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The Literature of the United States

Single Volume Edition

The Literature of the United States

An anthology and a history

Single Volume Edition

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PREFACE to the Single Volume Edition

The reception of *The Literature of the United States* in two volumes has been most gratifying. The critical appraisal of its pattern and contents encouraged us to stand on the publication in this first form alone. A considerable number of teachers, however, have indicated that the mechanics of the courses which they give would be better served if they could have the program within two covers. This Single Volume Edition is brought out to satisfy their needs.

The new form, which, understandably, is not intended to supplant the two volumes in the longer, more detailed survey courses, nevertheless embodies the principles and organization of the original work as far as possible. After much study, we have deleted those selections which we believe are *relatively* less essential to the student's understanding of the development of our literature. Our hope is that the selections which have been retained still make possible the introduction of the student to the varied literary achievements of our countrymen.

As we stated in the preface to the earlier publication, it is obvious in these unsettled times that, no matter what questions the future will pose, the young men and women who are passing through college classrooms are going to need all the strength of character, all the humility and tolerance and humor, all the intelligence which they can muster. We think that American literature can be of help. The literature of our country has been written by inhabitants of many different localities, representatives of many different levels of society, products of many different racial, religious, and occupational influences. American writers are not agreed on any one way to salvation, any one philosophy, any single explanation of this puzzling world. But they have told of finding life well worth the living in these United States. They have held pretty consistently that the world can be improved by tireless application of intelligence. We hope that something of this spirit will be absorbed from this book.

We realize that American literature may be taught, and taught well, in many different ways. Our guiding principle has been that although limited fields of study and specialized approaches are desirable in texts to be used in advanced courses, an introductory text fails unless it shows the great range of the riches of our literature and the several ways of appreciating these riches. Both in the selections and in the editorial apparatus, therefore, we have again tried to provide the material for different kinds of courses or a course with several emphases—the chronological survey, the careful analysis of the work of major authors, the study of literary types, and the examination of the development of significant ideas.

Hence *the selections* continue to be comprehensive. The writers included represent the whole range of American literary history, from the colonial period down to the present day. Major authors are given generous space, but the more interesting minor writers have not been neglected. Complete works have been given preference over unilluminating excerpts. Particular care has been taken to include folklore, humor, the drama, and the novel, all of which are often subordinated in anthologies to the more manageable essays, poems, and short stories. In addition to primarily artistic literary works, this book contains numerous examples of utilitarian types such as the sermon and the political tract. Throughout, we have tried to include only work likely to have lasting literary interest and value.

Hence, also, *the approaches* to these writings are varied. Introductory chapters on "Intellectual Currents" in the six periods of our plan are designed to indicate the intimate relationship between American literature and American history. Biographies of individual authors and occasional introductory notes suggest how a knowledge of the writer's life can often add to the interest and understanding of a particular selection. Sections on "Literary Trends" and numerous analytical notes emphasize the importance of the study of literary forms, techniques, and values.

Although we have consciously sought to emphasize variety, we have not ignored the desirability of coher-

ence. By frequent conferences and by correspondence we have sought ways and means of integrating the history of ideas, the history of forms, the biographies, the selections, and the notes.

We are jointly responsible for the plan of the book as a whole, and for what we hope will be found a satisfactory unification of enormously varied materials. To indicate our individual responsibility, however, we have initialed the introductory chapters, and we are individually responsible for the biographies, introductions, texts, and notes as follows:

W. B. (Walter Blair): John Smith, William Byrd, Singers of the Revolution, Edgar Allan Poe, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, Seba Smith, Singers of the West, Civil War Singers, Abraham Lincoln, "I Hear America Singing," David Crockett, George Washington Harris, Thomas Bangs Thorpe, Charles Farrar Browne, Henry Wheeler Shaw, John Greenleaf Whittier (regional poetry), Bret Harte, Samuel Clemens, Frank Norris, Emily Dickinson, Finley Peter Dunne, Henry Adams, Henry Louis Mencken, Robert Frost, Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, Ernest Hemingway, Irving Babbitt.

T. H. (Theodore Hornberger): William Bartram, Roger Williams, Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur, John Woolman, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Philip Freneau, Joel Barlow, William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, William J. Grayson, Hamlin Garland, William Vaughn Moody, Edward Bellamy, Sinclair Lewis, William Faulkner, Willa Cather, John Steinbeck.

R. S. (Randall Stewart): William Bradford, Samuel Sewall, Edward Taylor, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, John Pendleton Kennedy, William Gilmore Simms, John Greenleaf Whittier (abolitionist poetry), Henry Timrod, Walt Whitman, George Washington Cable, Joel Chandler Harris, Sarah Orne Jewett, William Sydney Porter, William Dean Howells, Henry James, Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Sidney Lanier, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Thomas Stearns Eliot, Allen Tate, Eugene O'Neill, John Dos Passos, Thomas Wolfe.

The illustrative material is intended to aid in showing students how captivating our literature has been throughout its history. A detailed consideration of the sources of the illustrations and the work of the artists follows this preface.

Some of our many debts to the work of scholars in the field of American literature are acknowledged in the introductions and notes Since we have avoided burdening the student with too large a mass of scholarly citations, we add here our general appreciation of the large contribution to our interpretations and criticism by our fellow-workers. American literary scholarship is relatively new, but it is growing rapidly and already bulks large in the preparation of any such book as this Here and there, we trust our work has added to its store of facts and generalizations.

The Literature of the United States is thus offered in an alternate form with a retention of its fundamental features We shall be pleased if this new version results in an extension of the usefulness of a work which attempts to represent so much of the cumulative development and study of American literature.

WALTER BLAIR
THEODORE HORNBERGER
RANDALL STEWART

ILLUSTRATIONS

Lives and Times in Pictures

The literature of the United States has been created by men and women living in a real world—a world of nature, of towns and cities, of homes. To apprehend this fact is very important if the student is really to know and to appreciate American literature. Yet the earliest authors and even some of our contemporaries may easily become remote from the student's understanding. To bring closer to the reader the men and women who wrote and the times in which they have lived, we have adopted a program involving the extensive use of interpretative illustrations.

Realizing that these illustrations would be worthless if they were not authentic, we have spent hours in research and the careful study of detail, to assure their accuracy. The artists, sharing our zeal for accuracy, have been equally careful: at times they have made extensive revisions in order to include only authentic materials and in order to keep the drawings consistent with the book as a whole. In addition, they have shown great skill, we believe, in working these many details into compositions distinguished for their artistry.

The illustrations designed and created especially for *The Literature of the United States* are of three types. The lives and times of the major authors included in the book have been illustrated in "panels" by GREGORY ORLOFF ("G. O."). The material in these drawings has its source in authentic historical documents, portraits, views of landscapes, of settlements, towns, and cities, and (now and then) illustrations from early editions of works. Other panels are devoted not to single authors but to the schools that have been recognized in the organization of this book—the groups of men and women whose writing seemed to have a common background, regional or stylistic, or a common moral, political, or artistic purpose.

The smaller drawings falling within the body of the selections are the work of HELEN NOEL ("H. N.") and were planned to point up details and to give a feeling for the life of the various periods. Particular emphasis has been placed on the homes and surroundings of the authors, the places about which they wrote, the particulars of the background of their everyday lives

Each chapter is introduced by a two-page panorama which we hope will give a general picture of America's development in the span of years covered in the chapter. These two-page drawings have been done by BRINTON TURKLE ("B. T."). In them are found illustrations of the architecture, the costume, the military tactics, the political life, the transportation, and the industrial and territorial expansion of each period

In striving further for authentic pictorial material heightening the interest of the literature, we have supplemented the work of our present-day artists with direct reproductions of contemporaneous illustrations of certain American writings. Such illustrations as those by Felix O. C. Darley for Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and Cooper's *The Pioneers,* which have long enhanced the reader's understanding and enjoyment of the literature, appear here.

A complete catalogue of the illustrations follows.

(A description of the details in each of the biographical and school panels is given in a footnote on the page where the panel appears. Contemporary sources have been used throughout, and are indicated in detail wherever they are of unusual interest.)

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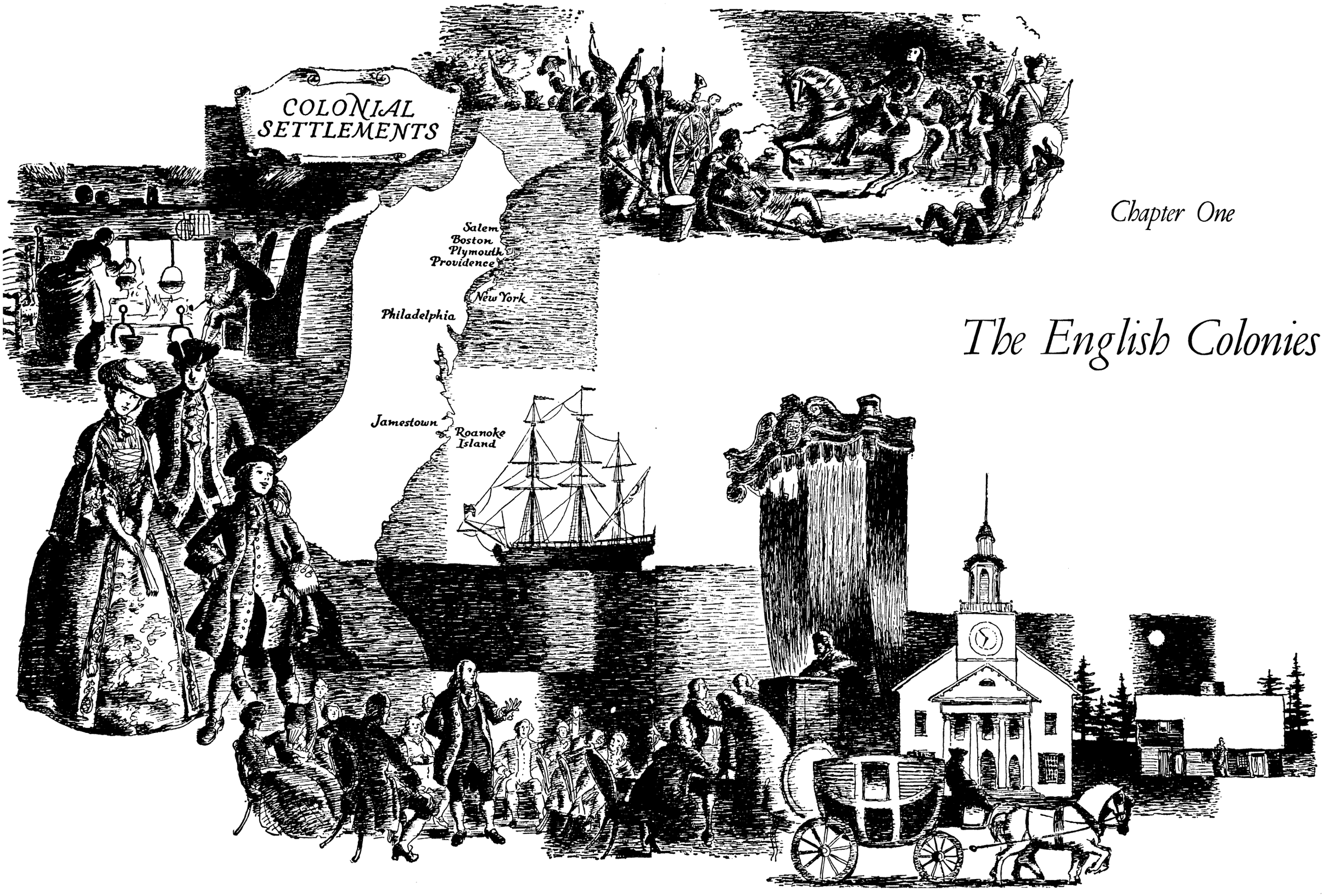
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Two details in editorial procedure require explanation: (1) The text of each selection is, in the judgment of the editors, the best available. The text has been specified, however, only when there has been some problem about the version to be adopted. (2) The first date following each selection is that of composition; the second date is that of publication.



Chapter One

The English Colonies

Chapter 1

The English Colonies 1588 • 1765

TO TREAD AND PLANT THAT GROUND. "Who can desire more content that hath small meanes; or but only his merit to advance his fortunes, then to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life. . . ."

— John Smith

I. Intellectual Currents

THE PATTERN of COLONIAL CULTURE

The story of the colonial period of what is now the United States is familiar, in its main outlines, to all of us. It extends roughly from that first voyage of Columbus in 1492 to the Stamp Act in 1765, which brought to scattered and disunited English settlements the realization of their common interests and strength

Columbus, seeking a new way of access to the riches of the Orient, found instead a New World and loosed upon it the expansive forces of the western European nations, already restlessly groping toward a new phase of their civilization. In the ensuing struggle for power, England was only gradually and belatedly involved. John and Sebastian Cabot had given her a claim to the northern continent of the new hemisphere, but it was nearly a century before men like Walter Raleigh sought to make good that claim by actual occupation. When it became clear that North America could offer little comparable to the easily won gold of Peru and the silver of Mexico, most Englishmen refused to grow excited over colonies, and many were openly scornful of such costly failures as that at Roanoke Island in 1585. Ultimately, however, their patriotism—a curious blend of nationalism and Protestantism—their renewed awareness of their rôle as a seafaring people, and their longing for wealth accounted for the tenuous successes of permanent settlements at Jamestown in Virginia in 1607 and at Plymouth in Massachusetts in 1620.

Thereafter the shape of things to come was perceptible to shrewd and well-informed men. From the Puritan Migration of 1628-1640 New England acquired a population of perhaps twenty-five thousand persons, enough to give her a long-enduring economic and cultural leadership in British America. From the difficulties of administering a colony at a distance of three thousand miles there developed representative assemblies (the first of them in Virginia) comparable to the lower house of the English Parliament. From the absorption of the Dutch of New Amsterdam and the Swedes along the Delaware, the pattern of colonial life acquired variety and color. The religious motives of the Catholic Lords Baltimore and the Quaker William Penn lent distinction to the settlement of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Up and down the Atlantic coastline, villages and farms and plantations proliferated, and everywhere men

sought to build that life which seemed to them desirable, compromising always with the hard facts of their environment and the often conflicting ambitions of their neighbors. By 1700 the colonists numbered more than a quarter of a million; by 1765, approximately a million and three quarters. They had been fortunate in being left pretty much to their own devices, or being interfered with only sporadically and unsystematically For all their differences—and they had many—they agreed, in the mass, upon one thing they wanted to control their own affairs. We know now, as Americans in 1765 could not know, that the road from such an agreement to Lexington and Bunker Hill and Independence Hall was inevitable, that the essential truth of their situation lay in Thomas Jefferson's epochal words "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for *one people. . . .*"

One people! Such the colonists in British America eventually became. Why and how they did so are still puzzling questions, despite the many words which have been written to explain the Revolution. The disintegrative forces of the colonial period were seemingly as powerful as those which operated for cohesion and unity. Intercolonial travel by land was difficult and uncommon. Personal and commercial connections between one colony and England were often closer than those between colony and colony. Marked religious differences prevailed, from Congregational New England to the Anglican establishments in Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. Outside of New England there was little homogeneity of background, for by 1765 one out of every three Pennsylvanians was German, every other North Carolinian was of Scotch-Irish ancestry, Negro slaves made up almost half the population of Virginia, and in South Carolina and Georgia the whites were actually outnumbered. Nevertheless all were Americans, with characteristic political and social institutions and with a literature of their own, which tells much of what they thought and argued and dreamed about.

Language, folklore, learning, the arts, literary tastes and types, legal, political, and educational institutions—everything except the land itself and a few skills acquired from the Indians—had been brought across the Atlantic Ocean. The process of transplantation had been by fits and starts and by devious routes; it had never been smoothly regular, almost never simple. Always involved in it had been change, adaptation, modification to meet the peculiar circumstances of the new environment. The old ways never worked quite perfectly under the new conditions. Men came who knew how to build houses, but they had to work with the building materials they found—lime for plaster, for example, was hard to come by—and they had to meet the exigencies of climates unlike those to which they had been accustomed. Physicians arrived, their minds stored with botanical medicine, only to discover that America had a flora of its own, whose medicinal use had to be discovered by experiment or learned from the aborigines. Traditions lingered, but necessity forced the quicker-witted to depend upon first-hand knowledge, and there was a sufficient variety of problems in the lands from Maine to Georgia to call forth all the ingenuity that experience could develop. Decade after decade the processes of transplantation and adaptation were repeated, with infinite minor variations. New men and women came from Europe, bringing new tools and talents and opinions and adapting them as best they could to what they found Frontier succeeded frontier as immigrants pushed up the streams toward the mountains to find new farms and found new villages. In the growth of the colonies there were few breathing-spaces; stability was short-lived, change incessant.

Nor was Europe static. In almost every field of human thought the period was tumultuous, full of conflict and revolutionary change. In economics, the feudal system was giving way to modern capitalism. In politics, the theory of the divine right of kings was dying under the blows of constitutional and contractual concepts. In religion, the schisms and sectarian rivalries which were the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation were hardly yet softened by the principle of toleration, which was eventually to bring a measure of amity. In science, revolution was continuous as Copernicus, Galileo, Bacon, Descartes, Boyle, Newton, and their associates and disciples changed both the world-view of western man and his method of advancing his exact knowledge of the world in which he lived. In literature and the arts, the creative outpouring of the Renaissance was succeeded by the more orderly but by no means barren reign of Neoclassicism.

The colonial era of the United States coincided, in short, with the germinal period of what we call the modern world. Europe, of necessity the chief constant factor to the people who settled in America, was itself becoming a new world. The more intelligent colonists,

get that they were participants in affairs of mighty moment, in the rebuilding of an old as well as in the creation of a new society.

Colonial literature was consequently written as often for European readers as for American. It was produced out of necessity rather than leisure, by men and women who wrote because they had some immediate pressing purpose, economic, religious, or political, which could be furthered by writing Our first concern must be to understand those purposes

THE ECONOMIC PROMISE

The first and the greatest promise which the New World held out to Europeans was freedom from want. To landless men whose ancestors had been bound for centuries to the soil, America offered room to raise food and clothing, to attain the security of well-stocked barnyards and overflowing granaries. As Captain John Smith put it, "Who can desire more content that hath small meanes, or but only his merit to advance his fortunes, then to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life." If Americans have always wished to live well—too well, according to those critics who count materialism our foremost national sin—they have come by their desire for an ever higher standard of living quite naturally. Few Europeans came to America without expecting to improve their economic status.

Colonial literature is therefore rich in accounts of the economic resources of the New World. The prospective immigrant wanted to know, in as much detail as possible, about his chances to earn a living He did not always find accurate information, because the books about the colonies were often written by promoters whose evaluations were rosily optimistic rather than sober or cautious. From the explorers, travelers, and settlers, however, as well as from the promoters, there came in the course of time an enormous body of information on the topography, soils, plants, animals, and minerals of British America. These writings told what would and would not grow. They paid particular attention to timber, because England needed ship supplies and her great forests were playing out. They commented in detail on game and fur-bearing animals, on fisheries, on the probabilities of mines.

The first selection in the present chapter is from one of the earliest English surveys of what is now a *New England* (1616). Smith named this region, described it with surprising accuracy, and enumerated the ways in which a living might be made in the New World. What he wrote was read carefully by men who were considering emigrating. His *Map of Virginia* (1612) and Thomas Hariot's *Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588) were similarly aimed at informing prospective settlers. No colony, indeed, was without a "Description" or "Map" or "True Report" of economic possibilities, followed by a local literature of promotion which was in turn succeeded by reports of progress. Of the many other books that might be named, the most important are Francis Higginson's *New England's Plantation* (1630), William Wood's *New England's Prospect* (1634), Thomas Morton's *New English Canaan* (1637), John Hammond's *Leah and Rachel; or, The Two Fruitful Sisters, Virginia and Mary-Land* (1656), Daniel Denton's *Brief Description of New-York* (1670), William Penn's *Some Account of the Province of Pensilvania* (1681), Thomas Ashe's *Carolina* (1688), and Gabriel Thomas' *Historical and Geographical Account of the Province and Country of Pensilvania* (1698). These books made it clear that the fundamental needs of food, clothing, and shelter could be satisfied rather more easily in America than in Europe, and they suggested that industry and ingenuity could produce surplus and wealth beyond anything of which the common man in Europe dared to dream.

From the first discovery, indeed, the New World seemed to many a land of marvels, of limitless economic opportunity. The state of mind it created had been germinating over many centuries. The ancients had harbored traditions of wonderful western lands: the Elysian Fields, where happy souls went after death; the Islands of the Hesperides, where golden apples grew; Atlantis, that island continent swallowed up by earthquakes long before the time of Plato. In medieval times men had written of fabulously wealthy islands—Antillia and O'Brazil—somewhere in the western ocean, and the news had slowly circulated that the Norsemen had found a new, rich western continent called Vinland. These stories, combined with the ineradicable conviction that America was close to the legendary treasures of India, China, and the Spice Islands, had prepared the European mind for wonders, and it was duly delighted with the strange new plants and animals and humans

of which the explorers wrote. Anything could happen in this New World.

There were only a few skeptics. Samuel Purchas, for example, in *Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1613), expressed the conviction that America was not so wonderful as some people seemed to think. "For what haue they," he wrote, "to oppose to our Elephants, Rhinocerotes, Camels, Horses, Kine, &c. Neither are the naturall fruits of America comparable to those of our World. Whence are their Spices, and best Fruits, but from hence, by transportation or transplantation? As for Arts, States, Literature, Diuine and Humane, multitudes of Cities, Lawes, and other Excellencies, our World enjoyeth still the priuiledge of the First-borne. America is a younger brother, and hath in these things almost no inheritance at all, till it bought somewhat hereof of the Spaniards, with the price of her Freedome." In the eighteenth century there were like-minded men, such as the Comte de Buffon and the Abbé Raynal, who were convinced that the American climate was enervating so that men and beasts degenerated there. Jefferson devoted much effort to refuting them by compiling tables of the comparative weights of European and American animals and by assembling for Buffon, in his apartments in Paris, the skeleton of an American mastodon.

Most Europeans, however, were more than willing to look to America with unbounded optimism, especially when, as often happened, they grew impatient with the state of things in their own civilization. The prevailing temper was that of the English philosopher George Berkeley, who pictured a Muse disgusted with Europe, waiting a better time.

> In happy climes, where from the genial sun
> And virgin earth such scenes ensue,
> The force of art by nature seems outdone,
> And fancied beauties by the true.

Man was to be better treated by Nature in the western hemisphere. He was, in fact, to rise to new heights, far more impressive than mere economic abundance could attain.

> Westward the course of empire takes its way,
> The four first Acts already past,
> The fifth shall close the Drama with the day;
> Time's noblest offspring is the last.

Only the presence of a savage people stood in the way of New World greatness. The Indians, it is true, were not very numerous and, with some exceptions, not very dangerous. Some observers saw the hand of God in the plague which had decimated the New England tribes just prior to the English settlement in that region; others argued that a few heathens should not be allowed to stand in the way of living-room for good, civilized Christians. The prospective settler wanted, of course, to know about the Indians. They were an economic fact to be reckoned with—a possible source of wealth, through trade or conquest, and a probable source of danger, if they resented, as they easily might, the invasion of their hunting grounds by land-hungry Europeans. The Indians therefore have a large place in almost every book which surveyed New World resources. Their persons and customs were described in great detail, their military strength carefully estimated. It cannot be said that the English always dealt justly with the aborigines; Roger Williams and William Penn were exceptional in their concern about obtaining land by purchase and treaty. Most of the settlers proceeded upon the expedient conviction that the Indians who stood in their path were treacherous and inferior animals to be eliminated with as little compunction as the rattlesnakes, the wolves, and the bears. The story of the gradual dispossession of the Indians is one of the blackest chapters in colonial annals.

Other than economic considerations appear in the literature about the Indians. Their novelty, the unsettled problem of their origin (were they, for instance, descendants of the lost Ten Tribes of Israel?), their uncanny skill in woodcraft, their strange social and political organization, their stoic endurance of pain and their sadistic pleasure in torture, their heathen faith—all created an interest which amounted to fascination. The Pocahontas legend, whether or not Smith invented it out of whole cloth (see p. 25), epitomizes the tendency to create a "noble savage." There developed in connection with the Indians the attitude known as primitivism, the glorification of the unspoiled simplicity of the "uncivilized." Primitivism was in the main based upon objection to the complexities and maladjustments of European life. In the colonial period it is more common in the books of Europeans than in those written by persons who had actually been in contact with the savages, although Morton's *New English Canaan* is a notable exception. Later, in the eighteenth century, primitivism appeared in the

poems of Freneau (p. 202), the essays of Crèvecoeur (p. 149), and the *Travels* of William Bartram (p. 54). It continued well into the nineteenth century and is an essential part of the philosophical background of Cooper's Leather-Stocking tales (see p. 268) and Longfellow's *Hiawatha.*

Colonial literature also records the economic processes by which simple home industries were gradually supplanted by a more specialized industrial life The references to mining and ironworks in the writings of Col. William Byrd of Westover in Virginia (see p. 50) suggest something of the beginnings of industrialization, which was not to become general, of course, until many years after political independence had been achieved

Most of us will agree that the New World fulfilled its economic promise. Like the man in the folk tale whose three wishes were fulfilled, but never quite as he expected them to be, the first Americans did not attain freedom from want as effortlessly as some of them had expected. They had to learn patience and thrift and the most efficient use of their vast new environment, and, as we shall see in a later chapter, they had to adjust themselves to other than merely local circumstances But attain it they did, in good measure, and colonial literature reveals both the nature and the realization of their desires.

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Next to getting a living, the chief concern of great numbers of the colonists was religion. Some of them, indeed, regarded the saving of souls—their own and those of other people—as the most pressing matter of existence To understand the men and women who established the pattern of American life we need to know with some precision their religious and theological background and its reflection in literature.

The first thing to remember is that most of the colonists, whatever their church, were keenly aware of the Reformation. The Bible had been in the hands of Englishmen, in their own language, only since 1535, and to most of them it was a fresh and inexhaustible revelation of the will of God The persecutions of the reign of Queen Mary, the fear of a Spanish invasion (which it was believed would have been swiftly followed by an Inquisition in England), the memory of the Gunpowder Plot of Guy Fawkes, the vexed problem of the royal succession, and the endless series of debates about church government and ritual—all were as close to the English in the early seventeenth century as the events of the period since 1865 are to present-day Americans.

The earliest attempts to colonize reflect the rivalry between Catholics and Protestants Smith, for example, emphasized the heathenism of the Indians, implying that it was the sacred duty of the English to convert them to the true faith, that is, to Anglicanism, before they could be led astray by the Catholic Spaniards or French. Obviously, however, the settlers who came to America with any such altruistic intentions were few and far between

Six English colonies—Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, Rhode Island, New Haven, and Pennsylvania —were nonetheless founded by religious groups or leaders to whom economic considerations were clearly secondary. Why this was the case can be understood only by reference to the peculiar circumstances of the Reformation in England.

Between Henry VIII's break with the Pope and the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Church of England had arrived at a *status quo* justly described as moderate Protestantism. The break with Rome was complete The ruler was the acknowledged head of the English Church, monastic orders had been abolished and most of the lands accumulated over the centuries by the Church had been nationalized, church services were held in English rather than in Latin; and the people had been provided with the English Bible and the English *Book of Common Prayer.* On the other hand, much that seemed "papist" to the more extreme Protestants remained—the hierarchy of parish priests, bishops, and archbishops, intimately connected with the structure of the civil state, richly ornamented churches and vestments; and set forms of prayer and worship

English dissent consisted of innumerable groups and individuals who believed that the Reformation had not gone far enough. Some wanted to remove all vestiges of Catholic practices and rituals, placing more emphasis upon the sermon and the Bible as the chief means of bringing souls to Christ—these were ordinarily called Puritans Others desired to substitute a measure of lay control for the system of benefices, bishops, and archbishops—they were the Presbyterians Still others wished each congregation to decide for themselves what form of worship they were to follow—these were the Separatists, Independents, or Congregationalists, also sometimes called Brownists, after their first spokesman, Robert

Browne (1550?-1633?). In addition, there were many shades of opinion regarding the proper forms of worship and the most desirable form of church government. With the passage of time differences of opinion about these matters multiplied rather than diminished.

The Anglican leaders sought continuously to enforce conformity to the *status quo*. As early as 1604, James I, speaking of the Puritans, announced, "I shall make them conform themselves or I will harry them out of the land, or else do worse." With the accession of Charles I in 1625 the more militant bishops had the support of a king with absolutist leanings, and unremitting efforts to insure conformity began. Under William Laud, Bishop of London from 1628 until 1633, and thereafter Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of England, until his execution in 1645, clergymen who failed to follow the prescribed forms of worship were brought into church courts, tried, and punished, most often by being forbidden to exercise any clerical functions. Among them were many of the men who became the leaders of the New England colonies.

The Pilgrims who came to Plymouth were Separatists. Some of them had emigrated to Holland, found the atmosphere there too "foreign" for their taste, and determined to settle in America. They were poor and would not have been able to make the voyage in the *Mayflower* had not the necessary capital been provided by a group of "merchant adventurers" of London. William Bradford (p. 29) was the mainstay of the settlement and church which they founded in Massachusetts. In 1692 Plymouth became a part of the Province of Massachusetts Bay.

The Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Company came to New England only when it became clear that reform within the English Church was impossible. They took care to bring their charter with them, and they intended to establish a state in which the kind of church they wanted might thrive. In contrast to the Pilgrims, they were wealthy and well-educated, many of them being substantial property-owners or professional men, university-trained as was their governor, John Winthrop. Furthermore, they were numerous; between 1628 and 1640 there was a constant stream of immigrants. Not all of them were as earnest in their religion as Winthrop and the ministers, but Bay Colony leadership was shrewd. Social, political, and educational institutions were so securely established that no study of the genesis of American life can ignore the Puritan tradition. Before the Puritans had been long in New England, they agreed upon a form of church government which was partly Congregational, partly Presbyterian—the *Cambridge Platform* of 1649 By that time the Westminster Assembly had effected changes not wholly dissimilar within the Church of England, although they were to be largely annulled by the Restoration in 1660.

Puritanism, however, was more than an attitude toward forms of worship and church government. It was then, as it is now, a word used to describe a strait-laced way of life, a concern with moral conduct so great as to lead some individuals to attempt what we now think of as unwarranted control of the personal lives of their neighbors, a rigid repression of sins and fashions that are now thought venial Such was Puritanism at its worst At its best it provided men with a sense of social responsibility, an earnestness about life which had in it both intellectual conviction and intense, sometimes even mystic, piety.

Underlying Puritan earnestness was Calvinism, a stern and legalistic theology constructed by the Genevan reformer, John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvinism portrayed God as a sovereign whom man, in the person of Adam, had disobeyed, thereby breaking an inexpressibly sacred and solemn covenant. Upon Adam and all his race retribution had justly fallen. Through Christ, however, man had been given a second chance, although that chance was extended only to those men whom God had "elected" to be saved. Most men were predestined to damnation, as they deserved. Although one could never be wholly sure of being among the fortunate few for whom salvation was foreordained, life was to be lived in a search for the divine will, as it might be expressed in one's own struggle for serenity, through one's spiritual growth, or as it might be interpreted from events in the external world. To walk uprightly in the sight of God, and to seek to follow His will—these were the aims of the Calvinist and the origin, as has often been remarked, of the "New England conscience."

Calvinism was the dominant theology of the entire colonial period, and it survives to some extent in the formal creeds of most Protestant churches other than the Lutheran. Non-Calvinists have always found it "harsh," chiefly because of its humiliating picture of human nature as utterly corrupt, regenerable only by the grace of God. In its defense two things may be said: it is not

difficult for anyone except the blindest optimist to observe unpalatable depths of cussedness in human beings, and it is evident that to some individuals the Calvinistic glorification of God gave an exhilaration and a direction to life which few faiths rival.

From the first Calvinism had its opponents. Of the many that might be described, four are so important to the student of literature that their description is a necessity These four—Antinomianism, Arminianism, Quakerism, and Deism—had one thing in common. they granted human nature a more dignified place than the Calvinists were willing to grant it. Otherwise they were most dissimilar. Antinomianism and Arminianism were merely theological positions, not necessarily connected with a particular church any more than was Calvinism itself. Quakerism was and is the doctrine of a religious society, the Friends, theologically not very far removed from Calvinism. Deism was neither theology nor a church, but a philosophical position, a state of mind

Antinomianism has approximately the place in religion that anarchy has in politics, that is to say, it is the denial of any authority beyond the individual The Antinomian controversy which shook the Bay Colony to its foundations in 1636 and 1637 ended with the banishment of Anne Hutchinson for spreading, among other heresies, the doctrine that God revealed Himself directly to individuals, so that one could know whether or not one was of the "elect." Such thinking challenged both the Calvinistic concept of the Bible as God's final revelation and the social control which was basic in the thought of such leaders as Winthrop

Arminianism takes its name from the Dutch theologian, Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), who held that one could achieve salvation in part through "good works," that is to say, through living a moral and upright life, but it was regarded by the Calvinists as derogatory to the sovereignty of God However, when the evangelical preachers of the eighteenth century took religion to the masses of the people, "good works" formed a far more concrete appeal than more abstruse theology, and the Methodist movement particularly became deeply tinged with Arminian thought.

Quakerism is the only one of the many radical Protestant opinions of the seventeenth century which has continued in its original form to be influential to the present day. The folk who first called themselves "Children of Light" and, later, the Society of Friends, organized under the leadership of George Fox (1624-1691) in the late 1640's. Their popular name was given them in jest, after Fox had asserted that even magistrates would come to "tremble before the word of the Lord." The Friends believed that the duty of man is to follow the Bible and the "inner light," that "pure wisdom" which comes from above. With a quietistic listening for the "openings" from God they combined the social control of "speaking out" in meeting, by which the promptings of the inner light were communicated to and passed upon by other Friends—a control which preserved them from the Antinomian lawlessness. They believed that all men are brethren, that all violence (and especially war) is evil, that worldly distinctions of class and dress are meaningless, that the taking of oaths is blasphemous They had no professional clergy, and they tended to distrust higher learning. Bitterly persecuted in New England as late as 1677, they established themselves in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, where they became a powerful force for the abolition of slavery and for social reform of many varieties. They produced relatively few writers (for the greatest of them, John Woolman, see p 155), but their equalitarianism and humanitarianism have always been influential in American life. Whittier was their chief spokesman in nineteenth-century American literature. but the Quaker influence may easily be discerned in the work of Walt Whitman and many lesser figures.

Deism is ordinarily dated from the writings of the English philosopher Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648). Herbert approached the problem of religion from a purely rational point of view, similar to what we would now call the comparative method. He found that in all ages and in all times, whether pagan or Christian, men had agreed on five axioms (1) that there is a God, (2) that He ought to be worshiped; (3) that piety and virtue are the essentials of worship; (4) that man ought to repent his sins; and (5) that there are rewards and punishments in a future life Veneration of the Bible as the revelation of God is wholly absent from this rational conclusion, and it is the rejection of revelation which is the distinguishing mark of Deistic thought. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, rationalism spread rapidly, in part as a result of the scientific advance, and there was widespread acceptance of the Deistic view that religious truth could be obtained by the use of reason. Although the Deistic controversy was primarily an English affair, Increase and Cotton

Mather were attacking the Deists before the end of the century, and Edwards' *Divine and Supernatural Light* (p. 83) would scarcely have been written had it not seemed important to refute the Deistic emphasis upon the place of reason in religion. The best-known Deistic work by a colonial American is Benjamin Franklin's *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain* (1725), which its author accounted an "erratum" (see p. 118). No reader of Franklin's writings will be long in doubt, however, of his fundamental agreement with Lord Herbert of Cherbury. The Deistic principles of many of the leaders of the Revolution, including Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Ethan Allen, lend credibility to the picture of an American "cult of reason" in the late eighteenth century; but that, together with the mare's nest stirred up by Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* (1792), must await discussion in another chapter.

Toleration and revivalism, perhaps the most characteristic features of American religious life, also have their origins in the colonial period. Both are still, after all these years, matters for the thoughtful concern of every American.

Roger Williams (p. 63) founded Rhode Island in 1636 as a tiny island of refuge for "heretics" like Anne Hutchinson and the Quakers. He was far ahead of his time, for not until the chartering of Pennsylvania in 1681 was there a second colony ready to receive all victims of religious persecution. Maryland, to be sure, passed a Toleration Act in 1649 as a protection for the Roman Catholics, but Jews and Unitarians were not desired. Maryland was to be a "Christian" settlement, not a refuge for unbelievers who might cause disturbance. The American colonies, some of them none too willingly, bowed to the provisions of the Toleration Act passed by Parliament in 1689, and thereafter the principle of religious freedom was given at least lip service. Nonconformists to the dominant pattern of religious life were by no means safe, however, although in later years anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and anti-this-and-that feeling is usually explainable in part by economic competition

Revivalism, while not wholly native, has probably never flourished elsewhere so consistently as in America. Its origins are to be sought in the religious situations of colonies founded by earnest and pious folk who saw their children slipping away from the faith as life became easier and more secular. This situation developed in New England shortly after 1650 and was signalized by the adoption of the Half-Way Covenant of 1662, which admitted the children of church members to church membership (although not to communion) without the previously required confession of "religious experience." For most of the sixty years thereafter New England clergymen seized upon every possible opportunity to expound the decadence of religion, the necessity of a return to the ways of the founders, the dangers of apostasy, and the innumerable evidences of divine disfavor in comets, witchcrafts, earthquakes, fires, and storms. The trends and fashions of the times were often viewed with alarm in Samuel Sewall's *Diary* (see p. 37) and in innumerable writings by the Mathers. Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana* is the best-known complaint of the decline of religion and the diminishing influence of the clergy.

After 1720, however, religion was reinvigorated by what is known as the "Great Awakening," widespread revivals which reached the younger folk and the lower classes in all the colonies. Through the awakening, religion found new leaders and a somewhat broader base; it became perceptibly less intellectual and more emotional. The revivals are believed to have begun with certain Dutch Reformed churches of New Jersey in the 1720's; they soon afterward appeared in the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian churches of Pennsylvania; by the 1730's they had arrived in New England, where Edwards was soon absorbed in their strange phenomena. Six times between 1729 and 1770 the colonies felt the impulse of the preaching of George Whitefield (1714-1770), an English evangelist who had been associated with the Wesleys in the development of Methodism. Whitefield, who had the advantage of Calvinistic convictions, preached to vast crowds, often out of doors, and invariably aroused great enthusiasm. The Baptists and the Methodists also extended their ranks through highly successful revivals, particularly in the Southern colonies, in the decades just before the Revolution.

The literature relating to revivalism is enormous; one scholar estimates that there are more than thirty-five thousand separate pieces which refer to the awakening. Best known, probably, is Edwards' *Some Thoughts concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742) and Charles Chauncy's answer thereto.

The effect of revivalism was to make religion more the personal concern of the common man than it had been before, and it is not an accident that its develop-

ment coincided in time with the spread of a humanitarian concern for the poor and the unfortunate. It has remained characteristic of American Protestantism, although often frowned upon by settled clergymen and the higher economic levels of society. Conservatives are still objecting to camp meetings, tent revivals, and the thousand and one varieties of missions and tabernacles which dot the streets of the larger American cities. The value of revivalism is a debatable question which each individual must answer for himself. Doubtless it has tended to divide churches and has lent itself to the self-seeking of unscrupulous evangelists. On the other hand it has kept its appeal through recognition of the importance of emotional release. Religion does not appeal to the rational mind alone.

COMMONWEALTH-BUILDING

A third great concern of the colonists and another theme of colonial literature, intimately connected with the economic and the religious, is the political "new deal" which the New World promised. Americans were thinking, from the first, of the possibility of a new kind of state.

John Smith was not alone in observing a parallel between Europe in his time and the declining years of the Roman empire (see p 23). Although England had become a great and strong nation under Queen Elizabeth, there seemed to be more distressing poverty, more selfish wealth, more injustice and social unrest than there had ever been before. We can now see that feudalism was disintegrating slowly, that hereditary and class privileges had survived longer than serfdom, and that capitalism had not provided men with sufficient social responsibility. Smith is clear enough in his conviction that "rich men for the most part are growne to that dotage, through their pride in their wealth, as though there were no accident could end it, or their life." In America, a land of greater plenty, he believed that merit and industry might find their fair rewards and that all men might work together for the common weal.

Smith's frequent use of the word "commonwealth" is significant, for to his generation a commonwealth was a state in which all citizens—not merely a few—had an interest in the government. This is not to say that Smith was a democrat, for he was not He vaguely expressed the general dissatisfaction of his time with the political *status quo*. The Renaissance was the age in which American political philosophy was born. Men were dreaming of an ideal commonwealth, as they had not been dreaming since Plato in the fourth century B.C.

The political climate of opinion of the age of geographical discovery is suggested by More's *Utopia* (1515-1516) and Bacon's *New Atlantis* (*c.* 1617). Their dreams of a new society were paralleled by the nostalgia of the primitivists, who looked back to a Golden Age in which men lived in amity, untroubled by such bickerings as those produced by the Reformation and the new national rivalries. Talk of a "brave new world" was in the air, and it was not silenced by American experience So many folk were thinking of a better state that Shakespeare, in *The Tempest* (*c.* 1610), created an "honest old counsellor," Gonzalo, whose satirical remarks are worth recalling:

I' th' commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; . . .
All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour; treason, felony,
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,
Would I not have, all foison, all abundance,
To feed my innocent people. . . .
I would with such perfection govern, sir,
T' excel the golden age

At least eight American colonies—Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, Rhode Island, New Haven, Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Georgia—show traces of their founders' thinking in terms of an ideal commonwealth. In most of them religious and economic motives were also involved, but these, too, have their place in the history of political experimentation. The communistic beginnings of the Pilgrims (see p. 32), the theocracy of Massachusetts Bay and New Haven, the toleration principles of Rhode Island, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, John Locke's "ideal" constitution for Carolina, and James Oglethorpe's notion of a refuge for debtors in Georgia—all had political implications. The most discussed experiment is that of Massachusetts Bay

The full story of the transformation of the dream of an ideal commonwealth into the workaday institutions of British America, not ideal but on the whole far less aristocratic than those of Europe, is highly involved

We should remember, however, that colonial literature reflects at least three processes or developments. (1) the familiar pattern of transplantation and adaptation, in this case of English political and legal institutions; (2) the relative freedom from interference which was the result of unsettled problems of political authority in the mother country; and (3) the growth of democracy and local control, usually attributed to the influence of Separatism, which trained humble folk to share in church government.

All are well illustrated in the early stages of a long-continued conflict between aristocracy and democracy in the Bay Colony. The aim of John Winthrop and his companions was to found a theocracy, a state of which the head should be God, the fundamental law His word, the Bible. They wished a Bible commonwealth in which civil authority should contribute in every possible way to the welfare of the Puritan church. As John Eliot said, in *The Christian Commonwealth* (1659), "there is undoubtedly a form of Civil Government, instituted by God himself in the holy Scriptures"—a conviction which, rather than any statutory provision, accounts for the leadership of the clergy in the seventeenth century. The magistrates consulted the "elders," that is, the ministers, in every important debate on policy. But Winthrop had too much of the lawyer's respect for statute and for precedent to throw overboard the common law and the example of England, and it was not long before Massachusetts had a bicameral legislature and a legal code drawn, not from the Bible, but from experience. Because the Bay Company founders had the foresight to bring their charter with them, their government survived the chaotic conditions of the Civil War in England. The independent attitude of New England towns demonstrates the early strength of the ideal of local autonomy in an era which had adopted a modified form of Separatism.

Bradford and Williams reveal in their writings much the same background. From Plymouth, the original Separatist community, we have the *Mayflower Compact* (see p. 32), earliest of American written constitutions and one of the first political reflections of the development of Calvinism which is called "Covenant" or "Federal" theology. In it the Pilgrims agreed to "solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves togeather into a civill body politick, . . . and by vertue hearof to enacte . . . such just and equall lawes . . . as shall be thought most meete and convient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." The *Compact* has a well-deserved distinction, and every American will do well to review occasionally its significant phrases. It was Separatism, too, which led Williams to assert his doctrine that the power of the civil state must not serve the purposes of a single church (p. 65). Other colonies copied the idea of a social compact, and other colonies came gradually to recognize the value of toleration.

The conflict between the ideal of government by the few and the ideal of government by the many runs throughout American literature. In the colonial time it is to be seen in a vast body of writings relating to the theocracy in Massachusetts and the various attempts of men like Cotton Mather to return to the "New England Way." The belief of the ruling classes that things were not going well may be felt in Sewall's *Diary,* which intimates that the common people were often rowdy and obstreperous. William Byrd felt much the same way about the North Carolinians (p 47). Occasionally the common man found a defender, of whom the most notable was John Wise (1652-1725). In his *Churches' Quarrel Espoused* (1710) and *Vindication of the Government of the New-England Churches* (1717) he blasted a Mather-sponsored effort to give the clergy greater power. Wise's works had important political implications and were widely quoted when the Revolution called forth all the ammunition that could be collected.

The colonies did not achieve the ideal commonwealth, but they present a consistent picture of an effort to serve the common interest of all, according to the lights of the men who led them. "Their Cheif Red Letter day," one traveler wrote of the inhabitants of Connecticut, "is St. Election, which is annually Observed according to Charter, to choose their Governor, a blessing they can never be thankfull enough for, as they will find, if ever it be their hard fortune to loose it."

SUPERSTITION and SCIENCE

The reader of colonial literature cannot fail to notice that most writing of the era is punctuated with "It pleased God" and "a special providence of God appeared"—recognitions of the immediate concern of the Deity for His universe and His people. Although most conspicuous in the historical works and diaries of the

Puritans, these expressions may easily be found in the reports of such hard-bitten gentlemen of fortune as John Smith.

In Bradford, Winthrop, Sewall, and Mather, however, such references are often accounted superstitious by latter-day readers, who live in a world wherein the uninterrupted order of nature is taken for granted and a scientific world-view prevails. We need to reflect briefly, therefore, upon the place of science in the thought of colonial Americans, especially when we encounter Sewall's comment (see p. 39) on Mather's pulpit exposition of the Copernican hypothesis. "I think it inconvenient to assert such Problems."

The age unquestionably accepted the providential order of nature, a world in which the Lord intervened not merely to mark the sparrow's fall but to reward and punish in accordance with His inscrutable ends. Before scorning this acceptance as sheer superstition, we should consider how often we moderns fall back upon "luck" or "fate" or "accident" to account for the puzzling and inexplicable turns of events which we all encounter. Things happen to all of us which no amount of foresight or care can help us avoid. Belief in divine intervention had the advantage of giving direction to men's lives, however much we may question the results of the Puritans' incessant search for an understanding of the divine will.

What we must not conclude too easily is that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were deliberately unscientific. On the contrary, they were the age of Bacon, Boyle, Descartes, Newton, Laplace, and many other first-rank scientists, whose search for truth was emulated, although not of course with such brilliant success, on this side of the Atlantic. Benjamin Franklin was not the first American to study natural phenomena.

Colonial literature shows both a persistent scientific curiosity and the universal economic motive for the investigation of nature. Early visitors impressed the Indians with mathematical instruments, the lodestone, and spring clocks, and Smith fascinated Opechakanough with his sign-language exposition of astronomy and geography (see p. 26). Smith, moreover, classified and described natural phenomena in accordance with the best methods at his command, as did his innumerable successors among the travel writers and promoters. Bartram was a skilled botanist. Bradford, as likely as anyone to perceive the hand of God in all events, found room to "leave it to naturallists to judge" the value of his hypothesis of the results of earthquakes, and did not find his view of providence inconsistent with the search for natural causes for the immoralities of 1642 (p. 35). Byrd's journals abound in medicinal, botanical, and zoölogical observations; both he and Cotton Mather were members of the Royal Society of London and contributed to its *Philosophical Transactions,* the foremost scientific periodical of the age.

There is abundant evidence, in short, that the sense of the nearness of God and the operation of His providence did not outlaw the study of nature. Sewall's "inconvenient" was probably not the expression of opposition to scientific knowledge, but the not uncommon feeling that science and religion ought not to be mixed. Despite the dominance of theology, actual distrust of science is rarely encountered in the colonial era.

THE FINE ARTS

Painting, sculpture, music, and architecture, which now lend much to the richness of life and literature, were of relatively little interest to the colonists and are mentioned only seldom in their writings. We need not review the details of their beginning, but we should remember that they existed and that they manifested both the invariable pattern of transplantation and adaptation and the dominance of religion in the daily life of the people.

Painting was devoted almost exclusively to the portraiture of much-loved clergymen or the members of well-to-do families There were portraits painted in New England as early as 1641; one of the best known is that of Samuel Sewall made by a native amateur sometime before 1730. The first portrait engraving known to have been made in the British colonies was a woodcut of Richard Mather dating from 1670; the first line engraving on copper, a portrait of Increase Mather made about 1701; the first mezzotint for framing, a portrait of Cotton Mather made in 1727.

Sculpture was confined, prior to the nineteenth century, to the carving of angels, death's-heads, and other devices upon tombstones, and, if it is admitted as sculpture, to carving in wood. This is not so insignificant as it may sound, for the visitor to colonial graveyards often comes away with a clearer notion of our ancestors' surprising fearlessness of death.

a plain narrative, usually written by a plain man with few literary graces. Its organization was chronological, and the writer merely amplified, from memory, notes, or a journal, the events he had experienced, expanding whenever his own interests or those of his prospective readers seemed to demand it. The letter in which Columbus reported his first voyage of discovery is a good example; another is John Brereton's *Briefe and True Relation of the Discouerie of the North Part of Virginia* (1602), the earliest English account of the New England coast The type prevails in the great collections of voyages which were edited by Richard Hakluyt, Samuel Purchas, and John Harris (*Collection of Voyages and Travels,* 1705). Although written to provide information, the account of a voyage was seldom impersonal and sometimes achieved a sharpness of effect and a charm scarcely excelled by polished literary art.

The type could be adapted readily to a land journey, as in Byrd's "Progress to the Mines" and Bartram's *Travels.* Byrd's two versions of the *History of the Dividing Line* (pp 45 and 46) show how readily miscellaneous information could be inserted in the loose framework of a travel narrative

Travel literature forms one of the largest classes of American books. It is closely related to the economic motive in colonization, but it still lends itself readily to comment on social life and customs, on personalities, and even to sheer entertainment.

PROMOTION TRACTS

The writer of the promotion tract almost invariably had to struggle with a topical arrangement. He had to make some division of his material so that he could generalize attractively about the resources of the region he was describing He was not always familiar with his material; he could make only limited use of narrative, and he needed to appear judicious and relatively impersonal Promotion tracts therefore vary somewhat in structure, according to the different solutions of the problems.

Thomas Hariot wisely followed his main interest—economic resources—in his Virginia. First he described commodities already found or raised in Virginia in quantities sufficient to be marketable. useful plants, minerals, and furs. He then listed commodities known to be sufficient in quantity to sustain life: grains, vegetables, fruits, game animals, fowl, and fish. A third section listed miscellaneous commodities and included his account of the Indians.

Smith's *Description of New England* (p 22) and *Map of Virginia* (1612) employed a far more common structure. They begin with the general geographical features and then describe the climate, winds, soils, rivers, settled places, plants, animals, birds, fish, minerals, and Indians. The *Map* is the more consciously organized, in his *Description* Smith himself realized that his enthusiasm had carried him away, and at one point asks his readers to return a little with him, adding that he is not "sufficiently yet acquainted in those parts, to write fully the estate of the Sea, the Ayre, the Land, the Fruites, the Rocks, the People, the Gouernment, Religion, Territories and Limitations, Friends and Foes. but as I gathered from the niggardly relations in a broken language to my understanding, during the time I ranged those Countries." It will be noted that Smith had a list of topics, arranged in an order proceeding from the general to the particular. This systematic approach he probably derived from the geographical literature of the day, which in turn is a reflection of the almost invariable approach of the medieval schoolmen to the study of the external world.

When the works of Aristotle were the highest authority in science, they were studied according to a settled system. One began with the *Organon* and the *Physica,* which deal with logic and the general properties of natural bodies; next came the *De Caelo,* a description of the heavens; next the *De Generatione et Corruptione,* which treats the four elements—fire, water, earth, and air—and their various combinations and interactions; next the *Meteorologica,* which describes the various processes of change in the elements; next various discussions of "perfectly mixed" bodies and "imperfectly mixed" ones, inanimate (stones, metals, and minerals); and finally the *De Anima* and the *Historia Animalium,* descriptions of animate bodies (plants and animals). After that one came to the study of man.

Many promotion tracts besides Smith's were based ultimately upon this tradition, for it was the topical arrangement most familiar to educated men. Francis Higginson's *New England's Plantation* begins with the following statement: "And because the life and wel-fare of euerie

Bradford's book, had in it also the element of self-defense and a lawyer's respect for exact knowledge of precedents and experiments in institutional organization. Cotton Mather's many biographies in *Magnalia Christi Americana* exemplify his tendency to defend the "New England Way," as well as to emulate the didactic purposes of Bradford. Byrd's histories of the Dividing Line had axes to grind as well as information to convey.

Much colonial historical writing was tinged with the belief in a providential order of nature, and hence took on a distinctly theological quality. If events were to be interpreted as the working out of the divine plan, which man could never know in its entirety, a monstrous birth might be quite as significant to a reflective mind as a victory in battle or a great political or religious compromise. To the modern reader, Winthrop seems to jump readily from affairs of great moment to the most trivial events. This attitude tended to make history discontinuous except to the reader fascinated by the search for moral meanings in events. It is characteristic of most seventeenth-century writing, appearing most vividly in Edward Johnson's *History of New England* (1654) and reaching its culmination in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana.* For the providential theory the colonists had the example of the Book of Kings, the Roman historian Livy, and many ecclesiastical annalists from the time of St. Augustine.

More rationalistic tendencies may also be observed in colonial historiography. We have already noticed Bradford's analysis of possible causes of an outbreak of immorality in New England. Judicious and objective methods were foreshadowed in Thomas Prince's *Chronological History of New England,* the first volume of which appeared in 1730, in William Stith's *History of the First Discovery of Virginia* (1747), and most notably in Thomas Hutchinson's *History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay,* of which the first volume was published in 1764. These works likewise had European models, although Hutchinson's was the only one to show traces of the regard for institutional development which made Voltaire's *Age of Louis XIV* (1751) a landmark.

DIARIES and AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

An amazing number of colonists kept diaries or wrote autobiographies. Their purpose was sometimes practical —the desire to have a record of the weather, the planting and harvesting of crops, business transactions, and personal affairs. More often, perhaps, and almost always in the case of the autobiographies, the aim was fundamentally theological. Earnest Calvinists wished to study the state of their souls, and one of the best possible methods was to preserve a day-by-day or systematic account of temptations, struggles, and meditations, from which might be drawn some indication of their state of grace.

The best colonial example of a religious autobiography is probably Jonathan Edwards' "Personal Narrative." In its constant concern with the all-absorbing problem of man's relation to God, it is typical of numerous Puritan self-searchings. Other examples, almost as well known, are the autobiography and "Meditations and Spiritual Experiences" of Thomas Shepard, and the voluminous diary of Cotton Mather.

Those diaries which are most treasured by later generations, however, are the ones in which soul-searching is leavened by concern with temporal affairs. Winthrop's journal, Samuel Sewall's diary, the travel journal of Mrs. Knight, and the shorthand diaries from which William Byrd "wrote up" his histories of the Dividing Line and his "Progress to the Mines" are important because they preserve for us the customs, manners, and personalities of relatively worldly people. We learn from them of the food, the drink, the social life, the household appointments, the gardens, the crimes, the births, marriages, and deaths—the external life, in short, of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Americans.

Sewall's *Diary* is perhaps the best. It does not compare with the great English diaries written at approximately the same period by John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys, for Sewall's world was more circumscribed than theirs. Like all great diarists, however, Sewall has the virtue of revealing himself as a human being, not much unlike you and me in being beset by frailties and inadequacies and little vanities (not big ones, of course, for we none of us are inordinately vain—to ourselves).

It is worth remembering that two of the greatest of early American books—Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (p. 119) and John Woolman's *Journal* (p. 156) —are in the direct line of descent from one of the most popular of colonial literary types. Of these we shall have more to say later.

POEMS

More than one critic has hinted that the less said of American poetry prior to 1765 the better. Colonial production of verse, compared to that of England in the same period, was small in quantity and, with very few exceptions, vastly inferior in quality. No colonial poet reached the level of Herbert, Herrick, Cowley, Butler, Prior, Young, or Thomson, to say nothing of the front-rank poets, Donne, Milton, Dryden, and Pope. Moreover, the colonial versifiers displayed a deplorable tendency to imitate the poetic diction and verse forms of their transatlantic betters.

Early American verse can nevertheless add to our knowledge of the pattern of culture and of the place of the arts in colonial life. Some of it has a respectable originality in thought or subject matter, and some of it, notably that which expressed the religious faith of the most sensitive individuals, has genuine poetic merit.

The most utilitarian use of rhyme and meter is mnemonic; maxims and stories in verse are easier to remember verbatim than those in prose. Not a little colonial verse is based upon this fact, from the rhymed accounts of English Protestant history by the Rev. John Wilson (see *Handkerchiefs from Paul,* ed. K B. Murdock, 1927) down to the Rev. Michael Wigglesworth's famous summary of Calvinistic theology, *The Day of Doom* (1662). Even the compilers of the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), although their main purpose was to translate the Hebrew with the greatest possible exactness, chose to put the psalms to be sung in the New England churches in English meter, which is to say in the ballad stanza of folk poetry·

> The Lord to mee a shepheard is,
> want therefore shall not I.
> Hee in the folds of tender-grasse,
> doth cause mee downe to lie
> To waters calme me gently leads
> Restore my soule doth hee.
> he doth in paths of righteousnes:
> for his names sake leade mee.

The use of the ballad stanza reveals the strength of popular tradition in the face of novel conditions—in this instance the Puritan respect for the Hebrew text of the Scriptures. Poetry as art suffered severely, but its basic elements survived.

Vaguely related to the mnemonic purpose, although essentially didactic in the same way as colonial historical writing, are the numerous historical poems of the colonial period. Bradford himself tried his hand at this type of writing, but the best-known examples are Benjamin Tompson's narratives of King Philip's War. *New Englands Crisis* (1676) and *New Englands Tears for Her Present Miseries* (1676). Both display the providential theory of history in an elaborate form. Relating to biographical writing, moreover, are the numerous funeral elegies, at which many New England clergymen tried their hands Most modern readers will be satisfied to know Benjamin Franklin's recipe for such an elegy, without reading many of the originals on which he based his conclusions:

"For the subject of your Elegy, Take one of your Neighbors who has lately departed this Life; it is no great matter of what Age the Party dy'd, but it will be best if he went away suddenly, being *Kill'd, Drown'd,* or *Frose to Death.*

"Having chose the Person, take all his Virtues, Excellencies, &c and if he have not enough, you may borrow some to make up a sufficient Quantity· To these add his last Words, dying Expressions, &c. if they are to be had, mix all these together, and be sure you strain them well. Then season all with a Handful or two of Melancholly Expressions, such as, *Dreadful, Deadly, cruel cold Death, unhappy Fate, weeping Eyes,* &c. . . . let them Ferment for the Space of a Fortnight, and by that Time they will be incorporated into a Body, which take out, and having prepared a sufficient Quantity of double Rhimes, such as *Power, Flower; Quiver, Shiver; Grieve us, Leave us; tell you, excel you; Expeditions, Physicians; Fatigue him, Intrigue him;* &c you must spread all upon Paper,and if you can procure a Scrap of Latin to put at the End, it will garnish it mightily; then having affixed your Name at the Bottom, with a *Mœstus Composuit,* you will have an Excellent Elegy."

The more sophisticated poetry of the colonial era was likely to have a classical flavor, understandable in an age and place where the higher education gave a central place to the learned languages Not a few colonists composed Latin verses, and translations and para-

phrases constituted a common exercise. The height of "highbrow" verse-making was *Pietas et Gratulatio,* published at Boston in 1761. A tribute to the new king, George III, it contained three poems in Greek, sixteen in Latin, and twelve in English, most of them by recent graduates or faculty members of Harvard College. Individuals trained in the classics were also interested in the work of the English Neoclassical school, and there were many colonial poems in the manner of the satires of Dryden and Pope, the mock-heroics of Butler, and the philosophical pieces of Thomson, Young, and Pomfret. These are often interesting for their content, although it is disconcerting to find colonial poets expressing boredom with court and city life when, as someone has said, five minutes' walking would have taken any one of them into a cow pasture. We may safely leave the works of Mather Byles, John Adams (the clergyman, not the statesman), George Webb, William Livingston, the younger Thomas Godfrey, Nathaniel Evans, Joseph Green, and other would-be "wits" to the specialist, remembering, however, that these gentlemen were the literati of their day and, whatever their deficiencies, cherished the tradition of belles-lettres in a world frequently too busy for art.

Religious poetry is another matter. It is represented in the present chapter by the work of Edward Taylor. Although Taylor was probably familiar with the verse of some of the English religious poets of the seventeenth century, he had the true poet's gift of conveying intensity of individual experience. His poems, consequently, are probably the finest literary expression of the inner life of American Puritanism and have the same interest as the best of the diaries and spiritual autobiographies. In many ways, indeed, they are superior as a revelation of the ecstasy of the religious life.

NOVELS

Fiction, which bulks large in later American literature, was almost nonexistent in the colonial period. It was distrusted by serious-minded persons, in England as well as in America, although it is not just to ascribe its absence entirely to Puritan influence.

The novel as a form had by no means reached its full maturity. The seriousness of the reading public left little time for the long romances, although a good many of them appear on colonial booklists, and the pleasure in swift-moving narrative was partly provided for by the accounts of voyages and travels, the somewhat lurid accounts of captivity among the Indians, and the other factual material such as reports of the experiences and final hours of pirates and murderers and the descriptions of remarkable providences and witchcrafts. Many works of fiction which supposedly portrayed life must have seemed dull in comparison to more direct reporting. Quite probably the prevalent attitude toward fiction was not far from that in one passage of Cotton Mather's *Manuductio ad Ministerium,* where he advises divinity students to enjoy the recreation of poetry but not to be so set upon it "as to be always poring on the *Passionate* and *Measured* Pages. Let not what should be *Sauce* rather than Food for you, Engross all your Application . . . Indeed, not merely for the *Impurities* which they convey, but also on some other Accounts, the *Powers of Darkness* have a *Library* among us, whereof the *Poets* have been the most *Numerous* as well as the most *Venemous* Authors. Most of the modern *Plays,* as well as the *Romances* and *Novels,* and *Fictions,* which are a sort of *Poems,* do belong to the Catalogue of this cursed Library." T. H



John Smith

1579 • 1631

Apparently the colonizers who sailed into Hampton Roads, Virginia, in May 1607 were lucky to have Captain John Smith as their leader on what turned out to be a heart-breaking although, in the long run, a successful venture—the establishment of the first permanent British colony on this continent. One must say "apparently," because what we know about Smith's ability and background he chiefly has told us, and the blustering soldier of fortune was not a man to underestimate his valor or to let literal truth spoil a good story. His account told how he had been born at Willoughby and educated in the free schools there, how he had broken family ties in his teens, had gone into military service in his twenties, and thereafter had slain Turks, Tartars, or Indians with equal aplomb.

During his stay in Virginia from May 1607 to October 1609, Smith, according to his account, efficiently led the colonists, set up relationships with the Indians, and explored the country. In addition, somehow, he found time to write his first book and to send it overseas for publication. In the fall of 1609 Smith went back to England, he remained there until 1614. That year, some six years before the settlement of Plymouth, he returned to America to explore New England minutely from the Penobscot River to Cape Cod. Believing that a territory of such extent deserved a name of its own, he christened it New England. At home he made an excellent map of the coast and dotted it with English names such as Cape Ann, Charles River, and Plymouth. In 1615 he sailed again for New England with a body of colonizers who traveled on two ships. This expedition, however, was cut short when French pirates stopped the vessels. Smith was captured and taken to Rochelle, but he shortly escaped and returned to his native country. His exploring days over, he remained there until his death in London, June 21, 1631.

Panel (l. to r.) View of Jamestown in 1622 • Captain John Smith • Colonists trading with Indians • View of Plymouth in 1622 • Samuel Sewall

Historians have pictured the mustachioed captain writing his first book in a sleazy wilderness tent by the light of a blazing pine-knot. However it was composed, *A True Relation* (1607) was a book wrought on the scene between clashes with redmen. It and books which followed it, notably *A Description of New England* (1616) and *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624), written to encourage and direct colonizing or to glorify Smith, reveal his gusto and his imaginativeness, combined with what seems to be vivid circumstantial detail. Thus the poetry and hardships of the colonizing adventure fuse in these accounts.

Smith's works are interesting for their characterization of the author, their picturing of happenings, and their style. The style is that of an educated—but not too educated—man, writing imaginatively about first-hand experiences. It has the varied rhythms, the homeliness fused with strangeness and stateliness, of prose in the age of the King James Bible. Callous-fisted soldier though he was, Smith produced several fine bits of prose like those which follow.

Captain John Smith, Works, 1608-1631, ed. Edward Arber, Birmingham, 1884 (re-edited by A G. Bradley, 1910) • J G. Fletcher, John Smith — Also Pocahontas, New York, 1928 • M. C. Tyler, History of American Literature, 1607-1765, New York, 1878, I, 18-38

From • A Description of New England

Motives for Colonizing

The following selection from **A Description of New England** (1616) shows Smith as the advocate of the colonizing adventure. Eight years later the passage was reprinted in **The Generall Historie.** Like much of the writing of the period and like many other passages by Smith, this has as its purpose the attraction of settlers to the new colonies. The titles for this and the following selection were supplied by the editors.

Who can desire more content, that hath small meanes; or but only his merit to advance his fortunes, then to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life? If he have but the taste of virtue and magnanimity, what to such a minde can bee more pleasant, then planting and building a foundation for his Posteritie, gotte from the rude earth, by Gods blessing and his owne industry without prejudice to any? If hee have any graine of faith or zeale in Religion, what can hee doe lesse hurtfull to any. or more agreeable to God, then to seeke to convert those poore Salvages to know Christ, and humanitie, whose labours with discretion will triple requite thy charge and paines? What so truely su[i]tes with honour and honestie, as the discovering things unknowne? erecting Townes, peopling Countries, informing the ignorant, reforming things unjust, teaching virtue; and gaine to our Native mother-countrie; a kingdom to attend her: finde imployment for those that are idle, because they know not what to doe: so farre from wronging any, as to cause posterity to remember thee; and remembring thee, ever honour that remembrance with praise?

Consider· what were the beginnings and endings of the Monarkies of the *Chaldeans*, the *Syrians*, the *Grecians*, and *Romanes*, but this one rule; What was it they would not do for the good of their common weale, or their Mother-citie? For example: *Rome*, What made her such a Monarchesse, but onely the adventures of her youth, not in riots at home; but in dangers abroad? and the justice and judgement out of their experiences, when they grewe aged. What was their ruine and hurt but this; The excesse of idlenesse, the fondnesse of Parents, the want of experience in Magistrates, the admiration of their undeserved honours, the contempt of true merit, their unjust jealo[u]sies, their politike incredulities, their hypocriticall seeming goodnesse, and their deeds of secret lewdnesse? finally, in fine, growing onely formall temporists, all that their predecessors got in many yeeres they lost in a few daies Those by their pain and vertues became Lords of the world, they by their ease and vices became slaves to their servants. This is the difference

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Text (for this and the following selection): **Captain John Smith, Works, 1608-1631, ed.** Edward Arber, The English Scholar's Library, No. 16, Birmingham, 1884

betwixt the use of Armes in the field, and on the monuments of stones; the golden age and the leaden age, prosperity and miserie, justice and corruption, substance and shadowes, words and deeds, experience and imagination, making Commonwealths, and marring Commonwealths, the fruits of virtue, and the conclusions of vice.

Then, who would live at home idly (or thinke in himselfe any worth to live) onely to eate, drink and sleepe, and so die? Or by consuming that carelesly, his friends got worthily? Or by using that miserably, that maintained vertue honestly? Or for being descended nobly, pine with the vaine vaunt of great kindred in penurie? Or (to maintaine a silly shew of bravery) toyle out thy heart, soule, and time, basely; by shifts, tricks, cards and dice? Or by relating newes of others actions, sharke here and there for a dinner, or supper; deceive thy friends, by faire promises and dissimulation, in borrowing where thou never intendest to pay; offend the lawes, surfeit with excesse, burden thy Country, abuse thy selfe, despaire in want, and then couzen thy kindred, yea even thy owne brother, and wish thy parents death (I will not say damnation) to have their estates? though thou seest what honours, and rewards, the world yet hath for them [who] will seeke them and worthily deserve them.

I would bee sor[r]y to offend, or that any should mistake my honest meaning. for I wish good to all, hurt to none. But rich men for the most part are growne to that dotage, through their pride in their wealth, as though there were no accident could end it, or their life.

And what hellish care do such take to make it their owne miserie and their Countries spoile, especially when there is most neede of their imployment? drawing by all manner of inventions, from the Prince and his honest subjects, even the vitall spirits of their powers and estates: as if their Bagges, or Bragges were so powerfull a defence, the malicious could not assault them; when they are the onely baite, to cause us not to bee onely assaulted; but betrayed and murdered in our owne security, ere wee well perceive it

May not the miserable ruine of *Constantinople,* their impregnable walles, riches, and pleasures [at] last taken by the *Turke* (which were then but a bit, in comparison of their mightines) now remember us of the effects of private covetousnesse? at which time the good *Emperour* held himselfe rich enough, to have such rich subjects, so formall in all excesse of vanity, all kinde of delicacie and prodigalitie. His povertie when the *Turke* besieged, the citizens (whose merchandizing thoughts were onely to get wealth, little conceiving the desperate resolution of a valiant expert enemy) left the Emp[erour] so long to his conclusions, having spent all he had to pay his young, raw, discontented Souldiers; that sodainly he, they, and their citie were all a prey to the devouring *Turke.* And what they would not spare for the maintenance of them who adventured their lives to defend them, did serve onely their enemies to torment them, their friends and countrey, and all Christendome to this present day. Let this lamentable example remember you that are rich (seeing there are such great theeves in the world to robbe you) not [to] grudge to lend some proportion, to breed them that have little, yet [are] willing to learne how to defend you. for, it is too late when the deed is a-doing.

The *Romanes* estate hath beene worse then this: for, the meere covetousnesse and extortion of a few of them, so moved the rest, that not having any imployment but contemplation, their great judgements grew to so great malice, as themselves were sufficient to destroy themselves by faction: Let this move you to imbrace imployment for those whose educations, spirits, and judgements want but your purses, not onely to prevent such accustomed dangers, but also to gaine more thereby then you have.

And you fathers, that are either so foolishly fond, or so miserably covetous, or so wilfully ignorant, or so negligently careless, as that you will rather maintaine your children in idle wantonness, till they grow your masters; or become so basely unkinde, as they wish nothing but your deaths; so that both sorts grow dissolute: and although you would wish them any where to escape the gallowes, and ease your cares; though they spend you here one, two or three hundred pound[s] a yeer, you would grudge to give halfe so much in adventure with them to obtaine an estate, which in a small time, but with a little assistance of your providence, might bee better then your owne. But if an Angell should tell you, [that] any place yet unknowne can afford such fortunes; you would not beleeve it, no more then *Columbus* was be-

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40 **the miserable . . . Constantinople.** The fall of Constantinople, in 1453, followed a fierce forty-day siege. Historians agree with Smith that Constantine's inability to pay his troops contributed to their ineffectiveness, but they disagree with Smith's claim that the defending force was larger than the attacking force • 64 **The Romanes estate. . . .** This paragraph contains Smith's version of the causes for the fall of the Roman Empire

leeved there was any such Land as is now the well knowne abounding *America;* much lesse such large Regions as are yet unknowne, as well in *America,* as in *Affrica* and *Asia,* and *Terra incognita:* where were courses for gentlemen (and them that would be so reputed) more suiting their qualities, then begging from their Princes generous disposition, the labours of his subjects, and the very marrow of his maintenance.

I have not beene so ill bred, but I have tasted of *Plenty* and *Pleasure,* as well as *Want* and *Miserie:* nor doth necessitie yet, or occasion of discontent, force me to these endeavors: nor am I ignorant what small thanke[s] I shall have for my paines; or that many would have the Worlde imagine them to bee of great judgement, that can but blemish these my designes, by their witty objections and detractions: yet (I hope) my reasons with my deeds, will so prevaile with some, that I shall not want imployment in these affaires, to make the most blinde see his owne senselesnesse and incredulity; Hoping that gaine will make them affect that which Religion, Charity and the Common good cannot. It were but a poore device in me, To deceive my selfe; much more the King, State, my Friends and Countrey, with these inducements, which seeing his Majestie hath given permission, I wish all sorts of worthie, honest, industrious spirits, would understand: and if they desire any further satisfaction, I will doe my best to give it: Not to perswade them to goe onely; but goe with them: Not leave them there; but live with them there.

I will not say, but by ill providing and undue managing, such courses may bee taken [that] may make us miserable enough: But if I may have the execution of what I have projected; if they want to eate, let them eat or never digest Mee. If I performe what I say, I desire but that reward out of the gaines [which] may su[i]te my paines, quality, and condition. And if I abuse you with my tongue, take my head for satisfaction. If any dislike at the yeeres end, defraying their charge, by my consent they should freely returne. I feare not want of companie sufficient, were it but knowne what I know of these Countries; and by the proofe of that wealth I hope yeerely to returne, if God please to blesse me from such accidents, as are beyond my power in reason to prevent: For, I am not so simple to thinke, that ever any other motive then wealth, will ever erect there a Commonweale; or draw companie from their ease and humours at home, to stay in *New England* to effect my purposes.

And lest any should thinke the toile might be insupportable, though these things may bee had by labour, and diligence: I assure my selfe there are who delight extreamly in vaine pleasure, that take much more paines in *England* to enjoy it, then I should doe here [*New England*] to gaine wealth sufficient; and yet I thinke they should not have halfe such sweet content: for our pleasure here is still gaines, in *England* charges and losse. Heer nature and liberty affords us that freely, which in *England* we want, or it costeth us deerely. What pleasure can bee more, then (being tired with any occasion a-shore, in planting Vines, Fruits, or Hearbs, in contriving their owne grounds to the pleasure of their owne minds, their Fields, Gardens, Orchards, Buildings, Ships, and other workes, &c.) to recreate themselves before their owne doores in their owne boates upon the Sea; where man, woman and childe, with a small hooke and line, by angling, may take divers sorts of excellent fish, at their pleasures? And is it not pretty sport, to pull up two pence, six pence, and twelve pence, as fast as you can ha[u]le and veare a line? He is a very bad Fisher [that] cannot kill in one day with his hooke and line, one, two, or three hundred Cods: which dressed and dried, if they bee sold there for ten shillings a hundred, though in England they will give more then twentie, may not both the servant, the master and marchant, be well content with this gaine? If a man worke but three daies in seaven, he may get more then hee can spend unlesse he will be excessive. Now that Carpenter, Mason, Gardiner, Taylor, Smith, Sailer, Forgers, or what other, may they not make this a pretty recreation though they fish but an houre in a day, to take more then they can eat in a weeke? or if they will not eat it, because there is so much better choice; yet sell it, or change it, with the fishermen or marchants for any thing they want. And what sport doth yeeld a more pleasing content, and lesse hurt and charge then angling with a hooke; and crossing the sweet ayre from Ile to Ile, over the silent streames of a calme Sea? Wherein the most curious may finde pleasure, profit, and content.

Thus, though all men be not fishers: yet all men, whatsoever, may in other matters doe as well. For necessity doth in these cases so rule a Commonwealth, and each in their severall functions, as their labours in their

34 digest Mee, exploit me • 68 haule and veare, pull in and let out • 76 excessive, extravagant

qualities may be as profitable, because there is a necessary mutuall use of all.

For Gentlemen, what exercise should more delight them, then ranging dayly these unknowne parts, using fowling and fishing, for hunting and hawking? and yet you shall see the wilde-haukes give you some pleasure, in seeing them stoope (six or seven times after one another) an houre or two together, at the skuls of fish in the faire harbours, as those a-shore at a foule, and never trouble nor torment yourselves, with watching, mewing, feeding, and attending them: nor kill horse and man with running and crying, *See you not a hawk?* For hunting also: the woods, lakes and rivers affoord not onely chase sufficient, for any that delights in that kinde of toile or pleasure; but such beasts to hunt, that besides the delicacy of their bodies for food, their skins are so rich, as they will recompence thy daily labour with a Captains pay.

For labourers, if those that sowe hempe, rape, turnups, parsnips, carrats, cabidge, and such like; give 20, 30, 40, 50 shillings yearely for an acre of ground, and meat[,] drinke[,] and wages to use it, and yet grow rich; when better, or at least as good ground may be had and cost nothing but labour; it seems strange to me, any such should there grow poore.

My purpose is not to perswade children from their parents; men from their wives; nor servants from their masters: onely such as with free consent may be spared: But that each parish, or village, in Citie, or Countrey, that will but apparell their fatherlesse children of thirteene or foureteene years of age, or young maried people that have small wealth to live on, heere by their labour may live exceeding well: provided alwaies, that first there bee a sufficient power to command them, houses to receive them, meanes to defend them, and meet provisions necessarie for them; for any place may bee over-lain: and it is most necessarie to have a fortresse (ere this grow to practice) and sufficient masters, (as, Carpenters, Masons, Fishers, Fowlers, Gardiners, Husbandmen, Sawyers, Smiths, Spinsters, Taylors, Weavers, and such like) to take ten, twelve, or twentie, or as there is occasion, for Apprentises. The Masters by this may quicklie growe rich; these may learne their trades themselves, to doe the like; to a generall and an incredible benefit, for King, and Countrey, Master, and Servant.

1616

7 **stoope**, stoop, dive • 11 **mewing**, caging up

From • The Generall Historie of Virginia

Pocahontas

The passage recounting Smith's captivity and his rescue by Pocahontas, from **The Generall Historie** (1624), gains in interest if it is placed alongside the account of the same events which had appeared in 1608 in his **A True Relation of Such Occurences and Accidents of Note as Hath Happened in Virginia.** Henry Adams notes that, according to the earlier version, Smith had shortly found that his captors were using him with kindness, but that in the later he constantly feared violence; that "eight guards, which had been sufficient in 1608, were multiplied to thirty or forty tall fellows in 1624," and so on. Such changes heightened the drama, making both the captain and his captors more formidable. The most notable changes added to the ferocity of Powhatan and showed Pocahontas in the act of rescuing the heroic captain. The modifications suggest that Smith was perhaps better qualified as a writer of historical fiction than as a sternly accurate historian. The passage, nevertheless, vividly re-creates the life of the colonists and reveals the character of its picturesque author. The zestful yet workaday style is typical.

The next voyage hee proceeded so farre that with much labour by cutting of trees insunder he made his passage; but when his Barge could passe no farther, he

1 **hee**, John Smith. The account is written in the third person

left her in a broad bay out of danger of shot, commanding none should goe a shore till his returne: himselfe with two English and two Salvages went up higher in a Canowe, but hee was not long absent, but his men went a shore, whose want of government, gave both occasion and opportunity to the Salvages to surprise one *George Cassen,* whom they slew, and much failed not to have cut of[f] the boat and all the rest.

Smith little dreaming of that accident, being got to the marshes at the rivers head, twentie myles in the desert, had his two men slaine (as is supposed) sleeping by the Canowe, whilst himselfe by fowling sought them victuall, who finding he was beset with 200. Salvages, two of them hee slew, still defending himselfe with the ayd of a Salvage his guid[e], whom he bound to his arme with his garters, and used him as a buckler, yet he was shot in his thigh a little, and had many arrowes that stucke in his cloathes but no great hurt, till at last they tooke him prisoner.

When this newes came to *James* towne, much was their sorrow for his losse, fewe expecting what ensued.

Sixe or seven weekes those Barbarians kept him prisoner, many strange triumphes and conjurations they made of him, yet hee so demeaned himselfe amongst them, as he not onely diverted them from surprising the Fort, but procured his owne libertie, and got himselfe and his company such estimation amongst them, that those Salvages admired him more then their owne *Quiyouckosucks.*

The manner how they used and delivered him, is as followeth.

The Salvages having drawne from *George Cassen* whether Captaine *Smith* was gone, prosecuting that opportunity they followed him with 300. bowmen, conducted by the King of *Pamaunkee,* who in divisions searching the turnings of the river, found Robinson and Emry by the fire side, those they shot full of arrowes and slew. Then finding the Captaine, as is said, that used the Salvage that was his guide as his shield (three of them being slaine and divers other so gauld) all the rest would not come neere him. Thinking thus to have returned to his boat, regarding them, as he marched, more then his way, [Smith] slipped up to the middle in an oasie creeke & his Salvage with him, yet durst they not come to him till being neere dead with cold, he threw away his armes. Then according to their composition they drew him forth and led him to the fire, where his men were slaine. Diligently they chafed his benummed limbs.

He demanding for their Captaine, they shewed him *Opechankanough,* King of Pamaunkee, to whom he gave a round Ivory double compass Dyall. Much they marvailed at the playing of the Fly and Needle, which they could see so plainely, and yet not touch it, because of the glasse that covered them. But when he demonstrated by that Globe-like Jewell, the roundness of the earth, and skies, the spheare of the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, and how the Sunne did chase the night round about the world continually; the greatnesse of the Land and Sea, the diversitie of Nations, varietie of complexions, and how we were to them Antipodes, and many other such like matters, they all stood as amazed with admiration.

Notwithstanding, within an houre after they tyed him to a tree, and as many as could stand about him prepared to shoot him, but the King holding up the Compass in his hand, they all laid downe their Bowes and Arrowes, and in a triumphant manner led him to Orapaks, where he was after their manner kindly feasted, and well used.

Their order in conducting him was thus; Drawing themselves all in fyle, the King in the middest had all their Peeces and Swords borne before him. Captaine *Smith* was led after him by three great Salvages, holding him fast by each arme: and on each side six went in fyle with their Arrowes nocked. But arriving at the Towne (which was but onely thirtie or fortie hunting houses made of Mats, which they remove as they please, as we our tents) all the women and children staring to behold him, the souldiers first all in fyle performed the forme of a Bissom so well as could be, and on each flanke, officers as Serjeants to see them keepe their orders A good time they continued this exercise, and then cast themselves in a ring, dauncing in such severall Postures, and singing and yelling out such hellish notes and screeches; being strangely painted, every one his quiver of Arrowes, and at his backe a club, on his arme

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7 **much failed not,** "came near cutting off the boat and all the rest" • 11 **two men slaine,** "Jehu Robinson and Thomas Emry slaine"—Smith • 22 **Sixe . . . weekes.** "More accurately about three weeks —Dec 16, 1607–Jan. 8, 1608 "—Arber • 29 **Quiyouckosucks.** Henry Spelman, in his **Relation of Virginea** (1613), wrote, "In ye Patomecks countrey they have an other god whom they call Quioquascacke, and untu ther Images they offer Beades and Copper if at any time they want Rayne or have to much. . . ." • 33 **whether,** news of whither • 40 **gauld,** galled • 43 **oasie,** oozy • 46 **composition,** agreement • 78 **Bissom,** a military formation

a Fox or an Otters skinne, or some such matter for his vambrace; their heads and shoulders painted red, with Oyle and *Pocones* mingled together, which Scarlet-like colour made an exceeding handsome shew; his Bow in his hand, and the skinne of a Bird with her wings abroad dryed, tyed on his head, a peece of copper, a white shell, a long feather, with a small rattle growing at the tayles of their snaks tyed to it, or some such like toy. All this while *Smith* and the King stood in the middest guarded, as before is said; and after three dances they all departed. *Smith* they conducted to a long house, where thirtie or fortie tall fellowes did guard him; and ere long more bread and venison was brought him then would have served twentie men, I thinke his stomacke at that time was not very good; what he left they put in baskets and tyed over his head. About midnight they set the meate againe before him, all this time not one of them would eate a bit with him, till the next morning they brought him as much more, and then did they eate all the old, & reserved the new as they had done the other, which made him thinke they would fat him to eat him. Yet in this desperate estate to defend him from the cold, one *Maocassater* brought him his gowne, in requitall of some beads and toyes Smith had given him at his first arrivall in Virginia.

Two dayes after, a man would have slaine him (but that the guard prevented it) for the death of his sonne, to whom they conducted him to recover the poore man then breathing his last. *Smith* told them that at *James* towne he had a water would doe it, if they would let him fetch it, but they would not permit that; but made all the preparations they could to assault *James* towne, craving his advice, and for recompence he should have life, libertie, land, and women. In part of a table booke he writ his minde to them at the Fort, what was intended, how they should follow that direction to affright the messengers, and without fayle send him such things as he writ for, and an inventory with them. The difficultie and danger he told the Salvages, of the Mines, great gunnes, and other Engins, exceedingly affrighted them; yet according to his request they went to James towne, in as bitter weather as could be of frost and snow, and within three dayes returned with an answer.

But when they came to *Jame[s]* towne, seeing men sally out as he had told them they would, they fled; yet in the night they came againe to the same place where he had told them they should receive an answer, and such things as he had promised them; which they found accordingly, and with which they returned with no small expedition, to the wonder of them all that heard it, that he could either divine, or the paper could speake.

Then they led him to the *Youthtanunds*, the *Mattapanients*, the *Payankatanks*, the *Nantaughtacunds*, and *Onawmanients* upon the rivers of *Rapahanock*, and *Patawomek*, over all those rivers, and backe againe by divers other severall Nations, to the Kings habitation at Pamaunkee, where they entertained him with most strange and fearefull Conjurations;

> As if neare led to hell,
> Amongst the Devils to dwell.

Not long after, early in a morning a great fire was made in a long house, and a mat spread on the one side, as on the other; on the one they caused him to sit, and all the guard went out of the house, and presently came skipping in a great grim fellow, all painted over with coale, mingled with oyle; and many Snakes and Wesels skins stuffed with mosse, and all their tayles tyed together, so as they met on the crowne of his head in a tassell; and round about the tassell was as a Coronet of feathers, the skins hanging round about his head, backe, and shoulders, and in a manner covered his face; with a hellish voyce, and a rattle in his hand. With most strange gestures and passions he began his invocation, and environed the fire with a circle of meale; which done, three more such like devils came rushing in with the like antique tricks, painted halfe blacke, halfe red: but all their eyes were painted white, and some red stroakes like Mutchato's along their cheekes. Round about him those fiends daunced a pretty while, and then came in three more as ugly as the rest, with red eyes, and white stroakes over their blacke faces. At last they all sat downe right against him, three of them on the one hand of the chiefe Priest, and three on the other. Then all with their rattles began a song, which ended, the chiefe Priest layd downe five wheat cornes, then strayning his armes and hands with such violence that he sweat, and his veynes swelled, he began a short Oration, at the conclusion they all gave a short groane, and then layd down three graines more. After that, began their song againe, and then another Oration, ever laying

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2 vambrace, a leather guard worn on the forearm • 3 Pocones, bloodroot • 78 Mutchato's, mustachios

downe so many cornes as before, till they had twice incirculed the fire; that done, they tooke a bunch of little stickes prepared for that purpose, continuing still their devotion, and at the end of every song and Oration, they layd downe a sticke betwixt the divisions of Corne. Till night, neither he nor they did either eate or drinke; and then they feasted merrily, with the best provisions they could make. Three dayes they used this Ceremony; the meaning whereof, they told him, was to know if he intended them well or no. The circle of meale signified their Country, the circles of corne the bounds of the Sea, and the stickes his Country. They imagined the world to be flat and round, like a trencher, and they in the middest.

After this they brought him a bagge of gunpowder, which they carefully preserved till the next spring, to plant as they did their corne; because they would be acquainted with the nature of that seede.

Opitchapam the Kings brother, invited him to his house, where, with as many platters of bread, foule, and wild beasts as did environ him, he bid him wellcome; but not any of them would eate a bit with him, but put up all the remainder in Baskets.

At his return to Opechancanoughs, all the Kings women, and their children, flocked about him for their parts; as a due by Custome, to be merry with such fragments.

> But his waking mind in hydeous dreames did oft
> see wondrous shapes,
> Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of
> stupendious makes.

At last they brought him to *Meronocomoco,* where was *Powhatan,* their Emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till *Powhatan* and his trayne had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of *Rarowcun* skinnes, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 yeares, and along on each side the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds; but every one with something, and a great chayne of white beads about their necks.

At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of *Appamatuck* was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell, to dry them: having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held; but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, *Pocahontas,* the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shooes, bowes, arrowes, pots; plant, hunt, or doe any thing so well as the rest.

> They say he bore a pleasant shew,
> But sure his heart was sad.
> For who can pleasant be, and rest,
> That lives in feare and dread:
> And having life suspected, doth
> It still suspected lead.

Two days after, *Powhatan,* having disguised himselfe in the most fearefullest manner he could, caused Captain *Smith* to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after, from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then *Powhatan,* more like a devill then a man, with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to *James* towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a gryndstone, for which he would give him the Country of *Capahowosick,* and for ever esteeme him as his sonne *Nantaquoud.*

So to *James* towne with 12 guides *Powhatan* sent him. That night they quarterd in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other: for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne Barbarians with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the

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35 Rarowcun, raccoon • 58 as well of, as efficient at • 87 betimes, early

Fort; where *Smith,* having used the Salvages with what kindnesse he could, he shewed *Rawhunt, Powhatans* trusty servant, two demi-Culverings & a millstone to carry *Powhatan:* they found them somewhat too heavie; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with Isickles, the yce and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore Salvages ran away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toyes; and sent to *Powhatan,* his women, and children such presents, as he gave them in generall full content.

Now in *James* Towne they were all in combustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the pinnace; which with the hazzard of his life, with Sakre falcon and musket shot, *Smith* forced now the third time to stay or sinke.

Some, no better then they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to have put him to death by the Leviticall law, for the lives of *Robinson* and *Emry;* pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends: but he quickly tooke such order with such Lawyers, that he layd them by the heeles till he sent some of them prisoners for *England.*

1623•1624

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3 demi-Culverings, nine-pound cannons • 15 pinnace, a small sailing vessel • 15 Sakre falcon, a type of cannon • 20 Leviticall law, as set forth in Leviticus 24.17. "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death "

William Bradford

1590 · 1657

William Bradford came of a family of prosperous farmers in Yorkshire, England. While still a boy, he joined the Separatist group which met in the house of William Brewster at Scrooby, and in 1609 he accompanied the Separatists to Holland, where they remained eleven years. He sailed on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Following the landing at Plymouth in December of that year, Bradford, as his *History* records, took a leading part in the affairs of the colony. He was chosen governor in the annual elections no less than thirty times, serving continuously from 1622 to 1656, except for five years, when he was relieved at his own urgent request. The record shows him to have been worthy of such confidence.

The manuscript of Bradford's work was probably not intended for publication. At any rate, although it was freely drawn upon by numerous New England historians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (among them, Thomas Hutchinson), it was not published until 1856, shortly after it had been discovered in the library of the Bishop of London. It may have been taken to London by Hutchinson, a Loyalist, or by a British soldier. The manuscript was returned to Massachusetts in 1897 and has since reposed in the Massachusetts State Library.

Bradford's book tells the story of Plymouth Plantation through 1646. "There is no other document upon New England history," says Moses Coit Tyler, "that can take precedence of this either in time or in authority." It is a vivid record of the colonists' triumph over difficulties of many kinds. One cannot help being impressed by Bradford's sincerity, his exalted aims, and his lifelong dedication to religious truth as he conceived it.

Although he was said by Cotton Mather to have mastered Latin and Greek and to have studied Hebrew ("because he would see with his own eyes the ancient oracles of God in their native beauty"), his study must have been predominantly in the English Bible, which he read in the Geneva version of 1560, for his style, like John Bunyan's, shows a strong Biblical influence. Whether his art was conscious or not, Bradford's prose is worthy of a distinguished place in the English tradition of his century.

Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, ed. W. T. Davis, New York, 1908 • S. E. Morison, "William Bradford," Dictionary of American Biography, New York, 1933, II, 559-563 • E F. Bradford, "Conscious Art in Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation," New England Quarterly, April 1928, I, 133-157

From

The History of Plymouth Plantation

THE 9. CHAP.

Of their vioage, and how they passed the sea, and of their safe arrival at Cape Codd

Sept[r]: 6. [1620] These troubls being blowne over, and now all being compacte togeather in one shipe, they put to sea againe with a prosperus winde, which continued diverce days togeather, which was some incouragmente unto them; yet according to the usuall maner many were afflicted with sea-sicknes. And I may not omite hear a spetiall worke of Gods providence. Ther was a proud and very profane yonge man, one of the sea-men, of a lustie, able body, which made him the more hauty; he would allway be contemning the poore people in their sicknes, and cursing them dayly with greevous execrations, and did not let to tell them, that he hoped to help to cast halfe of them over board before they came to their jurneys end, and to make mery with what they had; and if he were by any gently reproved, he would curse and swear most bitterly. But it plased God before they came halfe seas over, to smite this yong man with a greeveous disease, of which he dyed in a desperate maner, and so was him selfe the first that was throwne overbord. Thus his curses light on his owne head; and it was an astonishmente to all his fellows, for they noted it to be the just hand of God upon him.

After they had injoyed faire winds and weather for a season, they were incountred many times with crosse winds, and mette with many feirce stormes, with which the shipe was shroudly shaken, and her upper works made very leakie; and one of the maine beames in the midd ships was bowed and cracked, which put them in some fear that the shipe could not be able to performe the vioage. So some of the cheefe of the company, perceiveing the mariners to feare the suffisiencie of the shipe, as appeared by their mutterings, they entred into serious consulltation with the m[r] and other officers of the ship, to consider in time of the danger; and rather to returne then to cast them selves into a desperate and inevitable perill. And truly ther was great distraction and differance of opinion amongst the mariners them selves; faine would they doe what could be done for their wages sake, (being now halfe the seas over,) and on the other hand they were loath to hazard their lives too desperately. But in examening of all opinions, the m[r] and others affirmed they knew the ship to be stronge and firme under water; and for the buckling of the maine beame, ther was a great iron scrue the passengers brought out of Holland, which would raise the beame into his place; the which being done, the carpenter and m[r] affirmed that with a post put under it, set firme in the lower deck, and otherways bounde, he would make it sufficiente. And as for the decks and uper workes they would calke them as well as they could, and though with the workeing of the ship they would not longe keepe stanch, yet ther would otherwise be no great danger, if they did not overpress her with sails. So they commited them selves to the will of God, and resolved to proseede.

Text: Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, ed W T. Davis, New York, 1908 • 2 shipe, the Mayflower • 12 let, forbear • 27 shroudly, severely • 34 m[r], master or captain

In sundrie of these stormes the winds were so feirce, and the seas so high, as they could not beare a knote of saile, but were forced to hull, for diverce days togither. And in one of them, as they thus lay at hull, in a mighty storme, a lustie yonge man (called John Howland) coming upon some occasion above the grattings, was, with a seele of the shipe throwne into [the] sea; but it pleased God that he caught hould of the top-saile halliards, which hunge over board, and rane out at length; yet he held his hould (though he was sundrie fadomes under water) till he was hald up by the same rope to the brime of the water, and then with a boat hooke and other means got into the shipe againe, and his life saved; and though he was something ill with it, yet he lived many years after, and became a profitable member both in church and commone wealthe. In all this viage ther died but one of the passengers, which was William Butten, a youth, servant to Samuell Fuller, when they drew near the coast. But to omite other things, (that I may be breefe,) after longe beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made and certainly knowne to be it, they were not a litle joyfull. After some deliberation had amongst them selves and with the m^{r} of the ship, they tacked aboute and resolved to stande for the southward (the wind and weather being faire) to finde some place aboute Hudsons river for their habitation. But after they had sailed that course aboute halfe the day, they fell amongst deangerous shoulds and roring breakers, and they were so farr intangled ther with as they conceived them selves in great danger, and the wind shrinking upon them withall, they resolved to bear up againe for the Cape, and thought them selves hapy to gett out of those dangers before night overtooke them, as by Gods providence they did. And the next day they gott into the Cape-harbor wher they ridd in saftie. A word or too by the way of this cape; it was thus first named by Capten Gosnole and his company, An^{o}. 1602, and after by Capten Smith was caled Cape James; but it retains the former name amongst seamen. Also that pointe which first shewed those dangerous shoulds unto them, they called Pointe Care, and Tuckers Terrour; but the French and Dutch to this day call it Malabarr, by reason of those perilous shoulds, and the losses they have suffered their.

Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the periles and miseries therof, againe to set their feete on the firme and stable earth, their proper elemente. And no marvell if they were thus joyefull, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his owne Italy; as he affirmed, that he had rather remaine twentie years on his way by land, then pass by sea to any place in a short time; so tedious and dreadfull was the same unto him.

But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amased at this poore peoples presente condition; and so I thinke will the reader too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembred by that which wente before), they had now no freinds to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refresh their weatherbeaten bodys, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seeke for succoure. It is recorded in scripture as a mercie to the apostle and his shipwraked company, that the barbarians shewed them no smale kindnes in refreshing them, but these savage barbarians, when they mette with them (as after will appeare) were readier to fill their sids full of arrows then otherwise. And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that cuntrie know them to be sharp and violent, and subjecte to cruell and feirce stormes, deangerous to travill to known places, much more to serch an unknown coast. Besids, what could they see but a hidious and desolate wildernes, full of wild beasts and willd men? and what multituds ther might be of them they knew not. Nether could they, as it were, goe up to the tope of Pisgah, to vew from this willdernes a more goodly cuntrie to feed their hops; for which way soever they turnd their eys (save upward to the heavens) they could have litle solace or content in respecte of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a wetherbeaten face; and the whole countrie, full of woods and thickets,

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3 **hull**, drift • 7 **seele**, lurch • 39 **Smith**, Captain John Smith, on his map of New England • 52 **Seneca**, Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.?-65 A.D.), Roman philosopher and author. See Seneca's "Epistle LIII" for Bradford's allusion • 67 **scripture**, Acts 28:2 • 80 **Pisgah**, the mountain from which Moses was permitted to view the Promised Land. See Deuteronomy 34:1-4

represented a wild and savage heiw. If they looked behind them, ther was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a maine barr and goulfe to seperate them from all the civill parts of the world. If it be said they had a ship to sucour them, it is trew; but what heard they daly from the m^r^ and company? but that with speede they should looke out a place with their shallop, wher they would be at some near distance; for the season was shuch as he would not stirr from thence till a safe harbor was discovered by them wher they would be, and he might goe without danger; and that victells consumed apace, but he must and would keepe sufficient for them selves and their returne. Yea, it was muttered by some, that if they gott not a place in time, they would turne them and their goods ashore and leave them. Let it also be considred what weake hopes of supply and succoure they left behinde them, that might bear up their minds in this sade condition and trialls they were under; and they could not but be very smale. It is true, indeed, the affections and love of their brethren at Leyden was cordiall and entire towards them, but they had litle power to help them, or them selves; and how the case stode betweene them and the marchants at their coming away, hath allready been declared. What could now sustaine them but the spirite of God and his grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: *Our faithers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this willdernes; but they cried unto the Lord, and he heard their voyce, and looked on their adversitie, etc. Let them therfore praise the Lord, because he is good, and his mercies endure for ever. Yea, let them which have been redeemed of the Lord, shew how he hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressour. When they wandered in the deserte willdernes out of the way, and found no citie to dwell in, both hungrie, and thirstie, their sowle was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before the Lord his loving kindnes, and his wonderfull works before the sons of men. . . .*

The remainder of An°: 1620

I shall a litle returne backe and begine with a combination made by them before they came ashore, being the first foundation of their govermente in this place; occasioned partly by the discontented and mutinous speeches that some of the strangers amongst them had let fall from them in the ship—That when they came a shore they would use their owne libertie; for none had power to command them, the patente they had being for Virginia, and not for New-england, which belonged to an other Goverment, with which the Virginia Company had nothing to doe. And partly that shuch an acte by them done (this their condition considered) might be as firme as any patent, and in some respects more sure.

The forme was as followeth.

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are under-writen, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britaine, Franc, and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc., haveing undertaken, for the glorie of God, and advancemente of the Christian faith, and honour of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutualy in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves togeather into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just and equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witnes wherof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the 11. of November, in the year of the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftie fourth. An°: Dom. 1620.

After this they chose, or rather confirmed, Mr. John Carver (a man godly and well approved amongst them) their Governour for that year. And after they had provided a place for their goods, or comone store, (which were long in unlading for want of boats, foulnes of winter weather, and sicknes of diverce,) and begune some small cottages for their habitation, as time would admitte, they mette and consulted of lawes and orders,

21 Leyden, in Holland, whence the more devout members of the group had come • 27 Our . . . etc. The sentence paraphrases Deuteronomy 26 7 • 31 Let . . . men. The passage paraphrases Psalms 107 1-8 • 56 In . . . 1620. This document, known as the "Mayflower Compact," was an agreement signed by the Pilgrim Fathers to serve as a form of government because the Pilgrims had no charter

both for their civill and military Govermente, as the necessitie of their condition did require, still adding therunto as urgent occasion in severall times, and as cases did require.

In these hard and difficulte beginings they found some discontents and murmurings arise amongst some, and mutinous speeches and carriags in other; but they were soone quelled and overcome by the wisdome, patience, and just and equall carrage of things by the Govr and better part, which clave faithfully togeather in the maine. But that which was most sadd and lamentable was, that in 2. or 3. moneths time halfe of their company dyed, espetialy in Jan: and February, being the depth of winter, and wanting houses and other comforts; being infected with the scurvie and other diseases, which this long vioage and their in-acomodate condition had brought upon them; so as ther dyed some times 2. or 3. of a day, in the foresaid time; that of 100. and odd persons, scarce 50. remained And of these in the time of most distres, ther was but 6. or 7. sound persons, who, to their great comendations be it spoken, spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their owne health, fetched them woode, made them fires, drest them meat, made their beads, washed their lothsome cloaths, cloathed and uncloathed them; in a word, did all the homly and necessarie offices for them which dainty and quesie stomacks cannot endure to hear named; and all this willingly and cherfully, without any grudging in the least, shewing herein their true love unto their freinds and bretheren. A rare example and worthy to be remembred. Tow of these 7. were Mr. William Brewster, ther reverend Elder, and Myles Standish, ther Captein and military comander, unto whom my selfe, and many others, were much beholden in our low and sicke condition. And yet the Lord so upheld these persons, as in this generall calamity they were not at all infected either with sicknes, or lamnes. And what I have said of these, I may say of many others who dyed in this generall vissitation, and others yet living, that whilst they had health, yea, or any strength continuing, they were not wanting to any that had need of them. And I doute not but their recompence is with the Lord. . . .

[1623] All this whille no supply was heard of, neither knew they when they might expecte any. So they begane to thinke how they might raise as much corne as they could, and obtaine a beter crope then they had done, that they might not still thus languish in miserie. At length, after much debate of things, the Govr (with the advise of the cheefest amongest them) gave way that they should set corne every man for his owne perticuler, and in that regard trust to them selves; in all other things to goe on in the generall way as before. And so assigned to every family a parcell of land, according to the proportion of their number for that end, only for present use (but made no devission for inheritance), and ranged all boys and youth under some familie. This had very good success; for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corne was planted then other waise would have bene by any means the Govr or any other could use, and saved him a great deall of trouble, and gave farr better contente. The women now wente willingly into the feild, and tooke their litle-ons with them to set corne, which before would aledg weaknes, and inabilitie; whom to have compelled would have bene thought great tiranie and oppression.

The experience that was had in this commone course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceite of Platos and other ancients, applauded by some of later times; — that the taking away of propertie, and bringing in communitie into a comone wealth, would make them happy and florishing; as if they were wiser then God. For this comunitie (so farr as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much imployment that would have been to their benefite and comforte. For the yongmen that were most able and fitte for labour and service did repine that they should spend their time and streingth to worke for other mens wives and children, with out any recompence. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in devission of victails and cloaths, then he that was weake and not able to doe a quarter the other could; this was thought injuestice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalised in labours, and victails, cloaths, etc., with the meaner and yonger sorte, thought it some indignite and disrespect unto them.

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10 Govr, Governor Bradford himself • 68 **commone course**, ownership in common. Thus ended the communistic experiment at Plymouth

And for mens wives to be commanded to doe servise for other men, as dresing their meate, washing their cloaths, etc., they deemd it a kind of slaverie, neither could many husbands well brooke it. Upon the poynte all being to have alike, and all to doe alike, they thought them selves in the like condition, and one as good as another; and so, if it did not cut of those relations that God hath set amongest men, yet it did at least much diminish and take of the mutuall respects that should be preserved amongst them. And would have bene worse if they had been men of another condition. Let none objecte this is men's corruption, and nothing to the course it selfe. I answer, seeing all men have this corruption in them, God in his wisdome saw another course fiter for them. . . .

[1628] Aboute some 3. or 4. years before this time, ther came over one Captaine Wolastone, (a man of pretie parts,) and with him 3. or 4. more of some eminencie, who brought with them a great many servants, with provissions and other implments for to begine a plantation; and pitched them selves in a place within the Massachusets, which they called, after their Captains name, Mount-Wollaston. Amongst whom was one Mr. Morton, who, it should seeme, had some small adventure (of his owne or other mens) amongst them, but had litle respecte amongst them, and was sleghted by the meanest servants. Haveing continued ther some time, and not finding things to answer their expectations, nor profite to arise as they looked for, Captaine Wollaston takes a great part of the sarvants, and transports them to Virginia, wher he puts them of at good rates, selling their time to other men; and writs back to one Mr. Rassdall, one of his cheefe partners, and accounted their marchant, to bring another parte of them to Verginia likewise, intending to put them of ther as he had done the rest. And he, with the consente of the said Rasdall, appoynted one Fitcher to be his Livetenante, and governe the remaines of the plantation, till he or Rasdall returned to take further order theraboute. But this Morton abovesaid, haveing more craft than honestie, (who had been a kind of petiefogger, of Furnefells Inne,) in the others absence, watches an oppertunitie, (commons being but hard amongst them,) and gott some strong drinck and other junkats, and made them a feast; and after they were merie, he begane to tell them, he would give them good counsell. You see (saith he) that many of your fellows are carried to Virginia; and if you stay till this Rasdall returne, you will also be carried away and sould for slaves with the rest. Therfore I would advise you to thruste out this Levetenant Fitcher; and I, having a parte in the plantation, will receive you as my partners and consociats; so may you be free from service, and we will converse, trad, plante, and live togeather as equalls, and supporte and protecte one another, or to like effecte. This counsell was easily received; so they tooke oppertunitie, and thrust Levetenante Fitcher out a dores, and would suffer him to come no more amongst them, but forct him to seeke bread to eate, and other releefe from his neigbours, till he could gett passage for England. After this they fell to great licenciousnes, and led a dissolute life, powering out them selves into all profanenes. And Morton became lord of misrule, and maintained (as it were) a schoole of Athisme And after they had gott some good into their hands, and gott much by trading with the Indeans, they spent it as vainly, in quaffing and drinking both wine and strong waters in great exsess, and, as some reported, 10*li.* worth in a morning. They allso set up a May-pole, drinking and dancing aboute it many days togeather, inviting the Indean women, for their consorts, dancing and frisking togither, (like so many fairies, or furies rather,) and worse practises. As if they had anew revived and celebrated the feasts of the Roman Goddes Flora, or the beasly practieses of the madd Bacchinalians. Morton likwise (to shew his poetrie) composed sundry rimes and verses, some tending to lasciviousnes, and others to the detraction and scandall of some persons, which he affixed to this idle or idoll May-polle. They chainged allso the name of their place, and in stead of calling it Mounte Wollaston, they called it Merriemounte, as if this joylity would have lasted ever. But this continued not long, for after Morton was sent for England, (as follows to be declared,) shortly after came over that worthy gentlman, Mr. John Indecott, who brought

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7 **of**, off, as often in Bradford • 23 **Mr. Morton**, Thomas Morton, whose amusing and very different account in the **New English Canaan** (London, 1637) should be compared with Bradford's • 41 **petiefogger**, pettifogger, an inferior lawyer • 42 **Furnefells Inne**, Furnival's Inn, one of the Inns of Court in London occupied by "students and practicers" of the law • 43 **commons**, food • 62 **powering**, pouring • 69 **li**, pounds • 85 **Indecott**, John Endicott

over a patent under the broad seall, for the govermente of the Massachusets, who visiting those parts caused that May-polle to be cutt downe, and rebuked them for their profannes, and admonished them to looke ther should be better walking; so they now, or others, changed the name of their place again, and called it Mounte-Dagon. . . .

[1633] Mr. Roger Williams (a man godly and zealous, having many precious parts, but very unsettled in judgmente) came over first to the Massachusets, but upon some discontente left that place, and came hither, (wher he was friendly entertained, according to their poore abilitie,) and exercised his gifts amongst them, and after some time was admitted a member of the church; and his teaching well approoved, for the benefite wherof I still blese God, and am thankfull to him, even for his sharpest admonitions and reproufs, so farr as they agreed with truth. He this year begane to fall into some strang oppinions, and from opinion to practise; which caused some controversie betweene the church and him, and in the end some discontente on his parte, by occasion whereof he left them some thing abruptly. Yet after wards sued for his dismission to the church of Salem, which was granted, with some caution to them concerning him, and what care they ought to have of him. But he soone fell into more things ther, both to their and the goverments troble and disturbance. I shall not need to name perticulers, they are too well knowen now to all, though for a time the church here wente under some hard censure by his occasion, from some that afterwards smarted them selves. But he is to be pitied, and prayed for, and so I shall leave the matter, and desire the Lord to shew him his errors, and reduse him into the way of truth, and give him a setled judgment and constancie in the same; for I hope he belongs to the Lord, and that he will shew him mercie. . . .

[1638] This year, aboute the 1. or 2. of June, was a great and fearfull earthquake; it was in this place heard before it was felte. It came with a rumbling noyse, or low murmure, like unto remoate thunder; it came from the norward, and pased southward. As the noyse aproched nerer, they earth begane to shake, and came at length with that violence as caused platters, dishes, and such like things as stoode upon shelves, to clatter and fall downe; yea, persons were afraid of the houses themselves. It so fell oute that at the same time diverse of the cheefe of this towne were mett together at one house, conferring with some of their freinds that were upon their removall from the place, (as if the Lord would herby shew the signes of his displeasure, in their shaking a peeces and removalls one from an other.) How ever it was very terrible for the time, and as the men were set talking in the house, some women and others were without the dores, and the earth shooke with that violence as they could not stand without catching hould of the posts and pails that stood next them; but the violence lasted not long. And about halfe an hower, or less, came an other noyse and shaking, but nether so loud nor strong as the former, but quickly passed over; and so it ceased. It was not only on the sea coast, but the Indeans felt it within land; and some ships that were upon the coast were shaken by it. So powerfull is the mighty hand of the Lord, as to make both the earth and sea to shake, and the mountaines to tremble before him, when he pleases; and who can stay his hand? It was observed that the sommers, for divers years togeather after this earthquake, were not so hotte and seasonable for the ripning of corne and other fruits as formerly; but more could and moyst, and subjecte to erly and untimly frosts, by which, many times, much Indean corne came not to maturitie; but whether this was any cause, I leave it to naturallists to judge. . . .

Anno Dom: 1642

Marvilous it may be to see and consider how some kind of wickednes did grow and breake forth here, in a land wher the same was so much witnesed against, and so narrowly looked unto, and severly punished when it was knowne; as in no place more, or so much, that I have known or heard of; insomuch as they have been somewhat censured, even by moderate and good men, for their severitie in punishments. And yet all this could not suppress the breaking out of sundrie notorious sins, (as this year, besids other, gives us too many sad presidents and instances,) espetially drunkennes and unclainnes; not only incontinencie betweene persons unmaried, for which many both men and women have been punished sharply enough, but some maried persons allso.

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34 **the . . . truth.** Banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635, Roger Williams (see p. 63) migrated to the Narragansett country, where he founded Providence, Rhode Island • **83 presidents,** precedents

but that which is worse, even sodomie and bugerie, (things fearfull to name,) have broak forth in this land, oftener then once. I say it may justly be marveled at, and cause us to fear and tremble at the consideration of our corrupte natures, which are so hardly bridled, subdued, and mortified, nay, cannot by any other means but the powerfull worke and grace of Gods spirite But (besids this) one reason may be, that the Divell may carrie a greater spite against the churches of Christ and the gospell hear, by how much the more they indeaour to preserve holynes and puritie amongst them, and strictly punisheth the contrary when it ariseth either in church or comone wealth, that he might cast a blemishe and staine upon them in the eyes of [the] world, who use to be rash in judgmente. I would rather thinke thus, then that Satane hath more power in these heathen lands, as som have thought, then in more Christian nations, espetially over Gods servants in them.

2. An other reason may be, that it may be in this case as it is with waters when their streames are stopped or dammed up, when they gett passage they flow with more violence, and make more noys and disturbance, then when they are suffered to rune quietly in their owne chanels. So wikednes being here more stopped by strict laws, and the same more nerly looked unto, so as it cannot rune in a comone road of liberty as it would, and is inclined, it searches every wher, and at last breaks out wher it getts vente.

3. A third reason may be, hear (as I am verily perswaded) is not more evills in this kind, nor nothing nere so many by proportion, as in other places, but they are here more discoverd and seen, and made publick by due serch, inquisition, and due punishment; for the churches looke narrowly to their members, and the magistrats over all, more strictly then in other places. Besids, here the people are but few in comparison of other places, which are full and populous, and lye hid, as it were, in a wood or thickett, and many horrible evills by that means are never seen nor knowne, wheras hear, they are, as it were, brought into the light, and set in the plaine feeld, or rather on a hill, made conspicuous to the veiw of all. . . .

1630-1657 • 1856

Samuel Sewall

1652 • 1730

Samuel Sewall was born at Bishopstoke, England, but migrated to Boston when he was nine years old and spent the rest of his life there. For nearly sixty years following his graduation from Harvard in 1671, he was active in business and politics. For a period (1681-1684) he managed the colony's printing press, he spent a year in England (1688-1689), engaged in private business and assisting Increase Mather in his unsuccessful efforts to bring about the restoration of the colony's charter, he was captain, in 1701, of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company; and from 1718 to 1728 he was Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Massachusetts.

James Truslow Adams (in the *Dictionary of American Biography*) calls Sewall a "competent jurist of more than average liberality" His most famous, or infamous, juridical rôle was played at Salem in 1692 as one of three commissioners appointed to try the cases of witchcraft. Nineteen persons were sentenced to death Sewall was the only one of the three judges ever to admit publicly that the court had been guilty of a tragic error (see selection).

Sewall has been called unattractive names by more than one recent writer on colonial New England Adams says that he was "mercenary", Parrington speaks of his "tradesman's conception of religion", socially minded historians have pointed to Sewall as an example of the unholy alliance between Puritanism and capitalism. It is true that Sewall was not the man to underestimate

the value of a dollar honestly earned. At the same time, it is hardly possible for the careful reader of the *Diary* to question the sincerity of Sewall's religious convictions.

Sewall was the author of several lesser works (among them, *The Selling of Joseph,* perhaps the earliest protest in this country against Negro slavery); but his fame rests upon the *Diary,* which remained unpublished until 1878 Begun in 1673 and continued through 1729, the *Diary* affords a rich and vivid picture of life in and around Boston for a period of about fifty-seven years It is remarkably concise and suggestive. Indeed, its distinctive literary virtue lies in the writer's ability to suggest an unforgettable picture in a few words: the picture, for example, of a New England meeting house in winter, "This day so cold that the Sacramental Bread is frozen pretty hard, and rattles sadly as broken into the Plates." After these two hundred years and more, Sewall's *Diary,* in Parrington's words, "is still quick with life."

Samuel Sewall, **Diary, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections,** Series 5, Vols V-VII, 1878-1882 • **Samuel Sewall's Diary (abridged),** ed Mark Van Doren, New York, 1927 • V L Parrington, "Samuel Sewall, Yankee," **The Colonial Mind,** New York, 1927

From the

Diary

July 8, 1677. New Meeting House *Mane:* In Sermon time there came in a female Quaker, in a Canvas Frock, her hair disshevelled and loose like a Periwigg, her face as black as ink, led by two other Quakers, and two other followed. It occasioned the greatest and most amazing uproar that I ever saw. . . .

[Nov. 12, 1685] . . . the Ministers of this Town Come to the Court and complain against a Dancing Master who seeks to set up here and hath mixt Dances, and his time of Meeting is Lecture-Day, and 'tis reported he should say that by one Play he could teach more Divinity than Mr. Willard or the Old Testament Mr. Moodey said 'twas not a time for N[ew] E[ngland] to dance. Mr. Mather struck at the Root, speaking against mixt Dances. . . .

Sabbath, Jan^{y} 24 [1686]. Friday night and Satterday were extream cold, so that the Harbour frozen up, and to the Castle. This day so cold that the Sacramental Bread is frozen pretty hard, and rattles sadly as broken into the Plates. . . .

Tuesday, Dec^{r} 21 [1686] There is a meeting at Mr. Allen's, of the Ministers and four of each Congregation, to consider what answer to give the Governour; and 'twas agreed that could not with a good conscience consent that our Meeting-Houses should be made use of for the Common-Prayer Worship. . . .

[January 14, 1697] Copy of the Bill I put up on the Fast day, giving it to Mr. Willard as he pass'd by, and standing up at the reading of it, and bowing when finished, in the Afternoon.

Samuel Sewall, sensible of the reiterated strokes of God upon himself and family, and being sensible, that as to the Guilt contracted upon the opening of the late Commission of Oyer and Terminer at Salem (to which the order for this Day relates) he is, upon many accounts, more concerned than any that he knows of, Desires to take the Blame and shame of it, Asking pardon of men, And especially desiring prayers that God, who has an Unlimited Authority, would pardon that sin and all other his sins; personal and Relative: And according to his infinite Benignity, and Sovereignty, Not Visit the sin of him, or of any other, upon himself or any of his, nor upon the Land: But that He would powerfully defend him against all Temptations to Sin, for the future, and vouchsafe him the efficacious,

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1 **Mane,** in the morning • 3 **Periwigg.** Sewall had a particular aversion to periwigs • 10 **Lecture-Day,** every Thursday, when a sermon or "lecture" was delivered • 11 **one Play.** The theater, of course, was not permitted in colonial Boston • 14 **Mr. Mather,** the Rev Increase Mather, father of Cotton Mather • 26 **Common Prayer Worship,** the form of worship used by the Established Church of England. "I would not set up," Sewall wrote in his Diary, "that which the people of New England came over to avoid " Thus rebuffed, Sir Edmund Andros, the Royal Governor, and his Anglican associates founded King's Chapel, although the building was not completed until after Andros' expulsion from the colony in 1689 • 27 **the Bill.** The document is Sewall's public confession of error as one of the judges of the witchcraft cases in Salem in 1692 • 34 **Oyer and Terminer,** literally, to hear and determine, used of a writ or commission giving authority to judges

saving Conduct of his Word and Spirit. . . .

Lord's Day, June 10, 1705. The Learned and pious Mr. Michael Wigglesworth dies at Malden about 9 m. Had been sick about 10 days of a Fever, 73 years and 8 moneths old. He was the Author of the Poem entituled The Day of Doom, which has been so often printed: and was very useful as a Physician. . . .

Feb^{y} 9. 1708. The Apointment of a Judge for the Super. Court being to be made upon next Fifth day, Febr. 12, I pray'd God to Accept me in keeping a private day of Prayer with Fasting for That and other Important Matters: I kept it upon the Third day Febr. 10. 1708 in the uper Chamber at the North-East end of the House, fastening the Shutters next the Street.— Perfect what is lacking in my Faith, and in the faith of my dear Yokefellow. Convert my children; especially Samuel and Hanah; Provide Rest and Settlement for Hanah: Recover Mary, Save Judith, Elisabeth and Joseph: Requite the Labour of Love of my Kinswoman Jane Tappin, Give her health, find out Rest for her. Make David a man after thy own heart, Let Susan live and be baptised with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. Relations. Steer the Government in this difficult time, when the Governour and many others are at so much Variance: Direct, incline, overrule on the Council-day fifth-day, Febr. 12. as to the special Work of it in filling the Super. Court with Justices, or any other thing of like nature. . . . Bless the Company for propagation of the Gospel, especiall Gov^{r} Ashurst &c. Revive the Business of Religion at Natick, and accept and bless John Neesnumin who went thither last week for that end. Mr. Rawson at Nantucket Bless the South Church in preserving and spiriting our Pastor, in directing unto suitable Supply, and making the Church unanimous: Save the Town, College; Province from Invasion of Enemies, open, Secret, and from false Brethren: Defend the Purity of Worship Save Connecticut, bless their New Governour: Save the Reformation under N. York Governm^{t}. Reform all the European Plantations in America; Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch; Save this New World, that where Sin hath abounded, Grace may Superabound; that CHRIST who is stronger, would bind the strong man and spoil his house; and order the Word to be given, Babylon is fallen.——— Save our Queen, lengthen out her Life and Reign. Save France, make the Proud helper stoop, Save all Europe; Save Asia, Africa, Europe and America. These were gen^{l} heads of my Meditation and prayer; and through the bounteous Grace of GOD, I had a very Comfortable day of it. . . .

Aug^{t} 25 [1709]. Mr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Pemberton and wife, and others dine with us after Lecture. In the even I invited the Gov^{r} and Council to drink a Glass of Wine with me; About 20 came; viz. Gov^{r} Winthrop, Hathorne. . . . Gave them variety of good Drink, and at going away a large piece of Cake Wrap'd in Paper. They very heartily wish'd me Joy of my daughter's Marriage. . . .

April 3 [1711]. I dine with the Court at Pullin's Mr. Attorney treats us at his house with excellent Pipins, Anchovas, Olives, Nuts. I said I should be able to make no Judgment on the Pipins without a Review, which made the Company Laugh. Spake much of Negroes; I mention'd the problem, whether should be white after the Resurrection. Mr. Bolt took it up as absurd, because the body should be void of all Colour, spake as if it should be a Spirit. I objected what Christ said to his Disciples after the Resurrection. He said twas not so after his Ascension. . . .

Seventh Day [Saturday] Feb^{y} 6 [1714] [Queen Anne's birthday]. . . . My neighbour Colson knocks at our door at about 9 or past to tell of the Disorders at the Tavern at the South-end in Mr. Addington's house, kept by John Wallis. He desired me that I would accompany Mr. Bromfield and Constable Howell thither It was 35 Minutes past Nine at Night before Mr Bromfield came; then we went. I took Aeneas Salter with me. Found much Company. They refus'd to go away. Said were there to drink the Queen's Health, and they had many other Healths to drink Call'd for more Drink: drank to me, I took notice of the Affront to them Said must and would stay upon that Solemn occasion. Mr John Netmaker drank the Queen's health to me. I told him I drank none; upon that he ceas'd Mr. Brinley put on his Hat to affront me I made him take it off. I threaten'd to send some of them to prison; that did not

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6 **The Day of Doom,** first published in 1662, was the most popular poem written in colonial New England • 35 **College,** Harvard College • 41 **where . . . Superabound.** Compare Romans 5 20. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" Sewall's language is often Biblical • 43 **bind . . . house,** a paraphrase of Matthew 12 29 • 45 **Queen,** Anne, Queen of England, 1702-1714 • 46 **Proud . . . stoop,** a paraphrase of Job 9 13 • 55 **Hathorne,** John Hathorne, one of the "witch judges" and an ancestor of Nathaniel Hawthorne

move them. They said they could but pay their Fine, and doing that they might stay. I told them if they had not a care, they would be guilty of a Riot. Mr. Bromfield spake of raising a number of Men to Quell them, and was in some heat, ready to run into Street. But I did not like that. Not having Pen and Ink, I went to take their Names with my Pensil, and not knowing how to Spell their Names, they themselves of their own accord writ them. Mr. Netmaker, reproaching the Province, said they had not made one good Law.

At last I address'd myself to Mr. Banister. I told him he had been longest an Inhabitant and Freeholder, I expected he should set a good Example in departing thence. Upon this he invited them to his own House, and away they went; and we, after them, went away. The Clock in the room struck a pretty while before they departed. I went directly home, and found it 25 Minutes past Ten at Night when I entred my own House. . . .

Dec^{r} 23 [1714]. Dr. C. Mather preaches excellently from Ps. 37. Trust in the Lord &c. only spake of the Sun being in the centre of our System. I think it inconvenient to assert such Problems. . . .

Octob^{r} 3. [1720]. Waited on Madam Winthrop again; 'twas a little while before she came in. Her daughter Noyes being there alone with me, I said, I hoped my Waiting on her Mother would not be disagreeable to her. She answer'd she should not be against that that might be for her Comfort. I Saluted her, and told her I perceiv'd I must shortly wish her a good Time; (her mother had told me, she was with Child, and within a Moneth or two of her time). By and by in came Mr. Airs, Chaplain of the Castle, and hang'd up his Hat, which I was a little startled at, it seeming as if he was to lodge there. At last Madam Winthrop came in too. After a considerable time, I went up to her and said, if it might not be inconvenient I desired to speak with her. She assented, and spake of going into another Room; but Mr. Airs and Mrs. Noyes presently rose up, and went out, leaving us there alone. Then I usher'd in Discourse from the names in the Fore-seat; at last I pray'd that Katharine might be the person assign'd for me. She instantly took it up in the way of Denyal, as if she had catch'd at an Opportunity to do it, saying she could not do it before she was asked. Said that was her mind unless she should Change it, which she believed she should not; could not leave her Children. I express'd my Sorrow that she should do it so Speedily, pray'd her Consideration, and ask'd her when I should wait on her agen. She setting no time, I mention'd that day Sennight. Gave her Mr. Willard's Fountain open'd with the little print and verses; saying, I hop'd if we did well read that book, we should meet together hereafter, if we did not now. She took the Book, and put it in her Pocket. Took Leave.

8^{r} 5. Midweek, I din'd with the Court; from thence went and visited Cousin Jonathon's wife, Lying in with her little Betty. Gave the Nurse 2^{s}. Although I had apointed to wait upon her, M^{rs} Winthrop, next Monday, yet I went from my Cousin Sewall's thither about 3. p. m. The Nurse told me Madam dined abroad at her daughter Noyes's, they were to go out together. I ask'd for the Maid, who was not within. Gave Katee a peny and a Kiss and came away. Accompanyed my Son and dâter Cooper in their Remove to their New House. . . .

8^{r} 6th. . . . A little after 6. p. m. I went to Madam Winthrop's. She was not within. I gave Sarah Chickering the Maid 2^{s}, Juno, who brought in wood, 1^{s}. Afterward the Nurse came in, I gave her 18^{d}, having no other small Bill. After awhile Dr. Noyes came in with his Mother; and quickly after his wife came in: They sat talking, I think, till eight a-clock. I said I fear'd I might be some Interruption to their Business: Dr. Noyes reply'd pleasantly: He fear'd they might be an Interruption to me, and went away. Madam seem'd to harp upon the same string. Must take care of her Children; could not leave that House and Neighbourhood where she had dwelt so long. I told her she might doe her children as much or more good by bestowing what she laid out in Hous-keeping, upon them. Said her Son

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1 **Fine.** A law of the colony "for the better observation and keeping of the Lord's Day" imposed a fine of five shillings on every person remaining in a public house, "drinking, or idly spending his time on Saturday night, after the sun is set, or on the Lord's Day, or the evening following" • **23 Waited . . . again.** Sewall's second wife had died May 26, 1720 Sewall at this time was 68; Madam Winthrop was 56. Twice a widow, she did not marry again • **32 Castle,** Castle Island, which was fortified, and where soldiers were stationed • **40 names . . . Fore-seat,** eligible widows, mentioned in a previous entry • **41 Katharine,** Madam Winthrop • **50 Sennight,** a week • **50 Fountain open'd,** Samuel Willard, "The Fountain Opened, or the Great Gospel Privilege of having Christ exhibited to Sinful Men . . .," Boston, 1700 • **55 8^{r},** October


Madam Winthrop's Wedding Room

would be of age the 7th of August. I said it might be inconvenient for her to dwell with her Daughter-in-Law, who must be Mistress of the House. I gave her a piece of Mr. Belcher's Cake and Ginger-Bread wrapped up in a clean sheet of Paper; told her of her Father's kindness to me when Treasurer, and I Constable. My Daughter Judith was gon from me and I was more lonesom—might help to forward one another in our Journey to Canaan.—Mr. Eyre came within the door; I saluted him, ask'd how Mr. Clark did, and he went away. I took leave about 9 aclock. I told [her] I came now to refresh her Memory as to Monday-night; said she had not forgot it. In discourse with her, I ask'd leave to speak with her Sister; I meant to gain Madm Mico's favour to persuade her Sister. She seem'd surpris'd and displeas'd, and said she was in the same condition! . . .

8r 10th. . . . In the Evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who treated me with a great deal of Curtesy; Wine, Marmalade. I gave her a News-Letter about the Thanksgiving Proposals, for sake of the verses for David Jeffries. She tells me Dr. Increase Mather visited her this day, in Mr. Hutchinson's Coach. . . .

8r 11th I writ a few Lines to Madam Winthrop to this purpose: "Madam, These wait on you with Mr. Mayhew's Sermon, and Account of the state of the Indians on Martha's Vinyard. I thank you for your Unmerited Favours of yesterday; and hope to have the Hapiness of Waiting on you tomorrow before Eight a-clock after Noon. I pray GOD to keep you, and give you a joyfull entrance upon the Two Hundred and twenty ninth year of Christopher Columbus his Discovery; and take Leave, who am, Madam, your humble Servt.

S. S.

Sent this by Deacon Green, who deliver'd it to Sarah Chickering, her Mistress not being at home.

8r 12. . . . Mrs. Anne Cotton came to door (twas before 8.) said Madam Winthrop was within, directed me into the little Room, where she was full of work behind a Stand; Mrs. Cotton came in and stood. Madam Winthrop pointed to her to set me a Chair. Madam Winthrop's Countenance was much changed from what 'twas on Monday, look'd dark and lowering. At last, the work, (black stuff or Silk) was taken away, I got my Chair in place, had some Converse, but very Cold and indifferent to what 'twas before. Ask'd her to acquit me of Rudeness if I drew off her Glove. Enquiring the reason, I told her twas great odds between handling a dead Goat, and a living Lady. Got it off. I told her I had one Petition to ask of her, that was, that she would take off the Negative she laid on me the third of October; She readily answer'd she could not, and enlarg'd upon it; She told me of it so soon as she could; could not leave her house, children, neighbours, business. I told her she might do som Good to help and suport me. Mentioning Mrs. Gookin, Nath, the widow Weld was spoken of; said I had visited Mrs. Denison. I told her Yes! Afterward I said, If after a first and second Vagary she would Accept of me returning, Her Victorious Kindness and Good Will would be very Obliging. She thank'd me for my Book, (Mr. Mayhew's Sermon), But said not a word of the Letter. When she insisted on the Negative, I pray'd there might be no more Thunder and Lightening, I should not sleep all night. I gave her Dr. Preston, The Church's Marriage and the Church's Carriage, which cost me 6s at the Sale. The door standing open, Mr. Airs came in, hung up his Hat, and sat down. After awhile, Madam Winthrop moving, he went out. Jno Eyre look'd in, I said How do ye, or,

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19 **News-Letter.** The Boston **News-Letter**, founded in 1704, was the first newspaper in the colonies. The issue of October 3-10, 1720, contained "A Proclamation for a General Thanksgiving" issued by Governor Samuel Shute, calling for the observance of Thursday, October 27, and "forbidding all Servile Labour and Recreation" on that day • 20 **Proposals**, an unidentified broadside, presumably • 64 **Dr. Preston**, John Preston (1587-1628), English Puritan divine, much read by the early Puritans of New England

your servant Mr. Eyre: but heard no word from him. Sarah fill'd a Glass of Wine, she drank to me, I to her, She sent Juno home with me with a good Lantern, I gave her 6[d] and bid her thank her Mistress. In some of our Discourse, I told her I had rather go to the Stone-House adjoining to her, than to come to her against her mind. Told her the reason why I came every other night was lest I should drink too deep draughts of Pleasure. She had talk'd of Canary, her Kisses were to me better than the best Canary. Explain'd the expression Concerning Columbus. . . .

8[r] 15. I dine on Fish and Oyle at Mr. Stoddard's. Capt. Hill wish'd me Joy of my proceedings i. e. with M— Winthrop; Sister Cooper aplauded it, spake of Visiting her: I said her Complaisance of her Visit would be obliging to me.

8[r] 16. L. Day, I upbraided my self that could be so solicitous about Earthly things; and so cold and indifferent as to the Love of Christ, who is altogether Lovely....

8[r] 17. . . . In the Evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who Treated me Courteously, but not in Clean Linen as sometimes. She said, she did not know whether I would come again, or no. I ask'd her how she could so impute inconstancy to me. (I had not visited her since Wednesday night being unable to get over the Indisposition received by the Treatment received that night, and I *must* in it seem'd to sound like a made piece of Formality.) Gave her this day's Gazett. . . .

8[r] 18. Visited Madam Mico, who came to me in a splendid Dress. I said, It may be you have heard of my Visiting Madam Winthrop, her Sister. She answered, Her Sister had told her of it. I ask'd her good Will in the Affair. She answer'd, If her Sister were for it, she should not hinder it. I gave her Mr. Homes's Sermon. She gave me a Glass of Canary, entertain'd me with good Discourse, and a Respectfull Remembrance of my first Wife. I took Leave.

8[r] 19. Midweek, Visited Madam Winthrop; Sarah told me she was at Mr. Walley's, would not come home till late. I gave her Hanah 3 oranges with her Duty, not knowing whether I should find her or no. Was ready to go home: but said if I knew she was there, I would go thither. Sarah seem'd to speak with pretty good Courage, She would be there. I went and found her there, with Mr. Walley and his wife in the little Room below. At 7 a-clock I mentioned going home; at 8. I put on my Coat, and quickly waited on her home. She found occasion to speak loud to the servant, as if she had a mind to be known. Was Courteous to me; but took occasion to speak pretty earnestly about my keeping a Coach: I said 'twould cost £100. per anum: she said twould cost but £40. Spake much against John Winthrop, his false-heartedness. Mr. Eyre came in and sat awhile; I offer'd him Dr. Incr. Mather's Sermons, whereof Mr. Apleton's Ordination Sermon was one; said he had them already. I said I would give him another. Exit. Came away somewhat late.

8[r] 20. . . . Madam Winthrop not being at Lecture, I went thither first; found her very Serene with her dâter Noyes, Mrs. Dering, and the widow Shipreev sitting at a little Table, she in her arm'd Chair. She drank to me, and I to Mrs. Noyes. After awhile pray'd the favour to speak with her. She took one of the Candles, and went into the best Room, clos'd the shutters, sat down upon the Couch. She told me Madam Usher had been there, and said the Coach must be set on Wheels, and not by Rusting. She spake somthing of my needing a Wigg. Ask'd me what her Sister said to me. I told her, She said, If her Sister were for it, She would not hinder it. But I told her, she did say she would be glad to have me for her Brother. Said, I shall keep you in the Cold, and asked her if she would be within to morrow night, for we had had but a running Feat. She said she could not tell whether she should, or no. I took Leave. As were drinking at the Governour's, he said: In England the Ladies minded little more than that they might have Money, and Coaches to ride in. I said, And New-England brooks its Name. At which Mr. Dudley smiled. Gov[r] said they were not quite so bad here.

8[r] 21. Friday, My Son, the Minister, came to me p. m. by apointment and we pray one for another in the Old Chamber; more especially respecting my Courtship. About 6. a-clock I go to Madam Winthrop's; Sarah told me her Mistress was gon out, but did not tell me whither she went. She presently order'd me a Fire; so I went in, having Dr. Sibb's Bowels with me to read. I read the

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3 Juno, an Indian servant • 5 Stone-House, the prison near by • 17 L., Lord's • 28 Gazett, the Boston Gazette, founded in 1719 • 87 Dr. Sibb's Bowels, Richard Sibbes, "Bowels Opened; or Discovery of the neere and deere Love between Christ and the Church," 1639. An English Puritan, Sibbes was much read by the New England Puritans

two first Sermons, still no body came in: at last about 9. a-clock Mr. Jn° Eyre came in; I took the oportunity to say to him as I had done to Mrs. Noyes before, that I hoped my Visiting his Mother would not be disagreeable to him; He answered me with much Respect. When twas after 9. a-clock He of himself said he would go and call her, she was but at one of his Brothers: A while after I heard Madam Winthrop's voice, enquiring somthing about John. After a good while and Claping the Garden door twice or thrice, she came in. I mention'd somthing of the lateness; she banter'd me, and said I was later. She receiv'd me Courteously. I ask'd when our proceedings should be made publick: She said They were like to be no more publick than they were already. Offer'd me no Wine that I remember. I rose up at 11 a-clock to come away, saying I would put on my Coat. She offer'd not to help me. I pray'd her that Juno might light me home, she open'd the Shutter, and said twas pretty light abroad; Juno was weary and gon to bed. So I came hom by Star-light as well as I could. At my first coming in, I gave Sarah five Shillings. I writ Mr. Eyre his Name in his book with the date Octob[r] 21. 1720. It cost me 8[s]. Jehovah jireh! Madam told me she had visited M. Mico, Wendell, and W[m] Clark of the South [Church].

Octob[r] 22. Dâter Cooper visited me before my going out of Town, staid till about Sun set. I brought her going near as far as the Orange Tree. Coming back, near Leg's Corner, Little David Jeffries saw me, and looking upon me very lovingly, ask'd me if I was going to see his Grandmother? I said, Not to-night. Gave him a peny, and bid him present my Service to his Grandmother.

Octob[r] 24. I went in the Hackny Coach through the Comon, stop'd at Madam Winthrop's (had told her I would take my departure from thence). Sarah came to the door with Katee in her Arms: but I did not think to take notice of the Child. Call'd her Mistress. I told her, being encourag'd by David Jeffries loving eyes, and sweet Words, I was come to enquire whether she could find in her heart to leave that House and Neighbourhood, and go and dwell with me at the South-end; I think she said softly, Not yet. I told her It did not ly in my Lands to keep a Coach. If I should, I should be in danger to be brought to keep company with her Neighbour Brooker, (he was a little before sent to prison for Debt). Told her I had an Antipathy against those who would pretend to give themselves; but nothing of their Estate. I would a proportion of my Estate with my self. And I supos'd she would do so. As to a Perriwig, My best and greatest Friend, I could not possibly have a greater, began to find me with Hair before I was born, and had continued to do so ever since; and I could not find in my heart to go to another. She comended the book I gave her, Dr. Preston, the Church Marriage; quoted him saying 'twas inconvenient keeping out of a Fashion comonly used. I said the Time and Tide did circumscribe my Visit. She gave me a Dram of Black-Cherry Brandy, and gave me a lump of the Sugar that was in it. She wish'd me a good Journy. I pray'd God to keep her, and came away. Had a very pleasant Journy to Salem. . . .

31. . . . At night I visited Madam Winthrop about 6. p. m. They told me she was gon to Madam Mico's. I went thither and found she was gon; so return'd to her house, read the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians in Mr. Eyre's Latin Bible. After the Clock struck 8. I began to read the 103. Psalm. Mr. Wendell came in from his Warehouse. Ask'd me if I were alone? Spake very kindly to me, offer'd me to call Madam Winthrop. I told him, She would be angry, had been at Mrs. Mico's; he help'd me on with my Coat and I came home: left the Gazett in the Bible, which told Sarah of, bid her present my Service to Mrs. Winthrop, and tell her I had been to wait on her if she had been at home.

Nov[r] 1. I was so taken up that I could not go if I would.

Nov[r] 2. Midweek, went again, and found Mrs. Alden there, who quickly went out. Gave her about ½ pound of Sugar Almonds, cost 3[s] per £. Carried them on Monday. She seem'd pleas'd with them, ask'd what they cost. Spake of giving her a Hundred pounds per añum if I dy'd before her. Ask'd what sum she would give me, if she should dy first? Said I would give her time to Consider of it. She said she heard as if I had given all to my Children by Deeds of Gift. I told her 'twas a mistake, Point-Judith was mine &c. That in England, I own'd, my Father's desire was that it should go to my eldest Son; 'twas 20£ per añum; she thought 'twas forty.

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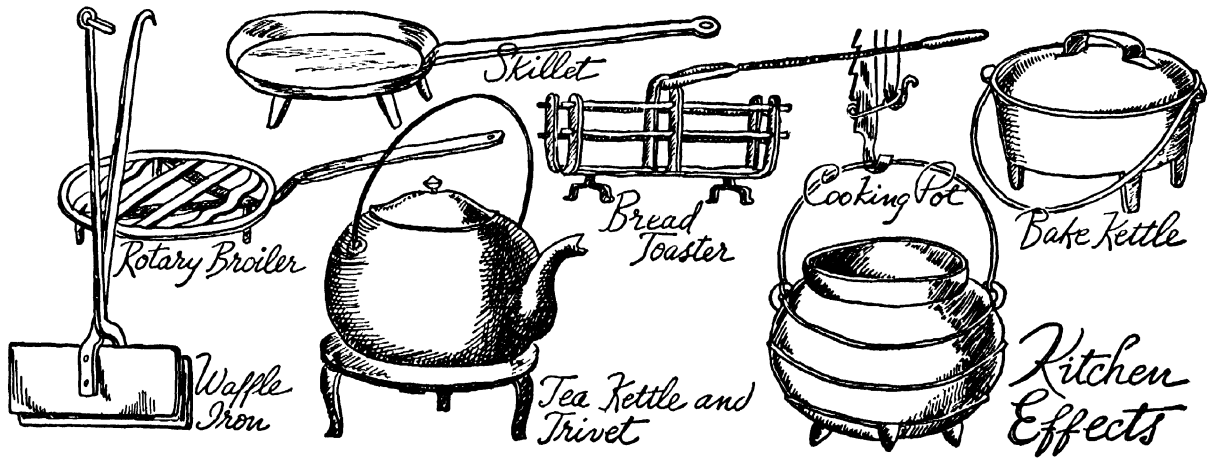
23 **Jehovah jireh,** the name which Abraham gave to the place where he found the ram and offered it up in Isaac's stead (see Genesis 22:14). The meaning is "God will provide"

I think when I seem'd to excuse pressing this, she seem'd to think twas best to speak of it; a long winter was coming on. Gave me a Glass or two of Canary.

Novr 4th. Friday, Went again about 7. a-clock; found there Mr. John Walley and his wife: sat discoursing pleasantly. I shew'd them Isaac Moses's Writing. Madam W. serv'd Comfeits to us. After a-while a Table was spread, and Super was set. I urg'd Mr. Walley to Crave a Blessing; but he put it upon me. About 9. they went away. I ask'd Madam what fashioned Neck-lace I should present her with, She said, None at all. I ask'd her Whereabout we left off last time; mention'd what I had offer'd to give her; Ask'd her what she would give me; She said she could not Change her Condition: She had said so from the beginning; could not be so far from her Children, the Lecture. Quoted the Apostle Paul affirming that a single Life was better than a Married. I answer'd That was for the present Distress. Said she had not pleasure in things of that nature as formerly: I said, you are the fitter to make me a Wife. If she held in that mind, I must go home and bewail my Rashness in making more haste than good Speed. However, considering the Super, I desired her to be within next Monday night, if we liv'd so long. Assented. She charg'd me with saying, that she must put away Juno, if she came to me: I utterly deny'd it, it never came into my heart; yet she insisted upon it; saying it came in upon Discourse about the Indian woman that obtained her Freedom this Court. About 10. I said I would not disturb the good orders of her House, and came away. She not seeming pleas'd with my Coming away. Spake to her about David Jeffries, had not seen him.

Monday, Novr 7th. My Son pray'd in the Old Chamber. Our time had been taken up by Son and Daughter Cooper's Visit; so that I only read the 130th and 143. Psalm. Twas on the Account of my Courtship. I went to Mad. Winthrop; found her rocking her little Katee in the Cradle. I excus'd my Coming so late (near Eight). She set me an arm'd Chair and Cusheon; and so the Cradle was between her arm'd Chair and mine. Gave her the remnant of my Almonds; She did not eat of them as before; but laid them away; I said I came to enquire whether she had alter'd her mind since Friday, or remained of the same mind still. She said, Thereabouts. I told her I loved her, and was so fond as to think that she loved me: She said had a great respect for me. I told her, I had made her an offer, without asking any advice; she had so many to advise with, that twas a hindrance. The Fire was come to one short Brand besides the Block, which Brand was set up in end; at last it fell to pieces, and no Recruit was made: She gave me a Glass of Wine. I think I repeated again that I would go home and bewail my Rashness in making more haste than good Speed. I would endeavor to contain myself, and not go on to sollicit her to do that which she could not Consent to. Took leave of her. As came down the steps she bid me have a Care. Treated me Courteously. Told her she had enter'd the 4th year of her Widowhood. I had given her the News-Letter before: I did not bid her draw off her glove as sometime I had done. Her dress was not so clean as sometime it had been. Jehovah jireh!

1677-1720·1878-1882





William Byrd

1674 • 1744

Gentleman, scholar, and wit, William Byrd II, Esquire, of Westover Plantation, Virginia, vividly exemplifies colonial Southern aristocracy Although Byrd's birthplace was a tidewater plantation, he was educated in England and on the Continent. His training in business and the law prepared him to engage in what he called "projects for improving our infant colony" and to administer his properties. His training in the social graces and in classical and Neoclassical literature prepared him to live as an aristocrat and to write amusing literature.

Shortly after his return from England to America in 1692, Byrd assumed his place as a member of the ruling circle of Virginia. He served in the House of Burgesses; on various occasions he represented the colony in England; he was appointed a member of the Council and held that dignified position the rest of his life In addition to these political duties, Byrd had the task of running a vast plantation tended by numerous slaves and of supervising extensive scattered properties. (He had title to 179,440 acres of land at the time of his death.)

Byrd's numerous tasks, however, did not keep him from living as he felt a gentleman should. His handsome brick mansion, with its fine gardens and its wide lawn sloping to the river, was a show place. He thought of himself as a social leader, and his hospitality was lavish.

But Byrd's idea of aristocratic living included pleasures in addition to those afforded by dancing, dining, and fox hunting. Thinking well of scholarship, for years he corresponded with the Royal Society, of which he was a member; and almost daily he took from the shelves of his admirable library some Latin, Greek, or Hebrew classic to read and enjoy. And in his correspondence through the years with his British friends he tried to give his phrases the sparkle, the wit, and the grace of some of the urbane classical authors whom he admired.

Panel (l. to r.)· Byrd as a surveyor • Byrd's drawing-room • Westover • Byrd at the age of 30 • Byrd coat-of-arms • Dancing the minuet at Westover

Such were the attitudes, such was the way of life that shaped the writings for which Byrd is best remembered: *The Secret History, The History of the Dividing Line, A Progress to the Mines,* and *A Journey to the Land of Eden.* The first two are accounts of a surveying trip Byrd led in 1728 to determine the Virginia boundary The latter two works record journeys he made in 1732 and 1733 to inspect his frontier properties. None of these works was published until 1841, long after his death.

These writings show the ability to record in well-turned phrases the witty perceptions of an author who knew and admired such sophisticated British writers of the period as Wycherley, Swift, and Pope. They also show the personality of their author—a businessman, keenly observant of industry, commerce, and commercial possibilities; a Virginia aristocrat, given to taking sly digs at people of other social strata or other parts of the country; a charming and urbane man of the world.

History of the Dividing Line and Other Tracts, ed T. H. Wynne, Richmond, 1866 • **The Writings of Colonel William Byrd of Westover in Virginia, Esq.,** ed J S Basset, New York, 1901 • **William Byrd's Histories of the Dividing Line** (including **The Secret History**), ed. W K. Boyd, New York, 1929 • R. C. Beatty, **William Byrd of Westover,** Boston, 1932 • Louis Wright, "The Byrds' Progress from Trade to Genteel Elegance," **The First Gentlemen of Virginia,** San Marino, 1940

From

The Secret History of the Line

The following entries in Byrd's secret journal tell of a part of the survey in 1728 to determine the line between Virginia and North Carolina. At the time the passage begins, the surveyors were going through the Dismal Swamp, and the commissioners, who had gone around the swamp, were awaiting their return. The passage, with its handling of a rather racy situation in the manner of an author of Restoration comedy, is typical of a good deal of Byrd's writing. It is noteworthy that Byrd gives his companions names generally used in the comedy of the period.

March] 25, [1728] The Air was chill'd with a N. Wester which favour'd our Dismalites who enter'd the Desert very early. It was not so kind to Meanwell who unreasonably kick't off the Bed Clothes, & catch't An Ague. We killed the Time, by that great help to disagreeable Society, a Pack of Cards. Our Landlord had not the Good Fortune to please Firebrand with our Dinner, but surely when People do their best, a reasonable Man wou'd be satisfy'd. But he endeavour'd to mend his Entertainment by making hot Love to Ruth, who wou'd by no means be charm'd either with his Perswasion, or his Person. While the Master was employ'd in making Love to one Sister, the man made his Passion known to the other, Only he was more boisterous, & employ'd force, when he cou'd not succeed by fair means Tho' one of the men rescu'd the poor Girl from this violent Lover; but was so much his Friend as to keep the shamefull Secret from those, whose Duty it wou'd have been to punish such Violations of Hospitality. Nor was this the only one this disorderly fellow was guilty of, for he broke upon a House where our Landlord kept the Fodder for his own use, upon the belief that it was better than what he allow'd us. This was in compliment to his Master's Horses I hope, & not in blind obedience to any order he receiv'd from him.

[March] 26. I persuaded Meanwell to take a Vomit of Ipocoacana which workt very kindly; I took all the care of him I cou'd, tho' Firebrand was so unfriendly as not to step once up Stairs to visit him. I also gave a Vomit to a poor Shoemaker that belong'd to my Landlord, by which he reap't great benefit Puzzlecause made a Journey to Edenton, & took our Chaplain with him to preach the Gospel to the Infidels of that Town, & to baptize some of their Children. I began to entertain with my Chocolate, which every body commended, but

2 **Dismalites,** the surveyors in the Dismal Swamp • 3 **Meanwell,** identified by Professor Boyd as William Dandridge, a Virginia commissioner • 7 **Firebrand,** Richard Fitz-William, another Virginia commissioner • 28 **Ipocoacana,** technical name for ipecac, the root of which is emetic • 32 **Puzzlecause,** fictitious name for Edward Moseley, a North Carolina commissioner

only he that commends nothing that don't belong to himself. In the Evening I took a Solitary walk, that I might have Leizure to think on my absent Friends, which I now grew impatient to see. Orion stuck as close to his Patron Firebrand, as the Itch does to the Fingers of many of his Country Folks.

[March] 27. Tho' it threaten'd Rain both Yesterday & today, yet Heaven was so kind to our Friends in the Dismal as to keep it from Falling. I perswaded Meanwell to take the Bark, which He did with good Effect, tho' he continued very faint & low-Spirited. He took Firebrand's Neglect in great Dudgeon, and amidst all his good Nature cou'd not forbear a great deal of Resentment; but I won his Heart entirely by the tender Care I took of him in his illness. I also gain'd the Men's Affection by dressing their wounds, & giving them little Remedys for their complaints. Nor was I less in my Landlords Books, for acting the Doctor in his Family. Tho' I observ'd some Distempers in it, that were past my Skill to cure. For his Wife & Heir Apparent were so enclin'd to a cheerfull Cup, that our Liquor was very unsafe in their keeping. I had a long time observed that they made themselves happy every day, before the Sun had run one third of his course, which no doubt gave some uneasiness to the Old Gentleman: but Custome that reconciles most Evils, made him bear it with Christian Patience.

As to the Young Gentleman, he seem'd to be as worthless as any homebred Squire I had ever met with, & much the worse for having a good Opinion of himself. His good Father intended him for the Mathematicks, but he never cou'd rise higher in that Study than to gage a Rum Cask. His Sisters are very sensible Industrious Damsels, who tho' they see Gentlemen but Seldom, have the Grace to resist their Importunitys, & tho' they are innocently free, will indulge them in no dangerous Libertys. However their cautious Father having some Notion of Female Frailty, from what he observed in their Mother, never suffers them to lie out of his own Chamber.

1728-1929

4 Orion, another Virginia commissioner • 10 the Bark, quinine

From • The History of the Dividing Line

An Aristocrat Describes Lubberland

Byrd's account, in The History of the Dividing Line, of three of the days covered in the previous selection offers an interesting comparison with the less polite Secret History. Although in each passage the author has his eye on amusing literary effects, the second version, intended for publication, is less libelous and more polished. The second version, too, shows more of Byrd's prejudices—against infidels and New Englanders, for instance. The satirical description of the poor whites in the entry for March 27, the best-known passage in the diary, is an interesting early example of a kind of humor which later was to be widespread in America—humor which made sport of the people of this class.

March 24, 1728] This being Sunday, we had a Numerous congregation, which flocked to our Quarters from all the adjacent Country. The News that our Surveyors were come out of the Dismal, increas'd the Number very much, because it wou'd give them an Opportunity of guessing, at least, whereabouts the Line wou'd cut, whereby they might form Some Judgment whether they belong'd to Virginia or Carolina. Those who had taken up Land within the Disputed Bounds were in great pain lest it should be found to ly in Virginia; because this being done contrary to an Express

2 Numerous congregation, ironic reference to the people of the district, gathered not for Sunday worship but to find where the line was to fall

Order of that government, the Patentees had great reason to fear they should in that case have lost their land. But their Apprehensions were now at an end, when they understood that all the Territory which had been controverted was like to be left in Carolina. In the afternoon, those who were to re-enter the Dismal were furnished with the Necessary provisions, and Order'd to repair the Over-Night to their Landlord, Peter Brinkley's, that they might be ready to begin their Business early on Monday Morning. Mr. Irvin was excused from the fatigue, in compliment to his Lungs; but Mr. Mayo and Mr. Swan were Robust enough to return upon that painful Service, and, to do them Justice, they went with great Alacrity. The Truth was, they now knew the worst of it; and cou'd guess pretty near at the time when they might hope to return to Land again.

[March] 25th. The Air was chill'd this Morning with a Smart North-west Wind, which favour'd the Dismalites in their Dirty March. They return'd by the Path they had made in coming out, and with great Industry arriv'd in the Evening at the Spot where the Line had been discontinued. After so long and laborious a Journey, they were glad to repose themselves on their couches of Cypress-bark, where their sleep was as sweet as it wou'd have been on a Bed of Finland Down In the mean time, we who stay'd behind had nothing to do, but to make the best observations we cou'd upon that Part of the Country. The Soil of our Landlord's Plantation, though none of the best, seemed more fertile than any thereabouts, where the Ground is near as Sandy as the Desarts of Affrica, and consequently barren. The Road leading from thence to Edenton, being in distance about 27 Miles, lies upon a ridge call'd Sandy-Ridge, which is so wretchedly Poor that it will not bring Potatoes.

The Pines in this part of the country are of a different Species from those that grow in Virginia· their bearded Leaves are much longer and their Cones much larger. Each Cell contains a Seed of the Size and Figure of a black-ey'd Pea, which, Shedding in November, is a very good Mast for Hogs, and fattens them in a Short time. The smallest of these Pines are full of Cones, which are 8 or 9 Inches long, and each affords commonly 60 or 70 Seeds. This Kind of Mast has the Advantage of all other, by being more constant, and less liable to be nippt by the Frost, or eaten by the Caterpillars. The Trees also abound more with Turpentine, and consequently yield more Tarr, than either the Yellow or the White Pine; and for the same reason make more durable Timber for building. The Inhabitants hereabouts pick up Knots of Lightwood in abundance, which they burn into tar, and then carry it to Norfolk or Nansemond for a Market. The Tar made in this method is the less Valuable, because it is said to burn the Cordage, tho' it is full as good for all other uses, as that made in Sweden and Muscovy.

Surely there is no place in the World where the Inhabitants live with less Labour than in N Carolina. It approaches nearer to the Description of Lubberland than any other, by the great felicity of the Climate, the easiness of raising Provisions, and the Slothfulness of the People.

Indian corn is of so great increase, that a little Pains will Subsist a very large Family with Bread, and then they may have meat without any pains at all, by the Help of the Low Grounds, and the great Variety of Mast that grows on the High-land. The Men, for their Parts, just like the Indians, impose all the Work upon the poor Women. They make their Wives rise out of their Beds early in the Morning, at the same time that they lye and Snore, till the Sun has risen one-third of his course, and disperst all the unwholesome Damps. Then, after Stretching and Yawning for half an Hour, they light their Pipes, and, under the protection of a cloud of Smoak, venture out into the open Air; tho', if it happens to be never so little cold, they quickly return Shivering into the Chimney corner. When the Weather is mild, they stand leaning with both their arms upon the cornfield fence, and gravely consider whether they had best go and take a Small Heat at the Hough but generally find reasons to put it off till another time.

Thus they loiter away their Lives, like Solomon's Sluggard, with their Arms across, and at the Winding up of the Year Scarcely have Bread to Eat. To speak the Truth, tis a thorough Aversion to Labor that makes People file off to N Carolina, where Plenty and a Warm Sun confirm them in their disposition to Laziness for their whole Lives.

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1 **Patentees,** holders of grants of land • 28 **Landlord's Plantation,** the Speight plantation • 50 **Lightwood,** resinous pine • 58 **Lubberland,** imaginary country where people live in idleness • 78 **Hough,** hoe • 80 **Solomon's Sluggard.** See Proverbs 6.9: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?"

this place, till the People return'd out of the Dismal, twas agreed that our Chaplain might Safely take a turn to Edenton, to preach the Gospel to the Infidels there, and Christen their Children. He was accompany'd thither by Mr. Little, One of the Carolina Commissioners, who, to shew his regard for the Church, offered to treat Him on the Road with a Fricassee of Rum. They fry'd half a Dozen Rashers of very fat Bacon in a Pint of Rum, both which being disht up together, serv'd the company at once both for meat and Drink. Most of the Rum they get in this country comes from New England, and is so bad and unwholesome, that it is not improperly called "Kill-Devil." It is distilled there from forreign molosses, which, if Skilfully manag'd, yields near Gallon for Gallon. Their molosses comes from the same country, and has the name of "Long Sugar" in Carolina, I suppose from the Ropiness of it, and Serves all the purposes of Sugar, both in their Eating and Drinking.

When they entertain their Friends bountifully, they fail not to set before them a Capacious Bowl of Bombo, so call'd from the Admiral of that name. This is a Compound of Rum and Water in Equal Parts, made palatable with the said long Sugar. As good humour begins to flow, and the Bowl to Ebb, they take Care to replenish it with Shear rum, of which there always is a Reserve under the Table. But such Generous doings happen only when that Balsam of life is plenty, for they have often such Melancholy times, that neither Land-graves nor Cassicks can procure one drop for their Wives, when they ly in, or are troubled with the Colick or Vapours. Very few in this Country have the Industry to plant Orchards, which, in a Dearth of Rum, might supply them with much better Liquor. The Truth is, there is one Inconvenience that easily discourages lazy People from making This improvement: very often, in Autumn, when the Apples begin to ripen, they are visited with Numerous Flights of paraqueets, that bite all the Fruit to Pieces in a moment, for the sake of the Kernels. The Havock they make is sometimes so great, that whole orchards are laid waste in Spite of all the Noises that can be made, or Mawkins that can be dresst up, to fright 'em away. These Ravenous Birds visit North Carolina only during the warm Season, and so soon as the Cold begins to come on, retire back towards except in a very hot Summer, when they visit the most Southern Parts of it. They are very Beautiful; but like some other pretty Creatures, are apt to be loud and mischievous.

[March] 27. Betwixt this and Edenton there are many thuckleberry Slashes, which afford a convenient Harbour for Wolves and Foxes. The first of these wild Beasts is not so large and fierce as they are in other countries more Northerly. He will not attack a Man in the Keenest of his Hunger, but run away from him as from an Animal more mischievous than himself. The Foxes are much bolder, and will Sometimes not only make a Stand, but likewise assault any one that would balk them of their Prey. The Inhabitants hereabouts take the trouble to dig abundance of Wolf-Pits, so deep and perpendicular, that when a Wolf is once tempted into them, he can no more Scramble out again, than a Husband who has taken the leap can Scramble out of Matrimony. Most of the Houses in this part of the country are Log-houses, covered with Pine or Cypress shingles, 3 feet long, and one broad. They are hung upon Laths with Peggs, and their doors too turn upon Wooden Hinges, and have wooden Locks to Secure them, so that the Building is finisht without Nails or other Iron-Work. They also set up their Pales without Nails at all, and indeed more Securely than those that are nailed. There are 3 Rails mortis'd into the Posts, the lowest of which serves as a Sill with a Groove in the Middle, big enough to receive the End of the Pales. the middle Part of the pale rests against the Inside of the Next Rail, and the Top of it is brought forward to the outside of the uppermost. Such Wreathing of the Pales in and out makes them stand firm, and much harder to unfix than when nail'd in the Ordinary way.

Within 3 or 4 miles of Edenton, the Soil appears to be a little more fertile, tho' it is much cut with Slashes, which seem all to have a tendency towards the Dismal. This Towne is Situate on the North side of Albemarle Sound, which is thereabout 5 miles over. A Dirty Slash

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31 **Land-graves nor Cassicks,** high officials provided for in John Locke's "The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina" (1669). Byrd is here gibing at some of the stuffy titles suggested by Locke • 43 **Mawkins,** scarecrows • 53 **thuckleberry,** huckleberry • 53 **Slashes,** swamps which, as Byrd goes on to say, drain into the Dismal Swamp • 72 **Pales,** fence poles

runs all along the Back of it, which in the Summer is a foul annoyance, and furnishes abundance of that Carolina plague, musquetas. There may be 40 or 50 Houses, most of them Small, and built without Expense. A Citizen here is counted Extravagant, if he has Ambition enough to aspire to a Brick-chimney. Justice herself is but indifferently Lodged, the Court-House having much of the Air of a common Tobacco-House. I believe this is the only Metropolis in the Christian or Mahometan World, where there is neither Church, Chappel, Mosque, Synagogue, or any other Place of Publick Worship of any Sect or Religion whatsoever. What little Devotion there may happen to be is much more private than their vices. The People seem easy without a Minister, as long as they are exempted from paying Him. Sometimes the Society for propagating the Gospel has had the Charity to send over Missionaries to this Country; but unfortunately the Priest has been too Lewd for the people, or, which oftener happens, they too lewd for the Priest. For these Reasons these Reverend Gentlemen have always left their Flocks as arrant Heathen as they found them. Thus much however may be said for the Inhabitants of Edenton, that not a Soul has the least taint of Hypocrisy, or Superstition, acting very Frankly and aboveboard in all their Excesses.

Provisions here are extremely cheap, and extremely good, so that People may live plentifully at a triffleing expense. Nothing is dear but Law, Physick, and Strong Drink, which are all bad in their Kind, and the last they get with so much Difficulty, that they are never guilty of the Sin of Suffering it to Sour upon their Hands. Their Vanity generally lies not so much in having a handsome Dining-Room, as a Handsome House of Office: in this Kind of Structure they are really extravagant. They are rarely guilty of Flattering or making Court to their governors, but treat them with all the Excesses of Freedom and Familiarity. They are of Opinion their rulers wou'd be apt to grow insolent, if they grew Rich, and for that reason take care to keep them poorer, and more dependent, if possible, than the Saints in New England used to do their Governors. They have very little corn, so they are forced to carry on their Home-Traffick with Paper-Money. This is the only Cash that will tarry in the Country, and for that reason the Discount goes on increasing between that and real Money, and will do so to the End of the Chapter.

[March] 28. Our Time passt heavily in our Quarters, where we were quite cloy'd with the Carolina Felicity of having nothing to do. It was really more insupportable than the greatest Fatigue, and made us even envy the Drudgery of our Friends in the Dismal. Besides, tho' the Men we had with us were kept in Exact Discipline, and behav'd without Reproach, yet our Landlord began to be tired of them, fearing they would breed a Famine in his Family. Indeed, so many keen Stomachs made great Havock amongst the Beef and Bacon which he had laid in for his Summer Provision, nor cou'd he easily purchase More at that time of the Year, with the Money we paid him, because the People having no certain Market seldom provide any more of these Commodities than will barely supply their own Occasions. Besides the Weather was now grown too warm to lay in a fresh Stock so late in the Spring. These Considerations abated somewhat of that chearfulness with which he bidd us Welcome in the Beginning, and made him think the time quite as long as we did until the Surveyors return'd. While we were thus all Hands uneasy, we were comforted with the News that this Afternoon the Line was finisht through the Dismal. The Messenger told us it had been the hard work of three days to measure the Length of only 5 miles, and mark the Trees as they passt along, and by the most exact Survey they found the Breadth of the Dismal in this Place to be completely 15 miles. How wide it may be in other Parts, we can give no Account, but believe it grows narrower towards the North; possibly towards Albemarle Sound it may be something broader, where so many Rivers issue out of it. All we know for certain is, that from the Place where the line enter'd the Dismal, to where it came out, we found the Road round that Portion of it belongs to Virginia to be about 65 Miles. How great the Distance may be from Each of those Points, round that Part that falls within the Bounds of Carolina, we had no certain Information: Tho' tis conjectur'd it cannot be so little as 30 Miles. At which rate the whole Circuit must be about an Hundred. What a Mass of Mud and Dirt is treasur'd up within this filthy circumference, and what a Quantity of Water must perpetually drain into it from the riseing ground that Surrounds it on every

41 Saints in New England, a gibe at New England Puritanism • 53 behav'd without Reproach. Compare The Secret History

Side? Without taking the Exact level of the Dismal, we may be sure that it declines towards the Places where the Several Rivers take their Rise, in order to carry off the constant Supplies of Water. Were it not for such Discharges, the whole Swamp would long Since have been converted into a Lake. On the other Side this Declension must be very gentle, else it would be laid perfectly dry by so many continual drains; Whereas, on the contrary, the Ground seems everywhere to be thoroughly drenched even in the dryest Season of the Year. The Surveyors concluded this day's Work with running 25 chains up into the Firm Land, where they waited further Orders from the Commissioners.

1728·1841

12 chains, surveyor's chains, sixty feet long, for measuring

From

A Progress to the Mines

In September and October 1732 Byrd took a trip to inspect some of his mining properties and to collect what data he could on the cost of manufacturing iron. Along the way he stopped to inspect properties of his or to visit with various prosperous planters. This excerpt tells of the first two stops. He halted first at his father's old place near the falls of the James River, where he supervised some drilling and talked with the miller, the weaver, the overseer's wife, and the overseer. His second stop was at Colonel Randolph's home at Tuckahoe. There with Mrs. Fleming, another friend of the Randolph's, he was delayed for a time by rainy weather.

1732, Sept. 18. For the pleasure of the good company of Mrs. Byrd, and her little Governuor, my Son, I went about half way to the Falls in the Chariot. There we halted, not far from a purling Stream, and upon the Stump of a propagate Oak picket the Bones of a Piece of Roast Beef. By the Spirit which that gave me, I was the better able to part with the dear Companions of my Travels, and to perform the rest of my Journey on Horseback by myself. I reached Shaccoa's before 2 o'clock, and crost the River to the Mills. I had the Grief to find them both stand as still, for the want of Water, as a dead Woman's Tongue, for want of Breath. It had rain'd so little for many Weeks above the Falls, that the Naides had hardly Water enough left to wash their Faces. However, as we ought to turn all our Misfortunes to the best Advantage, I directed Mr. Booker, my first Minister there, to make use of the lowness of the water for blowing up the Rocks at the Mouth of the Canal. For that purpose I order'd Iron Drills to be made about 2 foot long, pointed with Steel, Chizzel fashion, in order to make holes, into which we put our Cartridges of Powder, containing each about 3 Ounces. There wanted Skill among my Engineers to chuse the best parts of the Stone for boring, that we might blow to the most advantage. They made all their Holes quite perpendicular, whereas they should have humour'd the Grain of the Stone for the more effectual Execution. I order'd the points of the Drills to be made Chizzel way, rather than the Diamond, that they might need to be Seldomer repair'd, tho' in Stone the Diamond points would make the most despatch. The Water now flow'd out of the River so slowly, that the Miller was oblig'd to pond it up in the Canal, by setting open the Floodgates at the Mouth, and shutting those close at the Mill. By this contrivance, he was able at any time to grind two or three Bushels, either for his choice Customers, or for the use of my Plantations. Then I walkt to the place where they broke the Flax, which is wrought with much greater ease than the Hemp, and is much better for Spinning. From thence I paid a Visit to the Weaver, who needed a little of Minerva's Inspiration to make the most of a piece of fine Cloth. Then I lookt in upon my Caledonian Spinster, who was mended more in her looks than in her

14 Naides, naiads • 41 Minerva, the goddess of spinning and weaving • 42 Caledonian Spinster, the wife of the overseer

Humour. However, she promised much, tho' at the same time intended to perform little. She is too high-Spirited for Mr. Booker, who hates to have his sweet Temper ruffled, and will rather suffer matters to go a little wrong sometimes, than give his righteous Spirit any uneasiness. He is very honest, and would make an admirable Overseer where Servants will do as they are bid. But Eye-Servants, who want abundance of over-looking, are not so proper to be committed to his Care. I found myself out of order, and for that reason retir'd Early; yet with all this precaution had a gentle feaver in the Night, but towards morning Nature set open all her Gates, and drove it out in a plentiful perspiration.

[Sept.] 19. The worst of this fever was, that it put me to the Necessity of taking another Ounce of Bark. I moisten'd every dose with a little Brandy, and fill'd the Glass up with Water, which is the least Nauseous way of taking this Popish Medicine, and besides hinders it from Purging. After I had swallow'd a few Poacht Eggs, we rode down to the Mouth of the Canal, and from thence crost over to the broad Rock Island in a Canoe. Our errand was to view some Iron Ore, which we dug up in two places. That on the surface seemed very spongy and poor, which gave us no great Encouragement to search deeper, nor did the Quantity appear to be very great. However, for my greater Satisfaction, I order'd a hand to dig there for some time this Winter. We walkt from one End of the Island to the other, being about half a Mile in length, and found the Soil very good, and too high for any Flood, less than that of Deucalion, to do the least damage. There is a very wild prospect both upward and downward, the River being full of Rocks, over which the Stream tumbled with a Murmur, loud enough to drown the Notes of a Scolding Wife. This Island would make an agreeable Hermitage for any good Christian, who had a mind to retire from the World. Mr. Booker told me how Dr. Ireton had cured him once of a Looseness, which had been upon him two whole years. He order'd him a Dose of Rhubarb, with directions to take 25 Drops of Laudanum so Soon as he had had 2 Physical Stools. Then he rested one day, and the next order'd him another Dose of the same Quantity of Laudanum to be taken, also after the 2d Stool. When this was done, he finisht the Cure by giving him 20 drops of Laudanum every night for five Nights running. The Doctor insisted upon the necessity of Stopping the Operation of the Rhubarb before it workt quite off, that what remained behind might strengthen the Bowels. I was punctual in Swallowing my Bark, and that I might use exercise upon it, rode to Prince's Folly, and my Lord's Islands, where I saw very fine Corn. In the meantime Vulcan came in Order to make the drills for boring the Rocks, And gave me his Parole he wou'd, by the grace of God, attend the works till they were finisht, which he perform'd as lamely as if he had been to labour for a dead Horse, and not for ready Money. I made a North Carolina dinner upon Fresh Pork, though we had a plate of Green Peas after it, by way of Desert, for the Safety of our Noses. Then my first minister and I had some serious Conversation about my affairs, and I find nothing disturb'd his peaceable Spirit so much as the misbehavior of the Spinster above-mention'd. I told him I cou'd not pity a Man, who had it always in his Power to do himself and her Justice, and wou'd not. If she were a Drunkard, a Scold, a Thief, or a Slanderer, we had wholesome Laws, that would make her Back Smart for the diversion of her other Members, and it was his Fault he had not put those wholesome Severities in Execution. I retired in decent time to my own Apartment, and Slept very comfortably upon my Bark, forgetting all the little crosses arising from Overseers and Negroes.

[Sept.] 20. I continued the Bark, and then tost down my Poacht Eggs, with as much ease as some good Breeders Slip Children into the World. About Nine I left the Prudentest Orders I could think of with my Visier, and then crost the River to Shacc's. I made a running Visit to 3 of my Quarters, where, besides finding all the People well, I had the Pleasure to see better Crops than usual both of Corn and Tobacco. I parted there with my Intendant, and pursued my Journey to Mr. Randolph's, at Tuckahoe, without meeting with any Adventure by the way. Here I found Mrs. Fleming, who was packing up her Baggage with design to follow her Husband the next day, who was gone to a new Settlement in Goochland. Both he and She have been about Seaven Years persuading themselves to remove to that retired part of

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31 **Deucalion**, son of Prometheus. When Jupiter punished the race of men with a vast flood, Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha alone survived by finding refuge on towering Parnassus • 52 **Vulcan**, god of fire, hence of the glow of the forge. Here, of course, the name is humorously applied to a very un-Vulcan-like worker • 76 **Visier**, vizier

the Country, tho' they had the two strong Arguments of Health and Interest for doing so. The Widow smiled graciously upon me, and entertain'd me very handsomely. Here I learnt all the tragical Story of her Daughter's humble Marriage with her Uncle's Overseer. Besides the meanness of this mortal's Aspect, the Man has not one visible Qualification, except Impudence, to recommend him to a Female's Inclinations. But there is sometimes such a Charm in that Hibernian Endowment, that frail Woman cannot withstand it, tho' it stand alone without any other Recommendation. Had she run away with a Gentleman or a pretty Fellow, there might have been some Excuse for her, tho' he were of inferior Fortune: but to stoop to a dirty Plebeian, without any kind of merit, is the lowest Prostitution. I found the Family justly enraged at it; and tho' I had more good Nature than to join in her Condemnation, yet I cou'd devise no Excuse for so senceless a Prank as this young Gentlewoman had play'd. Here good Drink was more Scarce than good Victuals, the Family being reduc'd to the last Bottle of Wine, which was therefore husbanded very carefully. But the Water was excellent. The Heir of the Family did not come home till late in the Evening. He is a pretty Young Man, but had the misfortune to become his own master too soon. This puts young Fellows upon wrong pursuits, before they have Sence to Judge rightly for themselves. Tho' at the same time they have a strange conceit of their own Sufficiency, when they grow near 20 Years old, especially if they happen to have a small Smattering of Learning. Tis then they fancy themselves wiser than all their Tutors and Governors, which makes them headstrong to all advice, and above all Reproof and Admonition.

[Sept.] 21. I was sorry in the morning to find myself stopt in my Career by bad Weather brought upon us by a North-East Wind. This drives a World of Raw unkindly Vapours upon us from Newfoundland, laden with Blite, Coughs, and Pleurisys. However, I complain'd not, lest I might be suspected to be tir'd of the good Company. Tho' Mrs. Fleming was not so much upon her Guard, but mutiny'd strongly at the Rain, that hinder'd her from pursuing her dear Husband. I said what I cou'd to comfort a Gentlewoman under so sad a Disappointment. I told her a husband, that staid so much at Home as her's did, cou'd be no such violent Rarity, as for a Woman to venture her precious Health, to go daggling thro' the Rain after him, or to be miserable if she happen'd to be prevented. That it was prudent for marry'd people to fast Sometimes from one another, that they might come together again with the better Stomach. That the best things in this World, if constantly us'd, are apt to be cloying, which a little absence and Abstinence wou'd prevent. This was Strange Doctrine to a fond Female, who fancys People shou'd love with as little Reason after Marriage as before. In the afternoon Monsieur Marij, the Minister of the Parish, came to make me a Visit. He had been a Romish Priest, but found Reasons, either Spiritual or temporal, to quit that gay Religion. The fault of this new Convert is, that he looks for as much Respect from his Protestant Flock, as is paid to the Popish Clergy, which our ill-bred Hugonots dont understand. Madam Marij, had so much Curiosity as to want to come too; but another Horse was wanting, and she believ'd it would have too Vulgar an Air to ride behind her Husband. This Woman was of the true Exchange Breed, full of Discourse, but void of Discretion, and marry'd a Parson, with the Idle hopes he might some time or other come to be his Grace of Canterbury. The Gray Mare is the better Horse in that Family, and the poor man Submits to her wild Vagarys for Peace' Sake. She has just enough of the fine Lady, to run in debt, and be of no signification in her Household. And the only thing that can prevent her from undoing her loving Husband will be, that nobody will trust them beyond the 16000, which is soon run out in a Goochland store. The way of Dealing there is, for some small Merchant or Pedler to buy a Scots Pennyworth of Goods, and clap 150 per cent upon that. At this Rate the Parson cant be paid much more for his preaching than tis worth. No sooner was our Visitor retired, but the facetious Widow was so kind as to let me into all this Secret History, but was at the same time exceedingly Sorry that the Woman should be so indiscreet, and the man so tame as to be govern'd by an unprofitable and fantastical Wife.

[Sept.] 22. We had another wet day, to try both Mrs. Fleming's Patience and my good Breeding. The N E Wind commonly sticks by us 3 or 4 days, filling the Atmosphere with damps, injurious both to man and

75 16000. Sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco was the legal salary of a minister

Beast. The worst of it was, we had no good Liquor to warm our Blood, and fortify our Spirits against so strong a Malignity. However, I was cheerful under all these Misfortunes, and expresst no Concern but a decent Fear lest my long visit might be troublesome. Since I was like to have thus much Leizure, I endeavour'd to find out what Subject a dull marry'd man cou'd introduce that might best bring the Widow to the Use of her Tongue. At length, I discover'd she was a notable Quack, and therefore paid that regard to her Knowledge, as to put some Questions to her about the bad distemper that raged then in the Country. I mean the Bloody Flux, that was brought us in the Negro-ship consigned to Colo. Braxton. She told me she made use of very Simple remedys in that Case, with very good Success. She did the Business either with Hartshorn Drink, that had Plantain Leaves boil'd in it, or else with a Strong decoction of St. Andrew's Cross, in New milk instead of Water. I agreed with her that those remedys might be very good, but would be more effectual after a dose or two of Indian Physick. But for fear this Conversation might be too grave for a Widow, I turn'd the discourse, and began to talk of Plays, & finding her Taste lay most towards Comedy, I offer'd my Service to read one to Her, which she kindly accepted. She produced the 2d part of the Beggar's Opera, which had diverted the Town for 40 nights successively, and gain'd four thousand pounds to the Author. This was not owing altogether to the Wit or Humour that Sparkled in it, but to some Political Reflections, that seem'd to hit the Ministry. But the great Advantage of the Author was, that his Interest was solicited by the Dutchess of Queensbury, which no man could refuse who had but half an Eye in his head, or half a Guinea in his Pocket. Her Grace, like Death, spared nobody, but even took my Lord Selkirk in for 2 Guineas, to repair which Extravagance he liv'd upon Scots Herrings 2 Months afterwards. But the best Story was, she made a very Smart Officer in his Majesty's Guards give her a Guinea, who Swearing at the same time twas all he had in the world, she sent him 50 for it the next day, to reward his Obedience. After having acquainted my Company with the History of the Play, I read 3 Acts of it, and left Mrs. Fleming and Mr. Randolph to finish it, who read as well as most Actors do at a Rehearsal Thus we kill'd the time, and triumpht over the bad Weather.

1732•1866

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26 **the Beggar's Opera** (1727), a play by John Gay (1688-1732) produced very successfully, as Byrd indicates, in London. Actually it ran for sixty-three successive nights • 32 **the Dutchess of Queensbury,** Catherine Douglas, the wife of the third Duke of Queensbury, Charles Douglas—a leading figure in London society and one of Gay's staunchest friends

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William Bartram

1739 • 1823

William Bartram could draw and color pictures of Pennsylvania turtles well enough to have them published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in London, but he was not anxious to be apprenticed to an engraver. He failed to make his living either as a trader or as a farmer. Wandering with his father into the back country, collecting seeds and plants to send to wealthy gardening enthusiasts in England, he had learned a great many things, none of them especially profitable.

In another environment, perhaps, Bartram's meticulous observations might have made him a great botanist, ornithologist, geologist, or anthropologist, but he would not have been happy. In his time the study of nature was relatively unspecialized, and it was still possible to

see a plant, a bird, a landscape, or an Indian as an individual rather than as a specimen. Nature to Bartram was animistic, sublime, unspoiled, and beautiful; his Seminoles and Cherokees were, except when corrupted by the white man, unblemished in their nobility, as became nature's children. The great adventure of his life was as much poetic as scientific—a series of excursions into the deep South between 1773 and 1777, when he walked and sailed and paddled through enchanting country, taking notes for a book wherein poetry is modestly hidden behind a prosaic title *Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogules, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws; Containing an Account of the Soil and Natural Productions of Those Regions, Together with Observations on the Manners of the Indians* (Philadelphia, 1791).

The *Travels* was reprinted in London editions in 1792 and 1794, in a Dublin edition in 1793, and translations were soon available in German (1793), Dutch (1794-1797), and French (1799-1801). It has twice been reprinted in recent years (1928, 1940).

Because Bartram was able to communicate his delight in the world with disarming and attractive freshness, one can readily understand why he was a favorite among many leading writers of the Romantic period.

Ernest Earnest, **John and William Bartram, Botanists and Explorers,** Philadelphia, 1940 • **The Travels of William Bartram,** ed Mark Van Doren, with introduction by J L Lowes, New York, 1940 • N B Fagin, **William Bartram, Interpreter of the American Landscape,** Baltimore, 1933

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Travels

Part I of the Travels describes a sea trip from Philadelphia to Savannah, with a stop at Charleston, and several excursions into what is now the interior of Georgia Part II, the longest and most popular section, covers travels in northern Florida. Part III is an account of a trip from Charleston across South Carolina and northern Georgia into Alabama and Louisiana. Part IV is "An Account of the Persons, Manners, Customs and Government of the Muscogules or Creeks, &c. Aborigines of the Continent of North America."

The first selection printed here is the first quarter of Chapter 5, Part II; it is an example both of Bartram's attitude toward nature and of his narrative skill The second selection, from Chapter 3, Part III, illustrates Bartram's acquaintance with the traditions of pastoral literature.

Being desirous of continuing my travels and observations, higher up the river, and having an invitation from a gentleman who was agent for, and resident at a large plantation, the property of an English gentleman, about sixty miles higher up, I resolved to pursue my researches to that place; and having engaged in my service a young Indian, nephew to the White Captain, he agreed to assist me in working my vessel up as high as a certain bluff, where I was, by agreement, to land him, on the West or Indian shore, whence he designed to go in quest of the camp of the White Trader, his relation.

Provisions and all necessaries being procured, and the morning pleasant, we went on board and stood up the river. We passed for several miles on the left, by islands of high swamp land, exceedingly fertile, their banks for a good distance from the water, much higher than the interior part, and sufficiently so to build upon, and be out of the reach of inundations They consist of a loose black mould, with a mixture of sand, shells and dissolved vegetables The opposite Indian coast is a perpendicular bluff, ten or twelve feet high, consisting of a black sandy earth, mixed with a large proportion of shells, chiefly various species of fresh water Cochlea and Mytuli. Near the river, on this high shore, grew Corypha palma, Magnolia grandiflora, Live Oak, Callicarpa, Myrica cerifera, Hybiscus spinifex, and the beautiful evergreen shrub called Wild lime or Tallow nut. This last shrub grows six or eight feet high, many erect stems rising from a root; the leaves are lanciolate and intire, two or three

2 the river, the St John's River in northeastern Florida • 7 the White Captain, a Seminole chief, mentioned in the preceding chapter • 23 Cochlea . . . Tallow nut Here, as elsewhere, Bartram's scientific terms are a curious mixture of the technical, the popular, the obsolete, and the current His generic names ordinarily follow the classification of Linnaeus (Carl von Linné, 1707-1778), Swedish dictator of eighteenth-century natural history • 29 lanciolate, lanceolate, spearlike

inches in length and one in breadth, of a deep green colour, and polished, at the foot of each leaf grows a stiff, sharp thorn, the flowers are small and in clusters, of a greenish yellow colour, and sweet scented; they are succeeded by a large oval fruit, of the shape and size of an ordinary plumb, of a fine yellow colour when ripe, a soft sweet pulp covers a nut which has a thin shell, enclosing a white kernel somewhat of the consistence and taste of the sweet Almond, but more oily and very much like hard tallow, which induced my father when he first observed it, to call it the Tallow nut.

At the upper end of this bluff is a fine Orange grove Here my Indian companion requested me to set him on shore, being already tired of rowing under a fervid sun, and having for some time intimated a dislike to his situation, I readily complied with his desire, knowing the impossibility of compelling an Indian against his own inclinations, or even prevailing upon him by reasonable arguments, when labour is in the question, before my vessel reached the shore, he sprang out of her and landed, when uttering a shrill and terrible whoop, he bounded off like a roebuck, and I lost sight of him I at first apprehended that as he took his gun with him, he intended to hunt for some game and return to me in the evening The day being excessively hot and sultry, I concluded to take up my quarters here until next morning

The Indian not returning this morning, I sat sail alone The coasts on each side had much the same appearance as already described. The Palm trees here seem to be of a different species from the Cabbage tree, their strait trunks are sixty, eighty or ninety feet high, with a beautiful taper of a bright ash colour, until within six or seven feet of the top, where it is a fine green colour, crowned with an orb of rich green plumed leaves I have measured the stem of these plumes fifteen feet in length, besides the plume, which is nearly of the same length.

The little lake, which is an expansion of the river, now appeared in view; on the East side are extensive marshes, and on the other high forests and Orange groves, and then a bay, lined with vast Cypress swamps, both coasts gradually approaching each other, to the opening of the river again, which is in this place about three hundred yards wide; evening now drawing on, I was anxious to reach some high bank of the river, where I intended to lodge, and agreeably to my wishes, I soon after discovered on the West shore, a little promontory, at the turning of the river, contracting it here to about one hundred and fifty yards in width. This promontory is a peninsula, containing about three acres of high ground, and is one entire Orange grove, with a few Live Oaks, Magnolias and Palms. Upon doubling the point, I arrived at the landing, which is a circular harbour, at the foot of the bluff, the top of which is about twelve feet high; and back of it is a large Cypress swamp, that spreads each way, the right wing forming the West coast of the little lake, and the left stretching up the river many miles, and encompassing a vast space of low grassy marshes From this promontory, looking Eastward across the river, we behold a landscape of low country, u[n]paralleled as I think; on the left is the East coast of the little lake, which I had just passed, and from the Orange bluff at the lower end, the high forests begin, and increase in breadth from the shore of the lake, making a circular sweep to the right, and contain many hundred thousand acres of meadow, and this grand sweep of high forests encircles, as I apprehend, at least twenty miles of these green fields, interspersed with hommocks or islets of evergreen trees, where the sovereign Magnolia and lordly Palm stand conspicuous. The islets are high shelly knolls, on the sides of creeks or branches of the river, which wind about and drain off the super-abundant waters that cover these meadows, during the winter season.

The evening was temperately cool and calm. The crocodiles began to roar and appear in uncommon numbers along the shores and in the river. I fixed my camp in an open plain, near the utmost projection of the promontory, under the shelter of a large Live Oak, which stood on the highest part of the ground and but a few yards from my boat From this open, high situation, I had a free prospect of the river, which was a matter of no trivial consideration to me, having good reason to dread the subtle attacks of the alligators, who were crouding about my harbour. Having collected a good quantity of wood for the purpose of keeping up a light and smoke during the night, I began to think of preparing my supper, when, upon examining my stores, I found but a scanty provision, I thereupon determined, as the most expeditious way of supplying my necessities,

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10 my father. Bartram was retracing a route he had followed with his father in 1765 John Bartram's journal of that expedition, which has been called "a kind of first draft of the **Travels**," was printed in the third edition (1769) of William Stork's **Description of East Florida**


John Bartram's House

to take my bob and try for some trout. About one hundred yards above my harbour, began a cove or bay of the river, out of which opened a large lagoon. The mouth or entrance from the river to it was narrow, but the waters soon after spread and formed a little lake, extending into the marches, its entrance and shores within I observed to be verged with floating lawns of the Pistia and Nymphea and other aquatic plants; these I knew were excellent haunts for trout.

The verges and islets of the lagoon were elegantly embellished with flowering plants and shrubs; the laughing coots with wings half spread were tripping over the little coves and hiding themselves in the tufts of grass; young broods of the painted summer teal, skimming the still surface of the waters, and following the watchful parent unconscious of danger, were frequently surprised by the voracious trout, and he in turn, as often by the subtle, greedy alligator. Behold him rushing forth from the flags and reeds. His enormous body swells. His plaited tail brandished high, floats upon the lake. The waters like a cataract descend from his opening jaws. Clouds of smoke issue from his dilated nostrils. The earth trembles with his thunder. When immediately from the opposite coast of the lagoon, emerges from the deep his rival champion. They suddenly dart upon each other. The boiling surface of the lake marks their rapid course, and a terrific conflict commences. They now sink to the bottom folded together in horrid wreaths. The water becomes thick and discoloured. Again they rise, their jaws clap together, re-echoing through the deep surrounding forests. Again they sink, when the contest ends at the muddy bottom of the lake, and the vanquished makes a hazardous escape, hiding himself in the muddy turbulent waters and sedge on a distant shore. The proud victor exulting returns to the place of action. The shores and forests resound his dreadful roar, together with the triumphing shouts of the plaited tribes around, witnesses of the horrid combat.

My apprehensions were highly alarmed after being a spectator of so dreadful a battle; it was obvious that every delay would but tend to encrease my dangers and difficulties, as the sun was near setting, and the alligators gathered around my harbour from all quarters; from these considerations I concluded to be expeditious in my trip to the lagoon, in order to take some fish. Not thinking it prudent to take my fusee with me, lest I might lose it overboard in case of a battle, which I had every reason to dread before my return, I therefore furnished myself with a club for my defence, went on board, and penetrating the first line of those which surrounded my harbour, they gave way; but being pursued by several very large ones, I kept strictly on the watch, and paddled with all my might towards the entrance of the lagoon, hoping to be sheltered there from the multitude of my assailants; but ere I had half-way reached the place, I was attacked on all sides, several endeavouring to overset the canoe. My situation now became precarious to the last degree: two very large ones attacked me closely, at the same instant, rushing up with their heads and part of their bodies above the water, roaring terribly and belching floods of water over me. They struck their jaws together so close to my ears, as almost to stun me, and I expected every moment to be dragged out of the boat and instantly devoured, but I applied my weapons so effectually about me, though at random, that I was so successful as to beat them off a little; when, finding that they designed to renew the battle, I made for the shore, as the only means left me for my preservation, for,

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46 fusee, a light musket or firelock

by keeping close to it, I should have my enemies on one side of me only, whereas I was before surrounded by them, and there was a probability, if pushed to the last extremity, of saving myself, by jumping out of the canoe on shore, as it is easy to outwalk them on land, although comparatively as swift as lightning in the water. I found this last expedient alone could fully answer my expectations, for as soon as I gained the shore they drew off and kept aloof. This was a happy relief, as my confidence was, in some degree, recovered by it. On recollecting myself, I discovered that I had almost reached the entrance of the lagoon, and determined to venture in, if possible to take a few fish and then return to my harbour, while day-light continued; for I could now, with caution and resolution, make my way with safety along shore, and indeed there was no other way to regain my camp, without leaving my boat and making my retreat through the marshes and reeds, which, if I could even effect, would have been in a manner throwing myself away, for then there would have been no hopes of ever recovering my bark, and returning in safety to any settlements of men. I accordingly proceeded and made good my entrance into the lagoon, though not without opposition from the alligators, who formed a line across the entrance, but did not pursue me into it, nor was I molested by any there, though there were some very large ones in a cove at the upper end. I soon caught more trout than I had present occasion for, and the air was too hot and sultry to admit of their being kept for many hours, even though salted or barbecued. I now prepared for my return to camp, which I succeeded in with but little trouble, by keeping close to the shore, yet I was opposed upon re-entering the river out of the lagoon, and pursued near to my landing (though not closely attacked) particularly by an old daring one, about twelve feet in length, who kept close after me, and when I stepped on shore and turned about, in order to draw up my canoe, he rushed up near my feet and lay there for some time, looking me in the face, his head and shoulders out of water; I resolved he should pay for his temerity, and having a heavy load in my fusee, I ran to my camp, and returning with my piece, found him with his foot on the gunwale of the boat, in search of fish, on my coming up he withdrew sullenly and slowly into the water, but soon returned and placed himself in his former position, looking at me and seeming neither fearful or any way disturbed. I soon dispatched him by lodging the contents of my gun in his head, and then proceeded to cleanse and prepare my fish for supper, and accordingly took them out of the boat, laid them down on the sand close to the water, and began to scale them, when, raising my head, I saw before me, through the clear water, the head and shoulders of a very large alligator, moving slowly towards me; I instantly stepped back, when, with a sweep of his tail, he brushed off several of my fish. It was certainly most providential that I looked up at that instant, as the monster would probably, in less than a minute, have seized and dragged me into the river. This incredible boldness of the animal disturbed me greatly, supposing there could now be no reasonable safety for me during the night, but by keeping continually on the watch; I therefore, as soon as I had prepared the fish, proceeded to secure myself and effects in the best manner I could: in the first place, I hauled my bark upon the shore, almost clear out of the water, to prevent their oversetting or sinking her, after this every moveable was taken out and carried to my camp, which was but a few yards off; then ranging some dry wood in such order as was the most convenient, cleared the ground round about it, that there might be no impediment in my way, in case of an attack in the night, either from the water or the land; for I discovered by this time, that this small isthmus, from its remote situation and fruitfulness, was resorted to by bears and wolves. Having prepared myself in the best manner I could, I charged my gun and proceeded to reconnoitre my camp and the adjacent grounds; when I discovered that the peninsula and grove, at the distance of about two hundred yards from my encampment, on the land side, were invested by a Cypress swamp, covered with water, which below was joined to the shore of the little lake, and above to the marshes surrounding the lagoon, so that I was confined to an islet exceedingly circumscribed, and I found there was no other retreat for me, in case of an attack, but by either ascending one of the large Oaks, or pushing off with my boat.

It was by this time dusk, and the alligators had nearly ceased their roar, when I was again alarmed by a tumultuous noise that seemed to be in my harbour, and therefore engaged my immediate attention. Returning to my

camp I found it undisturbed, and then continued on to the extreme point of the promontory, where I saw a scene, new and surprising, which at first threw my senses into such a tumult, that it was some time before I could comprehend what was the matter; however, I soon accounted for the prodigious assemblage of crocodiles at this place, which exceeded every thing of the kind I had ever heard of.

How shall I express myself so as to convey an adequate idea of it to the reader, and at the same time avoid raising suspicions of my want of veracity. Should I say, that the river (in this place) from shore to shore, and perhaps near half a mile above and below me, appeared to be one solid bank of fish, of various kinds, pushing through this narrow pass of St. Juans into the little lake, on their return down the river, and that the alligators were in such incredible numbers, and so close together from shore to shore, that it would have been easy to have walked across on their heads, had the animals been harmless. What expressions can sufficiently declare the shocking scene that for some minutes continued, whilst this mighty army of fish were forcing the pass? During this attempt, thousands, I may say hundreds of thousands of them were caught and swallowed by the devouring alligators. I have seen an alligator take up out of the water several great fish at a time, and just squeeze them betwixt his jaws, while the tails of the great trout flapped about his eyes and lips, ere he had swallowed them. The horrid noise of their closing jaws, their plunging amidst the broken banks of fish, and rising with their prey some feet upright above the water, the floods of water and blood rushing out of their mouths, and the clouds of vapour issuing from their wide nostrils, were truly frightful. This scene continued at intervals during the night, as the fish came to the pass. After this sight, shocking and tremendous as it was, I found myself somewhat easier and more reconciled to my situation, being convinced that their extraordinary assemblage here, was owing to this annual feast of fish, and that they were so well employed in their own element, that I had little occasion to fear their paying me a visit.

It being now almost night, I returned to my camp, where I had left my fish broiling, and my kettle of rice stewing, and having with me, oil, pepper and salt, and excellent oranges hanging in abundance over my head (a valuable substitute for vinegar) I sat down and regaled myself chearfully; having finished my repast, I re-kindled my fire for light, and whilst I was revising the notes of my past day's journey, I was suddenly roused with a noise behind me toward the main land; I sprang up on my feet, and listning, I distinctly heard some creature wading in the water of the isthmus; I seized my gun and went cautiously from my camp, directing my steps towards the noise; when I had advanced about thirty yards, I halted behind a coppice of Orange trees, and soon perceived two very large bears, which had made their way through the water, and had landed in the grove, about one hundred yards distance from me, and were advancing towards me. I waited until they were within thirty yards of me, they there began to snuff and look towards my camp, I snapped my piece, but it flashed, on which they both turned about and galloped off, plunging through the water and swamp, never halting as I suppose, until they reached fast land, as I could hear them leaping and plunging a long time; they did not presume to return again, nor was I molested by any other creature, except being occasionally awakened by the whooping of owls, screaming of bitterns, or the wood-rats running amongst the leaves.

The wood-rat is a very curious animal, they are not half the size of the domestic rat; of a dark brown or black colour; their tail slender and shorter in proportion, and covered thinly with short hair; they are singular with respect to their ingenuity and great labour in the construction of their habitations, which are conical pyramids about three or four feet high, constructed with dry branches, which they collect with great labour and perseverance, and pile up without any apparent order, yet they are so interwoven with one another, that it would take a bear or wild-cat some time to pull one of these castles to pieces, and allow the animals sufficient time to secure a retreat with their young.

The noise of the crocodiles kept me awake the greater part of the night, but when I arose in the morning, contrary to my expectations, there was perfect peace; very few of them to be seen, and those were asleep on the shore, yet I was not able to suppress my fears and apprehensions of being attacked by them in future; and indeed yesterday's combat with them, notwithstanding

I came off in a manner victorious, or at least made a safe retreat, had left sufficient impression on my mind to damp my courage, and it seemed too much for one of my strength, being alone in a very small boat to encounter such collected danger. To pursue my voyage up the river, and be obliged every evening to pass such dangerous defiles, appeared to me as perilous as running the gauntlet betwixt two rows of Indians armed with knives and fire brands; I however resolved to continue my voyage one day longer, if I possibly could with safety, and then return down the river, should I find the like difficulties to oppose. Accordingly I got every thing on board, charged my gun, and set sail cautiously along shore; as I passed by Battle lagoon, I began to tremble and keep a good look out, when suddenly a huge alligator rushed out of the reeds, and with a tremendous roar, came up, and darted as swift as an arrow under my boat, emerging upright on my lea quarter, with open jaws, and belching water and smoke that fell upon me like rain in a hurricane; I laid soundly about his head with my club and beat him off, and after plunging and darting about my boat, he went off on a strait line through the water, seemingly with the rapidity of lightning, and entered the cape of the lagoon; I now employed my time to the very best advantage in paddling close along shore, but could not forbear looking now and then behind me, and presently perceived one of them coming up again; the water of the river hereabouts, was shoal and very clear, the monster came up with the usual roar and menaces, and passed close by the side of my boat, when I could distinctly see a young brood of alligators to the number of one hundred or more, following after her in a long train, they kept close together in a column without straggling off to the one side or the other, the young appeared to be of an equal size, about fifteen inches in length, almost black, with pale yellow transverse waved clouds or blotches, much like rattle snakes in colour. I now lost sight of my enemy again.

Still keeping close along shore; on turning a point or projection of the river bank, at once I beheld a great number of hillocks or small pyramids, resembling hay cocks, ranged like an encampment along the banks, they stood fifteen or twenty yards distant from the water, on a high marsh, about four feet perpendicular above the



water, I knew them to be the nests of the crocodile, having had a description of them before, and now expected a furious and general attack, as I saw several large crocodiles swimming abreast of these buildings. These nests being so great a curiosity to me, I was determined at all events immediately to land and examine them. Accordingly I ran my bark on shore at one of their landing places, which was a sort of nick or little dock, from which ascended a sloping path or road up to the edge of the meadow, where their nests were, most of them were deserted, and the great thick whitish egg-shells lay broken and scattered upon the ground round about them.

The nests or hillocks are of the form of an obtuse cone, four feet high and four or five feet in diameter at their bases; they are constructed with mud, grass and herbage: at first they lay a floor of this kind of tempered mortar upon the ground, upon which they deposit a layer of eggs, and upon this a stratum of mortar seven or eight inches in thickness, and then another layer of eggs, and in this manner one stratum upon another, nearly to the top: I believe they commonly lay from one to two hundred eggs in a nest: these are hatched I suppose by the heat of the sun, and perhaps the vegetable substances mixed with the earth, being acted upon by

the sun, may cause a small degree of fermentation, and so increase the heat in those hillocks. The ground for several acres about these nests shewed evident marks of a continual resort of alligators; the grass was every where beaten down, hardly a blade or straw was left standing; whereas, all about, at a distance, it was five or six feet high, and as thick as it could grow together. The female, as I imagine, carefully watches her own nest of eggs until they are all hatched, or perhaps while she is attending her own brood, she takes under her care and protection, as many as she can get at one time, either from her own particular nest or others: but certain it is, that the young are not left to shift for themselves, having had frequent opportunities of seeing the female alligator, leading about the shores her train of young ones, just like a hen does her chickens, and she is equally assiduous and courageous in defending the young, which are under their care, and providing for their subsistence; and when she is basking upon the warm banks, with her brood around her, you may hear the young ones continually whining and barking, like young puppies. I believe but few of the brood live to the years of full growth and magnitude, as the old feed on the young as long as they can make prey of them.

The alligator when full grown is a very large and terrible creature, and of prodigious strength, activity and swiftness in the water. I have seen them twenty feet in length, and some are supposed to be twenty-two or twenty-three feet; their body is as large as that of a horse; their shape exactly resembles that of a lizard, except their tail, which is flat or cuniform, being compressed on each side, and gradually diminishing from the abdomen to the extremity, which, with the whole body is covered with horny plates or squammae, impenetrable when on the body of the live animal, even to a rifle ball, except about their head and just behind their fore-legs or arms, where it is said they are only vulnerable. The head of a full grown one is about three feet, and the mouth opens nearly the same length, the eys are small in proportion and seem sunk deep in the head, by means of the prominency of the brows; the nostrils are large, inflated and prominent on the top, so that the head in the water, resembles, at a distance, a great chunk of wood floating about. Only the upper jaw moves, which they raise almost perpendicular, so as to form a right angle with the lower one. In the fore part of the upper jaw, on each side, just under the nostrils, are two very large, thick, strong teeth or tusks, not very sharp, but rather the shape of a cone, these are as white as the finest polished ivory, and are not covered by any skin or lips, and always in sight, which gives the creature a frightful appearance; in the lower jaw are hols opposite to these teeth, to receive them; when they clap their jaws together it causes a surprising noise, like that which is made by forcing a heavy plank with violence upon the ground, and may be heard at a great distance.

But what is yet more surprising to a stranger, is the incredible loud and terrifying roar, which they are capable of making, especially in the spring season, their breeding time; it most resembles very heavy distant thunder, not only shaking the air and waters, but causing the earth to tremble; and when hundreds and thousands are roaring at the same time, you can scarcely be persuaded, but that the whole globe is violently and dangerously agitated.

An old champion, who is perhaps absolute sovereign of a little lake or lagoon (when fifty less than himself are obliged to content themselves with swelling and roaring in little coves round about) darts forth from the reedy coverts all at once, on the surface of the waters, in a right line; at first seemingly as swift as lightning, but gradually more slowly until he arrives at the center of the lake, when he stops; he now swells himself by drawing in wind and water through his mouth, which causes a loud sonorous rattling in the throat for near a minute, but it is immediately forced out again through his mouth and nostrils, with a loud noise, brandishing his tail in the air, and the vapour ascending from his nostrils like smoke. At other times, when swolen to an extent ready to burst, his head and tail lifted up, he spins or twirls round on the surface of the water. He acts his part like an Indian chief, when rehearsing his feats of war, and then retiring, the exhibition is continued by others who dare to step forth, and strive to excel each other, to gain the attention of the favorite female.

Having gratified my curiosity at this general breeding place and nursery of crocodiles, I continued my voyage up the river without being greatly disturbed by them: in my way I observed islets or floating fields of the bright green Pistia, decorated with other amphibious

plants, as Senecio Jacobea, Persicaria amphibia, Coreopsis bidens, Hydrocotile fluitans, and many others of less note. . . .

I arrived at Cowe about noon; this settlement is esteemed the capital town; it is situated on the bases of the hills on both sides of the river, near to its bank, and here terminates the great vale of Cowe, exhibiting one of the most charming natural mountainous landscapes perhaps any where to be seen; ridges of hills rising grand and sublimely one above and beyond another, some boldly and majestically advancing into the verdant plains, their feet bathed with the silver flood of the Tanase, whilst others far distant, veiled in blue mists, sublimely mount aloft, with yet greater majesty lift up their pompous crests and overlook vast regions. . . .

Next day after my arrival I crossed the river in a canoe, on a visit to a trader who resided amongst the habitations on the other shore.

After dinner, on his mentioning some curious scenes amongst the hills, some miles distance from the river, we agreed to spend the afternoon in observations on the mountains.

After riding near two miles through Indian plantations of Corn, which was well cultivated, kept clean of weeds and was well advanced, being near eighteen inches in height, and the Beans planted at the Corn-hills were above ground; we leave the fields on our right, turning towards the mountains and ascending through a delightful green vale or lawn, which conducted us in amongst the pyramidal hills and crossing a brisk flowing creek, meandering through the meads which continued near two miles, dividing and branching in amongst the hills; we then mounted their steep ascents, rising gradually by ridges or steps one above another, frequently crossing narrow, fertile dales as we ascended; the air feels cool and animating, being charged with the fragrant breath of the mountain beauties, the blooming mountain cluster Rose, blushing Rhododendron and fair Lilly of the valley: having now attained the summit of this very elevated ridge, we enjoyed a fine prospect indeed; the enchanting Vale of Keowe, perhaps as celebrated for fertility, fruitfulness and beautiful prospects as the Fields of Pharsalia or the Vale of Tempe: the town, the elevated peaks of the Jore mountains, a very distant prospect of the Jore village in a beautiful lawn, lifted up many thousand feet higher than our present situation, besides a view of many other villages and settlements on the sides of the mountains, at various distances and elevations; the silver rivulets gliding by them and snow white cataracts glimmering on the sides of the lofty hills; the bold promontories of the Jore mountain stepping into the Tanase river, whilst his foaming waters rushed between them.

After viewing this very entertaining scene we began to descend the mountain on the other side, which exhibited the same order of gradations of ridges and vales as on our ascent, and at length rested on a very expansive, fertile plain, amidst the towering hills, over which we rode a long time, through magnificent high forests, extensive green fields, meadows and lawns. Here had formerly been a very flourishing settlement, but the Indians deserted it in search of fresh planting land, which they soon found in a rich vale but a few miles distance over a ridge of hills. Soon after entering on these charming, sequestered, prolific fields, we came to a fine little river, which crossing, and riding over fruitful strawberry beds and green lawns, on the sides of a circular ridge of hills in front of us, and going around the bases of this promontory, came to a fine meadow on an arm of the vale, through which meandered a brook, its humid vapours bedewing the fragrant strawberries which hung in heavy red clusters over the grassy verge; we crossed the rivulet, then rising a sloping, green, turfy ascent, alighted on the borders of a grand forest of stately trees, which we penetrated on foot a little distance to a horse-stamp, where was a large squadron of those useful creatures, belonging to my friend and companion, the trader, on the sight of whom they assembled together from all quarters; some at a distance saluted him with shrill neighings of gratitude, or came prancing up to lick the salt out of his hand; whilst the younger and

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4 **Cowe,** a Cherokee town, in what is now Oconee County, South Carolina, bordering northern Georgia • 13 **Tanase,** Tennessee • 41 **Vale of Keowe.** The Keowee River forms the present boundary between Oconee and Pickens Counties • 43 **Pharsalia,** the central plain of Thessaly, renowned for Pompey's defeat there by Caesar (48 B.C.) • 43 **Tempe,** a valley in the north of Thessaly, between Mounts Olympus and Ossa, renowned for its beauty • 44 **Jore mountains,** apparently the southern extremity of the Blue Ridge • 76 **horse-stamp,** an enclosure or habitual standing-place for horses

more timorous came galloping onward, but coyly wheeled off, and fetching a circuit stood aloof, but as soon as their lord and master strewed the chrystaline salty bait on the hard beaten ground, they all, old and young, docile and timorous, soon formed themselves in ranks and fell to licking up the delicious morsel.

It was a fine sight; more beautiful creatures I never saw; there were of them of all colours, sizes and dispositions. Every year as they become of age he sends off a troop of them down to Charleston, where they are sold to the highest bidder.

Having paid our attention to this usefull part of the creation, who, if they are under our dominion, have consequently a right to our protection and favour. We returned to our trusty servants that were regaling themselves in the exuberant sweet pastures and strawberry fields in sight, and mounted again; proceeding on our return to town, continued through part of this high forest skirting on the meadows; began to ascend the hills of a ridge which we were under the necessity of crossing, and having gained its summit, enjoyed a most enchanting view, a vast expanse of green meadows and strawberry fields; a meandering river gliding through, saluting in its various turnings the swelling, green, turfy knolls, embellished with parterres of flowers and fruitful strawberry beds; flocks of turkies strolling about them; herds of deer prancing in the meads or bounding over the hills; companies of young, innocent Cherokee virgins, some busily gathering the rich fragrant fruit, others having already filled their baskets, lay reclined under the shade of floriferous and fragrant native bowers of Magnolia, Azalea, Philadelphus, perfumed Calycanthus, sweet Yellow Jessamine and cerulian Glycine frutescens, disclosing their beauties to the fluttering breeze, and bathing their limbs in the cool fleeting streams; whilst other parties, more gay and libertine, were yet collecting strawberries or wantonly chasing their companions, tantalizing them, staining their lips and cheeks with the rich fruit.

This sylvan scene of primitive innocence was enchanting, and perhaps too enticing for hearty young men long to continue as idle spectators.

In fine, nature prevailing over reason, we wished at least to have a more active part in their delicious sports. Thus precipitately resolving, we cautiously made our approaches, yet undiscovered, almost to the joyous scene of action. Now, although we meant no other than an innocent frolic with this gay assembly of hamadryades, we shall leave it to the person of feeling and sensibility to form an idea to what lengths our passions might have hurried us, thus warmed and excited, had it not been for the vigilance and care of some envious matrons who lay in ambush, and espying us gave the alarm, time enough for the nymphs to rally and assemble together; we however pursued and gained ground on a group of them, who had incautiously strolled to a greater distance from their guardians, and finding their retreat now like to be cut off, took shelter under cover of a little grove, but on perceiving themselves to be discovered by us, kept their station, peeping through the bushes; when observing our approaches, they confidently discovered themselves and decently advanced to meet us, half unveiling their blooming faces, incarnated with the modest maiden blush, and with native innocence and cheerfulness, presented their little baskets, merrily telling us their fruit was ripe and sound.

We accepted a basket, sat down and regaled ourselves on the delicious fruit, encircled by the whole assembly of the innocently jocose sylvan nymphs; by this time the several parties under the conduct of the elder matrons, had disposed themselves in companies on the green, turfy banks.

My young companion, the trader, by concessions and suitable apologies for the bold intrusion, having compromised the matter with them, engaged them to bring their collections to his house at a stipulated price, we parted friendly.

And now taking leave of these Elysian fields, we again mounted the hills, which we crossed, and traversing obliquely their flowery beds, arrived in town in the cool of the evening.

1774?-1776?-1791

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28 **companies . . . virgins.** One stanza from Wordsworth's "Ruth," composed in 1799, will illustrate the use which the English romantics made of Bartram's book. The Youth who broke Ruth's heart was from Georgia, and

> He told of girls—a happy rout!
> Who quit their folds with dance and shout,
> Their pleasant Indian towns,
> To gather strawberries all day long;
> Returning with a choral song
> When daylight is gone down.



Roger Williams

1603? • 1683

Roger Williams has an honored place in American history as the first vigorous proponent of the principles which stand first in the Bill of Rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The separation of church from state and the complete toleration of religious opinions, whatever they may be, are so basic to American democracy that it is easy to forget how rare they once were, and how bitter and long-continued a battle was necessary to achieve their general acceptance. As Nazi Germany revealed, the struggle is not merely a historical episode. Religious freedom is not even yet secure the world over. Roger Williams, whose central conviction was that the power of the civil state must not

Panel (l to r) Roger Williams teaching the Indians • Early meetinghouses, Sandown, New Hampshire, and Deerfield, Massachusetts • A New England preacher • Pulpit of St Botolph's Church, Boston, England

be used to enforce a specious uniformity of religious belief, speaks of a matter still crucial in the tangled affairs of humanity.

The exact date of Williams' birth is unknown because of the destruction of records in the Great Fire of London in 1666. He was born between 1603 and 1606 in London, the son of a moderately prosperous merchant. Sometime in his teens he learned shorthand and became the protégé of one of England's greatest lawyers, Sir Edward Coke (1552-1634). Through Coke's influence he entered Charterhouse School in 1621 and there did so well that he won a scholarship. With it and other rewards for his distinction as a student, he was able to take his B.A. degree in 1627 as a member of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, subscribing, as was required, to the authority of the King, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the Thirty-Nine Articles (the accepted body of divinity) in the Church of England.

It is probable that Williams went to the university with the intention of preparing for the law. After taking his degree, however, he continued at Cambridge as a student of divinity. Already Puritan in his sympathies, he was unable to accept the prospect presented by the ecclesiastical measures and appointments of Charles I, who obviously planned to suppress all nonconformity. In the winter of 1628-1629, therefore, Williams left the university to become the household chaplain of an Essex country gentleman who had connections with a number of the leading promoters of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. By May of 1629 he was considering migration to New England, and in December of 1630 he sailed for Massachusetts. Meanwhile he had suffered the humiliation of having his proposal of marriage to a young lady rejected by her aunt on the ground of his low social rank, and had married a lady's maid—on the rebound but, as it turned out, very happily. By 1630 he had arrived at Separatist convictions; he believed, that is to say, that the individual congregation should be the ultimate authority in church government and that the civil state should not be permitted to enforce uniformity.

Williams' religious and political convictions did not become apparent, however, until he arrived in New England. There, chosen teacher of the church in Boston, he refused the post because that congregation still wished to regard themselves as Anglicans. Chosen teacher at Salem, where the church was Separatist, he was unable to take the post after John Winthrop and other officials remonstrated with the Salem people. He then spent some two years at Plymouth, working as a laborer and acquainting himself with the language and customs of the Indians—a missionary work for which all New England had cause to be thankful later. In the latter part of 1633 he returned to Salem; here followed the series of events which brought Williams into conflict with the ruling oligarchy of the Bay Colony and eventually resulted in his banishment. Much has been written about these events, which are intricately bound up with the political development of Massachusetts; it is sufficient here to note that the main points at issue were two: the validity of the royal charter upon which were based all titles to land in the colony, and the power of the civil magistrates to enforce religious conformity. Williams, through his acquaintance with the customs of the Indians, had come to believe that their land had been unjustly taken from them, and he had strenuously denied the right of the General Court to make laws regulating the churches. His congregation at Salem supported him until the civil authorities, in close consultation with the more conservative clergy, exerted strong economic pressure upon Salem. Finally, in 1635, he was banished, to find refuge with friendly Indians in what is now Rhode Island.

The remainder of Williams' life is a complicated story of religious and political events in a frontier colony. He left Separatism to join the first Baptist church to be organized in America; but a few months later he decided that he could belong to no church and became a Seeker, acknowledging no authority but the Bible and the works of God and waiting for the light of revelation. At the same time, he devoted himself to organizing a new colony where all churches should be free from civil control. Circumstances favored him. To lands purchased from the Indians there came settlers, many of them exiles like himself from the more authoritarian colonies. In 1644 Williams visited England, where he found the temper of the Puritans in power more akin to his own than to that of the Bay Colony; he was able to obtain a charter granting full self-government to the Providence Plantations. Later charters in 1655 and 1663 confirmed the first, and despite many internal and external difficulties a colony which separated church from state succeeded and eventually became the model for a nation.

Roger Williams the man is much better remembered

than Roger Williams the writer. *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643) is, however, one of the most readable of the seventeenth-century books about the Indians. He was also the author of a lengthy tract against the doctrines of the founder of the Society of Friends, *George Fox Digg'd out of His Burrowes* (Boston, 1676). His chief activity as a writer was connected with two periods of residence in London, on behalf of his fellow settlers in Rhode Island. He was there in 1643-1644, at the time of the meeting of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and again in 1652-1654, when the Puritan Commonwealth became a Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell. His associates in London included many famous men, among them John Milton; and the situation there called forth his most sustained literary work, a series of pamphlets in which he debated the subject of persecution for cause of conscience (as we would say now, freedom of thought) with John Cotton, one of the ministers who had been responsible for his banishment from Massachusetts.

The Works of Roger Williams, Narragansett Club Publications, 6 vols., Providence, 1866-1874 • James Ernst, **Roger Williams, New England Firebrand**, New York, 1932 • S. H. Brockunier, **The Irrepressible Democrat: Roger Williams**, New York, 1940 • James Ernst, **The Political Thought of Roger Williams**, University of Washington Publications in Language and Literature, Vol. VI, No. 1, Seattle, 1929

From

The Bloudy Tenent

Of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience, Discussed, in a Conference Between Truth and Peace

The debate between John Cotton and Roger Williams on religious liberty began with the appearance of **A Letter of Mr. John Cotton to Mr. Williams**, published in London in the fall of 1643, at a time when the Westminster Assembly was debating the reorganization of the Church of England. In it Cotton defended the Bay Colony for banishing Williams and incidentally argued in favor of enforced uniformity of religion. Williams countered in January with **Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered**, following it the next month with **Queries of Highest Consideration**, in which he advocated separation of church and state. In July, moreover, he published **The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.** He was then in London and so sympathetic with the Levellers, one of the most democratic of the extreme Puritan parties, that he asserted in **The Bloudy Tenent** that the foundation of the civil power lies in the people and "that such Governments as are by them erected and established, have no more power, nor for no longer time, than the civill power or people consenting and agreeing shall betrust them with." Parliament decided that such remarks were dangerous enough to justify an order that the book be burned by the public hangman. It was perhaps fortunate for Williams that he published it anonymously.

Cotton remained in Boston but the debate went on. **His Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven and Power Thereof**, an argument for a Congregational establishment, was published in 1644, and another work, **The Controversies Concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion Truly Stated**, appeared in 1646. He answered Williams specifically in 1647 with **The Bloudy Tenent Washed, and Made White in the Bloud of the Lambe** and **A Reply to Mr. Williams His Examination, and Answer of the Letter Sent to Him by John Cotton.** The discussion was concluded five years later, in 1652, with Williams' **The Bloudy Tenent Yet More Bloody: By Mr. Cottons Endevour to Wash It White in the Blood of the Lambe.**

Since all these books are interdependent, each being organized in terms of its predecessor, they are difficult to represent adequately in short space. The selection which follows consists of the introduction and the first two chapters of **The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.** Only a part of Williams' argument is included, but the humanity of his position, the dialogue method which he used, and the occasional eloquence of his style are sufficiently evident.

tions, Kingdomes, Cities, Townes, to finde out precious *Truth?*

Truth. The like enquiries in my flights and travells have I made for *Peace,* and still am told, she hath left the *Earth,* and fled to *Heaven.*

Peace. Deare *Truth,* What is the *Earth* but a *dungeon of darknesse,* where *Truth* is not?

Truth. And what's the *Peace* thereof but a fleeting *dreame,* thine *Ape* and *Counterfeit?*

Peace. O where's the Promise of the *God* of *Heaven,* that *Righteousnes* and *Peace* shall *kisse* each other?

Truth. Patience (sweet *Peace*) these *Heavens* and *Earth* are growing *Old,* and shall be changed like a *Garment,* Psal. 102. They shall melt away, and be burnt up with all the *Works* that are therein; and the most high *Eternall Creatour,* shall gloriously create *New Heavens* and *New Earth,* wherein dwells *Righteousnesse,* 2 Pet. 3. Our *kisses* then shall have their *endlesse* date of pure and sweetest ioyes? till then both *Thou* and *I* must hope, and wait, and beare the furie of the *Dragons* wrath, whose *monstrous Lies* and *Furies* shall with himselfe be cast into the *lake* of *Fire,* the *second death,* Revel. 20.

Peace. Most precious Truth, thou knowest we are both pursued and laid for: Mine *heart* is full of sighes, mine *eyes* with teares: Where can I better vent my full oppressed *bosome,* then into *thine,* whose faithfull *lips* may for these few houres revive my drooping wandring *spirits,* and here begin to *wipe Teares* from mine eyes, and the eyes of my dearest *Children?*

Truth. Sweet daughter of the *God* of *Peace,* begin; powre out thy *sorrowes,* vent thy *complaints:* how joyfull am I to improve these precious Minutes to revive our *Hearts,* both thine and mine, and the hearts of all that *love* the *Truth* and *Peace,* Zach. 8.

Peace. Deare Truth, I know thy *birth,* thy *nature,* thy *delight.* They that know thee, will *prize* thee farre above themselves and lives, and *sell themselves* to *buy thee.* Well spake that famous *Elizabeth* to her famous *attorney* Sir *Edward Coke:* Mr. *Attourney,* goe on as thou hast begun, and still plead, not *pro Domina Regina,* but *pro Domina Veritate.*

Truth. 'Tis true, my *Crowne* is high, my *Scepter's* strong to breake down *strongest holds,* to throw down highest *Crownes* of all that plead (though but in thought) against me. Some few there are, but oh how few are valiant for the *Truth,* and dare to *plead* my *Cause,* as my *Witnesses* in sack-cloth, Revel. 11. While all men's *Tongues* are bent like *Bowes* to shoot out lying words against Me!

Peace. O how could I spend *eternall dayes* and *endlesse dates* at thy holy feet, in listning to the precious Oracles of thy mouth! All the Words of thy mouth are *Truth,* and there is no *iniquity* in them; Thy *lips* drop as the hony-combe. But oh! since we must part anon, let us (as thou saidst) improve our *Minutes,* and (according as thou promisedst) revive me with thy words, which are sweeter then the honey and the honey-combe.

Chapter II

Deare *Truth,* I have two sad *Complaints:*

Great complaints of Peace.

First, the most sober of thy *Witnesses,* that dare to *plead* thy *Cause,* how are they charged to be *mine Enemies, contentious, turbulent, seditious?*

Secondly, Thine *Enemies,* though they speake and raile against thee, though they outragiously *pursue, imprison, banish, kill* thy faithfull *Witnesses,* yet how is all vermillion'd o're for *Justice* 'gainst the *Heretieks?* Yea, if they kindle coales, and blow the flames of *devouring Warres,* that leave neither *Spirituall* nor *Civill State,* but burns up *Branch* and *Root,* yet how doe all pretend an *holy War?* He that *kills,* and hee that's *killed,* they both cry out, It is for *God,* and for their *conscience.*

Persecutors seldom plead Christ, but Moses for their Author.

Tis true, nor one nor other seldome dare to plead the mighty Prince *Christ Jesus* for their *Authour,* yet both (both *Protestant* and *Papist*) pretend they have spoke with *Moses* and the *Prophets,* who all, say they (before *Christ* came) allowed such *holy persecutions, holy Warres* against the enemies of holy *Church.*

Truth. Deare Peace (to ease thy first *complaint*) tis true, thy dearest *Sons,* most like their mother, *Peace-keeping, Peace-making* Sons of *God,* have borne and still must beare the *blurs* of *troublers* of *Israel,* and

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21 Dragons wrath, Satan's wrath. Revelation 20 2 "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan. . . ." There are many echoes of the Book of Revelation in this chapter • 41 pro . . . Veritate, not for Mistress Queen, but for Mistress Truth

turners of the *World* upside downe. And tis true againe, what *Salomon* once spake: The *beginning* of *strife* is as when one letteth out *Water*, therefore (saith he) leave off *contention* before it be medled with. This *Caveat* should keepe the *bankes* and *sluces* firme and strong, that *strife*, like a *breach of waters*, breake not in upon the sons of men.

Yet *strife* must be distinguished: It is *necessary* or *unnecessary*, *godly* or *ungodly*, *Christian* or *unchristian*, &c. **Strife distinguished.**

It is *unnecessary*, *unlawfull*, *dishonourable*, *ungodly*, *unchristian*, in most cases in the world, for there is a *possibility* of keeping *sweet Peace* in most cases, and if it be *possible*, it is the expresse command of *God* that *Peace* be kept, *Rom.* 13. **1. Ungodly strife.**

Againe, it is *necessary*, *honourable*, *godly*, &c. with *civill* and earthly *weapons* to *defend* the *innocent*, and to *rescue* the oppressed from the violent *pawes* and *jawes* of oppressing persecuting *Nimrods*, Psal. 73. Job 29. **2. Godly strife.**

It is as *necessary*, yea more *honourable*, *godly*, and *Christian*, to *fight* the *fight* of *faith*, with *religious* and *spirituall Artillery*, and to *contend earnestly* for the *faith* of *Jesus*, *once* delivered to the *Saints* against all *opposers*, and the *gates* of *earth* and *hell*, *men* or *devils*, yea against *Paul* himselfe, or an *Angell* from *heaven*, if he bring any other *faith* or *doctrine*, *Jude* vers. 4. *Gal.* 1. 8.

Peace. With the *clashing* of such *Armes* am I never *wakened*. Speake once againe (deare Truth) to my second *complaint* of bloody *persecution*, and devouring *wars*, marching under the colours of upright *Justice*, and holy *Zeale*, &c. **A threefold dolefull cry. Christs worship is his bed, Cant. 1. 16.**

Truth. Mine eares have long beene filled with a threefold dolefull *Outcry*.

First, of one hundred forty Foure thousand *Virgins* (*Rev.* 14.) forc'd and ravisht by *Emperours*, *Kings* and *Governours* to their beds of *worship* and *Religion*, set up (like *Absaloms*) on high in their severall *States* and *Countries* **False worship therefore is a false bed.**

Secondly, the cry of those precious *soules* under the *Altar* (*Rev.* 6.) the *soules* of such as have beene persecuted and slaine for the testimony and *witnesse* of *Jesus*, whose *bloud* hath beene spilt like *water* upon the *earth*, and that because they have held fast the *truth* and *witnesse* of *Jesus*, against the *worship* of the *States* and *Times*, compelling to an *uniformity* of *State Religion*. **The cry of the soules under the Altar.**

These *cries* of *murthered Virgins* who can sit still and *heare?* Who can but run with zeale inflamed to prevent the *deflowring* of *chaste soules*, and spilling of the *bloud* of the *innocent? Humanity* stirs up and prompts the *Sonnes* of men to draw *materiall swords* for a *Virgins chastity* and *life*, against a *ravishing murtherer?* And *Piety* and *Christianity* must needs awaken the *Sons* of *God* to draw the *spirituall sword* (the Word of God) to preserve the *chastity* and *life* of *spirituall Virgins*, who abhorre the spirituall *defilements* of *false worship*, *Rev.* 14.

Thirdly, the *cry* of the *whole earth*, made *drunke* with the *bloud* of its *inhabitants*, slaughtering each other in their *blinded zeale*, for *Conscience*, for *Religion*, against the *Catholickes*, against the *Lutherans*, &c. **A cry of the whole earth.**

What fearfull *cries* within these twenty years of hundred *thousands* men, women, children, fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, brethren, sisters, old and young, high and low, *plundred*, *ravished*, *slaughtered*, *murthered*, *famished?* And hence these cries, that men fling away the *spirituall sword* and *spirituall artillery* (in *spirituall* and *religious* causes) and rather trust for the suppressing of each others *God*, *Conscience*, and *Religion* (as they suppose) to an *arme* of *flesh*, and *sword* of *steele?*

Truth. Sweet Peace, what hast thou there?

Peace. Arguments against *persecution* for cause of *Conscience.*

Truth. And what there?

Peace. An *Answer* to such *Arguments*, contrarily maintaining such *persecution* for cause of *Conscience.*

Truth. These *Arguments* against such persecution, and the *Answer* pleading for it, written (as *Love* hopes) from godly *intentions*, *hearts*, and *hands*, yet in a marvellous different *stile* and *manner*. The *Arguments* against *persecution* in *milke*, the *Answer* for it (as I may say) in *bloud*. **The wonderfull providéce of God in the writing of the Arguments against persecution in Milke.**

The *Authour* of these *Arguments* (against *persecution*) (as I have beene informed) being committed by

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2 Salomon. See Proverbs 17:14 • 5 Caveat, warning • 41 like Absaloms. See II Samuel 15

some then in power, *close prisoner* to *Newgate,* for the witnesse of some *truths* of *Jesus,* and having not the use of *Pen* and *Inke,* wrote these *Arguments* in *Milke,* in sheets of Paper, brought to him by the *Woman* his *Keeper,* from a friend in *London,* as the *stopples* of his *Milk bottle.*

In such Paper written with *Milk* nothing will appeare, but the way of reading it by *fire* being knowne to this *friend* who received the Papers, he transcribed and kept together the Papers, although the *Author* himselfe could not correct, nor view what himselfe had written.

It was in *milke,* tending to soule *nourishment,* even for *Babes* and Sucklings in *Christ.*

It was in *milke,* spiritually *white,* pure and innocent, like those *white horses* of the *Word* of *truth* and *meeknesse,* and the *white Linnen* or *Armour* of *righteousnesse,* in the *Army* of *Jesus. Rev.* 6. & 19.

It was in *milke,* soft, meeke, peaceable and gentle, tending both to the *peace* of *soules,* and the *peace* of *States* and Kingdomes.

The Answer writ in Bloud.

Peace. The *Answer* (though I hope out of milkie pure intentions) is returned in *bloud: bloudy* & slaughterous *conclusions; bloudy* to the *souls* of all men, forc'd to the *Religion* and *Worship* which every civil State or Common-weale agrees on, and compells all subjects to in a dissembled *uniformitie.*

Bloudy to the *bodies,* first of the holy *witnesses* of *Christ Jesus,* who testifie against such invented worships.

Secondly, of the *Nations* and Peoples slaughtering each other for their severall respective Religions and Consciences.

1644?·1644

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8 way . . . fire, that is, by heating paper so that the writing appears

Cotton Mather

1663 · 1728

Pedant, neurotic, megalomaniac, reactionary, benighted witch hunter—so has Cotton Mather come to be known to later generations, who have accepted him as the best example of New England Puritanism gone to seed. There is truth in the judgment, or enough so that no one is likely to grow fond of either the man or the writer; and yet to understand Cotton Mather is possibly a sure way to explore the intellectual labyrinth of provincial America in the period between 1680 and 1728.

Mather's outward life was uneventful. He was born in Boston in 1663, the son of the Rev. Increase Mather and the grandson of the Rev. John Cotton. Of his boyhood, if it can be called that, we know very little except that he was incredibly pious and industrious and that he suffered from an impediment in his speech. Writing of his early life, for the benefit of his son, he lamented "early Ebullitions of *Original Sin,*" but confessed that at the age of seven or eight he was composing forms of prayer for his schoolmates and rebuking them for "their wicked *words* and *ways.*" "And sometimes," he added, "I suffered from them, the persecution of not only *Scoffs* but Blows also for my Rebukes." At eleven, according to the same account, he wrote and spoke Latin with great facility, had gone through most of the New Testament in Greek, and had begun his Hebrew grammar. When he received his B.A. degree from Harvard College in 1678, he was fourteen, the youngest graduate then on record. His stammering relieved (convincing evidence to him of God's special favor), he put aside his plan of becoming a physician to



follow his family's calling, the ministry. After taking his M A in 1681, he continued to assist his father at the Second, or Old North, Church, where he was installed as co-minister in 1685. There he remained all his life, marrying three times, burying most of his fifteen children, preaching literally thousands of sermons, and writing untiringly. He published 444 separate items, and great quantities of material are still extant in manuscript.

Outside of his personal idiosyncrasies, which were many and, at this distance, unpleasant, Mather was handicapped chiefly by nostalgia. He suffered from a lifelong yearning for the good old days when a New England clergyman wielded virtually sovereign power and regarded himself, quite rightly, as playing a leading rôle in a world-wide drama. Doubtless the good old days were never quite what Cotton Mather thought they were, and the Puritan Revolution not as all-important as it seemed. So intent was Mather upon preserving the "old New England way" that he was in many ways backward-looking, committed to a delaying action against new forces. Although he was never such a popular leader as his father, he was so prolific a writer that he has come to represent to many people the whole story of American Puritanism, a result which he himself would have regarded as unfortunate.

His most famous books, and indeed the bulk of his works, are best interpreted as efforts to strengthen the position of the church in a society which was growing steadily more worldly. *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693), the classic account of the tragedy of Salem witchcraft, is a monument to credulity, but it is also the result of a conviction, which Cotton Mather shared with pious and intelligent men on both sides of the Atlantic, that to give up a belief in spirits was to sell out to materialism. The vast *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) was designed to bind New Englanders to the religion of their forefathers by arousing pride in their spiritual inheritance. *The Christian Philosopher* (1721) sought to demonstrate that science was "no *Enemy,* but a mightly and wondrous *Incentive to Religion.*" And the *Manuductio ad Ministerium* (1726), which Moses Coit Tyler regarded as the most vigorous and entertaining of Mather's books, was his mature advice to prospective candidates for the ministry.

For all his efforts, Mather did not reinvigorate religion, as Jonathan Edwards was soon to do. He wrote too much and thought too little for that. His inveterate habit of paraphrasing freely from the books of others, on the theory that he could thereby edify his provincial audience, kept him almost always upon the surface of the world of ideas. There, however, he ranged widely, and often modified or shifted his intellectual position. *The Christian Philosopher, Manuductio ad Ministerium,* and *Bonifacius* (1710), better known as *Essays to Do*

Panel (l. to r.)· Boston's first Town House • Cotton Mather at 65; from the Pelham portrait • Harvard in 1726 • Title page of Mather's Magnalia Christi Americana • Old State House, Boston

Good, show an amazing adjustment to scientific, humanitarian, and philanthropic movements which were, in the end, to build a new kind of society. Mather did not always understand their implications, but he was so anxious to be well-informed and informative about all branches of knowledge that his books are a mirror of their age.

Sermons, biographies, theological treatises, essays, handbooks for his parishioners, letters, poems, and various other types of writing flowed steadily from his pen. He also kept one of the fullest and most self-revealing of Puritan diaries. He cultivated and defended an elaborate, allusion-studded style which modern readers are likely to find pedantic and antiquated. Both his literary forms and his style, however, were intimately related to provincial Boston, seeking to preserve its traditions and to maintain its place in the sun.

Selections from Cotton Mather, ed. K. B. Murdock, New York, 1926 • T. J. Holmes, Cotton Mather, a Bibliography of His Works, 3 vols., Cambridge, 1940 • Barrett Wendell, Cotton Mather, the Puritan Priest, New York, 1891

From

The Wonders of the Invisible World

The Salem "witchcraft episode" began at Salem Village, now Danvers, Massachusetts, during the winter of 1691-1692, with the nine-year-old daughter, the eleven-year-old niece, and the West Indian servant, half Indian, half Negro, of the Rev. Samuel Parris. The children became "afflicted"; that is, they flew into fits and complained of being pricked, bitten, pinched, or choked by invisible hands, of being tormented by apparitions. When a gathering of ministers examined them and decided they were bewitched, they named, after much urging, three tormentors: an obvious neurotic, a miserable old woman, and Tituba, the West Indian servant. In March, publicly examined by Salem magistrates, Tituba confessed to the practice of witchcraft, naming the other two women as her accomplices. Soon there were more accusations, more examinations, more commitments to jail, and by May about one hundred persons were confined, awaiting trial, partly because the community was rural and disunited, full of bitterness among neighbors and relatives.

To meet this situation the new governor, Sir William Phips, appointed a special court of oyer and terminer, to investigate and to try the witchcraft cases. On evidence such as appears in this selection, the seven magistrates sent Bridget Bishop to the gallows in June. In July five others were hanged; in August, six; in September, fourteen. One eighty-year-old man was pressed to death beneath heavy stones because, fearing that his conviction would forfeit the property he hoped to leave his family, he refused to plead either guilty or not guilty. Forty-five individuals confessed themselves witches and thus escaped death; all those who were executed maintained their innocence to the end. Altogether, more than two hundred persons were accused or suspected. At length the accusations became so numerous and so absurd that the prosecutions were abandoned, the confessed witches freed, and before many years Samuel Sewall was publicly asking forgiveness for his share in the judicial decisions (see p. 37).

Scholars have disagreed violently about the extent to which Increase and Cotton Mather should be held responsible for this amazing episode. Their apologists point out (1) that the vast majority of educated men of the day, whatever their religious affiliations, believed in witchcraft; (2) that Increase Mather, who returned from England in the midst of the mania, urged the utmost caution in weighing the evidence; and (3) that Cotton Mather wrote his account of the trials out of friendship for the magistrates involved. Against these facts one must weigh the intangible effects of Increase Mather's **Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences** (1684) and Cotton Mather's **Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions** (1689). Both books collected accounts of Satan's activities against New England, with the intention of combating materialism and religious indifference. Although the

Mathers were following in the footsteps of such English writers as Joseph Glanvill, Henry More, and Richard Baxter, it is possible that their stories of supernatural phenomena contributed to the state of mind which lay behind the explosion at Salem Village.

The Wonders of the Invisible World, for which many generations have condemned Cotton Mather as benighted and superstitious, was written in September and October 1692. Two Boston imprints appeared in 1693, and there were three London editions in the same year. More recently it has been several times reprinted, together with Robert Calef's **More Wonders of the Invisible World** (London, 1700), a rationalist's attack upon the procedure and the principals of the Salem outbreak.

THE TRIAL OF BRIDGET BISHOP, ALIAS, OLIVER AT THE COURT OF OYER AND TERMINER HELD AT SALEM, JUNE 2, 1692

I

She was Indicted for Bewitching of several persons in the Neighbourhood, the Indictment being drawn up, according to the *Form* in such Cases usual And pleading, *Not Guilty,* there were brought in several persons, who had long undergone many kinds of Miseries, which were preternaturally Inflicted, and generally ascribed unto an horrible *Witchcraft.* There was little Occasion to prove the *Witchcraft;* it being Evident and Notorious to all Beholders. Now to fix the *Witchraft* on the Prisoner at the Bar, the first thing used, was, the Testimony of the *Bewitched;* whereof, several Testify'd That the *Shape* of the Prisoner did oftentimes very grievously Pinch them, choak them, Bite them, & Afflict them; urging them to write their Names in a *Book,* which the said Spectre called, *Ours.* One of them did further Testify, that it was the *Shape* of this Prisoner, with another, which one Day took her from her Wheel, and carrying her to the River side, threatned there to Drown her, if she did not Sign to the Book mentioned: which yet she refused. Others of them did also Testify, that the said *Shape* did in her Threats brag to them that she had been the Death of sundry persons, then by her Named; that she had *Ridden* a man, then likewise Named. Another Testify'd, the Apparition of *Ghosts* unto the Spectre of *Bishop,* crying out, *You Murdered us!* About the Truth whereof, there was in the matter of Fact, but too much Suspicion.

II. It was Testify'd, That at the Examination of the Prisoner, before the Magistrates, the Bewitched were extreamly Tortured If she did but cast her Eyes on them, they were presently struck down; and this in such a manner as there could be no Collusion in the Business. But upon the Touch of her Hand upon them, when they lay in their Swoons, they would immediately Revive; and not upon the Touch of any ones else. Moreover, upon some Special Actions of her Body, as the shaking of her Head, or the Turning of her Eyes, they presently and painfully fell into the like postures. And many of the like Accidents now fell out, while she was at the Bar. One at the same time testifying, That she said, *She could not be Troubled to see the Afflicted thus Tormented.*

III. There was Testimony likewise brought in, that a man striking once at the place, where a Bewitched person said, the *Shape* of this *Bishop* stood, the bewitched cryed out, that he had Tore her Coat, in the place then particularly specify'd; and the Womans Coat, was found to be Torn in that very place.

IV. One *Deliverance Hobbs,* who had Confessed her being a Witch, was now Tormented by the Spectres, for her Confession. And she now Testify'd, That this *Bishop,* tempted her to Sign the *Book* again, and to Deny what she had Confess'd. She affirmed, that it was the Shape of this Prisoner, which whipped her with Iron Rods, to compel her thereunto. And she affirmed, that

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Text. the first Boston edition, 1693 • **Bridget Bishop,** previously married to a man named Oliver, had long had a bad reputation in Salem Village and had once before been accused of witchcraft. She was the first to be tried and hanged • 3 **the Form . . . usual,** based upon procedures of the English common law, developed during frequent prosecutions for witchcraft under statutes adopted in 1563 and 1604 and not repealed until 1736 • 12 **Shape . . . Prisoner.** The crucial point in the prosecutions was "spectral evidence." The magistrates acted on the assumption that evil spirits could not assume the shape of innocent persons. This meant that if an accuser testified under oath to seeing the apparition of his tormentor, and identified it, his very accusation was accepted as proof of guilt • 14 **Book,** the large black book in which a witch inscribed his name to seal his contract with Satan The signature was ordinarily made with the blood of the signer, as in the Faust legend • 17 **Wheel,** spinning wheel • 23 **Ridden a man,** an allusion to the folk belief in incubi, from which the term "nightmare" is derived • 30 **cast her Eyes,** an instance of the "evil eye," upon which the Salem judges pondered at some length

this *Bishop* was at a General Meeting of the Witches, in a Field at *Salem*-Village and there partook of a Diabolical Sacrament, in Bread and Wine then Administred!

V. To render it further Unquestionable, that the prisoner at the Bar, was the Person truly charged in THIS *Witchcraft,* there were produced many Evidences of OTHER *Witchcrafts,* by her perpetrated. For Instance, *John Cook* testify'd, that about five or six years ago, One morning, about Sun-Rise, he was in his Chamber assaulted by the *Shape* of this prisoner: which Look'd on him, grin'd at him, and very much hurt him, with a Blow on the side of the Head: and that on the same day, about Noon, the same *Shape* walked in the Room where he was, and an Apple strangely flew out of his Hand, into the Lap of his mother, six or eight foot from him.

VI. *Samuel Gray,* testify'd, That about fourteen years ago, he wak'd on a Night, & saw the Room where he lay, full of Light; & that he then saw plainly a Woman between the Cradle, and the Bed-side, which look'd upon him. He Rose, and it vanished; tho' he found the Doors all fast. Looking out at the Entry-Door he saw the same Woman, in the same Garb again; and said, *In Gods Name, what do you come for?* He went to Bed, and had the same Woman again assaulting him. The Child in the Cradle gave a great schreech, and the Woman Disappeared. It was long before the Child could be quieted; and tho' it were a very likely thriving Child, yet from this time it pined away, and after divers months dy'd in a sad Condition. He knew not *Bishop,* nor her Name; but when he saw her after this, he knew by her Countenance, and Apparrel, and all Circumstances, that it was the Apparition of this *Bishop,* which had thus troubled him.

VII. *John Bly* and his wife, testify'd, that he bought a sow of *Edward Bishop,* the Husband of the prisoner; and was to pay the price agreed, unto another person. This Prisoner being Angry that she was thus hindred from fingring the money, Quarrell'd with *Bly.* Soon after which the Sow, was taken with strange Fits; Jumping, Leaping, and Knocking her head against the Fence; she seem'd Blind and Deaf, and would neither eat nor be suck'd. Whereupon a neighbour said, she believed the Creature was *Over-Looked;* & sundry other circumstances concurred, which made the Deponents Belive that *Bishop* had Bewitched it.

VIII. *Richard Coman* testify'd, that eight years ago, as he lay Awake in his Bed, with a Light Burning in the Room, he was annoy'd with the Apparition of this *Bishop,* and of two more that were strangers to him; who came and oppressed him so that he could neither stir himself, nor wake any one else; and that he was the night after, molested again in the like manner; the said *Bishop* taking him by the Throat, and pulling him almost out of the Bed. His Kinsman offered for this cause to lodge with him; and that Night, as they were Awake, Discoursing together: this *Coman* was once more visited, by the Guests which had formerly been so troublesome; his kinsman being at the same time strook speechless and unable to move Hand or Foot. He had laid his sword by him; which these unhappy spectres, did strive much to wrest from him; only he held too fast for them. He then grew able to call the People of his house; but altho' they heard him, yet they had not power to speak or stirr, until at last, one of the people crying out, *what's the matter!* the spectres all vanished.

IX. *Samuel Shattock* testify'd, That in the Year 1680, this *Bridget Bishop,* often came to his house upon such frivolous and foolish errands, that they suspected she came indeed with a purpose of mischief. Presently whereupon his eldest child, which was of as promising Health & Sense, as any child of its Age, began to droop exceedingly, & the oftener that *Bishop* came to the House, the worse grew the Child. As the Child would be standing at the Door, he would be thrown and bruised against the Stones, by an Invisible Hand, and in like sort knock his Face against the sides of the House, and bruise it after a miserable manner. Afterwards this *Bishop* would bring him things to Dy, whereof he could not Imagine any use, and when she paid him a piece of Money, the Purse and Money were unaccountably conveyed out of a Lock'd box, and never seen more. The Child was immediately hereupon taken with terrible fits, whereof his Friends thought he would have dyed: indeed he did almost nothing but cry and Sleep for several Months together: and at length his understanding

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1 **General . . . Witches,** the Sabbat, the sacrilegious and obscene parody of the mass and other sacraments which constituted a central feature of the folklore of witchcraft. Goethe used it skillfully in **Faust,** Hawthorne in **Young Goodman Brown;** it survives in the Hallowe'en figures of witches on broomsticks, on which they were supposed to ride to such meetings • **16 Samuel Gray,** who, according to Calef, repented his "wholly groundless" accusation on his deathbed

was utterly taken away. Among other Symptoms of an Inchantment upon him, one was, that there was a Board in the Garden, whereon he would walk; and all the invitations in the world could never fetch him off. About Seventeen or Eighteen years after, there came a Stranger to Shattocks House, who seeing the Child, said, *This poor Child is Bewitched; and you have a Neighbour living not far off, who is a Witch.* He added, *Your Neighbour has had a falling out with your Wife; and she said in her Heart, your Wife is a proud Woman, and she would bring down her Pride in this Child:* He then Remembred, that *Bishop* had parted from his Wife in muttering and menacing Terms, a little before the Child was taken Ill. The abovesaid Stranger would needs carry the Bewitched Boy with him, to *Bishops* House, on pretence of buying a pot of Cyder. The Woman Entertained him in furious manner; and flew also upon the Boy, scratching his Face till the Blood came, and saying, *Thou Rogue, what? dost thou bring this Fellow here to plague me?* Now it seems the man had said before he went, that he would fetch Blood of *her.* Even after the Boy was follow'd with grievous Fits, which the Doctors themselves generally ascribed unto *Witchcraft;* and wherein he would be thrown still into the *Fire* or the *Water,* if he were not constantly look'd after; and it was verily believed that *Bishop* was the cause of it.

X. *John Louder* testify'd, that upon some little controversy with *Bishop* about her fowles, going well to Bed, he did awake in the Night by moonlight, and did see clearly the likeness of this woman grievously oppressing him; in which miserable condition she held him unable to help him self, till near Day. He told *Bishop* of this; but she deny'd it, and threatned him, very much. Quickly after this, being at home on a Lords Day, with the doors shutt about him, he saw a Black Pig approach him; at which he going to kick, it vanished away. Immediately after, sitting down, he saw a Black Thing Jump in at the Window, & come & stand before him. The Body, was like that of a Monkey, the Feet like a Cocks, but the Face much like a mans. He being so extreemly affrighted, that he could not speak; this Monster spoke to him, and said, *I am a Messenger sent unto you, for I understand that you are in some Trouble of Mind, and if you will be ruled by me, you shall want for nothing in this world.* Whereupon he endeavoured to clap his hands upon it; but he could feel no substance, and it jumped out of the window again; but immediately came in by the Porch, though the Doors were shut, and said, *You had better take my Counsel!* He then struck at it with a stick, but struck only the Ground-sel, and broke the Stick. The Arm with which he struck was presently Disenabled, and it vanished away. He presently went out at the Back-Door, and spyed, this *Bishop,* in her Orchard, going toward her House; but he had not power to set one foot forward unto her. Whereupon returning into the House, he was immediately accosted by the Monster he had seen before; which Goblin was now going to Fly at him. whereat he cry'd out, *The whole Armour of God, be between me and you!* So it sprang back, and flew over the Apple Tree; shaking many Apples off the Tree, in its flying over. At its Leap, it flung Dirt with its Feet, against the Stomack of the man; whereon he was then struck Dumb, and so continued for three Days together. Upon the producing of this Testimony, *Bishop* deny'd that she knew this Deponent· yet their two Orchards joined, and they had often had their Little Quarrels for some years together.

XI. *William Stacy, Testifyed,* That receiving Money of this *Bishop* for work done by him, he was gone but a matter of Three Rods from her, and looking for his money, found it unaccountably gone from him. Some time after, *Bishop* asked him whether his Father would grind her grist for her? He demanded why? She Reply'd, *Because Folks count me a witch.* He answered, *No Question, but he will grind it for you.* Being then gone about six Rods from her, with a small Load in his Cart, suddenly the Off-wheel slump't and sunk down into an Hole, upon plain ground, so that the Deponent, was forced to get help for the Recovering of the wheel. But stepping Back to look for the Hole which might give him this disaster, there was none at all to be found. Some time after, he was waked in the Night; but it seem'd as Light as Day, and he perfectly saw the shape of this *Bishop,* in the Room, Troubling of him; but upon her going out, all was Dark again. He charg'd *Bishop*

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27 **some little controversy,** suggestion that neighborhood quarrels and malice formed part of the explanation for the witchcraft episode • 35 **Black Pig,** evidently the animal "familiar" of the witch, supposedly nourished by blood or by the supernatural teat mentioned in Section XIII • 38 **Black Thing,** the Devil • 51 **Ground-sel,** threshold • 59 **The whole . . . God,** an allusion to the traditional protection from witchcraft the name of God, the Bible, a crucifix or some other sacred object

afterwards with it: and she deny'd it not; but was very angry. Quickly after, this Deponent having been threatned by *Bishop,* as he was in a dark Night going to the Barn, he was very suddenly taken or lifted from the ground, and thrown against a stone wall; After that, he was again hoisted up and thrown down a Bank, at the end of his House. After this again, passing by this *Bishop,* his Horse with a small load, striving to Draw, all his Gears flew to pieces, and the Cart fell down; and this deponent going then to lift a Bag of corn, of about two Bushels; could not budge it, with all his might.

Many other pranks of this *Bishops,* this deponent was Ready to testify. He also testify'd, that he verily Believed, the said *Bishop,* was the Instrument of his Daughter, *Priscilla's* Death; of which suspicion, pregnant Reasons were assigned.

XII. To Crown all, *John Bly,* and *William Bly,* Testify'd, That being Employ'd by *Bridget Bishop,* to help take down the Cellar-wall of the old House, wherein she formerly Lived, they did in Holes of the said old Wall, find several *Poppets,* made up of Rags, and Hogs Brussels, with Headless Pins in them, the points being outward. Whereof she could now give no Account unto the Court, that was Reasonable or Tolerable.

XIII. One thing that made against the Prisoner was, her being evidently convicted of *Gross Lying* in the Court, several Times, while she was making her Plea. But besides this, a Jury of Women, found a preternatural Teat upon her Body; but upon a second search, within three or four Hours, there was no such thing to be seen. There was also an account of other people whom this woman had afflicted. And there might have been many more, if they had been, enquired for. But there was no need of them.

XIV. There was one very strange thing more, with which the Court was newly Entertained. As this Woman was under a Guard, passing by the Great and Spacious Meeting-House of *Salem,* she gave a Look towards the House And immediately a *Daemon* Invisibly Entring the Meeting-house, Tore down a part of it, so that tho' there were no person to be seen there, yet the people at the Noise running in, found a Board, which was strongly fastned with several Nails, transported unto another quarter of the House.

1692·1693

21 **Poppets,** images. The practice described is commonplace in primitive magic and survives in voodooism

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From

Curiosa Americana

Cotton Mather's curiosity about science won him election as Fellow of the Royal Society of London in 1713. Between 1712 and 1724 he sent to that organization over eighty letters on more or less scientific subjects. Professor Murdock has shown that Mather's facts were drawn from an account sent him by John Winthrop (1681-1747), a descendant of the famous governor of that name, on September 12, 1717.

10 d. X m. 1717

S$_r$

Tho' we gott so far onward at the Beginning of another Winter, yett we have not forgott the Last: which at the Latter End whereof, we were Entertained & overwhelmed with a *Snow,* which was attended with some Things that were uncommon enough, to afford matter for a letter from us The *Winter* was not so bad as that wherein *Tacitus* tells us that *Corbulo* made his Expedition against the *Parthians.* Nor like that which proved so fatal to the Beasts & Birds, in the Days of the Emperour *Justinian* [nor?] that wherein the very Fishes were killed under the Freezing Sea, when *Phocas* did as

Text. from **Selections from Cotton Mather,** ed K B Murdock • 1 **10d.** X m. 1717, December 10 Prior to 1752, March rather than January was accounted the first month of the year • 9 Tacitus (55?-117?), Roman historian Corbulo, a famous general under Claudius and Nero, was executed at the latter's orders in 67 A D In all probability, Mather's allusions in his first paragraph were derived from some dictionary or classical encyclopedia which listed the great snows of antiquity • 12 Justinian (483-565), Emperor of the eastern Roman empire • 13 Phocas, usurper of the empire of Constantinople, 602-610, and a notoriously cruel tyrant

much to the men whom Tyrants treat like the Fishes of the Sea. But the Conclusion of our *Winter* was hard enough, & was too formidable to be easily forgotten: and of a peece with what you had in *Europe*, a year before. The *Snow* was the Chief Thing that made it so. For tho' rarely does a *Winter* pass us, wherein we may not say with *Pliny, Ingens Hyeme Nivis apud nos copia;* yett the Last *Winter* brought with it a *Snow* that Excelled them all. A *Snow* tis true, not equal to that which once fell and Lay Twenty Cubits high, about the Beginning of *October,* in the parts about the *Euxine Sea.* Nor to that, which the French Annals tell us, kept falling for twenty Nine weeks together. Nor to several mentioned by *Boethius,* wherein vast Numbers of people, and of Cattel, perished; Not to those that *Strabo* finds upon *Caucasus* and *Rhodiginus* in *Armenia.* But yett such an one, and attended with such Circumstances, as may deserve to be Remembred.

On the Twentieth of the Last *February,* there came on a *Snow,* which being added unto what had covered the ground a few Days before, made a Thicker Mantle for our Mother than what was usual: And the Storm with it, was for the following Day so violent, as to make all communication between the Neighbours every where to cease. People for some Hours could not pass from one side of a Street unto another, and the poor Women, who happened at this critical time to fall into Travail, were putt into Hardships which anon produced many odd Stories for us. But on the Twenty-fourth Day of the Month comes *Pelion* upon *Ossa.* Another *Snow* came on, which almost buried the Memory of the former: With a Storm so furious, that Heaven laid an Interdict on the Religious Assemblies throughout the countrey on this Lords-day, the like whereunto had never been seen before. The Indians near an hundred years old, affirm, that their Fathers never told them of any thing that equall'd it. Vast Numbers of Cattel were destroy'd in this Calamity; Whereof some that were of the Stronger Sort, were found standing Dead on their Legs, as if they had been alive, many weeks after, when the Snow melted away. And others had their Eyes glazed over the Ice at such a rate, that being not far from the Sea, they went out of their way, and drowned them there.

One Gentleman, on whose Farms, there were now Lost above eleven hundred *Sheep,* which with other cattel were Interred (Shall I Say, or Inniv'd) in the Snow; writes me That there were Two *Sheep* very singularly circumstanced. For no Less than Eight & Twenty Days after the Storm, the people pulling out the Ruines of above an hundred Sheep, out of a Snow-bank, which Lay sixteen foot high drifted over them, there were Two found alive, which had been there all this time, & kept themselves alive by Eating the Wool of their Dead Companions. When they were taken out, they shed their own Fleeces, but soon gott into good Case again.

Sheep were not the only creatures that Lived unaccountably for whole weeks without their usual Sustenance, entirely buried in the *Snow-drifts.* The *Swine* had a share with the *Sheep* in Strange Survivals. A man had a couple of Young *Hogs,* which he gave over for Dead; But on the twenty-seventh day after their Burial, they made their way out of a *Snow-bank,* at the bottom of which they had found a Little Tansy to feed upon.

The *Poultry* as unaccountably survived as these. *Hens* were found alive, after *Seven Days; Turkeys* were found alive, after *five & Twenty Days;* Buried in the *Snow,* and at a Distance from the Ground; and altogether destitute of any thing to feed them.

The Number of Creatures, that kept a *Rigid Fast,* shutt up in *Snow,* for several weeks together, & were found alive after all, have yielded surprizing stories to us.

The Wild Creaturss of the Woods, (the *Outgoings of the Evening*) made their Descent as well as they could in this Time of Scarcity for them, towards the Sea-side. A vast multitude of Deer for the Same Cause taking the Same Couse, & the Deep Snow Spoiling them of their only Defence: which is, *To Run,* they became such a prey to those Devourers, that it is thought, not one in Twenty Escaped.

But here again occurr'd a Curiosity.

These carniverous Sharpers, and especially the *Foxes,* would make their *Nocturnal Visits,* to the Pens, where

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7 **Ingens . . . copia.** We have had uncommonly heavy snows this winter • 10 **Twenty Cubits,** thirty or more feet The ancient cubit varied from eighteen to twenty-two inches • 11 **Euxine Sea,** Black Sea • 14 **Boethius** (475?-525?), Roman philosopher • 15 **Strabo** (60 B C.?-24 A D ?), Greek geographer • 16 **Rhodiginus** (1450?-1525), Italian philologist, author of **Antiquae Lectiones** (1516) • 30 **Pelion upon Ossa.** Both are mountains in Thessaly. The giants, at war with the gods, supposedly tried to pile one mountain upon the other, in order to reach the heavens. The expression, of course, means one great thing on top of another • 46 **Inniv'd.** Mather is playing with the Latin **terra** (earth) and **nix** (snow)

the people had their Sheep defended from them. The poor Ewes big with young were so terrified with the frequent Approaches of the *Foxes*, & the Terror had such Impression on them, that most of the *Lambs* brought forth in the Spring following, were of Monsieur *Reinard's* complexion, when the Dams were all either White or Black.

It was remarkable, that immediately after the Fall of the Snow, an infinite multitude of Sparrows, made their Appearance; but then after a short continuance all disappeared.

It is incredible, how much Damage was done to the *Orchards;* For the Snow freezing to a Crust, as high as the Boughs of the Trees, anon Splitt them to peeces. The Cattle also, walking on the Crusted Snow, a dozen foot from the Ground, so fed upon the Trees as very much to damnify them.

The Ocean was in a prodigious Ferment, and after it was over, Vast Heaps of Little Shells were driven ashore, where they were never seen before. Mighty Shoals of Porpoises, also kept a Playday in the Disturbed waves of our Harbours.

The odd Accidents befalling many poor people, whose Cottages were totally covered with the Snow, & the very tops of their Chimneys to be seen, would afford a Story; But there not being any Relacion to philosophy in them, I forbear them. And now, *I am* Satis Terris Nivis.—And here is enough of my Winter-tale. If it serve to no other purpose, yett it will give me an opportunity to tell you, That Nine months ago, I did a thousand times wish myself with you in *Gresham-Colledge*, which is never so horribly Snow'd upon. But instead of so great a satisfaction, all I can attain to, is the pleasure of talking with you in this Epistolary way, and subscribing myself,

Syr, Yours with an Affection that knows no Winter

[Cotton Mather]

D^r^ Woodward

1717•1926

27 **Satis Terris Nivis,** weary of the snow-covered ground • 31 **Gresham-College,** an institution founded with funds left by Sir Thomas Gresham (1519-1579). It was the meeting-place of the Royal Society of London

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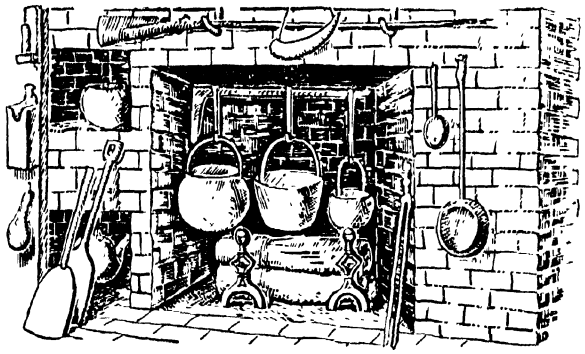
From

Manuductio ad Ministerium

The Manuductio ad Ministerium, or Directions for a Candidate of the Ministry (Boston, 1726), has been reprinted three times—in 1781, 1789, and by the Facsimile Text Society in 1938. It describes the proper studies for the prospective clergyman, evaluating all the arts and sciences. Professor Perry Miller has recently pointed out that it represents both a "mature tradition of Puritan scholarship in America" and certain striking departures from the seventeenth-century positions. Particularly forward-looking are Mather's emphasis on practical conduct, his minimizing of logic, his enthusiasm for science, and his failure to insist upon the traditional "doctrine-reasons-uses" pattern of the sermon. His comments on style, however, are a defense of the method and conviction of his own work, akin neither to the "plain style" of his predecessors nor to the fashions of the age of Addison and Steele. The passage is a digression in the course of Mather's comments on literature.

There has been a deal of a do about a STYLE; So much, that I must offer you my Sentiments upon it. There is a *Way of Writing*, wherein the Author endeavours, that the Reader may have *something to the Purpose* in every Paragraph. There is not only a *Vigour* sensible in

Text. the Boston edition of 1726 • 1 **a deal . . . do,** particularly by the enthusiasts for the New Science of Francis Bacon, Robert Boyle, and the Royal Society



every *Sentence,* but the Paragraph is embellished with *Profitable References,* even to something beyond what is *directly spoken.* Formal and Painful *Quotations* are not studied, yet all that could be learnt from them is insinuated The Writer pretends not unto *Reading,* yet he could not have writ as he does if he had not *Read* very much in his Time; and his Composures are not only a *Cloth of Gold,* but also stuck with as many *Jewels,* as the Gown of a Russian Embassador. This *Way of Writing* has been decried by many, and is at this Day more than ever so, for the same Reason, that in the old Story, the *Grapes* were decried, *That they were not Ripe.* A Lazy, Ignorant, Conceited Sett of Authors, would perswade the whole Tribe, to lay aside that *Way of Writing,* for the same Reason that one would have perswaded his Brethren to part with the Encumbrance of their *Bushy Tails.* But however *Fashion* and *Humour* may prevail, they must not think that the Club at their *Coffee-House* is, *All the World;* but there will always be those, who will in this Case be governed by *Indisputable Reason;* And who will think, that the real Excellency of a Book will never ly in *saying of little;* That the less one has for his Money in a Book, 'tis really the more Valuable for it, and that the less one is instructed in a Book, and the more of Superfluous *Margin,* and Superficial *Harangue,* and the less of *Substantial Matter* one has in it, the more tis to be accounted of. And if a more Massy *Way of Writing* be never so much disgusted at This Day, a *Better Gust* will come on, as will some other Thing, *quæ jam Cecidere.* In the mean time, Nothing appears to me more Impertinent and Ridiculous than the *Modern Way,* [I cannot say, *Rule;* For they have *None!*] of *Criticising.* The Blades that set up for *Criticks,* I know not who constituted or commission'd 'em!—they appear to me, for the most part as *Contemptible,* as they are a *Supercilious* Generation. For indeed no Two of them have the same *Style;* and they are as intollerably Cross-grain'd and severe in their Censures upon one another, as they are upon the rest of Mankind. But while each of them, conceitedly enough, sets up for the *Standard of Perfection,* we are entirely at a Loss which *Fine* to follow. Nor can you easily find any one thing wherein they agree for their *Style,* except perhaps a perpetual Care to give us Jejune and Empty Pages, without such *Touches of Erudition* (to speak in the *Style* of an Ingenious Traveller) as may make the Discourses less *Tedious,* and more *Enriching,* to the Mind of him that peruses them. There is much Talk of a *Florid Style,* obtaining among the Pens, that are most in Vogue, but how often would it puzzle one, even with the best Glasses to find the *Flowres!* And if they were to be Chastized for it, it would be with as much of Justice, as *Jerom* was, for being a *Ciceronian.* After all, Every Man will have his own *Style,* which will distinguish him as much as his *Gate:* And if you can attain to that which I have newly described, but always writing so as to give an *Easy Conveyance* unto your *Idea's,* I would not have you by any *Scourging* be driven out of your *Gate,* but if you must confess a *Fault* in it, make a Confession like that of the Lad, unto his Father while he was beating him for his *Versifying.*

However, since every Man will have his own Style, I would pray, that we may learn to treat one another with mutual *Civilities,* and *Condescensions,* and handsomely *indulge* one another in this, as *Gentlemen* do in other Matters.

I wonder what ails People, that they can't let *Cicero* write in the *Style* of *Cicero,* and *Seneca* write in the (much other!) *Style* of *Seneca;* and own that Both may please in their *several Ways.*—But I will freely tell you; what has made me consider the *Humouristr* that set up for *Criticks upon Style,* as the most *Unregardable Set of*

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11 **the old Story,** of the fox and the grapes, in Aesop's **Fables,** a book which apparently was one of Mather's favorites In 1692 he wrote and circulated in manuscript a number of "Political Fables" • 29 **Gust,** taste • 30 **quæ jam Cecidere,** which now to cut short, i e , so much for that • 53 **Jerom,** St Jerome (331?-420), famous as a stylist The remark is attributed to Erasmus • 68 **Seneca,** Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B C ?-65 A D), noted for his short, epigrammatic sentences and the rhetorical ornament, in marked contrast to the long sentences of Cicero

Mortals in the World, is This! Far more Illustrious *Criticks* than any of those to whom I am now bidding Defiance, and no less Men than your *Erasmus's,* and your *Grotius's,* have taxed the *Greek Style* of the *New Testament,* with I know not what *Solæcisms* and *Barbarisms;* And, how many *learned Folks* have Obsequiously run away with the Notion! Whereas 'tis an Ignorant and an Insolent *Whimsey;* which they have been guilty of. It may be (and particularly by an Ingenious *Blackwal,* it has been) Demonstrated, That the Gentlemen are mistaken in every one of their pretended Instances; All the Unquestionable *Classicks,* may be brought in, to convince them of their Mistakes. Those Glorious Oracles are as *pure Greek* as ever was written in the World; and so Correct; so Noble, so Sublime is their *Style,* that never any thing under the Cope of Heaven, but the Old Testament, has equall'd it.

1726

3 **Erasmus's . . . Grotius's,** Desiderius Erasmus (1467?-1536) and Hugo de Groot (1583-1645) Erasmus edited the New Testament in Greek, with a Latin translation, Grotius was the author of a commentary or "annotations" on the Bible • 10 **Blackwal,** Anthony Blackwall (1674-1730), author of **The Sacred Classicks Defended** (1725)

Jonathan Edwards

1703 • 1758

To most Americans Jonathan Edwards is either the founder of the family which has compared so favorably with the ill-fated Jukes that it provides the stock argument for the importance of heredity and education or, and perhaps more commonly, the most sulphurous hellfire preacher of the colonial period To the specialists, however, Edwards is the greatest theologian that America has yet produced, unquestionably one of the most original minds in our country's history. By uniting a passionate love for God and His authority with a genius for logic and system, he made himself the foremost reinterpreter of Calvinism in America; and he has remained, down to the present day, a great bulwark of religion through his powerful affirmation of faith in the reality and the primacy of spiritual experience. Something of his stature is suggested by the fact that he has been compared with such church fathers as Tertullian, St. Augustine, and Calvin; with the philosophers Spinoza, Leibnitz, Berkeley, and Kant, and, for his synthesis of the attitudes of an age, with such widely separated figures as Dante and Emerson.

Edwards was born in 1703 at East Windsor, Connecticut, where his father was minister. Surrounded by sisters (he was the fifth child and the only son in a family of eleven), he received his early education at home. He entered Yale College when that institution was wandering from one little Connecticut town to another, and was graduated before he was seventeen. He spent two additional years at Yale in the study of theology and, after an interval of eight months during which he preached in a Presbyterian church in New York City, three more years as a tutor. Early in 1727 he joined his grandfather, the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, in the church at Northampton, Massachusetts, married,



and became full minister there upon Stoddard's death in 1729.

As a clergyman Edwards developed an absorbing interest in what we would now call the psychology of religion. He welcomed the "awakenings" which came periodically in his church, and eventually announced that he could not conscientiously admit to communion those persons who had made no public relation of religious experience. His congregation, influenced as much, perhaps, by personal as by doctrinal considerations, were unwilling to accept this return to the stricter ways of the first generation in New England, and in 1750 Edwards was dismissed. From 1751 until 1757 he was pastor at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, at that time an Indian mission village on the frontier. He then accepted a call to the presidency of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), where he died of smallpox three months after his installation.

The rise of Edwards to leadership as a preacher and theologian is to be traced chiefly in his writings. His precocity as a thinker is demonstrated by a considerable body of philosophical papers written during his residence at Yale and published piecemeal after his death "Of Insects," "Of Being," "Colours," and "Notes on the Mind" have often been cited as evidence of his genius for logical analysis. They show that he developed, independently of George Berkeley, the English philosopher, that philosophical position known as "subjective idealism," which holds that matter has reality only in terms of the perceiving mind. Although this position was fundamental to Edwards' entire intellectual life, he did not publish his conclusions and therefore had no genuine influence upon the philosophical thought of his age.

Soon after his settlement at Northampton, however, he began to publish sermons and case histories which show his absorption in the phenomena of conversion. *A Divine and Supernatural Light* (1734) carefully expounds his belief that a mystical faith is likewise the most logical. *A Faithful Narrative* (1737) describes the first great revival in his church. *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742) supports the activities of George Whitefield, an English Methodist who had preached with great effect throughout the colonies, in the face of ridicule by the leading ministers of Boston. These works merit comparison with a famous book of the twentieth century William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) Despite occasional overseriousness, notably in the description of the emotional antics of very young children, Edwards must not be dismissed as a ranting revivalist, playing upon unstable individuals and reveling in the physical contortions of repenting sinners. He could be as skeptical of mass emotion as anyone, but he did believe thoroughly in the possibility and the supreme importance of true conversion He had experienced it himself; he thought he could distinguish between the genuinely "awakened" and the momentarily excited He lent his support, therefore, to those who sought to arouse men to the insuffi-

Panel (l to r.). A colonial prayer meeting • Jonathan Edwards' church, the Third Meeting-House at Northampton, Massachusetts • Edwards at the age of 37 • His home at Northampton

Secondly, IT evidences his Blessedness also, as it intimates that this Knowlege is above any that *Flesh and Blood* can *reveal.* "This is such Knowlege as my *Father* "*which is in heaven* only can give: It is too high and "excellent to be communicated by such Means as other "Knowlege is. Thou art *blessed,* that thou knowest "that which GOD alone can teach thee.

THE Original of this Knowlege is here declared; both negatively and positively. *Positively,* as GOD is here declared the Author of it. *Negatively,* as 'tis declared that *Flesh and Blood* had *not revealed it.* GOD is the Author of all Knowlege and Understanding whatsoever: He is the Author of the Knowlege, that is obtained by human Learning: He is the Author of all moral Prudence, and of the Knowlege and Skill that Men have in their secular Business. Thus it is said of all in *Israel* that were *wise-hearted,* and skill'd in Embroidering, that GOD had *fill'd* them *with the spirit of Wisdom.* Exod. 28. 3.

GOD is the Author of such Knowlege; but yet not so but that *Flesh and Blood reveals it.* Mortal Men are capable of imparting the Knowlege of human Arts and Sciences, and Skill in temporal Affairs. GOD is the Author of such Knowlege by those Means: *Flesh and Blood* is made use of by GOD as the *mediate* or *second* Cause of it; He conveys it by the Power and Influence of natural Means. But this spiritual Knowlege, spoken of in the Text, is what *God* is the Author of, and none else: He *reveals it* and *Flesh and Blood reveals it not.* He imparts this Knowlege immediately, not making use of any intermediate natural Causes, as he does in other Knowlege.

What had passed in the preceding Discourse naturally occasioned CHRIST to observe this; because the Disciples had been telling, how others did not know him, but were generally mistaken about him, and divided and confounded in their Opinions of him; but *Peter* had declared his assured Faith that he was the *Son of GOD.* Now it was natural to observe, how it was not *Flesh and Blood* that had *revealed it to* him, but GOD; for if this knowlege were dependent on natural Causes or Means, how came it to pass that they, a Company of poor Fishermen, illiterate Men, and Persons of low Education, attain'd to the knowlege of the Truth; while the Scribes and Pharisees, Men of vastly higher advantages, and greater knowlege and sagacity in other matters, remain'd in Ignorance? This could be owing only to the gracious distinguishing Influence and Revelation of the SPIRIT of GOD. Hence, what I would make the Subject of my present Discourse from these Words, is this

DOCTRINE, VIZ.

That there is such a thing, as A SPIRITUAL *and* DIVINE LIGHT, *immediately imparted to the Soul by* GOD, *of a different Nature from any that is obtain'd by natural Means.*

IN what I say on this Subject at this Time, I would

I. SHOW what this *divine Light* is.

II. HOW it is given *Immediately by* GOD, and not *obtain'd by natural Means.*

III. SHOW the Truth of the Doctrine.

AND then conclude with a brief Improvement.

I. I would show *what this* spiritual and divine Light *is.* And in order to it would show,

First, IN a few things *what it is not.* And here,

1. THOSE *Convictions that natural Men may have of their Sin and Misery* is not *this* spiritual and divine Light. Men in a natural Condition may have Convictions of the Guilt that lies upon them, and of the anger of GOD, and their Danger of divine Vengeance. Such Convictions are from *Light* or Sensibleness of Truth: That some Sinners have a greater Conviction of their Guilt and Misery than others, is because some have more *Light,* or more of an Apprehension of Truth than others. And this *Light* and Conviction may be from the Spirit of GOD; *the* SPIRIT *convinces* Men *of Sin:* but yet nature is much more concern'd in it than in the Communication of that *spiritual and divine Light* that is spoken of in the *Doctrine;* 'tis from the Spirit of GOD only as assisting *natural Principles,* and not as infusing any new *Principles. Common Grace* differs from *special,* in that it influences only by assisting of *Nature;* and not by imparting *Grace,* or bestowing any thing *above* Nature. The *Light* that is obtain'd, is wholly *natural,* or of no superiour *Kind* to what meer *Nature* attains to; tho' more of *that kind* be obtained, than would be obtained if Men were left wholly to themselves. Or *in other Words, Common Grace* only assists the Faculties of the Soul to do that more fully, which they do by *Nature;* as *natural* Conscience, or Reason, will by meer *Nature* make a Man sensible of Guilt, and will accuse and condemn him when he has done amiss. Conscience is a

Principle natural to Men; and the Work that it doth *naturally*, or of itself, is to give an Apprehension of *right* and *wrong;* and to suggest to the Mind the Relation that there is between right and wrong, and a Retribution. The Spirit of GOD, in those Convictions which unregenerate Men sometimes have, assists Conscience to do this Work in a further Degree, than it would do if they were left to themselves: He helps it against those Things that tend to stupify it, and obstruct its Exercise. But in the *renewing* and *sanctifying* work of the HOLY GHOST, those things are wrought in the Soul that are *above* Nature; and of which there is nothing of the like kind in the Soul *by* Nature; and they are caused to exist in the Soul habitually, & according to such a stated Constitution or Law, that lays such a Foundation for Exercises in a continued Course, as is called a *Principle* of nature. Not only are remaining *Principles* assisted to do their work more freely and fully, but those *Principles* are restored that were utterly destroyed by the Fall; and the mind thence-forward habitually exerts those acts that the Dominion of Sin had made it as wholly destitute of, as a dead Body is of vital Acts.

THE Spirit of GOD acts in a very different manner in the one Case, from what he doth in the other. He may indeed act *upon* the Mind of a natural Man; but he acts *in* the Mind of a Saint as an *indwelling vital Principle.* He acts upon the Mind of an unregenerate Person as an *extrinsick occasional Agent;* for in acting upon them he doth not unite himself to them; for notwithstanding all his Influences that they may be the Subjects of, they are still *sensual having not the Spirit. Jude* 19. But he unites himself with the Mind of a Saint, takes him for his Temple, actuates and influences him as a new, *supernatural Principle* of Life and Action. There is this Difference; that the Spirit of GOD in acting in the Soul of a Godly Man, exerts and communicates himself there in his own proper Nature. Holiness is the proper Nature of the Spirit of GOD. The HOLY SPIRIT operates in the Minds of the Godly, by uniting himself to them, and living in them, and exerting his own Nature in the Exercise of their Faculties. The Spirit of GOD may act upon a Creature, and yet not, in acting communicate himself. The Spirit of GOD may act upon inanimate Creatures; as the *Spirit moved upon the Face of the Waters,* in the Beginning of the Creation: So the Spirit of GOD may act upon the minds of Men, many ways, and communicate himself no more than when he acts upon an inanimate Creature. *For Instance.* He may excite Thoughts in them, may assist their natural Reason and Understanding, or may assist other natural Principles, and this without any Union with the Soul, but may act, as it were, as upon an external Object. But as he acts in his holy Influences, and spiritual Operations, he acts in a way of peculiar Communication of himself; so that the Subject is thence denominated *Spiritual.*

2. THIS spiritual and divine Light *don't consist in any Impression made upon the Imagination.* 'Tis no *Impression* upon the Mind, as tho' one saw any thing with the bodily Eyes: 'Tis no *Imagination* or *Idea* of an outward *Light* or Glory, or any Beauty of Form or Countenance, or a visible Lustre or Brightness of any Object. The *Imagination* may be strongly impress'd with such things; but this is not *spiritual Light.* Indeed when the Mind has a lively Discovery of spiritual things, and is greatly affected by the Power of divine Light, it may, and probably very commonly doth, much affect the *Imagination:* So that *Impressions* of an outward Beauty or Brightness, may accompany those spiritual Discoveries. But *spiritual Light* is not that *Impression upon the Imagination,* but an exceeding different thing from it. Natural Men may have lively *Impressions* on their *Imaginations;* and we cant determine but that the Devil, *who transforms himself into an Angel of Light,* may cause *Imaginations* of an outward Beauty, or visible Glory, and of Sounds and Speeches, and other such Things; but these are Things of a vastly inferiour Nature to *Spiritual Light.*

3. THIS spiritual Light *is not the suggesting of any new Truths, or Propositions not contain'd in the Word of* GOD. This suggesting of new Truths or Doctrines to the Mind, independent of any antecedent Revelation of those Propositions, either in Word or Writing, is Inspiration; such as the Prophets and Apostles had, and such as some Enthusiasts pretend to. But this *spiritual Light* that I am speaking of, is quite a different thing from Inspiration: It reveals no new Doctrine, it suggests no new Proposition to the Mind, it teaches no new thing of GOD, or CHRIST, or another World, not taught in the Bible; but only gives a due Apprehension of those things that are taught in the word of GOD.

4. *'Tis not every affecting View that Men have of the Things of Religion, that is this* spiritual and divine

Light. Men by meer Principles of Nature are capable of being *affected* with Things that have a special Relation to Religion, as well as other Things. A Person by meer Nature, for Instance, may be liable to be *affected* with the Story of JESUS CHRIST, and the sufferings he underwent, as well as by any other tragical Story: He may be the more *affected* with it from the Interest he conceives Mankind to have in it: Yea he may be *affected* with it without believing it; as well as a Man may be *affected* with what he reads in a Romance, or see's acted in a Stage Play. He may be *affected* with a lively and eloquent description of many pleasant things that attend the state of the Blessed in Heaven; as well as his Imagination be entertain'd by a romantick description of the pleasantness of Fairy Land, or the like. And that common belief of the truth of *the things of Religion,* that Persons may have from Education, or otherwise, may help forward their *affection.* We read in Scripture of many that were greatly *affected* with things of a religious nature, who yet are there represented as wholly graceless, and many of them very ill Men. A Person therefore may have *affecting views of the things of Religion,* and yet be very destitute of *spiritual Light. Flesh* and *Blood* may be the Author of this: One Man may give another an *affecting view* of divine things with but common assistance; but GOD alone can give a *spiritual* Discovery of them.

BUT I proceed to show,

Secondly, Positively, WHAT *this* spiritual and divine Light *is.*

AND it may be thus described, *A true sense of the divine Excellency of the things revealed in the Word of* GOD, *and a conviction of the truth and reality of them, thence arising.*

THIS *spiritual Light* primarily consists in the former of these, *viz.* a real sense and apprehension of the divine Excellency of things revealed in the Word of GOD. A spiritual and saving Conviction of the truth and reality of these things, arises from such a sight of their divine Excellency and Glory; so that this Conviction of their truth is an effect and natural consequence of this sight of their divine Glory. There is therefore in this *spiritual Light,*

1. *A true sense of the divine and superlative excellency of the things of Religion;* a real sense of the excellency of GOD and JESUS CHRIST, and of the work of Redemption, and the ways and works of GOD revealed in the Gospel. There is a *divine* and *superlative* Glory in these things; an Excellency that is of a vastly higher Kind, and more sublime Nature, than in other things; a Glory greatly distinguishing them from all that is earthly and temporal. He that is spiritually *enlightened* truly apprehends and sees it, or has a sense of it. He don't meerly rationally believe that GOD is Glorious, but he has a sense of the Gloriousness of GOD in his Heart. There is not only a rational belief that GOD is holy, and that Holiness is a good thing; but there is a sense of the Loveliness of GOD's Holiness. There is not only a speculatively judging that GOD is gracious, but a sense how amiable GOD is upon that Account; or a sense of the Beauty of this divine Attribute.

THERE is a twofold Understanding or Knowledge of Good that GOD has made the Mind of Man capable of. The *First,* that which is meerly *speculative* and *notional:* As when a Person only speculatively judges, that any thing is, which by the Agreement of Mankind, is called Good or Excellent, *viz.* that which is most to general Advantage, and between which and a Reward there is a suitableness; and the like. And the *other* is that which consists in the sense of the Heart: As when there is a sense of the Beauty, Amiableness, or Sweetness of a thing; so that the Heart is sensible of Pleasure and Delight in the presence of the *Idea* of it. In the *former* is exercised meerly the speculative Faculty, or the Understanding strictly so called, or as spoken of in Distinction from the Will or Disposition of the Soul. In the *latter* the Will, or Inclination, or Heart, are mainly concern'd.

THUS there is a Difference between *having an Opinion* that GOD is holy and gracious, and *having a sense* of the Loveliness and Beauty of that Holiness and Grace. There is a Difference between *having a rational Judgment* that Honey is sweet, and *having a sense* of its sweetness. A Man may have the *Former,* that knows not how honey tasts; but a Man can't have the Latter unless he has an *Idea* of the tast of Honey in his Mind. So there is a difference between *believing* that a Person is Beautiful, and *having a* sense of his Beauty. The *Former* may be obtain'd by hear-say, but the *Latter* only by seeing the Countenance. There is a wide difference between meer *speculative, rational Judging* any thing to be excellent, and *having* a sense of its Sweetness, and Beauty. The *Former* rests only in the Head, Speculation only is concern'd in it; but the Heart is concern'd in

the *Latter.* When the Heart is sensible of the Beauty and Amiableness of a Thing, it necessarily feels Pleasure in the Apprehension. It is implied in a Persons being heartily sensible of the Loveliness of a thing, that the *Idea* of it is sweet and pleasant to his Soul; which is a far different thing from having a rational Opinion that it is excellent.

2. THERE *arises from this* sense of divine Excellency of Things contain'd in the Word of GOD, *a Conviction of the Truth and Reality of them: and that either* directly, *or* indirectly.

First, *Indirectly,* and that two ways.

1. AS *the Prejudices that are in the Heart, against* the truth of divine things, *are hereby removed; so that the Mind becomes susceptive of the due Force of rational Arguments for their Truth.* The Mind of Man is naturally full of *Prejudices against the Truth of divine Things:* It is full of Enmity against the Doctrines of the Gospel; which is a disadvantage to those *Arguments* that prove their *Truth,* and causes them to lose their Force upon the Mind. But when a Person has discovered to him the divine excellency of Christian Doctrines, this destroys the Enmity, removes those *Prejudices,* and sanctifys the Reason, and causes it to lie open to the *Force of Arguments for their Truth.*

HENCE was the different Effect that CHRIST'S Miracles had to convince the Disciples, from what they had to convince the Scribes and Pharisees. Not that they had a stronger Reason, or had their Reason more improved; but their Reason was sanctified, and those blinding *Prejudices,* that the Scribes and Pharisees were under, were removed by the sense they had of the Excellency of CHRIST, and his Doctrine.

2. IT *not only removes the Hinderances of Reason, but positively helps Reason.* It makes even the speculative Notions the more lively. It engages the attention of the Mind, with the more Fixedness and Intenseness to that Kind of Objects; which causes it to have a clearer View of them, and enables it more clearly to see their mutual Relations, and occasions it to take more Notice of them. The *Ideas* themselves that otherwise are dim, and obscure, are by this Means impress'd with the greater Strength, and have a Light cast upon them; so that the Mind can better judge of them. As he that beholds the Objects on the Face of the Earth, when the Light of the Sun is cast upon them, is under greater Advantage to discern them in their true Forms, and mutual Relations, than he that sees them in a dim Star-light or Twilight.

The Mind having a sensibleness of the Excellency of divine Objects, dwells upon them with Delight; and the Powers of the Soul are more awaken'd and enliven'd to employ themselves in the Contemplation of them, and exert themselves more fully and much more to the Purpose. The Beauty and Sweetness of the Objects draws on the Faculties, and draws forth their Exercises: So that Reason it self is under far greater Advantages for its proper and free Exercises, and to attain its proper End, free of Darkness and Delusion. But,

SECONDLY, A true sense of the divine Excellency of the Things of GOD'S Word doth more *directly* and *immediately* convince of the Truth of them; And that because the Excellency of these things is so superlative. There is a Beauty in them that is so divine and Godlike, that is greatly and evidently distinguishing of them from things meerly human, or that Men are the Inventors and Authors of; a Glory that is so high and great, that when clearly seen, commands Assent to their Divinity and Reality. When there is an actual and lively Discovery of this Beauty and Excellency, it won't allow of any such Thought as that it is an Human work, or the Fruit of Mens Invention. This Evidence that they, that are spiritually *enlightned,* have of the Truth of the things of Religion, is a Kind of *intuitive* and *immediate* Evidence. They believe the Doctrines of GOD'S Word to be divine, because they see Divinity in them, i.e. They see a divine, and transcendent, and most evidently distinguishing Glory in them; such a Glory as, if clearly seen, don't leave Room to doubt of their being of GOD, and not of Men.

SUCH a Conviction of the Truth of Religion as this, arising, these Ways, from a sense of the divine Excellency of them, is that true spiritual Conviction, that there is in saving Faith. And this Original of it, is that by which it is most essentially distinguished from that common assent, which unregenerate Men are capable of.

II. I Proceed now to the second Thing proposed, *viz.* To show *how this Light is Immediately given by* GOD, *and not obtain'd by natural Means.* And here,

1. *'Tis not intended that the natural Faculties are not made Use of in it.* The *natural Faculties* are the Subject of this Light: And they are the Subject in such a Manner, that they are not meerly pasive, but active in it; the Acts and Exercises of Man's Understanding are con-

cern'd and made use of in it. GOD in letting in this *Light* into the Soul, deals with Man according to his Nature, or as a rational Creature; and makes Use of his human *Faculties.* But yet this *Light* is not the less *immediately* from GOD for that; tho' the *Faculties are made Use of,* 'tis as the Subject and not as the Cause; and that acting of the *Faculties* in it, is not the Cause, but is either implied in the Thing it self, (in the *Light* that is imparted) or is the Consequence of it. As the Use that we make of our Eyes in beholding various Objects, when the Sun arises, is not the Cause of the Light that discovers those Objects to us.

2. *'Tis not intended that outward Means have no Concern in this Affair.* As I have observed already, 'tis not in this Affair, as it is in Inspiration, where new Truths are suggested: for here is by this *Light* only given a due Apprehension of the same Truths that are revealed in the Word of GOD; and therefore it is not given without the Word. The Gospel is made Use of in this Affair: This *Light* is the *Light of the Glorious Gospel of* CHRIST 2. *Cor.* iv. 4. The Gospel is as a Glass, by which this *Light* is conveyed to us. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. *Now we see through a Glass*—But,

3. WHEN it is said that this *Light* is given immediately by GOD, and not obtained by natural Means, *hereby is intended, that 'tis given by* GOD *without making Use of any Means that operate by their own Power, or a natural Force.* GOD makes Use of Means; but 'tis not as mediate Causes to produce this Effect. There are not truly any second Causes of it; but it is produced by GOD *immediately.* The Word of GOD is no proper Cause of this Effect: It don't operate by any *natural Force* in it. The Word of GOD is only made Use of to convey to the Mind the Subject matter of this saving Instruction: And this indeed it doth convey to us by *natural Force* or Influence. It conveys to our Minds these and those Doctrines; it is the Cause of the Notion of them in our Heads, but not of the sense of the divine Excellency of them in our Hearts. Indeed a Person can't have *spiritual Light* without the Word. But that don't argue, that the Word properly causes that *Light.* The Mind can't see the Excellency of any Doctrine, unless that Doctrine be first in the Mind; but the seeing the Excellency of the Doctrine may be immediately from the Spirit of GOD; tho' the conveying of the Doctrine or Proposition it self may be by the Word. So that the Notions that are the Subject matter of this *Light,* are conveyed to the Mind by the Word of GOD; but that due sense of the Heart, wherein this *Light* formally consists, is immediately by the Spirit of GOD. *As for Instance,* that Notion that there is a CHRIST and that CHRIST is holy and gracious, is conveyed to the Mind by the Word of GOD: But the sense of the Excellency of CHRIST by reason of that Holiness and Grace, is nevertheless immediately the Work of the HOLY SPIRIT. I come now,

III. To show *the Truth of the Doctrine;* that is to show *that there is such a Thing as that spiritual Light that has been described, thus immediately let into the Mind by* GOD. And here I would shew briefly, that this Doctrine is both *scriptural,* and *rational.*

First, 'TIS SCRIPTURAL. My Text is not only full to the Purpose, but 'tis a Doctrine that the Scripture abounds in. We are there abundantly taught, that the Saints differ from the Ungodly in this, that they have the Knowlege of GOD, and a sight of GOD, and of JESUS CHRIST. I shall mention but few Texts of many; 1 John 3. 6. *Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, nor known him.* 3 John 11. *He that doth Good,* is of God; *but he that doth Evil, hath not seen* GOD. John 14. 19. *The world seeth me no more; but ye see me.* John 17.

3. *And this is Eternal Life, that they might know thee, the only true* GOD, *and* JESUS CHRIST *whom thou hast sent.* This Knowlege, or sight of GOD and CHRIST, can't be a meer speculative Knowlege; because it is spoken of as a seeing and knowing, wherein they differ from the Ungodly. And by these Scriptures it must not only be a different Knowlege in Degree and Circumstances, and different in its Effects; but it must be entirely different in Nature and Kind.

AND this Light and Knowlege is always spoken of as immediately given of GOD Mat. 11. 25, 26, 27. *At that time* JESUS *answered and said, I thank thee O Father Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes; even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no Man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any Man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Here this Effect is ascribed alone to the arbitrary Operation, and Gift of GOD, bestowing this Knowlege on whom he will, and distinguishing those with it, that have the least natural Advantage or Means for Knowlege, even

Babes, when it is denied to the *Wise* and *Prudent.* And the imparting of the Knowlege of GOD is here appropriated to the Son of GOD, as his sole Prerogative. And again, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *For* GOD *who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowlege of the Glory of* GOD *in the Face of* JESUS CHRIST. This plainly shows, that there is such a thing as a discovery of the divine superlative Glory and Excellency of GOD and CHRIST; and that peculiar to the Saints: and also that 'tis as immediately from GOD, as Light from the Sun: and that 'tis the immediate Effect of his Power and Will; for 'tis compared to GOD'S creating the Light by his powerful Word in the beginning of the Creation; and is said to be by the Spirit of the LORD, in the 18th verse of the preceding Chapter. GOD is spoken of as giving the Knowlege of CHRIST in Conversion, as of what before was hidden and unseen in that Gal. 1. 15, 16. *But when it pleased* GOD, *who separated me from my Mothers Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me*—. This Scripture also speaks plainly of such a Knowlege of the Word of GOD, as has been described, as the immediate gift of GOD. Psal. 119. 18. *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* What could the Psalmist mean, when he begged of GOD to *open* his *Eyes?* Was he ever blind? Might he not have Resort to the Law and see every Word and Sentence in it when he pleased? And what could he mean by those *wondrous Things?* Was it the wonderful Stories of the Creation, and Deluge, and Israel's passing thro' the red Sea, and the like? were not his Eyes open to read these strange things when he would? Doubtless by *wondrous Things in* GOD'S *Law,* he had Respect to those distinguishing and wonderful Excellencies, and marvellous Manifestations of the divine Perfections, and Glory, that there was in the Commands and Doctrines of the Word, and those Works and Counsels of GOD that were there revealed. So the Scripture speaks of a Knowlege of GOD'S Dispensation, and Covenant of Mercy, and Way of Grace towards his People, as peculiar to the Saints, and given only by GOD, Psal. 25. 14. *The Secret of the* LORD *is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his Covenant.*

AND that a true and saving Belief of the Truth of Religion is that which arises from such a Discovery, is also what the Scripture teaches. As John 6, 40. *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which* SEETH *the Son, and* BELIEVETH *on him, may have everlasting Life.* Where it is plain that a true Faith is what arises from a spiritual sight of CHRIST. And John 17. 6, 7, 8. *I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World*——. *Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee; for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.* Where CHRIST'S *manifesting* GOD'S *Name* to the Disciples, or giving them the Knowlege of God, was that whereby they knew that CHRIST'S Doctrine was *of* GOD, and that CHRIST himself was *of* him, proceeded *from* him, and was *sent* by him. Again John 12. 44, 45, 46. JESUS *cried and said, He that* believeth *on me,* believeth *not on me, but on him that sent me; And he that* seeth *me* seeth *him that sent me. I am come a* Light *into the World, that whosoever* Believeth *on me should not abide in* Darkness. Their Believing in CHRIST, and spiritually Seeing him, are spoken of as running parallel.

CHRIST condemns the Jews, that they did not know that he was the MESSIAH, and that his Doctrine was true, from an inward distinguishing Tast and Relish of what was divine, in *Luke* 12. 56, 57. He having there blamed the Jews, that though they could *discern the Face of the Sky and of the Earth,* and Signs of the Weather, that yet they could not *discern* those *Times;* or as tis expressed in *Matthew, the Signs of* those *Times;* He adds, *yea and why even of your own selves, judge ye not what is right?* i. e. without extrinsick *Signs.* "Why have ye not that sense of true Excellency, "whereby ye may distinguish that which is holy and "divine? Why have ye not that savour of the things of "GOD, by which you may see the distinguishing Glory, "and evident Divinity of me and my Doctrine?

THE Apostle *Peter* mentions it as what gave them (the Apostles) good and well grounded Assurance of the Truth of the Gospel, that they had seen the divine Glory of CHRIST. 2. *Pet.* 1. 16. *For we have not followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known unto you, the Power and Coming of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST, *but were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty.* The Apostle has Respect to that visible Glory of CHRIST which they saw in his Transfiguration: That Glory was

semblance of divine Holiness, Majesty, and Grace, that it evidently denoted him to be a divine Person. But if a sight of CHRIST's outward Glory might give a rational Assurance of his Divinity, why may not an Apprehension of his spiritual Glory do so too. Doubtless CHRIST'S spiritual Glory is in itself as distinguishing, and as plainly shewing his Divinity, as his outward Glory; and a great deal more: for his spiritual Glory is that wherein his Divinity consists; and the outward Glory of his Transfiguration shew'd him to be divine, only as it was a Remarkable Image or Representation of that spiritual Glory. Doubtless therefore he that has had a clear sight of the spiritual Glory of CHRIST, may say, *I have not followed cunningly devised Fables, but* have been an *Eye-witness of his Majesty,* upon as good Grounds as the Apostle, when he had Respect to the outward Glory of Christ, that he had seen.

But this brings me to what was proposed next *viz.* to show that,

Secondly, THIS Doctrine is RATIONAL.

1. 'TIS rational *to suppose that there is really such an Excellency in divine things, that is so transcendent and exceedingly different from what is in other things, that if it were seen would most evidently distinguish them.* We can't *rationally* doubt but that Things that are *divine,* that appertain to the supreme Being, are vastly different from Things that are *human;* that there is that God-like, high, and glorious Excellency in them, that does most remarkably difference them from the things that are of Men; insomuch that if the difference were but seen, it would have a convincing, satisfying influence upon any one, that they are what they are, viz. *divine.* What Reason can be offered against it? Unless we would argue that GOD is not remarkably distinguished in Glory from Men.

IF CHRIST should now appear to any One as he did on the Mount at his Transfiguration; or if he should appear to the World in the Glory that he now appears in Heaven, as he will do at the Day of Judgment; without doubt, the Glory and Majesty that he would appear in, would be such as would satisfy every One, that he was a divine Person, and that Religion was true: And it would be a most reasonable, and well grounded Conviction too. And why may there not be that Stamp of Divinity, or divine Glory on the word of GOD, on the Scheme and Doctrine of the Gospel, that may be in provided it be but seen? 'Tis rational to suppose, that when GOD speaks to the World, there should be something in his Word or Speech vastly different from MEN'S Word. Supposing that GOD never had spoken to the World, but we had Noticed that He was about to do it; that he was about to Reveal himself from Heaven, and speak to us immediately himself, in divine Speeches or Discourses, as it were from his own Mouth; or that he should give us a Book of his own inditing; after what manner should we expect that he would speak? Would it not be *rational* to suppose, that his Speech would be exceeding different from Men's Speech, that he should speak like a GOD; that is, that there should be such an Excellency and sublimity in his Speech or Word, such a Stamp of Wisdom, Holiness, Majesty, and other divine Perfections, that the word of Men, yea of the wisest of Men, should appear mean and base in Comparison of it? Doubtless it would be thought *rational* to expect this, and *unreasonable* to think otherwise. When a wise Man speaks in the Exercise of his Wisdom, there is something in every thing he says, that is very distinguishable from the Talk of a little Child. So, without doubt, and much more, is the Speech of GOD, (if there be any such Thing as the Speech of GOD,) to be distinguished from that of the wisest of Men; agreably to *Jer.* 23. 28, 29. GOD having there been reproving the false Prophets that prophesied in his Name, and pretended that what they spake was his Word, when indeed it was their own Word, says, *The Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully:* WHAT IS THE CHAFF TO THE WHEAT? *Saith the* LORD. *Is not my Word like as a Fire, saith the* LORD, *and like a Hammer that breaketh the Rock in Pieces?*

2. *IF there be such a distinguishing Excellency in divine things; 'tis* rational *to suppose that there may be such a thing as seeing it.* What should hinder but that it may be seen? 'Tis no Argument that there is no such Thing as such a distinguishing Excellency, or that, if there be, that it can't be seen, that some don't see it, tho' they may be discerning Men in temporal Matters. It is not *rational* to suppose, if there be any such Excellency in divine Things, that wicked Men should see it. 'Tis not *rational* to suppose, that those whose Minds are full of spiritual Pollution, and under the Power of filthy Lusts, should have any Relish or Sense of divine Beauty,

or Excellency; or that their Minds should be susceptive of that *Light* that is in its own Nature so pure and heavenly. It need not seem at all strange, that Sin should so blind the Mind, seeing that Mens particular natural Tempers and Dispositions will so much blind them in secular Matters; as when Mens natural Temper is melancholly, jealous, fearful, proud, or the like.

3. 'Tis rational *to suppose that this Knowlege should be given immediately by* God, *and not be obtain'd by natural means.* Upon what account should it seem *unreasonable,* that there should be any *immediate* Communication between God and the Creature? 'Tis strange that Men should make any matter of difficulty of it. Why should not He that made all things, still have something *immediately* to do with the Things that he has made? Where lies the great difficulty, if we own the Being of a God, and that he created all things out of Nothing, of allowing some immediate Influence of God on the Creation still. And if it be *reasonable* to suppose it with Respect to any Part of the Creation, 'tis Especially so with Respect to reasonable intelligent Creatures; who are next to God in the Gradation of the different Orders of Beings, and whose Business is most *immediately* with God; who were made on Purpose for those Exercises that do respect God, and wherein they have *nextly* to do with God: for *Reason* teaches that Man was made to serve and glorify his Creator. And if it be *rational* to suppose that God immediately communicates himself to Man in any Affair, it is in this. 'Tis *rational* to suppose that God would reserve that Knowlege and Wisdom, that is of such a divine and excellent Nature, to be bestowed *immediately* by himself, and that it should not be left in the Power of second Causes. Spiritual Wisdom and Grace is the highest and most *excellent* Gift that ever God bestows on any Creature: In this the highest Excellency and Perfection of a rational Creature consists. 'Tis also immensely the most *important* of all divine Gifts: 'Tis that wherein Mans Happiness consists, and on which his everlasting Welfare depends. How *rational* is it to suppose that God, however he has left meaner Goods and lower Gifts to second Causes, and in some sort in their Power, yet should reserve this most excellent, divine, and important of all divine Communications, in his own Hands, to be bestowed *immediately* by himself, as a thing too great for second Causes to be concern'd in? 'Tis *rational* to suppose that this Blessing should be *immediately* from God; for there is no Gift or Benefit that is in it self so nearly related to the divine Nature, there is nothing the Creature receives that is so much *of* God, *of* his Nature, so much a Participation of the Deity: 'Tis a Kind of Emanation of God's Beauty, and is related to God as the Light is to the Sun. 'Tis therefore congruous and fit, that when it is given of God, it should be nextly from himself, and by himself, according to his own Sovereign Will.

'Tis *rational* to suppose, that it should be beyond a Man's Power to obtain this Knowlege, and *Light,* by the meer Strength of natural Reason; for 'tis not a Thing that belongs to Reason, to see the Beauty and Loveliness of spiritual things; it is not a speculative thing, but depends on the Sense of the Heart. Reason indeed is necessary in order to it, as 'tis by Reason only that we are become the Subjects of the means of it; which means I have already shown to be necessary in order to it, though they have no proper causal Influence in the Affair. 'Tis by Reason that we become possessed of a notion of those Doctrines that are the Subject Matter of this *divine Light;* and Reason may many ways be indirectly, and remotely an Advantage to it. And Reason has also to do in the Acts that are immediately consequent on this Discovery: A seeing the Truth of Religion from hence, is by Reason; though it be but by one step, and the Inference be immediate. So Reason has to do in that accepting of, and trusting in Christ, that is consequent on it. But if we take Reason strictly, not for the Faculty of mental Perception in general, but for Ratiocination, or a Power of Inferring by Arguments; I say if we take Reason thus, the perceiving of spiritual Beauty and Excellency no more belongs to Reason, than it belongs to the Sense of feeling to perceive Colors, or to the Power of seeing to perceive the Sweetness of Food. It is out of Reason's province to perceive the Beauty or Loveliness of any thing: Such a Perception don't belong to that Faculty. Reason's Work is to perceive Truth and not Excellency. 'Tis not Ratiocination that gives Men the Perception of the Beauty and Amiableness of a Countenance; tho' it may be many ways indirectly an advantage to it; yet 'tis no more Reason that immediately perceives it, than it is Reason that perceives the Sweetness of Honey: It depends on the Sense of the Heart. Reason may determine that a

that Honey is sweet to others; but it will never give me a Perception of its Sweetness.

I will conclude with a very brief *Improvement* of what has been said.

FIRST. THIS Doctrine may lead us *to reflect* on the Goodness of GOD, that has so ordered it, that a saving Evidence of the Truth of the Gospel is such, as is attainable by Persons of mean Capacities, and Advantages, as well as those that are of the greatest Parts and Learning. If the Evidence of the Gospel depended only on History, and such Reasonings as learned Men only are capable of, it would be above the Reach of far the greatest part of Mankind. But Persons, with but an ordinary Degree of Knowlege, are capable without a long and subtil Train of Reasoning, to see the divine Excellency of the things of Religion: They are capable of being taught by the Spirit of GOD, as well as learned Men. The Evidence that is this Way obtained, is vastly better and more satisfying, than all that can be obtain'd by the Arguings of those that are most Learned, and greatest Masters of Reason. And Babes are as capable of knowing these things, as [are] the wise and prudent; and they are often hid from these, when they are revealed to those. 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. *For ye see your Calling Brethren, how that not many wise Men, after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But* GOD *hath chosen the foolish things of the World—.*

Secondly. THIS Doctrine may well put us upon *examining* ourselves, whether we have ever had his *divine Light,* that has been described, let into our Souls. If there be such a thing indeed, and it ben't only a Notion or Whimsy of Persons of weak and distempered Brains, then doubtless 'tis a thing of great Importance, whether we have thus been taught by the Spirit of GOD; whether *the Light of the Glorious Gospel of* CHRIST, *who is the Image of* GOD *hath shined into us, giving us the Light of the Knowlege of the Glory of* GOD *in the Face of* JESUS CHRIST, whether we have *seen the Son, and believed on him,* or have that Faith of Gospel Doctrines that arises from a spiritual Sight of CHRIST.

Thirdly. ALL may hence be *exhorted,* earnestly *to seek* this *spiritual Light.* To influence and move to it, the following things may be consider'd.

1. THIS is the most *excellent and divine* Wisdom, that any Creature is capable of. 'Tis more excellent all the Knowlege of the greatest Philosophers or Statesmen. Yea the least Glimpse of *the Glory of* GOD *in the Face of* CHRIST doth more exalt and enoble the Soul, than all the Knowlege of those that have the greatest speculative Understanding in Divinity, without grace. This Knowlege has the most noble Object that is, or can be, *viz.* the divine Glory and Excellency of GOD, and CHRIST. The Knowlege of these Objects is that wherein consists the most excellent Knowlege of the Angels, yea, of GOD himself,

2. THIS Knowlege is that which is above all others *Sweet and Joyful.* Men have a great deal of Pleasure in human Knowlege, in Studies of natural things; but this is nothing to that Joy which arises from this *divine Light* shining into the Soul. This *Light* gives a View of those things that are immensely the most exquisitely Beautiful, and capable of delighting the Eye of the Understanding. This *spiritual Light* is the dawning of the Light of Glory in the Heart. There is nothing so powerful as this to support Persons in Affliction, and to give the Mind Peace and Brightness, in this stormy and dark World.

3. THIS Light is such as *effectually influences the Inclination, and Changes the Nature of the Soul.* It assimilates the Nature to the divine Nature, and changes the Soul into an Image of the same Glory that is beheld. 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open Face beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* This Knowlege will wean from the World, and raise the Inclination to heavenly things. It will turn the Heart to GOD as the Fountain of Good, and to choose him for the only Portion. This *Light,* and this only, will bring the Soul to a saving Close with CHRIST. It conforms the Heart to the Gospel, mortifies its Enmity and Opposition against the Scheme of Salvation therein revealed: It causes the Heart to embrace the joyful Tidings, and entirely to adhere to, and acquiesce in the Revelation of CHRIST as our Saviour: It causes the whole Soul to accord and Symphonize with it, admitting it with entire Credit and Respect, cleaving to it with full Inclination and Affection. And it effectually disposes the Soul to give up it self entirely to CHRIST.

4. THIS Light and this only *has its Fruit in a uni-*

versal Holiness of Life. No meerly notional or speculative Understanding of the Doctrines of Religion, will ever bring to this. But this *Light* as it reaches the bottom of the Heart, and changes the Nature, so it will effectually dispose to an universal Obedience. It shews GOD'S worthiness to be obeyed and served. It draws forth the Heart in a sincere Love to GOD, which is the only Principle of a true, gracious and universal Obedience. And it convinces of the Reality of those glorious Rewards that GOD has promised to them that obey him.

1733•1734

A PURITAN POET: Taylor

Edward Taylor

c. 1645 • 1729

Very few biographical facts concerning Edward Taylor are known. He was born in Coventry, England. In 1668, at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, he left England, presumably for liberty of conscience, and came to Boston, where he was cordially received by Increase Mather. He was admitted to Harvard College and was graduated in the Class of 1671. A lifelong friendship with Samuel Sewall, of the same class, dated from his college years. Following his graduation, Taylor became pastor of the church at Westfield, Massachusetts. He lived quietly at Westfield during the remaining fifty-eight years of his life, serving the community for that long period both as minister and as physician. Twice married, he had seven children by his first wife and six by his second. Ezra Stiles, his grandson (President of Yale, 1778-1795), described him as "a man of small stature but firm: of quick Passions—yet serious and grave."

Taylor did not write his poems for publication. They must have been read by very few during the poet's lifetime, and for more than two centuries after his death their existence was almost completely forgotten. The recent publication of a small portion of Taylor's manuscripts has greatly enriched our poetical heritage from colonial times. Indeed, Taylor's poetry takes rank as one of the classics of New England literature.

Taylor wrote in the "metaphysical" tradition, the tradition of Donne, Crashaw, and Herbert, and he must have been influenced by their poetry, particularly by Herbert's. His structure follows the "metaphysical" pattern; that is, to borrow T. S. Eliot's description, "the elaboration of a figure of speech to the farthest stage to which ingenuity can carry it" and "a development by rapid association of thought." The thought and emotion are elaborated in homely metaphors drawn straight from the poet's own experience. The weaving of cloth affords the metaphorical vehicle in one poem; the making of bread, in another; the cultivation of flowers, in a third. Music and musical instruments are a rich source of figurative language—the many musical references help to refute the popular notion that the early Puritans were hostile to music.

Taylor's poems help to refute also the notion that Puritans were, without exception, grim and strenuously unhappy. Taylor celebrates the joys of the Christian

life; to him the Christian experience was something quite delightful. His saints, unlike Bunyan's plodding pilgrim, are "encoached for Heaven," and they sing as they ride. The Christian life is a rich banquet with music. The water of life is "beer"; the bread of life, "Heaven's Sugar Cake." He experiences a mystical union with the divine. He describes in brilliant, ardent verses Christ's ascent into Heaven and longs for wings to follow after.

The Poetical Works of Edward Taylor, ed T H Johnson, New York, 1939 • Austin Warren, "Edward Taylor's Poetry Colonial Baroque," **The Kenyon Review**, III, Summer 1941 • W C. Brown, "Edward Taylor An American 'Metaphysical'," **American Literature**, XVI, November 1944

From • God's Determinations

The Glory of and Grace in the Church Set Out

Come now behold
Within this Knot What Flowers do grow
Spanglde like gold:
Whence Wreaths of all Perfumes do flow.
Most Curious Colours of all Sorts you shall
With all Sweet Spirits scent. Yet that's not all.

Oh! Look, and finde
These Choicest Flowers most richly Sweet
Are Disciplinde
With Artificiall Angells meet.
An heap of Pearls is precious: but they Shall
When Set by Art Excell. Yet that's not all.

Christ's Spirit showers
Down in his Word, and Sacraments
Upon these Flowers
The Clouds of Grace Divine Contents.
Such things of Wealthy Blessings on them fall
As make them sweetly thrive. Yet that's not all.

Yet Still behold!
All flourish not at once. We see
While Some Unfold
Their blushing Leaves, some buds there bee.
Here's Faith, Hope, Charity in flower, which call
On yonders in the Bud. Yet that's not all.

But as they stand
Like Beauties reeching in perfume
A Divine Hand
Doth hand them up to Glories room:
Where Each in sweet'ned Songs all Praises shall
Sing all ore Heaven for aye And that's but all

1939

The Joy of Church Fellowship Rightly Attended

In Heaven soaring up, I dropt an Eare
On Earth: and oh! sweet Melody:
And listening found it was the Saints who were
Encoacht for Heaven that sang for Joy
For in Christs Coach they sweetly sing,
As they to Glory ride therein.

Oh! joyous hearts! Enfir'de with holy Flame!
Is Speech thus tassled with praise?
Will not your inward fire of Joy contain;
That it in open flames doth blaze?
For in Christs Coach Saints sweetly sing,
As they to Glory ride therein.

And if a string do slip, by Chance, they soon
Do screw it up again: whereby
They set it in a more melodious Tune
And a Diviner Harmony.
For in Christs Coach they sweetly sing
As they to Glory ride therein.

The Glory . . . Out • 26 **reeching**, reeking. Obviously, the word does not have the unpleasant connotation of modern usage

The Joy . . . Attended • 8 **tassled**, tasseled, adorned

In all their Acts, publick and private, nay,
And secret too, they praise impart.
But in their Acts Divine and Worship, they
With Hymns do offer up their Heart.
Thus in Christs Coach they sweetly sing
As they to Glory ride therein.

Some few not in; and some whose Time and Place
Block up this Coaches way do goe
As Travellers afoot: and so do trace
The Road that gives them right thereto;
While in this Coach these sweetly sing
As they to Glory ride therein.

1939

Huswifery

The poem is a good example of Taylor's ingenious elaboration of a single metaphor.

Make me, O Lord, thy Spinning Wheele compleat.
Thy Holy Worde my Distaff make for mee.
Make mine Affections thy Swift Flyers neate
And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee
My Conversation make to be thy Reele
And reele the yarn thereon Spun of thy Wheele.

Make me thy Loome then, knit therein this Twine:
And make thy Holy Spirit, Lord, winde quills.
Then weave the Web thyselfe. The yarn is fine.
Thine Ordinances make my Fulling Mills.
Then dy the Same in Heavenly Colours Choice,
All pinkt with Varnisht Flowers of Paradise.

Then cloath therewith mine Understanding, Will,
Affections, Judgment, Conscience, Memory;
My Words, and Actions, that their shine may fill
My wayes with glory and thee glorify.
Then mine apparell shall display before yee
That I am Cloathd in Holy robes for glory.

1939

From • Sacramental Meditations

The Experience

The poem seems to express an authentic mystical experience, the union of the soul with God, and should be compared with an even more notable account of such an experience in Jonathan Edwards' "Personal Narrative."

Oh! that I alwayes breath'd in such an aire,
As I suckt in, feeding on sweet Content!
Disht up unto my Soul ev'n in that pray're
Pour'de out to God over last Sacrament.
What Beam of Light wrapt up my Sight to finde
Me neerer God than ere Came in my minde?

Most Strange it was! But yet more Strange that shine
Which filld my Soul then to the brim to spy
My nature with thy Nature all Divine
Together joynd in Him thats Thou, and I.
Flesh of my Flesh, Bone of my Bone: there's run
Thy Godhead, and my Manhood in thy Son.

Oh! that that Flame which thou didst on me Cast
Might me enflame, and Lighten everywhere.
Then Heaven to me would be less at last,
So much of heaven I should have while here.
Oh! Sweet though Short! I'le not forget the same.
My neerness, Lord, to thee did me Enflame.

I'le Claim my Right: Give place, ye Angells Bright.
Ye further from the Godhead stande than I.
My Nature is your Lord; and doth Unite
Better than Yours unto the Deity.
Gods Throne is first and mine is next; to you
Onely the place of Waiting-men is due.

Huswifery, housewifery • 3 **Flyers**, the pair of arms in a spinning wheel which revolve around the bobbin to twist the yarn • 8 **quills**, spindles or spools • 10 **Fulling Mills**, a mill for cleaning, shrinking, and thickening cloth. This is an especially happy analogy, since the ordinances of the church may be supposed to have a similarly purifying and fortifying effect

Oh! that my Heart thy Golden Harp might bee
Well tun'd by Glorious Grace, that ev'ry string
Screw'd to the highest pitch, might unto thee
All Praises wrapt in sweetest Musick bring.
I praise thee, Lord, and better praise thee would
If what I had, my heart might ever hold. 30
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Meditation Eight

I kening through Astronomy Divine
The Worlds bright Battlement, wherein I spy
A Golden Path my Pensill cannot line
From that bright Throne unto my Threshold ly.
And while my puzzled thoughts about it pore
I finde the Bread of Life in't at my doore.

When that this Bird of Paradise put in
This Wicker Cage (my Corps) to tweedle praise
Had peckt the Fruite forbid: and so did fling
Away its Food: and lost its golden dayes, 10
It fell into Celestiall Famine sore:
And never could attain a morsell more.

Alas! alas! Poore Bird, what wilt thou doe?
This Creatures field no food for Souls e're gave.
And if thou knock at Angells dores they show
An Empty Barrell: they no Soul bread have.
Alas! Poore Bird, the Worlds White Loafe is done.
And cannot yield thee here the smallest Crumb.

In this sad state, Gods Tender Bowells run
Out Streams of Grace: And he to end all strife 20
The Purest Wheate in Heaven, his deare-dear Son
Grinds, and kneads up into this Bread of Life.
Which Bread of Life from Heaven down came and stands
Disht on thy Table up by Angells Hands.

Did God mould up this Bread in Heaven, and bake,
Which from his Table came, and to thine goeth?
Doth he bespeake thee thus, This Soule Bread take;
Come, Eate thy fill of this, thy Gods White Loafe?
Its Food too fine for Angells, yet come, take
And Eate thy fill. Its Heavens Sugar Cake. 30

What Grace is this knead in this Loafe? This thing
Souls are but petty things it to admire.
Yee Angells, help: This fill would to the brim
Heav'ns whelm'd-down Chrystall meele Bowle, yea and higher.
This Bread of Life dropt in thy mouth doth Cry:
Eate, Eate me, Soul, and thou shalt never dy.
1939

Meditation Twenty

The poem describes Christ's ascension to Heaven.

View, all ye eyes above, this sight which flings
Seraphick Phancies in Chill Raptures high:
A Turffe of Clay, and yet bright Glories King:
From dust to Glory Angell-like to fly.
A Mortall Clod immortaliz'de, behold,
Flyes through the skies swifter than Angells could.

Upon the Wings he of the Winde rode in
His Bright Sedan, through all the Silver Skies,
And made the Azure Cloud, his Charriot, bring
Him to the Mountain of Celestiall joyes. 10
The Prince o'th'Aire durst not an Arrow spend,
While through his Realm his Charriot did ascend.

He did not in a Fiery Charriot's shine,
And Whirlewinde, like Elias upward goe.

The Experience • 27 **highest pitch.** The tightening of the strings of musical instruments is a favorite figure with Taylor • 30 **ever,** always, constantly, thus repeating the thought of the first line

Meditation Eight • 6 **Bread of Life.** John 6.35. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life . . ." • 7 **Bird of Paradise,** the soul • 8 **tweedle,** sing • 11 **Celestiall Famine,** a lack of spiritual food • 14 **Creatures field,** the world • 19 **Bowells,** the seat of pity; hence, compassion • 34 **whelm'd-down,** filled to overflowing

Meditation Twenty • 11 **Prince . . . Aire,** Satan, who is described in Ephesians 2 2 as "the prince of the power of the air" • 14 **Elias,** Elijah, whose ascent to heaven is described in II Kings 2:11

But th' golden Ladders Jasper rounds did climbe
Unto the Heavens high from Earth below.
Each step had on a Golden Stepping Stone
Of Deity unto his very Throne.

Methinks I see Heavens sparkling Courtiers fly,
In flakes of Glory down him to attend;
And heare Heart Cramping notes of Melody
Surround his Charriot as it did ascend:
Mixing their Musick, making e'ry string
More to inravish, as they this tune sing.

God is Gone up with a triumphant shout:
The Lord with sounding Trumpets melodies:
Sing Praise, sing Praise, sing Praise, sing Praises out,
Unto our King sing praise seraphick-wise!
Lift up your Heads, ye lasting Doors, they sing.
And let the King of Glory Enter in.

Art thou ascended up on high, my Lord,
And must I be without thee here below?
Art thou the sweetest joy the Heavens afford?
Oh! that I with thee was! what shall I do?
Should I pluck Feathers from an Angells Wing,
They could not waft me up to thee my King.

Lend me thy Wings, my Lord, I'st fly apace,
My Soules Arms stud with thy strong Quills, true Faith;
My Quills then Feather with thy Saving Grace,
My Wings will take the Winde thy Word displai'th.
Then I shall fly up to thy glorious Throne
With my strong Wings whose Feathers are thine own.

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Meditation Sixty, Second Series

This poem, whose theme is the "water of life," may be regarded as a companion piece to "Meditation Eight," whose theme is the "bread of life."

Ye Angells bright, pluck from your Wings a Quill;
Make me a pen thereof that best will write:
Lende me your fancy and Angellick skill
To treate this Theme, more rich than Rubies bright.
My muddy Inke and Cloudy fancy dark
Will dull its glory, lacking highest Art.

An Eye at Centre righter may describe
The Worlds Circumferentiall glory vast,
As in its nutshell bed it snugs fast ti'de,
Than any angells pen can glory Cast
Upon this Drink drawn from the Rock, tapt by
The Rod of God, in Horeb, typickly.

Sea water strain'd through Minerall, Rocks, and Sands,
Well Clarifi'de by Sunbeams, Dulcifi'de,
Insipid, Sordid, Swill, Dishwater stands.
But here's a Rock of Aqua-Vitae tri'de!
When once God broacht it, out a River came
To bath and bibble in, for Israels train.

Some rocks have sweat. Some Pillars bled out tears,
But here's a River in a Rock up tunn'd,
Not of Sea Water nor of Swill. It's beere!
No Nectar like it! Yet it once unbungd,
A River down out runs through ages all,
A Fountain opte, to wash off Sin and Fall.

Christ is this Horebs Rock, the streames that slide
A River is of Aqua Vitae Deare,
Yet costs us nothing, gushing from his side:
Celestiall Wine our sinsunk souls to cleare.

Meditation Twenty • 29 Lift . . . in, based upon Psalms 24:7 • 37 I'st, I wouldst

Meditation Sixty • 11 Rock . . . Horeb, an allusion to the smiting of the rock by Moses, recorded in Numbers 20:11 • 12 typickly. The rock from which the water flowed typified, or prefigured, Christ. Compare I Corinthians 10:4: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" • 16 Aqua-Vitae, brandy • 21 beere. Good Puritans had no aversion to alcoholic beverages, if moderately used. (Compare Sewall's Diary, August 25, 1709.) One is nevertheless astonished at the audacity of the poet in using beer as an emblem of the "spiritual drink" • 24 opte, opened

This Rock and Water, Sacramentall Cup
Are made, Lords Supper Wine for us to sup.

This Rock's the Grape that Zions Vineyard bore,
Which Moses Rod did smiting pound, and press,
Untill its blood, the brooke of Life, run ore:
All Glorious Grace, and Gracious Righteousness.
We in this brook must bath: and with faiths quill
Suck Grace and Life out of this Rock our fill.

Lord, oynt me with this Petro oyle I'm sick.
Make me drink Water of the Rock I'm dry.
Me in this fountain wash: my filth is thick.
I'm faint: give Aqua Vitae or I dy
If in this stream thou cleanse and Chearish mee,
My Heart thy Hallelujahs Pipe shall be

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Meditation One Hundred and Ten, Second Series

The Angells sung a Carole at thy Birth,
My Lord, and thou thyselfe didst sweetly sing
An Epinicioum at thy Death on Earth.
And order'st thine, in memory of this thing,
Thy Holy Supper, closing it at last
Up with an Hymn, and Choakst the foe thou hast.

This Feast thou madst in memory of thy death:
Which is disht up most graciously: and towers
Of reeching vapours from thy Grave (Sweet breath)
Aromatize the Skies That sweetest Showers,
Richly perfumed by the Holy Ghost,
Are rained thence upon the Churches Coast.

Thy Grave beares flowers to dress thy Church withall,
In which thou dost thy Table dress for thine.
With Gospell Carpet, Chargers, Festivall
And Spirituall Venison, White Bread and Wine·
Being the Fruits thy Grave brings forth and hands
Upon thy Table where thou waiting standst.

Dainties most rich, all spiced o're with Grace,
That grow out of thy Grave do deck thy Table.
To entertain thy Guests, thou callst, and place
Allowst, with welcome. (and this is no Fable),
And with these Guests I am invited to't,
And this rich banquet makes me thus a Poet.

Thy Cross planted within thy Coffin beares
Sweet Blossoms and rich Fruits, whose steams do rise
Out of thy Sepulcher and purge the aire
Of all Sins damps and fogs that Choake the Skies.
This Fume perfumes Saints hearts as it out peeps,
Ascending up to bury thee in th'reechs.

Joy stands on tiptoes all the while thy Guests
Sit at thy Table, ready forth to sing
Its Hallilujahs in sweet musicks dress,
Waiting for Organs to imploy herein.
Here matter is allowd to all, rich, high,
My Lord, to tune thee Hymns melodiously.

Oh! make my heart thy Pipe: the Holy Ghost
The Breath that fills the same and Spiritually.
Then play on mee, thy pipe, that is almost
Worn out with piping tunes of Vanity.
Winde musick is the best, if thou delight
To play the same thyselfe, upon my pipe.

Hence make me, Lord, thy Golden Trumpet Choice,
And trumpet thou thyselfe upon the same
Thy heart enravishing Hymns with Sweetest Voice.
When thou thy Trumpet soundst, thy tunes will flame.

Meditation Sixty • 37 **Petro, of the rock**

Meditation One Hundred and Ten • 3 **Epinicioum,** epinicion, a song of triumph • 9 **reeching,** the "reeking" atmosphere, a cloud of incense • 31 **Joy . . . tiptoes.** Taylor's editor suggests that the phrase owes something to George Herbert's "The Church Militant": "Religion stands on tip-toe in our land Readie to pass to the American strand"

My heart shall then sing forth thy praises sweet,
When sounded thus with thy Sepulcher reech.

Make too my Soul thy Cittern, and its wyers
Make my affections: and rub off their rust
With thy bright Grace: and screw my Strings up higher,
And tune the same to tunes thy praise most Just.

Ile close thy Supper then with Hymns most sweet,
Burr'ing thy Grave in thy Sepulcher's reech.

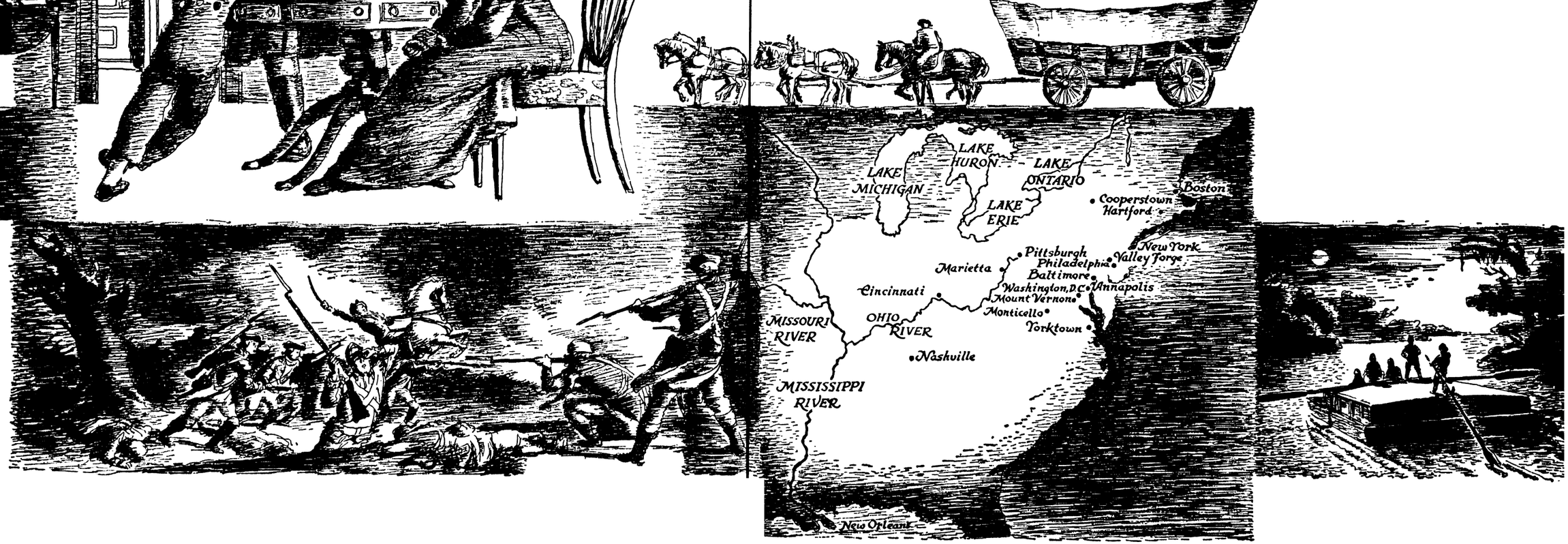
1939

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48 **thy Sepulcher reech,** the breath of thy Sepulcher • 49 **Cittern,** cithern, a lutelike instrument played with a plectrum • 54 **Burr'ing,** burying

Chapter Two

The New Republic



Chapter 2

The New Republic

1765 • 1829

TO SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY. "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

—U. S. Constitution

I. Intellectual Currents

A NEW and a PROUD NATION

The most distinctive aspects of the second great stage of American development were the stabilization of independent political institutions and the corresponding cultural nationalism which pervaded almost every phase of American thought. The stage is often called the early national period. Although various other dates might be given, it is justifiably described as beginning with the Stamp Act Congress of 1765, wherein the united political power of Americans was first demonstrated, and as ending in 1829 with the inauguration of Andrew Jackson as seventh President of the United States, an event which was a triumph for the common man.

These sixty-four years present a picture of world-shaking change. This was the age of the American Revolution, the ratification of the Constitution, and the development of the two-party system of government. It was the age of George Washington and John Paul Jones, of Shays' Rebellion and the Whiskey Insurrection, of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition, of the War of 1812, of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun, of the Missouri Compromise and the Monroe Doctrine. In Europe it was the age of the French Revolution and of the rise and fall of Napoleon, of the romantic revival and the industrial revolution in England.

Like all periods of rapid change, this one was inexpressibly complex, but it was marked by the general collapse of anachronistic institutions and philosophies. The "haves" were ranged against the "have nots," aristocratic and landed classes against those less fortunate, proponents of centralized control against those who wished more local autonomy, absolutists and authoritarians against all colors of individualists and democrats. Western civilization painfully sought new compromises in these perennial conflicts, and those it arrived at, while not wholly satisfactory and far from the last full measure of democracy, were considerably more democratic than the world had known before.

No explanation as simple as this can be entirely satisfactory. The familiar clashes of the era—Mercantilism *vs.* Free Trade, Imperialism *vs.* Home Rule, Tory *vs.* Whig, and Federalist *vs.* Republican—existed in some form long before 1766 and, under other names, are with us still. In the realm of human affairs few basic differences are ever decisively and finally settled.

As an illustration, consider the Revolutionary ideals of liberty and equality, in which most Americans profess belief. Practically regarded, these two concepts have incompatible elements; for liberty, followed to its logical extreme, is antisocial, and social and economic equality can only be obtained by severe limitation of individual freedom. Nevertheless, reconciliation of the two is one of the central problems of a democratic society. Neither can be absolute; the best that can be hoped for is that under favorable conditions a people may have a relatively large degree of freedom and a relatively large degree of equality.

Because the most magnificent promise of the American way of life is the fullest possible development of the individual within a society providing equal and exact justice for all, the literature of the early national period has extraordinary interest. The problems faced by the generations who lived between 1765 and 1829 are essentially today's problems.

American nationalism was based upon both the geographical isolation of the English colonies and the political, economic, and social controversies which resulted in revolution. The debate over the Stamp Act divided the colonists into two parties: conservatives and radicals, or, to give them the names more common at the time, Tories and Whigs, Loyalists and Patriots. The lines of cleavage varied from colony to colony, but the radical leaders came mainly from the middle classes, whose distrust of British control was often mingled with antipathy to the ruling aristocracy. Anti-British feeling was combined from the first with a glorification of the common man and his place in the world. The victorious party consisted of those Americans least aware and least desirous of commercial, social, religious, and cultural ties with Great Britain. Aggressive and self-confident, men "on the make," to use a phrase of a later age, they had nevertheless a self-conscious anxiety to show themselves "just as good" as the Tories they had so effectually chased out.

Self-consciousness was indeed characteristic of the entire period. The idea of inferiority, and particularly of inferiority to Britain, was unendurable. Patriotism often silenced intelligent objectivity; the person who expressed much skepticism regarding American character, institutions, or destiny found himself exceedingly unpopular. The first generations of citizens of the United States were extraordinarily sensitive to criticism.

The train of events, moreover, was propitious for the growth of nationalism. Of the elements contributing to unity, such diverse factors as the Revolution itself, the conservative reaction to the upheaval in France, the Napoleonic wars, and Westward expansion deserve recalling.

Many democratic tendencies were accentuated or set in motion by the Revolution. Large estates were confiscated and divided; small business and manufacturing were stimulated; church establishments were attacked; slavery, imprisonment for debt, and humiliating punishments were regarded with growing disfavor; the idea of universal education at state expense was voiced. Americans were far from being of one mind about these matters, but they recognized that such tendencies differentiated the United States from the nations of the Old World. They agreed, moreover, in insisting that they were now ready to arrange their own affairs, and in being sublimely confident that they could arrange them better than the English had arranged theirs. The Americans were a "new" people, as Crèvecoeur put it. They were ready to teach the rest of the world; they were weary of being taught.

The assertion of the rights of man by the revolutionists in France seemed at first a gratifying justification of the American example. European convulsions soon brought, however, a strong conservative reaction among Americans, already doubtful that they had wholly solved their political problems. The Federalists, who under the leadership of Hamilton controlled the government from the adoption of the Constitution until 1801, were perhaps not lovers of the common man, but they were still fervent nationalists. They planned and worked to create a strong federal union, able to withstand possible attack from abroad and to suppress internal disorder. Events proved that they were both wise and patriotic.

The Napoleonic wars, which disrupted commercial and diplomatic accord with Europe, made American iso-

lation much more a reality than it had been before. The United States was finally drawn into a second war with England, largely through the determination of the "War Hawks" of the back country, and the War of 1812 is generally credited with giving the nation that economic self-sufficiency which had long been talked about but never quite achieved. Textile and iron industries grew up quickly, and Americans faced the occupation of the West with full assurance that they had the means to fulfill their dreams of greatness.

The West, despite its individualism, was even more nationalistic than the older seaboard states. It looked to the central government for its lands and the means of access to them, and its local ties were new and weak. It was the West which was least respectful of Europe, most certain that the United States, if necessary, could lick the entire Old World.

From the perspective of the twentieth century it is clear that the bonds of Europe were not cut sharply, that the old pattern of transplantation and adaptation continued as immigrants like Albert Gallatin and P. S. Dupont de Nemours brought their talents to the service of American life. Nationalism, however, was peculiarly significant to literature, for it led Americans to attempt the impossible—the creation, overnight, of a tradition of belles-lettres.

To the nationalist the possession of a first-rate literature of politics and a highly reputable literature of religion was not enough; if poetry, fiction, and the drama were the marks of a great culture, America must have them. If, as Aristotle had asserted, epic poetry was the height of literary art, the United States must have epic poems comparable in grandeur to the North American continent and the superior political institutions of the Republic.

Such was the attitude which lay behind the work of Philip Freneau, Royall Tyler, the Connecticut Wits, William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, and James Fenimore Cooper. In Commencement and Fourth of July orations, in newly founded magazines with "United States" or "Columbian" or a state or city name conspicuous in their titles, in anthologies, and in books, Americans hammered at the theme of intellectual independence, the creation of a literary culture better than anything which had yet appeared or which was likely to appear in monarchical Europe. However, they did not succeed in creating such a culture before 1829.

National pride led to many pleas for more generous support of American writers and many elaborate defenses of America against the criticism of British editors and travelers. This material, most voluminous after the War of 1812, has been labeled the "Paper War" and is not of general interest, although both Cooper and Irving contributed to it. It had, however, one all-important effect—it focused the attention of American writers more sharply than ever before upon the native scene. What, they asked themselves, was unique in American life? In their attempt to answer that question they became deeply concerned with native types, dialects, manners, scenery, and institutions. Despite their frequent failure to solve the problem of finding fresh or appropriate forms in which to clothe their new literary materials, they left a body of writing notable both for its variety and for its interpretation of American life in all its phases.

POLITICAL THOUGHT

The literature of politics is represented in outline in the present chapter. It may best be summarized as it centers around four stages of American history: (1) the debate about self-government which extended from the Stamp Act to the Declaration of Independence; (2) the Revolution itself; (3) the struggle for stability and an acceptable balance of the opposing political philosophies of Hamilton and Jefferson; and (4) the continuing battle of the common man for his share of the responsibilities and rewards of political office.

(1) The philosophy and the events which lay behind the Revolution are readily gathered from John Dickinson's "Liberty Song," Benjamin Franklin's "Edict by the King of Prussia" (p. 145), Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (p. 170), and the Declaration of Independence itself (p. 181). Franklin provides a description of the economic and political irritations enumerated also in the Declaration; the others give an impression of the emotions of the period, deeply rooted as they were in social and religious differences.

These writings are only a small part of the literary debate of 1765-1776. Pamphlets, speeches, sermons, and state papers appeared in profusion. Outstanding among the Whig pamphlets are those by Samuel Adams, James Otis, Daniel Dulany, John Dickinson, and the first works of Hamilton and Jefferson. The Tory position was maintained by such writers as Jonathan Boucher, Martin

Howard, Daniel Leonard, and Samuel Seabury. Patrick Henry's "Give me liberty or give me death" speech of March 1775 is a part of the full picture, as is Francis Hopkinson's allegory, *A Pretty Story* (1774). In a little more than a decade a large body of polemical prose appeared, presenting arguments based both upon specific legal or constitutional positions and upon abstract philosophies of government. Both types of argument are observable in the Declaration.

The legal position of the Patriots—denial of the authority of Parliament to levy "internal taxes" on the colonies, assertion of the doctrine of "no taxation without representation," and demands that the colonial legislatures be recognized as the only just means of obtaining "consent of the governed"—proved in the end less defensible than direct appeal to the right of revolution. For that and other "natural rights" specifically named in the Declaration, the Patriots had the precedents of the revolutions which had driven Charles I and James II from the English throne. They knew their history and their political philosophy; their writings show close study of the theories of Thomas Hobbes, Sir Robert Filmer, John Locke, and many other English and European thinkers. They had behind them, moreover, a solid tradition of theological disputation. It is impossible to read their presentations of the colonial case without increasing respect for the caliber of their minds and the clarity of their exposition.

(2) The "clash of resounding arms" at Lexington ended the constitutional debate and brought to the fore more emotional and persuasive writers—propagandists they would now be called. Their task was to unite and hold in line a Revolutionary party which was never perhaps more than a two-thirds majority of the population; their method was to appeal to the interests and the prejudices of as many different groups as they could. Master of them all was Paine, whose *Crisis* series ranks with the best propaganda ever written. Newspapers and magazines carried much similar material, including numerous poems such as Freneau's "Memorable Victory" (p. 207) and Hopkinson's "Battle of the Kegs" (p. 165). Popular songs, ballads, and hymns had their place in the literary war (see p. 163). There were also extensive verse satires, of which the most famous was John Trumbull's *M'Fingal* (Part I, 1775), an imitation of Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663-1678), an English satire. The Loyalists, too, had their propagandists, of whom the best known were Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell. They show clearly the social cleavage of the Revolution, for they almost invariably assumed a snobbish tone toward the "rabble." Few printing presses were available to the Loyalists, however, and their opinions must be sought in letters, diaries, parodies of Patriot songs, and such accounts of affairs as Boucher's *View,* published later in England. Neither party was averse to name-calling or scurrility, and it is perhaps no accident that the most good-natured of Revolutionary songs, "Yankee Doodle" (p. 163), is the only one which has remained on the lips of Americans to the present day.

(3) A rational and deliberative tone is again uppermost (although undertones of emotion are not lacking) in the literature of the years between the end of the war and the stabilization of the new government. Its great monument, outside of the Constitution itself, is *The Federalist,* in the main the work of Hamilton (p. 185). Washington's *Farewell Address,* in which Hamilton had a part, the inaugurals of Jefferson, and the political content of such pieces as Tyler's play, *The Contrast,* H. H. Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry,* and Freneau's "Stanzas to an Alien" (p. 213) round out the picture of the political issues of the era. Fuller representation would include *The Anarchiad* (1786-1787) and numerous other works by the Connecticut Wits, most of whom were strongly Federalist in their convictions. Joel Barlow, author of *Advice to the Privileged Orders* (1791) and *The Conspiracy of Kings* (1792) was a notable exception (see p. 216).

Especially interesting here is the repetition, with variations, of the age-old conflicts. Centralized control and local autonomy, government by the few and government by the many—these were again among the alternatives. Woodrow Wilson and others have suggested that the Constitution was based upon a political philosophy derived ultimately from Newtonian physics, to the effect that opposing political forces can be balanced one against another, and the state, though constantly moving, preserved in equilibrium. John Adams was probably the chief American exponent of this philosophy, with his distrust of unlimited democracy and his theory that executive, aristocratic, and democratic elements must be preserved in any stable government by elaborate checks and balances. The French political philosopher Montesquieu, widely read in America, had much the same idea. Whatever its precise sources, the Constitution unques-

tionably reflects a conservative reaction to Revolutionary doctrines. It has proved flexible enough, however, to protect both majorities and minorities with reasonable success for over 150 years.

(4) The Federalists, however right they may have been, were not astute politicians. They did not disguise their belief that the masses counted for little, the *aristoi* for much, and they ignored local loyalties and conditions which they would have done well to study. The common people demanded respect throughout the period, and toward the end of it they received from most successful politicians the flattery which has ever since been theirs. They wanted their leaders "folksy," and they did not care whether or not words were meticulously pronounced and diplomatic protocol rigorously observed. They did not, in short, accept the aristocratic notion that those who handle the affairs of state should be informed on fundamental principles and skilled in public speaking. In 1828, at length, the common people came into their own and elected Andrew Jackson. They did not, of course, find thereby an immediate solution to the unending problems of democratic government.

Irving's satirical portrait of Jefferson in the *Knickerbocker History* gives some indication of the political temper of the last phase of the early national period, but the citizenry of Templeton as delineated in Cooper's *The Pioneers* (p. 268) are even better evidence. Special privileges had to go, even though their elimination might mean economic waste, ignorance enshrined in public office, and general irresponsibility. Cooper's own attitude, expressed far more irascibly elsewhere, was precisely that of the orderly man who surveys the litter in a public park on the morning after the Labor Day weekend. He doubted that the common people were yet prepared to take care of their heritage. The political spirit of the period was well expressed by Jackson himself in the peroration to his *Farewell Address*. Pride in the national accomplishment and assurance that there was no longer danger from abroad were combined with the recognition that "It is from within, among yourselves, from cupidity, from corruption, from disappointed ambition, and inordinate thirst for power, that factions will be formed and liberty endangered. It is against such designs, whatever disguise the actors may assume, that you have especially to guard yourselves." Who shall say that Jackson was not right?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The problem of earning a living was not so frequently or so fully the concern of literature after 1765 as it had been before. Nevertheless, the later writing can be better understood with some knowledge of the economic thought and conflicts which distinguished American life in the early national period.

Fundamental, of course, was the desire of individuals to "get on" in the world. Simple living, thrift, and industry, the ideals preached by Poor Richard (see p. 138), were the ideals of most men. They were praised by writers as diverse as Crèvecoeur, Washington, Jefferson, Dwight, and Barlow. Americans were on their way to full acceptance of the gospel proclaimed in 1838 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (see "A Psalm of Life," p. 374).

> Let us, then, be up and doing
> With a heart for any fate;
> Still achieving, still pursuing,
> Learn to labor and to wait.

Most Americans probably felt that money was the chief thing to be up and doing about, and they did not question the validity of working for that end. John Woolman (p. 155) was an exception; like Thoreau in a later generation he wished to know the result of the pursuit of wealth. Far more averse to luxuries and pomp than many who cried out against them from higher places in the world, he reached a thought-provoking conclusion: "Wealth desired for its own sake Obstructs the increase of Virtue, and large possessions in the hands of selfish men have a bad tendency, for by their means too small a number of people are employed in things usefull, and therefore some of them are necessitated to labour too hard." A few other observers expressed a similar concern lest money-getting end in too wide a discrepancy between the very rich and the very poor (see, for example, Crèvecoeur), but Poor Richard's disciples would scarcely have admitted the possibility that men could labor too hard.

At what, then, did Americans labor? They were primarily an agricultural people in 1765 and they were still so in 1829, but in the interval the economy of the nation underwent great changes which had their due

effect upon literature. Three such changes may be mentioned: (1) the shift from a colonial to a national economy, although with continuing conflicts between those who wanted a centralized control of commerce, manufactures, finance, and transportation and those who wanted a large measure of local control; (2) the far-reaching development of industry and the factory system; and (3) the creation, through expansion to the West, of an enormous domestic market.

The colonies in 1766 were dependencies of a nation which, in so far as it had a colonial policy, had accepted the Mercantilist doctrine that overseas possessions should supply the home country with raw materials and serve as a market for manufactured products. The trade regulations based upon this theory caused much hard feeling, as may readily be seen in Franklin's "Edict" and "Rules"; they were, of course, one of the principal causes of the Revolution. Mercantilism was also partially responsible for the British desire to limit expansion to the West, where the control of markets would be more difficult. That attitude aroused as much antagonism, probably, as either the trade regulations or the taxation which was sought to help pay for the French and Indian War; the Virginians were particularly unwilling to give up the West to the Indians. As Paine's *Common Sense* shows, the Americans had arrived at the point where they thought in "continental" terms, and they were determined to control not merely their internal affairs but their economic life as well.

The success of the Revolution permitted the development of home manufactures and the West. The federal government gradually acquired title to the Western lands, and with the Constitution, internal tariff barriers were removed. Washington's *Farewell Address* provides a good view of the hope that the natural economic rivalries of the various sections might be minimized, a hope which was echoed by Jefferson and Jackson. Americans did not agree, however, on the extent to which the central government should aid the states in internal improvements or "protect" infant industries or control the financial structure of the nation. They never have agreed on these matters, but their disagreements were especially sharp in the age of Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures,* of the clamor of the West for roads and canals, and of Jackson's titanic struggle with the Second Bank of the United States.

Industrialization was forced upon the United States by the situation in Europe, where France and Great Britain were at war almost continuously from 1793 until 1815. The unprecedented development of American foreign trade involved the nation in its first attempt to make good its right to trade as a neutral with belligerent nations, in the face of Napoleon's Berlin and Milan Decrees and the British Orders in Council. The Embargo Act of 1807 and the War of 1812 are usually credited with effecting a large measure of self-sufficiency in manufactures, although the full effect of the factory system was not to be felt until several decades later. Irving's satire on governing by proclamation in the *Knickerbocker History* suggests the Federalist attitude toward Jefferson's theory of economic isolation to avoid embroilment in war. Bryant's "A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal" (p. 230) reflects the development of industrialization.

The occupation of the West began almost immediately after the Revolution, but it was enormously accelerated by the introduction of new means of transportation. The steamboat reached the Ohio River in 1811, only four years after Robert Fulton's first successful demonstration on the Hudson. Roads and canals followed swiftly; the Cumberland or National Road had reached Zanesville, Ohio, by 1825, the year in which the Erie Canal was completed. The railroad era was soon to come, for construction of the Baltimore and Ohio began in 1828. The West soon had its own literature, reflecting the turbulence of the period. Its development is also suggested by Cooper's *The Pioneers,* despite a slightly earlier setting, and by Bryant's "The Prairies" (p. 232). From the time of the *Western Review* (1819-1821) of Lexington, Kentucky, this Western section had periodicals of its own and a local literature.

RELIGION

Religion remained vastly important to Americans, but it did not occupy quite so central a position in the national life as it had previously. The disruption and damage of the Revolution perceptibly weakened the position of many churches; Congress was forbidden by the Constitution to make any laws leading to the establishment of a state church; and the Bill of Rights asserted the principle of complete religious freedom. Disestablishment in those states which had supported particular

churches followed, and the period as a whole displays that wide variety of religious thought to which Americans are now accustomed. Nationalistic tendencies may be discerned in various denominations and in the continued dominance of Protestantism, but they are of minor significance.

This is not to say that religious fervor lessened, or that sectarianism disappeared. The masses wanted churches; denominational rivalries were no less intense; and the literature of religion was still enormous.

Calvinism remained a powerful force through the influence of such followers of Edwards as Timothy Dwight, and it may be observed in a watered-down form in certain lines of Bryant's "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood" (p. 226) and "To a Waterfowl" (p. 227). Revivalism flourished at intervals throughout the period, especially in the West. Quakerism, no longer noisily militant, found its finest American exponent in Woolman.

From the standpoint of literary history, however, the distinctive feature of the age is the emergence of the rationalistic and humanitarian doctrines of Deism and Unitarianism. Neither was new; neither was widely popular. The virulence with which they were both attacked gives us some hint of their effect upon the age, and from this distance it is clear that their common confidence in the powers of the human mind and their common tendency to present a man-centered rather than a God-centered world expressed something basic in the times.

Deism, which denied the revelation of God in the Bible, preferring to seek religious truth through human reason, regarded religious duties as primarily humanitarian. Franklin arrived at Deistic beliefs early in life and he seems never to have deserted them. After his *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity* (1725), however, he never expounded them openly, evidently having reached the conclusion that the orthodox Christian churches operated as a desirable social control, doing more good than harm. Somewhat similar attitudes are to be seen in Crèvecoeur, Freneau, Jefferson, and even Washington. With the French Revolution, however, Deism became momentarily a proselyting faith, spread in Deistic newspapers, magazines, and societies, as well as in more or less formal treatises. Three of the last are worth mention: Ethan Allen's *Reason the Only Oracle of God* (1784), for which the Revolutionary hero of Vermont was largely indebted to a Dr. Thomas Young; Paine's *The Age of Reason* (1794-1795; see p. 194); and Elihu Palmer's *Principles of Nature* (1802). These works were the object of almost unbelievably violent attacks by such orthodox Christians as Dwight, who regarded Deism not only as the worst form of infidelity and materialism but also as the handmaid of political radicalism. Deism was effectually destroyed, for the masses were not willing to give up the authority of the Bible, whatever they thought of social and political controls.

Unitarianism, the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ, developed under the leadership of William Ellery Channing. It had been common among the upper and more rationalistic classes in Boston and other large New England towns since the 1780's, and became a matter for violent debate only after 1805, when a Unitarian was appointed to the professorship of divinity in Harvard College. Differing from Deism in its acceptance of revelation, it is chiefly significant for its similar emphasis upon human nature and reason, and for its humanitarianism. The genesis of the succeeding age of reform, in so far as that reform was stimulated by Transcendentalism (see p. 350), has often been found in Unitarianism. Closely related to it is Universalism, organized as a formal sect in 1794 with the central doctrine that, since God is all-good, He could never have intended other than that all men shall be saved—a position which had been anticipated some years earlier by Charles Chauncy. These doctrines, although not widely popular, challenged the dominance of Calvinism throughout the nation.

SCIENCE and EDUCATION

When Benjamin Silliman founded the *American Journal of Science* in 1818 with the express purpose of raising science to "the elevation of our national character," he added one more link to the chain of nationalistic ambitions. The period abounded in new scientific associations, museums, libraries, and colleges. This aspect of the age is seldom apparent in literature because of the advance of specialization, but it is worth recalling to the reader of Franklin, Freneau, the Connecticut Wits, and even Cooper and Poe. Scientific rationalism was spreading rapidly, and it was finding institutional support.

Irving's satire on Jefferson's fondness for gadgets suggests that the advance of science was not universally appreciated, as does Poe's famous sonnet (p. 335). On the other hand, the absence of persistent appeals to a providential order of nature will be observed by every reader, and the scientific world-view may be regarded as generally accepted.

Neither the common schools nor the universities found much genuine state support before 1829; the democratization of education was to come somewhat later. The principle that the state should educate its citizens and exert itself for the diffusion of knowledge was, however, clearly enunciated by Washington and Jefferson (p. 175) and other of the founding fathers. The setting aside of public lands in the West for the maintenance of school systems had not succeeded, but the foundation had been laid. Timothy Dwight's prophecy of "new-born Oxfords" in the West and Cooper's account of the grandiose educational dreams of Templeton in *The Pioneers* show that Americans were thinking of education.

THE FINE ARTS

The fine arts, relatively unimportant in the colonial period, were especially susceptible to the later urgings of nationalism. Their connection with literature, moreover, was much more intimate than it had been before. While it cannot be said that they attained genuine distinction before 1829, their development was extraordinary and well worth attention.

The piety which had supported portraiture in the earlier age now became patriotic, and the founders of the Republic were given generously such immortality as paint could provide. The numerous portraits of Washington by Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828) are the best-known example of a demand which gave a livelihood to a dozen or more painters in the period. Most of them were trained abroad, many under Benjamin West (1738-1820), an expatriate from Pennsylvania who was President of the Royal Academy from 1792 until his death. Large historical paintings of incidents of the Revolution were also popular, although the most familiar, Emanuel Leutze's "Washington Crossing the Delaware," was painted somewhat later. Most interesting to students of literature, however, because it paralleled the literary search for new material, was the beginning of a landscape school with such painters as Thomas Cole (1801 1848), to whom Bryant addressed a highly characteristic sonnet (p. 231). Numerous galleries, art schools, and associations were founded, of which the most important was the National Academy of the Arts of Design, founded in 1826 and still in existence.

Sculpture was still in the future, although by 1825 a few Americans were settling in Italy to learn that art. They were soon to return to fill the halls of the Capitol at Washington with nationalistic statuary. The carving of ship figureheads was a folk form which later generations have much admired; the observant reader will notice Freneau's reference to the "girl at the head" in his "Lines by H. Salem" (p. 211).

Music became somewhat more popular in the period, with the organization of choral societies in the larger towns, even as far west as Cincinnati. There was much music in the cities, and in the 1820's opera was introduced. Immigrants continued to provide the most genuine music-lovers, and except for a few songs such as Samuel Woodworth's "The Old Oaken Bucket" not even lyrics were American. Dwight's "Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise" is an example of the patriotic songs which found places in the popular books of music. Francis Scott Key's "The Star-Spangled Banner" is the major contribution of the era, but many generations of Americans have lamented that its melody is neither native nor within the range of most American voices.

Perhaps the most fascinating survival of the cultural nationalism of the period is the classical revival in architecture, with which Cooper had so much fun in *The Pioneers.* Sponsored by Jefferson, who fell in love with the Roman remains at Nîmes in southern France (and with the Maison Carré in particular), classical forms dominated both public and domestic architecture from shortly after the Revolution until the 1840's. They were closely connected with the conviction that American tastes should be exemplary and republican; they disregarded, as Cooper so neatly demonstrated, the American climate and the American way of life. Colonial and Georgian styles survived, especially in the seaboard towns, and the great architect of the period is now acknowledged to have been Charles Bulfinch (1763-1844), designer of the State House at Boston. The period is memorable, moreover, for the first architectural competition for designs for the national capitol. T. H.

II. Literary Trends

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of LITERARY PUBLICATION

The literate American between 1765 and 1829 had great advantages over his colonial ancestors. He was the heir of an enormous expansion of printing, of the establishment of a periodical press scarcely equaled in vigor elsewhere in the world, and of the acceptance to a degree before unknown of the protection of literary property by copyright. None of these developments had reached its height by 1829, but their collective importance to literature can scarcely be overemphasized.

Almost all of the books represented in the present chapter were printed in America for American readers. The exceptions—certain pieces by Franklin, Crèvecœur's *Letters,* and Paine's *Age of Reason*—are those whose circumstances of publication were peculiar. Irving and Cooper were among the few authors who had audiences on both sides of the Atlantic, and they developed the custom of arranging for nearly simultaneous editions in London and New York.

The spread of printing can be suggested by statistics. In 1810 the census found 202 paper mills in the United States. Charles Evans, who sought in his *American Bibliography* to list all American imprints before 1820 (and did not complete the task), found 35,854 items before 1800, of which 25,634 were printed between 1766 and 1799 inclusive, as against 10,220 items between 1639 and 1765. He listed 329 imprints for 1765 and 784 for 1799. Nor was this steady increase centralized; it was, indeed, less so than would be the case today. The chief center of printing until the Revolution was Boston; Philadelphia then held the lead until the 1820's, when it went to New York. But there were presses in all the larger towns, including those in the West, and many of them published books as well as newspapers and magazines. All printing was still by hand, on flat-bed presses, but improvements and industrialization were in the offing. The Columbian Iron Press, developed about 1807, substituted the principle of the fulcrum for that of the screw. Steam and revolving cylinder presses were soon to be adopted, and one American, William Church (1778-1853), had patented in London in 1827 a type-casting and composing machine.

The stimulation to printing was primarily political, for this was the age of party journalism. Much of the political writing by Franklin, Adams, Paine, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Freneau first appeared in newspapers, which, despite paper shortages and military occupations, played a highly valuable part in the Revolution. The war over, newspapers multiplied; it is said that about two hundred were published simultaneously by 1801. Dailies appeared at Philadelphia and New York in 1783 and 1785, when those cities numbered about 25,000 persons. In the Hamilton-Jefferson period, party journalism swiftly came to maturity with the help of Freneau (see p. 203). Newspapers survived the Alien and Sedition Acts (see Freneau's "Stanzas to an Alien," p. 213); their place in political controversy is vividly revealed by Jefferson's attention to them in his *Second Inaugural.* Bryant, it will be remembered (see p. 224), made his fortune as editor and part owner of the New York *Evening Post,* founded by Hamilton in 1801. Throughout the period, in short, newspapers increased rapidly in numbers (by 1829 there were probably more than a thousand of them), in size, and in influence.

Magazines developed more slowly. F. L. Mott has estimated that about seventy-five were begun between 1783 and 1801, several hundred more during the first third of the nineteenth century. Most of them were short-lived, but they played a large part in the rise of belles-lettres. Among those in which material reprinted in the following pages first appeared were the *United States Magazine* (Philadelphia, 1779, edited by H. H. Brackenridge), the *New-York Magazine* (1790-1797), and the *North American Review* (Boston, 1815-1939). Other important literary outlets included the *Farmer's Weekly Museum* (Walpole, N H., 1793-1810, edited chiefly by Joseph Dennie), the *Columbian Magazine* (Philadelphia, 1786-1792), the *American Museum* (Philadelphia, 1787-1792), the *Massachusetts Magazine* (Boston, 1789-1796), and the *Port Folio* (Philadelphia, 1801-1827, edited by Dennie). These periodicals, and others like them all over the nation, provided a market for poems, essays, fiction, and literary criticism such as had never before been available. They were the background for the magazine world which supported Edgar Allan Poe in the next decade (see p. 306).

The American author, moreover, was favored after 1790 by a national copyright law protecting him from the unauthorized use of his work within the United States (but not, it will be noted, abroad) for a period of fourteen years, with the possibility of an extension

for another fourteen. This law, based upon the similar law passed in Great Britain in 1710, and upon legislation in Connecticut in 1783, was a great boon, although it did not protect American writers from the competition of pirated English books. International copyright was not achieved until 1891.

The book trade developed rapidly after the Revolution, and before the end of the period publishing, as now understood, was replacing older methods of bridging the gap between author and reader. Bookstores and printing establishments transformed themselves into publishers, and some of the familiar names of present-day publishing appeared. The firm of Wiley was founded by Charles Wiley in 1807, that of Harper by J. and J. Harper, printers, in 1817, that of Appleton by Daniel Appleton in 1825. Americans, nevertheless, were still largely dependent upon Great Britain; it has been estimated that American presses supplied only twenty per cent of current books in 1820, only thirty per cent in 1830.

NATIONALISM and ROMANTICISM

The content of American literature between 1765 and 1829 was, we have seen, largely determined by the peculiar circumstances of American life, and shows in large measure the dominant nationalistic pattern of thought of the period. When we turn, however, to problems of literary form, we are at once impressed by a quite dissimilar and even a conflicting factor—the continuing influence of European and especially English literary tradition. Our early national literature was written at approximately the same time as the so-called romantic revival, and its connections with that movement are so numerous that some scholars have preferred to describe it as American romanticism.

Romanticism is one of those tags of literary history which are useful as broad generalizations but impossible to define precisely. It was first used to serve as a contrast to classicism, in a description of the difference between the prevailing literary temper of the years between 1775 and 1837 and the prevailing literary temper of the century immediately preceding. The foremost English romanticists were Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, all of them except Scott primarily poets. Despite their wide divergences of temperament and literary production, they represented, taken together, something new in English literature.

The American romanticists included in the present chapter (it must be remembered that numerous later writers might be grouped with them) are Freneau, Bryant, Irving, Cooper, and Poe. Cooper wrote only prose, Irving only a poem or two, and Poe is quite as famous for his prose fiction and criticism as for his poetry. Nevertheless, these writers too, like their English contemporaries, represent something new. Their similarity may be readily demonstrated by brief consideration of five elements which are generally accepted as identifying marks of romanticism.

(1) The revolt against the literary forms and ideas of the period of classicism, evident in varying ways in the work of Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley, has some parallel in the relatively new forms of fiction developed by Irving, Cooper, and Poe, and in the political poetry of Freneau and Bryant.

(2) The new emphasis upon the imaginative and emotional qualities of literature, apparent in all the English romanticists, is likewise observable in all the Americans It includes a liking for the picturesque, the exotic, the sensuous, the sensational, and the supernatural, and sometimes, as in the case of Poe, all of them together

(3) The strong tendency to exalt the individual and the common man, characteristic especially of Wordsworth, was in America almost a national religion, as we have seen.

(4) The fresh interest in external nature, for which Wordsworth is again most famous, may be felt in the poetry of Freneau and Bryant and in the novels of Cooper.

(5) The literary use of the more colorful aspects of the past, common in the work of Coleridge, Scott, and Keats, is also to be found in Freneau's use of the "ruins of empire" theme, in Bryant's fascination by the Mound Builders, in Irving's effort to exploit the legends of the Hudson River region, and in Cooper's long series of historical tales.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Americans have often been compared with the English romanticists. Doubtless they were deeply influenced by the literary fashions of Great Britain and instances may be shown of direct imitation. Yet we must not too hastily dismiss all of their work as imitative, nor ignore their very great differences from the English. Americans contributed to romanticism as much, perhaps, as they derived from it. The interplay of forms and ideas was simply the con-

tinuation of a cultural bond with Europe which no degree of national pride could wholly sever. Always the American writers were drawn in two directions, on the one hand to their own land, which usually furnished them with the content for their writings, and on the other hand to that cosmopolitan tradition which ordinarily furnished them with the forms in which they shaped their ideas.

TYPES of DIMINISHING IMPORTANCE

A distinctive feature of the period is the rise to greater importance than ever before of poetry, the essay, and fiction—those belletristic forms in which the ideas of the writer are shaped within a fairly well defined aesthetic pattern. It cannot be said that Americans uniformly displayed, within these forms, that cultural independence which they thought so desirable. The rise of belles-lettres nevertheless indicates the appearance of a class of men who thought of themselves as literary artists, and of a reading public ready for literature other than the merely informational or utilitarian.

With the advent of more polished and more self-consciously literary writers, the distinctive ideas of the age were much more likely to find expression in belles-lettres than before. Accounts of voyages, promotion tracts, sermons, histories, and biographies continued to be written, but they no longer had a central place.

The only material in the following pages closely related to the accounts of voyages and the promotion tracts is Crèvecoeur's *Letters,* Bartram's *Travels* having been included in Chapter One. The most cursory examination of Crèvecoeur will show that his book is more like a series of familiar essays than like the writing of Bartram and his predecessors. The older types by no means disappeared, but they take a subordinate place, in such works as Jonathan Carver's *Travels* (1778), Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (written about 1782), Flint's *Geography and History of the Mississippi Valley* (1827), and the travel books of Bryant, Cooper, and Irving. An especially interesting survival is Poe's extensive use of the "imaginary voyage" form in the *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and other minor works.

Sermons similarly became freer and more polished, under the influence of ideals of composition like those expressed by Channing. Dwight's sermons are probably more typical of the time than Channing's, but they and the hundreds of others published during the period are now seldom read. The methods of oral discourse developed in the pulpit had their influence upon political oratory, which, as we shall see, now came into favor.

As we should expect, the nationalistic temper of the period had an immediate effect upon history and biography. The events of the Revolution were recorded, its heroes immortalized by such works as John Marshall's *Life of Washington* (1804-1807), and there was a flood of local histories, headed by Jeremy Belknap's *History of New Hampshire* (1784-1792). Little of this work was objective, and Irving's burlesque of antiquarianism and local pedantry (see p. 239) was doubtless needed. Not for several decades was history of literary merit and sound scholarship to be popularized by Prescott, Motley, and Parkman. Cooper's history of the United States Navy and Irving's many biographies should not, however, be forgotten. Such writings were thoroughly characteristic of the period in which these men matured.

POLEMICAL TRACTS and TREATISES

The literature of persuasion was, of course, outstanding in an age of constant political discussion. It had a conspicuous place from the first, as we have seen; now it reached a very high level indeed in such examples as Franklin's "Edict" and "Rules," Adams' *Novanglus,* Paine's *Common Sense, American Crisis,* and *Age of Reason,* and *The Federalist.* Many other works might be named from the period, for the great bulk of political writings belongs to this class, as do many theological treatises. Closely related to the tract and treatise on the one hand, and to the sermon on the other, are the innumerable political addresses and orations, such as the farewell addresses of Washington and Jackson, and Jefferson's inaugurals.

As was the case in the colonial period, the structure of this material defies generalization. Certain new tendencies are, however, evident. The development of newspapers and magazines made place for short pieces like Franklin's, and for lengthy series of essays and letters such as those by Adams, Paine (in the *Crisis*), and Hamilton. The latter were quite evidently influenced by the rise to prominence of the English periodical essay.

Topical arrangement continued to dominate, with the nature of the controversy determining the pattern.

Of especial interest are the meticulous planning of *The Federalist,* described in the first number of that series, and the variety which was achieved by Paine, both in *Common Sense* and in the *Crisis* series.

The addresses and orations have remarkably similar structure, except that to the topical arrangement the speaker's invariable exordium (introduction) and peroration (conclusion) are added. The modest beginning and the highly dignified conclusion, often embodying an appeal to divine guidance, are still a part of the pattern of discourse expected of our national leaders.

The rhetorical height of the period was unquestionably the Declaration of Independence, which combines the topical structure of the tract with the tones and methods of oratory. The revisions of Jefferson's first draft (p. 181) provide an opportunity to study the standards of the Revolutionary period. The careful balance of emotion and reason makes the Declaration a model of its kind, and it is not surprising that its phrases have never lost their vividness. Paine's writings have a similar oratorical ring, as do Hamilton's (although less frequently); it is unfortunate that we have no authentic text of the speeches with which Patrick Henry and James Otis electrified their audiences, for they too were doubtless masterpieces of persuasion.

DIARIES and AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Franklin's *Autobiography* (p. 119) and Woolman's *Journal* (p. 156) would be found upon any list of the great books of the period, and the enduring attraction of diaries and autobiographies is also attested by the inclusion herein of the effort in these forms by Jefferson (p. 177). All these men had a didactic purpose, ethical, religious, or political. The structure of such writings is ordinarily chronological, with success depending almost wholly upon the attractiveness of the personality self-revealed. Woolman is of course the fulfilment of the tradition of spiritual autobiography, Franklin the most striking evidence of the secularization of American life. More than one commentator has noted the thought-provoking contrast between the two men.

POEMS

Poetry had been cultivated from the first in America; it now began to bulk much larger. The present chapter contains examples of the work of three poets who would be included in any list of major American verse-makers: Freneau, Bryant, and Poe. Represented also are the poets of the Revolution, and one of the Connecticut Wits—Barlow.

The singers of the Revolution were more concerned with propaganda than with artistic finish, but the relative sophistication of their forms as compared with those of the *Bay Psalm Book* and *The Day of Doom* is immediately evident. Popular ballad meters were retained, together with such ballad devices as repetition and refrain, but both "Yankee Doodle" and "The Battle of the Kegs" consistently use feminine rhymes and "Nathan Hale," probably the finest of the anonymous ballads, has a subjectivity unusual in the type.

The Revolutionary songs are, in fact, somewhat more free and fresh in their forms than most of the poems of the Connecticut Wits, who regarded themselves as the "highbrows" of their time. The Wits had studied English literature and accepted the "rules" of classicism, including that respect for established types which is sometimes described as the "tyranny of the genres." Dwight thought so highly of Denham, Pope, Thomson, and Goldsmith that he incorporated whole lines of theirs in *Greenfield Hill* and deliberately imitated their forms and diction, even though he was dealing with American themes and problems. Barlow, least conservative of the Wits, felt most at home in the mock-heroic and the iambic pentameter couplet perfected (and worn out) by the predecessors and contemporaries of Pope. Nor are the examples here the most flagrant instances of the way in which a reverence for classical forms vitiated the sometimes original ideas of the Connecticut Wits. Their efforts at the epic—Dwight's *Conquest of Canaan* (1785) and Barlow's *Columbiad* (1807)— are the most familiar evidences of misguided nationalistic endeavor.

Freneau, Bryant, and Poe, taken together, show the steady progress of romanticism in America. Freneau's admiration for the classics, Milton, and Ossian identifies him as a precursor of the romantic revival as was the English poet Thomas Gray, whom he much resembles. Bryant, with his many similarities to Wordsworth, had deep roots in the English poetic theory of the eighteenth century; his concept of the imagination and his emphasis upon the moral quality of beauty sometimes were in conflict with his more romantic glorification of emotion. In Poe, finally, we may see the central conviction that

the business of the poet is simply the creation of beauty or, in other words, the achievement of an aesthetic effect with no relation to moral truth—an extreme romantic view. A similar progress in forms is evident, paralleling the change from established patterns to great variety which had taken place slightly earlier in English poetry. Freneau's regular verse forms give way to Bryant's experiments with anapestic substitutions in iambic meter and, eventually, to Poe's notion of organic form, which amounted in practice to such emphasis upon the musical and emotional effects of rhyme, alliteration, and assonance that sometimes, as in "Ulalume," sound became more important than sense.

Examination of the minor poetry written between 1765 and 1829 will corroborate this description of the trend, and may be conveniently accomplished by looking through some of the anthologies of the age. Elihu Hubbard Smith's *American Poems, Selected and Original* (1793), *The Columbian Muse* (1794), and Samuel Kettell's *Specimens of American Poetry* (1829) are particularly valuable. The transition was by no means over by 1829.

ESSAYS

Newspapers and magazines played their part in the increase of poetic production, but they were most fundamental, perhaps, to the American development of the literary essay. The essay form had firmly established itself in England with *The Spectator* (begun 1711) of Addison and Steele, and its prestige was much enhanced by Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and other later authors. Its brevity and variety, together with the ease with which it could be adapted to didactic purposes, made it very attractive to Americans, who had had nothing quite like it before except the squibs in the almanacs (see Franklin's "Way to Wealth," p. 138). As early as 1722 Franklin was imitating *The Spectator* in his brother's newspaper, over the signature of "Silence Dogood." Thereafter the newspaper or magazine which lacked its "Tomo Cheeki" (Freneau) or "Jonathan Old-style" (Irving) or "Oliver Oldschool" (Joseph Dennie) was a rarity. The attempt to maintain a dignified anonymity gave a sameness to these productions in a type which depends for its success upon the personality, even the idiosyncrasy, of the author. In Irving's *Sketch Book*, however, the essay achieved genuine distinction. Crèvecoeur, moreover, has some claim to being regarded as one of the earliest of nature essayists.

Newspaper and magazine requirements were likewise responsible for the beginnings of American literary criticism, in reviews and leading articles such as those by Poe (p. 307). Bryant's lectures on poetry, although prepared for oral delivery, might easily have taken the review form, as much of his other criticism did. The earliest American reviewers learned their trade from the British quarterlies, much as they deplored the strictures of those journals on American politics and culture.

NOVELS and SHORT STORIES

The prejudice against fiction which had marked the colonial period did not disappear in America until well after 1800 Jefferson, Dwight, and Noah Webster must be counted among the many who expressed belief that stories gave wholly false notions of life to impressionable youth. Nevertheless, fiction grew steadily more popular. In the late eighteenth century circulating libraries specializing in fiction prospered at the expense of the young ladies who demanded romance, and the new magazines, although expressing a suitable editorial concern about the possible moral effect of fiction, could not afford to bar it from their pages By the 1780's American authors were ready to help supply the market with native productions, often meeting the anticipated criticism by protestations that their tales were drawn from "real life," or pointing out that they invariably portrayed the awful consequences of sin and the fair rewards of virtue. That sin was made attractive was purely coincidental.

The prevailing nationalism was evident in the quest for American settings and characters, but the American novel in its first stages was heavily indebted to English models. Three distinct trends may be discerned, in an order which is roughly chronological. (1) The earliest American novels were adaptations of the fiction of sentiment and sensibility which had made the reputations of Samuel Richardson and Laurence Sterne; Mrs. Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* (1797) is generally regarded as the best example of the type. (2) Americans next imitated the sensationalism of the so-called Gothic romance, as practiced in its later stages by Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, and the mystery-laden propaganda novel of which William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794) is typical; this trend is illustrated by the work of Charles

Brockden Brown (1771-1810) and, so far as propaganda is concerned, by H. H. Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry.* (3) Finally, the society or domestic novel for which Fanny Burney and Jane Austen were famous and the historical romance as developed by Sir Walter Scott became naturalized in the United States; in these forms James Fenimore Cooper led the way, achieving the first really striking success.

Sentiment and sensibility—alike in their release of the "tender" emotions but differing in that sentimentalism was didactic and moral, sensibility deliberately throat-filling and tear-jerking—can scarcely be separated in *The Power of Sympathy; or, The Triumph of Nature* (1789), written "to expose the dangerous Consequences of Seduction and to set forth the advantages of female Education." Usually accepted as the first American novel, it was long attributed to Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton, but is now claimed for William Hill Brown. Mrs. Susanna Haswell Rowson's *Charlotte Temple, a Tale of Truth* (1790) was more popular. Many other sentimental novels might be named, and seduction and suicide and floods of tears filled many pages of fiction far into the nineteenth century. For most readers, however, *The Coquette* will be sufficient introduction to the type. Its form—a series of letters—was derived from Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa Harlowe* and, while not universal, was characteristic. The contemporary attitude toward such fiction may be gauged by Tyler's play, *The Contrast,* in which sentimentalism is vigorously attacked.

Charles Brockden Brown made use of the epistolary form in *Jane Talbot* (1801) and *Clara Howard* (1801), but he is better known for his "thrillers": *Wieland* (1798), *Ormond* (1799), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800), and *Edgar Huntley* (1801). These are remarkable for their use of such mysteries as ventriloquism and sleepwalking, as well as for wonder-working heroes and deep-dyed villains. Brown's imitation of the Gothic romance and of Godwin is unmistakable but not slavish. His work shows traces also of social purpose. That theme, however, was best used by Brackenridge, whose models were *Don Quixote* and Henry Fielding. *Modern Chivalry* is a rambling book, partly a satirical tract on the times (for which it is now usually read) and partly a picaresque romance, with Teague O'Regan as its rogue hero.

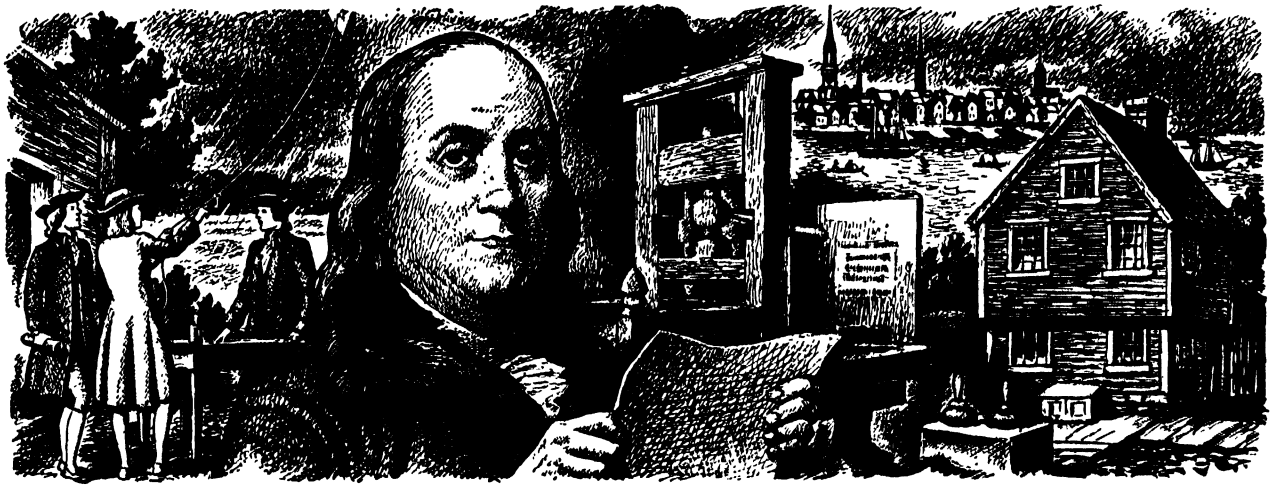
The work of Cooper, weak as it is in some respects, was a clear improvement over earlier attempts in the form. His first effort, *Precaution* (1820), was an imitation of the Jane Austen type of English domestic fiction, and foreshadowed a lifelong concern with social distinctions. *The Spy* (1821) was doubtless suggested by the success of the then unidentified author of *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* in combining history and fiction. Nationalism helped to make Cooper's work popular, but he must be credited with great skill in obtaining suspense in those parts of his novels in which physical action dominates, as well as with advances in the use of setting and in characterization. The escape-pursuit pattern, evident at intervals through *The Pioneers,* is the structure in which he excelled; unfortunately he often combined it with overelaborate mysteries such as that of the Effinghams. Unquestionably, however, Cooper made the American novel respectable, and his excursions into new types were paralleled by the novels of Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880), Catherine Maria Sedgwick (1769-1867), and James Kirke Paulding (1778-1860).

Unlike the novel, the short story was largely dependent upon the magazines, and therefore had a relatively even start in international competition. Its beginnings are closely connected with those of the essay and with "characters," delineations of unusual or typical personalities. Franklin came close to the short story in "The Way to Wealth" (p. 138) and "The Ephemera" (p. 147). The English magazines, although full of Oriental and moral tales, widely imitated in America, had not perfected the short story by 1815, nor had the German and French storytellers. The Americans had, therefore, a relatively new field, in which the contributions of Irving and Poe were outstanding. Although not many of their contemporaries rivalled them, with the short story the Americans first took a place in the main stream of world literature.

The story sketches of Irving retained many of the characteristics of the essay: a sense of the author's presence and manipulation, leisurely movement, a fullness of detail that is sometimes almost digression, and the achievement of atmosphere rather than suspense and sharp climax. With Poe, however, a close student of magazine requirements, the short story became distinctive. His detective tales, his scientific tales, his psychological studies, his tales of terror—all have a structural sureness which has been admired and imitated. They are often regarded as the first and the best of their kind.

Writing in 1835 to T. W. White, owner of the *Southern Literary Messenger,* Poe remarked that editors were demanding tales containing "the ludicrous heightened into the grotesque; the fearful colored into the horrible; the witty exaggerated into the burlesque; and the singular heightened into the strange and mystical." He could turn out stories with any of these effects, but he was at his best in creating the second and the fourth of them. "The Fall of the House of Usher," "Ligeia," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Cask of Amontillado" are all spine-tingling, gooseflesh-raising stories. They owe something, no doubt, to the Gothic romances, but Poe's artistic genius, which was marked by a passion for unity of effect, raises them far above his models. To the most romantically unreal situations imaginable he brought such realistic and carefully ordered detail, such psychological convincingness, that many generations of readers have reacted exactly as Poe intended that they should.

His theory that the short story should produce one single effect—and one only—is now regarded as too cramping; there are many other purposes which a short-story writer may legitimately pursue. Poe, however, presented his conception of a story so clearly (in his review of *Twice-Told Tales,* p. 307), and carried it out so effectively in his own work, that it was accepted almost without challenge down to the twentieth century. Whatever may have been its limitations, it remains one of the most original aesthetic positions in American literature. Working within it, Poe produced a body of short fiction which belongs with the classics, not merely of the United States but of the world. T. H.



Benjamin Franklin

1706 • 1790

Benjamin Franklin was one of the great men of the eighteenth century, famous far beyond the limits of the colonies which he helped unite into a nation. John Adams once remarked—and there is good reason to think he was right—that Franklin was more renowned than Sir Isaac Newton, Frederick the Great, or Voltaire, and "more beloved and esteemed than any or all of them." There was a warmth in Franklin; his mind, inquiring rather than dogmatic, endeared him to an age which regarded itself as peculiarly "enlightened," the more so since his reasonableness and simplicity were combined with a generous flair for showmanship. His contemporaries, and to some extent their posterity, saw Franklin in a series of sharply dramatic pictures—flying his kite in a thunderstorm to demonstrate the identity of lightning with electricity, standing modest but unawed before the House of Commons to assert the justice of American complaints, beaming philosophically yet with obvious delight in the adulation of the ladies of the court of Louis XVI, suggesting to the Constitutional Convention that it break a deadlock in debate by an appeal for the guidance of the Supreme Being.

Panel (l. to r.): An experiment with electricity • Franklin, about 55 years old • Printing-press used by Franklin • View of Philadelphia, 1754 • Franklin's birthplace, Milk Street, Boston

Unfortunately for his later reputation Franklin wrote an autobiography in which he reviewed his early life. It is a classic of its type—the first "rags-to-riches" success story in American literature—but it so glorified thrift, industry, conformity, and shrewd calculation of the material results of tact in personal relations that many sensitive readers have damned Franklin, on his own testimony, as selfishly opportunistic. Only those who accept unthinkingly the bourgeois standard that "getting ahead" is the be-all and end-all of life can wholeheartedly admire his self-portrait.

The truth of the matter is that Franklin was neither a great-souled philanthropist nor an unprincipled "careerist." A somewhat enigmatic mixture of idealist and realist, he comes close to being the first example of the typical American. He could not well have emerged from the mass of people in any corner of the world other than colonial America, and his vanity in having worked his way up is both pardonable and widespread in a land where class lines have never been rigid. Not very many self-made men, however, have turned as Franklin did from the making of a fortune to the broadening of a mind. Blessed with an insatiable curiosity and an admirable gusto for living, he became so widely traveled and so universally acquainted that there was scarcely a nook of the age in which he lived where he was not at home.

The details of his early life are familiar through his autobiography. There he tells of his ancestry and birth (in Boston in 1706), of his early apprenticeship to his printer brother, of the circumstances which led to his running off to Philadelphia when he was seventeen, of his disillusion there and in London concerning easy roads to wealth. In 1728 he founded his own printing firm, determined to make his fortune by hard work and thrift. Only men with financial security could afford to indulge themselves in the public service which he had in the back of his mind.

It took just twenty years for him to make enough money so that he could retire. Other men of forty-two would have gone on to pile up the pounds, shillings, and pence; Franklin, for all his preaching of the gospel of moneymaking, was not ambitious for mere financial power. He turned first to science, long one of his enthusiasms, and within a few years was internationally famous for his *Experiments & Observations on Electricity,* first published in London in 1751. Already, however, he was busy with public projects and political affairs, notable among them the founding of the Library Company of Philadelphia (1731), the organization of the American Philosophical Society (1743), the proposal for the Academy of Philadelphia, later the University of Pennsylvania (1749), and his service as clerk of the colonial legislature (1736-1751).

To recite, much less to evaluate, Franklin's activities during the remainder of his life would require many pages and the recapitulation of American history from the Albany Congress of 1754 to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States in 1789. There was scarcely a stage in the process of binding disparate colonies into a great nation wherein the calm counsel of Benjamin Franklin had no part. He was probably the first American to assert the principle of "no taxation without representation"; between 1757 and 1775 he was the chief representative of the colonial point of view in England; in 1775-1776 he was a key member of the Second Continental Congress, where he was one of the drafting committee for the Declaration of Independence; between 1777 and 1785 he was in France, where he was largely responsible for the alliance without which the Revolution could hardly have been successful and where he helped to negotiate the treaty of peace; and in 1787, back in Philadelphia, he ended his good works by acting as a balance wheel in the stormy Constitutional Convention.

Franklin would not have obtained the influence which he had if he had not been a writer. At sixteen he was contributing essays to his brother's newspaper, over the signature of "Silence Dogood." Thereafter he wrote steadily, with growing ease and polish. Most of his early work appeared in the newspapers and almanacs which helped him make his fortune; later he became a skillful writer of political pamphlets, many of them published anonymously; throughout his life he was an accomplished letter writer. In an age which tended to like ornate Latinate prose he cultivated simplicity in style and structure. He did not think of himself as an author in the belletristic sense, although all his life he had a critical eye for style both in prose and in poetry. His literary purposes, like those in politics, were utilitarian; "that is best wrote," he once said, "which is best adapted for obtaining the end of the writer." Never a writer of books, he succeeded in leaving papers which are ordinarily collected in ten volumes—and there is as yet no really complete edition.

His literary ends were many and various. *A Disserta-*

tion on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain (1725) expressed his youthful convictions on the fundamentals of morality—Deistic convictions which he later decided were not "useful," however sound they may have been. *Plain Truth* (1747) marked his entrance into political pamphleteering, with a plea for measures to defend Pennsylvania from the French and Indians. *Experiments & Observations on Electricity* (1751; 2d ed., 1754; 4th ed., 1769) was composed of letters describing his scientific work and that of his friends. *The Interest of Great Britain Considered with Regard to Her Colonies* (1760) was representative of his long effort to persuade the British of the necessity for a home-rule policy. Most of his other pieces were composed for newspaper or periodical publication or for the entertainment and edification of his friends. The *Autobiography*, by far his most extended work, not published until long after his death, was written for the younger members of his family.

Franklin and his writings have meant many things to many men, and they will doubtless continue to attract commentators and special students. The problems which they present are universal problems in religion, education, economics, politics, and the social and physical sciences. To the general reader, moreover, Franklin, as much as any colonial American, has the fascinating power of a great and versatile personality. To understand the drives which found expression in his life and work is not only a means of understanding the eighteenth century but also a way of clarifying certain personal values. What should a man or woman seek to find in the vocation which he chooses to gain his livelihood? To what extent is self-aggrandizement compatible with self-respect? What, after all, is success? Franklin did not give an ultimate answer to these questions, but few persons will read his life or writings without reflecting upon them with new insight.

The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin, ed. John Bigelow, 10 vols., New York, 1887-1889 • **The Writings of Benjamin Franklin**, ed. A. H. Smyth, 10 vols., New York, 1905-1907 • **Benjamin Franklin: Representative Selections**, ed. F. L. Mott and C. E. Jorgenson, Cincinnati, 1936 • P. L. Ford, **Franklin Bibliography**, Brooklyn, 1889 • Carl Van Doren, **Benjamin Franklin**, New York, 1938

From the *Autobiography*

Franklin began writing his autobiography when he was sixty-five. Vacationing with his friend Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph's, in Hampshire, he determined to use his unwonted leisure to give an account of his ancestry and early life to his son William, then governor of New Jersey. After setting down a list of events and topics to be discussed, he composed eighty-six pages of manuscript, carrying the story of his life down to 1730. He may have sent this manuscript to his son, although there is no real proof that he did so. At any rate, busy with political affairs, he forgot about his memoirs for eleven years. In 1782, living at Passy, a suburb of Paris, he received a letter from an American friend in which was enclosed a copy of the first portion of the autobiography (how obtained no one knows), with the urgent suggestion that it be continued. After consultation with his French friends, who agreed that the project should be completed, Franklin wrote fourteen more pages in 1784. In this portion he described his effort to learn virtue by a chart system; he was over seventy-eight when he composed it. Four years later, back in Philadelphia, he added a third section of 117 pages, and in 1790, a few weeks before his death, he wrote still a fourth part of seven and one-half pages. Although his memoirs were eagerly awaited, it was, through circumstances too complicated to describe here, many years before there was an edition based upon the original manuscript. John Bigelow's transcription, first published in 1868, is now known to be far from accurate, so far as Franklin's capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure are concerned. A definitive edition, based upon the original manuscript at the Henry E. Huntington Library and prepared by Max Farrand, embodies careful study of the innumerable interlinear changes.

The following selections include about one third of the portion of the Autobiography written at Twyford in 1771, the larger part of the portion written at Passy in 1784, and a small part (that describing Franklin's success with the investigation of electricity) of the portion written at Philadelphia in 1788. The "preachy" tone of the Twyford and Passy sections may be explained in part by his desire to edify his son, for whom he had high ambitions, and by his penchant for moralizing, evident throughout his work. It should be remembered, however, that the Autobiography, with its strong suggestion that anyone who is willing to pay the price of caution and industry can succeed, is not, for all its frankness, a full revelation of Franklin.

TWYFORD, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771

Dear Son, I have ever had a Pleasure in obtaining any little Anecdotes of my Ancestors. You may remember the Enquiries I made among the Remains of my Relations when you were with me in England; and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Now imagining it may be equally agreable to you to know the Circumstances of *my* Life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with; and expecting a Weeks uninterrupted Leisure in my present Country Retirement, I sit down to write them for you. To which I have besides some other Inducements. Having emerg'd from the Poverty and Obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a State of Affluence and some Degree of Reputation in the World, and having gone so far thro' Life with a considerable Share of Felicity, the conducing Means I made use of, which, with the Blessing of God, so well succeeded, my Posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own Situations, and therefore fit to be imitated. That Felicity, when I reflected on it, has induc'd me sometimes to say, that were it offer'd to my Choice, I should have no Objection to a Repetition of the same Life from its Beginning, only asking the Advantages Authors have in a second Edition to correct some Faults of the first. So would I if I might, besides corr[ecting] the Faults, change some sinister Accidents and Events of it for others more favourable, but tho' this were deny'd, I should still accept the Offer. However, since such a Repetition is not to be expected, the next Thing most like living one's Life over again, seems to be a *Recollection* of that Life; and to make that Recollection as durable as possible, the putting it down in Writing. Hereby, too, I shall indulge the Inclination so natural in old Men, to be talking of themselves and their own past Actions, and I shall indulge it, without being troublesome to others who thro' respect to Age might think themselves oblig'd to give me a Hearing, since this may be read or not as any one pleases. And lastly (I may as well confess it, since my Denial of it will be believ'd by no Body) perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *Vanity*. Indeed I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory Words, *Without vanity I may say*, &c but some vain thing immediately follow'd. Most People dislike Vanity in others whatever share they have of it themselves, but I give it fair Quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of Good to the Possessor and to others that are within his Sphere of Action: And therefore in many Cases it would not be quite absurd if a Man were to thank God for his Vanity among the other Comforts of Life.—

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all Humility to acknowledge, that I owe the mention'd Happiness of my past Life to his kind Providence, which led me to the Means I us'd and gave them Success. My Belief of this, induces me to *hope*, tho' I must not *presume*, that the same Goodness will still be exercis'd towards me in continuing that Happiness, or in enabling me to bear a fatal Reverse, which I may experience as others have done, the Complexion of my future Fortune being known to him only: in whose Power it is to bless to us even our Afflictions.

The Notes one of my Uncles (who had the same kind of Curiosity in collecting Family Anecdotes) once put into my Hands, furnish'd me with several Particulars relating to our Ancestors. From these Notes I learnt that the Family had liv'd in the same Village, Ecton in Northamptonshire, for 300 Years, and how much longer

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Text: That of the first section is based upon the original manuscript as examined by F. L. Mott and C. E. Jorgenson, that of the second and third sections is from the Bigelow edition, Vol. I (1887) • **1 Twyford,** a village near Winchester, about fifty miles southwest of London • **5 with me.** William Franklin and his father made a genealogical tour into central England in 1758 • **62 one . . . Uncles, Benjamin Franklin,** who died in Boston in 1728 • **66 Ecton,** about fifty miles north-northeast of London

he knew not (perhaps from the Time when the Name *Franklin* that before was the name of an Order of People, was assum'd by them for a Surname, when others took surnames all over the kingdom)[,] on a Freehold of about 30 Acres, aided by the Smith's Business, which had continued in the Family till his Time, the eldest son being always bred to that Business[.] A Custom which he and my Father both followed as to their eldest Sons.—When I search'd the Register at Ecton, I found an Account of their Births, Marriages and Burials, from the Year 1555 only, there being no Register kept in that Parish at any time preceding.—By that Register I perceiv'd that I was the youngest Son of the youngest Son for 5 Generations back. My Grandfather Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he grew too old to follow Business longer, when he went to live with his Son John, a Dyer at Banbury in Oxfordshire, with whom my Father serv'd an Apprenticeship. There my Grandfather died and lies buried. We saw his Gravestone in 1758. His eldest Son Thomas liv'd in the House at Ecton, and left it with the Land to his only Child, a Daughter, who, with her Husband, one Fisher of Wellingborough sold it to Mr. Isted, now Lord of the Manor there. My Grandfather had 4 Sons that grew up, viz Thomas, John, Benjamin and Josiah. I will give you what Account I can of them at this distance from my Papers, and if these are not lost in my Absence, you will among them find many more Particulars. Thomas was bred a Smith under his Father, but being ingenious, and encourag'd in Learning (as all his Brothers likewise were) by an Esquire Palmer then the principal Gentleman in that Parish, he qualify'd himself for the Business of Scrivener, became a considerable Man in the County Affairs, was a chief Mover of all publick Spirited Undertakings for the County or Town of Northampton and his own village, of which many instances were told us; and he was at Ecton much taken Notice of and patroniz'd by the then Lord Halifax. He died in 1702, Jan. 6, old Stile, just 4 Years to a Day before I was born. The Account we receiv'd of his Life and Character from some old People at Ecton, I remember struck you as something extraordinary, from its Similarity to what you knew of mine. Had he died on the same Day, you said one might have suppos'd a Transmigration.—John was bred a Dyer, I believe of Woollens. Benjamin, was bred a Silk Dyer, serving an Apprenticeship at London. He was an ingenious Man, I remember him well, for when I was a Boy he came over to my Father in Boston, and lived in the House with us some Years. He lived to a great Age. His Grandson Samuel Franklin now lives in Boston. He left behind him two Quarto Volumes, M. S. of his own Poetry, consisting of little occasional Pieces address'd to his Friends and Relations, of which the following sent to me, is a Specimen. He had form'd a Shorthand of his own, which he taught me, but, never practising it I have now forgot it. I was nam'd after this Uncle, there being a particular Affection between him and my Father. He was very pious, a great Attender of Sermons of the best Preachers, which he took down in his Shorthand and had with him many Volumes of them. He was also much of a Politician, too much perhaps for his Station. There fell lately into my Hands in London a Collection he had made of all the principal Pamphlets relating to Publick Affairs from 1641 to 1717. Many of the Volumes are wanting, as appears by the Numbering, but there still remains 8 Vols. Folio, and 24 in 4.^{to} and 8.^{vo}.—A Dealer in old Books met with them, and knowing me by my sometimes buying of him, he brought them to me. It seems my Uncle must have left them here when he went to America, which was above 50 years since. There are many of his Notes in the Margins.—

This obscure Family of ours was early in the Reformation, and continu'd Protestants thro' the Reign of Queen Mary, when they were sometimes in Danger of Trouble on Account of their Zeal against Popery. They had got an English Bible, and to conceal and secure it, it was fastened open with Tapes under and within the Frame of a Joint Stool. When my Great Great Grandfather read [it] to his Family, he turn'd up the joint Stool upon his Knees, turning over the Leaves then under the Tapes. One of the Children stood at the Door to give Notice if he saw the Apparitor coming, who was an

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2 **Order of People.** Franklins were small landowners in the English feudal society of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries • 38 **Lord Halifax,** Charles Montague, first Earl of Halifax (1661-1715), a noted financier • 38 **old Stile,** the Julian calendar, superseded by the present Gregorian calendar in 1752. By modern reckoning Franklin was born on January 17, 1706 • 54 **a Specimen,** which Franklin failed to insert, as a marginal note shows was intended. Examples of Uncle Benjamin's verses are printed in the Bigelow edition • 73 **Reign . . . Mary,** 1553-1558 • 78 **Joint Stool,** a wooden footstool made by a joiner.

Officer of the Spiritual Court. In that Case the Stool was turn'd down again upon its feet, when the Bible remain'd conceal'd under it as before. This Anecdote I had from my Uncle Benjamin.—The Family continu'd all of the Church of England till about the End of Charles the 2ds Reign, when some of the Ministers that had been outed for Nonconformity, holding Conventicles in Northamptonshire, Benjamin and Josiah adher'd to them, and so continu'd all their Lives. The rest of the Family remain'd with the Episcopal Church.

Josiah, my father, married young, and carried his Wife with three Children into New England, about 1682. The Conventicles having been forbidden by Law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable Men of his Acquaintance to remove to that Country, and he was prevail'd with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their Mode of Religion with Freedom. —By the same Wife he had 4 Children more born there, and by a second wife ten more, in all 17, of which I remember 13 sitting at one time at his Table, who all grew up to be Men and Women, and married. I was the youngest Son, and the youngest Child but two, and was born in Boston, N. England. My mother, the 2d wife was Abiah Folger, a daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first Settlers of New England, of whom honourable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his Church History of that Country, (entitled Magnalia Christi Americana) as *a godly learned Englishman,* if I remember the Words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional Pieces, but only one of them was printed which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the home-spun Verse of that Time and People, and address'd to those then concern'd in the Government there. It was in favour of Liberty of Conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other Sectaries, that had been under Persecution; ascribing the Indian Wars and other Distresses, that had befallen the Country to that Persecution, as so many Judgments of God, to punish so heinous an Offense; and exhorting a Repeal of those uncharitable Laws. The whole appear'd to me as written with a good deal of Decent Plainness and manly Freedom. The six last concluding Lines I remember, tho' I have forgotten the two first of the Stanza, but the Purport of them was that his Censures proceeded from Good will, and therefore he would be known as the Author,

"Because to be a Libeller, (says he)
I hate it with my Heart.
From Sherburne Town where now I dwell,
My Name I do put here,
Without Offense, your real Friend,
It is Peter Folgier."

My elder Brothers were all put Apprentices to different Trades. I was put to the Grammar School at Eight Years of Age, my Father intending to devote me as the Tithe of his Sons to the Service of the Church. My early Readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read) and the Opinion of all his Friends that I should certainly make a good Scholar, encourag'd him in this Purpose of his. My Uncle Benjamin too approv'd of it, and propos'd to give me all his Shorthand Volumes of Sermons I suppose as a Stock to set up with, if I would learn his Character. I continu'd however at the Grammar School not quite one Year, tho' in that time I had risen gradually from the Middle of the Class of that Year to be the Head of it, and farther was remov'd into the next Class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the End of the Year. But my Father in the mean time, from a View of the Expence of a College Education which, having so large a Family, he could not well afford, and the mean Living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain, Reasons that he gave to his Friends in my Hearing, altered his first Intention, took me from the Grammar School, and sent me to a School for Writing and Arithmetic kept by a then famous Man, Mr. Geo. Brownell, very successful in his Profession generally, and that by

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5 Charles . . . Reign, 1660-1685 • **7 for Nonconformity,** that is, for refusing to read the prayer book as required by the Act of Uniformity of 1662 • **7 Conventicles,** secret religious meetings, outlawed by the Conventicle Act of 1664 • **28 a godly . . . Englishman,** actually "an Able Godly Englishman," mentioned very briefly in Bk. VI, Chap. VI, of the Magnalia by Cotton Mather • **30 one . . . printed,** an allusion to "A Looking Glass for the Times· or, the Former Spirit of New England Revived in This Generation," a fourteen-page pamphlet published at Boston in 1676 • **49 Sherburne Town,** "In the Island of Nantucket." —Franklin • **54 the Grammar School.** There were two grammar schools in Boston in 1714. Franklin is thought to have attended the older one, now known as the Boston Latin School • **56 Tithe.** Benjamin was Josiah Franklin's tenth son • **76 Mr. Geo. Brownell,** who taught private pupils in Boston between 1712 and 1734

mild encouraging Methods. Under him I acquired fair Writing pretty soon, but I fail'd in the Arithmetic, and made no Progress in it.—At Ten Years old, I was taken home to assist my Father in his Business, which was that of a Tallow Chandler and Sope Boiler. A Business he was not bred to, but had assumed on his Arrival in New England and on finding his Dying Trade would not maintain his Family, being in little Request. Accordingly I was employed in cutting Wick for the Candles, filling the Dipping Mold, and the Molds for cast Candles, attending the Shop, going of Errands, etc.—I dislik'd the Trade and had a strong Inclination for the Sea; but my Father declar'd against it; however, living near the Water, I was much in and about it, learnt early to swim well, and to manage Boats, and when in a Boat or Canoe with other Boys I was commonly allow'd to govern, especially in any case of Difficulty; and upon other Occasions I was generally a Leader among the Boys, and sometimes led them into Scrapes, of w^{ch} I will mention one Instance, as it shows an early projecting public Spirit, tho' not then justly conducted. There was a salt Marsh that bounded part of the Mill Pond, on the Edge of which at Highwater, we us'd to stand to fish for Min[n]ows. By much Trampling, we had made it a mere Quagmire. My Proposal was to build a Wharf there fit for us to stand upon, and I show'd my Comrades a large Heap of Stones which were intended for a new House near the Marsh, and which would very well suit our Purpose. Accordingly in the Evening when the Workmen were gone, I assembled a Number of my Playfellows; and working with them diligently like so many Emmets, sometimes two or three to a Stone, we brought them all away and built our little Wharff.—The next Morning the Workmen were surpriz'd at Missing the Stones; which were found in our Wharff; Enquiry was made after the Removers; we were discovered and complain'd of; several of us were corrected by our Fathers; and tho' I pleaded the Usefulness of the Work, mine convinc'd me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

I think you may like to know something of his Person and Character. He had an excellent Constitution of Body, was of middle Stature, but well set and very strong. He was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skill'd a little in Music and had a clear pleasing Voice, so that when he play'd Psalm Tunes on his Violin and sung withal as he sometimes did in an Evening after the Business of the Day was over, it was extreamly agreable to hear. He had a mechanical Genius too, and on occasion was very handy in the Use of other Tradesmen's Tools. But his great Excellence lay in a sound Understanding, and solid Judgment in prudential Matters, both in private and publick Affairs. In the latter indeed he was never employed, the numerous Family he had to educate and the straitness of his Circumstances, keeping him close to his Trade, but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading People, who consulted him for his Opinion in Affairs of the Town or of the Church he belong'd to and show'd a good deal of Respect for his Judgment and advice. He was also much consulted by private Persons about their affairs when any Difficulty occurr'd, and frequently chosen an Arbitrator between contending Parties.—At his Table he lik'd to have as often as he could, some sensible Friend or Neighbour to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful Topic for Discourse, which might tend to improve the Minds of his Children. By this means he turn'd our Attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the Conduct of Life; and little or no Notice was ever taken of what related to the Victuals on the Table, whether it was well or ill drest, in or out of season, of good or bad flavour, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind; so that I was bro't up in such a perfect Inattention to those Matters as to be quite Indifferent what kind of Food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this Day, if I am ask'd I can scarce tell a few Hours after Dinner, what I din'd upon. This has been a Convenience to me in travelling, where my Companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable Gratification of their more delicate[,] because better instructed[,] tastes and appetites.

My Mother had likewise an excellent Constitution. She suckled all her 10 Children. I never knew either my Father or Mother to have any Sickness but that of which they dy'd he at 89 and she at 85 years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a Marble Stone over their Grave with this Inscription:

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20 projecting, promoting

JOSIAH FRANKLIN
And ABIAH his Wife
Lie here interred.
They lived lovingly together in Wedlock
Fifty-five Years.
Without an Estate or any gainful Employment,
By constant labour and Industry,
With God's blessing,
They maintained a large Family
Comfortably;
And brought up thirteen Children,
And seven Grandchildren
Reputably.
From this Instance, Reader,
Be encouraged to Diligence in thy Calling,
And Distrust not Providence.
He was a pious and prudent Man,
She a discreet and virtuous Woman.
Their youngest Son,
In filial Regard to their Memory,
Places this Stone.
J. F. born 1655—Died 1744—Ætat 89.
A. F. born 1667—Died 1752—85.

By my rambling Digressions I perceive myself to be grown old. I us'd to write more methodically.—But one does not dress for private Company as for a publick Ball. 'Tis perhaps only Negligence.—

To return. I continu'd thus employ'd in my Father's Business for two Years, that is till I was 12 Years old, and my Brother John, who was bred to that Business having left my Father, married and set up for himself at Rhodeisland, there was all Appearance that I was destin'd to supply his Place and be a Tallow Chandler. But my Dislike to the Trade continuing, my Father was under Apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreable, I should break away and get to Sea, as his Son Josiah had done to his great Vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and see Joiners, Bricklayers, Turners, Braziers, etc. at their Work, that he might observe my Inclination, and endeavour to fix it on some Trade or other on Land. It has ever since been a Pleasure to me to see good Workmen handle their Tools, and it has been useful to me, having learnt so much by it, as to be able to do little Jobs myself in my House, when a Workman could not readily be got; and to construct little Machines for my Experiments while the Intention of making the Experiment was fresh and warm in my Mind. My Father at last fix'd upon the Cutler's Trade, and my Uncle Benjamin's Son Samuel was bred to that Business in London[,] being about that time establish'd in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his Expectations of a Fee with me displeasing my Father, I was taken home again.—

From a Child I was fond of Reading, and all the little Money that came into my Hands was ever laid out in Books. Pleas'd with the Pilgrim's Progress, my first Collection was of John Bunyan's Works, in separate little Volumes I afterwards sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's Historical Collections; they were small Chapmen's Books and cheap, 40 or 50 in all—My Father's little Library consisted chiefly of Books in polemic Divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted, that at a time when I had such a Thirst for Knowledge, more proper Books had not fallen in my Way, since it was now resolv'd I should not be a Clergyman. Plutarch's Lives there was, in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great Advantage. There was also a Book of Defoe's, called an Essay on Projects, and another of Dr. Mather's, called Essays to do Good which perhaps gave me a Turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future Events of my Life.

This Bookish inclination at length determin'd my Father to make me a Printer, tho' he had already one Son (James) of that Profession. In 1717 my Brother James return'd from England with a Press and Letters to set

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56 **Pilgrim's Progress,** allegorical novel (1678) by John Bunyan (1628-1688), English nonconformist. Bunyan's writings were not collected at this date, Franklin's purchases were probably early editions of separate works • 59 **R. Burton's . . . Collections,** a series of compilations by an English publisher and hack writer, Nathaniel Crouch (1632?-1725?). Sold at a shilling each by chapmen (peddlers) and bookdealers, they were widely popular in colonial America • 66 **Plutarch's Lives,** the most famous collection of biographies of the Greeks and Romans, by a Greek who lived at Rome in the first century A.D. • 68 **Essay on Projects** (1697) by Daniel Defoe (1661?-1731), English journalist and novelist. The book dealt with such matters as education and insurance • 69 **Essays . . . Good,** contained the ideas of Cotton Mather (see p 71) on cooperative societies for religious and humanitarian improvement • 75 **James,** James Franklin (1696/7-1735)

up his Business in Boston. I lik'd it much better than that of my Father, but still had a Hankering for the Sea. —To prevent the apprehended Effect of such an Inclination, my Father was impatient to have me bound to my Brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded and signed the Indentures, when I was yet but 12 Years old.—I was to serve as an Apprentice till I was 21 Years of Age, only I was to be allow'd Journeyman's Wages during the last Year. In a little time I made great Proficiency in the Business, and became a useful Hand to my Brother. I now had Access to better Books. An Acquaintance with the Apprentices of Booksellers, enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my Room reading the greatest Part of the Night, when the Book was borrow'd in the Evening and to be return'd early in the Morning[,] lest it should be miss'd or wanted. And after some time an ingenious Tradesman Mr. Matthew Adams who had a pretty Collection of Books, and who frequented our Printing House, took Notice of me, invited me to his Library, and very kindly lent me such Books as I chose to read. I now took a Fancy to Poetry, and made some little Pieces. My Brother, thinking it might turn to account encourag'd me, and put me on composing two occasional Ballads. One was called The *Lighthouse Tragedy,* and contained an Acc[t] of the drowning of Capt. Worthilake with his Two Daughters; the other was a Sailor Song on the Taking of *Teach* or Blackbeard the Pirate. They were wretched Stuff, in the Grub-street Ballad Stile, and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the Event being recent, having made a great Noise. This flatter'd my Vanity. But my Father discourag'd me, by ridiculing my Performances, and telling me Verse-makers were generally Beggars; so I escap'd being a Poet, most probably a very bad one. But as Prose Writing has been of great Use to me in the Course of my Life, and was a principal Means of my Advancement, I shall tell you how in such a Situation I acquir'd what little Ability I have in that Way.

There was another Bookish Lad in the Town, John Collins by Name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of Argument, and very desirous of confuting one another. Which disputacious Turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad Habit, making People often extreamly disagreeable in Company, by the Contradiction that is necessary to bring it into Practice, and thence, besides souring and spoiling the Conversation, is productive of Disgusts and perhaps Enmities where you may have occasion for Friendship. I had caught it by reading my Father's Books of Dispute about Religion. Persons of good Sense, I have since observ'd, seldom fall into it, except Lawyers, University Men, and Men of all Sorts that have been bred at Edinborough. A Question was once some how or other started between Collins and me, of the Propriety of educating the Female Sex in Learning, and their Abilities for Study. He was of Opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary Side, perhaps a little for Dispute['s] sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready Plenty of Words, and sometimes as I thought bore me down more by his Fluency than by the Strength of his Reasons. As we parted without settling the Point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my Arguments in Writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answer'd and I reply'd. Three of [or] four Letters of a Side had pass'd, when my Father happen'd to find my Papers, and read them. Without ent'ring into the Discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the Manner of my Writing, observ'd that tho' I had the Advantage of my Antagonist in correct Spelling and pointing (which I ow'd to the Printing House) I fell far short in elegance of Expression, in Method and in Perspicuity, of which he convinc'd me by several Instances. I saw the Justice of his Remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the *Manner* in writing, and determin'd to endeavour at Improvement.—

About this time I met with an odd Volume of the Spectator. It was the Third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the Writing excellent, and wish'd if possible to imitate it. With that

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27 Capt. Worthilake or Worthylake, first keeper of the Boston lighthouse. He and his wife and one daughter were drowned (Franklin's memory was at fault here) in November 1718 • **28 Teach,** Edward Teach or Thatch, better known as Blackbeard, killed by a British naval officer in North Carolina in 1718 • **73 pointing,** punctuating • **81 Spectator** (1711-1712; second series, 1714), English literary periodical conducted by Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729)

View, I took some of the Papers, and making short Hints of the Sentiment in each Sentence, laid them by a few Days, and then without looking at the Book, try'd to compleat the Papers again, by expressing each hinted Sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been express'd before, in any suitable Words, that should come to hand.

Then I compar'd my Spectator with the Original, discover'd some of my Faults and corrected them. But I found I wanted a Stock of Words or a Readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquir'd before that time, if I had gone on making Verses, since the continual Occasion for Words of the same Import but of different Length, to suit the Measure, or of different Sound for the Rhyme, would have laid me under a constant Necessity of searching for Variety, and also have tended to fix that Variety in my Mind, and make me Master of it. Therefore I took some of the Tales and turn'd them into Verse: And after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the Prose, turn'd them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my Collections of Hints into Confusion, and after some Weeks, endeavour'd to reduce them into the best Order, before I began to form the full Sentences, and compleat the Paper. This was to teach me Method in the Arrangement of Thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discover'd many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the Pleasure of Fancying that in certain Particulars of small Import, I had been lucky enough to improve the Method or the Language and this encourag'd me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English Writer, of which I was extreamly ambitious.

My time for these Exercises and for Reading, was at Night, after Work or before it began in the Morning; or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the Printing House alone, evading as much as I could the common Attendance on publick Worship, which my Father used to exact of me when I was under his Care: And which indeed I still thought a Duty; tho' I could not, as it seemed to me, afford the Time to practise it.

When about 16 Years of Age, I happen'd to meet with a Book, written by one Tryon, recommending a Vegetable Diet. I determined to go into it. My Brother being yet unmarried, did not keep House, but boarded himself and his Apprentices in another Family. My refusing to eat Flesh occasioned an Inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's Manner of preparing some of his Dishes, such as Boiling Potatoes or Rice, making Hasty Pudding, and a few others, and then propos'd to my Brother, that if he would give me Weekly half the Money he paid for my Board I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional Fund for buying Books. But I had another Advantage in it. My Brother and the rest going from the Printing House to their Meals, I remain'd there alone, and dispatching presently my light Repast, (which often was no more than a Bisket or a Slice of Bread, a Handful of Raisins or a Tart from the Pastry Cook's, and a Glass of Water) had the rest of the Time till their Return, for Study, in which I made the greater Progress from the greater Clearness of Head and quicker Apprehension which usually attend Temperance in Eating and Drinking. And now it was that being on some Occasion made asham'd of my Ignorance in Figures, which I had twice failed in Learning when at School, I took Cocker's Book of Arithmetick, and went thro' the whole by myself with great Ease. I also read Seller's and Sturmy's Books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little Geometry they contain, but never proceeded far in that Science.—And I read about this Time Locke on Human Understanding, and the Art of Thinking by Messrs du Port Royal.

While I was intent on improving my Language, I met with an English Grammar (I think it was Greenwood's) at the End of which there were two little

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43 Tryon, Thomas Tryon (1634-1703), English mystic. Franklin probably read Health's Grand Preservative (1682) • 68 Cocker's. Edward Cocker (1631-1675), English textbook writer, was the author of several different arithmetics, the most popular of which was first published in 1678, after Cocker's death • 70 Seller's. John Seller (fl. 1700) was the author of The English Pilot (1671) and Practical Navigation (1718). The latter is the book which Franklin probably read • 70 Sturmy's, presumably Samuel Sturmy's The Mariner's Magazine (1669) • 73 Locke . . . Understanding, the best-known work of the English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704), An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690) • 75 Messrs . . . Royal. Port-Royal, originally a nunnery near Chevreuse in France, became in the seventeenth century the center of Jansenism, a movement within the Roman Catholic Church with which were associated Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638) and Blaise Pascal (1623-1662). The book referred to by Franklin is L'Art de penser, a logic first published in 1662 • 77 Greenwood's, "An Essay towards a Practical English Grammar" (1711) by James Greenwood (d. 1737), English grammarian

Sketches of the Arts of Rhetoric and Logic, the latter finishing with a Specimen of a Dispute in the Socratic Method. And soon after I procur'd Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates, wherein there are many Instances of the same Method. I was charm'd with it, adopted it, dropt my abrupt Contradiction, and positive Argumentation, and put on the humble Enquirer and Doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftsbury and Collins, become a real Doubter in many Points of our religious Doctrine, I found this Method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I us'd it, therefore I took a Delight in it, practis'd it continually and grew very artful and expert in drawing People even of superior Knowledge into Concessions the Consequences of which they did not forsee, entangling them in Difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining Victories that neither myself nor my Cause always deserved.—I continu'd this Method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the Habit of expressing myself in Terms of modest Diffidence, never using when I advance any thing that may possibly be disputed, the Words, *Certainly, undoubtedly;* or any others that give the Air of Positiveness to an Opinion; but rather say, I conceive, or I apprehend a Thing to be so or so, It appears to me, or I should think it so or so for such and such Reasons, or I imagine it to be so, or it is so if I am not mistaken. This Habit I believe has been of great Advantage to me, when I have had occasion to inculcate my Opinions and persuade Men into Measures that I have been from time to time engag'd in promoting.—And as the chief Ends of Conversation are to *inform,* or to be *informed,* to *please* or to *persuade,* I wish wellmeaning sensible Men would not lessen their Power of doing Good by a Positive assuming Manner that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create Opposition, and to defeat every one of those Purposes for which Speech was given us, to wit, giving or receiving Information, or Pleasure: For if you would *inform,* a positive dogmatical Manner in advancing your Sentiments, may provoke Contradiction and prevent a candid Attention. If you wish Information and Improvement from the Knowledge of others and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fix'd in your present Opinions, modest sensible Men, who do not love Disputation, will probably leave you undisturbed in the Possession of your Error; and by such a Manner you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your Hearers, or to persuade those whose Concurrence you desire.—Pope says, judiciously,

Men should be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot,—

farther recommending it to us,

To speak tho' sure, with seeming Diffidence.

And he might have coupled with this Line that which he has coupled with another, I think less properly,

For want of Modesty is want of Sense.

If you ask why *less properly,* I must repeat the lines;

"Immodest Words admit of *no* Defence;
For Want of Modesty is Want of Sense."

Now is not *Want of Sense* (where a Man is so unfortunate as to want it) some Apology for his *Want of Modesty?* and would not the Lines stand more justly thus?

Immodest Words admit *but this* Defence,
That Want of Modesty is Want of Sense.

This however I should submit to better Judgments.—

My Brother had in 1720 or 21, begun to print a Newspaper. It was the second that appear'd in America, and was called *The New England Courant.* The only one before it, was *the Boston News Letter.* I remember his being dissuaded by some of his Friends from the Undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one Newspaper

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3 Xenophon's . . . Socrates, probably the translation by that title published in 1712 by Edward Bysshe, an English hack writer. Xenophon (444-354? B.C.) wrote his **Memorabilia** (in dialogue form) to defend Socrates against the charge that he had corrupted the youth of Athens • **8 Shaftsbury and Collins,** presumably a reference to "Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times" (1711) by Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), a moralist whose remarks on the Bible show Deistic tendencies, and the "Discourse of Freethinking" (1713) by Anthony Collins (1676-1729), in which that English writer advanced the thesis that all belief should be based upon reason • **49 Pope says,** in the **Essay on Criticism** (1711), Part II, ll. 574-575. Franklin substitutes "should" for "must" in the first line, evidently quoting from memory. The additional line is from the same poem, line 567 • **55 another,** not actually by Pope. The couplet Franklin had in mind, concluding "For want of decency is want of sense," is from the "Essay on Translated Verse" (1684) by Wentworth Dillon, fourth Earl of Roscommon (1633?-1685) • **68 the second. The New-England Courant** had been preceded by three other newspapers (see p. 14)

being in their Judgment enough for America. — At this time 1771 there are not less than five and twenty. — He went on however with the Undertaking, and after having work'd in composing the Types and printing off the Sheets, I was employ'd to carry the Papers thro' the Streets to the Customers.—He had some ingenious Men among his Friends who amus'd themselves by writing little Pieces for this Paper, which gain'd it Credit, and made it more in Demand; and these Gentlemen often visited us. — Hearing their Conversations, and their Accounts of the Approbation their Papers were receiv'd with, I was excited to try my Hand among them. But being still a Boy, and suspecting that my Brother would object to printing any Thing of mine in his Paper if he knew it to be mine, I contriv'd to disguise my Hand, and writing an anonymous Paper I put it in at Night under the Door of the Printing House. It was found in the Morning and communicated to his Writing Friends when they call'd in as usual They read it, commented on it in my Hearing, and I had the exquisite Pleasure, of finding it met with their Approbation, and that in their different Guesses at the Author none were named but Men of some Character among us for Learning and Ingenuity. — I suppose now that I was rather lucky in my Judges: And that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteem'd them. Encourag'd however by this, I wrote and convey'd in the same Way to the Press several more Papers, which were equally approv'd, and I kept my Secret till my small Fund of Sense for such Performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it; when I began to be considered a little more by my Brother's Acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. And perhaps this might be one Occasion of the Differences that we began to have about this Time. Tho' a Brother, he considered himself as my Master, and me as his Apprentice; and accordingly expected the same Services from me as he would from another; while I thought he demean'd me too much in some he requir'd of me, who from a Brother expected more Indulgence. Our Disputes were often brought before our Father, and I fancy I was either generally in the right, or else a better Pleader, because the Judgment was generally in my favour. But my Brother was passionate and had often beaten me, which I took extreamly amiss; and thinking my Apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some Opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected.

One of the Pieces in our Newspaper, on some political Point which I have now forgotten, gave Offence to the Assembly. He was taken up, censur'd and imprison'd for a Month by the Speaker's Warrant, I suppose because he would not discover his Author. I too was taken up and examin'd before the Council; but tho' I did not give them any Satisfaction, they contented themselves with admonishing me, and dismiss'd me; considering me perhaps as an Apprentice who was bound to keep his Master's Secrets. During my Brother's Confinement, which I resented a good deal, notwithstanding our private Differences, I had the Management of the Paper, and I made bold to give our Rulers some Rubs in it, which my Brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavourable Light, as a young Genius that had a Turn for Libelling and Satyr. My Brother's Discharge was accompany'd with an Order of the House, (a very odd one) *that James Franklin should no longer print the Paper called the New England Courant.* There was a Consultation held in our Printing House among his Friends what he should do in this Case. Some propos'd to evade the Order by changing the Name of the Paper; but my Brother seeing Inconveniences in that, it was finally concluded on as a better Way, to let it be printed for the future under the Name of *Benjamin Franklin.* And to avoid the Censure of the Assembly that might fall on him, as still printing it by his Apprentice, the Contrivance was, that my old Indenture should be return'd to me with a full Discharge on the Back of it, to be shown on Occasion; but to secure to him the Benefit of my Service I was to sign new Indentures for the Remainder of the Term, w^ch^ were to be kept private.

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49 **unexpected.** "I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me, might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me thro' my whole life."—Franklin • 50 **some political Point.** James Franklin's offense, hardly heinous from a present-day point of view, was to print a fictitious letter from Newport saying that pirates had been seen off the coast and that it was reported that the Massachusetts government was fitting out a ship to go after them, "wind and weather permitting." Franklin was arrested for contempt and released only after apology. The Order of the House came six months later, after James Franklin had printed (in January 1723) an article attacking "hypocritical pretenders to religion." Benjamin Franklin's name appeared as publisher from February 11, 1723, until fall, when he ran away to New York

A very flimsy Scheme it was, but however it was immediately executed, and the Paper went on accordingly under my Name for several Months. At length a fresh Difference arising between my Brother and me, I took upon me to assert my Freedom, presuming that he would not venture to produce the new Indentures. It was not fair in me to take this Advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first Errata of my life: But the Unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under the Impressions of Resentment, for the Blows his Passion too often urg'd him to bestow upon me. Tho' he was otherwise not an ill-natur'd Man: Perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

When he found I would leave him, he took care to prevent my getting Employment in any other Printing-House of the Town, by going round and speaking to every Master, who accordingly refus'd to give me Work. I then thought of going to New York as the nearest Place where there was a Printer: and I was the rather inclin'd to leave Boston, when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing Party; and from the arbitrary Proceedings of the Assembly in my Brother's Case it was likely I might if I stay'd soon bring myself into Scrapes; and farther that my indiscrete Disputations about Religion began to make me pointed at with Horror by good People, as an Infidel or Atheist. I determin'd on the Point: but my Father now siding with my Brother, I was sensible that if I attempted to go openly, Means would be used to prevent me. My Friend Collins therefore undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the Captain of a New York Sloop for my Passage, under the Notion of my being a young Acquaintance of his that had got a naughty Girl with Child, whose Friends would compel me to marry her, and therefore I could not appear or come away publickly. So I sold some of my Books to raise a little Money, Was taken on board privately, and as we had a fair Wind[,] in three Days I found myself in New York near 300 Miles from home, a Boy of but 17, without the least Recommendation to or Knowledge of any Person in the Place, and with very little Money in my Pocket.

My Inclinations for the Sea, were by this time worne out, or I might now have gratify'd them. But having a Trade, and supposing myself a pretty good Workman, I offer'd my Service to the Printer in the Place, old Mr. W^m^ Bradford, who had been the first Printer in Pensilvania, but remov'd from thence upon the Quarrel of Geo. Keith.—He could give me no Employment, having little to do, and Help enough already: But, says he, my Son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal Hand, Aquila Rose, by Death. If you go thither I believe he may employ you.—Philadelphia was 100 Miles farther. I set out, however, in a Boat for Amboy, leaving my Chest and Things to follow me round by Sea. In crossing the Bay we met with a Squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill, and drove us upon Long Island. In our Way a drunken Dutchman, who was a Passenger too, fell overboard; when he was sinking I reach'd thro' the Water to his shock Pate and drew him up so that we got him in again. His ducking sober'd him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his Pocket a Book which he desir'd I would dry for him. It prov'd to be my old favourite Author Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in Dutch, finely printed on good Paper with copper Cuts, a Dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own Language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the Languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other Book except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mix'd Narration and Dialogue, a Method of Writing very engaging to the Reader, who in the most interesting Parts finds himself, as it were brought into the Company, and present at the Discourse. De foe in his Cruso, his Moll Flanders, Religious Courtship, Family Instructor, and other Pieces, has imitated it with Success. And Richardson has done the same in his Pamela, etc.—

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46 old . . . Bradford. William Bradford (1663-1752) was the pioneer printer of the middle colonies, having first visited Pennsylvania in 1682 • **51 my Son,** Andrew Bradford (1686-1742), for many years Franklin's chief rival in Philadelphia • **52 Aquila Rose** (1695-1723), a minor poet, author of the posthumous **Poems on Several Occasions** (1740) • **54 Amboy,** Perth Amboy, on the southern shore of Raritan Bay in New Jersey • **58 Kill,** Kill van Kull, the strait between Staten Island and New Jersey • **75 De foe . . . Pieces.** The references are to **Robinson Crusoe** (1719), **Moll Flanders** (1722), **Religious Courtship** (1722), and **The Family Instructor** (1715-1718) or **A New Family Instructor** (1727). Franklin's acquaintance with the work of Defoe has interesting implications for the student of his style • **78 Richardson,** Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), English novelist, whose **Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded** was first printed in 1740

When we drew near the Island we found it was at a Place where there could be no Landing, there being a great Surff on the stony Beach. So we dropt Anchor and swung round towards the Shore. Some People came down to the Water Edge and hallow'd to us, as we did to them. But the Wind was so high and the Surff so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were Canoes on the Shore, and we made Signs and hallow'd that they should fetch us, but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable. So they went away, and Night coming on, we had no Remedy but to wait till the Wind should abate, and in the mean time the Boatman and I concluded to sleep if we could, and so crouded into the Scuttle with the Dutchman who was still wet, and the Spray beating over the Head of our Boat, leak'd thro' to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this Manner we lay all Night with very little Rest. But the Wind abating the next Day, we made a Shift to reach Amboy before Night, having been 30 Hours on the Water without Victuals, or any Drink but a Bottle of filthy Rum: The Water we sail'd on being salt.—

In the Evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to Bed. But having read somewhere that cold Water drank plentifully was good for a Fever, I follow'd the Prescription, sweat plentifully most of the Night, my Fever left me, and in the Morning crossing the Ferry, I proceeded on my Journey, on foot, having 50 Miles to Burlington, where I was told I should find Boats that would carry me the rest of the Way to Philadelphia.

It rain'd very hard all the Day, I was thoroughly soak'd, and by Noon a good deal tir'd, so I stopt at a poor Inn, where I staid all night, beginning now to wish I had never left home. I cut so miserable a Figure too, that I found by the Questions ask'd me I was suspected to be some runaway Servant, and in danger of being taken up on that Suspicion. However I proceeded the next Day, and got in the Evening to an Inn within 8 or 10 Miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown.—

He ent[e]red into Conversation with me while I took some Refreshment, and finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our Acquaintance continu'd as long as he liv'd. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant Doctor, for there was no Town in England, or Country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular Account. He had some Letters, and was ingenious, but much of an Unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some Years after to travesty the Bible in doggrel Verse as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many of the Facts in a very ridiculous Light, and might have hurt weak minds if his Work had been publish'd:— but it never was.—At his House I lay that Night, and the next Morning reach'd Burlington.—But had the Mortification to find that the regular Boats were gone, a little before my coming, and no other expected to go till Tuesday, this being Saturday. Wherefore I returned to an old Woman in the Town of whom I had bought Gingerbread to eat on the Water, and ask'd her Advice; she invited me to lodge at her House till a Passage by Water should offer: and being tired with my foot Travelling, I accepted the Invitation. She understanding I was a Printer, would have had me stay at that Town and follow my Business, being ignorant of the Stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a Dinner of Ox Cheek with great Goodwill, accepting only of a Pot of Ale in return. And I thought myself fix'd till Tuesday should come. However walking in the Evening by the Side of the River, a Boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several People in her. They took me in, and as there was no wind, we row'd all the Way; and about Midnight not having yet seen the City, some of the Company were confident we must have pass'd it, and would row no farther, the others knew not where we were, so we put towards the Shore, got into a Creek, landed near an old Fence[,] with the Rails of which we made a Fire, the Night being cold, in October, and there we remain'd till Daylight. Then one of the Company knew the Place to be Cooper's Creek a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the Creek, and arriv'd there about 8 or 9 o'Clock, on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market Street Wharff.—

I have been the more particular in this Description of my Journey, and shall be so of my first Entry into that

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29 Burlington, on the Delaware River, northeast of Philadelphia • 39 Dr. Brown, apparently an obscure physician, Dr. John Browne, who died in 1737 • 49 as . . . Virgil, an allusion to a burlesque poem, "Scarronides," or the "First Book of Virgil Travestie" (1664), by Charles Cotton (1630-1687), English translator • 78 Cooper's Creek, a small stream which empties into the Delaware at Camden, just above downtown Philadelphia

City, that you may in your Mind compare such unlikely Beginnings with the Figure I have since made there. I was in my Working Dress, my best Cloaths being to come round by Sea. I was dirty from my Journey; my Pockets were stuff'd out with Shirts and Stockings; I knew no Soul, nor where to look for Lodging. I was fatigued with Travelling, Rowing and Want of Rest. I was very hungry, and my whole Stock of Cash consisted of a Dutch Dollar and about a Shilling in Copper. The latter I gave the People of the Boat for my Passage, who at first refus'd it on Acc[t] of my Rowing; but I insisted on their taking it, a Man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little Money than when he has plenty, perhaps thro' Fear of being thought to have but little. Then I walk'd up the Street, gazing about, till near the Market House I met a Boy with Bread. I had made many a Meal on Bread, and inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the Baker's he directed me to in Second Street; and ask'd for Bisket, intending such as we had in Boston, but they it seems were not made in Philadelphia, then I ask'd for a threepenny Loaf, and was told they had none such: so not considering or knowing the Difference of Money and the greater Cheapness nor the Names of his Bread, I bad[e] him give me threepenny worth of any sort. He gave me accordingly three great Puffy Rolls. I was surpriz'd at the Quantity, but took it, and having no room in my Pockets, walk'd off, with a Roll under each Arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as fourth Street, passing by the Door of Mr. Read, my future Wife's Father, when she standing at the Door saw me, and thought I made as I certainly did a most awkward ridiculous Appearance. Then I turn'd and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my Roll all the Way, and coming round found myself again at Market Street Wharff, near the Boat I came in, to which I went for a Draught of the River Water, and being fill'd with one of my Rolls, gave the other two to a Woman and her Child that came down the River in the Boat with us and were waiting to go farther. Thus refresh'd I walk'd again up the Street, which by this time had many clean dress'd People in it who were all walking the same Way; I join'd them, and thereby was led into the great Meeting House of the Quakers near the Market. I sat down among them, and after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said; being very drowsy thro' Labour and want of Rest the preceding Night, I fell fast asleep, and continu'd so till the Meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was therefore the first House I was in or slept in, in Philadelphia.—

. . . I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; and tho' some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as *the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc.,* appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and govern'd it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteem'd the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, tho' with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mix'd with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, serv'd principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induc'd me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increas'd in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Tho' I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He us'd to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his

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50 **Philadelphia.** The selection from the portion of the Autobiography written at Twyford ends here; Franklin went on to describe his first connections in Philadelphia, his voyage to England and his work there in 1724-1726, and his business life in Philadelphia down to 1730 • 63 **the essentials . . . religion,** derived, that is to say, from comparing the fundamentals of all faiths—a typical Deistic method. Note also that Franklin omits mention of the Bible as the revealed word of God, an omission which is the surest distinguishing mark of Deism

administrations, and I was now and then prevail'd on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforc'd, their aim seeming to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians: *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things."* And I imagin'd, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confin'd himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle, viz.: 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the publick worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but, as they were not the kind of good things that I expected from that text, I despaired of ever meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before compos'd a little Liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz., in 1728), entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion.* I return'd to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blameable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.

It was about this time I conceiv'd the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wish'd to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employ'd in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of attention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I propos'd to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annex'd to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurr'd to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully express'd the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. Temperance.

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. Silence.

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. Order.

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. Resolution.

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

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28 Articles . . . Religion, to be found in Bigelow's Complete Works, I, 307-316, and in Smyth's Writings, II, 91-100

5. FRUGALITY.

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i.e.,* waste nothing.

6. INDUSTRY.

Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY.

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE.

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION.

Avoid extreams; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS.

Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY.

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable

12. CHASTITY.

Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY.

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judg'd it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone thro' the thirteen; and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arrang'd them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquir'd and establish'd, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improv'd in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtain'd rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order,* I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution,* once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and Industry freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of Sincerity and Justice, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I rul'd each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I cross'd these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

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57 **Pythagoras . . . Verses.** The Greek philosopher Pythagoras (fl. 540-512 B.C.) favored an ascetic discipline as a means of attaining spiritual perfection. A translation of the verses referred to by Franklin, showing remarkable similarity to the program here outlined, is given in Bigelow's Complete Works, I, 177-179. It seems probable that Franklin derived his Pythagorean ideas from Thomas Tryon, whose vegetarianism has been mentioned earlier • 60 **a little book,** which bears, according to William Temple Franklin, the date July 1, 1733

TEMPERANCE.							
EAT NOT TO DULNESS; DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.							
	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.
T.							
S.	*	*		*		*	
O.	**	*	*		*	*	*
R.			*			*	
F.		*			*		
I.			*				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offence against *Temperance,* leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I suppos'd the habit of that virtue so much strengthen'd, and its opposite weaken'd, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go thro' a course compleat in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplish'd the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato:*

> Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
> (And that there is, all nature cries aloud
> Thro' all her works), He must delight in virtue;
> And that which He delights in must be happy.

Another from Cicero,

O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus.

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue:

Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.—iii. 16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefix'd to my tables of examination, for daily use.

O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favours to me.

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's Poems, viz.:

> Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
> O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
> Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
> From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
> With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
> Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!

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24 **Addison's Cato,** a tragedy produced and published in 1713. The lines quoted (except for the "us" at the end of the first line) appear in a soliloquy by Cato on Plato's views of the immortality of the soul, at the beginning of Act V • 29 Cicero, Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.), Roman orator and philosopher. The sentences, with a few lines intervening, may be found in Bk V, Chap. II, of the **Tusculan Disputations,** and may be translated as follows. "O philosophy, thou guide of life, O thou explorer of virtue and expeller of vice. One day well spent and in accordance with thy lessons is to be preferred to an eternity of error" • 50 **Thomson's Poems.** The lines are from "Winter" (1726), ll. 210-215, by the English poet James Thomson (1700-1748)

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time,* one page in my little book contain'd the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

THE MORNING. *Question.* What good shall I do this day?

5, 6, 7 — Rise, wash and address *Powerful Goodness!* Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast

8, 9, 10, 11 — Work.

NOON.

12, 1 — Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine.

2, 3, 4, 5 — Work.

EVENING. *Question.* What good have I done to-day?

6, 7, 8, 9 — Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day.

NIGHT.

10, 11, 12, 1, 2, 3, 4 — Sleep.

I enter'd upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continu'd it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surpris'd to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferr'd my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I mark'd my faults with a black-lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went thro' one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employ'd in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of ORDER gave me the most trouble; and I found that, tho' it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master who must mix with the world and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order,* too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extreamly difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbour, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turn'd, while the smith press'd the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his ax as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by-and-by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, *"but I think I like a speckled ax best."* And I believe this may have been the case with many who, having, for want of some such means as I employ'd, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that *"a speckled ax was best";* for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extream nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad,

I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, tho' I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, tho' they never reach the wish'd-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavour, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor ow'd the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoy'd ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country, and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his younger acquaintances. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit. . . .

In 1746, being at Boston I met there with a Dr. Spence who was lately arrived from Scotland, and show'd me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly perform'd as he was not very expert but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surpris'd and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company receiv'd from Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquir'd great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, who, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were rang'd in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procur'd an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely form'd by instrument-makers. His lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction, and after some time he went thro' the colonies exhibiting them in every capital town and pick'd up some money. In the West India Islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Oblig'd as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be inform'd of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their

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32 **benefit.** Here ends the selection from the portion of the Autobiography written at Passy in 1784. A few paragraphs, relating chiefly to a proposed book on the "Art of Virtue," which Franklin never got around to writing, have been omitted • 33 **Dr. Spence** has been identified tentatively by I. Bernard Cohen in his edition (1941) of Franklin's Experiments as a Dr. A. Spencer, who advertised courses in experimental philosophy in Boston in 1743 and in Philadelphia in 1744. It appears probable that Franklin erred both in the date of his first acquaintance with electrical experiments and in the name of the man who displayed them • 39 **Mr. P. Collinson,** Peter Collinson (1694-1768), a Quaker merchant of London whose large trade with America enabled him to gratify a fondness for gardening and natural history. He formed intimate connections not only with Franklin but also with John Bartram, the father of William Bartram (see p. 53), and throughout his life imported exotic plants for his gardens at Mill Hill, near London • 53 **Mr. Kinnersley,** Ebenezer Kinnersley (1711-1778), one of Franklin's closest associates and himself a considerable contributor to electrical science. After 1751 he lectured, on a plan drawn up by Franklin, throughout the colonies and even in the West Indies

Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read, but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought they were of too much value to be stifled, and advis'd the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to Cave for publication in his *Gentleman's Magazine;* but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swell'd to a quarto volume which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had form'd and publish'd a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assur'd that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of "Letters," chiefly address'd to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduc'd from them.

I once purpos'd answering the abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my writings contain'd a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verifi'd, could not be defended; or of observations offer'd as conjectures, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contain'd was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe in preference to that of the abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B————, of Paris, his *élève* and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity, was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messrs. Dalibard and Delor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engag'd the public attention every where. M. Delor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectur'd in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments;* and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I receiv'd in the success of a similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

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3 **Dr. Mitchel,** John Mitchell (d. 1768), an English physician and scientist who resided from about 1721 until 1747 or 1748 at Urbanna, Virginia. He is most famous for his map of North America, printed in 1755 • 6 **Dr. Fothergill,** John Fothergill (1712-1780), English Quaker physician. He had many close connections with the American colonies and subsidized William Bartram's expedition into the Floridas and Georgia in 1773-1777 (see pp 54-62) • 9 **Cave,** Edward Cave (1691-1754), English printer and founder of the **Gentleman's Magazine** (1731), probably the most widely circulated periodical of the eighteenth century • 18 **Count de Buffon,** George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707-1785), one of the great natural philosophers of the age • 20 **M. Dalibard,** Jean François Dalibard (1703-1799). His translation was printed in 1752; on May 10 of the same year he successfully carried out the experiment suggested by Franklin of drawing lightning from the clouds • 22 **Abbé Nollet,** Jean Antoine Nollet (1700-1770), the chief French opponent to Franklin's theories. He appears to have been offended because Franklin ignored his earlier work in the field of electricity • 52 **M. le Roy,** Jean Baptiste Le Roy (1719-1800), a French physician much interested in electricity • 62 **Delor.** Of Delor, "master of experimental philosophy," little is known beyond the fact that he performed Franklin's experiments before the King and his courtiers and on May 18, 1752, repeated the experiment of drawing lightning from the clouds by using a ninety-foot iron rod

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The Society, on this, resum'd the consideration of the letters that had been read to them, and the celebrated Dr. Watson drew up a summary account of them and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their Transactions; and some members of the Society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainting them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honor, they chose me a member, and voted that I should be excus'd the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas; and ever since have given me their Transactions gratis. They also presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompanied by a very handsome speech of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honoured.

1771-1788·1868

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1 **Dr. Wright.** At this point Franklin's memory seems to have been badly in error. His writings were actually discussed before the Royal Society in June 1751 by Watson (see note), some time before his book had reached France. The Dr. Wright referred to is possibly William Wright (1735-1819), later closely associated with Franklin's friends, Fothergill and Sir John Pringle (see p 143) • 7 **Dr. Watson,** Sir William Watson (1715-1787), who had begun to contribute papers on electricity to the Royal Society as early as 1745 His theories were very similar to Franklin's, although more vaguely expressed • 13 **Mr. Canton,** John Canton (1718-1772), English schoolteacher and electrician, elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1749 • 23 **Sir Godfrey Copley,** (d. 1709) left the Royal Society the sum of one hundred pounds, the income of which was expended after 1736 for the annual award of a gold medal to persons making notable contributions to natural knowledge • 25 **Lord Macclesfield,** George Parker, second Earl of Macclesfield (1697-1764), astronomer and a president of the Royal Society He was chiefly responsible for the English acceptance of the change of the calendar in 1752

The Way to Wealth

In 1757, on board ship en route to England, Franklin brought together into a single piece many of the aphorisms relating to industry, frugality, and prudence which had previously appeared in the pages of **Poor Richard's Almanac.** Whether or not he had a file of the almanacs with him is uncertain; very possibly he had at hand a copy of **Gnomologia: Adagies and Proverbs; Wise Sentences and Witty Sayings, Ancient and Modern, Foreign and British** (London, 1732) by Thomas Fuller (1654-1734), a book which contains a great many of the sentences used by Franklin. In any case the compilation eventually proved to be one of Franklin's best-known works. As published in **Poor Richard Improved** for 1758 it had no title; it was reprinted in 1760 as **Father Abraham's Speech,** and in 1774 as **The Way to Wealth,** by which name it is now usually known. Thereafter it was published over and over again and translated into almost all of the modern languages; altogether nearly five hundred different editions are known. The explanation of such popularity lies partly in the age-old love for proverbs and partly in the dominance of the bourgeois philosophy of life during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The almanacs did not always contain such trustful worldly wisdom as appears here; Franklin had a streak of cynicism, and such adages as "Let thy maid-servant be faithful, strong, and homely," "Fish and visitors smell in three days," "An egg today is better than a hen tomorrow," and "He does not possess wealth, it possesses him" are not in quite the same spirit as those included here. It

should be noted that Franklin did not claim to be original in his maxims (only one, "Three Removes is as bad as a Fire," is thought to have been completely his creation); he displayed admirable literary skill, however, in creating a character and background to make his piece more than a mere listing of wise sayings, and in polishing and humanizing the material he garnered from his predecessors. "The cat in gloves catches no mice" is, for example, a redaction of "A gloved cat was never a good mouser" (Scottish proverb) and "A muffled cat is no good mouser" (English).

Courteous Reader,

I have heard that nothing gives an Author so great Pleasure, as to find his Works respectfully quoted by other learned Authors. This Pleasure I have seldom enjoyed; for tho' I have been, if I may say it without Vanity, an *eminent Author* of Almanacks annually now a full Quarter of a Century, my Brother Authors in the same Way, for what Reason I know not, have ever been very sparing in their Applauses; and no other Author has taken the least Notice of me, so that did not my Writings produce me some solid *Pudding,* the great Deficiency of *Praise* would have quite discouraged me.

I concluded at length, that the People were the best Judges of my Merit; for they buy my Works; and besides, in my Rambles, where I am not personally known, I have frequently heard one or other of my Adages repeated, with, *as Poor Richard says,* at the End on't; this gave me some Satisfaction, as it showed not only that my Instructions were regarded, but discovered likewise some Respect for my Authority; and I own, that to encourage the Practice of remembering and repeating those wise Sentences, I have sometimes *quoted myself* with great Gravity.

Judge then how much I must have been gratified by an Incident I am going to relate to you. I stopt my Horse lately where a great Number of People were collected at a Vendue of Merchant Goods. The Hour of Sale not being come, they were conversing on the Badness of the Times, and one of the Company call'd to a plain clean old Man, with white Locks, *Pray, Father* Abraham, *what think you of the Times? Won't these heavy Taxes quite ruin the Country? How shall we ever be able to pay them? What would you advise us to?*— Father *Abraham* stood up, and reply'd, If you'd have my Advice, I'll give it you in short, for a *Word to the Wise is enough,* and *many Words won't fill a Bushel,* as Poor *Richard says.* They join'd in desiring him to speak his Mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows;

"Friends, says he, and Neighbours, the Taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the Government were the only Ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our *Idleness,* three times as much by our *Pride,* and four times as much by our *Folly,* and from these Taxes the Commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an Abatement. However let us hearken to good Advice, and something may be done for us; *God helps them that help themselves,* as *Poor Richard* says, in his Almanack of 1733.

It would be thought a hard Government that should tax its People one tenth Part of their *Time,* to be employed in its Service. But *Idleness* taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute *Sloth,* or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle Employments or Amusements, that amount to nothing. *Sloth,* by bringing on Diseases, absolutely shortens Life. *Sloth, like Rust, consumes faster than Labour wears, while the used Key is always bright,* as *Poor Richard* says. But *dost thou love Life, then do not squander Time, for that's the Stuff Life is made of,* as *Poor Richard* says.—How much more than is necessary do we spend in Sleep! forgetting that *The sleeping Fox catches no Poultry,* and that *there will be sleeping enough in the Grave,* as *Poor Richard* says. If Time be of all Things the most precious, *wasting Time* must be, as *Poor Richard* says, *the greatest Prodigality,* since, as he elsewhere tells us, *Lost Time is never found again;* and what we call *Time-enough, always proves little enough:* Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the Purpose; so by Diligence shall we do more with less Perplexity. *Sloth makes all Things difficult, but Industry all easy,* as *Poor*

Text: Poor Richard Improved for 1758 • 7 Quarter . . . Century. The first Poor Richard was compiled in 1732, for the year 1733 • 11 solid Pudding. How much money Franklin made from Poor Richard is not known, but from the beginning his almanac was an enormous success, averaging perhaps ten thousand copies annually. It must have been one of his most reliable sources of income

Richard says; and *He that riseth late, must trot all Day, and shall scarce overtake his Business at Night.* While *Laziness travels so slowly, that Poverty soon overtakes him,* as we read in *Poor Richard,* who adds, *Drive thy Business, let not that drive thee;* and *Early to Bed, and early to rise, makes a Man healthy, wealthy and wise.*

So what signifies *wishing* and *hoping* for better Times. We may make these Times better if we bestir ourselves. *Industry need not wish,* as *Poor Richard* says, and *He that lives upon Hope will die fasting. There are no Gains, without Pains;* then *Help Hands, for I have no Lands,* or if I have, they are smartly taxed. And, as *Poor Richard* likewise observes, *He that hath a Trade hath an Estate,* and *He that hath a Calling, hath an Office of Profit and Honour;* but then the *Trade* must be worked at, and the *Calling* well followed, or neither the *Estate,* nor the *Office,* will enable us to pay our Taxes.—If we are industrious we shall never starve; for, as *Poor Richard* says, *At the working Man's House* Hunger *looks in, but dares not enter.* Nor will the Bailiff or the Constable enter, for *Industry pays Debts, while Despair encreaseth them,* says *Poor Richard.*—What though you have found no Treasure, nor has any rich Relation left you a Legacy, *Diligence is the Mother of Good luck,* as *Poor Richard* says, *and God gives all Things to Industry.* Then *plough deep, while Sluggards sleep, and you shall have Corn to sell and to keep,* says *Poor Dick.* Work while it is called To-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered To-morrow, which makes *Poor Richard* say, *One To-day is worth two To-morrows;* and farther, *Have you somewhat to do To-morrow, do it To-day.* If you were a Servant, would you not be ashamed that a good Master should catch you idle? Are you then your own Master, *be ashamed to catch yourself idle,* as *Poor Dick* says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your Family, your Country, and your gracious King, be up by Peep of Day; *Let not the Sun look down and say, Inglorious here he lies.* Handle your Tools without Mittens; remember that *the Cat in Gloves catches no Mice,* as *Poor Richard* says. 'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak handed, but stick to it steadily, and you will see great Effects, for *constant Dropping wears away Stones,* and by *Diligence and Patience the Mouse ate in two the Cable;* and *little Strokes fell great Oaks,* as *Poor Richard* says in his Almanack, the Year I cannot just now remember.

Methinks I hear some of you say, *Must a Man afford himself no Leisure?*—I will tell thee, my Friend, what *Poor Richard* says, *Employ thy Time well if thou meanest to gain Leisure;* and *since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour.* Leisure, is Time for doing something useful; this Leisure the diligent Man will obtain, but the lazy Man never; so that, as *Poor Richard* says, a *Life of Leisure and a Life of Laziness are two Things.* Do you imagine that Sloth will afford you more Comfort than Labour? No, for as *Poor Richard* says, *Trouble springs from Idleness, and grievous Toil from needless Ease. Many without Labour, would live by their* WITS *only, but they break for want of Stock.* Whereas Industry gives Comfort, and Plenty, and Respect: *Fly Pleasures, and they'll follow you. The diligent Spinner has a large Shift;* and *now I have a Sheep and a Cow, every Body bids me Good morrow;* all which is well said by *Poor Richard.*

But with our Industry, we must likewise be *steady, settled* and *careful,* and oversee our own Affairs *with our own Eyes,* and not trust too much to others; for, as *Poor Richard* says,

> *I never saw an oft removed Tree,*
> *Nor yet an oft removed Family,*
> *That throve so well as those that settled be.*

And again, *Three Removes is as bad as a Fire;* and again, *Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee;* and again, *If you would have your Business done, go; If not, send.* And again,

> *He that by the Plough would thrive,*
> *Himself must either hold or drive.*

And again, *The Eye of a Master will do more Work than both his Hands;* and again, *Want of Care does us more Damage than Want of Knowledge;* and again, *Not to oversee Workmen, is to leave them your Purse open.* Trusting too much to others Care is the Ruin of many; for, as the *Almanack* says, *In the Affairs of this World, Men are saved, not by Faith, but by the Want of it;* but a Man's own Care is profitable; for, saith *Poor Dick, Learning is to the Studious,* and *Riches to the Careful,* as well as *Power to the Bold,* and *Heaven to the Virtuous.* And farther, *If you would have a faithful Servant, and one that you like, serve yourself.* And again, he adviseth to Circumspection and Care, even in the smallest Mat-

ters, because sometimes *a little Neglect may breed great Mischief;* adding, *For want of a Nail the Shoe was lost; for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost,* being overtaken and slain by the Enemy, all for want of Care about a Horse shoe Nail.

So much for Industry, my Friends, and Attention to one's own Business; but to these we must add *Frugality,* if we would make our *Industry* more certainly successful. A Man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, *keep his Nose all his Life to the Grindstone,* and die not worth a *Groat* at last. *A fat Kitchen makes a lean Will,* as *Poor Richard* says; and,

Many Estates are spent in the Getting,
Since Women for Tea forsook Spinning and Knitting,
And Men for Punch forsook Hewing and Splitting.

If you would be wealthy, says he, in another Almanack, *think of Saving as well as of Getting: The* Indies *have not made* Spain *rich, because her* Outgoes *are greater than her* Incomes. Away then with your expensive Follies, and you will not have so much Cause to complain of hard Times, heavy Taxes, and chargeable Families; for, as *Poor Dick* says,

Women and Wine, Game and Deceit,
Make the Wealth small, and the Wants great.

And farther, *What maintains one Vice, would bring up two Children.* You may think perhaps, That a *little* Tea, or a *little* Punch now and then, Diet a *little* more costly, Clothes a *little* finer, and a *little* Entertainment now and then, can be no *great* Matter; but remember what *Poor Richard* says, *Many* a Little *makes a Mickle;* and farther, *Beware* of little *Expences; a small Leak will sink a great Ship;* and again, *Who Dainties love, shall Beggars prove;* and moreover, *Fools make Feasts, and wise Men eat them.*

Here you are all got together at this Vendue of *Fineries* and *Knicknacks.* You call them *Goods,* but if you do not take Care, they will prove *Evils* to some of you. You expect they will be sold *cheap,* and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but if you have no Occasion for them, they must be *dear* to you. Remember what *Poor Richard* says, *Buy what thou hast no Need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy Necessaries.* And again, *At a great Pennyworth pause a while:* He means, that perhaps the Cheapness is *apparent* only, and not *real;* or the Bargain, by straitning thee in thy Business, may do thee more Harm than Good. For in another Place he says, *Many have been ruined by buying good Pennyworths.* Again, *Poor Richard* says, *'Tis foolish to lay out Money in a Purchase of Repentance;* and yet this Folly is practised every Day at Vendues, for want of minding the Almanack. *Wise Men,* as *Poor Dick* says, *learn by others Harms, Fools scarcely by their own;* but *Felix quem faciunt aliena Pericula cautum.* Many a one, for the Sake of Finery on the Back, have gone with a hungry Belly, and half starved their Families; *Silks and Sattins, Scarlet and Velvets,* as *Poor Richard* says, *put out the Kitchen Fire.* These are not the *Necessaries* of Life; they can scarcely be called the *Conveniences,* and yet only because they look pretty, how many *want* to *have* them. The *artificial* Wants of Mankind thus become more numerous than the *natural;* and, as *Poor Dick* says, *For one* poor *Person, there are an hundred* indigent. By these, and other Extravagancies, the Genteel are reduced to Poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who through *Industry* and *Frugality* have maintained their Standing; in which Case it appears plainly, that a *Ploughman on his Legs is higher than a Gentleman on his Knees,* as *Poor Richard* says. Perhaps they have had a small Estate left them which they knew not the Getting of; they think *'tis Day, and will never be Night;* that a little to be spent out of *so much,* is not worth minding; *(a Child and a Fool, as Poor Richard says, imagine* Twenty Shillings *and Twenty Years can never be spent)* but, *always taking out of, the Meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the Bottom;* then, as *Poor Dick* says, *When the Well's dry, they know the Worth of Water.* But this they might have known before, if they had taken his Advice; *If you would know the Value of Money, go and try to borrow some;* for, *he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing;* and indeed so does he that lends to such People, when he goes *to get it in again.—Poor Dick* farther advises, and says,

Fond Pride of Dress *is sure a very Curse;*
E'er Fancy *you consult, consult your Purse.*

And again, *Pride is as loud a Beggar as Want, and a*

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51 **Felix . . . cautum.** Fortunate is he whom the mistakes of others make wary

great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine Thing you must buy ten more, that your Appearance may be all of a Piece; but *Poor Dick* says, *'Tis easier to* suppress *the first Desire, than to* satisfy *all that follow it.* And 'tis as truly Folly for the Poor to ape the Rich, as for the Frog to swell, in order to equal the Ox.

Great Estates may venture more,
But little Boats should keep near Shore.

'Tis however a Folly soon punished; for *Pride that dines on Vanity sups on Contempt,* as *Poor Richard* says. And in another Place, *Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy.* And after all, of what Use is this *Pride of Appearance,* for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote Health, or ease Pain; it makes no Increase of Merit in the Person, it creates Envy, it hastens Misfortune.

What is a Butterfly? At best
He's but a Caterpillar drest.
The gaudy Fop's his Picture just,

as *Poor Richard* says.

But what Madness must it be to *run in Debt* for these Superfluities! We are offered, by the Terms of this Vendue, *Six Months Credit;* and that perhaps has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready Money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah, think what you do when you run in Debt, *You give to another, Power over your Liberty.* If you cannot pay at the Time, you will be ashamed to see your Creditor; you will be in Fear when you speak to him; you will make poor pitiful sneaking Excuses, and by Degrees come to lose your Veracity, and sink into base downright lying; for, as *Poor Richard* says, *The second Vice is Lying, the first is running in Debt.* And again, to the same Purpose, *Lying rides upon Debt's Back.* Whereas a freeborn *Englishman* ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any Man living. But Poverty often deprives a Man of all Spirit and Virtue: *'Tis hard for an empty Bag to stand upright,* as *Poor Richard* truly says. What would you think of that Prince, or that Government, who should issue an Edict forbidding you to dress like a Gentleman or a Gentlewoman, on Pain of Imprisonment or Servitude? Would you not say, that you are free, have a Right to dress as you please, and that such an Edict would be a Breach of your Privileges, and such a Government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under that Tyranny when you run in Debt for such Dress! Your Creditor has Authority at his Pleasure to deprive you of your Liberty, by confining you in Goal [*sic*] for Life, or to sell you for a Servant, if you should not be able to pay him! When you have got your Bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of Payment, but *Creditors, Poor Richard* tells us, *have better Memories than Debtors;* and in another Place says, *Creditors are a superstitious Sect, great Observers of set Days and Times.* The Day comes round before you are aware, and the Demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it. Or if you bear your Debt in Mind, the Term which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extreamly short. *Time* will seem to have added Wings to his Heels as well as Shoulders. *Those have a short Lent,* saith *Poor Richard, who owe Money to be paid at Easter.* Then since, as he says, *The Borrower is a Slave to the Lender, and the Debtor to the Creditor,* disdain the Chain, preserve your Freedom; and maintain your Independency: Be *industrious* and *free;* be *frugal* and *free.* At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving Circumstances, and that you can bear a little Extravagance [*sic*] without Injury; but,

For Age and Want, save while you may;
No Morning Sun lasts a whole Day,

as *Poor Richard* says—Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but ever while you live, Expence is constant and certain; and *'tis easier to build two Chimnies than to keep one in Fuel,* as *Poor Richard* says. So *rather go to Bed supperless than rise in Debt.*

Get what you can, and what you get hold;
'Tis the Stone that will turn all your Lead into Gold,

as *Poor Richard* says. And when you have got the Philosopher's Stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad Times, or the Difficulty of paying Taxes.

This Doctrine, my Friends, is *Reason* and *Wisdom;* but after all, do not depend too much upon your own *Industry,* and *Frugality,* and *Prudence,* though excellent Things, for they may all be blasted without the Blessing of Heaven; and therefore ask that Blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember *Job* suffered, and was afterwards prosperous.

And now to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear School, but Fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that:* for

it is true, *we may give Advice, but we cannot give Conduct,* as *Poor Richard* says: However, remember this, *They that won't be counselled, can't be helped,* as *Poor Richard* says: And farther, That *if you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your Knuckles.*

Thus the old Gentleman ended his Harangue. The People heard it, and approved the Doctrine and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common Sermon; for the Vendue opened, and they began to buy extravagantly, notwithstanding all his Cautions, and their own Fear of Taxes.—I found the good Man had thoroughly studied my Almanacks, and digested all I had dropt on those Topicks during the Course of Five-and-twenty Years. The frequent Mention he made of me must have tired any one else, but my Vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth Part of the Wisdom was my own which he ascribed to me, but rather the *Gleanings* I had made of the Sense of all Ages and Nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the Echo of it; and though I had at first determined to buy Stuff for a new Coat, I went away resolved to wear my old One a little longer. *Reader,* if thou wilt do the same, thy Profit will be as great as mine.

I am, as ever,
Thine to serve thee,
RICHARD SAUNDERS.

July 7, 1757

1757•1758

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18 **The Gleanings . . . Nations.** Not all of Franklin's adages can be traced to particular sources, but examination of earlier collections of proverbs will disclose most of them in some form similar to that he used • 27 **Richard Saunders,** the fictitious compiler of **Poor Richard**

Letter to Sir John Pringle

It is difficult to represent Franklin's scientific writing, particularly that which deals with electricity, in small space. The following letter, however, illustrates both the clarity of his explanatory style—a factor which had a great deal to do with the wide acceptance of his theories and suggestions—and his talent for devising simple apparatus for the experimental investigation of his hypotheses. His thinking in the field of hydrodynamics has been amply justified by later expenditures to provide experimental tanks for the study of naval architecture and, although he did not foresee them, wind tunnels for the investigation of aerodynamics. Sir John Pringle (1707-1782) was a Scottish physician and professor who served as president of the Royal Society of London from 1772 until 1778. He and Franklin traveled together on the continent in the summer of 1766. This letter was first printed in the 1769 edition of **Experiments & Observations on Electricity.**

Craven Street, 10 May, 1768

Sir:—You may remember that when we were travelling together in Holland, you remarked that the *trackschuit* in one of the stages went slower than usual, and inquired of the boatman what might be the reason; who answered that it had been a dry season and the water in the canal was low. On being again asked if it was so low that the boat touched the muddy bottom, he said no, not so low as that, but so low as to make it harder for the horse to draw the boat. We neither of us at first could conceive that if there was enough water for the boat to swim clear of the bottom, its being deeper would make any difference. But, as the man affirmed it seriously as a thing well known among them, and as the punctuality required in their stages was likely to make such difference, if any there were, more readily observed by them than by other watermen who did not pass so regularly and constantly backwards and forwards in the same track, I began to apprehend there might be something in it, and attempted to account for it from this

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Text: Bigelow, **Complete Works,** IV, 159-162 • 3 **trackschuit,** the Dutch trek-schuit, towboat

consideration, that the boat, in proceeding along the canal, must, in every boat's length of her course, move out of her way a body of water equal in bulk to the room her bottom took up in the water; that the water so moved must pass on each side of her and under her bottom to get behind her; that if the passage under her bottom was straitened by the shallows, more of that water must pass by her sides, and with a swifter motion, which would retard her, as moving the contrary way; or that the water becoming lower behind the boat than before, she was pressed back by the weight of its difference in height, and her motion retarded by having that weight constantly to overcome. But as it is often lost time to attempt accounting for uncertain facts, I determined to make an experiment of this when I should have convenient time and opportunity.

After our return to England, as often as I happened to be on the Thames, I enquired of our watermen whether they were sensible of any difference in rowing over shallow or deep water. I found them all agreeing in the fact that there was a very great difference, but they differed widely in expressing the quantity of the difference; some supposing it was equal to a mile in six, others to a mile in three, &c. As I did not recollect to have met with any mention of this matter in our philosophical books, and conceiving that if the difference should really be great it might be an object of consideration in the many projects now on foot for digging new navigable canals in this island, I lately put my design of making the experiment in execution, in the following manner.

I provided a trough of planed boards fourteen feet long, six inches wide, and six inches deep, in the clear, filled with water within half an inch of the edge, to represent a canal. I had a loose board of nearly the same length and breadth, that, being put into the water, might be sunk to any depth, and fixed by little wedges where I would choose to have it stay, in order to make different depths of water, leaving the surface at the same height with regard to the sides of the trough. I had a little boat in form of a lighter or boat of burthen, six inches long, two inches and a quarter wide, and one inch and a quarter deep. When swimming it drew one inch water. To give motion to the boat I fixed one end of a long silk thread to its bow, just even with the water's edge, the other end passed over a well-made brass pulley of about an inch diameter, turning freely on a small axis; and a shilling was the weight. Then placing the boat at one end of the trough, the weight would draw it through the water to the other.

Not having a watch that shows seconds, in order to measure the time taken up by the boat in passing from end to end, I counted as fast as I could count to ten repeatedly, keeping an account of the number of tens on my fingers. And, as much as possible to correct any little inequalities in my counting, I repeated the experiment a number of times at each depth of water, that I might take the medium. And the following are the results:

	Water 1½ inches deep.	2 inches.	4½ inches.
1st exp.	100	94	79
2	104	93	78
3	104	91	77
4	106	87	79
5	100	88	79
6	99	86	80
7	100	90	79
8	100	88	81
	813	717	632
	Medium 101	Medium 89	Medium 79

I made many other experiments, but the above are those in which I was most exact; and they serve sufficiently to show that the difference is considerable. Between the deepest and shallowest it appears to be somewhat more than one fifth. So that, supposing large canals and boats and depths of water to bear the same proportions, and that four men or horses would draw a boat in deep water four leagues in four hours, it would require five to draw the same boat in the same time as far in shallow water; or four would require five hours.

Whether this difference is of consequence enough to justify a greater expense in deepening canals, is a matter of calculation, which our ingenious engineers in that way will readily determine. I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN

1768·1769

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28 many . . . foot. Most of the canals of Great Britain were constructed between 1760 and 1840

An Edict by the King of Prussia

A large part of Franklin's time in the decade after the repeal of the Stamp Act (1766) was devoted to pleading the cause of the American colonies before the British public and the Tory government. Franklin was ordinarily good-natured about the situation, but sometimes he grew impatient with the measures of men who did not know or wish to know the true state of affairs in America. The latter mood lay behind the satire "An Edict by the King of Prussia," first published in a London newspaper, the **Public Advertiser**, in 1773. By skillfully paraphrasing actual laws by which Parliament had regulated trade in Ireland and America, Franklin dramatized the illogicality of the ministry's position in a way remarkable for its brevity and its effectiveness. Of the reception of the piece he left an account in one of his letters: "What made it the more noticed here was, that people in reading it were, as the phrase is, **taken in**, till they had got half through it, and imagined it a real edict, to which mistake I suppose the King of Prussia's character must have contributed. I was down at Lord Le Despencer's, when the post brought that day's papers. Mr. Whitehead was there, too [Paul Whitehead, the author of "Manners"], who runs early through all the papers, and tells the company what he finds remarkable. He had them in another room, and we were chatting in the breakfast parlour, when he came running in to us, out of breath, with the paper in his hand. 'Here!' says he, 'here's news for ye! Here's the King of Prussia claiming a right to this kingdom!' All stared, and I as much as anybody; and he went on to read it. When he had read two or three paragraphs, a gentleman present said, 'Damn his impudence. I dare say we shall hear by next post, that he is upon his march with one hundred thousand men to back this.' Whitehead, who is very shrewd, soon after began to smoke it, and looking in my face, said, 'I'll be hanged if this is not some of your American jokes upon us.' The reading went on, and ended with abundance of laughing, and a general verdict that it was a fair hit."

Dantzick, Sept. 5

We have long wondered here at the supineness of the English nation, under the Prussian impositions upon its trade entering our port. We did not, till lately, know the claims, ancient and modern, that hang over that nation, and therefore could not suspect that it might submit to those impositions from a sense of duty, or from principles of equity. The following Edict, just made publick, may, if serious, throw some light upon this matter:

"FREDERICK, by the grace of God, King of Prussia, &c. &c. &c. to all present and to come, Health. The peace now enjoyed throughout our dominions, having afforded us leisure to apply ourselves to the regulation of commerce, the improvement of our finances, and at the same time the easing our domestic subjects in their taxes: For these causes and other good considerations us thereunto moving, we hereby make known, that, after having deliberated these affairs in our council, present our dear brothers, and other great officers of the state, members of the same, we, of our certain knowledge, full power, and authority royal, have made and issued this present Edict, viz.

"Whereas it is well known to all the world, that the first German settlements made in the island of Britain were by colonies of people, subjects to our renowned ducal ancestors, and drawn from their dominions, under the conduct of Hengist, Horsa, Hella, Uffa, Cerdicus, Ida, and others; and that the said colonies have flourished under the protection of our august house, for ages past; have never been emancipated therefrom; and yet have hitherto yielded little profit to the same: And whereas we ourself have in the last war fought for and defended the said colonies, against the power of France, and thereby enabled them to make conquests from the said power in America; for which we have not yet received adequate compensation: And whereas it is just and expedient that a revenue should be raised from the said colonies in Britain, towards our indemnification;

Text: Gentleman's Magazine for October 1773 • **12 to all . . . come.** "A tous presens et à venir. ORIGINAL." . . Franklin • **28 Hengist, . . . Ida,** all leaders of the Germanic invasion of Britain, traditionally dated as beginning in 449 A D Franklin seems to have read the **History of England** (1754-1761) by his friend David Hume (1711-1776), wherein these names are mentioned in almost the same order **Hella** should be Ælla, or Ella

and that those who are descendants of our ancient subjects, and thence still owe us due obedience, should contribute to the replenishing of our royal coffers, as they must have done, had their ancestors remained in the territories now to us appertaining: We do therefore hereby ordain and command, that, from and after the date of these presents, there shall be levied, and paid to our officers of the customs, on all goods, wares, and merchandizes, and on all grain and other produce of the earth, exported from the said island of Britain, and on all goods of whatever kind imported into the same, a duty of four and a half per cent. ad valorem, for the use of us and our successors. And that the said duty may more effectually be collected, we do hereby ordain, that all ships or vessels bound from Great-Britain to any other part of the world, or from any other part of the world to Great-Britain, shall in their respective voyages touch at our port of Koningsberg, there to be unladen, searched, and charged with the said duties.

"And whereas there hath been from time to time discovered in the said island of Great-Britain, by our colonists there, many mines or beds of iron stone; and sundry subjects of our ancient dominion, skilful in converting the said stone into metal, have in times past transported themselves thither, carrying with them and communicating that art; and the inhabitants of the said island, presuming that they had a natural right to make the best use they could of the natural productions of their country, for their own benefit, have not only built furnaces for smelting the said stone into iron, but have erected plating forges, slitting mills, and steel furnaces, for the more convenient manufacturing of the same, thereby endangering a diminution of the said manufacture in our ancient dominion; we do therefore hereby farther ordain, that, from and after the date hereof, no mill or other engine for slitting or rolling of iron, or any plating forge to work with a tilt-hammer, or any furnace for making steel, shall be erected or continued in the said island of Great-Britain: And the Lord-Lieutenant of every county in the said island is hereby commanded, on information of any such erection within his county, to order and by force to cause the same to be abated and destroyed, as he shall answer the neglect thereof to us at his peril. But we are nevertheless graciously pleased to permit the inhabitants of the said island to transport their iron into Prussia, there to be manufactured, and to them returned, they paying our Prussian subjects for the workmanship, with all the costs of commission, freight, and risk, coming and returning, any thing herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

"We do not, however, think fit to extend this our indulgence to the article of wool; but meaning to encourage not only the manufacturing of woolen cloth, but also the raising of wool, in our ancient dominions; and to prevent both, as much as may be, in our said island, we do hereby absolutely forbid the transportation of wool from thence even to the mother-country, Prussia, And that those islanders may be farther and more effectually restrained in making any advantage of their own wool, in the way of manufacture, we command that none be carried out of one county into another, nor shall any worsted, bay, or woollen-yarn, cloth, says, bays, kerseys, serges, frizes, druggets, cloth-serges, shalloons, or any other drapery stuffs or woollen manufactures whatsoever, made up or mixed with wool in any of the said counties, be carried into any other county, or be water-borne even across the smallest river or creek, on penalty of forfeiture of the same, together with the boats, carriages, horses, &c. that shall be employed in removing them. Nevertheless, our loving subjects there are hereby permitted (if they think proper) to use all their wool as manure, for the improvement of their lands.

"And whereas the art and mystery of making hats hath arrived at great perfection in Prussia; and the making of hats by our remoter subjects ought to be as much as possible restrained: And forasmuch as the islanders before mentioned, being in possession of wool, beaver and other furs, have presumptuously conceived they had a right to make some advantage thereof, by manufacturing the same into hats, to the prejudice of our domestic manufacture: We do therefore hereby strictly command and ordain, that no hats or felts whatsoever, dyed or undyed, finished or unfinished, shall be loaden or put into or upon any vessel, cart, carriage, or

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12 **ad valorem,** according to value • 18 **Koningsberg,** Königsberg, in East Prussia, peculiarly suitable to Franklin's purpose because of its remoteness The hit is at the laws requiring American ships trading abroad to touch at an English port • 22 **iron stone.** See a parliamentary act of 23 George III, c 29 (1749-1750) prohibiting ironworks in the American colonies • 53 **wool.** See an act of 10 and 11 William III, c. 10 (1698-1699) to prevent the exportation of wool from Ireland and the colonies • 76 **making hats.** See the act of 5 George II, c. 22 (1731-1732) prohibiting the conveyance of hats and felt from the colonies

horse, to be transported or conveyed out of one county in the said island into another county, or to any other place whatsoever, by any person or persons whatsoever, on pain of forfeiting the same, with a penalty of five hundred pounds sterling for every offence. Nor shall any hat-maker, in any of the said counties, employ more than two apprentices, on penalty of five pounds sterling per month: we intending hereby that such hat-makers, being so restrained, both in the production and sale of their commodity, may find no advantage in continuing their business. But, lest the said islanders should suffer inconveniency by the want of hats, we are farther graciously pleased to permit them to send their beaver furs to Prussia; and we also permit hats made thereof to be exported from Prussia to Britain; the people thus favoured to pay all costs and charges of manufacturing, interest, commission to our merchants, insurance and freight going and returning, as in the case of iron.

"And lastly, being willing farther to favour our said colonies in Britain, we do hereby also ordain and command, that all the thieves, highway and street robbers, house-breakers, forgerers, murderers, s—d—tes, and villains of every denomination, who have forfeited their lives to the law in Prussia, but whom we, in our great clemency, do not think fit here to hang, shall be emptied out of our gaols into the said island of Great-Britain, for the better peopling of that country.

"We flatter ourselves, that these our royal regulations and commands will be thought just and reasonable by our much favoured colonists in England; the said regulations being copied from their own statutes, of 10 and 11 Will. III. c. 10—5 Geo. II. c. 22—23 Geo. II. c. 29—4 Geo. I. c. 11. and from other equitable laws made by their parliaments, or from instructions given by their Princes, or from resolutions of both Houses, entered into for the good government of their own colonies in Ireland and America.

"And all persons in the said island are hereby cautioned not to oppose in any wise the execution of this our Edict, or any part thereof, such opposition being high-treason; of which all who are suspected shall be transported in fetters from Britain to Prussia, there to be tried and executed according to the Prussian law.

"Such is our pleasure.

"Given at Potsdam, this twenty-fifth day of the month of August, One thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, in the thirty-third year of our reign.

"By the King, in his Council.

"RECHTMÆSSIG, Sec."

Some take this Edict to be merely one of the King's Jeux d'Esprit: others suppose it serious, and that he means a quarrel with England; but all here think the assertion it concludes with, "that these regulations are copied from acts of the English parliament respecting their colonies," a very injurious one; it being impossible to believe, that a people distinguished for their love of liberty, a nation so wise, so liberal in its sentiments, so just and equitable towards its neighbors, should, from mean and injudicious views of petty immediate profit, treat its own children in a manner so arbitrary and tyrannical!

1773·1773

21 thieves, etc. See act of 4 George II, c. 11 (1717-1718) relating to piracy

The Ephemera

An Emblem of Human Life

The Ephemera was originally written in French for Madame Brillon de Jouy, one of Franklin's neighbors during his residence at Passy, and is thought to have been first printed on his private press there, about September 1778. Madame Brillon, perhaps forty years Franklin's junior, was the wife of a government official, none too happy in her family responsibilities but possessed of an abundant share of that vivacity which is so common among educated Frenchwomen. She and Franklin shared a fondness for music and for chess, and they exchanged half-flirtatious, half-serious letters not unlike the more polished bagatelle which follows. The familiar piece entitled **The Whistle** was also written for Madame Brillon.

As appears from the introductory paragraph, **The Ephemera** was suggested by a visit to the Moulin Joli, a

small island in the Seine which was a part of the country estate of Claude-Henri Watelet. Franklin later acknowledged that he owed something to his memory of a newspaper essay on "Human Vanity," printed in the **Pennsylvania Gazette** for December 4, 1735. What makes **The Ephemera** an unusually pointed comment on the well-worn theme of the transience of life is the reader's identification of the experienced Franklin with the insect philosopher. Pathos has seldom been more delicately sustained.

You may remember, my dear friend, that when we lately spent that happy day in the delightful garden and sweet society of the Moulin Joly, I stopt a little in one of our walks, and stayed some time behind the company. We had been shown numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly, called an ephemera, whose successive generations, we were told, were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf, who appeared to be engaged in conversation. You know I understand all the inferior animal tongues. My too great application to the study of them is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language. I listened through curiosity to the discourse of these little creatures; but as they, in their national vivacity, spoke three or four together, I could make but little of their conversation. I found, however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were disputing warmly on the merit of two foreign musicians, one a *cousin,* the other a *moscheto;* in which dispute they spent their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life as if they had been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I; you are certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention but the perfections and imperfections of foreign music. I turned my head from them to an old gray-headed one, who was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

"It was," said he, "the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could



House in which Franklin lived at Passy.

not itself subsist more than eighteen hours; and I think there was some foundation for that opinion, since, by the apparent motion of the great luminary that gives life to all nature, and which in my time has evidently declined considerably towards the ocean at the end of our earth, it must then finish its course, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and leave the world in cold and darkness, necessarily producing universal death and destruction. I have lived seven of those hours, a great age, being no less than four hundred and twenty minutes of time. How very few of us continue so long! I have seen generations born, flourish, and expire. My present friends are the children and grandchildren of the friends of my youth, who are now, alas, no more! And I must soon follow them; for, by the course of nature, though still in health, I cannot expect to live above seven or eight minutes longer. What now avails all my toil and labor in amassing honey-dew on this leaf, which

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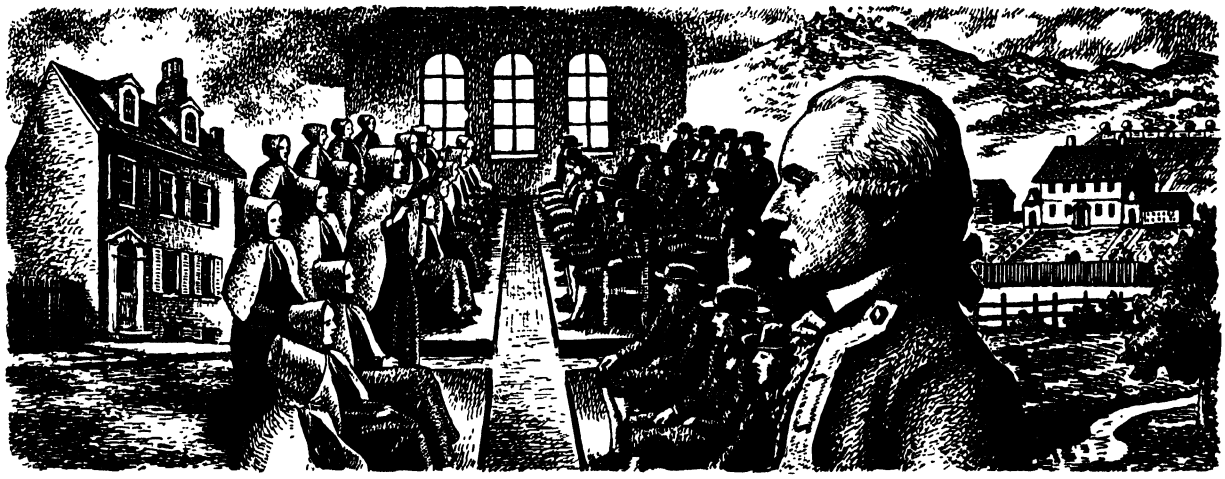
Text: Bigelow's **Complete Works,** VI, 237-239 • 19 **one . . . moscheto,** one a gnat, the other a mosquito. In a letter to William Carmichael written June 17, 1780, Franklin said that at the time he wrote "The Ephemera" "all conversations at Paris were filled with disputes about the music of Gluck and Piccini, a German and Italian musician, who divided the town into violent parties." **The Iphigénie en aulide** of C. W. Ritter von Gluck (1714-1787) was produced at Paris in 1774; Niccolo Piccini (1728-1800), the Italian composer, was invited to Paris in 1776

I cannot live to enjoy! What the political struggles I have been engaged in for the good of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush, or my philosophical studies for the benefit of our race in general! for in politics what can laws do without morals? Our present race of ephemeræ will in a course of minutes become corrupt, like those of other and older bushes, and consequently as wretched. And in philosophy how small our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short! My friends would comfort me with the idea of a name they say I shall leave behind me; and they tell me I have lived long enough to nature and to glory. But what will fame be to an ephemera who no longer exists? And what will become of all history in the eighteenth hour, when the world itself, even the whole Moulin Joly, shall come to an end, and be buried in universal ruin?"

To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid pleasures now remain, but the reflection of a long life spent in meaning well, the sensible conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ, and now and then a kind smile and a tune from the ever amiable *Brillante.*

B. FRANKLIN
1778-1778?

SOCIAL COMMENTATORS: Crèvecoeur, Woolman



Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur

1735 • 1813

Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur was born in France, near Caen. Educated first in a Jesuit school and then in England, he took ship for Canada before he was twenty and there enlisted in the army. He rose to the rank of lieutenant, making himself particularly useful as a mapmaker in the region of the lower Great

Panel (l. to r.): John Woolman's shop • Friends' meeting • Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur • Crèvecoeur's farm, Orange County

Lakes. About 1759 Crèvecoeur drifted down through the English colonies, probably working as a surveyor, and in 1764 applied for naturalization in New York. He settled on an Orange County farm, married, and for approximately fifteen years lived as a gentleman farmer in a well-established and prosperous rural community. Soon after his marriage in 1769, he appears to have begun setting down his impressions of the country; and by 1780, when he was forced to leave America because his moderate opinions had made both Whigs and Tories suspicious of him, he had a small trunk full of manuscripts. He found a publisher for some of them in London, but the publisher was a Whig and probably selected for *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) those pieces least critical of the Revolutionary party in America. A few others were published in a French translation in 1784, but a number of more obviously Tory papers remained in manuscript until 1925, when they were included in *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America.*

Crèvecoeur's *Letters* were popular in English, French, and German, and for a time he was a literary lion, the protégé in the Paris salons of Madame d'Houdetot, whom Rousseau had loved. Partly through her influence, the "sauvage" from America was sent back to New York as consul-general, and from 1783 until 1790 Crèvecoeur did his best to keep alive American gratitude to and friendship with France. The last twenty-three years of his life were spent in Europe.

Crèvecoeur expresses many of the revolutionary ideals which operated powerfully in the eighteenth century, first in America and then in France. He was a perfectionist, although he never recognized the paradox in his admiration for social progress and his equally high regard for the primitive and simple. He was more than a believer in religious freedom; he was anticlerical, with a distrust of organized religion almost as strong as Thomas Paine's. Like Benjamin Franklin and the Frenchmen who were weary of the old order, he was a physiocrat, believing that agriculture should be left largely free of taxation because it was the basis of wealth and a healthy economic life. Like Jefferson, he envisaged an agrarian society, free of governmental restrictions; free of the dangers of cities and of great wealth concentrated in the hands of the few; free, by and large, of the influence of clergymen and of lawyers; free of sickness, intemperance, and extravagance. In his most expansive moments, Crèvecoeur was capable of seeing America as "one diffusive scene of happiness reaching from the sea-shores to the last settlements on the borders of the wilderness."

Sometimes, particularly in the pieces which remained so long in manuscript, there is brief recognition of man's inhumanity to man, as exemplified by slavery and civil disturbances and war. Nature, usually beneficent, occasionally displays its crueler aspects, when the snakes fight to the death, the hummingbirds grow irascible, and storms and insects plague the determinedly happy farmer. Crèvecoeur, however, was fundamentally an optimist, and the pastoral tone prevails in his writing. His mind was keen and sensitive; an excellent observer, he had the power to communicate his emotional experience. If he overdramatized, he did so, one is convinced, without intent to deceive. The modern reader can understand the conviction of the friend who described Crèvecoeur as "a philanthropist; a man of serene temper and pure benevolence. The milk of human kindness circulated in every vein."

Crèvecoeur wrote well, although unevenly. The fashion of his day compelled him to shape his best-known book into a series of letters, but within these he displayed considerable command of three different forms: the prose essay, the short story, and the dramatic dialogue. His ideas are not unlike those of the promotion tracts and progress reports, but he had a sense of the form appropriate to his "sentiment and susceptibility." He therefore has his place both as a social philosopher and as one of the earliest American writers to experiment with the nature essay and with fiction as a medium for expression. Whether or not he was an "emotional liar," idealizing the simple life without regard to truth, may be a question for debate; there is almost no dissent, however, from the praise of his literary grace.

Letters from an American Farmer, ed. W. P. Trent and Ludwig Lewisohn, New York, 1904 • Sketches of Eighteenth Century America, ed. H. L. Bourdin, R. H Gabriel, and S. T. Williams, New Haven, 1925 • Julia P. Mitchell, St. Jean de Crèvecoeur, New York, 1916 • H. C. Rice, Le Cultivateur américain: étude sur l'oeuvre de Saint John de Crèvecoeur, Paris, 1933

From

Letters from an American Farmer

Letters from an American Farmer (London, 1782) was reprinted, in the English version, five times before 1793, and there were three editions of the French expansion and two of the German translation.

The twelve essays, or "letters," vary greatly in length, and it seems probable that the letter form was an afterthought of Crèvecoeur or his printer. The first three essays are a general and highly favorable view of American life, emphasizing the construction of a new and superior society in sharp contrast with Europe, which he regarded as decadent, stratified, and priest-dominated. The next six essays are more particular; four of them deal with Nantucket, one with Martha's Vineyard and the whale fishery, and one with Charleston and the deplorable institution of slavery. A nature essay, a description of the visit of a Russian gentleman to John Bartram, and "Distresses of a Frontier Man" complete the book.

The organization of the **Letters** is loose; Crèvecoeur's strength lay in his paragraphs and stretches of dialogue. The selection which follows is approximately the first third of Letter III, "What Is an American?"

I wish I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. He must greatly rejoice that he lived at a time to see this fair country discovered and settled; he must necessarily feel a share of national pride, when he views the chain of settlements which embellishes these extended shores. When he says to himself, this is the work of my countrymen, who, when convulsed by factions, afflicted by a variety of miseries and wants, restless and impatient, took refuge here. They brought along with them their national genius, to which they principally owe what liberty they enjoy, and what substance they possess. Here he sees the industry of his native country displayed in a new manner, and traces in their works the embrios of all the arts, sciences, and ingenuity which flourish in Europe. Here he beholds fair cities, substantial villages, extensive fields, an immense country filled with decent houses, good roads, orchards, meadows, and bridges, where an hundred years ago all was wild, woody and uncultivated! What a train of pleasing ideas this fair spectacle must suggest; it is a prospect which must inspire a good citizen with the most heartfelt pleasure. The difficulty consists in the manner of viewing so extensive a scene. He is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplations, different from what he had hitherto scene. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclestiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory, communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts he views not the hostile castle, and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabbin, where cattle and men help to keep each other warm, and dwell in meanness, smoke, and indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. The meanest of our log-houses is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest titles our towns afford; that of a farmer is the only appellation of the rural inhabitants of our country. It must take some time ere he can reconcile himself to our dictionary, which is but short in words of dignity, and names of honor. There, on a Sunday, he sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted, or riding in their own humble waggons. There is not among them an esquire, saving

will be litigious; pride and obstinacy are often the cause of law suits; the nature of our laws and governments may be another. As citizens it is easy to imagine, that they will carefully read the newspapers, enter into every political disquisition, freely blame or censure governors and others. As farmers they will be careful and anxious to get as much as they can, because what they get is their own. As northern men they will love the chearful cup. As Christians, religion curbs them not in their opinions; the general indulgence leaves every one to think for themselves in spiritual matters; the laws inspect our actions, our thoughts are left to God. Industry, good living, selfishness, litigiousness, country politics, the pride of freemen, religious indifference, are their characteristics. If you recede still farther from the sea, you will come into more modern settlements; they exhibit the same strong lineaments, in a ruder appearance. Religion seems to have still less influence, and their manners are less improved.

Now we arrive near the great woods, near the last inhabited districts, there men seem to be placed still farther beyond the reach of government, which in some measure leaves them to themselves. How can it pervade every corner; as they were driven there by misfortunes, necessity of beginnings, desire of acquiring large tracks of land, idleness, frequent want of economy, ancient debts; the re-union of such people does not afford a very pleasing spectacle. When discord, want of unity and friendship; when either drunkenness or idleness prevail in such remote districts; contention, inactivity, and wretchedness must ensue. There are not the same remedies to these evils as in a long established community. The few magistrates they have, are in general little better than the rest; they are often in a perfect state of war; that of man against man, sometimes decided by blows, sometimes by means of the law; that of man against every inhabitant of these venerable woods, of which they are come to dispossess them. There men appear to be no better than carnivorous animals of a superior rank, living on the flesh of wild animals when they can catch them, and when they are not able, they subsist on grain. He who would wish to see America in its proper light, and have a true idea of its feeble beginnings and barbarous rudiments, must visit our extended line of frontiers where the last settlers dwell, and where he may see the first labours of settlement, the mode of clearing the earth, in all their different appearances; where men are wholly left dependent on their native tempers, and on the spur of uncertain industry, which often fails when not sanctified by the efficacy of a few moral rules. There, remote from the power of example, and check of shame, many families exhibit the most hideous parts of our society. They are a kind of forlorn hope, preceding by ten or twelve years the most respectable army of veterans which come after them. In that space, prosperity will polish some, vice and the law will drive off the rest, who uniting again with others like themselves will recede still farther; making room for more industrious people, who will finish their improvements, convert the loghouse into a convenient habitation, and rejoicing that the first heavy labours are finished, will change in a few years that hitherto barbarous country into a fine fertile, well regulated district. Such is our progress, such is the march of the Europeans toward the interior parts of this continent. In all societies there are off-casts; this impure part serves as our precursors or pioneers; my father himself was one of that class, but he came upon honest principles, and was therefore one of the few who held fast; by good conduct and temperance, he transmitted to me his fair inheritance, when not above one in fourteen of his contemporaries had the same good fortune.

Forty years ago this smiling country was thus inhabited; it is now purged, a general decency of manners prevails throughout, and such has been the fate of our best countries.

Exclusive of those general characteristics, each province has its own, founded on the government, climate, mode of husbandry, customs, and peculiarity of circumstances. Europeans submit insensibly to these great powers, and become, in the course of a few generations, not only Americans in general, but either Pennsylvanians, Virginians, or provincials under some other name. Whoever traverses the continent must easily observe those strong differences, which will grow more evident in time. The inhabitants of Canada, Massachusetts, the middle provinces, the southern ones will be as different as their climates; their only points of unity will be those of religion and language. . . .

1780?-1782

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20 **the last . . . districts,** the frontier, noticeably unglorified in this description • 67 **my father,** a fictional touch, since there is no evidence that Crèvecoeur's father was ever in America

John Woolman

1720 • 1772

The *Journal* of John Woolman has found enthusiastic readers ever since its first publication in 1774. Among those who have been charmed by its revelation of a man who for honesty, simplicity, and sweetness of temper merits comparison with St. Francis of Assisi and Jesus Christ must be counted Charles Lamb, the English essayist, Lamb's friend Crabb Robinson, diarist-historian of the Romantic era, William Ellery Channing, and John Greenleaf Whittier. To many, Woolman has come to represent American Quakerism at its splendid best, a mystic faith whose outward starkness and lack of pomp accentuate great inward richness. More recently Woolman has been much admired for his unique grasp of the social and economic implications of the concept of the Society of Friends that the human race is one great family.

The brotherhood of man was to Woolman not an ideal but a reality, and as he grew older he sought to divorce himself, quietly but firmly, from all actions and institutions which even indirectly involved injustice to his fellow creatures. Although he made much of his living by drawing up legal documents, he refused to make out bills of sale for slaves. When he learned that plantation workers in the West Indies endured indescribable hardships, he did without sugar. Before he died he was examining every aspect, every purchase, of his daily life in the light of its social effect. He hit upon the methods of passive resistance, non-coöperation, and the economic boycott and, like Thoreau two generations later, learned to scale down his wants to fit his principles. Woolman did not reform society, but he tried to deal honestly with the exceedingly complicated problem of an individual's just relation to his fellow men. On occasion his methods have proved to be tremendously effective.

Woolman was born on a farm on Rancocas Creek, midway between Burlington and Mount Holly, New Jersey. There he lived until he was twenty, learning to love the Quaker way of life in his family, the village school, and the weekly Meeting. He then went into a shop in Mount Holly, five miles away, and in his spare time learned the tailor's trade. Diligent and thrifty, he might easily have grown wealthy, but his social conscience was obviously far greater than that of most of his associates. Soon he felt the call to visit other Meetings, as was the custom of those Friends who wished to become ministers and elders in a sect which had no professional clergy. During the last half of his life, except when he was ill, he made at least one journey a year, sometimes being away from home for as long as four months. Usually accompanied by another Friend, he visited and testified at Quaker meetings and in Quaker homes from New England to the Carolinas and westward into the Indian country, telling what was in his mind and heart and remonstrating with Quaker slaveholders and businessmen whose lives, in his judgment, fell short of what he called "pure wisdom." His tact, his literary skill, and, most of all, his unimpeachable sincerity made him successful in Quaker politics and action, and he was chiefly responsible for consolidating

Quaker sentiment for the emancipation of Negro slaves. His inclination to help arouse the English Quakers to the importance of this cause sent him to England in 1772. He arrived in London in June, visited Friends there and in the neighborhood, and then, wishing to go to the North, chose characteristically to walk rather than have any part in the oppression of postboys and horses. He got as far as York, where he died of smallpox in September.

In the course of his life Woolman wrote more than a dozen essays on matters which he thought ought to be more fully considered by the Quakers. Some of them were published during his lifetime, usually by the Overseers of the Press of the Philadelphia Meeting, so that they were distributed among Quakers with some degree of authority. The *Essay on Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (Part I, 1754; Part II, 1762) and *Considerations on Pure Wisdom and Human Policy* (1758) are the most important. A few of the more radical essays and the *Journal* did not appear until after Woolman's death.

Woolman's writing is far from being as artless as it may seem at first glance. He gained precisely the effect of unpretentious directness that he wanted, and he revised some of his manuscripts with considerable care. His Quaker readers were suspicious of learning, of dependence upon close-knit logic or rhetorical devices. The sweet reasonableness of Woolman's tone and the apparent carelessness in organization clothe a keen and penetrating intellect, stored with the rich wisdom of the Bible and of personal experience and directed by convictions which are often revolutionary.

The Journal and Essays of John Woolman, ed. Amelia M. Gummere, New York, 1922 • Janet Whitney, John Woolman, American Quaker, Boston, 1942

From

The Journal and Essays of John Woolman

Woolman tells us that he began his journal when he was thirty-six. Presumably he kept some kind of day-by-day diary, but so far as is known none is extant. The Journal has come down to us in two manuscripts, one of which includes a number of Woolman's essays and is the manuscript which he himself prepared for the publication committee of the Philadelphia Meeting before he left for England. The Journal consists of eleven chapters; all of Chapter I and a part of the latter portion of Chapter III follow. Mrs. Whitney has shown in her recent biography, by reference to manuscript account books, that Woolman's dating of events, probably from memory, is not always to be relied upon. His account of his gradual progress toward spiritual enlightenment, "until I felt that rise which prepares the creature to stand like a Trumpet, through which the Lord speaks to his flock," is possibly the clearest exposition of the Quaker faith in our literature.

CHAPTER I

I have often felt a motion of Love to leave some hints of my experience of the Goodness of God: and pursuant thereto, in the 36 year of my age, I begin this work.

I was Born in Northampton, in Burlington county, in West Jersey, in the year of our Lord 1720 & before I was seven years old, I began to be acquainted with the operations of Divine Love. Through the care of my Parents, I was taught to Read as soon as I was capable of it, and as I went from School one seventh-day, I remember, while my companions went to play by the way, I went forward out of sight, and seting down, I read the twenty second chapter of the Revelations: "He showed me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as Crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb," &c. and in the reading of it, my mind was drawn to seek after that Pure Habitation, which I then believed God had prepared for his servants. The place where I sat, and

the sweetness that attended my soul, remain fresh in my memory.

This, and the like Gracious Visitations, had that effect upon me, that when boys used ill language, it troubled me, & through the continued Mercies of God, I was preserved from it. The pious instructions of my Parents were often fresh in my mind when I happened to be among wicked children, and were of use to me.

My Parents haveing a large family of children, used frequently on first-days after meeting, to put us to read in the Holy Scriptures, or some religious books, one after another, the rest sitting by without much conversation, which I have since often thought was a good practice. From what I had read, I believed there had been in past ages, people who Walked in Uprightness before God in a degree exceeding any that I knew, or heard of, now living: & the Apprehension of their being less Steadiness and firmness amongst people in this age than in past ages, often Troubled me while I was still young.

I had a Dream about the ninth year of my age as follows: I saw the Moon rise near the West, & run a regular course Eastward, so swift that in about a quarter of an hour, she reached our Meridian, when there descended from her a small Cloud on the Direct line to the Earth, which lighted on a pleasant Green about twenty yards from the Door of my Father's House (in which I thought I stood) and was immediately turned into a Beautiful green Tree. The Moon appeared to run on with Equal swiftness, and soon set in the East, at which time the Sun arose at the place where it commonly doth in the Sumer, and Shineing with full Radiance in a Serene air, it appeared as plesant a morning as ever I saw.

All this time I stood still in the door, in an Awfull frame of mind, and I observed that as heat increased by the Riseing Sun, it wrought so powerfully on the little green Tree, that the leaves gradually withered, and before Noon it appear'd dry & dead. There then appeared a Being, Small of Size, moving Swift from the North Southward, called a *"Sun Worm."*

Tho' I was A Child, this dream was instructive to me.

Another thing remarkable in my childhood was, that once as I went to a neighbour's house, I saw, on the way, a Robbin sitting on her nest, and as I came near she went off, but having young ones, flew about, and with many cries expressed her Concern for them. I stood and threw stones at her, till one striking her, she fell down dead. At first I was pleas'd with the Exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with Horror, as haveing in a sportive way kild an Innocent Creature while she was carefull for her young. I beheld her lying dead, & thought those young ones for which she was so carefull must now perish for want of their dam to nourish them; and after some painfull considerations on the subject, I climbed up the Tree, took all the young birds, and killed them supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably; and believ'd in this case, that scripture proverb was fulfilled, "The tender mercies of the wicked are Cruel." I then went on my errand, but, for some hours, could think of little else but the Cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled.

Thus He whose tender Mercies are over all his works, hath placed that in the Human mind which incites to exercise goodness towards every liveing creature and This being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathizing; but being frequently & totally rejected, the mind shuts itself up in a Contrary disposition.

About the twelfth year of my age, my Father being abroad, my Mother reproved me for some misconduct, to which I made an Undutifull reply & the next first-day, as I was with my Father returning from Meeting, He told me he understood I had behaved amis to my Mother, and Advised me to be more carefull in future. I knew myself blameable, and in shame and confusion remained silent. Being thus awakened to a sense of my Wickedness, I felt remorse in my mind, and geting home, I retired and prayed to the Lord to forgive me; and I do not remember that I ever after that, spoke unhandsomely to either of my Parents, however foolish in some other things.

Having attained the age of Sixteen, I began to love wanton company: and though I was preserved from profane language or Scandalous conduct, Still I perceived a plant in me which produced much wild grapes. Yet my Merciful Father forsook me not utterly, but at

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9 large family. John Woolman was the fourth child and eldest son in a family of six girls and seven boys • **21 a Dream.** The symbolism of Woolman's dream is obscure, but presumably has something to do with his knowledge of good and evil • **59 scripture proverb,** Proverbs 10:12

times through his grace I was brought seriously to consider my ways, and the sight of my backsliding affected me with sorrow: but for want of rightly attending to the reproofs of Instruction, Vanity was added to Vanity, and Repentance. Upon the whole my mind was more and more Alienated from the Truth, and I hastened towards Destruction. While I meditate on the Gulf towards which I traveled, and reflect on my youthful Disobedience, my heart is affected with Sorrow.

Advancing in age, the number of my Acquaintance increased, and thereby my way grew more difficult. Though I had heretofore found comfort in reading the Holy Scriptures, and thinking on heavenly things, I was now Estranged therefrom. I knew I was going from the flock of Christ, and had no resolution to return, hence serious reflections were uneasie to me, and Youthfull Vanities and Diversions my greatest pleasure. Runing in this Road I found many like myself, and we associated in that which is reverse to true Friendship: but in this swift race it pleased God to visit me with Sickness, so that I doubted of recovering· and then did Darkness, Horror and Amazement, with full force seize me, even when my pain and distress of body was verry great: I thought it would have been better for me never to have had a being, than to see the day which I now saw. I was filled with Confusion, & in great affliction both of mind & body, I lay and bewailed myself. I had not confidence to lift up my cries to God, whom I had thus offended; but in a deep sense of my great folly I was humbled before Him, & at length that Word which is as a Fire and a Hamer, broke and dissolved my rebellious heart, and then my Cries were put up in contrition, and in the multitude of His mercies I found inward relief, and felt a close Engagement, that if he was pleased to Restore my health, I might walk Humbly before Him.

After my Recovery, this Exercise remained with me a considerable time, but, by degrees, giving way to youthfull vanities, they gained strength, and geting with wanton young people I lost ground. The Lord had been verry Gracious, and Spoke peace to me in the time of my distress, and I now most ungratefully turned again to folly, on which account, at times, I felt sharp reproof, but did not get low enough to Cry for help. I was not so hardy as to commit things scandalous, but to Exceed in Vanity, and promote myrth, was my chief study. Still I retained a love and esteem for pious people, and their company brought an Awe upon me. My Dear Parents several times Admonished me in the fear of the Lord, and their admonition entered into my heart, & had a good effect for a season, but not geting deep enough to pray rightly, the tempter when he came found entrance. I remember once having spent a part of a day in wantonness, as I went to bed at night, there lay in a window near my bed a Bible, which I opened, and first cast my eye on the Text, "we lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us." This I knew to be my case, and meeting with so unexpected a reproof, I was somewhat Affected with it, and went to bed under remorse of conscience, which I soon cast off again.

Thus time passed on, my heart was replenished with myrth and wantonness, while pleasing scenes of Vanity were presented to my Imagination, till I attain'd the age of Eighteen years, near which time I felt the Judgments of God in my soul like a consuming fire, and looking over my past life, the prospect was moveing. I was often sad, and longed to be deliver'd from those vanities; then again my heart was Strongly Inclined to them, and there was in me a sore conflict. At times I turned to folly, and then again sorrow and confusion took hold of me. In a while I resolved totally to leave off some of my vanities, but there was a secret reserve in my heart, of the more refined part of them, and I was not low enough to find true peace. Thus for some months, I had great troubles and disquiet, there remaining in me an unsubjected will, which rendered my labours fruitless, till at length, through the Mercifull continuance of Heavenly Visitations, I was made to bow down in Spirit before the Most High. I remember one evening I had spent some time in reading a pious author, and walking out a lone, I humbly prayed to the Lord for his help, that I might be delivered from those vanities which so ensnared me. Thus being brought low he helped me, and as I learned to bear the Cross, I felt refreshment to come from his Presence: but not keeping in that Strength which gave victory I lost ground again, The sense of which greatly afflicted me and I sought Desarts and lonely places, and there with tears did confess my Sins to God, and humbly craved help of HIM, and I may

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56 the Text, Jeremiah 3 25

say with Reverence he was near to me in my troubles, and in those times of Humiliation opened my ear to Discipline.

I was now led to look seriously at the means by which I was drawn from the pure Truth, and I learned this. That if I would live in the life which the Faithful servants of God lived in, I must not go into company as heretofore in my own will, but all the cravings of Sense must be governed by a Divine principle. In times of sorrow and abasement these Instructions were sealed upon me, and I felt the power of Christ prevail over all selfish desires, so that I was preserved in a good degree of steadiness, and being young and believing at that time that a single life was best for me, I was strengthened to keep from such company as had often been a snare to me.

I kept steady to meetings, spent first-days in the afternoon chiefly in reading the scriptures and other good Books, and was early convinced in my mind that true Religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the Heart doth Love and Reverence God the Creator, and learn to Exercise true Justice and Goodness, not only toward all men, but allso toward the Brute Creatures. That as the mind was moved by an inward Principle to Love God as an invisible, Incomprehensible Being, by the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the Visible world. That as by his breath the flame of life was kindled in all Animal and Sensible creatures, to say we Love God as unseen, and at the same time Exercise cruelty toward the least creature moving by his life, or by life derived from Him, was a Contradiction in itself.

I found no narrowness respecting Sects and Opinions, but believe that sincere upright-hearted people, in Every society who truly love God were accepted of HIM.

As I lived under the Cross, and simply followed the openings of Truth, my mind from day to day was more Enlightened, my former acquaintance were left to judge of me as they would, for I found it safest for me to live in private and keep these things sealed up in my own breast. While I silently ponder on that change which was wrought in me, I find no language equal to it, nor any means to convey a clear idea of it. I looked upon the works of God in this Visible Creation, and an awfullness covered me: my heart was tender and often contrite, and a universal Love to my fellow Creatures increased in me. This will be understood by such who have troden in the same path.

Some glances of Real beauty is percieveble in their faces, who dwell in true meekness. Some tincture of true Harmony in the sound of that voice to which Divine Love gives utterance, & Some appearance of right order in their temper and Conduct, whose passions are fully regulated, yet all these do not fully show forth that inward life to such who have not felt it; but this white stone and new name is known rightly to such only who have it.

Now tho' I had been thus Strengthened to bear the Cross, I still found myself in great danger, having many weaknesses Attending me, and strong Temptations to wrestle with, in the feeling whereof I frequently withdrew into private places, and often with tears besought the Lord to help me, whose gracious ear was open to my cry.

All this time I lived with my Parents, and wrought on the plantation, and having had schooling pretty well for a planter, I used to improve winter evenings, and other leisure times, and being now in the Twenty first year of my age, a man in much business at Shopkeeping and Baking, asked me if I would hire with him to tend Shop and keep books. I acquainted my Father with the proposal, and, after some deliberation it was agreed for me to go. I had for a considerable time found my mind less given to Husbandry than heretofore, having often in view some other way of living.

At home I had lived retired, and now having a prospect of being much in the way of company, I felt frequent and fervent Cries in my heart to God the Father of Mercies, that he would preserve me from all Taint & Corruption. That in this more public Employ, I might serve Him my Gracious Redeemer, in that Humility and self Denial with which I had been in a small degree exercised in a verry private life.

The man who employed me furnished a Shop in Mountholly, about five miles from my Father's house & Six from his own and there I lived alone, & tended his Shop. Shortly after my settlement here, I was visited by several young people, my former acquaintances, who knew not but vanities would be as agreeable to me now as ever, and at these times I cryed unto the Lord in Secret for wisdom and Strength, for I felt myself Encompassed with difficulties, and had fresh Ocasion to bewail the follies of time past, in contracting a familiar-

ity with a Libertine people. And as I had now left my Fathers house outwardly, I found my Heavenly Father to be mercifull to me beyond what I can express.

By day I was much among people, and had many tryals to go through, but in evenings I was mostly alone, and may with thankfulness acknowledge, that in those times the Spirit of Supplication was often poured upon me, under which I was frequently exercised, and felt my Strength renewed.

In a few months after I came here, my Master bought several Scotch men-servants, from on board a Vessel, and brought them to Mountholly to sell & having sold several the rest were left with me, one of which was taken sick, & died. The latter part of his sickness, he, being delirious, used to curse and Swear most sorrowfully, and after he was buried, I was left to sleep alone the next night in the same chamber where he died. I perceived in me a Timorousness: I knew however I had not injured the man, but had assisted in taking care of him according to my capacity, and I was not free to ask any one, on that occasion, to sleep with me: nature was feble, but every tryal was a fresh incitement to give myself up wholly to the service of God, for I found no helper like Him in times of Trouble.

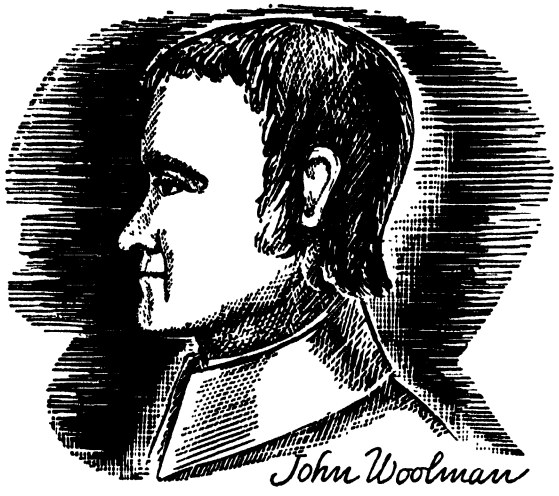
After a while my former Acquaintance gave over Expecting me as one of their company, and I began to be known to some whose conversation was helpful to me. And now, as I had Experienced the Love of God, through Jesus Christ, to Redeem me from many polutions, and to be a constant succour to me through a Sea of conflicts, with which no person was fully acquainted, and as my heart was often enlarged in this Heavenly Principle, so I felt a tender compassion for the youth who remain'd entangled in the same snares which had entangled me. From one month to another, this Love & tenderness increased, and my mind was more strongly engaged for the good of my fellow-creatures. I went to meetings in an awfull frame of mind, and endeavoured to be inwardly acquainted with the language of the True Shephered, and one day being under a Strong Exercise of Spirit, I stood up, and said some words in a meeting, but not keeping close to the Divine opening, I said more than was required of me & being soon sencible of my error, I was afflicted in mind some weeks, without any light or comfort, even to that degree that I could take satisfaction in nothing. I remembered God, and was troubled and in the depth of my distress he had pitty upon me, and sent the Comforter. I then felt forgiveness for my offence, and my mind became calm and quiet, being truly thankfull to my Gracious Redeemer for his mercies. And after this, feeling the spring of Divine Love opened, and a Concern to Speak, I said a few words in meeting in which I found peace; this I believe was about six weeks from the first time, and as I was thus humbled and disciplined under the Cross, my understanding became more strengthened to distinguish the language of the pure Spirit which inwardly moves upon the heart, and taught me to wait in Silence sometimes many weeks together, until I felt that rise which prepares the creature to Stand like a Trumpet, through which the Lord Speaks to his flock.

From an inward purifying, and stedfast abideing under it, springs a lively operative desire for the good of others. All faithful people are not called to the publick ministry but whoever are called to it, are called to minister of that which they have taisted and handled spiritually. The outward modes of worship are various, but wheresoever [men] are true Ministers of Jesus Christ, it is from the operation of his Spirit upon their hearts, first purifying them, and thus giving them a [feeling] sense of the conditions of others. This truth was early fixed in my mind, and I was taught to watch the pure opening, and to take heed least while I was standing to speak, my own will should get upermost, and cause me to utter words from worldly wisdom, and depart from the Chanel of the true Gospel Ministry.

In the management of my outward affairs I may say with thankfulness I found Truth to be my Support, and I was respected in my Masters Family who came to live in Mountholly within two years after my going there [1742.]

About the twenty third year of my age I had many fresh and heavenly openings, in respect to the care and providence of the Almighty over his creatures in general, and over man as the most noble amongst those which are visible, and Being clearly convinced in my Judgmt that to place my whole trust in God was best for me, I felt renewed engagements that in all things I might act on an inward principle of Virtue, and pursue worldly business no further than as Truth open'd my way therein.

About the time called Christmas I observed many people from the Country, and dwellers in Town, who resorting to publick houses, spent their time in drink-



ing and vain sports, tending to corrupt one another, on which account I was much troubled. At one house in particular there was much disorder, and I believed it was a duty laid on me to go and speak to the master of that house. I considered I was young, and that several Elderly friends in Town had opportunity to See these things, and though I would gladly have been excused, yet I could not feel my mind clear. The Exercise was heavy, and as I was Reading what the Almighty Said to Ezekiel, respecting his duty as a watchman, the matter was set home more clearly, and then with prayer and tears, I besought the Lord for his Assistance, who in loving kindness gave me a Resigned heart. Then at a sutable Opportunity, I went to the publick house, and Seeing the man amongst a company, I went to him and told him I wanted to speak with him, so we went aside, and there in the Fear and dread of the Almighty I Exprest to him what rested on my mind, which he took kindly, and afterward showed more regard to me than before. In a few years after he died, midle-aged, and I often thought that had I neglected my duty in that case, it would have given me great trouble and I was humbly thankfull to my Gracious Father, who had supported me therein.

My Employer having a Negro woman sold her, and directed me to write a bill of Sale, The man being waiting who had bought her. The thing was Sudden, and though the thoughts of writing an Instrument of Slavery for one of my fellow creatures felt uneasie, yet I remembered I was hired by the year; that it was my master who directed me to do it, and that it was an Elderly man, a member of our society who bought her, so through weakness I gave way, and wrote it, but at the Executing it I was so Afflicted in my mind, that I said before my Master and the friend, that I believed Slavekeeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christian Religion: this in some degree abated my uneasiness, yet as often as I reflected seriously upon it I thought I should have been clearer, if I had desired to be Excused from it, as a thing against my conscience, for such it was. [And] some time after this a young man of our Society, spake to me to write [an instrument of Slavery], he having taken a Negro into his house. I told him I was not easie to write it, for though many [people] kept slaves in our society as in others, I still believed the practice was not right, and desired to be excused from doing the writing. I spoke to him in good will, and he told me, that keeping slaves was not altogether agreable to his mind, but that the slave being a gift made to his wife, he had accepted of her.

CHAPTER III

. . . Until the year 1756, I continued to retail goods, besides following my trade as a Taylor; about which time I grew uneasy on account of my business growing too cumbersome. I began with selling timings for garments, and from thence proceeded to Sell cloaths and linens, and at length having got a considerable shop of goods, my trade increased every year, and the road to large business appeared open: but I felt a Stop in my mind.

Through the Mercies of the Almighty I had in a good degree learned to be content with a plain way of living. I had but a small family my outward Affairs had been prosperous and, on serious reflection I believed Truth did not require me to engage in much cumbering affairs. It had generally been my practice to buy and sell things realy usefull. Things that served chiefly to please the vain mind in people, I was not easie to trade in; seldom did it, and whenever I did, I found it weaken me as a Christian.

The increase of business became my burthen, for though my natural inclination was towards merchandize, yet I believed Truth required me to live more free from outward cumbers. There was now a strife in my mind betwixt the two, and in this exercise my prayers were

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9 Ezekiel. See Ezekiel 3:17-19

put up to the Lord, who Graciously heard me, and gave me a heart resigned to his Holy will; I then lessened my outward business; and as I had opportunity told my customers of my intention that they might consider what shop to turn to: and so in a while, wholly laid down merchandize, following my trade as a Taylor, myself only, having no prentice. I also had a nursery of Apple trees, in which I spent a good deal of time, howing, grafting, triming & Inoculating.

In merchandize it is the custom, where I lived, to sell chiefly on credit; and poor people often get in debt, & when payment is expected haveing not wherewith to pay, & so their creditors often sue for it at Law: having often observed occurrences of this kind, I found it good for me to advise poor people to take such as were most useful & not costly.

In the time of trading I had an opportunity of seeing that a too liberal use of Spirituous liquors, and the Custom of wearing too costly apparrel, led some people into great inconveniences: and these two things appear to be often connected one with the other; for by not attending to that use of things which is consistent with Universal Righteousness, there is a [necessary] increase of Labour which extends beyond what our Heavenly Father intends for us: and by great labour, and often by much sweting in the heat there is, even among such who are not drunkards, a craving of some liquor to revive the spirits: That partly by the wanton, Luxurious drinking of some, and partly by the drinking of others, led to it through immoderate labour, verry great quantities of Rum are annually expended in our Colonies, of which we should have no need, did we steadily Attend to pure Wisdom.

Where men take pleasure in feeling their minds elevated with strong drink, and so indulge this appetite as to disorder their understanding, neglect their duty as members in a family or civil society, and cast off all pretence to Religion, their case is much to be pitied; And where such whose lives are for the most part regular, and whose Examples have a strong influence on the minds of others, Adhere to some customs which powerfully draw toward the use of More strong liquor than pure wisdom [directeth the Use of,] this allso, as it hinders the spreading of the Spirit of meekness, and Strengthens the hands of the more Excessive drinkers, is a case to be lamented.

As [the least] degree of luxury hath some connection with evil, for those who profess to be disciples of Christ, and are looked upon as leaders of the people, to have that mind in them which was also in Him, & so stand separate from every wrong way, is a means of help to the weaker. As I have sometimes been much spent in the heat, and taken spirits to revive me. I have found by Experience that the mind is not so calm in such circumstances, nor so fitly disposed for Divine meditation, as when all such extreams are avoided, and I have felt an increasing Care to attend to that Holy Spirit which sets right bounds to our desires, and leads those who faithfully follow it to apply all the gifts of Divine Providence to the purposes for which they were intended. Did such who have the care of great Estates, attend with singleness of heart to this Heavenly Instructor, which so opens and enlarges the mind that Men love their neighbours as themselves, They would have wisdom given them to manage, without ever finding occasion to employ some people in the Luxuries of life, or to make it necessary for others to labour too hard: But for want of regarding steadily this Principle of Divine love, a selfish Spirit takes place in the minds of people, which is attended with darkness & manifold confusions in the world.

In the Course of my Tradeing, being somewhat affected at the Various Law Suits about collecting Money which I saw going forward; On aplying to a Constable, he gave me a List of his proceedings for one year as follows; to wit.

Served 267 Warrants, 103 Summonses, and 17 Executions! As to Writs Served by the Sheriff, I got no account of them.

I once had a Warrant for an Idle Man, who I believed was about to run away, which was the only time I applied to the Law to recover Money.

Through trading in things Usefull is an honest employ, yet through the great number of Superfluities which are commonly bought and sold, and through the corruptions of the times, they who apply to merchandize for a living, have great need to be well experienced in that precept which the prophet Jeremiah laid down for Baruc, his scribe: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." . . .

1772?-1774

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88 precept. See Jeremiah 45:5

Singers of the Revolution

Both Tories and Continentals used songs and poems to urge their forces to victory, voice their arguments, and celebrate their heroes. Beginning with the passage of the Stamp Act, the verses showed more and more clearly the growth of unrest, then defiance, and finally hatred.

There was a contrast in the sentiments expressed, but not much difference in the forms employed by the opposing songsters. The reason is suggested by Professor Boynton in *Literature and American Life* when he says, "The most popular songs were all set to melodies then current in old England, sometimes occurring in sequence: the first a parody of the English song, the next the parody of a parody, and so on." He cites the fortunes of the tune of David Garrick's "Hearts of Oak," first sung on the stage in 1759. Seven years later, in America, the tune was outfitted with words of a conciliatory sort urging both loyalty and liberty. Then came a series of versions whose first lines show the alternating use of the tune by the two parties:

July 1768: "Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all."

January 1769: "Come, cheer up, my lads, like a true British band."

1775: "Come, rouse up, my lads, and join the great cause."

These represent only a fraction of the songs which, down to 1812, made use of the Garrick tune.

Despite such typical resemblances the songs of the Revolution have many elements of interest. They vividly tell the story of the war and the feelings of the people about it. Further, like balladry in general—although many of them have an eighteenth-century polish not typical of the older ballads—they forcefully display human emotions and human character in times of stress.

Songs and Ballads of the American Revolution, ed. Frank Moore, New York, 1856 • J. T. Howard, The Music of George Washington's Time, New York, 1931

Yankee Doodle

Anonymous

"The Yankee's Return from Camp" was the title first given to this song, later generally known by its present title. Since it is an authentic ballad, there is no way of determining just who wrote it, when it was written, and what the original words were. The tune was known in the colonies as early as 1767, but the words were composed later, probably by British soldiers or Tory sympathizers who wanted to ridicule the crude Yankees. The contrary Yankees in time apparently used it as a battle song of their own. It is interesting not only for its wartime history and for its lasting appeal to Americans but also for the way it created an American bumpkin by letting him talk his own dialect, later to be a very important procedure in the humor and fiction of the United States.

Father and I went down to camp,
  Along with Captain Gooding,
And there we see the men and boys,
  As thick as hasty pudding.

Chorus

Yankee Doodle, keep it up,
  Yankee Doodle, dandy,
Mind the music and the step,
  And with the girls be handy.

And there we see a thousand men,
  As rich as 'Squire David;
And what they wasted every day,
  I wish it could be saved.

The 'lasses they eat every day,
  Would keep a house a winter;
They have so much that, I'll be bound,
  They eat it when they're a mind to.

And there we see a swamping gun,
  Large as a log of maple,
Upon a deuced little cart,
  A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shoot it off,
  It takes a horn of powder,
And makes a noise like father's gun,
  Only a nation louder.

I went as nigh to one myself,
  As Siah's underpinning;
And father went as nigh again,
  I thought the deuce was in him.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,
  I thought he would have cock'd it;
It scar'd me so, I shrink'd it off,
  And hung by father's pocket.

And Captain Davis had a gun,
  He kind of clapped his hand on't,
And stuck a crooked stabbing iron
  Upon the little end on't.

And there I see a pumpkin shell
  As big as mother's basin;
And every time they touch'd it off,
  They scamper'd like the nation.

I see a little barrel too,
  The heads were made of leather,
They knock'd upon't with little clubs,
  And call'd the folks together.

And there was Captain Washington,
  And gentlefolks about him,
They say he's grown so tarnal proud,
  He will not ride without 'em.

He got him on his meeting clothes,
  Upon a slapping stallion,
He set the world along in rows,
  In hundreds and in millions.

The flaming ribbons in his hat,
  They look'd so tearing fine ah,
I wanted pockily to get,
  To give to my Jemimah.

I see another snarl of men
  A digging graves, they told me,
So tarnal long, so tarnal deep,
  They 'tended they should hold me.

It scar'd me so, I hook'd it off,
  Nor stopp'd, as I remember,
Nor turned about, till I got home,
  Lock'd up in mother's chamber.

1775

Nathan Hale

Anonymous

After the retreat from Long Island in 1776, Washington tried to find among his men a "discreet and enterprising person to penetrate the enemy's camp" as a spy. Young Captain Nathan Hale, three years out of Yale College, undertook the mission. He went through the British lines, secured the information he wanted, and started to return. He was captured, however, and executed as a spy. The excellent ballad which tells of the event does not, surprisingly, make use of his reputed last words ("I regret that I have but one life to give for my country"). But the author perhaps saw that such details did not harmonize well with the rather elegiac account of the execution.

The breezes went steadily thro' the tall pines,
  A saying "Oh hu-ush!" a saying "Oh hu-ush!"
As stilly stole by a bold legion of horse,
  For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush.

"Keep still!" said the thrush as she nestled her young,
In a nest by the road, in a nest by the road;
"For the tyrants are near, and with them appear
What bodes us no good, what bodes us no good."

The brave captain heard it and thought of his home,
In a cot by the brook, in a cot by the brook,
With mother and sister and memories dear,
He so gaily forsook, he so gaily forsook.

Cooling shades of the night were coming apace,
The tattoo had beat, the tattoo had beat:
The noble one sprang from his dark lurking-place
To make his retreat, to make his retreat.

He warily trod on the dry rustling leaves,
As he pass'd thro' the wood, as he pass'd thro' the wood,
And silently gain'd his rude launch on the shore,
As she play'd with the flood, as she play'd with the flood.

The guards of the camp, on that dark, dreary night,
Had a murderous will, had a murderous will:
They took him and bore him afar from the shore,
To a hut on the hill, to a hut on the hill.

No mother was there, nor a friend who could cheer,
In that little stone cell, in that little stone cell
But he trusted in love from his Father above;
In his heart all was well, in his heart all was well

An ominous owl with his solemn bass voice
Sat moaning hard by, sat moaning hard by:
"The tyrant's proud minions most gladly rejoice,
For he must soon die, for he must soon die."

The brave fellow told them, no thing he restrain'd,
The cruel gen'ral, the cruel gen'ral;
His errand from camp, of the ends to be gain'd;
And said that was all, and said that was all.

They took him and bound him and bore him away,
Down the hill's grassy side, down the hill's grassy side.
'Twas there the base hirelings, in royal array,
His cause did deride, his cause did deride.

Five minutes were given, short moments, no more,
For him to repent, for him to repent.
He pray'd for his mother, he ask'd not another;
To Heaven he went, to Heaven he went.

The faith of a martyr the tragedy shew'd,
As he trod the last stage, as he trod the last stage;
And Britons will shudder at gallant Hale's blood,
As his words do presage, as his words do presage:

"Thou pale king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,
Go frighten the slave, go frighten the slave;
Tell tyrants to you their allegiance they owe;
No fears for the brave, no fears for the brave."

1776

The Battle of the Kegs

Francis Hopkinson 1737 • 1791

The first floating mines ever to be launched against an enemy fleet were tried out by the Americans in January 1778. These mines were kegs of powder which exploded upon coming into contact with other objects. A number of mines sent down the Delaware failed to do much damage to the British ships because the British had drawn them up to docks, out of the way of floating ice. One keg did explode, however, and the colonists claimed that the British became so disturbed that for a while they fearfully fired at every keg floating along the river, including a keg of butter.

Francis Hopkinson, a young Philadelphian and author of many pamphlets and poems in behalf of the Continentals, saw a chance to show the British in a ridiculous light by writing a poem about the incident. His ballad, published in the **Pennsylvania Packet** for March 4, became one of the most popular songs of the Revolution.

G. E. Hastings, **The Life and Works of Francis Hopkinson**, Chicago, 1926

Gallants attend, and hear a friend,
Trill forth harmonious ditty,
Strange things I'll tell, which late befell,
In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say,
Just when the sun was rising,
A soldier stood, on a log of wood.
And saw a thing surprising

As in amaze he stood to gaze,
The truth can't be denied, sir,
He spied a score of kegs or more,
Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor, too, in jerkin blue,
This strange appearance viewing,
First damn'd his eyes, in great surprise,
Then said, "some mischief's brewing.

"These kegs, I'm told, the rebels hold,
Packed up like pickled herring,
And they're come down, t' attack the town,
In this new way of ferrying."

The soldier flew, the sailor too,
And scared almost to death, sir,
Wore out their shoes to spread the news,
And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down, throughout the town,
Most frantic scenes were acted;
And some ran here, and others there,
Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cried, which some denied,
But said the earth had quakèd;
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,
Ran through the streets half naked.

Sir William, he, snug as a flea,
Lay all this time a snoring;
Nor dreamed of harm, as he lay warm,
In bed with Mrs. L....g.

Now in a fright, he starts upright,
Awak'd by such a clatter;
He rubs his eyes, and boldly cries,
"For God's sake, what's the matter?"

At his bedside he then espied,
Sir Erskine at command, sir,
Upon one foot he had one boot,
And t'other in his hand, sir.

"Arise! arise, Sir Erskine cries
The rebels—more's the pity—
Without a boat, are all afloat,
And rang'd before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,
With Satan for their guide, sir,
Packed up in bags, or wooden kegs,
Come driving down the tide, sir.

"Therefore prepare for bloody war;
The kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despis'd shall be,
And British courage doubted."

The royal band, now ready stand,
All ranged in dread array, sir,
With stomachs stout, to see it out,
And make a bloody day, sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
The small arms make a rattle,
Since wars began, I'm sure no man
Ere saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,
With rebel trees surrounded,
The distant woods, the hills and floods,
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,
Attack'd from every quarter;
Why sure, thought they, the devil's to pay,
'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made
Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes,
The conquering British troops, sir.

From morn till night, these men of might
Display'd amazing courage;
And when the sun was fairly down,
Retir'd to sup their porridge.

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33 Sir William, Sir William Howe (1729-1814), the commander of the British army, much hated by the Americans • 36 Mrs. L....g, the wife of Joshua Loring, a Loyalist refugee from Boston • 42 Sir Erskine, Sir William Erskine, a general in the British army

An hundred men, with each a pen,
  Or more, upon my word, sir,
It is most true would be too few,
  Their valor to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day,
  Against those wicked kegs, sir,
That years to come, if they get home,
  They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

1778

The Epilogue

Anonymous

In October 1778, when the British had possession of Philadelphia and the Continental Congress was meeting in Yorktown, Virginia, "The Epilogue," a Tory song, was published in a ballad sheet and posted in the streets of New York and Philadelphia.

Said a foreword: "There was lately exhibited in the city of Philadelphia, an admirable farce called **Independence.** Who the author was is not positively known, but some are of the opinion that it is the work of a certain quack doctor called Franklin. Others assert that it is the joint production of the strolling company by whom it was acted; it is, however, generally allowed, that one Adams gave the first hint, contrived the plot, and cast the parts. It appeared in the exhibition so tragi-comical, that the audience were at a loss whether to laugh or cry. They were, however, well pleased with the catastrophe, and joined heartily in the following chorus. As the renowned Voltaire somewhere relates, that a song was the cause of the French reformation, the excellent actor who performed the part of the President took upon himself the plain song."

Our farce is now finish'd, your sport's at an end,
But ere you depart, let the voice of a friend
By way of a chorus, the evening crown
With a song to the tune of a hey derry down,
  Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Old Shakspeare, a poet, who should not be spit on,
Altho' he was born in the island called Britain,
Hath said that mankind are all players at best,
A truth we'll admit of, for sake of the jest.

On this puny stage we've strutted our hour,
And have acted our parts to the best of our power;
That the farce hath concluded not perfectly well,
Was surely the fault of the devil in hell.

This devil, you know, out of spleen to the church,
Will oftentimes leave his best friends in the lurch,
And turn them adrift in the midst of their joy;
'Tis a difficult matter to cheat the Old Boy.

Since this is the case, we must e'en make the best
Of a game that is lost; let us turn it to jest;
We'll smile, nay, we'll laugh, we'll carouse and we'll sing,
And cheerfully drink life and health to the king.

Let Washington now from his mountains descend,
Who knows but in George he may still find a friend;
A Briton, altho' he loves bottle and wench,
Is an honester fellow than parle vous French.

Our great Independence we give to the wind,
And pray that Great Britain may once more be kind.
In this jovial song all hostility ends,
And Britons and we will for ever be friends.

Boys fill me a bumper! now join in the chorus!
There is happiness still in the prospect before us,
In this sparkling glass, all hostility ends,
And Britons and we will for ever be friends.

Good night! my good people, retire to your houses,
Fair ladies, I beg you, convince your dear spouses
That Britons and we are united in bliss,
And ratify all with a conjugal kiss.

Once more, here's a health to the king and queen!
Confusion to him, who in rancor and spleen,
Refuses to drink with an English friend,
Immutable amity to the world's end.

1778



Thomas Paine

1737 • 1809

The career and reputation of Thomas Paine are tragic evidence of human frailty. His private hells of physical and mental torture were paved with the most altruistic of intentions, and those who have judged him saint or devil have usually been passionately sincere. He emerged from failure and obscurity to become the most powerful single voice of revolutionary thought in British America; pursuing the line of his principles a little farther, he was driven out of England, jailed in France, and insulted and ostracized in the United States. Down through the years his name has called forth more diverse and violent comment than any other in literary history, not excepting Poe and Shelley.

Paine was born at Thetford in Norfolk, England, in 1737. His father was a Quaker farmer and staymaker; his mother a Church of England woman, older than her husband, a shade higher in the social scale, and discontented. Their son's childhood was unhappy, his early manhood scarcely less so. Leaving school at thirteen, he searched fruitlessly for a quarter of a century before he found an agreeable occupation. As sailor, corset-maker, collector of the excise, schoolteacher, tobacconist, he was never quite fitted to his task. At twenty-two he married, only to have his wife die in childbirth within a year. A second marriage, at thirty-four, ended three years later in a legal separation. All that Paine had found at thirty-seven were an interest in science and a sympathy for the underdog in society, the result of his private reading

Panel (l. to r.): Composition of The Crisis • Title page of Common Sense, 1776 • Reading the Crisis papers to the army • Thomas Paine at about 55 • His home in New Rochelle, New York

and his futile championship of the plea of his fellow-excisemen for more pay from Parliament.

Penniless and unknown, Paine encountered Benjamin Franklin, who apparently encouraged him to try America, giving him a letter of introduction as an "ingenious worthy young man" who might well be employed as "clerk, or assistant tutor in a school, or assistant surveyor." Late in 1774, seriously ill, Paine was carried off a ship in Pennsylvania.

Within a year he had readied himself for a new profession by a series of contributions to the *Pennsylvania Magazine.* As "Atlanticus," "Vox Populi," "Æsop," and "An Englishman," Paine learned to shape his humanitarian sympathies into persuasive essays on dueling, marriage, the rights of women, the need of copyright, kindness to animals, and the injustice of slavery. Meanwhile he had to make up his mind about the Battle of Lexington and the events which swiftly followed. That was not difficult, despite his Quaker predilections. What reason had he to love England? In the autumn of 1775 he was writing *Common Sense* to convince his adopted countrymen that "nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined *Declaration for Independence.*" The pamphlet's appearance and success demonstrated that the colonies had welcomed no mere bankrupt staymaker, but a propagandist of genius, whose skill in moving men to action has seldom been rivaled.

Common Sense, however, was only a beginning. The *Declaration* achieved, Paine joined the army in time to share the disheartening retreat across New Jersey in the fall of 1776. In the face of disaster, he wrote the first of a series of letter-pamphlets now known as *The American Crisis.* Published just before Christmas, its ringing denunciation of the "summer soldier and the sunshine patriot" was read to the troops who crossed the Delaware to surprise the Hessians at Trenton and thereby preserved the morale of the Americans during the first crucial winter of the war. Fifteen times thereafter, in the space of the next seven years, the need arose for a *Crisis* paper to hold the nation together or to arouse the support required for decisive action. Each of the sixteen numbers circulated in the tens of thousands. Finally, in 1783, Paine could write, " 'The times that tried men's souls' are over—and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished."

Paine's contributions had included various kinds of work for the Continental Congress, such as a quick but valuable trip to France in 1781. The end of the war, however, found him as poor as at the beginning, and not without his enemies. Washington, remembering the effect of his propaganda pieces, was able to suggest a few rewards: a confiscated estate from New York, a gift of money from Pennsylvania, and $3000 from the Congress itself. Paine's pamphlets had been his freewill offering to the cause; he had never wished to profit from their sale. No place appearing for him in the public service, he devoted what funds he had to promoting one of his inventions—a single-span iron bridge which, he argued, would be more practicable for American rivers than arches on piers, against which ice could jam in the spring. In April 1787 he sailed for France to display his model to the engineering experts and investors there. He was not, however, to succeed as a promoter of his own fortunes.

To follow in detail Paine's fifteen years in Europe would require many pages describing the intricate events of the French Revolution and the conservative reaction in England. Paine was not content to busy himself with bridges. *The Rights of Man* (Part I, 1791; Part II, 1792), his answer to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* is the fullest expression of his political convictions: that the best form of government is a representative republic, with universal manhood suffrage; and that the "natural rights" of men should be protected by written constitutions and legislation to prevent the development of aristocratic and hereditary privileges. For these views, and for his free prediction of coming revolution, he was found guilty of libel and exiled from an England he had already left. English mobs hanged and burned his effigy.

If, as has been said, Paine's views were too French for the English, they were soon to prove too English for the French. As honorary citizen and member of the National Convention, he opposed the execution of Louis XVI; and by December 1793, no longer a hero, he was imprisoned as a foreigner. Gouverneur Morris, the American ambassador, failed to help him (some biographers, in fact, believe that Morris was in part responsible for Paine's imprisonment, because of personal enmity), and Paine was not released until ten months later, after Morris had been succeeded by James Monroe. Broken

in health, his faith in political rationalism seriously damaged, Paine had still to meet the bitterest antagonisms of his career.

The Age of Reason (Part I, 1794; Part II, 1795) was written as Paine's "last offering" to mankind, to provide a religion compatible with the new political and social order which he believed was at hand despite the excesses of the Reign of Terror. Mankind was not only unappreciative; it was so shocked by the apparent blasphemy of his application of reason to religion that a goodly part of it was willing to burn Paine at the stake. To the masses, swayed by newspapers and pulpit pronouncements, Paine's name became a synonym for atheism and infidelity. His English publisher was prosecuted for blasphemy; he himself, after his return to the United States in 1802, was shot at through his window, insulted in the streets, and humiliated on his deathbed by clergymen who forced their way into his room. Even the Quakers refused to permit burial in their cemetery. Ten years later his bones were exhumed and taken to England, where William Cobbett planned to exhibit them as part of a scheme to reform society. Forbidden this final gruesome means of swaying men's minds, Paine's bones were, it is said, nearly sold at auction to satisfy the creditors of Cobbett's son before they finally disappeared.

Men still find moderation virtually impossible when evaluating Thomas Paine. He wrote always for a purpose, and some of his purposes are still anathema to large groups of people. Of his merits as a writer, however, there can be little disagreement. No man of his time was better able to express, simply and clearly, the views which effected vast changes in the political, social, and religious constitution of Western civilization. The force, directness, and variety of his appeals to reason and emotion made him the foremost propagandist-agitator of his time. A master of persuasion rather than a profound or original thinker, he will be studied as long as there are men who seek to understand the social functions of language and literature.

Selections from the Works of Thomas Paine, ed. A. W. Peach, New York, 1928 • **Thomas Paine. Representative Selections**, ed. H. H. Clark, Cincinnati, 1944 • M D Conway, **The Life of Thomas Paine**, 2 vols, New York, 1892 • Hesketh Pearson, **Tom Paine, Friend of Mankind**, New York, 1937 • Frank Smith, **Thomas Paine, Liberator**, New York, 1938

Common Sense

Addressed to the
Inhabitants of America,
On the following Interesting Subjects, viz.:

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in General; with Concise Remarks on the English Constitution.
II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.
III. Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs.
IV. Of the Present Ability of America; with some Miscellaneous Reflections.

A pamphlet of seventy-nine pages, **Common Sense** was published at Philadelphia in January 1776. The first open appeal for a declaration of independence, it achieved a sale estimated at 125,000 copies within three months and by the end of the year had appeared in fifteen or more editions.

George Washington, commanding the army besieging Boston, wrote on January 31 of the "sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning" of Paine's pamphlet, and it was unquestionably the greatest single force in convincing Americans of the wisdom of separation from England. Its shrewd analyses and arguments are punctuated by bursts of emotion-laden rhetoric, all bound together by a constant reiteration of the theme of "continental" destiny. In one way or another Paine appealed to almost every interest, selfish or benevolent, which could help to draw the colonists together.

The "sound doctrine" which Washington admired will be found upon examination to be largely that of John Locke (1632-1704), the English philosopher whose **Two Treatises on Government** (1689-1690) formed a classic justification of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It is not profitable, however, to trace the origins of Paine's political thought. He did not claim that it was original, and he did not intend that **Common Sense** should be read for its abstract principles. It was designed to bring action, and in achieving

that end it was supremely successful. Independence was declared, and Paine had every reason to feel, as he did, that the inscription on his tombstone should read simply "Thomas Paine, Author of Common Sense."

OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA WITH SOME MISCELLANEOUS REFLECTIONS

I have never met a man either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the countries would take place, one time or other: And there is no instance, in which we have shown less judgment; than in endeavoring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the Continent for independance.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor if possible to find out the very time. But I need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for the *time hath found us.* The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things, proves the fact.

'Tis not in numbers but in unity that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The Continent has at this time the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under Heaven: and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single Colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, is able to do any thing. Our land force is more than sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built, while the Continent remained in her hands. Wherefore, we should be no forwarder a hundred years hence in that branch than we are now; but the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing.

Were the Continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more seaport-towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none; and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought's unworthy a man of honor, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a pidling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt. A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, it is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and forty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. And as a compensation for her debt, she has a large navy. America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for a twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth at this time more than three millions and a half sterling.

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufactory of this country. 'Tis the best money we can lay out. A navy when finished is worth more than it cost: And is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means re-place our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one fourth part should be sailors. The Terrible privateer, Captain Death,

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Text: Professor Peach's version of the first edition, which eliminated "such typographical errors as were clearly destructive of the sense" • 77 **Captain Death,** commander of the **Terrible,** a British privateer captured by the French on December 28, 1756, after a murderous battle. About four hundred men were killed. "Death" was of course a pseudonym; his lieutenants were "Spirit" and "Ghost"

stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landsmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore we never can be more capable of beginning on maritime matters than now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war, of seventy and eighty guns, were built forty years ago in New England, and why not the same now? Ship building is America's greatest pride, and in which she will, in time, excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivalling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe, hath either such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she hath withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal to both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now, which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather, and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors and windows. The case is now altered, and our methods of defence ought to improve with our encrease of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid the city of Philadelphia under contribution for what sum he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of 14 to 16 guns, might have robbed the whole continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some perhaps will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can they be so unwise as to mean, that she will keep a navy in our harbors for that purpose? Common sense will tell us, that the power which hath endeavored to subdue us, is of all others, the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbors, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore if we must hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war, is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service, numbers of them are not in being; yet their names are pompously continued in the list, if only a plank be left of the ship; and not a fifth part of such as are fit for service, can be spared on any one station at one time. The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts, over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of prejudice and inattention, we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and, for that reason, supposed that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, has been made use of by a set of disguised Tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be further from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an over-match for her; because, as we neither have, nor claim any foreign dominion, our whole force would be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over, before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which, by laying in the neighborhood of the Continent lies entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with 20, 30, 40, or 50 guns, (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchant,) fifty or sixty of those ships, with a few guardships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet in time of peace to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpeter and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage has never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we can expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this continent will not be worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising; insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shows the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves that nothing but Continental authority can regulate Continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which, instead of being lavished by the king on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter supplied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under Heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the Colonies, as it is called, so far from being against is an argument in favor of independance. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so we might be less united. 'Tis a matter worthy of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns: and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men became too much absorbed thereby to attend to any thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit both of Patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the nonage of a nation. With the increase of commerce England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed-time of good habits as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult, if not impossible, to form the Continent into one Government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against Colony. Each being able would scorn each other's assistance: and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore the present time is the true time for establishing it. The intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are of all others the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters: we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable Æra for posterity to glory in.

The present time likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, viz. the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other nations let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—*To begin Government at the right end.*

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and, until we consent that the seat of government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensible duty of government to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government has to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us. It affords a larger field for our christian kindness: were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on

this liberal principle I look on the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only in what is called their Christian names.

In [an earlier section] I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a continental charter (for I only presume to offer hints, not plans) and in this place, I take the liberty of re-mentioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, professional freedom, or property. A right reckoning makes long friends.

I have heretofore likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors, or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is encreased. As an instance of this, I mention the following; when the petition of the associates was before the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania, twenty-eight members only were present, all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had been governed by two counties only; and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch likewise, which the house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the Delegates of that Province, ought to warn the people at large, how they trust power out of their hands. A set of instructions for their Delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonoured a school-boy, and after being approved by a few, a very few, without doors, were carried into the house, and there passed in behalf of the whole Colony; whereas, did the whole Colony know with what ill-will that house had entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several houses of Assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this Continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a CONGRESS, every well wisher to good order must own that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those who make a study of mankind, whether representation and election is not too great a power for one and the same body of men to possess? When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall (one of the Lords of the Treasury) treated the petition of the New-York Assembly with contempt, because *that* house, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty.

TO CONCLUDE, however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given to shew, that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined DECLARATION FOR INDEPENDANCE. Some of which are,

First.—It is the custom of Nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the Preliminaries of a Peace: but while America calls herself the Subject of Great Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her Mediation. Wherefore, in our present state we may quarrel on for ever.

Secondly.—It is unreasonable to suppose, that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connection between Britain and America; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

Thirdly.—While we profess ourselves the Subjects of Britain, we must, in the eyes of foreign nations, be considered as Rebels The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their peace,* for men to be in arms under the name of Subjects: we, on the spot, can solve the paradox; but to

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19 **petition . . . associates,** an allusion, apparently, to the Association of 1774, a series of nonimportation, nonconsumption, and nonexportation resolutions adopted by the First Continental Congress • 56 **Mr. Cornwall,** Charles Wolfram Cornwall (1735-1789), Lord of the Treasury in North's cabinet, 1774-1780, later speaker of the House of Commons, 1780-1789 • 61 **honesty.** "Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a State, should read Burgh's Political Disquisitions"—Paine The reference is to **Political Disquisitions** (3 vols., 1774-1775) by James Burgh (1714-1775), a British reformer who was friendly to the American colonists

unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

Fourthly.—Were a manifesto to be published, and despatched to foreign Courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceful methods which we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring at the same time, that not being able any longer to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we have been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connections with her, at the same time, assuring all such Courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them; such a memorial would produce more good effects to this Continent, than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British Subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad: the custom of All courts is against us, and will be so, until by an independence we take rank with other Nations.

These proceedings may at first seem strange and difficult, but like all other steps which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable: and until an Independance is declared, the Continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity. 1775•1776

Thomas Jefferson

1743 • 1826

Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, remains to this day the chief symbol of what has come to be called the "American way of life." Politicians quote him to lend authority to the most diverse points of view imaginable; to attack Jeffersonian principles would be well-nigh blasphemous. His words are the scriptures of our faith in democracy and the common man ("We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"); of our abiding trust in popular education ("Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged"); of our deep-rooted individualism ("I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man"). Nor is Jefferson's influence merely a matter of words; he has left his mark upon American political and educational institutions, even upon our public architecture, which reflects his enthusiasm for Greek and Roman models. Yet Jefferson is more than an oracle, more than a builder of the institutional foundations of American society. He himself would have deprecated the use of any man's words or actions to lend credit to any particular political or social program, for he had a sure grasp of the fact that every day is a new day, not merely to be endured but to be lived with as much intelligence and zest as an individual or nation can command. "The earth belongs always to the living generation. They may manage it then and what proceeds from it as they please during their usufruct. They are masters too of their own persons and consequently may govern them as they please."

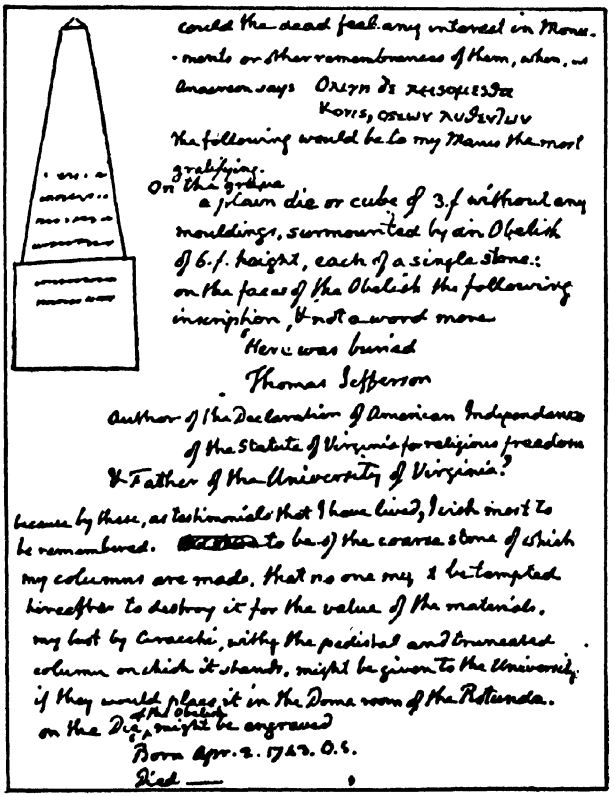
It would take many pages to describe how Jefferson attained, through painful experience, such wisdom. The outline of his career tells only the outward story, not the inward, mental growth. He was born near Char-

lottesville, Virginia, in 1743, his father being a planter who had married into the famous Randolph family. At fourteen he inherited nearly three thousand acres of land and a considerable number of slaves. He studied hard at William and Mary during 1760-1762, but he was also a social leader, welcome at the dinner table of the colonial governor and other Williamsburg notables. He read law, was admitted to the bar in 1767, and succeeded in combining his profession with the management of large estates. On New Year's Day, 1772, he married Martha Wayles Skelton, an attractive widow with whom he was deeply in love. About a year later she inherited forty thousand acres of land and one hundred and thirty-five slaves. Not many revolutionists have come from such a background, and it would no doubt have been easy for Jefferson to spend his energies in plantation and family life, of which he was very fond, and to let the world go its own way. The record of his public service is, considering his tastes and his ability to satisfy them, one of the most remarkable in American history.

Member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, 1769-1774, member of the Virginia Conventions of 1774 and 1775, Virginia delegate to the Second Continental Congress, 1775-1776, member of the legislature of the new state of Virginia, 1776-1779, governor of Virginia, 1779-1781, member of Congress under the Articles of Confederation, 1783-1784, American minister to France, 1784-1789, secretary of state, 1790-1793, vice-president, 1797-1801, President of the United States, 1801-1809—the list by itself is a thumbnail sketch of the birth and youth of a new nation. Jefferson was in the forefront of most of the great political developments of his age. His *Summary of the Rights of British America* (1774) was one of the notable assertions of the right of the colonists to self-government; he wrote, at thirty-three, the first draft of the *Declaration of Independence*; he led the attack on the state-supported church and the aristocracy-breeding institutions of primogeniture and entail in Virginia; he, more than any other single man, was responsible for the two-party system of government under the Constitution; as Chief Executive he engineered one of the great real-estate deals in history, the Louisiana Purchase; and throughout his life he was an earnest advocate of universal education for citizenship, of generous support of all the arts and sciences, of the emancipation of slaves, and of as large a measure of local self-government as was compatible with the common good of the whole nation.

Not the least of the many paradoxes in his life is that he should be remembered for the studied sentences of his public papers, for he was inclined to distrust rhetoric and oratory. Behind the words of his great state papers, however, are both the maturing of a great people and a deep faith in the integrity of the common man. Jefferson's dream was of a world wherein reason and justice should prevail over brute force and selfishness. To know his writings is to fortify oneself against any shallow interpretation of the much-abused term "Americanism."

The Works of Thomas Jefferson, ed. P. L. Ford, Federal Edition, 12 vols., New York, 1892-1894 • Gilbert Chinard, **Thomas Jefferson, the Apostle of Americanism**, Boston, 1929 • S. K. Padover, **Jefferson**, New York, 1942 • Carl Becker, **The Declaration of Independence**, New York, 1922


could the dead feel any interest in those
monuments or other remembrances of them, when, as
Anacreon says Οὐκέτι δὲ πεπότησαι
κοὐκέτι σοφὸν ἄδεις
The following would be to my Manes the most
gratifying.
On the grave
a plain die or cube of 3.f without any
mouldings, surmounted by an Obelisk
of 6.f. height, each of a single stone:
on the faces of the Obelisk the following
inscription, & not a word more
Here was buried
Thomas Jefferson
Author of the Declaration of American Independence
of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom
& Father of the University of Virginia
because by these, as testimonials that I have lived, I wish most to
be remembered. [illegible] to be of the coarse stone of which
my columns are made, that no one may be tempted
hereafter to destroy it for the value of the materials.
my book by Crocchi, with the pedestal and truncated
column on which it stands, might be given to the University
if they would place it in the Dome room of the Rotunda.
on the Die of the Obelisk might be engraved
Born Apr. 2. 1743. O.S.
Died —

Jefferson's sketch for his tombstone, and the inscription suggested by him.

From

Autobiography

Between January 6 and July 29, 1821, Jefferson spent some time composing the paper known as the "Autobiography," an account of his life up to 1790, when he arrived in New York to begin his work as secretary of state under President Washington. It was first printed in **Memoirs, Correspondence, and Miscellanies** (1829), edited by his grandson, T. J. Randolph. The portion here reprinted was written many years before, however, perhaps as early as August 1776. It is the most authoritative account of the composition and adoption of the **Declaration of Independence**, which Jefferson rightly regarded as the contribution for which he was most likely to be remembered by later generations. Neither he nor his contemporaries regarded the **Declaration** as an original composition; it expressed the philosophy of natural rights which had been everywhere accepted in the colonies, and largely in Great Britain, since the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Jefferson denied, however, that he had turned to any book or pamphlet while writing it, and the similarities to John Locke's **Two Treatises on Government** (1689-1690) and James Otis' **The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved** (1764) were doubtless coincidental. The tone of its appeal to the high court of world opinion and the ingenious concentration of responsibility upon King George III—always a useful device in propaganda—make it an unexcelled model of skillful rhetoric.

In Congress, Friday June 7. 1776. The delegates from Virginia moved in obedience to instructions from their constituents that the Congress should declare that these United colonies are & of right ought to be free & independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them & the state of Great Britain is & ought to be, totally dissolved; that measures should be immediately taken for procuring the assistance of foreign powers, and a Confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together.

The house being obliged to attend at that time to some other business, the proposition was referred to the next day, when the members were ordered to attend punctually at ten o'clock.

Saturday June 8. They proceeded to take it into consideration and referred it to a committee of the whole, into which they immediately resolved themselves, and passed that day & Monday the 10th in debating on the subject.

It was argued by Wilson, Robert R. Livingston, E. Rutledge, Dickinson and others

That tho' they were friends to the measures themselves, and saw the impossibility that we should ever again be united with Gr. Britain, yet they were against adopting them at this time:

That the conduct we had formerly observed was wise & proper now, of deferring to take any capital step till the voice of the people drove us into it:

That they were our power, & without them our declarations could not be carried into effect;

That the people of the middle colonies (Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylva, the Jerseys & N. York) were not yet ripe for bidding adieu to British connection, but that they were fast ripening & in a short time would join in the general voice of America:

That the resolution entered into by this house on the

Text: Ford's edition of the Works, Vol. I • 1 **Congress**, the Second Continental Congress, which convened in Philadelphia, May 10, 1775, to direct the contest which had already become, with the Battle of Lexington, open war • 2 **moved**, by Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794), later one of the first two United States senators from Virginia. The motion was seconded by John Adams • 21 **Wilson**, James Wilson (1742-1798) of Pennsylvania, later associate justice of the Supreme Court • 21 **Robert R. Livingston** (1746-1813) of New York; as chancellor of New York he administered the first presidential oath of office to George Washington • 21 **E. Rutledge**, Edward Rutledge (1749-1800) of South Carolina, later a United States senator • 22 **Dickinson**, John Dickinson (1732-1808) of Pennsylvania, author of the popular **Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania** (1768) • 37 **resolution**, declaring that "every kind of authority under the said crown should be totally suppressed"

15th of May for suppressing the exercise of all powers derived from the crown, had shown, by the ferment into which it had thrown these middle colonies, that they had not yet accomodated their minds to a separation from the mother country:

That some of them had expressly forbidden their delegates to consent to such a declaration, and others had given no instructions, & consequently no powers to give such consent:

That if the delegates of any particular colony had no power to declare such colony independant, certain they were the others could not declare it for them; the colonies being as yet perfectly independant of each other:

That the assembly of Pennsylvania was now sitting above stairs, their convention would sit within a few days, the convention of New York was now sitting; & those of the Jerseys & Delaware counties would meet on the Monday following, & it was probable these bodies would take up the question of Independance & would declare to their delegates the voice of their state:

That if such a declaration should now be agreed to, these delegates must retire & possibly their colonies might secede from the Union:

That such a secession would weaken us more than could be compensated by any foreign alliance:

That in the event of such a division, foreign powers would either refuse to join themselves to our fortunes, or, having us so much in their power as that desperate declaration would place us, they would insist on terms proportionably more hard and prejudicial:

That we had little reason to expect an alliance with those to whom alone as yet we had cast our eyes:

That France & Spain had reason to be jealous of that rising power which would one day certainly strip them of all their American possessions:

That it was more likely they should form a connection with the British court, who, if they should find themselves unable otherwise to extricate themselves from their difficulties, would agree to a partition of our territories, restoring Canada to France, & the Floridas to Spain, to accomplish for themselves a recovery of these colonies:

That it would not be long before we should receive certain information of the disposition of the French court, from the agent whom we had sent to Paris for that purpose:

That if this disposition should be favorable, by waiting the event of the present campaign, which we all hoped would be successful, we should have reason to expect an alliance on better terms:

That this would in fact work no delay of any effectual aid from such ally, as, from the advance of the season & distance of our situation, it was impossible we could receive any assistance during this campaign:

That it was prudent to fix among ourselves the terms on which we should form alliance, before we declared we would form one at all events:

And that if these were agreed on, & our Declaration of Independance ready by the time our Ambassador should be prepared to sail, it would be as well to go into that Declaration at this day.

On the other side it was urged by J. Adams, Lee, Wythe, and others

That no gentleman had argued against the policy or the right of separation from Britain, nor had supposed it possible we should ever renew our connection; that they had only opposed its being now declared:

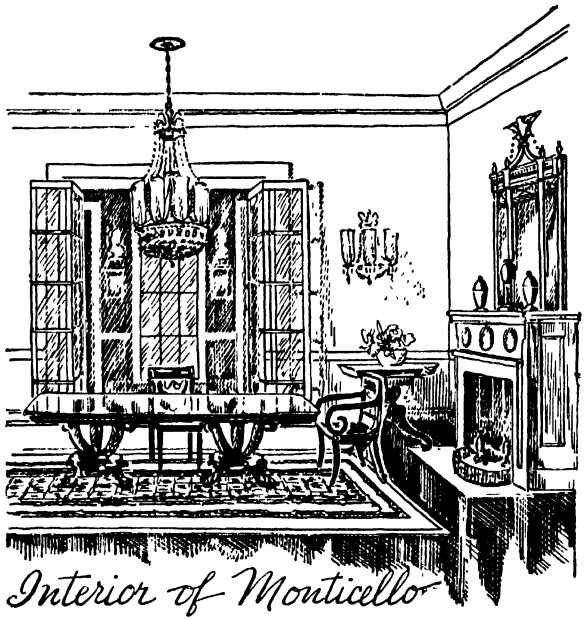
That the question was not whether, by a declaration of independance, we should make ourselves what we are not; but whether we should declare a fact which already exists:

That as to the people or parliament of England, we had alwais been independent of them, their restraints on our trade deriving efficacy from our acquiescence only, & not from any rights they possessed of imposing them, & that so far our connection had been federal only & was now dissolved by the commencement of hostilities:

That as to the King, we had been bound to him by allegiance, but that this bond was now dissolved by his assent to the late act of parliament, by which he declares us out of his protection, and by his levying war on us, a fact which had long ago proved us out of his protection; it being a certain position in law that allegiance & protection are reciprocal, the one ceasing when the other is withdrawn:

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45 the agent, Silas Deane (1737-1789), who went to Paris under instructions dated March 1776 • 48 present campaign, to defend New York and the Hudson River. At the time of these deliberations Washington was busy constructing fortifications commanding New York Harbor • 63 Wythe, George Wythe (1726-1806) of Virginia, in whose office Jefferson had studied law, among his other famous pupils were Chief Justice John Marshall, President James Monroe, and Henry Clay



Interior of Monticello

That James the IId. never declared the people of England out of his protection yet his actions proved it & the parliament declared it:

No delegates then can be denied, or ever want, a power of declaring an existing truth:

That the delegates from the Delaware counties having declared their constituents ready to join, there are only two colonies Pennsylvania & Maryland whose delegates are absolutely tied up, and that these had by their instructions only reserved a right of confirming or rejecting the measure:

That the instructions from Pennsylvania might be accounted for from the times in which they were drawn, near a twelvemonth ago since which the face of affairs has totally changed:

That within that time it had become apparent that Britain was determined to accept nothing less than a carte-blanche, and that the King's answer to the Lord Mayor Aldermen & common council of London, which had come to hand four days ago, must have satisfied every one of this point:

That the people wait for us to lead the way:

That *they* are in favour of the measure, tho' the instructions given by some of their *representatives* are not:

That the voice of the representatives is not always consonant with the voice of the people, and that this is remarkably the case in these middle colonies:

That the effect of the resolution of the 15th of May has proved this, which, raising the murmurs of some in the colonies of Pennsylvania & Maryland, called forth the opposing voice of the freer part of the people, & proved them to be the majority, even in these colonies:

That the backwardness of these two colonies might be ascribed partly to the influence of proprietary power & connections, & partly to their having not yet been attacked by the enemy:

That these causes were not likely to be soon removed, as there seemed no probability that the enemy would make either of these the seat of this summer's war:

That it would be vain to wait either weeks or months for perfect unanimity, since it was impossible that all men should ever become of one sentiment on any question:

That the conduct of some colonies from the beginning of this contest, had given reason to suspect it was their settled policy to keep in the rear of the confederacy, that their particular prospect might be better, even in the worst event:

That therefore it was necessary for those colonies who had thrown themselves forward & hazarded all from the beginning, to come forward now also, and put all again to their own hazard:

That the history of the Dutch revolution, of whom three states only confederated at first proved that a secession of some colonies would not be so dangerous as some apprehended:

That a declaration of Independence alone could render it consistent with European delicacy for European powers to treat with us, or even to receive an Ambassador from us:

That till this they would not receive our vessels into their ports, nor acknowledge the adjudications of our courts of admiralty to be legitimate, in cases of capture of British vessels:

That though France & Spain may be jealous of our rising power, they must think it will be much more formidable with the addition of Great Britain; and will therefore see it their interest to prevent a coalition; but should they refuse, we shall be but where we are;

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18 King's answer, one of George III's rejections of petitions addressed to him on behalf of the colonies • 53 Dutch revolution, of 1576. The United Netherlands Confederation was formed three years later

whereas without trying we shall never know whether they will aid us or not:

That the present campaign may be unsuccessful, & therefore we had better propose an alliance while our affairs wear a hopeful aspect:

That to await the event of this campaign will certainly work delay, because during this summer France may assist us effectually by cutting off those supplies of provisions from England & Ireland on which the enemy's armies here are to depend; or by setting in motion the great power they have collected in the West Indies, & calling our enemy to the defence of the possessions they have there:

That it would be idle to lose time in settling the terms of alliance, till we had first determined we would enter into alliance:

That it is necessary to lose no time in opening a trade for our people, who will want clothes, and will want money too for the paiment of taxes:

And that the only misfortune is that we did not enter into alliance with France six months sooner, as besides opening their ports for the vent of our last year's produce, they might have marched an army into Germany and prevented the petty princes there from selling their unhappy subjects to subdue us.

It appearing in the course of these debates that the colonies of N. York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina were not yet matured for falling from the parent stem, but that they were fast advancing to that state, it was thought most prudent to wait a while for them, and to postpone the final decision to July 1. but that this might occasion as little delay as possible a committee was appointed to prepare a declaration of independence. The commee were J. Adams, Dr. Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston & myself. Committees were also appointed at the same time to prepare a plan of confederation for the colonies, and to state the terms proper to be proposed for foreign alliance. The committee for drawing the declaration of Independence desired me to do it. It was accordingly done, and being approved by them, I reported it to the house on Friday the 28th of June when it was read and ordered to lie on the table. On Monday, the 1st of July the House resolved itself into a commee of the whole & resumed the consideration of the original motion made by the delegates of Virginia, which being again debated through the day, was carried in the affirmative by the votes of N. Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, N. Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, N. Carolina, & Georgia. S. Carolina and Pennsylvania voted against it. Delaware having but two members present, they were divided. The delegates for New York declared they were for it themselves & were assured their constituents were for it, but that their instructions having been drawn near a twelvemonth before, when reconciliation was still the general object, they were enjoined by them to do nothing which should impede that object They therefore thought themselves not justifiable in voting on either side, and asked leave to withdraw from the question, which was given them. The commee rose & reported their resolution to the house. Mr. Edward Rutledge of S. Carolina then requested the determination might be put off to the next day, as he believed his colleagues, tho' they disapproved of the resolution, would then join in it for the sake of unanimity. The ultimate question whether the house would agree to the resolution of the committee was accordingly postponed to the next day, when it was again moved and S. Carolina concurred in voting for it. In the meantime a third member had come post from the Delaware counties and turned the vote of that colony in favour of the resolution. Members of a different sentiment attending that morning from Pennsylvania also, her vote was changed, so that the whole 12 colonies who were authorized to vote at all, gave their voices for it; and within a few days, the convention of N. York approved of it and thus supplied the void occasioned by the withdrawing of her delegates from the vote.

Congress proceeded the same day to consider the declaration of Independance which had been reported & lain

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21 **six months sooner.** The tone here suggests what is generally thought to be the fact: that the colonists had received some assurances of secret assistance from France as early as the autumn of 1775 • 24 **petty princes.** The British ministry sent agents to employ mercenary troops from the German princes late in 1775, with the obvious intention of settling the American revolt in 1776 • 35 **Roger Sherman** (1721-1793), of Connecticut, later United States senator • 36 **myself.** Although he was only thirty-three, Jefferson's reputation as a writer won him more votes for appointment on this committee than any other candidate • 76 **few days,** July 9 • 79 **same day,** Tuesday, July 2

on the table the Friday preceding, and on Monday referred to a commee of the whole. The pusillanimous idea that we had friends in England worth keeping terms with, still haunted the minds of many. For this reason those passages which conveyed censures on the people of England were struck out, lest they should give them offence. The clause too, reprobating the enslaving the inhabitants of Africa, was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina and Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who on the contrary still wished to continue it. Our northern brethren also I believe felt a little tender under those censures; for tho' their people had very few slaves themselves yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others. The debates having taken up the greater parts of the 2d 3d & 4th days of July were, on the evening of the last, closed the declaration was reported by the commee, agreed to by the house and signed by every member present except Mr. Dickinson. As the sentiments of men are known not only by what they receive, but what they reject also, I will state the form of the declaration as originally reported. The parts struck out by Congress shall be distinguished by a black line drawn under them; and those inserted by them shall be placed in the margin or in a concurrent column.

A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate & equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with [*inherent and*] inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness: that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles, & organizing it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. Prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses & usurpations [*begun at a distinguished period and*] pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government, & to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to [*expunge*] their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of [*unremitting*] injuries &

certain

alter

repeated

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18 **signed . . . Dickinson.** Historians are agreed that Jefferson's memory was at fault on this point and that the Declaration was only "authenticated" by the signatures of the president and the secretary on July 4. The formal signing took place on August 2 • **23 a black line . . . .** In the present text the excisions are italicized and enclosed within brackets

usurpations, [*among which appears*
all having *no solitary fact to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest but all have*]
in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world [*for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood*].

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome & necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate & pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; & when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, & formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly [*& continually*] for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without & convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, & raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

obstructed by He has [*suffered*] the administration of justice [*totally to cease in some of these states*] refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made [*our*] judges dependant on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, & the amount and paiment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices [*by a self-assumed power*] and sent hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us in times of peace standing armies [*and ships of war*] without the consent of our legislatures

He has affected to render the military independant of, & superior to the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions & unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them by a mock-trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us [ ] of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging it's boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for in-

in many cases

troducing the same absolute rule into these [*states*]; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, & declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

colonies

He has abdicated government here [*withdrawing his governors, and declaring us out of his allegiance & protection*].

by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, & destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation & tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy [ ] unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, & totally

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends & brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

excited domestic insurrections among us, & has

He has [ ] endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, & condition [*of existence*].

[*He has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow-citizens, with the allurements of forfeiture & confiscation of our property.*

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobium of INFIDEL *powers, is the warfare of the* CHRISTIAN *king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where* MEN *should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the* LIBERTIES *of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the* LIVES *of another.*]

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries.

A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a [ ] people [*who mean to be free. Future ages will scarcely believe that the hardiness of one man adventured, within the short compass of twelve years only, to lay a foundation so broad & so undisguised for tyranny over a people fostered & fixed in principles of freedom*].

free

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend [*a*] jurisdiction over [*these our states*]. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration & settlement here, [*no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension: that these were effected at the expense of our own blood & treasure, unassisted*

an unwarrantable us

by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league & amity with them: but that submission to their parliament was no part of our constitution, nor ever in idea, if history may be credited: and,] we [ ] appealed to their native justice and magnanimity [*as well as to*] the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which [*were likely to*] interrupt our connection and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice & of consanguinity, [*and when occasions have been given them, by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have, by their free election, re-established them in power. At this very time too they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch & foreign mercenaries to invade & destroy us. These facts have given the last stab to agonizing affection, and manly spirit bids us to renounce forever these unfeeling brethren. We must endeavor to forget our former love for them, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends. We might have been a free and a great people together; but a communication of grandeur & of freedom it seems is below their dignity. Be it so, since they will have it. The road to happiness & to glory is open to us too. We will tread it apart from them, and*] acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our [*eternal*] separation [ ]!

have

and we have conjured them by

would inevitably

We must therefore and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled do in the name & by the authority of the good people of these [*states reject & renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain & all others who may hereafter claim by, through or under them: we utterly dissolve all political connection which may heretofore have subsisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain: & finally we do assert & declare these colonies to be free & independent states,*] & that as free & independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other acts & things which independent states may of right do.

And for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honour.

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, & by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish & declare that these united colonies are & of right ought to be free & independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them & the state of Great Britain is, & ought to be, totally dissolved; & that as free and independent states they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce & to do all other acts & things which independant states may of right do.

And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honor.

The Declaration thus signed on the 4th, on paper was engrossed on parchment, & signed again on the 2d. of August. . . .

1776?-1829

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44 **We therefore.** The version in the right-hand column is that adopted • 80 **The Declaration.** This last sentence was added by Jefferson later, when he knew that his account of the signing had been called into question

Alexander Hamilton

1757 • 1804

Much of the stability of the government of the United States, as we know it even today, must be attributed to the labors of Alexander Hamilton. Soldier, statesman, lawyer, and practical politician, he was only incidentally a writer. Yet, assisted by James Madison and John Jay, he planned and executed *The Federalist,* which Jefferson called, in a letter to Madison, "the best commentary on the principles of government that ever was written."

Hamilton was born in the West Indies in 1757. At an early age he displayed an amazing talent for business, so that interested elders sent him to the Continent to finish his education. In 1774, when he was an undergraduate at King's College (now Columbia University), he joined the Whig opposition to the British and soon distinguished himself as a speaker and pamphleteer. In March 1776 he joined the Continental army; within a year he was a lieutenant colonel and Washington's aide-de-camp.

Hamilton's most important contributions to government were his draft of the call for the Constitutional Convention, his success in obtaining the ratification of the new form of government by New York, his term as first secretary of the treasury in 1789-1795 (usually regarded as having laid the foundations of the fiscal policy, and the chief party issues, of the United States), and his influence as Washington's most trusted adviser. Hamilton's opposition to Aaron Burr resulted in the famous duel in which Hamilton was killed.

The inevitable contrast between Hamilton and Jefferson has frequently obscured the former's greatness. The self-made man, relatively narrow in his interests and distrustful of the masses, has suffered by the comparison with a versatile philosopher who, gracefully minimizing his own wealth and family connections, believed that all men are created equal. Men like Washington, however, quite evidently trusted Hamilton more than they did Jefferson; he had a solid quality, a realism which was wholly honest and direct.

On political questions Hamilton was always well-informed, and he wrote clearly and effectively for the audience to which he addressed himself. There are few better practitioners of argument in American literature.

The Works of Alexander Hamilton, ed. H. C. Lodge, Constitutional Edition, 12 vols , New York, 1904 • **Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson: Representative Selections,** ed. F. C. Prescott, Cincinnati, 1934 • H J. Ford, **Alexander Hamilton,** New York, 1925 • Bower Aly, **The Rhetoric of Alexander Hamilton,** New York, 1941

From

The Federalist

The Federalist consists of eighty-five essays, all but the last eight of which originally appeared in New York City newspapers between October 27, 1787, and April 4, 1788. They were at once collected and published in two volumes, presumably with Hamilton's supervision. The authorship of some of the essays has long been disputed, but it seems certain that Hamilton wrote at least fifty-one, Jay, five, and Madison, fourteen. Three were written by Hamilton and Madison in collaboration, and the authorship of the remaining twelve is now thought to have been Madison's.

The series was begun in answer to newspaper essays and pamphlets in opposition to the ratification of the Constitution (see **Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States,** 1888, and **Essays on the Constitution of**

the United States, 1892, ed. P. L. Ford). In New York, Hamilton was the only delegate to the Constitutional Convention who supported the proposed new form of government. The Federalist is credited with having carried the issue in New York, and it may have had influence elsewhere. In the course of its creation, however, the series became something more than mere debate; it enables Hamilton to bring to fruition his thorough study of constitutional problems. Of the three essays here reprinted, No. 1 shows his realistic philosophy of politics, No. XXIII his skill in logical argument, and No. LXIX his thorough knowledge of the early state constitutions, eleven of which had been adopted between 1776 and 1784.

NO. I

To the People of the State of New York:

After an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of the subsisting federal government, you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America. The subject speaks its own importance; comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION, the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed, the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world. It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force. If there be any truth in the remark, the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made; and a wrong election of the part we shall act may, in this view, deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism, to heighten the solicitude which all considerate and good men must feel for the event. Happy will it be if our choice should be directed by a judicious estimate of our true interests, unperplexed and unbiassed by considerations not connected with the public good. But this is a thing more ardently to be wished than seriously to be expected. The plan offered to our deliberations affects too many particular interests, innovates upon too many local institutions, not to involve in its discussion a variety of objects foreign to its merits, and of views, passions and prejudices little favorable to the discovery of truth.

Among the most formidable of the obstacles which the new Constitution will have to encounter may readily be distinguished the obvious interest of a certain class of men in every State to resist all changes which may hazard a diminution of the power, emolument, and consequence of the offices they hold under the State establishments, and the perverted ambition of another class of men, who will either hope to aggrandise themselves by the confusions of their country, or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies than from its union under one government.

It is not, however, my design to dwell upon observations of this nature. I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their situations might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views. Candor will oblige us to admit that even such men may be actuated by upright intentions; and it cannot be doubted that much of the opposition which has made its appearance, or may hereafter make its appearance, will spring from sources, blameless at least, if not respectable—the honest errors of minds led astray by preconceived jealousies and fears. So numerous indeed and so powerful are the causes which serve to give a false bias to the judgment, that we, upon many occasions, see wise and good men on the wrong as well as on the right side of questions of the first magnitude to society. This circumstance, if duly attended to, would furnish a lesson of moderation to those who are ever so much persuaded of their being in the right in any controversy. And a further reason for caution, in this respect, might be drawn from the reflection that we are not always sure that those who advocate the truth are influenced by purer principles than their antagonists. Ambition, avarice, personal animosity, party opposition, and many other motives not more laudable than these, are apt to operate as well upon those who support as those who oppose the right side of a question. Were there not even these inducements to

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Text: the Lodge edition of the Works, 1904, Vols. XI and XII • 29 The plan, the Constitution

moderation, nothing could be more ill-judged than that intolerant spirit which has, at all times, characterized political parties. For in politics, as in religion, it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword. Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution.

And yet, however just these sentiments will be allowed to be, we have already sufficient indications that it will happen in this as in all former cases of great national discussion. A torrent of angry and malignant passions will be let loose. To judge from the conduct of the opposite parties, we shall be led to conclude that they will mutually hope to evince the justness of their opinions, and to increase the number of their converts by the loudness of their declamations and the bitterness of their invectives. An enlightened zeal for the energy and efficiency of government will be stigmatized as the offspring of a temper fond of despotic power and hostile to the principles of liberty. An over-scrupulous jealousy of danger to the rights of the people, which is more commonly the fault of the head than of the heart, will be represented as mere pretence and artifice, the stale bait for popularity at the expense of the public good. It will be forgotten, on the one hand, that jealousy is the usual concomitant of love, and that the noble enthusiasm of liberty is apt to be infected with a spirit of narrow and illiberal distrust. On the other hand, it will be equally forgotten that the vigor of government is essential to the security of liberty; that, in the contemplation of a sound and well-informed judgment, their interest can never be separated; and that a dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people than under the forbidding appearance of zeal for the firmness and efficiency of government. History will teach us that the former has been found a much more certain road to the introduction of despotism than the latter, and that of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics, the greatest number have begun their career by paying an obsequious court to the people; commencing demagogues, and ending tyrants.

In the course of the preceding observations, I have had an eye, my fellow-citizens, to putting you upon your guard against all attempts, from whatever quarter, to influence your decision in a matter of the utmost moment to your welfare, by any impressions other than those which may result from the evidence of truth. You will, no doubt, at the same time, have collected from the general scope of them, that they proceed from a source not unfriendly to the new Constitution. Yes, my countrymen, I own to you that, after having given it an attentive consideration, I am clearly of opinion it is your interest to adopt it. I am convinced that this is the safest course for your liberty, your dignity, and your happiness. I affect not reserves which I do not feel. I will not amuse you with an appearance of deliberation when I have decided. I frankly acknowledge to you my convictions, and I will freely lay before you the reasons on which they are founded. The consciousness of good intentions disdains ambiguity. I shall not, however, multiply professions on this head. My motives must remain in the depository of my own breast. My arguments will be open to all, and may be judged of by all. They shall at least be offered in a spirit which will not disgrace the cause of truth.

I propose, in a series of papers, to discuss the following interesting particulars:—*The utility of the UNION to your political prosperity—The insufficiency of the present Confederation to preserve that Union—The necessity of a government at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the attainment of this object—The conformity of the proposed Constitution to the true principles of republican government—Its analogy to your own State constitution*—and lastly, *The additional security which its adoption will afford to the preservation of that species of government, to liberty, and to property.*

In the progress of this discussion I shall endeavor to give a satisfactory answer to all the objections which shall have made their appearance, that may seem to have any claim to your attention.

It may perhaps be thought superfluous to offer arguments to prove the utility of the UNION, a point, no doubt, deeply engraved on the hearts of the great body of the people in every State, and one, which it may be imagined, has no adversaries. But the fact is, that we already hear it whispered in the private circles of those who oppose the new Constitution, that the thirteen States are of too great extent for any general system, and that we must of necessity resort to separate confederacies

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65 particulars. The outline covers only the first fifty-one essays; the scheme was later expanded to include analyses of the House of Representatives, the Senate, the Executive (see p. 190), and the Judiciary

taries enough to countenance an open avowal of it. For nothing can be more evident, to those who are able to take an enlarged view of the subject, than the alternative of an adoption of the new Constitution or a dismemberment of the Union. It will therefore be of use to begin by examining the advantages of that Union, the certain evils, and the probable dangers, to which every State will be exposed from its dissolution. This shall accordingly constitute the subject of my next address.

PUBLIUS

NO. XXIII

To the People of the State of New York:

The necessity of a Constitution, at least equally energetic with the one proposed, to the preservation of the Union, is the point at the examination of which we are now arrived.

This inquiry will naturally divide itself into three branches—the objects to be provided for by the federal government, the quantity of power necessary to the accomplishment of those objects, the persons upon whom that power ought to operate. Its distribution and organization will more properly claim our attention under the succeeding head.

The principal purposes to be answered by union are these—the common defence of the members; the preservation of the public peace, as well against internal convulsions as external attacks; the regulation of commerce with other nations and between the States; the superintendence of our intercourse, political and commercial, with foreign countries.

The authorities essential to the common defence are these: to raise armies; to build and equip fleets; to prescribe rules for the government of both; to direct their operations; to provide for their support. These powers ought to exist without limitation, *because it is impossible to foresee or define the extent and variety of national exigencies, or the correspondent extent and variety of the means which may be necessary to satisfy them.* The circumstances that endanger the safety of nations are infinite, and for this reason no constitutional shackles can wisely be imposed on the power to which the care of stances; and ought to be under the direction of the same councils which are appointed to preside over the common defence.

This is one of those truths which, to a correct and unprejudiced mind, carries its own evidence along with it; and may be obscured, but cannot be made plainer by argument or reasoning. It rests upon axioms as simple as they are universal; the *means* ought to be proportioned to the *end;* the persons, from whose agency the attainment of any *end* is expected, ought to possess the *means* by which it is to be attained.

Whether there ought to be a federal government intrusted with the care of the common defence, is a question in the first instance, open for discussion; but the moment it is decided in the affirmative, it will follow, that that government ought to be clothed with all the powers requisite to complete execution of its trust. And unless it can be shown that the circumstances which may affect the public safety are reducible within certain determinate limits; unless the contrary of this position can be fairly and rationally disputed, it must be admitted, as a necessary consequence, that there can be no limitation of that authority which is to provide for the defence and protection of the community, in any matter essential to its efficacy—that is, in any matter essential to the *formation, direction,* or *support* of the NATIONAL FORCES.

Defective as the present Confederation has been proved to be, this principle appears to have been fully recognised by the framers of it; though they have not made proper or adequate provision for its exercise. Congress have an unlimited discretion to make requisitions of men and money; to govern the army and navy; to direct their operations. As their requisitions are made constitutionally binding upon the States, who are in fact under the most solemn obligations to furnish the supplies required of them, the intention evidently was, that the

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1 the whole. "The same idea, tracing the arguments to their consequences, is held out in several of the late publications against the new Constitution."—Publius. Madison had dealt with this "territorial" objection in No. XIV, and Hamilton returns to it briefly in No. XXIII. One conspicuous use of it by the opposition was the popular **Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican** (1787) by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia

United States should command whatever resources were by them judged requisite to the "common defence and general welfare." It was presumed that a sense of their true interests, and a regard to the dictates of good faith, would be found sufficient pledges for the punctual performance of the duty of the members to the federal head.

The experiment has, however, demonstrated that this expectation was ill-founded and illusory; and the observations, made under the last head, will, I imagine, have sufficed to convince the impartial and discerning, that there is an absolute necessity for an entire change in the first principles of the system; that if we are in earnest about giving the Union energy and duration, we must abandon the vain project of legislating upon the States in their collective capacities; we must extend the laws of the federal government to the individual citizens of America; we must discard the fallacious scheme of quotas and requisitions, as equally impracticable and unjust. The result from all this is that the Union ought to be invested with full power to levy troops; to build and equip fleets; and to raise the revenues which will be required for the formation and support of an army and navy, in the customary and ordinary modes practised in other governments.

If the circumstances of our country are such as to demand a compound instead of a simple, a confederate instead of a sole, government, the essential point which will remain to be adjusted will be to discriminate the OBJECTS, as far as it can be done, which shall appertain to the different provinces or departments of power; allowing to each the most ample authority for fulfilling the objects committed to its charge. Shall the Union be constituted the guardian of the common safety? Are fleets and armies and revenues necessary to this purpose? The government of the Union must be empowered to pass all laws, and to make all regulations which have relation to them. The same must be the case in respect to commerce, and to every other matter to which its jurisdiction is permitted to extend. Is the administration of justice between the citizens of the same State the proper department of the local governments? These must possess all the authorities which are connected with this object, and with every other that may be allotted to their particular cognizance and direction. Not to confer in each case a degree of power commensurate to the end, would be to violate the most obvious rules of prudence and propriety, and improvidently to trust the great interests of the nation to hands which are disabled from managing them with vigor and success.

Who so likely to make suitable provisions for the public defence, as that body to which the guardianship of the public safety is confided; which, as the centre of information, will best understand the extent and urgency of the dangers that threaten; as the representative of the WHOLE, will feel itself most deeply interested in the preservation of every part; which, from the responsibility implied in the duty assigned to it, will be most sensibly impressed with the necessity of proper exertions; and which, by the extension of its authority throughout the States, can alone establish uniformity and concert in the plans and measures by which the common safety is to be secured? Is there not a manifest inconsistency in devolving upon the federal government the care of the general defence, and leaving in the State governments the *effective* powers by which it is to be provided for? Is not a want of co-operation the infallible consequence of such a system? And will not weakness, disorder, an undue distribution of the burdens and calamities of war, an unnecessary and intolerable increase of expense, be its natural and inevitable concomitants? Have we not had unequivocal experience of its effects in the course of the revolution which we have just accomplished?

Every view we may take of the subject, as candid inquirers after truth, will serve to convince us, that it is both unwise and dangerous to deny the federal government an unconfined authority, as to all those objects which are intrusted to its management. It will indeed deserve the most vigilant and careful attention of the people, to see that it be modelled in such a manner as to admit of its being safely vested with the requisite powers. If any plan which has been, or may be, offered to our consideration, should not, upon a dispassionate inspection, be found to answer this description, it ought to be rejected. A government, the constitution of which renders it unfit to be trusted with all the powers which a free people *ought to delegate to any government,* would be an unsafe and improper depositary of the NATIONAL

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10 the last head. Nos. XV-XXII deal with the insufficiency and defects of the Confederation

INTERESTS. Wherever THESE can with propriety be confided, the coincident powers may safely accompany them. This is the true result of all just reasoning upon the subject. And the adversaries of the plan promulgated by the convention ought to have confined themselves to showing, that the internal structure of the proposed government was such as to render it unworthy of the confidence of the people. They ought not to have wandered into inflammatory declamations and unmeaning cavils about the extent of the powers. The POWERS are not too extensive for the OBJECTS of federal administration, or, in other words, for the management of our NATIONAL INTERESTS; nor can any satisfactory argument be framed to show that they are chargeable with such an excess If it be true, as has been insinuated by some of the writers on the other side, that the difficulty arises from the nature of the thing, and that the extent of the country will not permit us to form a government in which such ample powers can safely be reposed, it would prove that we ought to contract our views, and resort to the expedient of separate confederacies, which will move within more practicable spheres. For the absurdity must continually stare us in the face of confiding to a government the direction of the most essential national interests, without daring to trust to it the authorities which are indispensable to their proper and efficient management. Let us not attempt to reconcile contradictions, but firmly embrace a rational alternative.

I trust, however, that the impracticability of one general system cannot be shown. I am greatly mistaken, if anything of weight has yet been advanced of this tendency; and I flatter myself, that the observations which have been made in the course of these papers have served to place the reverse of that position in as clear a light as any matter still in the womb of time and experience can be susceptible of. This, at all events, must be evident, that the very difficulty itself, drawn from the extent of the country, is the strongest argument in favour of an energetic government; for any other can certainly never preserve the Union of so large an empire. If we embrace the tenets of those who oppose the adoption of the proposed Constitution, as the standard of our political creed, we cannot fail to verify the gloomy doctrines which predict the impracticability of a national system pervading the entire limits of the present Confederacy.

PUBLIUS

To the People of the State of New York:

I proceed now to trace the real characters of the proposed Executive, as they are marked out in the plan of the convention. This will serve to place in a strong light the unfairness of the representations which have been made in regard to it.

The first thing which strikes our attention is, that the executive authority, with few exceptions, is to be vested in a single magistrate. This will scarcely, however, be considered as a point upon which any comparison can be grounded; for if, in this particular, there be a resemblance to the king of Great Britain, there is not less a resemblance to the Grand Seignior, to the khan of Tartary, to the Man of the Seven Mountains, or to the governor of New York.

That magistrate is to be elected for *four* years; and is to be reeligible as often as the people of the United States shall think him worthy of their confidence. In these circumstances there is a total dissimilitude between *him* and a king of Great Britain, who is an *hereditary* monarch, possessing the crown as a patrimony descendible to his heirs forever; but there is a close analogy between *him* and a governor of New York, who is elected for *three* years, and is reeligible without limitation or intermission. If we consider how much less time would be requisite for establishing a dangerous influence in a single State, than for establishing a like influence throughout the United States we must conclude that a duration of *four* years for the Chief Magistrate of the Union is a degree of permanency far less to be dreaded in that office, than a duration of *three* years for a corresponding office in a single State.

The President of the United States would be liable to be impeached, tried, and, upon conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes or misdemeanors, removed from office; and would afterwards be liable to prosecution and punishment in the ordinary course of law. The person of the king of Great Britain is sacred and inviolable; there is no constitutional tribunal to which he is amenable; no punishment to which he can be subjected without involving the crisis of a national revolution. In this delicate and important circumstance of personal responsibility, the President of Confederated America would

stand upon no better ground than a governor of New York, and upon worse ground than the governors of Maryland and Delaware.

The President of the United States is to have power to return a bill, which shall have passed the two branches of the legislature, for reconsideration; and the bill so returned is to become a law, if, upon that reconsideration, it be approved by two thirds of both houses. The king of Great Britain, on his part, has an absolute negative upon the acts of the two houses of Parliament. The disuse of that power for a considerable time past does not affect the reality of its existence; and is to be ascribed wholly to the crown's having found the means of substituting influence to authority, or the art of gaining a majority in one or the other of the two houses, to the necessity of exerting a prerogative which could seldom be exerted without hazarding some degree of national agitation. The qualified negative of the President differs widely from this absolute negative of the British sovereign; and tallies exactly with the revisionary authority of the council of revision of this State, of which the governor is a constituent part. In this respect the power of the President would exceed that of the governor of New York, because the former would possess, singly, what the latter shares with the chancellor and judges; but it would be precisely the same with that of the governor of Massachusetts, whose constitution, as to this article, seems to have been the original from which the convention have copied.

The President is to be the "commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States. He is to have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States, *except in cases of impeachment;* to recommend to the consideration of Congress such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; to convene, on extraordinary occasions, both houses of the legislature, or either of them, and, in case of disagreement between them *with respect to the time of adjournment,* to adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; to take care that the laws be faithfully executed; and to commission all officers of the United States." In most of these particulars, the power of the President will resemble equally that of the king of Great Britain and of the governor of New York. The most material points of difference are these:—*First.* The President will have only the occasional command of such part of the militia of the nation as by legislative provision may be called into the actual service of the Union. The king of Great Britain and the governor of New York have at all times the entire command of all the militia within their several jurisdictions In this article, therefore, the power of the President would be inferior to that of either the monarch or the governor. *Secondly.* The President is to be commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States. In this respect his authority would be nominally the same with that of the king of Great Britain, but in substance much inferior to it. It would amount to nothing more than the supreme command and direction of the military and naval forces, as first General and admiral of the Confederacy; while that of the British king extends to the *declaring* of war and to the *raising* and *regulating* of fleets and armies,—all which, by the Constitution under consideration, would appertain to the legislature. The governor of New York, on the other hand, is by the constitution of the State vested only with the command of its militia and navy. But the constitutions of several of the States expressly declare their governors to be commanders-in-chief, as well of the army as navy; and it may well be a question, whether those of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, in particular, do not, in this instance, confer larger powers upon their respective governors, than could be claimed by a President of the United States. *Thirdly.* The power of the President, in respect to par-

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3 **Maryland and Delaware.** The constitutions of Maryland and Delaware had no specific provision for impeachment, the governor of New York could be impeached • 65 **legislature.** "A writer in a Pennsylvania paper, under the signature of **Tamony,** has asserted that the king of Great Britain owes his prerogative as commander-in-chief to an annual mutiny bill. The truth is, on the contrary, that his prerogative, in this respect, is immemorial, and was only disputed, 'contrary to all reason and precedent,' as Blackstone, vol. I , page 262, expresses it, by the Long Parliament of Charles I.; but by the statute the 13th of Charles II., chap 6, it was declared to be in the king alone, for that the sole supreme government and command of the militia within his Majesty's realms and dominions, and of all forces by sea and land, and of all forts and places of strength, EVER WAS AND IS the undoubted right of his Majesty and his royal predecessors, kings and queens of England, and that both or either house of Parliament cannot nor ought to pretend to the same "—Publius The reference is to **Commentaries on the Laws of England** (1765) by Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), one of the chief sources of Hamilton's political philosophy

dons, would extend to all cases, *except those of impeachment.* The governor of New York may pardon in all cases, even in those of impeachment, except for treason and murder. Is not the power of the governor, in this article, on a calculation of political consequences, greater than that of the President? All conspiracies and plots against the government, which have not been matured into actual treason, may be screened from punishment of every kind, by the interposition of the prerogative of pardoning. If a governor of New York, therefore, should be at the head of any such conspiracy, until the design had been ripened into actual hostility he could insure his accomplices and adherents an entire impunity. A President of the Union, on the other hand, though he may even pardon treason, when prosecuted in the ordinary course of law, could shelter no offender, in any degree, from the effects of impeachment and conviction. Would not the prospect of a total indemnity for all the preliminary steps be a greater temptation to undertake and persevere in an enterprise against the public liberty, than the mere prospect of an exemption from death and confiscation, if the final execution of the design, upon an actual appeal to arms, should miscarry? Would this last expectation have any influence at all, when the probability was computed, that the person who was to afford that exemption might himself be involved in the consequences of the measure, and might be incapacitated by his agency in it from affording the desired impunity? The better to judge of this matter, it will be necessary to recollect that, by the proposed Constitution, the offence of treason is limited "to levying war upon the United States, and adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort"; and that by the laws of New York it is confined with similar bounds. *Fourthly.* The President can only adjourn the national legislature in the single case of disagreement about the time of adjournment. The British monarch may prorogue or even dissolve the Parliament. The governor of New York may also prorogue the legislature of this State for a limited time; a power which, in certain situations, may be employed to very important purposes.

The President is to have power, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the senators present concur. The king of Great Britain is the sole and absolute representative of the nation in all foreign transactions. He can of his own accord make treaties of peace, commerce, alliance, and of every other description. It has been insinuated, that his authority in this respect is not conclusive, and that his conventions with foreign powers are subject to the revision, and stand in need of the ratification, of Parliament. But I believe this doctrine was never heard of until it was broached upon the present occasion. Every jurist of that kingdom, and every other man acquainted with its Constitution, knows, as an established fact, that the prerogative of making treaties exists in the crown in its utmost plenitude; and that the compacts entered into by the royal authority have the most complete legal validity and perfection, independent of any other sanction. The Parliament, it is true, is sometimes seen employing itself in altering the existing laws to conform them to the stipulations in a new treaty; and this may have possibly given birth to the imagination, that its coöperation was necessary to the obligatory efficacy of the treaty. But this parliamentary interposition proceeds from a different cause: from the necessity of adjusting a most artificial and intricate system of revenue and commercial laws, to the changes made in them by the operation of the treaty; and of adapting new provisions and precautions to the new state of things, to keep the machine from running into disorder. In this respect, therefore, there is no comparison between the intended power of the President and the actual power of the British sovereign. The one can perform alone what the other can do only with the concurrence of a branch of the legislature. It must be admitted, that, in this instance, the power of the federal Executive would exceed that of any State Executive. But this arises naturally from the sovereign power which relates to treaties. If the Confederacy were to be dissolved, it would become a question, whether the Executives of the several States were not solely invested with that delicate and important prerogative.

The President is also to be authorized to receive ambassadors and other public ministers. This, though it has been a rich theme of declamation, is more a matter of dignity than of authority. It is a circumstance which will be without consequence in the administration of the government; and it was far more convenient that it should

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54 jurist. "Vide Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i., p. 257."—Publius

ranches, upon every arrival of a foreign minister, though t were merely to take the place of a departed predecessor.

The President is to nominate and, *with the advice and consent of the Senate,* to appoint ambassadors and other public ministers, judges of the Supreme Court, and in general all officers of the United States established by law, and whose appointments are not otherwise provided for by the Constitution. The king of Great Britain is emphatically and truly styled the fountain of honor. He not only appoints to all offices, but can create offices. He can confer titles of nobility at pleasure; and has the disposal of an immense number of church preferments. There is evidently a great inferiority in the power of the President, in this particular, to that of the British king; nor is it equal to that of the governor of New York, if we are to interpret the meaning of the constitution of the State by the practice which has obtained under it. The power of appointment is with us lodged in a council, composed of the governor and four members of the Senate, chosen by the Assembly. The governor *claims,* and has frequently *exercised,* the right of nomination, and is *entitled* to a casting vote in the appointment. If he really has the right of nominating, his authority is in this respect equal to that of the President, and exceeds it in the article of the casting vote. In the national government, if the Senate should be divided, no appointment could be made; in the government of New York, if the council should be divided, the governor can turn the scale, and confirm his own nomination. If we compare the publicity which must necessarily attend the mode of appointment by the President and an entire branch of the national legislature, with the privacy in the mode of appointment by the governor of New York, closeted in a secret apartment with at most four, and frequently with only two persons; and if we at the same time consider how much more easy it must be to influence the small number of which a council of appointment consists, than the considerable number of which the national Senate would consist, we cannot hesitate to pronounce that the power of the chief magistrate of this State, in the disposition of offices, must, in practice, be greatly superior to that of the Chief Magistrate of the Union.

Hence it appears that, except as to the concurrent would, in the aggregate, possess more or less power than the Governor of New York. And it appears yet more unequivocally, that there is no pretence for the parallel which has been attempted between him and the king of Great Britain. But to render the contrast in this respect still more striking, it may be of use to throw the principal circumstances of dissimilitude into a closer group.

The President of the United States would be an officer elected by the people for *four* years; the king of Great Britain is a perpetual and *hereditary* prince. The one would be amenable to personal punishment and disgrace; the person of the other is sacred and inviolable. The one would have a *qualified* negative upon the acts of the legislative body; the other has an *absolute* negative. The one would have a right to command the military and naval forces of the nation; the other, in addition to this right, possesses that of *declaring* war, and of *raising* and *regulating* fleets and armies by his own authority. The one would have a concurrent power with a branch of the legislature in the formation of treaties; the other is the *sole possessor* of the power of making treaties. The one would have a like concurrent authority in appointing to offices; the other is the sole author of all appointments. The one can confer no privileges whatever: the other can make denizens of aliens, noblemen of commoners; can erect corporations with all the rights incident to corporate bodies. The one can prescribe no rules concerning the commerce or currency of the nation; the other is in several respects the arbiter of commerce, and in this capacity can establish markets and fairs, can regulate weights and measures, can lay embargoes for a limited time, can coin money, can authorize or prohibit the circulation of foreign coin. The one has no particle of spiritual jurisdiction; the other is the supreme head and governor of the national church! What answer shall we give to those who would persuade us that things so unlike resemble each other? The same that ought to be given to those who tell us that a government, the whole power of which would be in the hands of the elective and periodical servants of the people, is an aristocracy, a monarchy, and a despotism.

PUBLIUS

1787-1788•1788

Thomas Paine

1737 • 1809

See page 168 for a biographical account of Paine.

From

The Age of Reason

When Paine was arrested in Paris in December 1793, a part of **The Age of Reason** was in the hands of his printer, and on his way to prison he was allowed to turn over the remainder of the manuscript of Part I to Joel Barlow. A few copies were printed in January 1794. Part II, begun under the shadow of the guillotine and finished in the home of James Monroe, was added, and the whole work was published in 1795.

Paine's outspoken Deism (see p. 108 for a discussion of Deism) and anticlericalism were tempered by an earnest belief in a benevolent God and the perfectibility of man; he was neither an atheist nor a supporter of such mummery as the worship of an actress as representative of the Goddess of Reason—one of the actual incidents of the French Revolution. His book, indeed, was written partly to protest against the excesses of the Reign of Terror under Robespierre. It appeared, however, almost simultaneously with a new wave of evangelical fervor in America and was used to embarrass the Jeffersonian Republicans, whose opponents linked infidelity with political radicalism for the purpose of getting votes. To the orthodox, Paine's attack on some of the most cherished doctrines of Christianity was sheer blasphemy.

The modern reader will wonder chiefly at Paine's persistently literal interpretation of the Bible and his unquestioning assumption that human beings wish to be rational in their beliefs. In both respects he was a child of his time, the eighteenth century, which ordinarily demanded order and consistency, and was thoroughly committed to the mathematical world-view of Sir Isaac Newton, who pictured the universe as a smooth-running, rationally conducted machine.

It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon Religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and, from that

consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations; and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove of the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France, of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine; and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe in the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy.

But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches—whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish—appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise. They have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and, in order to *qualify* himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive anything more destructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had published the pamphlet, COMMON SENSE, in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a Revolution in the System of Government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of church and state, wherever it had taken place, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, had so effectually prohibited, by pains and penalties, every discussion upon established creeds, and upon first principles of religion, that until the system of government should be changed those subjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world; but that whenever this should be done, a revolution in the system of religion would follow. Human inventions and priestcraft would be detected, and man would return to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more.

Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles and saints; and the Turks their Mahomet—as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of those churches show certain books which they call *revelation,* or the word of God. The Jews say that their word of God was given by God to Moses face to face; the Christians say that their word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Turks say that their word of God (the Koran) was brought by an angel

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Text: that established by Professor Peach on the basis of the 1795 edition • 7 The circumstance, a reference to the acts of the National Convention between 1792 and the time of writing

from heaven. Each of those churches accuse the other of unbelief; and, for my own part, I disbelieve them all.

As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some observations on the word *revelation.* Revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated *immediately* from God to man.

No one will deny or dispute the power of the Almighty to make such a communication, if he pleases. But admitting, for the sake of a case, that something has been revealed to a certain person, and not revealed to any other person, it is revelation to that person only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, a third to a fourth, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is a revelation to the first person only, and *hearsay* to every other; and, consequently, they are not obliged to believe it.

It is a contradiction in terms and ideas to call anything a revelation that comes to us at secondhand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication. After this, it is only an account of something which that person says was a revelation made to him; and though he may find himself obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent upon me to believe it in the same manner, for it was not a revelation to *me,* and I have only his word for it that it was made to *him.*

When Moses told the children of Israel that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hand of God, they were not obliged to believe him, because they had no other authority for it than his telling them so; and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me so. The Commandments carry no internal evidence of divinity with them. They contain some good moral precepts, such as any man qualified to be a lawgiver, or legislator, could produce himself, without having recourse to supernatural intervention.

When I am told that the Koran was written in heaven, and brought to Mahomet by an angel, the account comes to near the same kind of hearsay evidence and second-hand authority as the former. I did not see the angel myself, and therefore I have a right not to believe it.

When also I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary said, or gave out, that she was with child without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed husband, Joseph, said, that an angel told him so, I have a right to believe them or not; such a circumstance required a much stronger evidence than their bare word for it; but we have not even this; for neither Joseph nor Mary wrote any such matter themselves. It is only reported by others that *they said so.* It is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not chuse to rest my belief upon such evidence.

It is, however, not difficult to account for the credit that was given to the story of Jesus Christ being the Son of God. He was born at a time when the heathen mythology had still some fashion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of such a story. Almost all the extraordinary men that ever lived under the heathen mythology were reputed to be the sons of some of their gods. It was not a new thing, at that time, to believe a man to have been celestially begotten; the intercourse of gods with women was then a matter of familiar opinion. Their Jupiter, according to their accounts, had cohabited with hundreds; the story therefore had nothing in it either new, wonderful, or obscene; it was conformable to the opinions that then prevailed among the people called Gentiles, or mythologists, and it was those people only that believed it. The Jews, who had kept strictly to the belief of one God and no more, and who had always rejected the heathen mythology, never credited the story.

It is curious to observe how the theory of what is called the Christian church sprung out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place, in the first instance, by making the reputed founder to be celestially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed was no other than a reduction of the former plurality, which was about twenty or thirty thousand. The statue of Mary succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The deification of heroes changed into the canonization of saints. The mythologists had gods for everything; the Christian mythologists had saints for everything. The church became as crouded with the one as the pantheon had been with the other; and Rome

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36 **supernatural intervention.** "It is, however, necessary to except the declaration which says that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children. This is contrary to every principle of moral justice."—Paine

• 78 **Diana of Ephesus,** whose shrine was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. See Acts 19

was the place of both. The Christian theory is little else than the idolatry of the ancient mythologists, accommodated to the purposes of power and revenue; and it yet remains to reason and philosophy to abolish the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is here said can apply, even with the most distant disrespect, to the real character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practiced was of the most benevolent kind; and though similar systems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek philosophers, many years before; by the Quakers since, and by many good men in all ages, it has not been exceeded by any.

Jesus Christ wrote no account of himself, of his birth, parentage, or anything else. Not a line of what is called the New Testament is of his writing. The history of him is altogether the work of other people; and as to the account given of his resurrection and ascension, it was the necessary counterpart to the story of his birth. His historians, having brought him into the world in supernatural manner, were obliged to take him out again in the same manner, or the first part of the story must have fallen to the ground.

The wretched contrivance with which this latter part is told exceeds everything that went before it. The first part, that of the miraculous conception, was not a thing that admitted of publicity; and therefore the tellers of this part of the story, had this advantage, that though they might not be credited they could not be detected. They could not be expected to prove it, because it was not one of those things that admitted of proof, and it was impossible that the person of whom it was told could prove it himself.

But the resurrection of a dead person from the grave, and his ascension through the air, is a thing very different, as to the evidence it admits of, to the invisible conception of a child in the womb. The resurrection and ascension, supposing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonstration, like that of the ascension of a balloon, or the sun at noonday, to all Jerusalem at least. A thing which everybody is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal; and as the public visibility of this last related act was the only evidence that could give sanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground because that evidence never was given. Instead of this, a small number of persons, not more than eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world, to say they *saw it,* and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it. But it appears that Thomas did not believe the resurrection; and, as they say, would not believe without having ocular and manual demonstration himself. *So neither will I;* and the reason is equally as good for me, and for every other person, as for Thomas.

It is in vain to palliate or disguise this matter. The story, so far as relates to the supernatural part, has every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon the face of it. Who were the authors of it is as impossible for us now to know, as it is for us to be assured that the books in which the account is related were written by the persons whose names they bear. The best surviving evidence we now have respecting this affair is the Jews. They are regularly descended from the people who lived in the times this resurrection and ascension is said to have happened, and they say, *it is not true.* It has long appeared to me a strange inconsistency to cite the Jews as a proof of the truth of the story. It is the same as if a man were to say, I will prove the truth of what I have told you by producing the people who say it is false.

That such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that he was crucified, which was the mode of execution at that day, are historical relations strictly within the limits of probability. He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man; but he preached also against the corruptions and avarice of the Jewish priests; and this brought upon him the hatred and vengeance of the whole order of priest-hood. The accusation which those priests brought against him was that of sedition and conspiracy against the Roman government, to which the Jews were then subject and tributary; and it is not improbable that the Roman government might have some secret apprehension of the effects of his doctrine as well as the Jewish priests; neither is it improbable that Jesus Christ had in contemplation the delivery of the Jewish nation from the bondage of the Romans.

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11 **Confucius,** the Chinese philosopher (551?-478 B.C.) • 51 **Thomas.** See John 20:24-29; whence the epithet, "doubting Thomas"

Between the two, however, this virtuous reformer and revolutionist lost his life.

It is upon this plain narrative of facts, together with another case I am going to mention, that the Christian mythologists, calling themselves the Christian church, have erected their fable, which for absurdity and extravagance is not exceeded by anything that is to be found in the mythology of the ancients.

The ancient mythologists tell that the race of Giants made war against Jupiter, and that one of them threw an hundred rocks against him at one throw; that Jupiter defeated him with thunder, and confined him afterwards under Mount Etna; and that every time the Giant turns himself, Mount Etna belches fire. It is here easy to see that the circumstance of the mountain, that of its being a volcano, suggested the idea of the fable; and that the fable is made to fit and wind itself up with that circumstance.

The Christian mythologists tell that their Satan made war against the Almighty, who defeated him, and confined him afterwards, not under a mountain, but in a pit. It is here easy to see that the first fable suggested the idea of the second; for the fable of Jupiter and the Giants was told many hundred years before that of Satan.

Thus far the ancient and the Christian mythologists differ very little from each other. But the latter have contrived to carry the matter much farther. They have contrived to connect the fabulous part of the story of Jesus Christ, with the fable originating from Mount Etna; and, in order to make all the parts of the story ty together, they have taken to their aid the tradition of the Jews; for the Christian mythology is made up partly from the ancient mythology and partly from the Jewish traditions.

The Christian mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again, to bring on the sequel of the fable. He is then introduced into the garden of Eden in the shape of a snake, or a serpent, and in that shape he enters into familiar conversation with Eve, who is not in any way surprised to hear a snake talk, and the issue of this *tête-à-tête* is, that he persuades her to eat an apple, and the eating of that apple, damns all mankind.

After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the church mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit; or, if they had not done this, that they would have put a mountain upon him (for they say their faith can remove a mountain) or have him put *under* a mountain, as the former mythologists had done, to prevent his getting again among the women and doing more mischief. But instead of this, they leave him at large without even obliging him to give his parole. The secret of which is, that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. They promised him ALL the Jews, ALL the Turks by anticipation, nine-tenths of the world beside, and Mahomet into the bargain. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian mythology?

Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in heaven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—put Satan into the pit—let him out again—given him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, these Christian mythologists bring the two ends of their fable together. They represent this virtuous and amiable man, Jesus Christ, to be at once both God and man, and also the Son of God, celestially begotten on purpose to be sacrificed, because they say, that Eve in her longing had eaten an apple.

Putting aside everything that might excite laughter by its absurdity, or detestation by its prophaneness, and confining ourselves merely to an examination of the parts, it is impossible to conceive a story more derogatory to the Almighty, more inconsistent with his wisdom, more contradictory to his power, than this story is.

In order to make for it a foundation to rise upon, the inventors were under the necessity of giving to the being whom they call Satan a power equally as great, if not greater, than they attribute to the Almighty. They have not only given him the power of liberating himself from the pit, after what they call his fall, but they have made that power increase afterwards to infinity. Before this fall, they represent him only as an angel of limited existence, as they represent the rest. After his fall, he becomes, by their account, omnipresent. He exists every-

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34 **Jewish traditions**, especially as found in the Cabala, or mystic books of the Jews, some of which are related to the Apocrypha. The idea of Satan is largely non-Biblical

where, and at the same time. He occupies the whole immensity of space.

Not content with this deification of Satan, they represent him as defeating, by strategem, in the shape of an animal of the creation, all the power and wisdom of the Almighty. They represent him as having compelled the Almighty to the *direct necessity* either of surrendering the whole of the creation to the government and sovereignty of this Satan or of capitulating for its redemption by coming down upon earth and exhibiting himself upon a cross in the shape of a man.

Had the inventors of this story told it the contrary way—that is, had they represented the Almighty as compelling Satan to exhibit *himself* on a cross in the shape of a snake, as a punishment for his new transgression, the story would have been less absurd, less contradictory. But, instead of this, they make the transgressor triumph and the Almighty fall.

That many good men have believed this strange fable, and lived very good lives under that belief (for credulity is not a crime) is what I have no doubt of. In the first place, they were educated to believe it, and they would have believed anything else in the same manner. There are also many who have been so enthusiastically enraptured by what they conceived to be the infinite love of God to man in making a sacrifice of himself, that the vehemence of the idea has forbidden and deterred them from examining into the absurdity and prophaneness of the story. The more unnatural anything is, the more is it capable of becoming the object of dismal admiration.

But if objects for gratitude and admiration are our desire, do they not present themselves every hour to our eyes? Do we not see a fair creation prepared to receive us the instant we were born—a world furnished to our hands that cost us nothing? Is it we that light up the sun, that pour down the rain, and fill the earth with abundance? Whether we sleep or wake the vast machinery of the universe still goes on. Are these things, and the blessings they indicate in future, nothing to us? Can our gross feelings be excited by no other subjects than tragedy and suicide? Or is the gloomy pride of man become so intolerable that nothing can flatter it but the sacrifice of the Creator?

I know that this bold investigation will alarm many, but it would be paying too great a compliment to their credulity to forbear it upon that account. The times and the subject demand it to be done. The suspicion that the theory of what is called the Christian church is fabulous is becoming very extensive in all countries; and it will be a consolation to men staggering under that suspicion, and doubting what to believe and what to disbelieve, to see the subject freely investigated. I therefore pass on to an examination of the books called the Old and the New Testament....

[Most of the remainder of Part I, and a large portion of Part II, here omitted, either display the "true theology" which Paine found in the works of creation, or attack the divine authority of the Bible by citation of conflicting texts and "absurd" stories. His chief argument is that mystery, miracle, and prophecy have been used in all ages to impose priesthood upon mankind. His positive Deism is summarized in the "Conclusion" to Part II, the latter part of which follows.]

Of all the systems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself, than this thing called Christianity. Too absurd for belief, too impossible to convince, and too inconsistent for practice, it renders the heart torpid or produces only atheists and fanatics. As an engine of power, it serves the purpose of despotism; and as a means of wealth, the avarice of priests; but so far as respects the good of man in general, it leads to nothing here or hereafter.

The only religion that has not been invented, and that has in it every evidence of divine originality, is pure and simple Deism. It must have been the first, and will probably be the last, that man believes. But pure and simple Deism does not answer the purpose of despotic governments. They cannot lay hold of religion as an engine, but by mixing it with human inventions, and making their own authority a part; neither does it answer the avarice of priests but by incorporating themselves and their functions with it, and becoming, like the government, a party in the system. It is that that forms the otherwise mysterious connection of church and state; the church human, and the state tyrannic.

Were man impressed as fully and strongly as he ought to be with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of that belief; he would stand in

awe of God and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is necessary that it act alone. This is Deism.

But when, according to the Christian trinitarian scheme, one part of God is represented by a dying man, and another part, called the Holy Ghost, by a flying pigeon, it is impossible that belief can attach itself to such wild conceits.

It has been the scheme of the Christian church, and of all the other invented systems of religion, to hold man in ignorance of the Creator, as it is of government to hold him in ignorance of his rights. The systems of the one are as false as those of the other, and are calculated for mutual support. The study of theology, as it stands for Christian churches, is the study of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it rests on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities, it has no data; it can demonstrate nothing, and admits of no conclusion. Not any thing can be studied as a science without our being in possession of the principles upon which it is founded; and as this is not the case with Christian theology, it is therefore the study of nothing.

Instead, then, of studying theology, as is now done, out of the Bible and Testament, the meanings of which books are always controverted, and the authenticity of which is disproved, it is necessary that we refer to the Bible of the creation. The principles we discover there are eternal, and of divine origin; they are the foundation of all the science that exists in the world, and must be the foundation of theology.

We can know God only through his works. We cannot have a conception of any one attribute but by following some principle that leads to it. We have only a confused idea of his powers if we have not the means of comprehending something of its immensity. We can have no idea of his wisdom but by knowing the order and manner in which it acts. The principles of science lead to this knowledge; for the Creator of man is the Creator of science; and it is through that medium that man can see God, as it were, face to face.

Could a man be placed in a situation, and endowed with the power of vision, to behold at one view, and to contemplate deliberately, the structure of the universe; to mark the movements of the several planets, the cause of their varying appearances, the unerring order in which they revolve, even to the remotest comet; their connection and dependence on each other, and to know the system of laws established by the Creator that governs and regulates the whole; he would then conceive, far beyond what any church theology can teach him, the power, the wisdom, the vastness, the munificence of the Creator. He would then see that all the knowledge man has of science, and that all the mechanical arts by which he renders his situation comfortable here, are derived from that source; his mind, exalted by the scene and convinced by the fact, would increase in gratitude as it increased in knowledge; his religion or his worship would become united with his improvement as a man; any employment he followed that had connection with the principles of the creation, as everything of agriculture, of science, and of the mechanical arts has, would teach him more of God and of the gratitude he owes to him than any theological Christian sermon he now hears. Great objects inspire great thoughts; great munificence excites great gratitude; but the groveling tales and doctrines of the Bible and the Testament are fit only to excite contempt.

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9 **wild conceits.** "The book called the book of Matthew says (iii, 16) that **the Holy Ghost descended in the shape of a dove.** It might as well have said a goose, the creatures are equally harmless, and the one is as much a nonsensical lie as the other. Acts ii, 2, 3, says that it descended in a mighty **rushing wind,** in the shape of **cloven tongues;** perhaps it was cloven feet. Such absurd stuff is only fit for tales of witches and wizards."—Paine • 23 **the study of nothing.** "The Bible-makers have undertaken to give us, in the first chapter of Genesis, an account of the creation; and in doing this they have demonstrated nothing but their ignorance. They make there to have been three days and three nights, evenings, and mornings, before there was any sun; when it is the presence or absence of the sun that is the cause of day and night—and what is called his rising and setting, that of morning and evening. Besides it is a puerile and pitiful idea to suppose the Almighty to say, 'Let there be light.' It is the imperative manner of speaking that a conjuror uses when he says to his cups and balls, 'Presto! be gone' and most probably has been taken from it, as Moses and his rod are a conjuror and his wand. Longinus calls this expression the sublime; and by the same rule the conjuror is sublime too; for the manner of speaking is expressively and grammatically the same. When authors and critics talk of the sublime, they see not how nearly it borders on the ridiculous. The sublime of the critics, like some parts of Edmund Burke's sublime and beautiful, is like a windmill just visible in a fog, which imagination might distort into a flying mountain, or an archangel, or a flock of wild geese."—Paine

Though man cannot arrive, at least in this life, at the actual scene I have described, he can demonstrate it because he has a knowledge of the principles upon which the creation is constructed. We know that the greatest works can be represented in model, and that the universe can be represented by the same means. The same principles by which we measure an inch or an acre of ground will measure to millions in extent. A circle of an inch diameter has the same geometrical properties as a circle that would circumscribe the universe. The same properties of a triangle that will demonstrate upon paper the course of a ship, will do it on the ocean, and, when applied to what are called the heavenly bodies, will ascertain to a minute the time of an eclipse, though those bodies are millions of miles distant from us. This knowledge is of divine origin, and it is from the Bible of the creation that man has learned it, and not from the stupid Bible of the church that teacheth man nothing.

All the knowledge man has of science and of machinery, by the aid of which his existence is rendered comfortable upon earth, and without which he would be scarcely distinguishable in appearance and condition from a common animal, comes from the great machine and structure of the universe. The constant and unwearied observations of our ancestors upon the movements and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in what are supposed to have been the early ages of the world, have brought this knowledge upon earth. It is not Moses and the prophets nor Jesus Christ, nor his apostles that have done it. The Almighty is the great mechanic of the creation; the first philosopher and original teacher of all science. Let us then learn to reverence our master, and not forget the labor of our ancestors.

Had we, at this day, no knowledge of machinery, and were it possible that man could have a view, as I have before described, of the structure and machinery of the universe, he would soon conceive the idea of constructing some at least of the mechanical works we now have; and the idea so conceived would progressively advance in practice. Or could a model of the universe, such as is called orrery, be presented before him and put in motion, his mind would arrive at the same idea. Such an object and such a subject would, whilst it improved him in knowledge useful to himself as a man and a member of society, as well as entertaining, afford far better matter for impressing him with a knowledge of and a belief in the Creator, and of the reverence and gratitude that a man owes to him, than the stupid texts of the Bible and the Testament, from which, be the talents of the preacher what they may, only stupid sermons can be preached. If man must preach, let him preach something that is edifying, and from the texts that are known to be true.

The Bible of the Creation is inexhaustible in texts. Every part of the science, whether connected with the geometry of the universe, with the systems of animal and vegetable life, or with the properties of inanimate matter, is a text as well for devotion as for philosophy—for gratitude as for human improvement. It will perhaps be said that if such a revolution in the system of religion takes place, every preacher ought to be a philosopher. *Most certainly;* and every house of devotion a school of science.

It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science and the light of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the assassin of the human species, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Christians have made him the murderer of himself, and the founder of a new religion, to supersede and expel the Jewish religion. And to find pretense and admission for these things, they must have supposed his power or his wisdom imperfect, or his will changeable; and the changeableness of the will is the imperfection of the judgment. The philosopher knows that the laws of the Creator have never changed with respect either to the principles of science or the properties of matter. Why, then, is it to be supposed they have changed with respect to man?

I here close the subject. I have shown in all the foregoing parts of this work that the Bible and Testament are impositions and forgeries; and I leave the evidence I have produced in proof of it to be refuted, if anyone can do it; and I leave the ideas that are suggested in the conclusion of the work to rest on the mind of the reader; certain, as I am, that when opinions are free, either in matters of government or religion, truth will finally and powerfully prevail.

1793·1794-1795



Philip Freneau

1752 · 1832

Philip Freneau's relatively high rank in American literary history is based upon three different aspects of his work, none of which would by itself justify his being regarded as almost a major writer. Taken together, however, his poems of romantic fancy, his ballads and satires in behalf of American independence, and his work as editor in the interest of Jeffersonian Republicanism reveal a fluent, versatile, and sometimes powerful man of letters. That he never attained the height of genius was perhaps as much an accident of his time as of his talent.

In his youth Freneau had the advantages of wealth, as they were understood at that time in New York and New Jersey. When he entered Princeton at sixteen, he hoped to prepare for the ministry. In college, as the close friend of James Madison (later the fourth President of the United States), Hugh Henry Brackenridge (author of *Modern Chivalry*), and William Bradford (later second attorney general of the United States), Freneau acquired Whig principles and literary ambitions. He began to write, imitating the classics and the English poets. In collaboration with Brackenridge he wrote part of a novel, "Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca in Arabia," and a Commencement poem, *The Rising Glory of America.* He had every reason to think the future would hold great things for him.

The next decade, however, brought unusual problems as well as the commonplace one of making a living (for Freneau's family resources steadily dwindled after his father's death in 1767). Theology proved unsatisfying; two ventures at teaching even more so. There was no livelihood in literature, although both the Commence-

Panel (l. to r.): The Boston, Plymouth, and Sandwich mail stage • After a husking bee in New England • Summer scene

ment poem and one other, *The American Village,* were printed in 1772. For the next two years or more Freneau's movements are obscure. He was evidently restless, for, although he turned up in New York in 1775, writing satires against General Gage and the British, he was off the next year to the West Indies. For about two years he lived on Santa Cruz, in the Virgin Islands, writing some of his most fanciful poems: "The Jamaica Funeral," "The Beauties of Santa Cruz," and "The House of Night." In 1778, after several voyages to Bermuda and at least one tour of the lower Gulf of Mexico, he started back for New Jersey. His ship was captured off the Carolinas by the British, but he was permitted to land near his home and promptly enlisted in the militia. Capture, apparently, had brought the war close home to him. The *United States Magazine,* edited by Brackenridge, soon printed some of Freneau's best West Indian poems, together with "King George the Third's Soliloquy," but his work as a propagandist did not become important until 1780. By that time he had left the army to become a blockade runner and had made two more trips to the West Indies. He was starting out on a fourth voyage, this time as third mate, when he was captured and confined for six weeks on prison and hospital ships in New York Harbor. That experience made Freneau a boiling, bitter, hate-marked patriot, and *The British Prison-Ship* (1781) was followed by a flood of propaganda, most of it published in the *Freeman's Journal,* a Philadelphia weekly. In satire and in ballads he expressed the hopes and the hates of his countrymen.

The war over, Freneau turned again to the sea to make his living, and between 1784 and 1790 was engaged chiefly in coastwise shipping, most of the time as ship's captain. In port, at Charleston, Philadelphia, or New York, he occasionally offered a new poem to a newspaper or magazine, and he presumably found some satisfaction in seeing in his cabin *The Poems of Philip Freneau* (Philadelphia, 1786) and *The Miscellaneous Works of Mr. Philip Freneau Containing His Essays and Additional Poems* (Philadelphia, 1788).

In April 1790 Freneau married and settled in New York, to try once more to make his living as a writer. While editing the *Daily Advertiser,* he made plans to establish a country paper of his own in New Jersey. Through the influence of James Madison, however, he was offered a part-time clerkship as translator in the Department of State, under Jefferson. In October 1791, encouraged by Madison and Jefferson, Freneau founded in Philadelphia the *National Gazette,* designed to rival the strongly Federalist *Gazette of the United States,* and to provide a focal point for the opposition to the policies of Alexander Hamilton. Freneau and his friends regarded the financial measures of Hamilton as favorable to the wealthy and dangerous to the common people; his frankness in saying so soon plunged him into the midst of the bitterest incidents attending the birth of party politics in the United States. He supported Jefferson with all the force of direct attack, satire, and abuse, and came to epitomize to Hamilton and his party the rabble-rousing journalist. "That rascal Freneau!" Washington is reported to have exclaimed. In the end Freneau's enthusiasm for the French Revolution and his support of Citizen Genêt, after that gentleman had alienated even Jefferson, lost him support, and the *National Gazette* expired in the fall of 1793. There can be no doubt, however, of Freneau's mighty contribution to the establishment of party government and party journalism.

During the last thirty-nine years of his life, Freneau was in almost constant financial difficulty. His chief editorial ventures were on the *Jersey Chronicle* of Mount Pleasant in 1795-1796, where he published his "Tomo Cheeki" essays and failed to collect from his subscribers, and a New York periodical, *The Time-Piece; and Literary Companion,* in 1797-1798. In 1803-1807 he was forced once more to return to the sea. Before his death in a blizzard in 1832, he published three more collections of his work.

Although Freneau was obviously imitative in his forms and themes—most of the famous English poets of the eighteenth century were among his literary mentors—he is remembered for his discovery of American plants and birds, for his primitivistic idealization of the Indian, for his feeling for the sea, on which he spent so much of his life. As a precursor of Bryant, Emerson, Poe, Whittier, and Longfellow, he has historic interest; but he is memorable also for his revelation of himself—a man who lived in stirring, restless, difficult times, fighting, not always judiciously, for the ways of life in which he believed.

The Poems of Philip Freneau, ed. F. L. Pattee, 3 vols, Princeton, 1902-1907 • Poems of Freneau, ed. H. H Clark, New York, 1929 • Lewis Leary, That Rascal Freneau: A Study in Literary Failure, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1941

The Power of Fancy

"The Power of Fancy" is perhaps the most interesting of the poems which Freneau wrote as an undergraduate at Princeton. The many literary allusions emphasize his reading of the classics, and the delight in distant places exemplifies his romantic tendency. His concept of poetic fancy, which is characteristic of eighteenth-century thought, was probably derived from the "Ode to Fancy" by Joseph Warton (1722-1800), one of the earliest of English "romantic" poets (see H. H. Clark, "Literary Influences on Philip Freneau," **Studies in Philology**, January 1925). Freneau's enthusiasm for Milton, and especially for "Il Penseroso," is more self-evident (see T. P. Haviland, "A Measure for the Early Freneau's Debt to Milton," **Publications of the Modern Language Association**, December 1940).

WAKEFUL, vagrant, restless thing,
Ever wandering on the wing,
Who thy wondrous source can find,
FANCY, regent of the mind;
A spark from Jove's resplendent throne,
But thy nature all unknown.
  THIS spark of bright, celestial flame,
From Jove's seraphic altar came,
And hence alone in man we trace,
Resemblance to the immortal race.
  Ah! what is all this mighty WHOLE,
These suns and stars that round us roll!
What are they all, where'er they shine,
But *Fancies* of the Power Divine!
What is this *globe*, these *lands*, and *seas*,
And *heat*, and *cold*, and *flowers*, and *trees*,
And *life*, and *death*, and *beast*, and *man*,
And *time*,—that with the *sun* began—
But thoughts on reason's scale combin'd,
Ideas of the Almighty mind?
  On the surface of the brain
Night after night she walks unseen,
Noble fabrics doth she raise
In the woods or on the seas,
On some high, steep, pointed rock,
Where the billows loudly knock
And the dreary tempests sweep
Clouds along the uncivil deep.
  Lo! she walks upon the moon,
Listens to the chimy tune
Of the bright, harmonious spheres,
And the song of angels hears;
Sees this earth a distant star,
Pendant, floating in the air;
Leads me to some lonely dome,
Where Religion loves to come,
Where the bride of Jesus dwells,
And the deep ton'd organ swells
In notes with lofty anthems join'd,
Notes that half distract the mind.
  Now like lightning she descends
To the prison of the fiends,
Hears the rattling of their chains,
Feels their never ceasing pains—
But, O never may she tell
Half the frightfulness of hell.
  Now she views Arcadian rocks,
Where the shepherds guard their flocks,
And, while yet her wings she spreads,
Sees chrystal streams and coral beds,
Wanders to some desert deep,
Or some dark, enchanted steep,
By the full moon light doth shew
Forests of a dusky blue,
Where, upon some mossy bed,
Innocence reclines her head.
  SWIFT, she stretches o'er the seas
To the far off Hebrides,
Canvas on the lofty mast

Text: the 1786 edition. In the 1795 edition and thereafter Freneau printed ll. 1-20 and 141-154 as "Ode to Fancy," using the remainder, in a much-revised form, for a poem entitled "Fancy's Ramble" • **20 Ideas . . . mind?** The notion here, essentially Platonic, was common in the eighteenth-century philosophy. The emphasis on reason in line 19 and the implications of the line preceding are evidence of Freneau's Deistic ideas (p 108) • **30 chimy . . . spheres.** The Aristotelian and Ptolemaic systems conceived of the universe as a succession of concentric spheres, something like the layers of an onion, which, as they rubbed together, produced a mighty musical harmony • **33 star,** "Milton's Paradise Lost, B. II, v. 1052."—Freneau • **47 Arcadian,** pastoral, from a mountainous area in ancient Greece, praised by the poets for its idyllic simplicity • **58 Hebrides,** islands off the coast of Scotland

Could not travel half so fast—
Swifter than the eagle's flight
Or instantaneous rays of light!
Lo! contemplative she stands
On Norwegia's rocky lands—
Fickle Goddess, set me down
Where the rugged winters frown
Upon Orca's howling steep,
Nodding o'er the northern deep,
Where the winds tumultuous roar,
Vext that *Ossian* sings no more.
Fancy, to that land repair,
Sweetest Ossian slumbers there;
Waft me far to southern isles
Where the soften'd winter smiles,
To Bermuda's orange shades,
Or Demarara's lovely glades;
Bear me o'er the sounding cape,
Painting death in every shape,
Where daring *Anson* spread the sail
Shatter'd by the stormy gale—
Lo! she leads me wide and far,
Sense can never follow her—
Shape thy course o'er land and sea,
Help me to keep pace with thee,
Lead me to yon chalky cliff,
Over rock and over reef,
Into Britain's fertile land,
Stretching far her proud command.
Look back and view, thro' many a year,
Cæsar, Julius Cæsar, there.
  Now to Tempe's verdant wood,
Over the mid ocean flood
Lo! the islands of the sea
—Sappho, Lesbos mourns for thee:
Greece, arouse thy humbled head,
Where are all thy mighty dead,
Who states to endless ruin hurl'd
And carried vengeance through the world?—
Troy, thy vanish'd pomp resume,
Or, weeping at thy Hector's tomb,
Yet those faded scenes renew,
Whose memory is to *Homer* due.
Fancy, lead me wandering still
Up to Ida's cloud-topt hill;
Not a laurel there doth grow
But in vision thou shalt show,—
Every sprig on Virgil's tomb
Shall in livelier colours bloom,
And every triumph Rome has seen
Flourish on the years between.
  Now she bears me far away
In the east to meet the day,
Leads me over Ganges' streams,
Mother of the morning beams—
O'er the ocean hath she ran,
Places me on *Tinian;*
Farther, farther in the east,
Till it almost meets the west,
Let us wandering both be lost
On Taitis sea-beat coast,
Bear me from that distant strand,
Over ocean, over land,
To California's golden shore—
Fancy, stop, and rove no more.
  Now, tho' late, returning home,
Lead me to *Belinda's* tomb;

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67 **Orca's,** perhaps a reference to the Orchades or Orkney Islands, to the north of Scotland. In the later version of the poem, "Fancy's Ramble," Freneau substituted **Hecla,** a mountain in Iceland. In either case Fancy's flight is somewhat erratic • 70 **Ossian,** a legendary Gaelic poet who celebrated the deeds of his father, Finn, or Find, who lived, presumably, in the third century. The Ossianic poems exist in fifteenth-century manuscripts, but their fame rests upon the attempt of James MacPherson (1736-1796) to create a Gaelic epic. His **Fingal** (1762) is now known to have been based largely upon forged manuscripts, but in Freneau's time it was accepted as authentic • 76 **Demarara's,** now the name of both a county and a river in British Guiana, it was once also the name for Georgetown, the capital of that South American colony • 79 **Anson,** George Anson (1697-1762), leader of a British naval expedition to the South Pacific, 1740-1744, which, after raiding Peru and a Spanish treasure ship off Accpulco in Mexico, continued westward around the world • 90 **there,** i.e., in Britain, where Caesar landed in 55 B.C. • 91 **Tempe's,** an allusion to the valley in Thessaly whose beauty was often celebrated by the classical poets • 94 **Sappho, Lesbos.** Sappho (fl. 630-570 B.C.), most famous of the women poets of antiquity, was supposedly born on the island of Lesbos or Mytilini, off the coast of Asia Minor • 95 **humbled head.** From 1715 until 1821 Greece was occupied by the Turks. An insurrection in 1770 may have suggested Freneau's phrase • 104 **Ida's.** The gods watched the battles around Troy, described in Homer's **Iliad,** from the summit of Mount Ida • 116 **Tinian,** an island in the Marianas, now well-known to Americans through its occupation in World War II. Anson was there for two months in 1742 • 120 **Taitis,** Tahiti, in the Society Islands, well-known to eighteenth-century readers through the expedition of Captain James Cook, who observed the Transit of Venus of 1769 at that spot • 126 **Belinda's,** a common name in Neoclassical poetry

Let me glide as well as you
Through the shroud and coffin too,
And behold, a moment, there,
All that once was good and fair—
Who doth here so soundly sleep?
Shall we break this prison deep?—
Thunders cannot wake the maid,
Lightnings cannot pierce the shade,
And tho' wintry tempests roar,
Tempests shall disturb no more.
YET must those eyes in darkness stay,
That once were rivals to the day—?
Like heaven's bright lamp beneath the main
They are but set to rise again.
FANCY, thou the muses' pride,
In thy painted realms reside
Endless images of things,
Fluttering each on golden wings,
Ideal objects, such a store,
The universe could hold no more:
Fancy, to thy power I owe
Half my happiness below;
By thee Elysian groves were made,
Thine were the notes that Orpheus play'd;
By thee was Pluto charm'd so well
While rapture seiz'd the sons of hell—
Come, O come—perceiv'd by none,
You and I will walk alone.

1770·1786

George the Third's Soliloquy

As "King George the Third's Soliloquy," this poem first appeared in the United States Magazine for May 1779, and was reprinted almost at once in the Pennsylvania Packet for June 5. Freneau revised it extensively for the 1786 edition of his Poems, changing the order of the lines, omitting some passages, and adding others. He then entitled it "George III. His Soliloquy for 1779." The present title and text first appeared in 1795. The 1809 edition shows minor variations in spelling, but no further changes. In its combination of bitterness, ridicule, and confidence in the ultimate triumph of the American cause, it probably typifies the attitude and methods of the Whig leaders. It was good politics, of course, to picture the Revolution as caused entirely by a tyrannical and unscrupulous monarch.

What mean these dreams, and hideous forms that rise
Night after night, tormenting to my eyes—
No real foes these horrid shapes can be,
But thrice as much they vex and torture me.
How cursed is he—how doubly curs'd am I—
Who lives in pain, and yet who dares not die;
To him no joy this world of Nature brings,
In vain the wild rose blooms, the daisy springs.
Is this a prelude to some new disgrace,
Some baleful omen to my name and race—!
It may be so—ere mighty Cesar died
Presaging Nature felt his doom, and sigh'd;
A bellowing voice through midnight groves was heard,
And threatening ghosts at dusk of eve appear'd—
Ere Brutus fell, to adverse fates a prey,
His evil genius met him on the way,
And so may mine!—but who would yield so soon
A prize, some luckier hour may make my own?—
Shame seize my crown, ere such a deed be mine—
No—to the last my squadrons shall combine,
And slay my foes, while foes remain to slay,
Or *heaven* shall grant me one successful day.
Is there a robber close in Newgate hemm'd,
Is there a cut-throat, fetter'd and condemn'd?
Haste, loyal slaves, to George's standard come,
Attend his lectures when you hear the drum;
Your chains I break—for better days prepare,
Come out, my friends, from prison and from care,
Far to the west I plan your desperate sway,

Power of Fancy • 149 **Elysian groves**, the abode of the blessed in classical mythology, a land of eternal spring and happiness • 150 **Orpheus**, a mythical Greek poet who, by petitioning Pluto with song and lyre, won back his wife Eurydice from Hades, only to lose her again by disobeying the injunction not to look at her until they reached the upper air

George the Third's Soliloquy • **Text**: the 1795 edition • 12 **Presaging Nature.** Plutarch and Strabo, Roman historians, tell of many wonders seen before Caesar's death, these among them • 16 **His evil . . . him.** According to Plutarch, Brutus was visited one night by an apparition, who identified himself as "Thy evil genius. We shall meet again at Philippi." On the eve of the second battle of Philippi the apparition reappeared; next day, defeated, Brutus fell upon his sword • 23 **Newgate.** A London prison

There 'tis no sin to ravage, burn, and slay.
There, without fear, your bloody aims pursue,
And show mankind what English thieves can do.
  That day, when first I mounted to the throne,
 swore to let all foreign foes alone.
Through love of peace to terms did I advance,
And made, they say, a shameful league with France.
But different scenes rise horrid to my view,
I charg'd my hosts to plunder and subdue—
At first, indeed, I thought short wars to wage
And sent some jail-birds to be led by Gage.
For 'twas but right, that those we mark'd for slaves
Should be reduc'd by cowards, fools, and knaves:
Awhile, directed by his feeble hand,
Those *troops* were kick'd and pelted through the land,
Or starv'd in Boston, curs'd the unlucky hour
They left their dungeons for that fatal shore.
  France aids them now, a desperate game I play,
And hostile Spain will do the same, they say;
My armies vanquish'd, and my heroes fled,
My people murmuring, and my commerce dead,
My shattered navy pelted, bruis'd, and clubb'd,
By Dutchmen bullied, and by Frenchmen drubb'd,
My name abhorr'd, my nation in disgrace,
How should I act in such a mournful case!
My hopes and joys are vanish'd with my coin,
My ruin'd army, and my lost Burgoyne!
What shall I do—confess my labours vain,
Or whet my tusks, and to the charge again!
But where's my force—my choicest troops are fled,
Some thousands crippled, and a myriad dead—
If I were own'd the boldest of mankind,
And hell with all her flames inspir'd my mind,
Could I at once with Spain and France contend,
And fight the *rebels,* on the world's green end?—
The pangs of *parting* I can ne'er endure,
Yet *part* we must, and part to meet no more!
Oh! blast this *Congress,* blast each upstart STATE,
On whose commands ten thousand captains wait;
From various climes that dire *Assembly* came,
True to their trust, as hostile to my fame,
'Tis these, ah these, have ruin'd half my sway,
Disgrac'd my arms, and led my slaves astray—
Curs'd be the day, when first I saw the sun,
Curs'd be the hour, when I these wars begun:
The fiends of darkness then possess'd my mind,
And powers unfriendly to the human kind.
To wasting grief, and sullen rage a prey,
To *Scotland's* utmost verge I'll take my way,
There with eternal storms due concert keep
And while the billows rage, as fiercely weep—
Ye highland lads, my rugged fate bemoan,
Assist me with one sympathizing groan,
For late I find the nations are my foes,
I must submit, and that with bloody nose,
Or, like our James, fly basely from the state,
Or share, what still is worse—old *Charles's* fate.

1779·1795

On the Memorable Victory

Obtained by the Gallant Captain John Paul Jones, of the *Bon Homme Richard,* over the *Seraphis,* under the command of Captain Pearson

This poem was first published in the **Freeman's Journal,** August 8, 1781. It relates the action of September 23, 1779, within sight of the east coast of England, in which John Paul Jones (1747-1792) won his greatest victory. The **Bon Homme Richard,** named for Benjamin Franklin, "Poor Richard," was a converted merchantman; only her officers were Americans. The raiding force of which it was the flagship encountered, off Scarborough, a large convoy from the Baltic, guarded by the **Serapis,** under the command of Richard Pearson (1731-1806). Jones, handicapped by inferior arms and equipment, was skillful in placing his deck guns and directing his boarding party, but his triumph came largely from the fact that he never thought of

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36 a shameful . . . France. Shameful because, in making peace with France, the Earl of Bute, King George's teacher and first prime minister, deserted Frederick the Great of Prussia, who had been fighting the three great absolutist monarchies Austria, Russia, and France • **40 Gage,** Thomas Gage (1721-1787), who ordered the march on Concord In the 1786 edition, this line read "And sent a scoundrel by the name of Gage" • **56 Burgoyne.** John Burgoyne (1723-1792) arrived in Boston to reinforce Gage in September 1774 • **67 Oh! . . . Congress.** In the 1779 version, this line began the poem Freneau's chief addition in 1786 consisted of ll. 1-22, but there was considerable rearrangement • **86 old Charles's fate,** an allusion to the execution of Charles I in 1649

accepting defeat. Freneau, curiously enough, does not use exactly Jones' classic reply to Pearson's demand that he strike his colors. "I have not," he said, "begun to fight."

O'ER the rough main, with flowing sheet,
The guardian of a numerous fleet,
  Seraphis from the Baltic came;
A ship of less tremendous force
Sail'd by her side the self-same course,
  Countess of Scarb'ro' was her name.

And now their native coasts appear,
Britannia's hills their summit rear
  Above the German main:
Fond to suppose their dangers o'er,
They southward coast along the shore,
  Thy waters, gentle Thames, to gain.

Full forty guns Seraphis bore,
And Scarb'ro's Countess twenty-four,
  Mann'd with Old England's boldest tars—
What flag that rides the Gallic seas
Shall dare attack such piles as these,
  Design'd for tumults and for wars!

Now from the top-mast's giddy height
A seaman cry'd—"Four sail in sight
  "Approach with favouring gales,"
Pearson, resolv'd to save the fleet,
Stood off to sea, these ships to meet,
  And closely brac'd his shivering sails.

With him advanc'd the Countess bold,
Like a black tar in wars grown old:
  And now these floating piles drew nigh;
But, muse, unfold, what chief of fame
In the other warlike squadron came,
  Whose standards at his mast head fly.

'Twas JONES, brave JONES, to battle led
As bold a crew as ever bled
  Upon the sky-surrounded main;
The standards of the western world
Were to the willing winds unfurl'd,
  Denying Britain's tyrant reign.

The *Good-Man-Richard* led the line;
The *Alliance* next: with these combine
  The Gallic ship they *Pallas* call,
The *Vengeance*, arm'd with sword and flame;
These to attack the Britons came—
  But *two* accomplish'd all.

Now Phoebus sought his pearly bed:
But who can tell the scenes of dread,
  The horrors of that fatal night!
Close up those floating castles came;
The Good-Man-Richard bursts in flame;
  Seraphis trembled at the sight.

She felt the fury of *her* ball:
Down, prostrate, down the Britons fall;
  The decks were strew'd with slain:
JONES to the foe his vessel lash'd;
And, while the black artillery flash'd,
  Loud thunders shook the main.

Alas! that mortals should employ
Such murdering engines, to destroy
  That frame by heaven so nicely join'd;
Alas! that e'er the god decreed
That brother should by brother bleed,
  And pour'd such madness in the mind.

But thou, brave JONES, no blame shalt bear;
The rights of men demand your care:
  For *these* you dare the greedy waves—
No tyrant, on destruction bent,
Has plann'd thy conquests—thou art sent
  To humble tyrants and their slaves.

See!—dread Seraphis flames again—
And art thou, JONES, among the slain,
  And sunk to Neptune's caves below—

Text: the 1795 edition • **42** two accomplish'd all. The Bon Homme Richard took the Serapis, the Pallas, the Countess of Scarborough. The Vengeance had no part in the action, and the Alliance, commanded by Captain Landis (d. 1818), who was later judged insane, not only failed to help but also fired occasionally, so Jones said, at the Bon Homme Richard • **43** Phoebus, the sun. The battle raged for several hours after sunset

He lives—though crowds around him fall,
Still he, unhurt, survives them all;
  Almost alone he fights the foe.

And can thy ship these strokes sustain?
Behold thy brave companions slain,
  All clasped in ocean's dark embrace.
STRIKE, OR BE SUNK—the Briton cries—
SINK IF YOU CAN—the chief replies,
  Fierce lightnings blazing in his face.

Then to the side three guns he drew,
(Almost deserted by his crew)
  And charg'd them deep with woe:
By *Pearson's* flash he aimed hot balls;
His main-mast totters—down it falls—
  O'erwhelming half below.

Pearson had yet disdain'd to yield,
But scarce his secret fears conceal'd,
  And thus was heard to cry—
"With hell, not mortals, I contend;
"What art thou—human or a fiend,
  "That dost my force defy?

"Return, my lads, the fight renew!"—
So call'd bold Pearson to his crew;
  But call'd, alas, in vain;
Some on the decks lay maim'd and dead;
Some to their deep recesses fled,
  And more were shrouded in the main.

Distress'd, forsaken, and alone,
He haul'd his tatter'd standard down,
  And yielded to his gallant foe;
Bold *Pallas* soon the *Countess* took,—
Thus both their haughty colours struck,
  Confessing what the brave can do.

But, JONES, too dearly didst thou buy
These ships possest so gloriously,
  Too many deaths disgrac'd the fray:
Thy barque that bore the conquering flame,
That the proud Briton overcame,
  Even she forsook thee on thy way;
For when the morn began to shine,
Fatal to her, the ocean brine
  Pour'd through each spacious wound;
Quick in the deep she disappear'd,
But JONES to friendly Belgia steer'd,
  With conquest and with glory crown'd.

Go on, great man, to scourge the foe,
And bid the haughty Britons know
  They to our *Thirteen Stars* shall bend;
The *Stars* that, veil'd in dark attire,
Long glimmer'd with a feeble fire,
  But radiant now ascend.

Bend to the Stars that flaming rise
On western worlds, more brilliant skies.
  Fair Freedom's reign restor'd—
So when the Magi, come from far,
Beheld the God-attending Star,
  They trembled and ador'd.

1781

To the Memory

Of the Brave Americans, under General Greene, in South Carolina, Who Fell in the Action of September 8, 1781

Since its appearance in the Freeman's Journal of November 21, 1781, and in the edition of 1786, this has been one of Freneau's best-known poems. It combines the patriotic theme with that gentle melancholy which is most familiar through Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." The skirmish on which the poem is based was an attack by General Nathanael Greene (1742-1786) and his force upon a British outpost, commanded by Georgia-born General John Stuart (1759-1815). Retreating to another position, the British re-formed their line and this time repulsed

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113 **Belgia,** here Holland. Jones took his prizes to Texel, largest of the West Frisian Islands • 124 **the Magi,** the wise men from the East who found the child Jesus in Bethlehem

the overanxious Americans, killing and wounding an estimated five to seven hundred men. Greene's attack was one of many which contributed to the failure of the British to hold South Carolina.

At EUTAW springs the valiant died:
Their limbs with dust are cover'd o'er—
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite thy gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast,
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sigh for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear:
'Tis not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear—

They saw their injur'd country's woe;
The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rush'd to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the shield,

Led by thy conquering genius, GREENE,
The Britons they compell'd to fly:
None distant view'd the fatal plain,
None griev'd, in such a cause, to die—

But, like the Parthian, fam'd of old,
Who, flying, still their arrows threw;
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

Now rest in peace, our patriot band;
Though far from Nature's limits thrown,
We trust, they find a happier land,
A brighter sun-shine of their own.

1781

The Wild Honey Suckle

"These stanzas," writes Professor Leary, "placed Freneau, beyond the reach of calumny or special pleading, chronologically at the head of America's procession of poets." They were first printed over the signature "K" in the **Columbian Herald**, July 6, 1786. Other printings followed in the **Pennsylvania Packet**, the **Freeman's Journal**, and the **Massachusetts Centinel**. There is no better evidence of Freneau's independence of the classical tradition and of his fresh perception of nature.

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouch'd thy honey'd blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet:
  No roving foot shall crush thee here,
  No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white array'd,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
  Thus quietly thy summer goes,
  Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers less gay,
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;

To the Memory • **Text:** the 1795 edition • 1 **Eutaw springs**, on the Santee River, midway between Charleston and Columbia, South Carolina • 19 **Then rush'd.** Professor Pattee has noted that Sir Walter Scott borrowed this and the following line for the introduction to Canto III of **Marmion:** "When Prussia hurried to the field, And snatch'd the spear, but left the shield" • 25 **the Parthian.** The horsemen of Parthia, a region in ancient Persia, used the stratagem of pretended retreat; when their enemies were scattered, they turned to the attack

The Wild Honey Suckle • **Text:** the 1795 edition, with changes of diction indicated on the basis of Professor Leary's text of the original printing (**That Rascal Freneau**, p. 71). Variations in punctuation have not all been described • 5 **crush.** 1786, find • 15 **They died.** In the 1786 version the following two lines are in parentheses • 15 **less.** 1786, more

Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came:
If nothing once, you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same;
The space between, is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower.

1786

The Indian Burying-Ground

"Lines occasioned by a visit to an old Indian burying ground" appeared in the American Museum for November 1787 and in Freneau's Miscellaneous Works (1788). This poem is usually regarded as one of the earliest idealizations of the Indian.

In spite of all the learn'd have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The *posture,* that *we* give the dead,
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
The Indian, when from life releas'd,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imag'd birds, and painted bowl,
And ven'son, for a journey dress'd,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
ACTIVITY, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the finer essence gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit—
Observe the swelling turf, and say
They do not *lie,* but here they *sit.*

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest play'd!

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale *Shebah,* with her braided hair)
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chace array'd,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief, and pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

1787

Lines by H. Salem, On His Return from Calcutta

No representative selection from Freneau would be complete without some poem of the sea, where he spent so many years of his life. There is no evidence that Freneau ever visited Calcutta, but this poem leaves no doubt of how he felt about the mariner's life. It first appeared as "A

The Wild Honey Suckle • 24 frail duration. 1786, empty image **The Indian Burying-Ground • Text.** the 1795 edition • **8 joyous feast.** "The North American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture; decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrupeds, &c· And (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomahawks, and other military weapons."—Freneau • **16 finer essence.** 1809, old ideas • **36 The hunter . . . shade!** Professor Pattee points out that the English poet Thomas Campbell borrowed this line in the fourth stanza of "O'Connor's Child"· "Now o'er the hills in chase he flits, The hunted and the deer a shade!"

Mistake Rectified" over the signature of "Sinbat the Sailor," in the National Gazette, and was soon reprinted in the Philadelphia Daily Advertiser and the Charleston City Gazette. In the 1795 edition it was called "Epistle to a Desponding Sea-man." Hezekiah Salem appears as a character or spokesman in several other poems by Freneau.

Your men of the land, from the king to Jack Ketch,
All join in supposing the sailor a wretch;
That his life is a round of vexation and woe,
With always too much or too little to do:
In the dead of the night, when other men sleep,
He, starboard and larboard, his watches must keep;
Imprisoned by Neptune, he lives like a dog;
And to know where he is, must depend on a LOG;
Must fret in a calm, and be sad in a storm;
In winter much trouble to keep himself warm:

Through the heat of the summer pursuing his trade,
No trees, but his topmasts, to yield him a shade:
Then, add to the list of the mariner's evils,
The water corrupted, the bread full of weevils;
Salt-junk to be eat, be it better or worse,
And, often bull beef of an Irishman's horse:
Whosoever is free, he must still be a slave,
(Despotic is always the rule on the wave;)
Not relished on water, your lords of the main
Abhor the republican doctrines of PAINE,
And each, like the despot of Prussia, may say
That his crew has no right, but the right to obey.
Such things say the lubbers, and sigh when they've said 'em,
But things are not so bad as their fancies persuade 'em:
There ne'er was a task but afforded some ease,
Nor a calling in life, but had something to please.
If the sea has its storms, it has also its calms,
A time to sing songs and a time to sing psalms.—
Yes—give me a vessel well timbered and sound,
Her bottom good plank, and in rigging well found,
If her spars are but staunch, and her oakham swelled tight,
From tempests and storms I'll extract some delight—
At sea I would rather have Neptune my jailor,
Than a lubber on shore, that despises a sailor.
Do they ask me what pleasure I find on the sea?—
Why, absence from land is a pleasure to me:
A hamper of porter, and plenty of grog,
A friend, when too sleepy, to give me a jog,
A coop that will always some poult[r]y afford,
Some bottles of gin, and no parson on board,
A crew that is brisk when it happens to blow,
One compass on deck and another below,
A girl, with more sense than the girl at the head,
To read me a novel, or make up my bed—
The man that has these, has a treasure in store
That millions possess not, who live upon shore:
But if it should happen that commerce grew dull,
Or Neptune, ill-humoured, should batter our hull,
Should damage my cargo, or heave me aground,
Or pay me with farthings instead of a pound:
Should I always be left in the rear of the race,
And this be forever—forever the case;
Why then, if the honest plain truth I may tell,
I would clew up my topsails, and bid him farewell.

1791

On Passing by an Old Church-Yard

This poem first appeared as "Melancholy reflections in passing by a burying place in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia" in the Time-Piece, September 15, 1797. It is a good example of the republicanism which sustained Freneau's distrust of pomp and aristocracy throughout the period of the French Revolution.

Pensive, on this green turf I cast my eye,
And almost feel inclined to muse and sigh:
Such tokens of mortality so nigh.

But hold,—who knows if these who soundly sleep,
Would not, alive, have made some orphan weep,
Or plunged some slumbering victim in the deep.

Lines . . . • Text: the 1809 edition • 15 Salt-junk, salt meat used on long voyages • 16 bull beef, the flesh of bulls, exceedingly tough; also a term of abuse • 20 Paine. Freneau admired Thomas Paine, as appears from a poem "On Mr. Paine's Rights of Man" (1795). Paine had left Philadelphia before Freneau had many associations there • 21 the despot of Prussia, probably Frederick the Great (1712-1786), famous for his reluctance to delegate his powers • 31 oakham, oakum, loose fiber from old rope, used to calk ships' seams • 43 the girl . . . head, the figurehead at the bow of the ship

On Passing by an Old Church-Yard • Text: the 1815 edition

There may be here, who once were virtue's foes,
A curse through life, the cause of many woes,
Who wrong'd the widow, and disturb'd repose.

There may be here, who with malicious aim
Did all they could to wound another's fame,
Steal character, and filch away good name.

Perhaps yond' solitary turf invests
Some who, when living, were the social pests,
Patrons of ribands, titles, crowns and crests.

Can we on such a kindred tear bestow?
They, who, in life, were every just man's foe,
A plague to all about them!—oh, no, no.

What though sepultured with the funeral whine;
Why, sorrowing on such tombs should we recline,
Where truth, perhaps, has hardly penn'd a line.

—Yet, what if here some honest man is laid
Whom nature of her best materials made,
Who all respect to sacred honor paid.

Gentle, humane, benevolent and just,
(Though now forgot and mingled with the dust,
There may be such, and such there are we trust.)

Yes—for the sake of that one honest man
We would on knaves themselves bestow a tear,
Think nature form'd them on some crooked plan,
And say *peace rest on all that slumber here.*

1797

Stanzas to an Alien,

Who After a Series of Persecutions Emigrated to the South Western Country.——1799.——

Freneau and his friends of Jefferson's party were thoroughly suspicious of the conservative reaction to the French Revolution, exemplified by the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. This poem, first published as "To an Alien" in the **Time-Piece** for July 13, 1798, shows Freneau's party spirit as well as his sympathy with political exiles. The "alien" has been identified by Professor Leary as John Daly Burk (1775?-1808), an Irishman who arrived in the United States in 1796. He had some reputation as an editor and dramatist and, after some trouble in New York, settled in Petersburg, Virginia.

Remote, beneath a sultry star
Where Mississippi flows afar
I see you rambling, God knows where.

Sometimes, beneath a cypress bough
When met in dreams, with spirits low,
I long to tell you what I know.

How matters go, in this our day,
When monarchy renews her sway,
And royalty begins her play.

I thought you wrong to come so far
Till you had seen our western star
Above the mists ascended clear.

I thought you right, to speed your sails
If you were fond of loathsome jails,
And justice with uneven scales.

And so you came and spoke too free
And soon they made you bend the knee,
And lodged you under lock and key.

Discharged at last, you made your peace
With all you had, and left the place
With empty purse and meagre face.—

You sped your way to other climes
And left me here to teaze with rhymes
The worst of men in worst of times.

Where you are gone the soil is free
And freedom sings from every tree,
"Come quit the crowd and live with me!"

Text: the 1815 edition

Where I must stay, no joys are found;
Excisemen haunt the hateful ground,
And chains are forged for all around.

The scheming men, with brazen throat,
Would set a murdering tribe afloat
To hang you for the lines you wrote.

If you are safe beyond their rage
Thank heaven, and not our *ruling sage,*
Who shuts us up in jail and cage.

Perdition seize that odious race
Who, aiming at distinguish'd place,
Would life and liberty efface;

With iron rod would rule the ball
And, at their shrine, debase us all,
Bid devils rise and angels fall.

Oh wish them ill, and wish them long
To be as usual in the wrong
In scheming for a chain too strong.

So will the happy time arrive
When coming home, if then alive,
You'll see them to the devil drive.

1798

To a Caty-Did

In a branch of a willow hid
Sings the evening Caty-did:
From the lofty locust bough
Feeding on a drop of dew,
In her suit of green array'd
Hear her singing in the shade
Caty-did, Caty-did, Caty-did!

While upon a leaf you tread,
Or repose your little head,
On your sheet of shadows laid,
All the day you nothing said:
Half the night your cheery tongue
Revell'd out its little song,
Nothing else but Caty-did.

From your lodgings on the leaf
Did you utter joy or grief—?
Did you only mean to say,
I have had my summer's day,
And am passing, soon, away
To the grave of Caty-did:—
Poor, unhappy Caty-did!

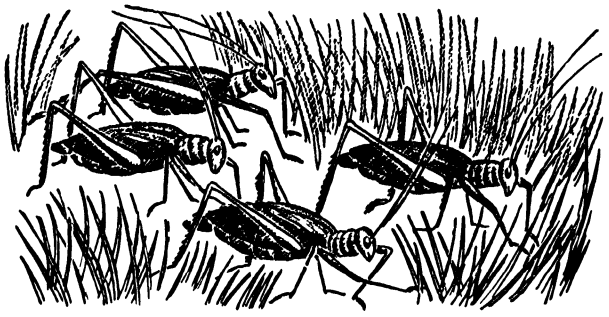
But you would have utter'd more
Had you known of nature's power—
From the world when you retreat,
And a leaf's your winding sheet,
Long before your spirit fled,
Who can tell but nature said,
Live again, my Caty-did!
Live, and chatter Caty-did.

Tell me, what did Caty do?
Did she mean to trouble you?—
Why was Caty not forbid
To trouble little Caty-did?—
Wrong, indeed at you to fling,
Hurting no one while you sing
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

Why continue to complain?
Caty tells me, she again
Will not give you plague or pain:—
Caty says you may be hid
Caty will not go to bed

Stanzas to an Alien • 35 **our ruling sage,** John Adams, the President. One of the acts relating to aliens gave him, for two years, the power to deport any aliens he deemed dangerous

To a Caty-Did • **Text:** the 1815 edition, apparently the first printing of this poem. In the table of contents it is entitled "Stanzas to a Caty-Did, the precursor of winter." **Caty-Did.** "A well-known insect, when full grown, about two inches in length, and of the exact color of a green leaf It is of the genus cicada, or grasshopper kind, inhabiting the green foliage of trees and singing such a note as **Caty-did** in the evening, towards autumn."—Freneau



While you sing us Caty-did.
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

But, while singing, you forgot
To tell us what did Caty *not:*
Caty-did not think of cold,
Flocks retiring to the fold,
Winter, with his wrinkles old,
Winter, that yourself foretold
When you gave us Caty-did.

Stay securely in your nest;
Caty now, will do her best,
All she can, to make you blest;
But, you want no human aid—
Nature, when she form'd you, said,
"Independent you are made,
My dear little Caty-did:
Soon yourself must disappear
With the verdure of the year,"—
And to go, we know not where,
With your song of Caty-did.

1815

On the Uniformity and Perfection of Nature

Freneau's views of God, man, and nature are fairly well summarized in this poem. The reference to the "great first cause" and the acceptance of an uninterrupted order of nature are Deistic in tendency, and it is possible to regard Freneau as philosophically akin to Franklin, Paine, and Jefferson. He had perhaps less faith in man than they; as Professor Leary says, his philosophy is one of "optimistic resignation."

On one fix'd point all nature moves,
Nor deviates from the track she loves;
Her system, drawn from reason's source,
She scorns to change her wonted course.

Could she descend from that great plan
To work unusual things for man,
To suit the insect of an hour—
This would betray a want of power,

Unsettled in its first design
And erring, when it did combine
The parts that form the vast machine,
The figures sketch'd on nature's scene.

Perfections of the great first cause
Submit to no contracted laws,
But all-sufficient, all-supreme,
Include no trivial views in them.

Who looks through nature with an eye
That would the scheme of heaven descry,
Observes her constant, still the same,
In all her laws, through all her frame.

No imperfection can be found
In all that is, above, around,—
All, nature made, in reason's sight
Is order all, and *all is right.*

1815

Text: the 1815 edition • **24 all is right.** See the last lines of the first Epistle of Pope's **Essay on Man** (1732):

"All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
All Discord, Harmony not understood;
All partial Evil, universal Good:
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, **Whatever is, is right.**"

Joel Barlow

1754 • 1812

Philanthropist, statesman, philosopher, poet—such is the order in which his biographer ranks the various capacities in which Joel Barlow distinguished himself. There can be little objection to the judgment; but it records the failure of a great ambition, for Barlow wanted above all things to be an epic poet. Later generations have regretted that the hours and years he spent on *The Columbiad* did not go instead into more prose such as the vigorous *Advice to the Privileged Orders* or, if he had to express himself in poetry, to such unpretentious portrayals of life and manners as *The Hasty-Pudding.*

Barlow was born at Redding, Connecticut, in 1754, and was graduated from Yale College with the Class of 1778. His college career was distinguished chiefly by at least one vacation spent in the army, of all places, and a Commencement poem, *The Prospect of Peace.* Settling down in the atmosphere of revolution proved somewhat difficult. He studied law for a time, then served as an unordained chaplain from September 1780 until the end of the war. Choosing Hartford for his home, he then tried his hand at teaching and editing before being admitted to the bar in 1786. In the year following he helped organize the Scioto Company, which planned to buy lands in Ohio and sell them at a large profit to European immigrants. Going abroad as a promoter in 1788, Barlow found London apathetic, but with the aid of enticing circulars he created a speculative flurry in Ohio real estate in Paris. Unfortunately the titles which he sold were not clear, and the Frenchmen who occupied Gallipolis in 1790 found that they had been swindled. The guilt, however, lay more with others than with Barlow, if not, indeed, with the French themselves, who were gulled by dreams of a Utopia in the wilderness.

Barlow was caught in Paris by the French Revolution. Somewhat surprisingly for a son of Federalist Connecticut who had collaborated in *The Anarchiad* (1786), an attack on populist tendencies in government, Barlow emerged in 1792 as an ardent radical. He expected a general revolution in the political and social structure of Europe along the lines of the American system. *Advice to the Privileged Orders*—a pamphlet attack on monarchy, an established church, inequalities in taxation and access to the courts, and standing armies—helped precipitate the conservative reaction in England, of which Edmund Burke was leader. A poem entitled *The Conspiracy of Kings* made him anathema to cautious Englishmen. Another pamphlet, *A Letter to the National Convention of France,* won him the honor of French citizenship. Barlow lived through the Terror without inconvenience and was able to befriend Thomas Paine in one serious crisis (see p. 194). From 1795 to 1797 he served as American consul in Algiers, engineering a treaty with the pirates there; he then returned to Paris and by judicious speculation in securities made a comfortable fortune. From 1805 until 1811 he lived in considerable splendor near Washington, D. C., polishing what he regarded as his great epic and entertaining his wide circle of friends. President Madison sent him once more to

France in 1811, as ambassador, and in the following year Barlow died in Poland, where he had gone to confer with Napoleon on matters of state.

Barlow spent a large part of his life planning, composing, and revising a long philosophical poem on the importance of American history. Some of it was written in 1780; two years later he was taking subscriptions for its publication. It appeared as *The Vision of Columbus* in 1787, and the final version, *The Columbiad*, was published in 1807, nearly thirty years after Barlow had conceived it. All that can be said for it is that it is a better epic than Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan*. Barlow is now read almost exclusively in *The Hasty-Pudding*, tossed off in a few days in a nostalgic mood.

The Connecticut Wits, ed. V. L. Parrington, New York, 1926 • C. B. Todd, Life and Letters of Joel Barlow, New York, 1886 • T. A. Zunder, The Early Days of Joel Barlow, a Connecticut Wit, New Haven, 1934 • V. C. Miller, Joel Barlow: Revolutionist, London, 1791-1792, Hamburg, 1932

The Hasty-Pudding

A Poem, in Three Cantos, Written at Chambery in Savoy, January, 1793

In January 1793, the month of the execution of Louis XVI, Barlow was in Savoy, apparently hoping to become a deputy to the National Convention from a new department or election district being organized there. In a spell of homesickness, brought on by encountering unexpectedly the most familiar porridge of his New England boyhood, he composed **The Hasty-Pudding**, which imitates the mock-heroic and pastoral veins of the age of Pope. The burlesque of the traditional epic invocation to the Muse, the rhetorical passages on exceedingly homely subjects, the numerous allusions—all reveal Barlow's familiarity with literature. Yet the poem, typical of the productions of the Connecticut group in its backward-looking tendencies, has a verve and an abundant local reference which save it from dullness. One might argue, indeed, that Barlow's democratic sympathies are as well expressed in his praise of simplicity as in his radical pamphlets. At any rate, to remember the most popular of Barlow's work is not wholly, as V. L. Parrington's remarks tend to suggest, to "make a mush" of an "honest thinker."

Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci.
He makes a good breakfast who mixes pudding with molasses.

PREFACE

A simplicity in diet, whether it be considered with reference to the happiness of individuals or the prosperity of a nation, is of more consequence than we are apt to imagine. In recommending so important an object to the rational part of mankind, I wish it were in my power to do it in such a manner as would be likely to gain their attention. I am sensible that it is one of those subjects in which example has infinitely more power than the most convincing arguments or the highest charms of poetry. Goldsmith's Deserted Village, *though possessing these two advantages in a greater degree than any other work of the kind, has not prevented villages in England from being deserted. The apparent interest of the rich individuals, who form the taste as well as the laws in that country, has been against him; and with that interest it has been vain to contend.*

Text: that which appeared in the January 1796 issue of the **New-York Magazine.** The first separate publication was apparently at New Haven; it contains an "advertisement" dated in April. The New Haven edition reveals several changes: the Preface became a dedication to Martha Washington; greater particularity was obtained by making "our sires" "my sire" throughout; four lines (following 264) were added; a prose note was appended and numerous changes made in punctuation, spelling, and italics. Possibly Barlow sent back two manuscripts; it is also possible that the dedication to Mrs. Washington was someone else's idea • **Omne . . . dulci.** He has gained all approval who has mingled the useful with the agreeable • **apparent interest.** A distinction between the "interests" of privileged groups and the interests of the masses is the basis of Barlow's argument in **Advice to the Privileged Orders.** He sought to appeal to the enlightened self-interest of all readers

The vicious habits which in this little piece I endeavor to combat, seem to me not so difficult to cure. No class of people has any interest *in supporting them, unless it be the interest which certain families feel in vying with each other in sumptuous entertainments. There may indeed be some instances of depraved appetites, which no arguments will conquer; but these must be rare. There are very few persons but what would always prefer a plain dish for themselves, and would prefer it likewise for their guests, if there were no risk of reputation in the case. This difficulty can only be removed by example; and the example should proceed from those whose situation enables them to take the lead in forming the manners of a nation. Persons of this description in America, I should hope, are neither above nor below the influence of truth and reason, when conveyed in language suited to the subject.*

Whether the manner I have chosen to address my arguments to them be such as to promise any success is what I cannot decide. But I certainly had hopes of doing some good, or I should not have taken the pains of putting so many rhymes together.—The example of domestic virtues has doubtless a great effect. I only wish to rank simplicity of diet *among the virtues. In that case I should hope it will be cherished and more esteemed by others than it is at present.*

THE AUTHOR

CANTO I

Ye Alps audacious, thro' the heav'ns that rise,
To cramp the day and hide me from the skies;
Ye Gallic flags, that o'er their heights unfurl'd,
Bear death to kings, and freedom to the world,
I sing not you. A softer theme I chuse,
A virgin theme, unconscious of the Muse,
But fruitful, rich, well suited to inspire
The purest frenzy of poetic fire.
Despise it not, ye Bards to terror steel'd,
Who hurl your thunders round the epic field;
Nor ye who strain your midnight throats to sing
Joys that the vineyard and the still-house bring;
Or on some distant fair your notes employ,
And speak of raptures that you ne'er enjoy.
I sing the sweets I know, the charms I feel,
My morning incense, and my evening meal,
The sweets of Hasty-Pudding. Come, dear bowl,
Glide o'er my palate, and inspire my soul.
The milk beside thee, smoking from the kine,
Its substance mingled, married in with thine,
Shall cool and temper thy superior heat,
And save the pains of blowing while I eat.
Oh! could the smooth, the emblematic song
Flow like thy genial juices o'er my tongue,
Could those mild morsels in my numbers chime,
And, as they roll in substance, roll in rhyme,
No more thy aukward unpoetic name
Should shun the Muse, or prejudice thy fame;
But rising grateful to th' accustom'd ear,
All Bards should catch it, and all realms revere.
Assist me first with pious toil to trace
Thro' wrecks of time thy lineage and thy race;
Declare what lovely squaw, in dayes of yore,
(Ere great Columbus sought thy native shore)
First gave thee to the world; her works of fame
Have liv'd indeed, but liv'd without a name.
Some tawny Ceres, goddess of her days
First learn'd with stones to crack the well dry'd maise,
Thro' the rough seive to shake the golden show'r,
In boiling water stir the yellow flour:
The yellow flour, bestrew'd and stir'd with haste,
Swells in the flood and thickens to a paste,
Then puffs and wallops, rises to the brim,
Drinks the dry knobs that on the surface swim;
The knobs at last the busy ladle breaks,
And the whole mass its true consistence takes.
Could but her sacred name unknown so long,
Rise, like her labors, to the son of song,
To her, to them, I'd consecrate my lays,
And blow her pudding with the breath of praise.
If 'twas Oella, whom I sang before,

---

3 **Gallic flags**, French standards. At the beginning of the French Revolution, Savoy was a part of the Kingdom of Sardinia; it was invaded and taken by the French in 1792 • 12 **still-house**, distillery • 37 **Ceres**, goddess of grain • 43 **wallops**, bubbles (dialect) • 51 **Oella . . . before.** In Bks. II and III of **The Vision of Columbus** and **The Columbiad**, Barlow made great use of the legend that the Incas of Peru originated with two children of the Sun, Manco Capac and his sister-wife, Mama Oella. This legend, derived from the history of Peru by Garcilaso de la Vega (1540-1616), made Oella the originator of spinning and other useful arts

I here ascribe her one great virtue more.
Not thro' the rich Peruvian realms alone
The fame of Sol's sweet daughter should be known,
But o'er the world's wide clime should live secure,
Far as his rays extend, as long as they endure.
  Dear Hasty-Pudding, what unpromis'd joy
Expands my heart, to meet thee in Savoy!
Doom'd o'er the world thro' devious paths to roam,
Each clime my country, and each house my home,
My soul is sooth'd, my cares have found an end,
I greet my long-lost, unforgotten friend.
  For Thee thro' Paris, that corrupted town,
How long in vain I wandered up and down,
Where shameless Bacchus, with his drenching hoard,
Cold from his cave usurps the morning board.
London is lost in smoke and steep'd in tea;
No Yankey there can lisp the name of thee;
The uncouth word, a libel on the town,
Would call a proclamation from the crown.
For climes oblique, that fear the sun's full rays,
Chill'd in their fogs, exclude the generous maize;
A grain whose rich luxuriant growth requires
Short gentle showers, and bright etherial fires.
  But here, tho' distant from our native shore,
With mutual glee we meet and laugh once more.
The same! I know thee by that yellow face,
That strong complexion of true Indian race.
Which time can never change, nor soil impair,
Nor Alpine snows, nor Turkey's morbid air;
For endless years, thro' every mild domain,
Where grows the maize, there thou art sure to reign.
  But man, more fickle, the bold licence claims,
In different realms to give thee different names.
Thee the soft nations round the warm Levant
Polanta call, the French of course *Polante.*
Ev'n in thy native regions, how I blush
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *Mush!*
On Hudson's banks, while men of Belgic spawn
Insult and eat thee by the name *Suppawn.*
Thy name is *Hasty-Pudding!* thus our sires
Were wont to greet thee fuming from their fires,
And while they argu'd in thy just defence
With logic clear, they thus explain'd the sense:—
"In *haste* the boiling cauldron, o'er the blaze,
"Receives and cooks the ready-powder'd maize;
"In *haste* 'tis served, and then in equal *haste,*
"With cooling milk, we make the sweet repast.
"No carving to be done, no knife to grate
"The tender ear, and wound the stony plate;
"But the smooth spoon, just fitted to the lip,
"And taught with art the yielding mass to dip,
"By frequent journeys to the bowl well stor'd,
"Performs the hasty honors of the board."
Such is thy name, significant and clear,
A name, a sound to every Yankey dear,
But most to me, whose heart and palate chaste
Preserve my pure hereditary taste.
  There are who strive to stamp with disrepute
The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;
In tropes of high-strain'd wit, while gaudy prigs
Compare thy nursling man to pamper'd pigs;
With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,
Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast.
What though the generous cow gives me to quaff
The milk nutritious; am I then a calf?
Or can the genius of the noisy swine,
Though nurs'd on pudding, thence lay claim to mine?
Sure the sweet song, I fashion to thy praise,
Runs more melodious than the notes they raise.
  My song resounding in its grateful glee,
No merit claims; I praise myself in thee.
My father lov'd thee thro' his length of days;
For thee his fields were shaded o'er with maize;
From thee what health, what vigor he possesst,
Ten sturdy freemen from his loins attest;
Thy constellation rul'd my natal morn,
And all my bones were made of Indian corn.
Delicious grain! whatever form it take,
To roast or boil, to smother or to bake,
In every dish 'tis welcome still to me,
But most, my *Hasty-Pudding,* most in thee.
  Let the green Succatash with thee contend,

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65 **Bacchus**, god of wine • 70 **crown.** "A certain king, at the time when this was written, was publishing proclamations to prevent American principles from being propagated in his country."—Barlow. The allusion is probably to a royal proclamation against seditious publications issued in England in May 1792, which forced Barlow to publish Part II of **Advice to the Privileged Orders** (1793) in Paris • 85 **Levant,** countries of the eastern Mediterranean • 89 **Belgic spawn,** the Dutch • 90 **Suppawn,** supawn, a word of American Indian origin • 126 **Ten sturdy freemen.** Only nine Barlow children are accounted for. "Still," says Professor Zunder, "Joel must have known the truth"

Let beans and corn their sweetest juices blend,
Let butter drench them in its yellow tide,
And a long slice of bacon grace their side;
Not all the plate, how fam'd soe'er it be,
Can please my palate like a bowl of thee.
Some talk of Hoe-Cake, fair Virginia's pride,
Rich Johnny-Cake this mouth has often tri'd;
Both please me well, their virtues much the same;
Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,
Except in dear New-England, where the last
Receive a dash a pumpkin in the paste,
To give it sweetness and improve the taste.
But place them all before me, smoaking hot,
The big, round dumplin rolling from the pot;
The pudding of the bag, whose quivering breast,
With suet lin'd, leads on the Yankey feast;
The Charlotte brown, within whose crusty sides
A belly soft the pulpy apple hides;
The yellow bread, whose face like amber glows,
And all of Indian that the bake-pan knows—
You tempt me not, my fav'rite greets my eyes,
To that lov'd bowl my spoon by instinct flies.

CANTO II

To mix the food by vicious rules of art,
To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,
To make mankind to social virtue sour,
Cram o'er each dish, and be what they devour;
For this the kitchen Muse first fram'd her book,
Commanding sweat to stream from every cook;
Children no more their antic gambols tri'd,
And friends to physic wonder'd why they died.
Not so the Yankey—his abundant feast,
With simples furnish'd, and with plainness drest,
A numerous offspring gathers round the board,
And cheers alike the servant and the lord;
Whose well-bought hunger prompts the joyous taste,
And health attends them from the short repast.
While the full pail rewards the milk-maid's toil,
The mother sees the morning cauldron boil;
To stir the pudding next demands their care,
To spread the table and the bowls prepare;
To feed the children, as their portions cool,
And comb their heads, and send them off to school.
Yet may the simplest dish some rules impart,
For nature scorns not all the aids of art.
Ev'n Hasty-Pudding, purest of all food,
May still be bad, indifferent, or good,
As sage experience the short process guides,
Or want of skill, or want of care presides.
Whoe'er would form it on the surest plan,
To rear the child and long sustain the man;
To shield the morals while it mends the size,
And all the powers of every food supplies,
Attend the lessons that the Muse shall bring,
Suspend your spoons, and listen while I sing.
But since, O man! thy life and health demand
Not food alone, but labour from thy hand,
First in the field, beneath the sun's strong rays,
Ask of thy mother earth the needful maize;
She loves the race that courts her yielding soil,
And gives her bounties to the sons of toil.
When now the ox, obedient to thy call,
Repays the loan that fill'd the winter stall,
Pursue his traces o'er the furrow'd plain,
And plant in measur'd hills the golden grain.
But when the tender germe begins to shoot,
And the green spire declares the sprouting root,
Then guard your nursling from each greedy foe,
Th' insidious worm, the all-devouring crow.
A little ashes, sprinkled round the spire,
Soon steep'd in rain, will bid the worm retire;
The feather'd robber with his hungry maw
Swift flies the field before your man of straw,
A frightful image, such as school-boys bring
When met to burn the Pope, or hang the King.
Thrice in each season, through each variant row
Wield the strong plow-share and the faithful hoe;
The faithful hoe; a double task that takes,
To till the summer corn, and roast the winter cakes.
Slow springs the blade, while check'd by chilling rains,
Ere yet the sun the seat of Cancer gains;

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150 **Charlotte**, a sweet enclosed in cake, crust, or crumbs, such as charlotte russe. Barlow probably picked up the word in Europe, although he may have been describing a kind of apple pie • 207 **burn . . . King.** The allusion is probably to the traditional celebration of Guy Fawkes Day, November 5, the anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605. English children still ask "a penny for the Guy"; American boys probably cared little for distinctions between Fawkes, Pope, and King • 213 **Cancer**, the sign of the zodiac marking the summer solstice or longest day in the year; about June 21

But when his fiercest fires emblaze the land,
Then start the juices, then the roots expand;
Then, like a column of Corinthian mould,
The stalk struts upward, and the leaves unfold;
The busy branches all the ridges fill,
Entwine their arms, and kiss from hill to hill.
Here cease to vex them, all your cares are done;
Leave the last labors to the parent sun;
Beneath his genial smiles, the well-drest field,
When autumn calls, a plenteous crop shall yield.
  Now the strong foliage bears the standards high,
And shoots the tall top-gallants to the sky;
The suckling ears their silky fringes bend,
And pregnant grown, their swelling coats distend;
The loaded stalk, while still the burthen grows,
O'erhangs the space that runs between the rows;
High as a hop-field waves the silent grove,
A safe retreat for little thefts of love,
When the pledg'd roasting-ears invite the maid,
To meet her swain beneath the new-form'd shade;
His generous hand unloads the cumbrous hill,
And the green spoils her ready basket fill;
Small compensation for the two-fold bliss,
The promis'd wedding and the present kiss.
  Slight depredations these; but now the moon
Calls from his hollow tree the sly raccoon;
And while by night he bears his prize away,
The bolder squirrel labors thro' the day.
Both thieves alike, but provident of time,
A virtue rare, that almost hides their crime.
Then let them steal the little stores they can,
And fill their gran'ries from the toils of man;
We've one advantage where they take no part,—
With all their wiles they ne'er have found the art
To boil the Hasty-Pudding; here we shine
Superior far to tenants of the pine;
This envy'd boon to man shall still belong,
Unshar'd by them in substance or in song.
  At last the closing season browns the plain,
And ripe October gathers in the grain;
Deep loaded carts the spacious corn-house fill,
The sack distended marches to the mill;
The lab'ring mill beneath the burthen groans,
And show'rs the future pudding from the stones;
Till the glad house-wife greets the powder'd gold,
And the new crop exterminates the old.

  The days grow short; but tho' the falling sun
To the glad swain proclaims his day's work done,
Night's pleasing shades his various tasks prolong,
And yield new subjects to my various song.
For now, the corn-house fill'd, the harvest home,
Th' invited neighbors to the *Husking* come;
A frolic scene, where work, and mirth, and play,
Unite their charms, to chace the hours away.
  Where the huge heap lies center'd in the hall,
The lamp suspended from the cheerful wall,
Brown corn-fed nymphs, and strong hard-handed beaux,
Alternate rang'd, extend in circling rows,
Assume their seats, the solid mass attack;
The dry husks rustle, and the corn-cobs crack;
The song, the laugh, alternate notes resound,
And the sweet cider trips in silence round.
  The laws of Husking every wight can tell;
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well:
For each red ear a general kiss he gains,
With each smut ear he smuts the luckless swains;
But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,
Red as her lips, and taper as her waist,
She walks the round, and culls one favor'd beau,
Who leaps, the luscious tribute to bestow.
Various the sport, as are the wits and brains
Of well-pleas'd lasses and contending swains;
Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,
And he that gets the last ear, wins the day.
  Meanwhile the house-wife urges all her care,
The well-earn'd feast to hasten and prepare.
The sifted meal already waits her hand.
The milk is strain'd, the bowls in order stand,
The fire flames high; and, as a pool (that takes
The headlong stream that o'er the mill-dam breaks)
Foams, roars, and rages, with incessant toils,

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216 **Corinthian mould**, the most ornamental of the Greek capital orders • 259 **the old.** New Haven ed. inserts.

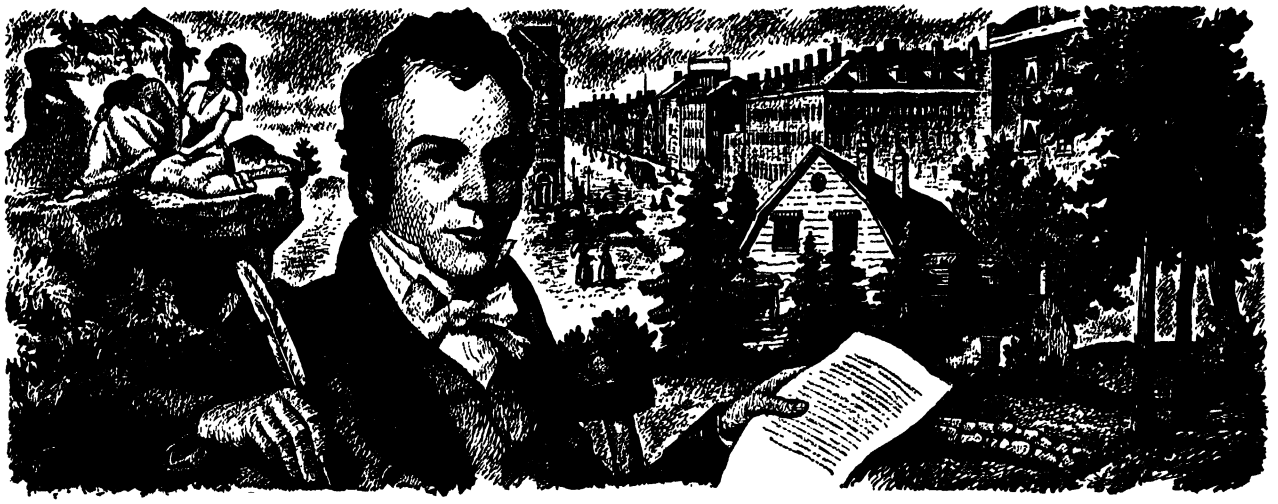
> Ah, who can sing what every wight must feel,
> The joy that enters with the bag of meal,
> A general jubilee pervades the house,
> Wakes every child and gladdens every mouse.

So the vext cauldron rages, roars and boils.
First with clean salt she seasons well the food,
Then strews the flour, and thickens all the flood.
Long o'er the simmering fire she lets it stand;
To stir it well demands a stronger hand;
The husband takes his turn and round and round
The ladle flies; at last the toil is crown'd;
When to the board the thronging huskers pour,
And take their seats as at the corn before.
I leave them to their feast. There still belong
More copious matters to my faithful song.
For rules there are, tho' ne'er unfolded yet,
Nice rules and wise, how pudding should be ate.
Some with molasses grace the luscious treat,
And mix, like Bards, the useful with the sweet.
A wholesome dish, and well deserving praise,
A great resource in those bleak wintry days,
When the chill'd earth lies buried deep in snow,
And raging Boreas dries the shivering cow.
Blest cow! thy praise shall still my notes employ,
Great source of health, the only source of joy;
Mother of Egypt's God,—but sure, for me,
Were I to leave my God, I'd worship thee.
How oft thy teats these pious hands have prest!
How oft thy bounties proved my only feast!
How oft I've fed thee with my fav'rite grain!
And roar'd, like thee, to find thy children slain!
Ye swains who know her various worth to prize,
Ah! house her well from Winter's angry skies.
Potatoes, pumpkins, should her sadness cheer,
Corn from your crib, and mashes from your beer;
When spring returns she'll well acquit the loan,
And nurse at once your infants and her own.
Milk then with pudding I should always chuse;
To this in future I confine my Muse,
Till she in haste some farther hints unfold,
Well for the young, nor useless to the old.
First in your bowl the milk abundant take,
Then drop with care along the silver lake
Your flakes of pudding; these at first will hide
Their little bulk beneath the swelling tide;
But when their growing mass no more can sink,
When the soft island looms above the brink,
Then check your hand; you've got the portion's due,
So taught our sires, and what they taught is true.
There is a choice in spoons. Tho' small appear
The nice distinction, yet to me 'tis clear.
The deep-bowl'd Gallic spoon, contriv'd to scoop
In ample draughts the thin diluted soup,
Performs not well in these substantial things,
Whose mass adhesive to the metal clings;
Where the strong labial muscles must embrace,
The gentle curve, and sweep the hollow space.
With ease to enter and discharge the freight,
A bowl less concave but still more dilate,
Becomes the pudding best. The shape, the size,
A secret rests unknown to vulgar eyes.
Experienc'd feeders can alone impart
A rule so much above the lore of art.
These tuneful lips, that thousand spoons have tried,
With just precision could the point decide.
Tho' not in song; the muse but poorly shines
In cones, and cubes, and geometric lines,
Yet the true form, as near as she can tell,
Is that small section of a goose-egg shell,
Which in two equal portions shall divide
The distance from the centre to the side.
Fear not to slaver; 'tis no deadly sin.
Like the free Frenchman, from your joyous chin
Suspend the ready napkin; or, like me,
Poise with one hand your bowl upon your knee;
Just in the zenith your wise head project,
Your full spoon, rising in a line direct,
Bold as a bucket, heeds no drops that fall,
The wide-mouth'd bowl will surely catch them all!

1793 • 1796

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362 **slaver**, drool, slobber • 369 **catch them all.** New Haven ed inserts a note "There are various ways of preparing and eating it; with molasses, butter, sugar, cream, and fried. Why so excellent a thing cannot be eaten alone? Nothing is perfect alone, even man who boasts of so much perfection is nothing without his fellow substance. In eating, beware of the lurking heat that lies deep in the mass; dip your spoon gently, take shallow dips and cool it by degrees. It is sometimes necessary to blow. This is indicated by certain signs which every experienced feeder knows. They should be taught to young beginners. I have known a child's tongue blistered for want of this attention, and then the school-dame would insist that the poor thing had told a lie. A mistake the falsehood was in the faithless pudding. A prudent mother will cool it for her child with her own sweet breath The husband, seeing this, pretends his own wants blowing too from the same lips A sly deceit of love She knows the cheat, but feigning ignorance, lends her pouting lips and gives a gentle blast, which warms the husband's heart more than it cools his pudding"



William Cullen Bryant

1794 • 1878

When William Cullen Bryant was born, during Washington's second term as President, there were fifteen states in the Union, with Kentucky the only one west of the Alleghenies. When Bryant died, twenty-two of the thirty-eight states were "western," and the first transcontinental railroad had been in operation for nearly a decade. In this period of unparalleled expansion, Bryant, as a public-spirited citizen and the editor of an influential newspaper, had a conspicuous place and would be remembered even had he not written poetry. Sober, dignified, earnest in urging principles and policies in which he believed, he was recognized as a great liberal, and it is likely that he will command respect, for one reason or another, from each succeeding generation of Americans.

As a poet, Bryant has suffered from being called the American Wordsworth, or a belated representative of New England Puritanism, or a cold child of the eighteenth century, only slightly affected by the warming influences of the Romantic movement. That there is some justice in each of these judgments cannot be denied, but Bryant may be better understood against the background of American expansion. His love of nature was typical of an age which was discovering the wildness and variety of American scenery; his moral earnestness was shared by the vast majority of his countrymen, although few of them, perhaps, were as untouched by denominational bigotry; and his conservative tastes in the arts were in large part the result of the uncertain groping of his generation toward standards and traditions. In Bryant's poetry, moreover, we can observe the

Panel (l. to r.): "Monument Mountain" • William Cullen Bryant at 25 • Broadway in 1840 • Bryant's birthplace, Cummington, Massachusetts

the idea of continuity on the one hand; and on the other the future, the manifest destiny of America, and the hope of a new start toward a more perfect world.

Bryant was born at Cummington, in western Massachusetts, November 3, 1794. Brought up in a Calvinistic and Federalist environment, he took himself and the world very seriously as soon as he knew anything about them. His first verses appeared in a newspaper when he was ten, and he saw his first book in print five years later, when his father arranged for the publication of *The Embargo,* an attack on Jefferson's methods of avoiding entanglement in the Napoleonic conflict. He had only one year of college, at Williams, and then, because there was no livelihood in poetry, he turned to the study of law. Admitted to the bar in 1814, he practiced in several Massachusetts towns with moderate success, occasionally using his leisure for composing poems. After 1817, when his father sent some of his poems to a Boston friend and "Thanatopsis" came out in the *North American Review,* he became known as poet and reviewer for that periodical and others. In 1821 he married Fanny Fairchild, the "fairest of the rural maids"; theirs was an unusually happy marriage. During a visit to Boston in that same year, to read "The Ages" before the Phi Beta Kappa society at Harvard, Bryant arranged for the first collection of his poems. Thin volume though it was—it contained only eight pieces—the *Poems* of 1821 remains a landmark in American literary history.

Then, in 1825, Bryant had the courage to give up the law for the uncertainties of a literary life and deserted Massachusetts for New York City. Within a few months he formed a connection with the *Evening Post,* a daily newspaper which had been founded by Alexander Hamilton; in 1829 he became its editor-in-chief. Thereafter until his death in 1878 he was first of all the editor of the *Evening Post;* as a part owner he grew wealthy and was able to afford much European travel for himself and his family, as well as to establish a comfortable home at Roslyn on Long Island. His liberalism was most marked in his lifelong devotion to free trade; it may also be followed in his treatment of both national and local politics. In editorials, travel letters, and public discourses he persistently and fearlessly spoke out for people, upholding the right of workingmen to organize, the abolition of slavery, and the rejected plans of Lincoln and Johnson for reconstruction of the South. A recital of his public services would be lengthy, and would include recognition of his part in the establishment of New York City's Central Park and Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as his close connections with the National Academy of Design and the Century Association.

Busy as he was, Bryant continued to write poetry throughout his life, although not in great quantity. After 1821, the chief editions of his poems were those of 1832, 1836, 1847, 1854, 1871, and 1876. Other volumes of importance included *The Fountain and Other Poems* (1842), *The White Footed Deer and Other Poems* (1844), and *Thirty Poems* (1864). He also translated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and published three volumes of travel letters as well as numerous commemorative discourses.

Bryant's poetry, although apparently simple, presents some very complicated problems, inadequately suggested by the familiar terms "classical" and "romantic." Lowell's famous description in *A Fable for Critics* (". . . Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified, / As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified") hints at the "classic" qualities of Bryant: his concern for form and clarity, harmony and serenity. That Bryant owed much to such English poets as James Thomson and William Cowper is clear. Yet his poetic theories and, more particularly, his themes—the past, death, freedom, nature—have much in them that is ordinarily called "romantic." Thoughtful consideration of his work will show how largely a matter of degree is the distinction between the classical and the romantic, and, for most readers, will bring respect for the mind of a man who was much more than a transition figure in the growth of American literature.

The Life and Works of William Cullen Bryant, ed. Parke Godwin, 6 vols., New York, 1883-1884 • William Cullen Bryant: Representative Selections, ed. Tremaine McDowell, Cincinnati, 1935 • John Bigelow, William Cullen Bryant, American Men of Letters Series, Boston, 1890 • W. A. Bradley, William Cullen Bryant, English Men of Letters Series, New York, 1905

Thanatopsis

Bryant's best-known poem, "Thanatopsis" (meaning "view of death"), was in large part written in 1811, when he was only sixteen. Six years later, without his knowledge, his father sent it and other pieces to the North American Review. The story goes that Richard Henry Dana, later one of Bryant's closest friends, remarked on seeing the manuscript that no one in America was capable of writing such verses. Thinking that another poem on death, consisting of four stanzas in iambic tetrameter rhyming abab, was a part of "Thanatopsis," the editors of the North American published both under one title in the issue for September 1817. When Bryant prepared the Poems of 1821, he added lines 1-17 (to "Yet a few days") as an introduction, and sixteen lines at the end (beginning with "As the long train").

The poem should be read in the light of both literary tradition and Bryant's own religious background. From the English poets (notably Henry Kirke White, Robert Blair, Bishop Beilby Porteus, Robert Southey, and William Cowper) he learned of the possibilities of blank verse and the themes of the "graveyard school" of writers. Even had he not read these poets, however, he would have had, from his Puritan background, a predilection for the funereal. Note, however, that Bryant's concept of Man's long sleep is more Stoic than Christian, with no hint of the resurrection or immortality of the soul.

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods

Text: here, as in the poems which follow, is the 1876 edition • 51 pierce . . . wilderness. North American: and the Borean desert pierce, 1821, 1832, 1847: and the Barcan desert pierce; 1854: traverse Barca's desert sands; present reading, 1871. Barca is the ancient name of that part of Libya east of Tripoli, its capital being Bengazi. Bryant seems to have had the idea, common in his time, that there was a Sahara-like desert west of the Mississippi

Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

1811·1817-1821

Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood

Nowhere, perhaps, does Bryant express more happily the romantic view of nature than in "A Fragment," which first appeared in the North American Review for September 1817 with "Thanatopsis." In the Poems of 1821 it was entitled "Inscription for the Entrance into a Wood." Note that nature is a joy and a solace to man, not, as the post-Darwinians tell us, an arena for the struggle to survive.

Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth which needs
No school of long experience, that the world
Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen
Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,
To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood
And view the haunts of Nature. The calm shade
Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft a balm
To thy sick heart. Thou wilt find nothing here
Of all that pained thee in the haunts of men,
And made thee loathe thy life. The primal curse
Fell, it is true, upon the unsinning earth,
But not in vengeance. God hath yoked to guilt
Her pale tormentor, misery. Hence, these shades
Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick roof
Of green and stirring branches is alive
And musical with birds, that sing and sport
In wantonness of spirit; while below
The squirrel, with raised paws and form erect,
Chirps merrily. Throngs of insects in the shade
Try their thin wings and dance in the warm beam
That waked them into life. Even the green trees
Partake the deep contentment; as they bend

Thanatopsis • 53 **Where . . . and.** NA. That veil Oregan, where he, 1821 Where rolls the Oregan, and The Oregon is Bryant's name for the Columbia River • 58 **withdraw.** NA, 1821, 1832 shalt fall • 59 **In silence from.** NA, 1821· Unnoticed by; 1832, 1847: Unheeded by • 60 **All that breathe.** NA Thousands more • 61 **The gay . . . care.** NA: The tittering world. Dance to the grave. The busy brood of care • 63 **as . . . chase.** NA: chases as before. 1821: The bow'd with age, the infant in the smiles; 1832, 1847, 1854: And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man • 74 **which.** 1821, 1832, 1847. that • 75 **that mysterious realm.** 1821 the pale realms of shade

Inscription • 1 **learned.** Until 1847: learnt • 2 **No . . . experience.** Until 1832. Experience more than reason • 3 **seen.** Until 1832 known • 7 **kindred.** 1817: kinder • 9 **Thou . . . here.** 1817: Here thou wilt nothing find • 13 **God . . . life.** 1817·

Misery is wed
To guilt. Hence in these shades we still behold
The abodes of gladness, here from tree to tree
And through the rustling branches flit the birds
In wantonness of spirit;—theirs are strains
Of no dissembled rapture—while below
The squirrel with rais'd paws and form erect
Chirps merrily. In the warm glade the throngs
Of dancing insects sport in the mild beam
That wak'd them into life

1821·

Misery is wed
To guilt. And hence the shades are still the abodes
Of undissembled gladness, the thick roof . . .

which is followed by the present version except for the use of "glade" instead of "shade" in line 20 By 1832 Bryant had come to the present reading

To the soft winds, the sun from the blue sky
Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene.
Scarce less the cleft-born wild-flower seems to enjoy
Existence, than the wingèd plunderer
That sucks its sweets. The mossy rocks themselves,
And the old and ponderous trunks of prostrate trees
That lead from knoll to knoll a causey rude
Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark roots,
With all their earth upon them, twisting high,
Breathe fixed tranquillity. The rivulet
Sends forth glad sounds, and tripping o'er its bed
Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks,
Seems, with continuous laughter, to rejoice
In its own being. Softly tread the marge,
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the wren
That dips her bill in water. The cool wind,
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to thee,
Like one that loves thee nor will let thee pass
Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace.

1817

To a Waterfowl

This poem, which Matthew Arnold believed the finest of its length in the English language, was composed by Bryant after a walk from Cummington to Plainfield, Massachusetts, in December 1815. It was first published in the North American Review for March 1818 and collected in the Poems of 1821. The clarity of the central image and the aptness and simplicity of the moral analogy have always been admired, even by those who dislike "preaching" in poetry. The effect of the stanza form has been described as "gliding," appropriate to the visual image of the second stanza.

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

1815-1818

A Forest Hymn

"A Hymn" first appeared in the United States Literary Gazette for April 1, 1825, over the signature of "B." It was reprinted as "Forest Hymn" in the Poems of 1832. Ex-

Inscription • 25 Looks. 1817 Peeps • 28 mossy. Until 1854 massy • 30 causey. 1817 causeway • 31 brook. 1817 stream • 39 in water. The 1817 version ends with these words

To a Waterfowl • 5 fowler's, hunter's • 9 plashy, marshy

cept for minor changes in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, Bryant left the poem pretty well alone down through the years. Thought to have been composed at Great Barrington early in 1825, it has always been praised for the simplicity and sincerity of its quiet love of the revelation of God in external nature.

The groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them—ere he framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down,
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
And supplication. For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
His spirit with the thought of boundless power
And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
Only among the crowd, and under roofs
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least,
Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
Acceptance in His ear.
Father, thy hand
Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down
Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
And shot toward heaven. The century-living crow
Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
Fit shrine for humble worshipper to hold
Communion with his Maker. These dim vaults,
These winding aisles, of human pomp or pride
Report not. No fantastic carvings show
The boast of our vain race to change the form
Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou fill'st
The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
That run along the summit of these trees
In music; thou art in the cooler breath
That from the inmost darkness of the place
Comes, scarcely felt; the barky trunks, the ground,
The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with thee.
Here is continual worship;—Nature, here,
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
From perch to perch, the solitary bird
Passes; and yon clear spring, that, midst its herbs,
Wells softly forth and wandering steeps the roots
Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and grace,
Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
Almost annihilated—not a prince,
In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this great universe.

My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on,
In silence, round me—the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.

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2 shaft, column • **2 architrave,** in classical architecture, that part of the entablature, or lintel, lying between the capital and the frieze Bryant was thinking first of the Greek temple and then ("lofty vault," l 4) of the Gothic cathedral • **30 century-living crow.** The long life of the crow, or raven, is traditional, there are said to be instances of captive ravens that have lived nearly a hundred years • **37 fantastic carvings.** At this period of his life, Bryant apparently cared little for Gothic architecture

Lo! all grow old and die—but see again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses—ever-gay and beautiful youth
In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
Moulder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost
One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies
And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
Of his arch-enemy Death—yea, seats himself
Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulchre,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves
Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they outlived
The generation born with them, nor seemed
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
Around them;—and there have been holy men
Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
But let me often to these solitudes
Retire, and in thy presence reassure
My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
And tremble and are still. Oh, God! when thou
Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
With all the waters of the firmament,
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods
And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
Uprises the great deep and throws himself
Upon the continent, and overwhelms
Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
Of the mad, unchained elements to teach
Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate,
In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works
Learn to conform the order of our lives.

1825

I Cannot Forget With What Fervid Devotion

Nine "Stanzas" by "X. X." appeared in the **New-York Review and Atheneum Magazine** for February 1826. When Bryant prepared the 1832 edition of his poems, he condensed this piece to seven stanzas. The poem is thought to have been written at Cummington in 1815, when Bryant was only twenty-one, but the nostalgia of a man of affairs for the dreams of his early youth was apparently recurrent throughout his life.

I cannot forget with what fervid devotion
I worshipped the visions of verse and of fame;
Each gaze at the glories of earth, sky, and ocean,
To my kindled emotions, was wind over flame.

And deep were my musings in life's early blossom,
'Mid the twilight of mountain-groves wandering long;
How thrilled my young veins, and how throbbed my full bosom,
When o'er me descended the spirit of song!

'Mong the deep-cloven fells that for ages had listened
To the rush of the pebble-paved river between,
Where the kingfisher screamed and gray precipice glistened,
All breathless with awe have I gazed on the scene;

Till I felt the dark power o'er my reveries stealing,
From the gloom of the thickets that over me hung,
And the thoughts that awoke, in that rapture of feeling,
Were formed into verse as they rose to my tongue.

Bright visions! I mixed with the world, and ye faded,
No longer your pure rural worshipper now;
In the haunts your continual presence pervaded,
Ye shrink from the signet of care on my brow.

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9 fells, mountains, rocky uplands. 1832.

From his throne in the depth of that stern solitude,
And he breathed through my lips, in that tempest of feeling,
Strains warm with his spirit, though artless and rude.

In the old mossy groves on the breast of the mountain,
  In deep lonely glens where the waters complain,
By the shade of the rock, by the gush of the fountain,
  I seek your loved footsteps, but seek them in vain.

Oh, leave not forlorn and forever forsaken,
  Your pupil and victim to life and its tears!
But sometimes return, and in mercy awaken
  The glories ye showed to his earlier years.

1815?-1826

A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal

Humor and awareness of the technological advances of the age are pleasantly combined in "A Meditation on Rhode Island Coal," first published in the **New-York Review and Atheneum Magazine** for April 1826.

"Decolor, obscurus, vilis, non ille repexam
Cesariem regum, non candida virginis ornat
Colla, nec insigni splendet per cingula morsu
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,
Tunc superat pulchros cultus et quicquid Eois
Indus litoribus rubra scrutatur in alga."—CLAUDIAN

I sat beside the glowing grate, fresh heaped
  With Newport coal, and as the flame grew bright
—The many-colored flame—and played and leaped,
  I thought of rainbows, and the northern light,
Moore's Lalla Rookh, the Treasury Report,
And other brilliant matters of the sort.

And last I thought of that fair isle which sent
  The mineral fuel; on a summer day
I saw it once, with heat and travel spent,
  And scratched by dwarf-oaks in the hollow way.
Now dragged through sand, now jolted over stone—
A rugged road through rugged Tiverton.

And hotter grew the air, and hollower grew
  The deep-worn path, and horror-struck, I thought,
Where will this dreary passage lead me to?
  This long dull road, so narrow, deep, and hot?
I looked to see it dive in earth outright;
I looked—but saw a far more welcome sight.

Like a soft mist upon the evening shore,
  At once a lovely isle before me lay,
Smooth, and with tender verdure covered o'er,
  As if just risen from its calm inland bay;
Sloped each way gently to the grassy edge,
And the small waves that dallied with the sedge.

The barley was just reaped; the heavy sheaves
  Lay on the stubble-field; the tall maize stood
Dark in its summer growth, and shook its leaves,
  And bright the sunlight played on the young wood—
For fifty years ago, the old men say,
The Briton hewed their ancient groves away.

I saw where fountains freshened the green land,
  And where the pleasant road, from door to door,
With rows of cherry-trees on either hand,
  Went wandering all that fertile region o'er—
Rogue's Island once—but when the rogues were dead,
Rhode Island was the name it took instead.

Beautiful island! then it only seemed
  A lovely stranger; it has grown a friend.

Claudian • The message is from a poem on the magnet, by Claudianus (365?-408), to be found among his **Carminum Minorum Corpusculum** (XXIX, ll. 10-15). The sense is Black, dull, and common, it does not adorn the braided hairs of kings nor the snowy necks of girls, nor shine in the jewelled buckles of warrior's belts. But consider the marvelous properties of this dull-looking stone and you will see that it is of more worth than lovely gems and any pearl sought of Indian amid the seaweed on the Red Sea's shore • **2 Newport coal.** Rhode Island coal was actually mined near Portsmouth on the northern part of the island in Narragansett Bay called Aquidneck by the Indians, on which Newport is located • **5 Lalla Rookh.** Part III of the poem by Thomas Moore (1779-1852) deals with Oriental fire worshipers • **5 the Treasury Report.** Since 1800, the law has required that the secretary of the treasury make an annual report of the state of the finances. • **12 Tiverton,** on the mainland north and east of Rhode Island proper • **29 fifty years ago,** during the British occupation of Newport, between 1776 and 1779, when much timber was cut for firewood • **31 fountains, springs** • **35 Rogue's Island.** Bryant's etymology is not admitted by Rhode Island folk, who attribute the name Rhode Island to Giovanni da Verrazano, a Florentine sailing under the flag of France, who visited Narragansett Bay in 1524 and thought it looked like the extensive harbors of the island of Rhodes in the Mediterranean

I gazed on its smooth slopes, but never dreamed
How soon that green and quiet isle would send
The treasures of its womb across the sea,
To warm a poet's room and boil his tea.

Dark anthracite! that reddenest on my hearth,
Thou in those island mines didst slumber long;
But now thou art come forth to move the earth,
And put to shame the men that mean thee wrong:
Thou shalt be coals of fire to those that hate thee,
And warm the shins of all that underrate thee.

Yea, they did wrong thee foully—they who mocked
Thy honest face, and said thou wouldst not burn;
Of hewing thee to chimney-pieces talked,
And grew profane, and swore, in bitter scorn,
That men might to thy inner caves retire,
And there, unsinged, abide the day of fire.

Yet is thy greatness nigh. I pause to state,
That I too have seen greatness—even I—
Shook hands with Adams, stared at La Fayette,
When, barehead, in the hot noon of July,
He would not let the umbrella be held o'er him,
For which three cheers burst from the mob before him.

And I have seen—not many months ago—
An Eastern Governor in chapeau bras
And military coat, a glorious show!
Ride forth to visit the reviews, and ah!
How oft he smiled and bowed to Jonathan!
How many hands were shook and votes were won!

'Twas a great Governor; thou too shalt be
Great in thy turn, and wide shall spread thy fame
And swiftly; farthest Maine shall hear of thee,
And cold New Brunswick gladden at thy name;
And, faintly through its sleets, the weeping isle
That sends the Boston folks their cod shall smile.

For thou shalt forge vast railways, and shalt heat
The hissing rivers into steam, and drive
Huge masses from thy mines, on iron feet,
Walking their steady way, as if alive,
Northward, till everlasting ice besets thee,
And South as far as the grim Spaniard lets thee.

Thou shalt make mighty engines swim the sea,
Like its own monsters—boats that for a guinea
Will take a man to Havre—and shalt be
The moving soul of many a spinning-jenny,
And ply thy shuttles, till a bard can wear
As good a suit of broadcloth as the mayor.

Then we will laugh at winter when we hear
The grim old churl about our dwellings rave:
Thou, from that "ruler of the inverted year,"
Shalt pluck the knotty sceptre Cowper gave,
And pull him from his sledge, and drag him in,
And melt the icicles from off his chin.

1826

To Cole, the Painter, Departing for Europe

Thomas Cole (1801-1848), lionized in New York City in the 1820's for his discovery of native subjects for landscape paintings, was one of Bryant's numerous friends in the world of art. The two men, companions on walking tours in the Catskills, were remarkably similar in their tastes and accomplishments. From the Hudson River scenes which gave him reputation Cole turned to allegories and moral-

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43 **anthracite.** Rhode Island coal is so compressed that it is much more difficult to ignite than ordinary hard coal, it is no longer commercially mined • 57 **Shook . . . La Fayette.** Bryant probably saw Lafayette when he took part in the Fourth of July celebration at New York in 1825, near the end of his triumphal tour of the United States; the other reference is probably to John Adams, still living in Quincy, Massachusetts, when the poem was written • 62 **Eastern . . . chapeau bras,** that is, in a three-cornered hat, of the late-eighteenth-century fashion. The governor was perhaps De Witt Clinton (1769-1828) • 71 **weeping isle,** Newfoundland, notorious for its fogs • 87 **"ruler . . . year,"** a line from Bk. IV, "The Winter Evening," of Cowper's **The Task** (1785) • 90 **his chin.** In the **New-York Review** there was an additional stanza, somewhat more convivial and topical than those Bryant retained, it refers to the famous punch of Newport and the "Lunch"—the Bread and Cheese Club in which James Fenimore Cooper was the leading spirit:

Heat will be cheap—a small consideration
Will put one in a way to raise his punch,
Set lemon-trees, and have a cane plantation—
'Twill be a pretty saving to the Lunch.
Then the West India Negroes may go play
The banjo and keep endless holiday.

izing in such series of paintings as "The Course of Empire" and "The Voyage of Life," both remarkably like Bryant's "The Flood of Years." Cole, born in England, came to the United States at eighteen, and in later life is said to have remarked that he would give his left hand to have been a native American. The nationalistic tone of Bryant's tribute is therefore quite appropriate.

Thine eyes shall see the light of distant skies;
  Yet, COLE! thy heart shall bear to Europe's strand
  A living image of our own bright land,
Such as upon thy glorious canvas lies;
Lone lakes—savannas where the bison roves—
  Rocks rich with summer garlands—solemn streams—
  Skies, where the desert eagle wheels and screams—
Spring bloom and autumn blaze of boundless groves.
Fair scenes shall greet thee where thou goest—fair,
  But different—everywhere the trace of men,
Paths, homes, graves, ruins, from the lowest glen
To where life shrinks from the fierce Alpine air—
  Gaze on them, till the tears shall dim thy sight,
  But keep that earlier, wilder image bright.

1829

The Prairies

About 1830, two of Bryant's younger brothers went west to take up land, eventually settling at Princeton, Illinois. Visiting them in the summer of 1832, the poet rode on horseback northward a hundred miles from Jacksonville. "The Prairies," in which he combined his impressions on this trip with his well-tried themes of the ruins of empire and the transience of human life, was first published in the Knickerbocker for December 1833. The last lines suggest that he believed it was the "manifest destiny" of the United States to occupy the entire North American continent.

These are the gardens of the Desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The Prairies. I behold them for the first,
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch
In airy undulations, far away,
As if the Ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
And motionless for ever. Motionless?—
No—they are all unchained again. The clouds
Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,
Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye have played
Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no part in all this glorious work:
The hand that built the firmament hath heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown their slopes
With herbage, planted them with island-groves,
And hedged them round with forests. Fitting floor
For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multitude
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above our Eastern hills.

  As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed,
Among the high rank grass that sweeps his sides

To Cole . . . • **3 our own bright.** Bryant seems not to have known that Cole was English-born until he delivered a funeral oration on Cole before the National Academy of Design in 1848

The Prairies • **3 no name.** "Prairie," French in origin, seems to have come into general use in American English late in the eighteenth century • **13 The surface . . . eye.** "The prairies of the West, with an undulating surface, rolling prairies, as they are called, present to the unaccustomed eye a singular spectacle when the shadows of the clouds are passing rapidly over them. The face of the ground seems to fluctuate and toss like billows of the sea."—Bryant • **17 the prairie-hawk . . . not.** "I have seen the prairie-hawk balancing himself in the air for hours together, apparently over the same spot; probably watching his prey."—Bryant • **21 Sonora,** a state in the northwestern part of Mexico

The hollow beating of his footstep seems
A sacrilegious sound. I think of those
Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they here—
The dead of other days?—and did the dust
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? Let the mighty mounds
That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race, that long has passed away,
Built them; a disciplined and populous race
Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet the Greek
Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
The glittering Parthenon. These ample fields
Nourished their harvests, here their herds were fed,
When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,
And bowed his manèd shoulder to the yoke.
All day this desert murmured with their toils,
Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked, and wooed
In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
From instruments of unremembered form,
Gave the soft winds a voice. The red-man came—
The roaming hunter-tribes, warlike and fierce,
And the mound-builders vanished from the earth.
The solitude of centuries untold
Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie-wolf
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den
Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the ground
Where stood their swarming cities. All is gone;
All—save the piles of earth that hold their bones,
The platforms where they worshipped unknown gods,
The barriers which they builded from the soil
To keep the foe at bay—till o'er the walls
The wild beleaguerers broke, and, one by one,
The strongholds of the plain were forced, and heaped
With corpses. The brown vultures of the wood
Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchres,
And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast.
Haply some solitary fugitive,
Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
Of desolation and of fear became
Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
Man's better nature triumphed then. Kind words
Welcomed and soothed him; the rude conquerors
Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose
A bride among their maidens, and at length
Seemed to forget—yet ne'er forgot—the wife
Of his first love, and her sweet little ones,
Butchered, amid their shrieks, with all his race.

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise
Races of living things, glorious in strength,
And perish, as the quickening breath of God
Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red-man, too,
Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,
And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought
A wilder hunting-ground. The beaver builds
No longer by these streams, but far away,
On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back
The white man's face—among Missouri's springs,
And pools whose issues swell the Oregon,
He rears his little Venice. In these plains
The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty leagues
Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake
The earth with thundering steps—yet here I meet
His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds,
And birds, that scarce have learned the fear of man,
Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
Bounds to the wood at my approach. The bee,

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42 **mighty mounds.** In the forty-two lines which follow, Bryant builds upon the theory, common in his time but now generally rejected, that the burial, ceremonial, and earthwork mounds of the Mississippi Valley were not constructed by the ancestors of the Indians, but by an extinct race, the Mound Builders. There are said to be ten thousand such mounds in Illinois alone; Bryant's letters reveal that he had examined some near St. Louis • 48 **Pentelicus,** a mountain range some miles northeast of Athens, where an unusually white marble was quarried • 50 **Parthenon,** a temple dedicated to Athena Parthenos on the Acropolis in Athens. Completed about 435 B.C., it is still one of the great monuments of the ancient world • 50 **These . . . harvests.** "The size and extent of the mounds in the valley of the Mississippi indicate the existence, at a remote period, of a nation at once populous and laborious, and therefore probably subsisting by agriculture"—Bryant • 52 **bison.** There is little evidence that the American buffalo was ever domesticated • 80 **the rude . . . chiefs.** "Instances are not wanting of generosity like this among the North American Indians toward a captive or survivor of a hostile tribe on which the greatest cruelties had been exercised."—Bryant

With whom he came across the eastern deep,
Fills the savannas with his murmurings,
And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
Within the hollow oak. I listen long
To his domestic hum, and think I hear
The sound of that advancing multitude
Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
Of Sabbath worshippers. The low of herds
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
Over the dark-brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
And I am in the wilderness alone.

1832·1833

The Antiquity of Freedom

As an editor Bryant had a constant and direct concern with politics. "The Antiquity of Freedom" should be read with the recollection that Bryant was deeply interested in political developments in Europe between the revolutions of 1830 and those of 1848. In that period the rise of socialism and the continuous struggle against despotic rulers kept most of the Continent in turmoil, and thousands fled to the United States. World War II has brought more Americans than ever before to a realization of the truth of Bryant's conception of freedom.

Here are old trees, tall oaks, and gnarlèd pines,
That stream with gray-green mosses; here the ground
Was never trenched by spade, and flowers spring up
Unsown, and die ungathered. It is sweet
To linger here, among the flitting birds
And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks, and winds
That shake the leaves, and scatter, as they pass,
A fragrance from the cedars, thickly set
With pale-blue berries. In these peaceful shades—
Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old—
My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,
Back to the earliest days of liberty.

A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
With which the Roman master crowned his slave
When he took off the gyves. A bearded man,
Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailèd hand
Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy brow,
Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs
Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has launched
His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
They could not quench the life thou hast from heaven;
Merciless Power has dug thy dungeon deep,
And his swart armorers, by a thousand fires,
Have forged thy chain, yet, while he deems thee bound,
The links are shivered, and the prison-walls
Fall outward, terribly thou springest forth,
As springs the flame above a burning pile,
And shoutest to the nations, who return
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies.

Thy birthright was not given by human hands:
Thou wert twin-born with man. In pleasant fields,
While yet our race was few, thou sat'st with him,
To tend the quiet flock and watch the stars,
And teach the reed to utter simple airs.
Thou by his side, amid the tangled wood,
Didst war upon the panther and the wolf,
His only foes, and thou with him didst draw
The earliest furrow on the mountain-side,
Soft with the deluge. Tyranny himself,
Thy enemy, although of reverend look,
Hoary with many years and far obeyed,
Is later born than thou; and as he meets
The grave defiance of thine elder eye,
The usurper trembles in his fastnesses.

Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse of years,
But he shall fade into a feeble age—
Feebler, yet subtler He shall weave his snares,

The Prairies • **111 came . . . deep.** Although the point is disputed, most authorities agree that the honeybee was not native to North America

The Antiquity • **15 cap.** Bryant had in mind the "liberty cap" of the French Revolution, adapted from the Roman "pilleus," given to a slave when he was freed • **37 reed.** The allusion is to the syrinx, or Panpipe, a primitive musical instrument made of reeds • **40 His. Knickerbocker**· Thine • **41 furrow.** Until 1854 furrows • **43 reverend,** venerable • **49 feeble.** In all other editions· feebler; probably, in 1876, an error

And spring them on thy careless steps, and clap
His withered hands, and from their ambush call
His hordes to fall upon thee. He shall send
Quaint maskers, wearing fair and gallant forms
To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words
To charm thy ear; while his sly imps, by stealth,
Twine round thee threads of steel, light thread on thread,
That grow to fetters; or bind down thy arms
With chains concealed in chaplets. Oh! not yet
Mayst thou unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by
Thy sword; nor yet, O Freedom! close thy lids
In slumber; for thine enemy never sleeps,
And thou must watch and combat till the day
Of the new earth and heaven. But wouldst thou rest
Awhile from tumult and the frauds of men,
There old and friendly solitudes invite
Thy visit. They, while yet the forest-trees
Were young upon the unviolated earth,
And yet the moss-stains on the rock were new,
Beheld thy glorious childhood, and rejoiced.

1842

"Oh Mother of a Mighty Race"

Although Bryant was decidedly lukewarm about the Mexican War, he shared the nationalistic feeling of the Polk administration. His patriotic emotions were doubtless accentuated by his trips to Europe, where he met sharp criticism of American democracy. The sentiment in this poem should be compared with that in the last lines of "The Prairies."

Oh mother of a mighty race,
Yet lovely in thy youthful grace!
The elder dames, thy haughty peers,
Admire and hate thy blooming years.
With words of shame
And taunts of scorn they join thy name.

For on thy cheeks the glow is spread
That tints thy morning hills with red;
Thy step—the wild-deer's rustling feet,
Within thy woods are not more fleet;
Thy hopeful eye
Is bright as thine own sunny sky.
Ay, let them rail—those haughty ones,
While safe thou dwellest with thy sons.
They do not know how loved thou art,
How many a fond and fearless heart
Would rise to throw
Its life between thee and the foe.

They know not, in their hate and pride,
What virtues with thy children bide;
How true, how good, thy graceful maids
Make bright, like flowers, the valley-shades;
What generous men
Spring, like thine oaks, by hill and glen.

What cordial welcomes greet the guest
By thy lone rivers of the West;
How faith is kept, and truth revered,
And man is loved, and God is feared,
In woodland homes,
And where the ocean-border foams

There's freedom at thy gates and rest
For Earth's down-trodden and opprest,
A shelter for the hunted head,
For the starved laborer toil and bread,
Power, at thy bounds,
Stops and calls back his baffled hounds.

Oh, fair young mother! on thy brow
Shall sit a nobler grace than now.
Deep in the brightness of thy skies
The thronging years in glory rise,
And, as they fleet,
Drop strength and riches at thy feet.

Thine eye, with every coming hour,
Shall brighten, and thy form shall tower;
And when thy sisters, elder born,
Would brand thy name with words of scorn,
Before thine eye,
Upon their lips the taunt shall die.

1846·1847

54 wearing . . . forms. Until 1847: forms of fair and gallant mien • 60 nor. K: or • 63 the day . . . heaven, the millennium. See Revelation 21·1 • 65 the frauds of men. K: from treachery

Robert of Lincoln

Bryant's pleasure in the bobolink is characteristically combined with a quiet comment on the round of human life. "Robert of Lincoln" is about as close as the sober Bryant ever gets to the "carpe diem" theme—the glorification, that is to say, of the enjoyment of the present moment.

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
  Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
  Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
  Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
                Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,
  Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
  Hear him call in his merry note:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
                Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
  Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
  Broods in grass while her husband sings:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
                Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
  One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
  Pouring boasts from his little throat:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
                Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
  Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
  Robert is singing with all his might:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
                Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell
  Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
  Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
                Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
  Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
  Half forgotten that merry air:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
                Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
  Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
  Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:

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49 **Gathering seeds.** John Burroughs, in an essay on "Nature and the Poets," challenged Bryant's natural history. The bobolink, he said, "is an insectivorous bird in the North, or until its brood has flown" • 66 **crone,** a withered old woman. Bryant refers to the fact that the male bobolink (the rice-bird of the South) annually loses his glossy black, buff, and white plumage, together with his song, and at the summer's end is almost indistinguishable from the female

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

1855

The Poet

Godwin informs us that "The Poet," the expression of Bryant's conviction that poetry depends primarily upon emotion, was written in 1863. As early as 1826, in his lectures on poetry before the American Atheneum Society, Bryant had asserted that "the great spring of poetry is emotion," although he also acknowledged the importance of appealing to the imagination and the understanding. His theories are similar to but somewhat less mystical than those of Emerson (see p. 434) and Whitman. The extent to which he followed his own advice about revision is debatable, for textual study reveals that he often changed his mind about his diction. Textual revisions are indicated in the footnotes for "Thanatopsis," "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood," and "The Antiquity of Freedom."

Thou, who wouldst wear the name
Of poet mid thy brethren of mankind,
And clothe in words of flame
Thoughts that shall live within the general mind!
Deem not the framing of a deathless lay
The pastime of a drowsy summer day.

But gather all thy powers,
And wreak them on the verse that thou dost weave,
And in thy lonely hours,
At silent morning or at wakeful eve,
While the warm current tingles through thy veins,
Set forth the burning words in fluent strains.

No smooth array of phrase,
Artfully sought and ordered though it be,
Which the cold rhymer lays
Upon his page with languid industry,
Can wake the listless pulse to livelier speed,
Or fill with sudden tears the eyes that read.

The secret wouldst thou know
To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?
Let thine own eyes o'erflow;
Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill;
Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be past,
And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast.

Then, should thy verse appear
Halting and harsh, and all unaptly wrought,
Touch the crude line with fear,
Save in the moment of impassioned thought;
Then summon back the original glow, and mend
The strain with rapture that with fire was penned.

Yet let no empty gust
Of passion find an utterance in thy lay,
A blast that whirls the dust
Along the howling street and dies away;
But feelings of calm power and mighty sweep,
Like currents journeying through the windless deep.

Seek'st thou, in living lays,
To limn the beauty of the earth and sky?
Before thine inner gaze
Let all that beauty in clear vision lie;
Look on it with exceeding love, and write
The words inspired by wonder and delight.

Of tempests wouldst thou sing,
Or tell of battles—make thyself a part
Of the great tumult; cling
To the tossed wreck with terror in thy heart;
Scale, with the assaulting host, the rampart's height,
And strike and struggle in the thickest fight.

So shalt thou frame a lay
That haply may endure from age to age,
And they who read shall say:
"What witchery hangs upon this poet's page!
What art is his the written spells to find
That sway from mood to mood the willing mind!"

1863·1864

The Poet • **8 wreak them on,** let them play upon



Washington Irving

1783 • 1859

Washington Irving was both the most polished and the most popular American prose writer of his generation. Not a profound thinker and heavily indebted for his tastes and skills to European models, he was nevertheless a gifted observer of surface details, and in the course of time he developed a style which justly earned him lasting fame. Wherever the short story is read, men, women, and children continue to enjoy "Rip Van Winkle," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," and other story sketches by Irving. They are both historically important, being among the first mature examples of American fiction, and charmingly untouched by time, revealing their author as a man who understood the amenities of life in a world which is not always orderly and reasonable.

Irving's career is best understood when divided into three periods: (1) 1783-1815, a rather lengthy but youthful groping for a profession which would satisfy his somewhat dilettantish tastes; (2) 1815-1832, a seventeen-year residence in Europe, where he achieved international recognition as one of the romantic rediscoverers of the past; and (3) 1832-1859, in which, established as a fashionable author, he wrote chiefly as a biographer and historian.

He was born in New York City on April 3, 1783, the eleventh and last son of Scotch-English parents. The staunch Presbyterianism of his father, a well-to-do merchant, played little part in Washington Irving's unsystematic education. A delicate boy, he found his chief pleasures in light literature, the theater, art, travel, and, most particularly, in good company. At nineteen, while reading law, he contributed a series of essays dealing

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Panel (l. to r.): The Alhambra • Sunnyside, Irving's home on the Hudson River • Washington Irving at the age of 26 • Illustration from Bracebridge Hall

largely with the theater to his brother Peter's newspaper, the *Morning Chronicle,* signing them in the eighteenth-century manner as "Jonathan Oldstyle." Between 1804 and 1806 he traveled in Europe, curiously unconcerned about the political turmoil in Napoleon's empire, but much impressed with such new friends as Washington Allston, the painter.

Back in New York and admitted to the bar, he joined his brother and James Kirke Paulding in the *New Yorker*-like series, *Salmagundi,* which ran for twenty numbers in 1807-1808. A more extended burlesque, begun with Peter Irving, resulted in *A History of New York . . . By Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809), a satire so elaborate that the law must have been much neglected during its composition. In his twenties, as a matter of fact, Irving was doubtless uncertain of himself and of his aims. He enjoyed the convivial society of New York's younger set, shared some responsibility in the family hardware business, and dabbled occasionally in Federalist politics, meanwhile pursuing a gentlemanly interest in literature. A moot question in Irving's biography is the importance of his romantic attachment to Matilda Hoffman, who died of consumption in 1809. Had he married, Irving might conceivably have settled down to the law or to the editing of literary magazines. Matilda's death made roving possible. A bachelor all his life, he cherished as he grew older a sentimental memory which did not entirely outlaw mild flirtations with living ladies.

In 1815 he went to Liverpool on business and found that family affairs there were in great disorder because of a brother's illness. Three years later the Irving firm was bankrupt, and his great decision—to make his living by authorship—was more or less forced upon him. The results were impressive: *The Sketch Book,* published serially in 1819-1820; *Bracebridge Hall* (1822); *Tales of a Traveller* (1824); and, after a stay in Spain as a diplomatic attaché, *The Alhambra* (1832). These and other books, together with his many social connections, brought fame and considerable fortune. Irving was at home in London, Paris, Dresden, and Madrid; he met and was accepted by many of the leading literary folk of Europe; he became, in short, a great success, bringing to the United States what the new nation most ardently desired in a man of letters—the respect of the Old World. Like Sir Walter Scott, whom he much admired, Irving worked hard but insisted on preserving the pleasant fiction that authorship was something that a gentleman accomplished with his left hand.

In this attitude he had the assistance of various governmental appointments which were urged upon him in his later years. He wisely refused offers of nominations to a seat in Congress, to the post of mayor of New York, to the secretaryship of the Navy. In 1841, however, he accepted the appointment of minister to Spain, and was again in Madrid between 1842 and 1845, when he resigned. The last years of his life were devoted to several relatively minor books dealing with the American West ("A Tour on the Prairies" in *The Crayon Miscellany,* 1835; *Astoria,* written in collaboration with his nephew, Pierre, 1836; and *Adventures of Captain Bonneville,* 1837), as well as to the biographical works which display his literary and political nostalgias (*Life of Oliver Goldsmith,* 1840, and *Life of Washington,* 5 vols., 1855-1859). Much of his time after 1835 was spent in the rambling, stepped-gabled cottage at Sunnyside, near Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow on the Hudson, where he died on November 28, 1859.

Irving's historical work exemplifies the antiquarian spirit which he shared with Scott and other romanticists, but he is most significant for bringing American fiction into the main stream of world literature. He wrote with full knowledge of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, and his work held its own in direct comparison with theirs. Irving owed much to Fielding, Sterne, Goldsmith, and Scott; he owed much, also, to such German romanticists as Ludwig Tieck and E. T. A. Hoffman. When all his literary obligations are recognized, however, there is much in Irving that is his own: a feeling for place and local customs; good-humored acceptance of eccentricities in human beings and divergent ways of looking at the world; a persistent refusal to take either himself or society too seriously; and, not least of all, a delicate balance between conformity and independence which, if not originality in the strictest sense, is still creative and individual. These are virtues which Americans have always liked to think characteristic of their nation.

Irving's Works, Author's Revised Edition, 40 vols , New York, 1848 • **Washington Irving: Representative Selections,** ed. H. A Pochmann, Cincinnati, 1934 • P. M. Irving, **The Life and Letters of Washington Irving,** 4 vols., New York, 1862-1864 • S. T. Williams, **The Life of Washington Irving,** 2 vols , New York, 1935 • Van Wyck Brooks, **The World of Washington Irving,** New York, 1944

From

A History of New York By Diedrich Knickerbocker

Soon after the conclusion of the **Salmagundi** series in January 1808, Irving and his brother Peter planned to parody Samuel Latham Mitchill's **The Picture of New York** (1807) with a historical sketch, "followed by notices of the customs, manners, and institutions of the city; written in a serio-comic vein, and treating local errors, follies, and abuses, with good-humored satire" ("The Author's Apology," in the 1848 edition). But Peter went to Europe, and Washington Irving took up the task alone. He eventually confined himself to an account of the period of Dutch domination, in seven books. Despite his humorous and satirical purposes, his account embodied fact as well as fiction, and his work provoked research into the forgotten archives of the province.

Almost every page of the **History** reflects Irving's wide reading of classical and English literature. He parodies or imitates Homer, Cervantes, Malory, Fielding, Sterne, Swift, and many other favorites; the work is, in effect, a patchwork quilt of references, echoes, burlesques.

No one can read Irving's **History** without feeling its youthful, undisciplined, irreverent buoyancy. The aping of various literary models is accomplished with such verve that its occasional lack of restraint and proportion is easily forgiven. The book should be received as Irving wished it to be, "with good-humored indulgence," to "be thumbed and chuckled over by the family fireside."

BOOK VI

CONTAINING THE SECOND PART OF THE REIGN OF PETER THE HEADSTRONG, AND HIS GALLANT ACHIEVEMENTS ON THE DELAWARE

Chapter VII

Showing the Great Advantage That the Author Has over His Reader in Time of Battle—Together with Divers Portentous Movements; Which Betoken That Something Terrible Is About To Happen

Like as a mighty alderman, when at a corporation feast the first spoonful of turtle-soup salutes his palate, feels his appetite but tenfold quickened, and redoubles his vigorous attacks upon the tureen; while his projecting eyes roll greedily round, devouring everything at table—so did the mettlesome Peter Stuyvesant feel that hunger for martial glory, which raged within his bowels, inflamed by the capture of Fort Casimir, and nothing could allay it but the conquest of all New Sweden. No sooner, therefore, had he secured his conquest, than he stumped resolutely on, flushed with success, to gather fresh laurels at Fort Christina.

This was the grand Swedish post, established on a small river (or, as it is improperly termed, creek) of the same name; and here that crafty governor Jan Risingh lay grimly drawn up, like a gray-bearded spider in the citadel of his web.

But before we hurry into the direful scenes which must attend the meeting of two such potent chieftains, it is advisable to pause for a moment, and hold a kind of warlike council. Battles should not be rushed into precipitately by the historian and his readers, any more than by the general and his soldiers. The great commanders of antiquity never engaged the enemy without previously preparing the minds of their followers by animating harangues; spiriting them up to heroic deeds assuring them of the protection of the gods, and inspiring them with a confidence in the prowess of their leaders. So the historian should awaken the attention and enlist the passions of his readers; and having set them all on fire with the importance of his subject, he should put himself at their head, flourish his pen, and lead them on to the thickest of the fight.

An illustrious example of this rule may be seen in that mirror of historians, the immortal Thucydides. Having arrived at the breaking out of the Peloponnesian war, one of his commentators observes that "he sounds the charge

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Text: the 1848 edition • **8 Fort Casimir,** a small post established by the Dutch in 1651 on the Delaware River near the present site of New Castle. Surrendered to the Swedes in 1654, it was recaptured by Stuyvesant and his forces in 1655 • **12 Fort Christina.** "At present a flourishing town, called Christiana, or Christeen, about thirty-seven miles from Philadelphia, on the post-road to Baltimore."—Irving. This fort, established in 1638, is usually said to have been at Wilmington • **15 Jan Risingh,** Johan Classon Rising (1617-1672), director-general of New Sweden, 1654-1655

in all the disposition and spirit of Homer. He catalogues the allies on both sides. He awakens our expectations, and fast engages our attention. All mankind are concerned in the important point now going to be decided. Endeavors are made to disclose futurity. Heaven itself is interested in the dispute. The earth totters, and nature seems to labor with the great event. This is his solemn, sublime manner of setting out. Thus he magnifies a war between two, as Rapin styles them, petty states; and thus artfully he supports a little subject by treating it in a great and noble method."

In like manner, having conducted my readers into the very teeth of peril—having followed the adventurous Peter and his band into foreign regions—surrounded by foes, and stunned by the horrid din of arms—at this important moment, while darkness and doubt hang o'er each coming chapter, I hold it meet to harangue them, and prepare them for the events that are to follow.

And here I would premise one great advantage which, as historian, I possess over my reader; and this it is, that though I cannot save the life of my favorite hero, nor absolutely contradict the event of a battle (both which liberties, though often taken by the French writers of the present reign, I hold to be utterly unworthy of a scrupulous historian), yet I can now and then make him bestow on his enemy a sturdy back-stroke sufficient to fell a giant; though, in honest truth, he may never have done anything of the kind—or I can drive his antagonist clear round and round the field, as did Homer make that fine fellow Hector scamper like a poltroon round the walls of Troy; for which, if ever they have encountered one another in the Elysian fields, I'll warrant the prince of poets has had to make the most humble apology.

I am aware that many conscientious readers will be ready to cry out "foul play!" whenever I render a little assistance to my hero—but I consider it one of those privileges exercised by historians of all ages—and one which has never been disputed. An historian is, in fact, as it were, bound in honor to stand by his hero—the fame of the latter is intrusted to his hands, and it is his duty to do the best by it he can. Never was there a general, an admiral, or any other commander, who, in giving account of any battle he had fought, did not sorely belabor the enemy; and I have no doubt that, had my heroes written the history of their own achievements, they would have dealt much harder blows than any that I shall recount. Standing forth, therefore, as the guardian of their fame, it behooves me to do them the same justice they would have done themselves; and if I happen to be a little hard upon the Swedes, I give free leave to any of their descendants, who may write a story of the State of Delaware, to take fair retaliation, and belabor Peter Stuyvesant as hard as they please.

Therefore stand by for broken heads and bloody noses! —My pen hath long itched for a battle—siege after siege have I carried on without blows or bloodshed; but now I have at length got a chance, and I vow to Heaven and St. Nicholas, that, let the chronicles of the times say what they please, neither Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Polybius, nor any other historian, did ever record a fiercer fight than that in which my valiant chieftains are now about to engage.

And you, oh most excellent readers, whom, for your faithful adherence, I could cherish in the warmest corner of my heart—be not uneasy—trust the fate of our favorite Stuyvesant with me—for by the rood, come what may, I'll stick by Hardkoppig Piet to the last. I'll make him drive about these losels vile, as did the renowned Launcelot of the Lake a herd of recreant Cornish knights—and if he does fall, let me never draw my pen to fight another battle in behalf of a brave man, if I don't make these lubberly Swedes pay for it!

No sooner had Peter Stuyvesant arrived at Fort Christina than he proceeded without delay to intrench himself, and immediately on running his first parallel, dispatched Antony Van Corlear to summon the fortress to surrender. Van Corlear was received with all due formality, hoodwinked at the portal, and conducted through a pestiferous smell of salt fish and onions to the citadel, a substantial hut built of pine logs. His eyes were here uncovered,

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59 **Sallust . . . Polybius**, ancient historians. Polybius was a Greek, the others Romans • 68 **losels**, worthless fellows (archaic) • 68 **Launcelot . . . Lake**, an echo of the **Morte d'Arthur** by Sir Thomas Malory (fl. 1470). The "driving about" of Cornish knights occurs chiefly in Bk. IX • 76 **Antony Van Corlear**, or Van Curler, a figure more renowned in folklore than in history. As governor's trumpeter, he is supposed by Irving to have given his name to Anthony's Nose, a mountain across the Hudson from West Point, and to have died in 1664 on a mission from Stuyvesant. Sent to arouse the Dutch colonists to their danger from the British, he discovered that the creek separating Manhattan from the Bronx was swollen by rains. Swearing to swim it "en spuyt den Duyvil," he started out, but was seized halfway across by the Devil. He freed himself once by a blast on his trumpet, but the Devil, recovering from surprise, dragged him down. Hence the name Spuyten Duyvil Creek

and he found himself in the august presence of Governor Risingh. This chieftain, as I have before noted, was a very giantly man; and was clad in a coarse blue coat, strapped round the waist with a leathern belt, which caused the enormous skirts and pockets to set off with a very warlike sweep. His ponderous legs were cased in a pair of foxy-colored jackboots, and he was straddling in the attitude of the Colossus of Rhodes before a bit of broken looking-glass, shaving himself with a villanously dull razor. This afflicting operation caused him to make a series of horrible grimaces, which heightened exceedingly the grisly terrors of his visage. On Antony Van Corlear's being announced, the grim commander paused for a moment, in the midst of one of his most hard-favored contortions, and after eying him askance over the shoulder, with a kind of snarling grin on his countenance, resumed his labors at the glass.

This iron harvest being reaped, he turned once more to the trumpeter, and demanded the purport of his errand. Antony Van Corlear delivered in a few words, being a kind of short-hand speaker, a long message from his excellency, recounting the whole history of the province, with a recapitulation of grievances, and enumeration of claims, and concluding with a peremptory demand of instant surrender; which done, he turned aside, took his nose between his thumb and fingers, and blew a tremendous blast, not unlike the flourish of a trumpet of defiance—which it had doubtless learned from a long and intimate neighborhood with the melodious instrument.

Governor Risingh heard him through, trumpet and all, but with infinite impatience; leaning at times, as was his usual custom, on the pommel of his sword, and at times twirling a huge steel watch-chain, or snapping his fingers. Van Corlear having finished, he bluntly replied, that Peter Stuyvesant and his summons might go to the d.....l, whither he hoped to send him and his crew of ragamuffins before supper time. Then unsheathing his brass-hilted sword, and throwing away the scabbard—"'Fore gad," quod he, "but I will not sheathe thee again until I make a scabbard of the smoke-dried leathern hide of this runagate Dutchman." Then having flung a fierce defiance in the teeth of his adversary by the lips of his messenger, the latter was reconducted to the portal, with all the ceremonious civility due to the trumpeter, squire, and ambassador of so great a commander; and being again unblinded, was courteously dismissed with a tweak of the nose, to assist him in recollecting his message.

No sooner did the gallant Peter receive this insolent reply than he let fly a tremendous volley of red-hot execrations, which would infallibly have battered down the fortifications, and blown up the powder magazine about the ears of the fiery Swede, had not the ramparts been remarkably strong, and the magazine bomb-proof. Perceiving that the works withstood this terrific blast, and that it was utterly impossible (as it really was in those unphilosophic days) to carry on a war with words, he ordered his merry men all to prepare for an immediate assault. But here a strange murmur broke out among his troops, beginning with the tribe of the Van Bummels, those valiant trenchermen of the Bronx, and spreading from man to man, accompanied with certain mutinous looks and discontented murmurs. For once in his life, and only for once, did the great Peter turn pale, for he verily thought his warriors were going to falter in this hour of perilous trial, and thus to tarnish forever the fame of the province of New Netherlands

But soon did he discover, to his great joy, that in his suspicion he deeply wronged his most undaunted army; for the cause of this agitation and uneasiness simply was, that the hour of dinner was at hand, and it would have almost broken the hearts of these regular Dutch warriors to have broken in upon the invariable routine of their habits. Besides, it was an established rule among our ancestors always to fight upon a full stomach; and to this may be doubtless attributed the circumstance that they came to be so renowned in arms.

And now are the hearty men of the Manhattoes, and their no less hearty comrades, all lustily engaged under the trees, buffeting stoutly with the contents of their wallets, and taking such affectionate embraces of their canteens and pottles, as though they verily believed they were to be the last. And as I foresee we shall have hot work in a page or two, I advise my readers to do the same, for which purpose I will bring this chapter to a close; giving them my word of honor, that no advantage shall be taken of this armistice to surprise, or in any wise molest, the honest Nederlanders, while at their vigorous repast.

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40 **runagate,** vagabond • 60 **trenchermen,** hearty eaters • 77 **Manhattoes,** the inhabitants of Manhattan. The origin of the name, spelled variously as Monados, Manados, Mantoes, and Manhates, is obscure; one theory is that is came from the Spanish "monados," drunken men • 81 **pottles,** two-quart tankards (obsolete)

Chapter VIII

Containing the Most Horrible Battle Ever Recorded in Poetry or Prose; With the Admirable Exploits of Peter the Headstrong

"Now had the Dutchmen snatched a huge repast," and finding themselves wonderfully encouraged and animated thereby, prepared to take the field. Expectation, says the writer of the Stuyvesant manuscript—Expectation now stood on stilts. The world forgot to turn round, or rather stood still, that it might witness the affray; like a round-bellied alderman, watching the combat of two chivalrous flies upon his jerkin. The eyes of all mankind, as usual in such cases, were turned upon Fort Christina. The sun, like a little man in a crowd at a puppet-show, scampered about the heavens, popping his head here and there, and endeavoring to get a peep between the unmannerly clouds that obtruded themselves in his way. The historians filled their ink-horns—the poets went without their dinners, either that they might buy paper and goose-quills, or because they could not get anything to eat. Antiquity scowled sulkily out of its grave, to see itself outdone—while even Posterity stood mute, gazing in gaping ecstasy of retrospection on the eventful field.

The immortal deities, who whilom had seen service at the "affair" of Troy—now mounted their feather-bed clouds, and sailed over the plain, or mingled among the combatants in different disguises, all itching to have a finger in the pie. Jupiter sent off his thunderbolt to a noted coppersmith, to have it furbished up for the direful occasion. Venus vowed by her chastity to patronize the Swedes, and in semblance of a blear-eyed trull paraded the battlements of Fort Christina, accompanied by Diana, as a sergeant's widow, of cracked reputation. The noted bully, Mars, stuck two horse-pistols into his belt, shouldered a rusty firelock, and gallantly swaggered at their elbow, as a drunken corporal—while Apollo trudged in their rear, as a bandy-legged fifer, playing most villanously out of tune.

On the other side, the ox-eyed Juno, who had gained a pair of black eyes over night, in one of her curtain lectures with old Jupiter, displayed her haughty beauties on a baggage-wagon—Minerva, as a brawny gin-suttler, tucked up her skirts, brandished her fists, and swore most heroically, in exceeding bad Dutch (having but lately studied the language,) by way of keeping up the spirits of the soldiers; while Vulcan halted as a club-footed blacksmith, lately promoted to be a captain of militia. All was silent awe, or bustling preparation: war reared his horrid front, gnashed loud his iron fangs, and shook his direful crest of bristling bayonets.

And now the mighty chieftains marshalled out their hosts. Here stood stout Risingh, firm as a thousand rocks—incrusted with stockades, and intrenched to the chin in mud batteries. His valiant soldiery lined the breastwork in grim array, each having his mustachios fiercely greased, and his hair pomatumed back, and queued so stiffly, that he grinned above the ramparts like a grisly death's head.

There came on the intrepid Peter—his brows knit, his teeth set, his fists clenched, almost breathing forth volumes of smoke, so fierce was the fire that raged within his bosom. His faithful squire Van Corlear trudged valiantly at his heels, with his trumpet gorgeously bedecked with red and yellow ribbons, the remembrances of his fair mistresses at the Manhattoes. Then came waddling on the sturdy chivalry of the Hudson. There were the Van Wycks, and the Van Dycks, and the Ten Eycks—the Van Nesses, the Van Tassels, the Van Grolls; the Van Hoesens, the Van Giesons and the Van Blarcoms—the Van Warts, the Van Winkles, the Van Dams; the Van Pelts, the Van Rippers, and the Van Brunts. There were the Van Hornes, the Van Hooks, the Van Bunschotens; the Van Gelders, the Van Arsdales, and the Van Bummels; the Vander Belts, the Vander Hoofs, the Vander Voorts, the Vander Lyns, the Vander Pools, and the Vander Spiegles—then came the Hoffmans, the Hooghlands, the Hoppers, the Cloppers, the Ryckmans, the Dyckmans, the Hogebooms, the Rosebooms, the Oothouts, the Quackenbosses, the Roerbacks, the Garrebrantzes, the Bensons, the Brouwers, the Waldrons, the Onderdonks, the Varra Vangers, the Schermerhorns, the Stoutenburghs, the Brinkerhoffs, the Bontecous, the Knickerbockers, the Hockstrassers, the Ten Breecheses and the Tough Breecheses, with a host more of worthies, whose names are too crabbed to be written, or if they could be written, it would be impossible for man to utter—all fortified with a mighty dinner,

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4 **Stuyvesant manuscript,** described in Irving's Preface as "an elaborate manuscript written in exceeding pure and classic low Dutch, excepting a few errors in orthography, which was found in the archives of the Stuyvesant family." It is apparently one of Irving's few fictitious authorities • 21 **the "affair" of Troy.** In this and the following paragraph Irving burlesques Bk. V of Homer's **Iliad** • 38 **gin-suttler,** gin-selling camp-follower • 52 **pomatumed,** smoothed with pomatum, a scented ointment • 62 **Van Wycks, etc.** See the catalogue of ships in Bk. I of the **Iliad**

and, to use the words of a great Dutch poet,

"Brimful of wrath and cabbage."

For an instant the mighty Peter paused in the midst of his career, and mounting on a stump, addressed his troops in eloquent Low Dutch, exhorting them to fight like *duyvels,* and assuring them that if they conquered, they should get plenty of booty—if they fell, they should be allowed the satisfaction, while dying, of reflecting that it was in the service of their country—and after they were dead, of seeing their names inscribed in the temple of renown, and handed down, in company with all the other great men of the year, for the admiration of posterity.—Finally, he swore to them, on the word of a governor (and they knew him too well to doubt it for a moment), that if he caught any mother's son of them looking pale, or playing craven, he would curry his hide till he made him run out of it like a snake in spring time. Then lugging out his trusty sabre, he brandished it three times over his head, ordered Van Corlear to sound a charge, and shouting the words "St. Nicholas and the Manhattoes!" courageously dashed forwards. His warlike followers, who had employed the interval in lighting their pipes, instantly stuck them into their mouths, gave a furious puff, and charged gallantly under cover of the smoke.

The Swedish garrison, ordered by the cunning Risingh not to fire until they could distinguish the whites of their assailants' eyes, stood in horrid silence on the covert-way, until the eager Dutchmen had ascended the glacis. Then did they pour into them such a tremendous volley, that the very hills quaked around, and were terrified even unto an incontinence of water, insomuch that certain springs burst forth from their sides, which continue to run unto the present day. Not a Dutchman but would have bitten the dust beneath that dreadful fire, had not the protecting Minerva kindly taken care that the Swedes should, one and all, observe their usual custom of shutting their eyes and turning away their heads at the moment of discharge.

The Swedes followed up their fire by leaping the counterscarp, and falling tooth and nail upon the foe with furious outcries. And now might be seen prodigies of valor, unmatched in history or song. Here was the sturdy Stoffel Brinkerhoff brandishing his quarter-staff, like the giant Blanderon his oak tree (for he scorned to carry any other weapon), and drumming a horrific tune upon the hard heads of the Swedish soldiery. There were the Van Kortlandts, posted at a distance, like the Locrian archers of yore, and plying it most potently with the longbow, for which they were so justly renowned. On a rising knoll were gathered the valiant men of Sing-Sing, assisting marvellously in the fight, by chanting the great song of St. Nicholas; but as to the Gardeniers of Hudson, they were absent on a marauding party, laying waste the neighboring watermelon patches.

In a different part of the field were the Van Grolls of Antony's Nose, struggling to get to the thickest of the fight, but horribly perplexed in a defile between two hills, by reason of the length of their noses. So also the Van Bunschotens of Nyack and Kakiat, so renowned for kicking with the left foot, were brought to a stand for want of wind, in consequence of the hearty dinner they had eaten, and would have been put to utter rout but for the arrival of a gallant corps of voltigeurs, composed of the Hoppers, who advanced nimbly to their assistance on one foot. Nor must I omit to mention the valiant achievements of Antony Van Corlear, who, for a good quarter of an hour, waged stubborn fight with a little pursy Swedish drummer; whose hide he drummed most magnificently, and whom he would infallibly have annihilated on the spot, but that he had come into the battle with no other weapon but his trumpet.

But now the combat thickened.—On came the mighty Jacobus Varra Vanger and the fighting men of the Wallabout; after them thundered the Van Pelts of Esopus, together with the Van Rippers and the Van Brunts, bearing down all before them—then the Suy Dams, and the Van Dams, pressing forward with many a blustering oath, at the head of the warriors of Hell-gate, clad in their thunder and lightning gaberdines; and lastly, the standard-bearers and body-guard of Peter Stuyvesant, bearing the great beaver of the Manhattoes.

And now commenced the horrid din, the desperate struggle, the maddening ferocity, the frantic desperation, the confusion and self-abandonment of war. Dutchman

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26 **covert-way . . . glacis.** Irving's familiarity with the scientific terms of military fortification was probably derived from one of his favorite books, **Tristram Shandy.** The covert-way is a covered passage in the counterscarp, or outer wall of a trench; the glacis is the open slope in front of that wall • 43 **the giant Blanderon,** a name apparently invented by Irving. Perhaps he had in mind the giants of Greek mythology who revolted against Jupiter, using tree trunks for weapons • 46 **Locrian archers.** The Locrians were the most ancient of Greek peoples • 62 **voltigeurs,** members of a special skirmishing company attached to a French infantry regiment (obsolete)

and Swede commingled, tugged, panted, and blowed. The heavens were darkened with a tempest of missives. Bang! went the guns—whack! went the broad-swords—thump! went the cudgels—crash! went the musket-stocks—blows—kicks—cuffs—scratches—black eyes and bloody noses swelling the horrors of the scene! Thick thwack, cut and hack, helter-skelter, higgledy-piggledy, hurly-burly, head over heels, rough and tumble!—Dunder and blixum! swore the Dutchmen—splitter and splutter! cried the Swedes—Storm the works! shouted Hardkoppig Peter—Fire the mine! roared stout Risingh—Tanta-rarra-ra! twanged the trumpet of Antony Van Corlear—until all voice and sound became unintelligible—grunts of pain, yells of fury, and shouts of triumph mingling in one hideous clamor. The earth shook as if struck with a paralytic stroke—trees shrunk aghast, and withered at the sight—rocks burrowed in the ground like rabbits—and even Christina creek turned from its course, and ran up a hill in breathless terror!

Long hung the contest doubtful, for though a heavy shower of rain, sent by the "cloud-compelling Jove," in some measure cooled their ardor, as doth a bucket of water thrown on a group of fighting mastiffs, yet did they but pause for a moment, to return with tenfold fury to the charge. Just at this juncture a vast and dense column of smoke was seen slowly rolling toward the scene of battle. The combatants paused for a moment, gazing in mute astonishment, until the wind, dispelling the murky cloud, revealed the flaunting banner of Michael Paw, the Patroon of Communipaw. That valiant chieftain came fearlessly on at the head of a phalanx of oyster-fed Pavonians and a corps de reserve of the Van Arsdales and Van Bummels, who had remained behind to digest the enormous dinner they had eaten. These now trudged manfully forward, smoking their pipes with outrageous vigor, so as to raise the awful cloud that has been mentioned; but marching exceedingly slow, being short of leg, and of great rotundity in the belt.

And now the deities who watched over the fortunes of the Nederlanders having unthinkingly left the field, and stepped into a neighboring tavern to refresh themselves with a pot of beer, a direful catastrophe had well-nigh ensued. Scarce had the myrmidons of Michael Paw attained the front of battle, when the Swedes, instructed by the cunning Risingh, levelled a shower of blows full at their tobacco-pipes. Astounded at this assault, and dismayed at the havoc of their pipes, these ponderous warriors gave way, and like a drove of frightened elephants broke through the ranks of their own army. The little Hoppers were borne down in the surge: the sacred banner emblazoned with the gigantic oyster of Communipaw was trampled in the dirt: on blundered and thundered the heavy-sterned fugitives, the Swedes pressing on their rear and applying their feet *a parte poste* of the Van Arsdales and the Van Brummels with a vigor that prodigiously accelerated their movements—nor did the renowned Michael Paw himself fail to receive divers grievous and dishonorable visitations of shoe-leather.

But what, oh Muse! was the rage of Peter Stuyvesant, when from afar he saw his army giving way! In the transports of his wrath he sent forth a roar, enough to shake the very hills. The men of the Manhattoes plucked up new courage at the sound; or rather, they rallied at the voice of their leader, of whom they stood more in awe than of all of the Swedes in Christendom. Without waiting for their aid, the daring Peter dashed sword in hand into the thickest of the foe. Then might be seen achievements worthy of the days of the giants. Wherever he went, the enemy shrank before him; the Swedes fled to right and left, or were driven, like dogs, into their own ditch; but as he pushed forward singly with headlong courage, the foe closed behind and hung upon his rear. One aimed a blow full at his heart; but the protecting power which watches over the great and good turned aside the hostile blade and directed it to a side-pocket, where reposed an enormous iron tobacco-box, endowed, like the shield of Achilles, with supernatural powers, doubtless from bearing the portrait of the blessed St. Nicholas. Peter Stuyvesant turned like an angry bear upon the foe, and seizing him as he fled, by an immeasurable queue, "Ah, whoreson caterpillar," roared he, "here's what shall make worms' meat of thee!" So saying, he whirled his sword, and dealt a blow that would have decapitated the varlet, but that the pitying steel struck short and shaved the queue forever from his crown. At this moment an arquebusier levelled his piece from a neighboring mound, with deadly aim; but the watchful Minerva, who had just stopped to tie up her garter, seeing the peril of her favorite hero, sent old Boreas with his bellows, who, as the match descended to the pan, gave a blast that blew the priming from the touch-hole.

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32 **corps de reserve,** reserve corps • 54 **a parte poste,** from the part after, here meaning to the backsides

ing the field from the top of a little ravelin, perceived his troops banged, beaten, and kicked by the invincible Peter. Drawing his falchion and uttering a thousand anathemas, he strode down to the scene of combat with some such thundering strides as Jupiter is said by Hesiod to have taken, when he strode down the spheres to hurl his thunder-bolts at the Titans.

When the rival heroes came face to face, each made a prodigious start in the style of a veteran stage-champion. Then did they regard each other for a moment with the bitter aspect of two furious ram-cats on the point of a clapper-clawing. Then did they throw themselves into one attitude, then into another, striking their swords on the ground, first on the right side, then on the left—at last at it they went, with incredible ferocity. Words cannot tell the prodigies of strength and valor displayed in this direful encounter—an encounter compared to which the far-famed battles of Ajax with Hector, of Æneas with Turnus, Orlando with Rodomont, Guy of Warwick with Colbrand the Dane, or of that renowned Welsh knight, Sir Owen of the Mountains with the giant Guylon, were all gentle sports and holiday recreations. At length the valiant Peter, watching his opportunity, aimed a blow, enough to cleave his adversary to the very chine; but Risingh, nimbly raising his sword, warded it off so narrowly, that glancing on one side, it shaved away a huge canteen in which he carried his liquor; thence pursuing its trenchant course, it severed off a deep coat pocket, stored with bread and cheese—which provant rolling among the armies, occasioned a fearful scrambling between the Swedes and Dutchmen, and made the general battle to wax more furious than ever.

Enraged to see his military stores laid waste, the stout Risingh, collecting all his forces, aimed a mighty blow full at the hero's crest. In vain did his fierce little cocked hat oppose its course. The biting steel clove through the stubborn ram beaver, and would have cracked the crown of any one not endowed with supernatural hardness of head; but the brittle weapon shivered in pieces on the skull of Hardkoppig Piet, shedding a thousand sparks, like beams of glory, round his grizzly visage.

The good Peter reeled with the blow, and turning up his eyes beheld a thousand suns, besides moons and stars, dancing about the firmament—at length, missing his footing, by reason of his wooden leg, down he came on his seat of honor with a crash which shook the surrounding

received into a cushion softer than velvet, which Providence, or Minerva, or St. Nicholas, or some cow, had benevolently prepared for his reception.

The furious Risingh, in spite of the maxim, cherished by all true knights, that "fair play is a jewel," hastened to take advantage of the hero's fall; but, as he stooped to give a fatal blow, Peter Stuyvesant dealt him a thwack over the sconce with his wooden leg, which set a chime of bells ringing triple bob majors in his cerebellum. The bewildered Swede staggered with the blow, and the wary Peter seizing a pocket pistol, which lay hard by, discharged it full at the head of the reeling Risingh. Let not my reader mistake, it was not a murderous weapon loaded with powder and ball, but a little sturdy stone pottle charged to the muzzle with a double dram of true Dutch courage, which the knowing Antony Van Corlear carried about him by way of replenishing his valor; and which had dropped from his wallet during his furious encounter with the drummer. The hideous weapon sang through the air, and true to its course as was the fragment of rock discharged at Hector by bully Ajax, encountered the head of the gigantic Swede with matchless violence.

This heaven-directed blow decided the battle. The ponderous pericranium of General Jan Risingh sank upon his breast; his knees tottered under him; a deathlike torpor seized upon his frame, and he tumbled to the earth with such violence, that old Pluto started with affright, lest he should have broken through the roof of his infernal palace.

His fall was the signal of defeat and victory—the Swedes gave way—the Dutch pressed forward, the former took to their heels, the latter hotly pursued.—Some entered with them, pell-mell, through the sally-port—others stormed the bastion, and others scrambled over the

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6 Hesiod (fl 900 B C), Greek poet • **12 ram-cats . . . clapper-clawing,** tomcats about to fight (dialectal) • **19 Ajax . . . Guylon,** a list of famous combats in literature. Irving's ultimate sources were Bk XIV of the **Iliad,** Bk XII of the **Aeneid,** Bk VI of the **Orlando Inamorata** of Matteo Maria Boiardo (1434-1494), the metrical romance of **Guy of Warwick** (thirteenth century), and **The Mabinogion** (twelfth century) • **30 provant,** provender, an allowance of food • **38 ram beaver,** man's hat • **52 maxim,** usually attributed to Scott's **Redgauntlet** (1824). Since Irving's use is of an earlier date, it is probable that both authors drew upon some source in chivalric literature • **57 triple bob majors,** a bell-ringing term. Bob-majors are rung upon eight bells, a treble bob being a method which produces a dodging or irregular effect • **81 sally-port . . . bastion . . . curtain.** The sally-port is a small concealed gate in a fortification; the bastion, a projection; the curtain, the wall between bastions

curtain. Thus in a little while the fortress of Fort Christina, which, like another Troy, had stood a siege of full ten hours, was carried by assault, without the loss of a single man on either side. Victory, in the likeness of a gigantic ox-fly, sat perched upon the cocked hat of the gallant Stuyvesant; and it was declared, by all the writers whom he hired to write the history of his expedition, that on this memorable day he gained a sufficient quantity of glory to immortalize a dozen of the greatest heroes in Christendom.

Chapter IX

In Which Author and the Reader, While Reposing after the Battle, Fall into a Very Grave Discourse—after Which Is Recorded the Conduct of Peter Stuyvesant after His Victory

Thanks to St. Nicholas, we have safely finished this tremendous battle. let us sit down, my worthy reader, and cool ourselves, for I am in a prodigious sweat and agitation—truly this fighting of battles is hot work! and if your great commanders did but know what trouble they give their historians, they would not have the conscience to achieve so many horrible victories. But methinks I hear my reader complain, that throughout this boasted battle there is not the least slaughter, nor a single individual maimed, if we except the unhappy Swede, who was shorn of his queue by the trenchant blade of Peter Stuyvesant; all of which, he observes, is great outrage on probability, and highly injurious to the interest of the narration.

This is certainly an objection of no little moment, but it arises entirely from the obscurity enveloping the remote periods of time about which I have undertaken to write Thus, though doubtless, from the importance of the object, and the prowess of the parties concerned, there must have been terrible carnage, and prodigies of valor displayed before the walls of Christina, yet, notwithstanding that I have consulted every history, manuscript, and tradition, touching this memorable though long-forgotten battle, I cannot find mention made of a single man killed or wounded in the whole affair.

This is, without doubt, owing to the extreme modesty of our forefathers, who, unlike their descendants, were never prone to vaunt of their achievements; but it is a virtue which places their historian in a most embarrassing predicament; for, having promised my readers a hideous and unparalleled battle, and having worked them up into a warlike and bloodthirsty state of mind, to put them off without any havoc and slaughter would have been as bitter a disappointment as to summon a multitude of good people to attend an execution, and then cruelly balk them by a reprieve.

Had the fates only allowed me some half a score of dead men, I had been content; for I would have made them such heroes as abounded in the olden time, but whose race is now unfortunately extinct; any one of whom, if we may believe those authentic writers, the poets, could drive great armies, like sheep, before him, and conquer and desolate whole cities by his single arm.

But seeing that I had not a single life at my disposal, all that was left me was to make the most I could of my battle, by means of kicks, and cuffs, and bruises, and such like ignoble wounds. And here I cannot but compare my dilemma, in some sort, to that of the divine Milton, who, having arrayed with sublime preparation his immortal hosts against each other, is sadly put to it how to manage them, and how he shall make the end of his battle answer to the beginning, inasmuch as, being mere spirits, he cannot deal a mortal blow, nor even give a flesh wound to any of his combatants. For my part, the greatest difficulty I found was, when I had once put my warriors in a passion, and let them loose into the midst of the enemy, to keep them from doing mischief. Many a time had I to restrain the sturdy Peter from cleaving a gigantic Swede to the very waistband, or spitting half a dozen little fellows on his sword, like so many sparrows. And when I had set some hundred of missives flying in the air, I did not dare to suffer one of them to reach the ground, lest it should have put an end to some unlucky Dutchman.

The reader cannot conceive how mortifying it is to a writer thus in a manner to have his hands tied, and how many tempting opportunities I had to wink at, where I might have made as fine a death-blow as any recorded in history or song.

From my own experience I begin to doubt most potently of the authenticity of many of Homer's stories. I verily believe, that when he had once launched one of his favorite heroes among a crowd of the enemy, he cut down many an honest fellow, without any authority for so do-

58 Milton. See Bk VI of Paradise Lost

ing, excepting that he presented a fair mark—and that often a poor fellow was sent to grim Pluto's domains, merely because he had a name that would give a sounding turn to a period. But I disclaim all such unprincipled liberties—let me but have truth and the law on my side, and no man would fight harder than myself—but since the various records I consulted did not warrant it, I had too much conscience to kill a single soldier. By St. Nicholas, but it would have been a pretty piece of business! My enemies, the critics, who I foresee will be ready enough to lay any crime they can discover at my door, might have charged me with murder outright—and I should have esteemed myself lucky to escape with no harsher verdict than manslaughter!

And now, gentle reader, that we are tranquilly sitting down here, smoking our pipes, permit me to indulge in a melancholy reflection which at this moment passes across my mind. How vain, how fleeting, how uncertain are all those gaudy bubbles after which we are panting and toiling in this world of fair delusions! The wealth which the miser has amassed with so many weary days, so many sleepless nights, a spendthrift here may squander away in joyless prodigality; the noblest monuments which pride has ever reared to perpetuate a name, the hand of time will shortly tumble into ruins—and even the brightest laurels, gained by feats of arms, may wither, and be forever blighted by the chilling neglect of mankind. "How many illustrious heroes," says the good Boëtius, "who were once the pride and glory of the age, hath the silence of historians buried in eternal oblivion!" And this it was that induced the Spartans, when they went to battle, solemnly to sacrifice to the Muses, supplicating that their achievements might be worthily recorded. Had not Homer tuned his lofty lyre, observes the elegant Cicero, the valor of Achilles had remained unsung. And such, too, after all the toils and perils he had braved, after all the gallant actions he had achieved, such too had nearly been the fate of the chivalric Peter Stuyvesant, but that I fortunately stepped in and engraved his name on the indelible tablet of history, just as the caitiff Time was silently brushing it away forever!

The more I reflect, the more I am astonished at the important character of the historian. He is the sovereign censor to decide upon the renown or infamy of his fellow men. He is the patron of kings and conquerors, on whom it depends whether they shall live in after ages, or be forgotten as were their ancestors before them. The tyrant may oppress while the object of his tyranny exists; but the historian possesses superior might, for his power extends even beyond the grave. The shades of departed and long-forgotten heroes anxiously bend down from above, while he writes, watching each movement of his pen, whether it shall pass by their names with neglect, or inscribe them on the deathless pages of renown. Even the drop of ink which hangs trembling on his pen, which he may either dash upon the floor, or waste in idle scrawlings—that very drop, which to him is not worth the twentieth part of a farthing, may be of incalculable value to some departed worthy—may elevate half a score, in one moment, to immortality, who would have given worlds, had they possessed them, to insure the glorious meed.

Let not my readers imagine, however, that I am indulging in vainglorious boastings, or am anxious to blazon forth the importance of my tribe. On the contrary, I shrink when I reflect on the awful responsibility we historians assume—I shudder to think what direful commotions and calamities we occasion in the world—I swear to thee, honest reader, as I am a man, I weep at the very idea! Why, let me ask, are so many illustrious men daily tearing themselves away from the embraces of their families—slighting the smiles of beauty—despising the allurements of fortune, and exposing themselves to the miseries of war?—Why are kings desolating empires, and depopulating whole countries? In short, what induces all great men of all ages and countries to commit so many victories and misdeeds, and inflict so many miseries upon mankind and upon themselves, but the mere hope that some historian will kindly take them into notice, and admit them into a corner of his volume? For, in short, the mighty object of all their toils, their hardships, and privations, is nothing but *immortal fame.* And what is immortal fame?—why, half a page of dirty paper!—alas! alas! how humiliating the idea—that the renown of so great a man as Peter Stuyvesant would depend upon the pen of so little a man as Diedrich Knickerbocker!

And now, having refreshed ourselves after the fatigues and perils of the field, it behooves us to return once more to the scene of conflict, and inquire what were the results

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2 Pluto's domains, i.e., Hades • 28 Boëtius. The remark appears in Bk. II, Prose VII of The Consolations of Philosophy, written early in the sixth century • 35 Cicero. See Pro Archia Poeta, Chap. X

of this renowned conquest. The fortress of Christina being the fair metropolis, and in a manner the key to New Sweden, its capture was speedily followed by the entire subjugation of the province. This was not a little promoted by the gallant and courteous deportment of the chivalric Peter. Though a man terrible in battle, yet in the hour of victory was he endued with a spirit generous, merciful, and humane. He vaunted not over his enemies, nor did he make defeat more galling by unmanly insults; for like that mirror of knightly virtue, the renowned Paladin Orlando, he was more anxious to do great actions than to talk of them after they were done. He put no man to death; ordered no houses to be burnt down; permitted no ravages to be perpetrated on the property of the vanquished; and even gave one of his bravest officers a severe admonishment with his walking staff, for having been detected in the act of sacking a hen-roost.

He moreover issued a proclamation, inviting the inhabitants to submit to the authority of their High Mightinesses; but declaring, with unexampled clemency, that whoever refused should be lodged at the public expense in a goodly castle provided for the purpose, and have an armed retinue to wait on them in the bargain. In consequence of these beneficent terms, about thirty Swedes stepped manfully forward and took the oath of allegiance; in reward for which they were graciously permitted to remain on the banks of the Delaware, where their descendants reside at this very day. I am told, however, by divers observant travellers, that they have never been able to get over the chap-fallen looks of their ancestors; but that they still do strangely transmit from father to son manifest marks of the sound drubbing given them by the sturdy Amsterdammers.

The whole country of New Sweden, having thus yielded to the arms of the triumphant Peter, was reduced to a colony called South River, and placed under the superintendence of a lieutenant-governor, subject to the control of the supreme government of New Amsterdam. This great dignitary was called Mynheer William Beekman, or rather *Beck*-man, who derived his surname, as did Ovidious Naso of yore, from the lordly dimensions of his nose, which projected from the centre of his countenance, like the beak of a parrot. He was the great progenitor of the tribe of the Beekmans, one of the most ancient and honorable families of the province; the members of which do gratefully commemorate the origin of their dignity; not as your noble families in England would do, by having a glowing proboscis emblazoned in their escutcheon, but by one and all wearing a right goodly nose, stuck in the very middle of their faces.

Thus was this perilous enterprise gloriously terminated, with the loss of only two men—Wolfert Van Horne, a tall spare man, who was knocked overboard by the boom of a sloop in a flaw of wind; and fat Brom Van Bummel, who was suddenly carried off by an indigestion; both, however, were immortalized, as having bravely fallen in the service of their country. True it is, Peter Stuyvesant had one of his limbs terribly fractured in the act of storming the fortress; but as it was fortunately his wooden leg, the wound was promptly and effectually healed.

And now nothing remains to this branch of my history but to mention that this immaculate hero, and his victorious army, returned joyously to the Manhattoes; where they made a solemn and triumphant entry, bearing with them the conquered Risingh, and the remnant of his battered crew, who had refused allegiance; for it appears that the gigantic Swede had only fallen into a swoon, at the end of the battle, from which he was speedily restored by a wholesome tweak of the nose.

These captive heroes were lodged, according to the promise of the governor, at the public expense, in a fair and spacious castle; being the prison of state, of which Stoffel Brinkerhoff, the immortal conqueror of Oyster Bay, was appointed governor; and which has ever since remained in the possession of his descendants.

It was a pleasant and goodly sight to witness the joy of the people of New Amsterdam, at beholding their warriors once more return from this war in the wilderness. The old women thronged round Antony Van Corlear, who gave the whole history of the campaign with matchless accuracy; saving that he took the credit of fighting the whole battle himself, and especially of vanquishing the stout Risingh; which he considered himself as clearly entitled to, seeing that it was effected by his own stone pottle.

The schoolmasters throughout the town gave holiday to their little urchins, who followed in droves after the drums, with paper caps on their heads, and sticks in their

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11 **Paladin Orlando**, or Roland, hero of romance, celebrated in the Chanson de Roland • 30 **chap-fallen**, with drooping jaws • 41 **Ovidious Naso**, better known as Ovid (43 B.C.-17 A.D.?), Roman poet • 54 **flaw**, gust, squall • 75 **descendants**. "This castle, though very much altered and modernized, is still in being, and stands at the corner of Pearl Street, facing Coentie's slip."—Irving

breeches, thus taking the first lesson in the art of war. As to the sturdy rabble, they thronged at the heels of Peter Stuyvesant wherever he went, waving their greasy hats in the air, and shouting "Hardkoppig Piet forever!"

It was indeed a day of roaring rout and jubilee. A huge dinner was prepared at the Stadthouse in honor of the conquerors, where were assembled in one glorious constellation the great and little luminaries of New Amsterdam. There were the lordly Schout and his obsequious deputy—the burgomasters with their officious schepens at their elbows—the subaltern officers at the elbows of the schepens, and so on down to the lowest hanger-on of police: every tag having his rag at his side, to finish his pipe, drink off his heel-taps, and laugh at his flights of immortal dullness. In short—for a city feast is a city feast all the world over, and has been a city feast ever since the creation—the dinner went off much the same as do our great corporation junketings and Fourth of July banquets. Loads of fish, flesh, and fowl were devoured, oceans of liquor drank, thousands of pipes smoked, and many a dull joke honored with much obstreperous fat-sided laughter.

I must not omit to mention, that to this far-famed victory Peter Stuyvesant was indebted for another of his many titles—for so hugely delighted were the honest burghers with his achievements, that they unanimously honored him with the name of *Pieter de Groodt*, that is to say, Peter the Great, or, as it was translated into English by the people of New Amsterdam, for the benefit of their New England visitors, *Piet de pig*—an appellation which he maintained even unto the day of his death

1809

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9 **Schout . . . burgomasters . . . schepens,** Dutch administrative officers A schout was a magistrate; a burgomaster (master of a borough) corresponded to a mayor, a schepen was an alderman

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From • The Sketch Book

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Found Among the Papers of the Late Diedrich Knickerbocker

The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. was first published in seven numbers in New York, between June 23, 1819, and September 13, 1820. In his Preface to the revised edition of 1848, Irving said that most of the essays and stories therein were part of an intended series which, before his plan had matured, he was compelled by circumstances to send piecemeal to the United States.

In addition to "The Author's Account of Himself" and "L'Envoy," collected editions usually contain thirty-two pieces; the original seven numbers offered only twenty-five. Among the additions were "Traits of Indian Character" and "Philip of Pokanoket," previously printed in the **Analectic Magazine** of Philadelphia. The greater part of **The Sketch Book** is composed of essays on English life and manners with a decidedly nostalgic flavor. Among the more famous are "Rural Life in England" (in No. II), "The Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap" (No. III), a series on Christmas customs at the country house of a Yorkshire squire, "Bracebridge Hall" (in No. V), "John Bull" (No. VI), and "Westminster Abbey" and "Stratford-on-Avon" (No. VII). Their emphasis upon the common literary and social heritage of Americans and Englishmen doubtless contributed to international good will in an era when misunderstanding seemed inevitable. That Irving was no sycophantic Anglophile was shown by his vigorous "English Writers on America" (No. II), a frank warning to England that "should those reverses overtake her, from which the proudest empires have not been exempt," she might regret having lost the friendship of the United States. **The Sketch Book** has remained a classic, however, largely because of two sketches or short stories, "Rip Van Winkle" (No. I) and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (No. VI), which are unquestionably among the best-known tales in the English language.

Both stories were written in England in 1818, while Irving was absorbed in what he called "the rich mine of German literature," whose discovery he probably owed to the enthusiasm of Scott. Scholarly investigation has shown that Irving followed German legends for both plots (see especially H. A. Pochmann's article in **Studies in Philology** for July 1930); his many allusions and tags of quotation reveal, in fact, how conscious he was of liter-

ary tradition. Yet, bookish as they are, both tales are skillfully localized and depend for their effect upon much the same feeling for history and folk life which characterizes the History of New York. Both of them continue the pleasant fiction of Diedrich Knickerbocker; both, although thin in plot and unremarkable for characterization, display a perfection of tone and the delight in details of living which are Irving's finest qualities.

A pleasing land of drowsy head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky.
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail, and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market-town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, there is a little valley, or rather lap of land, among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail, or tapping of a woodpecker, is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noon time, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around, and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat, whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a high German doctor, during the early days of the settlement, others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvellous beliefs, are subject to trances and visions; and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole nine fold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the revolutionary war; and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk, hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church

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Text: the revised edition of 1848 • **Castle of Indolence** (1748), an English poem in imitation of Spenser, by James Thomson (1700-1848). The lines appear in Bk. I • **9 Tarry Town,** one of the first Dutch settlements on the Hudson. It was Irving's home after 1835, and he was buried in the cemetery at Sleepy Hollow • **16 lap,** surface or bosom (archaic and poetic) • **42 high German,** southern or highland German • **45 Hendrick Hudson** (d. 1611?) entered the river bearing his name in 1609 • **56 nine fold,** an allusion to a line in **King Lear,** Act III, Scene iv. In folk belief the nightmare was a demon, nine fold refers to her offspring (from **foals**) or familiars. See note, pp. 73 and 75

at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this spectre, allege that the body of the trooper, having been buried in the church-yard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head; and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the church-yard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known, at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative—to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud; for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New-York, that population, manners, and customs, remain fixed; while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water which border a rapid stream; where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature, there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane; who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut; a State which supplies the Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodsmen and country schoolmasters.

The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock, perched upon his spindle neck, to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

His school-house was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs; the windows partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copy-books. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes set against the window shutters; so that, though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he would find some embarrassment in getting out; an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eel-pot. The school-house stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by, and a formidable birch tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a bee-hive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the tone of menace or command; or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "Spare the rod and spoil the child."—Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school, who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burthen off the backs of the weak, and

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10 before daybreak. See the actions of the ghost of Hamlet's father, in **Hamlet**, Act I • **59 genius**, guiding spirit • **82 "Spare . . . child."** See Proverbs 13-24: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." In the form used here the maxim first appeared in Part II (1664) of **Hudibras**, by Samuel Butler (1612-1680), an English satirical poet

laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little, tough, wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called "doing his duty by their parents;" and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that "he would remember it, and thank him for it the longest day he had to live."

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers, whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time; thus going the rounds of the neighborhood, with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labors of their farms; helped to make hay; mended the fences; took the horses to water; drove the cows from pasture; and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers, by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him, on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus, by divers little make-shifts in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of headwork, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle gentlemanlike personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver tea-pot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the church-yard, between services on Sundays! gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overrun the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones; or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half itinerant life, also, he was a kind of travelling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house; so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's history of New-England

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40 **the lion bold . . . ,** a couplet which appears in the 1747 edition of **The New England Primer** • 58 **"by . . . crook,"** a phrase from "Colyn Cloute" (1523), by the English poet, John Skelton (1460?-1529) • 87 **Cotton Mather's history,** a reference either to the **Memorable Providences** (1689) or to **Wonders of the Invisible World** (1693). See p. 72

Witchcraft, in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvellous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spell-bound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover, bordering the little brook that whimpered by his school-house, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of the evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way, by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination: the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hill-side; the boding cry of the tree-toad, that harbinger of storm; the dreary hooting of the screech-owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fire-flies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought, or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes;—and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe, at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was, to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvellous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them wofully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and where, of course, no spectre dared to show his face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homewards. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night!—With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window!—How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted spectre, beset his very path!—How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him!—and how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as

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18 **whip-poor-will.** "The whip-poor-will is a bird which is only heard at night. It receives its name from its note, which is thought to resemble those words" (Irving's note, added after 1820) • 32 **"in linked . . . out,"** a line from "L'Allegro" by John Milton (1608-1674)

might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time; and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart towards the sex; and it is not to be wondered at, that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes; more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those every thing was snug, happy, and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks, in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm-tree spread its broad branches over it; at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well, formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook, that bubbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings, or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens; whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior, and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings, and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered, as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side-dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow-lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burthened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee, or the Lord knows where.

When he entered the house the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged, but lowly-sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front,

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5 Saardam, modern Zaandam, a village near Amsterdam

capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion and the place of usual residence. Here, rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool ready to be spun; in another a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs, and dark mahogany tables, shone like mirrors; and irons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantelpiece; strings of various colored birds' eggs were suspended above it: a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had any thing but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily-conquered adversaries, to contend with; and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant, to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the centre of a Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were for ever presenting new difficulties and impediments; and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart; keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roystering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff, but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb, he had received the nickname of BROM BONES, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights; and, with the ascendency which bodily strength acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone admitting of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and, with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humor at bottom. He had three or four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good-will; and when any madcap prank, or rustic brawl, occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the

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18 and irons. 1820: andirons. The 1848 text is probably in error • 20 mock-oranges, probably syringas • 78 Don Cossacks, Cossacks of the Don River region of Russia. The Cossacks were originally tribes notable for their strong military (and especially their cavalry) organization; the name is variously interpreted as meaning "adventurers," "freebooters," and "plunderers" • 87 rantipole, reckless, wild (rare)

blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk! he was erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently-insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had any thing to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, let her have her way in every thing. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage her poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the mean time, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favorable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for the man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He who wins a thousand common hearts is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette, is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined; his horse was no longer seen tied at the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature, would fain have carried matters to open warfare, and have settled their pretensions to the lady, according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore—by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him: he had overheard a boast of Bones, that he would "double the schoolmaster up, and lay him on a shelf of his own school-house;" and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system; it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones, and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains; smoked out his singing school, by stopping up the chimney; broke into the school-house at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings of withe and window stakes, and turned every thing topsy-turvy: so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still

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17 supple-jack, a walking-stick, cut from a climbing vine • 24 Achilles, an allusion to his passion for Polyxena, daughter of Priam, the Trojan. Slain while arranging for the marriage, which was expected to bring peace, Achilles or his shade returned after death to demand his promised bride; she was accordingly sacrificed by the Greeks

more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod's to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situation of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on a lofty stool whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that sceptre of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails, behind the throne, a constant terror to evil doers; while on the desk before him might be seen sundry contraband articles and prohibited weapons, detected upon the persons of idle urchins; such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper game-cocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of buzzing stillness reigned throughout the school-room. It was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a Negro, in tow-cloth jacket and trowsers, a round-crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making or "quilting frolic," to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel's; and having delivered his message with that air of importance, and effort at fine language, which a Negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet school-room. The scholars were hurried through their lessons, without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy, had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed, or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside without being put away on the shelves, inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time; bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green, in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half hour at his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his looks by a bit of broken looking-glass, that hung up in the school-house. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman, of the name of Hans Van Ripper, and, thus gallantly mounted, issued forth, like a knight-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he bestrode was a broken-down plough-horse, that had outlived almost every thing but his viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burrs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral; but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from the name he bore of Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favorite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal, for, old and broken-down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a sceptre, and, as his horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called; and the skirts of his black coat fluttered out almost to the horse's tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed, as they shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day, the sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden

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26 **cap of Mercury,** the Petasus, or winged hat, symbol of Mercury's speed as messenger of the gods

livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble-field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fulness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking, from bush to bush, and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cock-robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds, and the golden-winged woodpecker, with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedar bird, with its red-tipt wings and yellow-tipt tail, and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light-blue coat and white under-clothes; screaming and chattering, nodding and bobbing and bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples; some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees; some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market; others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields, breathing the odor of the bee-hive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipation stole over his mind of dainty slapjacks, well buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and "sugar suppositions," he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down into the west. The wide bosom of the Tappan Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint, changing gradually into a pure apple green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark-gray and purple of their rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of the Heer Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk withered little dames, in close crimped caps, long-waisted short-gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pincushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lasses, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovation. The sons, in short square-skirted coats with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eel-skin for the purpose, it being esteemed, throughout the country, as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favorite steed Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks, which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable well-broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlor of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious

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20 monteiro cap, a hunting-cap with a flap

display of red and white: but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped-up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty dough-nut, the tenderer oly koek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple pies and peach pies and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly tea-pot sending up its clouds of vapor from the midst—Heaven-bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer; and whose spirits rose with eating as some men's do with drink. He could not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendor. Then, he thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old school-house; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good humor, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh, and a pressing invitation to "fall to, and help themselves."

And now the sound of the music from the common room or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old grayheaded Negro, who had been the itinerant orchestra of the neighborhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped on two or three strings, accompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fibre about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought Saint Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the Negroes; who having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighborhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window, gazing with delight at the scene, rolling their white eye-balls, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? the lady of his heart was his partner in the dance; and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawing out long stories about the war.

This neighborhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly-favored places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding, and infested with refugees, cow-boys, and all kinds of border chivalry. Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each story-teller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breastwork, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of Whiteplains, being an excellent master of

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5 dough-nut . . . oly koek . . . cruller, all of them fried in deep fat, but varying in composition. Oly koek, from the Dutch, is known chiefly in New York • **54 Saint Vitus,** according to legend a Christian martyr of the third century, especially venerated in medieval Germany • **76 cow-boys,** bands of Tory guerillas who operated near New York City during the Revolution

defence, parried a musket ball with a small sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whiz round the blade, and glance off at the hilt: in proof of which, he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighborhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions thrive best in these sheltered long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap, and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have travelled away from the neighborhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom hear of ghosts except in our long-established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts, was doubtless owing to the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighborhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favorite spectre of Sleepy Hollow, the headless horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patrolling the country; and, it was said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the church-yard.

The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust-trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which, peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. This was one of the favorite haunts of the headless horseman; and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree-tops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvellous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that, on returning one night from the neighboring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that he had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but, just as they came to the church bridge, the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvellous events that had taken place in his native State

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34 Major André (1751-1780), executed at Tappan, across the Hudson a few miles below Tarrytown, following his capture with the plans of West Point and evidence of the treason of Benedict Arnold. A monument now stands near the place of his capture in Tarrytown

of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favorite swains, and their light-hearted laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter until they gradually died away—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-à-tête with the heiress; fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chop-fallen.—Oh these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks?—Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival?—Heaven only knows, not I!—Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a hen-roost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks, roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crest-fallen, pursued his travel homewards, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him, the Tappan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the barking of the watch dog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this faithful companion of man. Now and then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bull-frog, from a neighboring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably, and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon, now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the centre of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled, and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by; and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights and doleful lamentations told concerning it.

As Ichabod approached this fearful tree, he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered—it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white, hanging in the midst of the tree—he paused and ceased whistling; but on looking more narrowly, perceived that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning, and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan—his teeth chattered and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly-wooded glen, known by the name of Wiley's swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grapevines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this bridge was the severest trial.

It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot: it was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen, black and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveller.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents—"Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgelled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervor into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and, with a scramble and a bound, stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road,



"He beheld something huge, misshapen . . . towering."

jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the Galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed, in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind—the other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavored to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion, that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveller in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck, on perceiving that he was headless!—but his horror was still more increased, on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of the saddle: his terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping, by a sudden movement, to give his companion the slip—but the spectre started full jump with him. Away then they dashed, through thick and thin; stones flying, and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to

Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong down hill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow, shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story, and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskilful rider an apparent advantage in the chase; but just as he had got half way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavored to hold it firm, but in vain; and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears; the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskilful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones's ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash—he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast—dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the school-house, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper, as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes, full of dogs' ears; and a broken pitchpipe. As to the books and furniture of the school-house, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's History of Witchcraft, a New England Almanac, and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted in several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honor of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who from that time forward determined to send his children no more to school; observing, that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole budget of others, were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the galloping Hessian. As he was a

bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him. The school was removed to a different quarter of the hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New-York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighborhood, partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time, had been admitted to the bar, turned politician, electioneered, written for the newspapers, and finally had been made a justice of the Ten Pound Court. Brom Bones too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance, conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe, and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the mill-pond. The school-house being deserted, soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue; and the plough boy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.

POSTSCRIPT, FOUND IN THE HANDWRITING OF MR. KNICKERBOCKER

The preceding Tale is given, almost in the precise words in which I heard it related at a Corporation meeting of the ancient city of Manhattoes, at which were present many of its sagest and most illustrious burghers. The narrator was a pleasant, shabby, gentlemanly old fellow, in pepper-and-salt clothes, with a sadly humorous face; and one whom I strongly suspected of being poor,—he made such efforts to be entertaining. When his story was concluded, there was much laughter and approbation, particularly from two or three deputy aldermen, who had been asleep the greater part of the time. There was, however, one tall, dry-looking old gentleman, with beetling eyebrows, who maintained a grave and rather severe face throughout: now and then folding his arms, inclining his head, and looking down upon the floor, as if turning a doubt over in his mind. He was one of your wary men, who never laugh, but upon good grounds —when they have reason and the law on their side. When the mirth of the rest of the company had subsided, and silence was restored, he leaned one arm on the elbow of his chair, and sticking the other akimbo, demanded, with a slight, but exceedingly sage motion of the head, and contraction of the brow, what was the moral of the story, and what it went to prove?

The story-teller, who was just putting a glass of wine to his lips, as a refreshment after his toils, paused for a moment, looked at his inquirer with an air of infinite deference, and, lowering the glass slowly to the table, observed, that the story was intended most logically to prove:—

"That there is no situation in life but has its advantages and pleasures—provided we will but take a joke as we find it:

"That, therefore, he that runs races with goblin troopers is likely to have rough riding of it.

"Ergo, for a country schoolmaster to be refused the hand of a Dutch heiress, is a certain step to high preferment, in the state."

The cautious old gentleman knit his brows tenfold closer after this explanation, being sorely puzzled by the ratiocination of the syllogism; while, methought, the one in pepper-and-salt eyed him with something of a triumphant leer. At length he observed, that all this was very well, but still he thought the story a little on the extravagant—there were one or two points on which he had his doubts.

"Faith, sir," replied the story-teller, "as to that matter, I don't believe one-half of it myself."

D. K.
1818·1820

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16 **Ten Pound Court**, in which cases involving not more than ten pounds were tried by a justice



James Fenimore Cooper

1789 • 1851

James Cooper (he became "James Fenimore-Cooper" by a legislative act in 1826 and later dropped the hyphen) was born at Burlington, New Jersey, in 1789. In the previous year his father had laid out the site of Cooperstown at the foot of Otsego Lake, in New York, and in 1790 he settled there with his family. The son was brought up in a community in which the Coopers were by far the most important personages; his future was from the first defined as that of a landowner and estate manager. To prepare for it he had the education of a gentleman, first under a private tutor in Albany, and then in Yale College, which expelled him for too much pleasure-seeking in 1806. His further education consisted of shipping to England as a common sailor in 1806-1807 and three years' service as a midshipman in the United States Navy, from which he resigned shortly after his marriage, in 1811, to Susan Augusta De Lancey, daughter of a wealthy family in Mamaroneck, Westchester County. Both he and his wife had money of their own, and there was more in prospect. They settled down to raising a family and supervising their interests, living for some time at Cooperstown, and later in Westchester. In 1819, when Cooper was thirty, he was a gentleman farmer and a small capitalist, with neither the ambition nor the necessity for authorship.

Panel (l. to r.): Scene from The Pilot • James Fenimore Cooper at 30 • from The Pathfinder • Otsego Hall • Statue of Indian hunter

Seldom, perhaps, has a novelist developed more casually. The tradition is that, reading aloud to his wife a story of English country life, he remarked that he could do as well himself and set out to make good his boast. The result was *Precaution,* a novel picturing English society and abounding with moral sentiment on marriage. It was published in 1820, and, although not especially successful, it led directly to *The Spy* (1821), which was enormously so. The course of Cooper's life was changed abruptly from that natural to a country gentleman to the uncertain peregrinations of a writer. He discovered that he had both a fertile imagination and a ready pen, and, devoting his mornings to composition, he began to produce a stream of books which, at the time of his death in 1851, consisted of thirty-three novels and numerous volumes of social comment, naval history, and travel.

The relation between his life and his writing is highly complicated. In general, however, three periods are clearly distinguishable. Between 1820 and 1826 he explored the possibilities of the novel of romantic action, in emulation of Sir Walter Scott; living in New York City after 1822, the center of the congenial "Lunch" or Bread and Cheese Club, he sent forth to the world, in rapid succession, *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Pilot* (1824), *Lionel Lincoln* (1825), and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). Between 1826 and 1833 he lived in Europe, where, under the tutelage of Lafayette, he became deeply interested in political philosophy, particularly as it appeared in the contrast between American and European institutions. An ardent patriot, he wrote a trilogy in opposition to Scott's glorification of medievalism, but *The Bravo* (1831), *The Heidenmauer* (1832), and *The Headsman* (1833) disappointed the public, in America as well as in Europe, and inaugurated a disillusion in their author which grew steadily with the years. From 1834 until his death Cooper lived half of each year in Cooperstown, spending the other six months in New York City. He had left the United States in the administration of John Quincy Adams; when he returned, the Jacksonian revolution had materially changed the social and political complexion of the nation. Cooper, an aristocrat by birth, by education, and by temperament, did not find the change wholly admirable; indeed, the last seventeen years of his life were spent in an unhappy battle for aristocratic principles which his countrymen found objectionable. Occasionally, as in *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841), Cooper returned to his earlier vein, but his more characteristic works were social satires, such as *Home as Found* (1838), and the problem novels, *Satanstoe* (1845), *The Chainbearer* (1845), and *The Redskins* (1846), based upon the opposition of New Yorkers to the continuance of the tenant farm system of the patroons. Sometimes, indeed, he deserted fiction to present his conviction that individual liberty can only be achieved by a constitutional government which protects property as well as human rights; in *The American Democrat* (1838), for example, he argued for an aristocracy of merit not unlike that envisaged by Alexander Hamilton and the Federalists.

Cooper was unpopular in his later years because of his criticism of democracy. The tale of his innumerable libel suits against those critics who unjustly defamed his character is lengthy and inappropriate here, but it should be said that he was usually in the right and won his cases. There is justice in Professor Spiller's claim that Cooper was the "most thoroughly critical mind that early America produced." Few men of his generation realized as he did that democracy, wrongly understood, can be tyrannical; that distinction and quality cannot be achieved by the glorification of mediocrity and numbers.

It is not as a social critic, however, that Cooper has won his fame, and another age than the present may well forget his problem novels. He lives, as his friend Bryant said, as the American Hesiod or Theocritus, a poet of the youth of a nation, a nation which was wresting a continent from nature and the Indians, not always intelligently, not always justly, but with full awareness of the imaginative "lift" of the great open spaces and the epic quality of man's struggle with the wilderness. His claim to fame as the first great American novelist can scarcely be challenged.

James Fenimore Cooper: Representative Selections, ed. R. E. Spiller, Cincinnati, 1936 • R. E. Spiller and P. C. Blackburn, A Descriptive Bibliography of the Writings of James Fenimore Cooper, New York, 1934 • T. R. Lounsbury, James Fenimore Cooper, American Men of Letters Series, Boston, 1882 • R. E. Spiller, Fenimore Cooper, Critic of His Times, New York, 1931 • Marcel Clavel, Fenimore Cooper, sa vie et son oeuvre, Aix-en-Provence, 1938

The Pioneers;

or The Sources of the Susquehanna

The Pioneers, Cooper's third published novel and the first of the five Leather-Stocking tales, appeared in two volumes on February 1, 1823, in New York. A London edition appeared in the same month and by 1832 there were translations into French, German, Swedish, Danish, and Spanish. Although it has not been, over the years, the most popular of his writings, **The Pioneers** has the distinction of introducing the two characters of the American wildernes. for which Cooper is most famous—Natty Bumppo, or the Leather-Stocking, and Chingachgook, Natty's Mohican friend and companion. The novel, moreover, is among the most autobiographical of Cooper's works, frequently foreshadowing his criticism of the ignorance and irresponsibility of frontier democracy which later became almost an obsession.

The first half of the book moves slowly—it takes Cooper nineteen chapters to cover the first twenty-four hours of his tale—but the reader is rewarded by a faithful representation of the life of a newly settled community in 1793, obviously based upon the author's memories of Cooperstown. The remainder of the book consists of a series of episodes in which the woodcraft and native intelligence of Natty Bumppo are given a central position. The plot will be found a mixture of disguised identity and escape from physical danger, a somewhat weak but wholly characteristic example of Cooper's storytelling. In the following abridgement, Cooper's poetical handling of external nature will be apparent, as well as his typical methods of characterization, successful frequently in the case of his men, almost always conventional in the portrayal of women. A Preface written for a revision made in 1831 acknowledged that the author depended largely upon fact for his setting and Templeton backgrounds, but denied any intention of describing accurately any real characters. Nevertheless, Judge Temple has seemed to most critics a portrait of William Cooper, the novelist's father, and various other characters have been identified with Cooperstown folk.

Natty Bumppo, however, was a creation all Cooper's own, with only a vague resemblance to Daniel Boone, who has been suggested as his prototype. Natty, under various names—the Leather-Stocking, Deerslayer, Hawk-eye, and Pathfinder—appears in and binds together five novels: **The Pioneers** (1823), **The Last of the Mohicans** (1826), **The Prairie** (1827), **The Pathfinder** (1840), and **The Deerslayer** (1841). Cooper did not plan these novels as a whole, however, and they are held together only as parts of a biographical whole which has numerous discrepancies. In point of biographical time **The Deerslayer** should be read first; its action takes place on Otsego Lake between 1740 and 1745. Next comes **The Last of the Mohicans**, which occurs on Lake George in 1757; then **The Pathfinder**, whose scene is Lake Ontario in 1760. After **The Pioneers**, as if Natty were not feeble enough at its conclusion, comes **The Prairie**, in which the nameless hero—his dog Hector, stuffed by an Indian taxidermist, at his side—dies in 1804 amid the scenic splendor of the Pawnee country.

CHAPTER I

Near the centre of the State of New York lies an extensive district of country, whose surface is a succession of hills and dales, or, to speak with greater deference to geographical definitions, of mountains and valleys. It is among these hills that the Delaware takes its rise; and flowing from the limpid lakes and thousand springs of this region, the numerous sources of the Susquehanna meander through the valleys, until, uniting their streams, they form one of the proudest rivers of the United States. The mountains are generally arable to the tops, although 10
instances are not wanting where the sides are jutted with rocks, that aid greatly in giving to the country that romantic and picturesque character which it so eminently possesses. The vales are narrow, rich, and cultivated; with a stream uniformly winding through

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Text: the collected edition of Cooper's novels in thirty-two volumes, New York, 1859-1861. The tags of poetry used by Cooper for chapter heads have been omitted

each. Beautiful and thriving villages are found interspersed along the margins of the small lakes, or situated at those points of the streams which are favorable to manufacturing; and neat and comfortable farms, with every indication of wealth about them, are scattered profusely through the vales, and even to the mountain tops. Roads diverge in every direction, from the even and graceful bottoms of the valleys, to the most rugged and intricate passes of the hills. Academies, and minor edifices of learning, meet the eye of the stranger at every few miles, as he winds his way through this uneven territory; and places for the worship of God abound with that frequency which characterizes a moral and reflecting people, and with that variety of exterior and canonical government which flows from unfettered liberty of conscience. In short, the whole district is hourly exhibiting how much can be done, in even a rugged country, and with a severe climate, under the dominion of mild laws, and where every man feels a direct interest in the prosperity of a commonwealth, of which he knows himself to form a part. The expedients of the pioneers who first broke ground in the settlement of this country are succeeded by the permanent improvements of the yeoman, who intends to leave his remains to moulder under the sod which he tills, or, perhaps, of the son, who, born in the land, piously wishes to linger around the grave of his father. Only forty years have passed since this territory was a wilderness.

Very soon after the establishment of the independence of the States, by the peace of 1783, the enterprise of their citizens was directed to a development of the natural advantages of their widely extended dominions. Before the war of the revolution the inhabited parts of the colony of New York were limited to less than a tenth of its possessions. A narrow belt of country, extending for a short distance on either side of the Hudson, with a similar occupation of fifty miles on the banks of the Mohawk, together with the islands of Nassau and Staten, and a few insulated settlements on chosen land along the margins of streams, composed the country, which was then inhabited by less than two hundred thousand souls. Within the short period we have mentioned, the population has spread itself over five degrees of latitude and seven of longitude, and has swelled to a million and a half inhabitants, who are maintained in abundance, and can look forward to ages before the evil day must arrive when their possessions shall become unequal to their wants.

Our tale begins in 1793, about seven years after the commencement of one of the earliest of those settlements, which have conduced to effect that magical change in the power and condition of the State, to which we have alluded.

It was near the setting of the sun, on a clear, cold day in December, when a sleigh was moving slowly up one of the mountains, in the district we have described. The day had been fine for the season, and but two or three large clouds, whose color seemed brightened by the light reflected from the mass of snow that covered the earth, floated in a sky of the purest blue. The road wound along the brow of a precipice, and on one side was upheld by a foundation of logs, piled one upon the other, while a narrow excavation in the mountain, in the opposite direction, had made a passage of sufficient width for the ordinary travelling of that day. But logs, excavation, and everything that did not reach several feet above the earth, lay alike buried beneath the snow. A single track, barely wide enough to receive the sleigh, denoted the route of the highway, and this was sunk nearly two feet below the surrounding surface. In the vale, which lay at a distance of several hundred feet lower, there was what in the language of the country was called a *clearing,* and all the usual improvements of a new settlement; these even extended up the hill to the point where the road turned short and ran across the level land, which lay on the summit of the mountain; but the summit itself remained in

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14 **canonical,** legal—a somewhat unusual handling of the word • 27 **forty years.** "The book was written in 1823."—Cooper • 44 **a million . . . inhabitants.** "The population of New York is now (1831) quite 2,000,000."—Cooper • 67 **sleigh.** "Sleigh is the word used in every part of the United States to denote a traineau. It is of local use in the west of England, whence it is more probably derived by the Americans. The latter draw a distinction between a sled, or sledge, and a sleigh, the sleigh being shod with metal. Sleighs are also subdivided into two-horse and one-horse sleighs. Of the latter, there are the cutter, with thills so arranged as to permit the horse to travel in the side track; the 'pung' or 'tow-pung,' which is driven with a pole, and the 'gumper,' a rude construction used for temporary purposes, in the new countries.

"Many of the American sleighs are elegant, though the use of this mode of conveyance is much lessend with the melioration of the climate, consequent on the clearing of the forests."—Cooper. Cooper was apparently correct in regarding "sleigh" as an American word, although present-day lexicographers believe its origin to have been Dutch. His remark on climate represents an opinion on a much-debated question of his day

forest. There was a glittering in the atmosphere, as if it were filled with innumerable shining particles; and the noble bay horses that drew the sleigh were covered, in many parts, with a coat of hoar frost. The vapor from their nostrils was seen to issue like smoke; and every object in the view, as well as every arrangement of the travellers, denoted the depth of a winter in the mountains. The harness, which was of a deep dull black, differing from the glossy varnishing of the present day, was ornamented with enormous plates and buckles of brass, that shone like gold in those transient beams of the sun, which found their way obliquely through the tops of the trees. Huge saddles, studded with nails, and fitted with cloth that served as blankets to the shoulders of the cattle, supported four high, square-topped turrets, through which the stout reins led from the mouths of the horses to the hands of the driver, who was a Negro, of apparently twenty years of age. His face, which nature had colored with a glistening black, was now mottled with the cold, and his large shining eyes filled with tears; a tribute to their power that the keen frosts of those regions always extracted from one of his African origin. Still there was a smiling expression of good humor in his happy countenance, that was created by the thoughts of home, and a Christmas fire-side, with its Christmas frolics. The sleigh was one of those large, comfortable, old-fashioned conveyances, which would admit a whole family within its bosom, but which now contained only two passengers besides the driver. The color of its outside was a modest green, and that of its inside a fiery red. The latter was intended to convey the idea of heat in that cold climate. Large buffalo skins, trimmed around the edges with red cloth, cut into festoons, covered the back of the sleigh, and were spread over its bottom, and drawn up around the feet of the travellers—one of whom was a man of middle age, and the other a female, just entering upon womanhood. The former was of a large stature; but the precautions he had taken to guard against the cold left but little of his person exposed to view. A greatcoat, that was abundantly ornamented by a profusion of furs, enveloped the whole of his figure, excepting the head, which was covered with a cap of marten skins, lined with morocco, the sides of which were made to fall, if necessary and were now drawn close over the ears, and fastened beneath his chin with a black riband. The top of the cap was surmounted with the tail of the animal whose skin had furnished the rest of the materials, which fell back, not ungracefully, a few inches behind the head. From beneath this mask were to be seen part of a fine manly face, and particularly a pair of expressive, large blue eyes, that promised extraordinary intellect, covert humor, and great benevolence. The form of his companion was literally hid beneath the garments she wore. There were furs and silks peeping from under a large camlet cloak, with a thick flannel lining, that, by its cut and size, was evidently intended for a masculine wearer. A huge hood of black silk, that was quilted with down, concealed the whole of her head, except at a small opening in front for breath, through which occasionally sparkled a pair of animated jet-black eyes.

Both the father and daughter (for such was the connection between the two travellers) were too much occupied with their reflections to break a stillness, that received little or no interruption from the easy gliding of the sleigh, by the sound of their voices The former was thinking of the wife that had held this their only child to her bosom, when, four years before, she had reluctantly consented to relinquish the society of her daughter, in order that the latter might enjoy the advantages of an education which the city of New York could only offer at that period. A few months afterward death had deprived him of the remaining companion of his solitude; but still he had enough of real regard for his child, not to bring her into the comparative wilderness in which he dwelt, until the full period had expired to which he had limited her juvenile labors. The reflections of the daughter were less melancholy, and mingled with a pleased astonishment at the novel scenery she met at every turn in the road.

The mountain on which they were journeying was covered with pines, that rose without a branch some seventy or eighty feet, and which frequently doubled that height by the addition of the tops. Through the innumerable vistas that opened beneath the lofty trees, the eye could penetrate, until it was met by a distant inequality in the ground, or was stopped by a view of the summit of the mountain, which lay on the opposite side of the valley to which they were hastening. The dark trunks of the trees rose from the pure white of the snow, in regularly formed shafts, until, at a great height, their branches shot forth horizontal limbs, that

were covered with the meagre foliage of an evergreen, affording a melancholy contrast to the torpor of nature below. To the travellers, there seemed to be no wind; but these pines waved majestically at their topmost boughs, sending forth a dull, plaintive sound, that was quite in consonance with the rest of the melancholy scene.

The sleigh had glided for some distance along the even surface, and the gaze of the female was bent in inquisitive, and, perhaps, timid glances, into the recesses of the forest, when a loud and continued howling was heard, pealing under the long arches of the woods, like the cry of a numerous pack of hounds. The instant the sound reached the ears of the gentleman, he cried aloud to the black—

"Hold up, Aggy; there is old Hector; I should know his bay among ten thousand! The Leather-stocking has put his hounds into the hills, this clear day, and they have started their game. There is a deer-track a few rods ahead;—and now, Bess, if thou canst muster courage enough to stand fire, I will give thee a saddle for thy Christmas dinner."

The black drew up, with a cheerful grin upon his chilled features, and began thrashing his arms together, in order to restore the circulation to his fingers, while the speaker stood erect, and, throwing aside his outer covering, stepped from the sleigh upon a bank of snow, which sustained his weight without yielding.

In a few moments the speaker succeeded in extricating a double-barrelled fowling-piece from among a multitude of trunks and bandboxes. After throwing aside the thick mittens which had encased his hands, that now appeared in a pair of leather gloves tipped with fur, he examined his priming, and was about to move forward, when the light bounding noise of an animal plunging through the woods was heard, and a fine buck darted into the path, a short distance ahead of him. The appearance of the animal was sudden, and his flight inconceivably rapid; but the traveller appeared to be too keen a sportsman to be disconcerted by either. As it came first into view he raised the fowling-piece to his shoulder, and, with a practised eye and steady hand, drew a trigger. The deer dashed forward undaunted, and apparently unhurt. Without lowering his piece, the traveller turned its muzzle toward his victim, and fired again. Neither discharge, however, seemed to have taken effect.

The whole scene had passed with a rapidity that confused the female, who was unconsciously rejoicing in the escape of the buck, as he rather darted like a meteor, than ran across the road, when a sharp quick sound struck her ear, quite different from the full, round reports of her father's gun, but still sufficiently distinct to be known as the concussion produced by fire-arms. At the same instant that she heard this unexpected report, the buck sprang from the snow to a great height in the air, and directly a second discharge, similar in sound to the first, followed, when the animal came to the earth, falling headlong, and rolling over on the crust with its own velocity. A loud shout was given by the unseen marksman, and a couple of men instantly appeared from behind the trunks of two of the pines, where they had evidently placed themselves in expectation of the passage of the deer.

"Ha! Natty, had I known you were in ambush, I should not have fired," cried the traveller, moving toward the spot where the deer lay—near to which he was followed by the delighted black, with his sleigh; "but the sound of old Hector was too exhilarating to be quiet; though I hardly think I struck him either."

"No—no—Judge," returned the hunter, with an inward chuckle, and with that look of exultation that indicates a consciousness of superior skill; "you burnt your powder only to warm your nose this cold evening. Did ye think to stop a full-grown buck, with Hector and the slut open upon him within sound, with that pop-gun in your hand? There's plenty of pheasants among the swamps; and the snow-birds are flying round your own door, where you may feed them with crumbs, and shoot them at pleasure, any day; but if you're for a buck, or a little bear's meat, Judge, you'll have to take the long rifle, with a greased wadding, or you'll waste more powder than you'll fill stomachs, I'm thinking."

As the speaker concluded, he drew his bare hand across the bottom of his nose, and again opened his enormous mouth with a kind of inward laugh.

"The gun scatters well, Natty, and it has killed a deer before now," said the traveller, smiling good-humoredly. "One barrel was charged with buck-shot; but the other was loaded for birds only. Here are two hurts; one through the neck, and the other directly through the heart. It is by no means certain, Natty, but I gave him one of the two."



The Leather-Stocking's cabin.

"Let who will kill him," said the hunter, rather surlily, "I suppose the creature is to be eaten." So saying, he drew a large knife from a leathern sheath, which was stuck through his girdle or sash, and cut the throat of the animal. "If there are two balls through the deer, I would ask if there wer'n't two rifles fired—besides, who ever saw such a ragged hole from a smooth-bore, as this through the neck?—and you will own yourself, Judge, that the buck fell at the last shot, which was sent from a truer and a younger hand than your'n or mine either; but for my part, although I am a poor man, I can live without the venison, but I don't love to give up my lawful dues in a free country. Though, for the matter of that, might often makes right here, as well as in the old country, for what I can see."

An air of sullen dissatisfaction pervaded the manner of the hunter during the whole of this speech; yet he thought it prudent to utter the close of the sentence in such an undertone, as to leave nothing audible but the grumbling sounds of his voice.

"Nay, Natty," rejoined the traveller, with undisturbed good humor, "it is for the honor that I contend. A few dollars will pay for the venison; but what will requite me for the lost honor of a buck's tail in my cap? Think, Natty, how I should triumph over that quizzing dog, Dick Jones, who has failed seven times already this season, and has only brought in one woodchuck and a few gray squirrels."

"Ah! the game is becoming hard to find, indeed, Judge, with your clearings and betterments," said the old hunter, with a kind of compelled resignation. "The time has been, when I have shot thirteen deer, without counting the fa'ns, standing in the door of my own hut!—and for bear's meat, if one wanted a ham or so, he had only to watch a-nights, and he could shoot one by moonlight, through the cracks of the logs; no fear of his over-sleeping himself neither, for the howling of the wolves was sartin to keep his eyes open. There's old Hector,"—patting with affection a tall hound, of black and yellow spots, with white belly and legs, that just then came in on the scent, accompanied by the slut he had mentioned; "see where the wolves bit his throat, the night I druv them from the venison that was smoking on the chimbly top;—that dog is more to be trusted than many a Christian man; for he never forgets a friend, and loves the hand that gives him bread."

There was a peculiarity in the manner of the hunter that attracted the notice of the young female, who had been a close and interested observer of his appearance and equipments, from the moment he came into view. He was tall, and so meagre as to make him seem above even the six feet that he actually stood in his stockings. On his head, which was thinly covered with lank, sandy hair, he wore a cap made of foxskin, resembling in shape the one we have already described, although much inferior in finish and ornaments. His face was skinny, and thin almost to emaciation; but yet it bore no signs of disease—on the contrary, it had every indication of the most robust and enduring health. The cold and the exposure had, together, given it a color of uniform red. His gray eyes were glancing under a pair of shaggy brows, that overhung them in long hairs of gray mingled with their natural hue; his scraggy neck was bare, and burnt to the same tint with his face; though a small part of a shirt collar, made of the country check, was to be seen above the over-dress he wore. A kind of coat, made of dressed deerskin, with the hair on, was belted close to his lank body, by a girdle of colored worsted. On his feet were deerskin moccasins, ornamented with porcupines' quills, after the manner of the Indians, and his limbs were guarded with long leggings of the same material as the moccasins, which, gartering over the knees of his tarnished buckskin breeches, had obtained for him, among the settlers, the nickname of Leather-stocking. Over his left shoulder was slung a belt of deerskin, from which depended an enormous ox horn, so thinly scraped as to discover the powder it contained. The larger end was fitted ingeniously and securely with a wooden bottom, and the other was stopped tight by a little plug. A leathern pouch hung before him, from

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25 quizzing, fun-loving or mocking

which, as he concluded his last speech, he took a small measure, and, filling it accurately with powder, he commenced reloading the rifle, which, as its butt rested on the snow before him, reached nearly to the top of his foxskin cap.

The traveller had been closely examining the wounds during these movements, and now, without heeding the ill-humor of the hunter's manner, he exclaimed:

"I would fain establish a right, Natty, to the honor of this death; and surely if the hit in the neck be mine, it is enough; for the shot in the heart was unnecessary—what we call an act of supererogation, Leather-stocking."

"You may call it by what larned name you please, Judge," said the hunter, throwing his rifle across his left arm, and knocking up a brass lid in the breech, from which he took a small piece of greased leather, and wrapping a ball in it, forced them down by main strength on the powder, where he continued to pound them while speaking. "It's far easier to call names than to shoot a buck on the spring; but the cretur came by his end from a younger hand than either your'n or mine, as I said before."

"What say you, my friend," cried the traveller, turning pleasantly to Natty's companion; "shall we toss up this dollar for the honor, and you keep the silver if you lose; what say you, friend?"

"That I killed the deer," answered the young man with a little haughtiness, as he leaned on another long rifle, similar to that of Natty.

"Here are two to one, indeed," replied the Judge, with a smile; "I am outvoted—over-ruled, as we say on the bench. There is Aggy, he can't vote, being a slave; and Bess is a minor—so I must even make the best of it. But you'll sell me the venison; and the deuce is in it, but I make a good story about its death."

"The meat is none of mine to sell," said Leather-stocking, adopting a little of his companion's hauteur; "for my part I have known animals travel days with shots in the neck, and I'm none of them who'll rob a man of his rightful dues."

"You are tenacious of your rights, this cold evening, Natty," returned the Judge, with unconquerable good nature; "but what say you, young man; will three dollars pay you for the buck?"

"First let us determine the question of right to the satisfaction of us both," said the youth, firmly but respectfully, and with a pronunciation and language vastly superior to his appearance; "with how many shot did you load your gun?"

"With five, sir," said the Judge, a little struck with the other's manner; "are they not enough to slay a buck like this?"

"One would do it; but," moving to the tree from behind which he had appeared, "you know, sir, you fired in this direction—here are four of the bullets in the tree."

The Judge examined the fresh marks in the bark of the pine, and shaking his head, said, with a laugh:

"You are making out the case against yourself, my young advocate—where is the fifth?"

"Here," said the youth, throwing aside the rough overcoat that he wore, and exhibiting a hole in his under garment, through which large drops of blood were oozing.

"Good God!" exclaimed the Judge with horror; "have I been trifling here about an empty distinction, and a fellow-creature suffering from my hands without a murmur? But hasten—quick—get into my sleigh—it is but a mile to the village, where surgical aid can be obtained;—all shall be done at my expense, and thou shalt live with me until thy wound is healed, aye, and forever afterward."

"I thank you for your good intention, but I must decline your offer. I have a friend who would be uneasy were he to hear that I am hurt and away from him. The injury is but slight, and the bullet has missed the bones; but I believe, sir, you will now admit my title to the venison."

"Admit it!" repeated the agitated Judge; "I here give thee a right to shoot deer, or bears, or anything thou pleasest in my woods, forever. Leather-stocking is the only other man that I have granted the same privilege to; and the time is coming when it will be of value. But I buy your deer—here, this bill will pay thee, both for thy shot and my own."

The old hunter gathered his tall person up into an air of pride, during this dialogue, but he waited until the other had done speaking.

"There's them living who say that Nathaniel Bumppo's right to shoot on these hills is of older date than Marmaduke Temple's right to forbid him," he said. "But if there's a law about it at all—though who ever heard of a law that a man shouldn't kill deer where he pleased! —but if there is a law at all, it should be to keep people from the use of smooth-bores. A body never knows

where his lead will fly, when he pulls the trigger of one of them uncertain fire-arms."

Without attending to the soliloquy of Natty, the youth bowed his head silently to the offer of the bank note, and replied:

"Excuse me; I have need of the venison."

"But this will buy you many deer," said the Judge; "take it, I entreat you," and lowering his voice to a whisper, he added—"it is for a hundred dollars."

For an instant only, the youth seemed to hesitate, and then, blushing even through the high color that the cold had given to his cheeks, as if with inward shame at his own weakness, he again declined the offer.

During this scene the female arose, and, regardless of the cold air, she threw back the hood which concealed her features, and now spoke, with great earnestness

"Surely, surely—young man,—sir—you would not pain my father so much, as to have him think that he leaves a fellow-creature in this wilderness, whom his own hand has injured. I entreat you will go with us, and receive medical aid."

Whether his wound became more painful, or there was something irresistible in the voice and manner of the fair pleader for her father's feelings, we know not; but the distance of the young man's manner was sensibly softened by this appeal, and he stood in apparent doubt, as if reluctant to comply with, and yet unwilling to refuse her request. The Judge, for such being his office, must in future be his title, watched, with no little interest, the display of this singular contention in the feelings of the youth; and advancing, kindly took his hand, and as he pulled him gently toward the sleigh, urged him to enter it.

"There is no human aid nearer than Templeton," he said, "and the hut of Natty is full three miles from this, —come—come, my young friend, go with us, and let the new doctor look to this shoulder of thine. Here is Natty will take the tidings of thy welfare to thy friend; and should'st thou require it, thou shalt return home in the morning."

The young man succeeded in extricating his hand from the warm grasp of the Judge, but he continued to gaze on the face of the female, who, regardless of the cold, was still standing with her fine features exposed, which expressed feelings that eloquently seconded the request of her father. Leather-stocking stood, in the meantime, leaning upon his long rifle, with his head turned a little to one side, as if engaged in sagacious musing; when, having apparently satisfied his doubts, by revolving the subject in his mind, he broke silence.

"It may be best to go, lad, after all; for if the shot hangs under the skin, my hand is getting too old to be cutting into human flesh, as I once used to. Though some thirty years agone, in the old war, when I was out under Sir William, I travelled seventy miles alone in the howling wilderness, with a rifle bullet in my thigh, and then cut it out with my own jack-knife Old Indian John knows the time well. I met him with a party of the Delawares, on the trail of the Iroquois, who had been down and taken five scalps on the Schoharie. But I made a mark on the redskin that I'll warrant he carried to his grave! I took him on his posteerum, saving the lady's presence, as he got up from the ambushment, and rattled three buckshot into his naked hide, so close, that you might have laid a broad joe upon them all—" here Natty stretched out his long neck, and straightened his body, as he opened his mouth, which exposed a single tusk of yellow bone, while his eyes, his face, even his whole frame seemed to laugh, although no sound was emitted, except a kind of thick hissing, as he inhaled his breath in quavers. "I had lost my bullet mould in crossing the Oneida outlet, and had to make shift with the buckshot; but the rifle was true, and didn't scatter like your two-legged thing there, Judge, which don't do, I find, to hunt in company with."

Natty's apology to the delicacy of the young lady was unnecessary, for, while he was speaking, she was too much employed in helping her father to remove certain articles of baggage to hear him. Unable to resist the kind urgency of the travellers any longer, the youth, though still with an unaccountable reluctance, suffered himself to be persuaded to enter the sleigh. The black, with the aid of his master, threw the buck across the baggage, and entering the vehicle themselves, the Judge invited the hunter to do so likewise.

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55 **Sir William,** Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), who led an expedition against Crown Point on Lake Champlain in 1755 and the successful attack on Fort Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River in 1759 His influence with the Mohawk Indians was one of the main reasons for the British success in their long struggle with the French • 65 **broad joe,** gold coin of Portugal

"No, no," said the old man, shaking his head; "I have work to do at home this Christmas eve—drive on with the boy, and let your doctor look to the shoulder; though if he will only cut out the shot, I have yarbs that will heal the wound quicker than all his foreign 'intments." He turned, and was about to move off, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he again faced the party, and added: "If you see anything of Indian John, about the foot of the lake, you had better take him with you, and let him lend the doctor a hand; for old as he is, he is curious at cuts and bruises, and it's likelier than not he'll be in with brooms to sweep your Christmas ha'arths."

"Stop, stop," cried the youth, catching the arm of the black as he prepared to urge his horses forward; "Natty —you need say nothing of the shot, nor of where I am going—remember, Natty, as you love me."

"Trust old Leather-stocking," returned the hunter, significantly; "he hasn't lived fifty years in the wilderness, and not larnt from the savages how to hold his tongue—trust to me, lad; and remember old Indian John."

"And, Natty," said the youth eagerly, still holding the black by the arm, "I will just get the shot extracted, and bring you up to-night, a quarter of the buck, for the Christmas dinner."

He was interrupted by the hunter, who held up his finger with an expressive gesture for silence. He then moved softly along the margin of the road, keeping his eyes steadfastly fixed on the branches of a pine. When he had obtained such a position as he wished, he stopped, and cocking his rifle, threw one leg far behind him, and, stretching his left arm to its utmost extent along the barrel of his piece, he began slowly to raise its muzzle in a line with the straight trunk of the tree. The eyes of the group in the sleigh naturally preceded the movement of the rifle, and they soon discovered the object of Natty's aim. On a small dead branch of the pine, which, at the distance of seventy feet from the ground, shot out horizontally, immediately beneath the living members of the tree, sat a bird, that in the vulgar language of the country was indiscriminately called a pheasant or a partridge. In size, it was but little smaller than a common barn-yard fowl. The baying of the dogs, and the conversation that had passed near the root of the tree on which it was perched, had alarmed the bird, which was now drawn up near the body of the pine, with a head and neck so erect, as to form nearly a straight line with its legs. As soon as the rifle bore on the victim, Natty drew his trigger, and the partridge fell from its height with a force that buried it in the snow.

"Lie down, you old villain!" exclaimed Leather-stocking, shaking his ramrod at Hector as he bounded toward the foot of the tree, "lie down, I say!" The dog obeyed, and Natty proceeded with great rapidity, though with the nicest accuracy, to reload his piece. When this was ended, he took up his game, and showing it to the party without a head, he cried: "Here is a titbit for an old man's Christmas—never mind the venison, boy, and remember Indian John; his yarbs are better than all the foreign 'intments Here, Judge," holding up the bird again, "do you think a smooth-bore would pick game off their roost, and not ruffle a feather?" The old man gave another of his remarkable laughs, which partook so largely of exultation, mirth, and irony, and shaking his head, he turned, with his rifle at a trail, and moved into the forest with steps that were between a walk and a trot. At each movement he made, his body lowered several inches, his knees yielding with an inclination inward; but as the sleigh turned at a bend in the road, the youth cast his eyes in quest of his old companion, and he saw that he was already nearly concealed by the trunks of the trees, while his dogs were following quietly in his footsteps, occasionally scenting the deer track, that they seemed to know instinctively was now of no further use to them. Another jerk was given to the sleigh, and Leather-stocking was hid from view.

[CHAPTER II. Here the reader learns that Marmaduke Temple is the descendant of a Quaker who had settled in Pennsylvania toward the end of the seventeenth century and had acquired many thousands of acres of land. For two generations, however, the family fortunes had dwindled; then, in the person of Marmaduke's father, they began again to rise. Marmaduke, sent to a good school, had made the acquaintance of Edward Effingham, the son of a British major who so disliked business affairs that he transferred his estate to his son. Edward thereupon invested it in a silent partnership with Marmaduke in a Philadelphia mercantile house, a transaction kept secret because of Major Effingham's distrust of the Quaker sect, to which Marmaduke nominally belonged. The business proved successful and the two friends prospered—then came the Revolution. Leaving his papers and effects in

Marmaduke's hands, Edward went to England, whence he returned in the uniform of a British officer. Marmaduke sided with the rebels and, although forced to abandon Philadelphia, handled his business affairs wisely, while serving his country in civil capacities. A large part of his funds he used to purchase confiscated Tory estates in New York, including (as is revealed a bit later) those of the Effinghams. He has now turned from commerce to the settlement and development of his land holdings in Otsego County and has become the chief magistrate in that jurisdiction. His only child and heir, Elizabeth, is returning from school to become the mistress of his household.]

CHAPTER III

Some little while elapsed ere Marmaduke Temple was sufficiently recovered from his agitation to scan the person of his new companion. He now observed that he was a youth of some two or three and twenty years of age, and rather above the middle height. Further observation was prevented by the rough overcoat which was belted close to his form by a worsted sash, much like the one worn by the old hunter. The eyes of the Judge, after resting a moment on the figure of the stranger, were raised to a scrutiny of his countenance. There had been a look of care visible in the features of the youth, when he first entered the sleigh, that had not only attracted the notice of Elizabeth, but which she had been much puzzled to interpret. His anxiety seemed the strongest when he was enjoining his old companion to secrecy; and even when he had decided, and was rather passively suffering himself to be conveyed to the village, the expression of his eyes by no means indicated any great degree of self-satisfaction at the step. But the lines of an uncommonly prepossessing countenance were gradually becoming composed; and he now sat silent, and apparently musing. The Judge gazed at him for some time with earnestness, and then smiling, as if at his own forgetfulness, he said:

"I believe, my young friend, that terror has driven you from my recollection; your face is very familiar, and yet, for the honor of a score of bucks' tails in my cap, I could not tell your name."

"I came into the country but three weeks since," returned the youth coldly, "and I understand you have been absent twice that time."

"It will be five to-morrow. Yet your face is one that I have seen; though it would not be strange, such has been my affright, should I see thee in thy winding-sheet walking by my bedside to-night. What say'st thou, Bess? Am I compos mentis or not?—Fit to charge a grand jury, or, what is just now of more pressing necessity, able to do the honors of a Christmas-eve in the hall of Templeton?"

"More able to do either, my dear father," said a playful voice from under the ample inclosures of the hood, "than to kill deer with a smooth-bore." A short pause followed, and the same voice, but in a different accent, continued: "We shall have good reasons for our thanksgiving to-night, on more accounts than one."

The horses soon reached a point where they seemed to know by instinct that the journey was nearly ended, and bearing on the bits as they tossed their heads, they rapidly drew the sleigh over the level land which lay on the top of the mountain, and soon came to the point where the road descended, suddenly but circuitously, into the valley.

The Judge was roused from his reflections, when he saw the four columns of smoke which floated above his own chimneys. As house, village, and valley burst on his sight, he exclaimed cheerfully to his daughter:

"See, Bess, there is thy resting-place for life!—And thine, too, young man, if thou wilt consent to dwell with us."

The eyes of his auditors involuntarily met; and if the color that gathered over the face of Elizabeth was contradicted by the cold expression of her eye, the ambiguous smile that again played about the lips of the stranger seemed equally to deny the probability of his consenting to form one of this family group. The scene was one, however, which might easily warm a heart less given to philanthropy than that of Marmaduke Temple.

The side of the mountain on which our travellers were journeying, though not absolutely perpendicular, was so steep as to render great care necessary in descending the rude and narrow path, which, in that early day, wound along the precipices. The Negro reined in his impatient steeds, and time was given Elizabeth to dwell on a scene which was so rapidly altering under the hands

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36 compos mentis, of sound mind

of man, that it only resembled, in its outlines, the picture she had so often studied with delight in childhood. Immediately beneath them lay a seeming plain, glittering without inequality, and buried in mountains. The latter were precipitous, especially on the side of the plain, and chiefly in forest. Here and there the hills fell away in long, low points, and broke the sameness of the outline, or setting to the long and wide field of snow, which, without house, tree, fence, or any other fixture, resembled so much spotless cloud settled to the earth. A few dark and moving spots were, however, visible on the even surface, which the eye of Elizabeth knew to be so many sleighs going their several ways, to or from the village. On the western border of the plain, the mountains, though equally high, were less precipitous, and, as they receded, opened into irregular valleys and glens, or were formed into terraces and hollows that admitted of cultivation. Although the evergreens still held dominion over many of the hills that rose on this side of the valley, yet the undulating outlines of the distant mountains, covered with forests of beech and maple, gave a relief to the eye, and the promise of a kinder soil. Occasionally spots of white were discoverable amidst the forests of the opposite hills, which announced, by the smoke that curled over the tops of the trees, the habitations of man, and the commencement of agriculture. These spots were sometimes, by the aid of united labor, enlarged into what were called settlements, but more frequently were small and insulated; though so rapid were the changes, and so persevering the labors of those who had cast their fortunes on the success of the enterprise, that it was not difficult for the imagination of Elizabeth to conceive they were enlarging under her eye, while she was gazing, in mute wonder, at the alterations that a few short years had made in the aspect of the country. The points on the western side of this remarkable plain, on which no plant had taken root, were both larger and more numerous than those on its eastern, and one in particular thrust itself forward in such a manner as to form beautifully curved bays of snow on either side. On its extreme end an oak stretched forward, as if to overshadow, with its branches, a spot which its roots were forbidden to enter. It had released itself from the thraldom that a growth of centuries had imposed on the branches of the surrounding forest trees, and threw its gnarled and fantastic arms abroad, in the wildness of liberty. A dark spot of a few acres in extent at the southern extremity of this beautiful flat, and immediately under the feet of our travellers, alone showed by its rippling surface, and the vapors which exhaled from it, that what at first might seem a plain was one of the mountain lakes, locked in the frosts of winter. A narrow current rushed impetuously from its bosom at the open place we have mentioned, and was to be traced, for miles, as it wound its way toward the south through the real valley, by its borders of hemlock and pine, and by the vapor which arose from its warmer surface into the chill atmosphere of the hills. The banks of this lovely basin, at its outlet, or southern end, were steep but not high; and in that direction the land continued, far as the eye could reach, a narrow but graceful valley, along which the settlers had scattered their humble habitation, with a profusion that bespoke the quality of the soil, and the comparative facilities of intercourse.

Immediately on the bank of the lake and at its foot, stood the village of Templeton. It consisted of some fifty buildings, including those of every description, chiefly built of wood, and which, in their architecture, bore no great marks of taste, but which also, by the unfinished appearance of most of the dwellings, indicated the hasty manner of their construction. To the eye, they presented a variety of colors. A few were white in both front and rear, but more bore that expensive color on their fronts only, while their economical but ambitious owners had covered the remaining sides of the edifices with a dingy red. One or two were slowly assuming the russet of age; while the uncovered beams that were to be seen through the broken windows of their second stories, showed that either the taste or the vanity of their proprietors had led them to undertake a task which they were unable to accomplish. The whole were grouped in a manner that aped the streets of a city, and were evidently so arranged by the directions of one who looked to the wants of posterity rather than to the convenience of the present incumbents. Some three or four of the better sort of buildings, in addition to the uniformity of their color, were fitted with green blinds, which, at that season at least, were rather strangely contrasted to the chill aspect of the lake, the mountains, the forests, and the wide fields of snow. Before the doors of these pretending dwellings were placed a few saplings, either without branches, or possessing only the feeble shoots of one or two summers'

growth, that looked not unlike tall grenadiers on post near the threshold of princes. In truth, the occupants of these favored habitations were the nobles of Templeton, as Marmaduke was its king. They were the dwellings of two young men who were cunning in the law; an equal number of that class who chaffered to the wants of the community under the title of storekeepers; and a disciple of Æsculapius, who, for a novelty, brought more subjects into the world than he sent out of it. In the midst of this incongruous group of dwellings, rose the mansion of the Judge, towering above all its neighbors. It stood in the centre of an inclosure of several acres, which were covered with fruit trees. Some of the latter had been left by the Indians, and began already to assume the moss and inclination of age, therein forming a very marked contrast to the infant plantations that peered over most of the picketed fences of the village. In addition to this show of cultivation, were two rows of young Lombardy poplars, a tree but lately introduced into America, formally lining either side of a pathway, which led from a gate that opened on the principal street to the front door of the building. The house itself had been built entirely under the superintendence of a certain Mr. Richard Jones, whom we have already mentioned, and who from his cleverness in small matters, and an entire willingness to exert his talents, added to the circumstance of their being sisters' children, ordinarily superintended all the minor concerns of Marmaduke Temple. Richard was fond of saying, that this child of his invention consisted of nothing more nor less than what should form the groundwork of every clergyman's discourse; viz., a firstly, and a lastly. He had commenced his labors, in the first year of their residence, by erecting a tall, gaunt edifice of wood, with its gable toward the highway. In this shelter, for it was little more, the family resided three years. By the end of that period, Richard had completed his design. He had availed himself, in this heavy undertaking, of the experience of a certain wandering eastern mechanic, who, by exhibiting a few soiled plates of English architecture, and talking learnedly of friezes, entablatures, and particularly of the composite order, had obtained a very undue influence over Richard's taste, in everything that pertained to that branch of the fine arts. Not that Mr. Jones did not affect to consider Hiram Doolittle a perfect empiric in his profession, being in the constant habit of listening to his treatises on architecture with a kind of indulgent smile; yet, either from an inability to oppose them by anything plausible from his own stores of learning, or from secret admiration, Richard generally submitted to the arguments of his coadjutor. Together, they had not only erected a dwelling for Marmaduke, but they had given a fashion to the architecture of the whole county. The composite order, Mr. Doolittle would contend, was an order composed of many others, and was intended to be the most useful of all, for it admitted into its construction such alterations as convenience or circumstances might require. To this proposition Richard usually assented; and when rival geniuses, who monopolize not only all the reputation, but most of the money of a neighborhood, are of a mind, it is not uncommon to see them lead the fashion, even in graver matters. In the present instance, as we have already hinted, the castle, as Judge Templeton's dwelling was termed in common parlance, came to be the model, in some one or other of its numerous excellences, for every aspiring edifice within twenty miles of it.

The house itself, or the "lastly," was of stone; large, square, and far from uncomfortable. These were four requisites on which Marmaduke had insisted with a little more than his ordinary pertinacity. But everything else was peaceably assigned to Richard and his associate. These worthies found the material a little too solid for the tools of their workmen, which, in general, were employed on a substance no harder than the white pine of the adjacent mountains, a wood so proverbially soft, that it is commonly chosen by the hunters for pillows. But for this awkward dilemma, it is probable that the ambitious tastes of our two architects would have left us much more to do in the way of description. Driven from the faces of the house by the obduracy of the material, they took refuge in the porch and on the roof. The former, it was decided, should be severely classical, and the latter a rare specimen of the merits of the composite order.

A roof, Richard contended, was a part of the edifice that the ancients always endeavored to conceal, it being an excrescence in architecture that was only to be tolerated on account of its usefulness. Besides, as he wittily added, a chief merit in a dwelling was to present a front, on whichever side it might happen to be seen; for as it

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8 Æsculapius, god of medicine in classical mythology

was exposed to all eyes in all weathers, there should be no weak flank for envy or unneighborly criticism to assail. It was therefore decided that the roof should be flat, and with four faces. To this arrangement, Marmaduke objected the heavy snows that lay for months, frequently covering the earth to a depth of three or four feet. Happily, the facilities of the composite order presented themselves to effect a compromise, and the rafters were lengthened, so as to give a descent that should carry off the frozen element. But unluckily, some mistake was made in the admeasurement of these material parts of the fabric; and as one of the greatest recommendations of Hiram was his ability to work by the "square rule," no opportunity was found of discovering the effect until the massive timbers were raised, on the four walls of the building. Then, indeed, it was soon seen that, in defiance of all rule, the roof was by far the most conspicuous part of the whole edifice. Richard and his associate consoled themselves with the belief, that the covering would aid in concealing this unnatural elevation; but every shingle that was laid only multiplied objects to look at. Richard essayed to remedy the evil with paint, and four different colors were laid on by his own hands. The first was a sky-blue, in the vain expectation that the eye might be cheated into the belief it was the heavens themselves that hung so imposingly over Marmaduke's dwelling; the second was what he called a "cloud-color," being nothing more nor less than an imitation of smoke; the third was what Richard termed an invisible green, an experiment that did not succeed against a background of sky. Abandoning the attempt to conceal, our architects drew upon their invention for means to ornament the offensive shingles. After much deliberation and two or three essays by moonlight, Richard ended the affair by boldly covering the whole beneath a color that he christened "sunshine," a cheap way, as he assured his cousin, the Judge, of always keeping fair weather over his head. The platform, as well as the eaves of the house, were surmounted by gaudily painted railings, and the genius of Hiram was exerted in the fabrication of divers urns and mouldings, that were scattered profusely around this part of their labors. Richard had originally a cunning expedient, by which the chimneys were intended to be so low, and so situated, as to resemble ornaments on the balustrades; but comfort required that the chimneys should rise with the roof, in order that the smoke might be carried off, and they thus became four extremely conspicuous objects in the view.

As this roof was much the most important architectural undertaking in which Mr. Jones was ever engaged, his failure produced a correspondent degree of mortification. At first, he whispered among his acquaintances, that it proceeded from ignorance of the square rule on the part of Hiram; but as his eye became gradually accustomed to the object, he grew better satisfied with his labors, and instead of apologizing for the defects, he commenced praising the beauties of the mansion-house. He soon found hearers; and, as wealth and comfort are at all times attractive, it was, as has been said, made a model for imitation on a small scale. In less than two years from its erection, he had the pleasure of standing on the elevated platform, and of looking down on three humble imitators of its beauty. Thus it is ever with fashion, which even renders the faults of the great, subjects of admiration.

Marmaduke bore this deformity in his dwelling with great good nature, and soon contrived, by his own improvements, to give an air of respectability and comfort to his place of residence. Still there was much of incongruity, even immediately about the mansion-house. Although poplars had been brought from Europe to ornament the grounds, and willows and other trees were gradually springing up nigh the dwelling, yet many a pile of snow betrayed the presence of the stump of a pine; and even in one or two instances, unsightly remnants of trees that had been partly destroyed by fire were seen rearing their black, glistening columns twenty or thirty feet above the pure white of the snow. These, which in the language of the country are termed stubs, abounded in the open fields adjacent to the village, and were accompanied by the ruin of a pine or a hemlock that had been stripped of its bark, and which waved in melancholy grandeur its naked limbs to the blast, a skeleton of its former glory. But these and many other unpleasant additions to the view were unseen by the delighted Elizabeth, who, as the horses moved down the side of the mountain, saw only in gross the cluster of houses that lay like a map at her feet; the fifty smokes that were curling from the valley to the clouds; the frozen lake as it lay imbedded in mountains of evergreen, with the long shadows of the pines on its white surface, lengthening in the setting sun; the dark riband of water that gushed from the outlet, and was winding its way toward the dis-

tant Chesapeake—the altered, though still remembered, scenes of her childhood.

Five years had wrought greater changes than a century would produce in countries where time and labor have given permanency to the works of man. To the young hunter and the Judge the scene had less novelty; though none ever emerge from the dark forests of that mountain, and witness the glorious scenery of that beauteous valley, as it bursts unexpectedly upon them, without a feeling of delight. The former cast one admiring glance from north to south, and sank his face again beneath the folds of his coat; while the latter contemplated, with philanthropic pleasure, the prospect of affluence and comfort that was expanding around him, the result of his own enterprise, and much of it the fruits of his own industry. . . .

[CHAPTER IV. On the way down the mountain the party is met by a four-horse lumber-sleigh containing four men: Richard Jones, small and red-faced; Monsieur Le Quoi, tall and sharp-featured, with projecting eyes, light blue and glassy; Major Fritz Hartmann, solid, short, and square; and Mr. Grant, a meek-looking, long-visaged clergyman. They welcome the Judge and his daughter in their various dialects. Richard attempts to turn around on the narrow road, and a bad accident is averted only by the quick action of the young hunter in seizing the bridles of the lead team; the welcoming party, however, is tossed out into the snow and the sleigh overturned. The Judge throws out the deer and his baggage, leaving Richard and the Negro to bring them when they have righted the larger sleigh; he takes the others in and drives on down the mountain. While they are alone, Richard worms out of Agamemnon the details of the shooting of the deer.

CHAPTER V. At the base of the mountain Richard and Agamemnon catch up with the smaller sleigh, and all arrive at the mansion-house as the sun goes down. There they are greeted by the major-domo, Benjamin Penguillan (nicknamed Ben Pump), a Cornishman who until 1783 had served in the British navy, by the housekeeper, Remarkable Pettibone, and by several lesser servants and the family dogs. The interior, as inexpertly furnished as the house itself is constructed, is described in detail. After some conversation, by which Richard is restrained from attempting to practice his amateur knowledge of surgery upon the young hunter, the village physician arrives.

CHAPTER VI. Dr. Elnathan Todd, largely self-educated, makes elaborate preparations to remove the bullet, although he has never previously attempted such an operation. He is aided by numerous suggestions from the bystanders. At length his patient informs him that the ball is only skin deep at the back of the shoulder, and no probe will be necessary. The incision is made; the young hunter jerks his arm; and the bullet falls out. At that moment Indian John appears in the doorway.

CHAPTER VII. At this point, Cooper digresses to give an account of the two Indian nations of the region: the Iroquois and the Delawares. Chingachgook or "Great Snake," locally known as John Mohegan or Indian John, is one of the last of the Mohegans, a Delaware tribe. He is much distressed by the accident to the young stranger, but quickly absolves the Judge from blame and dresses the wound, to the admiration of the doctor and the others. The Judge again attempts to purchase the deer from the young hunter, but he refuses to sell any part of it. The Judge finally gives up trying, and the young man, when questioned, identifies himself merely as Oliver Edwards and departs, with the deer, in the Judge's sleigh. Indian John remains, and his acceptance of an invitation to attend church next day gives him an opportunity to make some remarks on religion.

CHAPTER VIII. The story now halts for further exposition. Monsieur Le Quoi is revealed to be a refugee from the French Revolution who has become a prosperous storekeeper in the Judge's "Patent," as the grant of land in Otsego County is known locally. Major Hartmann is identified as the descendant of a German immigrant who had settled early in the century on the Mohawk River; he visits his friend the Judge four times a year, staying precisely a week each time. Mr. Grant, it appears, has just arrived as a missionary of the Protestant Episcopal Church; his first public service is scheduled for this very evening, Christmas Eve. It will be held in the great room of the Academy, a structure built by Richard Jones, Hiram Doolittle, and the local Freemasons at a time when Templeton had ambitions for an institution of higher learning. The Academy, now a common country school, is used for unusual trials at law, balls, and other meetings, including church services. When no itinerant preacher appears of

a Sunday, Richard Jones is accustomed to read one of Laurence Sterne's sermons.

CHAPTER IX. The Judge and his friends have dinner, and their food is described at mouth-watering length. Conversation turns upon the mysterious young stranger who has been living with Natty Bumppo for nearly three weeks. Elizabeth shows that he has interested her; Richard inclines to be critical of him and of his ancestry. Dinner over, the party prepare to leave for the church service.

CHAPTER X. The Judge, Elizabeth, Mr. Grant, and Major Hartmann walk through the streets, Elizabeth looking out for familiar houses and persons. At the "Bold Dragoon," a tavern on one of the principal corners, they encounter Captain and Mrs. Hollister, the proprietors. When they have entered the Academy, Richard Jones and Monsieur Le Quoi appear and discuss with Hiram Doolittle, who comes on the scene for the first time, the church which is being built opposite the Academy. Richard is trying, none too successfully, to make New St. Paul's, as the church is called, Episcopalian. The Judge has decreed that when it is completed the people shall decide for themselves what denomination it shall be.

CHAPTER XI. The interior of the Academy, the seating of the congregation, and Mr. Grant's service and sermon are described.

CHAPTER XII. The service over, Elizabeth is introduced to Louisa Grant, the clergyman's daughter; the two girls take an immediate fancy to each other. After the Temples go, Chingachgook, Natty Bumppo, Oliver Edwards, and the Grants remain. The Indian and Natty express themselves on religion, and Oliver reveals that he has been baptized an Episcopalian and has never attended worship in any other church. Mr. Grant is moved to invite him and his friends to the Grant home; Chingachgook and Oliver accept. There, Oliver reveals a strong antipathy to Judge Temple, which the clergyman deprecates, attributing it to Oliver's Delaware blood, of which he has spoken proudly. After an hour's conversation, Oliver and the Indian leave.

CHAPTER XIII. After a description of the "Bold Dragoon," the local tavern, and its host and hostess, there is a discussion among the company about whether or not the mysterious young man could sue Judge Templeton for damages. Squire Lippett expresses the hope that the young man will press his case, and tries to get Dr. Todd to say he will sue Judge Temple for the medical care given Oliver. Lippett promises to take his case, free of cost. Natty then enters, and the story continues:]

The old hunter carried in his hand his never-failing companion, the rifle; and although all of the company were uncovered excepting the lawyer, who wore his hat on one side, with a certain dam'me air, Natty moved to the front of one of the fires, without in the least altering any part of his dress or appearance. Several questions were addressed to him, on the subject of the game he had killed, which he answered readily, and with some little interest; and the landlord, between whom and Natty there existed much cordiality, on account of their both having been soldiers in youth, offered him a glass of a liquid, which, if we might judge from its reception, was no unwelcome guest. When the forester had got his potation also, he quietly took his seat on the end of one of the logs that lay nigh the fires, and the slight interruption produced by his entrance seemed to be forgotten.

"The testimony of the blacks could not be taken, sir," continued the lawyer, "for they are all the property of Mr. Jones, who owns their time. But there is a way by which Judge Temple, or any other man, might be made to pay for shooting another, and for the cure in the bargain.—There is a way, I say, and that without going into the 'court of errors,' too."

"And a mighty big error ye would make of it, Mister Todd," cried the landlady, "should ye be putting the matter into the law at all, with Joodge Temple, who has a purse as long as one of them pines on the hill, and who is an asy man to dale wid, if yees but mind the humor of him. He's a good man is Joodge Temple, and a kind one, and one who will be no the likelier to do the pratty thing, becase ye would wish to tarrify him wid the law. I know of but one objection to the same, which is an over carelessness about his sowl. It's neither a Methodie, nor a Papish, nor Prasbetyrian, that he is, but just nothing at all; and it's hard to think that he, 'who will not fight the good fight, under the banners of a rig'lar church, in this world, will be mustered among the chosen in heaven,' as my husband, the captain there, as ye call him, says—though there is but one captain that I know, who desarves the name. I hopes, Lather-stocking, ye'll no be foolish, and putting the boy up to try

the law in the matter; for 'twill be an evil day to ye both, when ye first turn the skin of so paceable an animal as a sheep into a bone of contention. The lad is wilcome to his drink for nothing, until his shoulther will bear the rifle ag'in."

"Well, that's gin'rous," was heard from several mouths at once, for this was a company in which a liberal offer was not thrown away; while the hunter, instead of expressing any of that indignation which he might be supposed to feel, at hearing the hurt of his young companion alluded to, opened his mouth, with the silent laugh for which he was so remarkable, and after he had indulged his humor, made this reply:—

"I know'd the Judge would do nothing with his smooth-bore when he got out of his sleigh. I never saw but one smooth-bore that would carry at all, and 'that was a French-ducking-piece, upon the big lakes: it had a barrel half as long ag'in as my rifle, and would throw fine shot into a goose, at 100 yards; but it made dreadful work with the game, and you wanted a boat to carry it about in. When I went with Sir William ag'in the French, at Fort Niagara, all the rangers used the rifle, and a dreadful weapon it is, in the hands of one who knows how to charge it, and keep a steady aim. The Captain knows, for he says he was a soldier in Shirley's; and though they were nothing but baggonet-men, he must know how we cut up the French and Iroquois in the skrimmages in that war. Chingachgook, which means 'Big Sarpent' in English, old John Mohegan, who lives up at the hut with me, was a great warrior then, and was out with us; he can tell all about it, too; though he was overhand for the tomahawk, never firing more than once or twice, before he was running in for the scalps. Ah! times is dreadfully altered since then. Why, Doctor, there was nothing but a footpath, or at the most a track for pack-horses, along the Mohawk, from the Jarman Flats up to the forts. Now, they say, they talk of running one of them wide roads with gates on it along the river; first making a road, and then fencing it up! I hunted one season back of the Kaatskills, nighhand to the settlements, and the dogs often lost the scent, when they came to them highways, there was so much travel on them, though I can't say that the brutes was of a very good breed. Old Hector will wind a deer in the fall of the year, across the broadest place in the Otsego, and that is a mile and a half, for I paced it myself on the ice, when the tract was first surveyed, under the Indian grant."

"It sames to me, Natty, but a sorry compliment, to call your comrad after the evil one," said the landlady; "and it's no much like a snake that old John is looking now. Nimrod would be a more besameing name for the lad, and a more Christian, too, seeing that it comes from the Bible. The sargeant read me the chapter about him, the night before my christening, and a mighty asement it was, to listen to anything from the book."

"Old John and Chingachgook were very different men to look on," returned the hunter, shaking his head at his melancholy recollections.—"In the 'fifty-eighth war' he was in the middle of manhood, and taller than now by three inches. If you had seen him, as I did, the morning we beat Dieskau, from behind our log walls, you would have called him as comely a red-skin as ye ever set eyes on. He was naked all to his breech-cloth and leggins; and you never seed a creater so handsomely painted. One side of his face was red, and the other black. His head was shaved clean, all to a few hairs on the crown, where he wore a tuft of eagle's feathers, as bright as if they had come from a peacock's tail. He had colored his sides so that they looked like an atomy, ribs and all; for Chingachgook had a great taste in such things, so that, what with his bold, fiery countenance, his knife, and his tomahawk, I have never seen a fiercer warrior on the ground. He played his part, too, like a man; for I saw him next day, with thirteen scalps on his pole. And I will say this for the 'Big Snake,' that he always dealt fair, and never scalped any that he didn't kill with his own hands."

"Well, well," cried the landlady; "fighting is fighting, anyway, and there is different fashions in the thing,

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22 **Fort Niagara,** captured by a large force of British and Indians, under the command of Sir William Johnson, on July 7, 1759 • 25 **Shirley's,** William Shirley (1694-1771), royal governor of Massachusetts from 1741 until 1757, and commander of the British forces in America from Braddock's death in 1755 until he was superseded in the following year. He led an unsuccessful expedition against Fort Niagara in 1755 • 37 **Jarman Flats,** German Flatts, a settlement on the present site of Herkimer, New York, made by Germans from the Palatinate in 1725 • 52 **Nimrod.** See Genesis 10 8-9 • 59 **fifty-eighth war,** the French and Indian War • 62 **Dieskau,** Ludwig August Dieskau (1701-1767), German baron and general who served under the French in Canada. He was taken prisoner by Johnson and his men near Fort Edward on the upper Hudson on September 8, 1755

though I can't say that I relish mangling a body after the breath is out of it; neither do I think it can be uphild by doctrine. I hope, sargeant, ye niver was helping in sich evil worrek."

"It was my duty to keep my ranks, and to stand or fall by the baggonet or lead," returned the veteran. "I was then in the fort, and seldom leaving my place, saw but little of the savages, who kept on the flanks or in front, skrimmaging. I remember, howsomever, to have heard mention made of the 'Great Snake,' as he was called, for he was a chief of renown; but little did I ever expect to see him enlisted in the cause of Christianity, and civilized like old John."

"Oh! he was Christianized by the Moravians, who were always over intimate with the Delawares," said Leatherstocking. "It's my opinion that, had they been left to themselves, there would be no such doings now, about the head waters of the two rivers, and that these hills mought have been kept as good hunting-ground by their right owner, who is not too old to carry a rifle, and whose sight is as true as a fish-hawk hovering——"

He was interrupted by more stamping at the door, and presently the party from the Mansion-house entered, followed by the Indian himself.

CHAPTER XIV

Some little commotion was produced by the appearance of the new guests, during which the lawyer slunk from the room. Most of the men approached Marmaduke, and shook his offered hand, hoping "that the Judge was well;" while Major Hartmann, having laid aside his hat and wig, and substituted for the latter a warm, peaked woollen night-cap, took his seat very quietly on one end of the settee, which was relinquished by its former occupants. His tobacco-box was next produced, and a clean pipe was handed him by the landlord. When he had succeeded in raising a smoke, the Major gave a long whiff, and turning his head toward the bar, he said—

"Petty, pring in ter toddy."

In the mean time the Judge had exchanged his salutations with most of the company, and taken a place by the side of the Major, and Richard had bustled himself into the most comfortable seat in the room. Mr. Le Quoi was the last seated, nor did he venture to place his chair finally until by frequent removals he had ascertained that he could not possibly intercept a ray of heat from any individual present. Mohegan found a place on an end of one of the benches, and somewhat approximated to the bar. When these movements had subsided, the Judge remarked pleasantly—

"Well, Betty, I find you retain your popularity through all weathers, against all rivals, and among all religions. How liked you the sermon?"

"Is it the sarmon?" exclaimed the landlady. "I can't say but it was rasonable; but the prayers is mighty unasy. It's no small a matter for a body in their fifty-nint' year, to be moving so much in church. Mr. Grant sames a godly man, anyway, and his garrel is a hoomble one, and a devout.—Here, John, is a mug of cider, laced with whiskey. An Indian will drink cider, though he niver be athirst."

"I must say," observed Hiram, with due deliberation, "that it was a tonguey thing; and I rather guess that it gave considerable satisfaction. There was one part, though, which might have been left out, or something else put in; but then I s'pose that, as it was a written discourse, it is not so easily altered as where a minister preaches without notes."

"Ay! there's the rub, Joodge," cried the landlady. "How can a man stand up and be praching his word, when all that he is saying is written down, and he is as much tied to it as iver a thaving dragoon was to the pickets?"

"Well, well," cried Marmaduke, waving his hand for silence, "there is enough said; as Mr. Grant told us, there are different sentiments on such subjects, and in my opinion he spoke most sensibly.—So, Jotham, I am told you have sold your betterments to a new settler, and have moved into the village, and opened a school. Was it cash or dicker?"

The man who was thus addressed occupied a seat immediately behind Marmaduke; and one who was ignorant of the extent of the Judge's observation, might have thought he would have escaped notice. He was of a thin, shapeless figure, with a discontented expression of countenance, and with something extremely shiftless in his whole air. Thus spoken to, after turning and twisting a little, by way of preparation, he made a reply.

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14 Moravians, or United Brethren, a German Protestant sect active after 1734 in Indian missions. Heckewelder, from whom Cooper derived much of his Indian lore, was a Moravian missionary

"Why, part cash, and part dicker. I sold out to a Pumfret-man who was so'thin forehanded. He was to give me ten dollars an acre for the clearin', and one dollar an acre over the first cost on the woodland; and we agreed to leave the buildin's to men. So I tuck Asa Montagu, and he tuck Absalom Bement, and they two tuck old Squire Napthali Green. And so they had a meetin', and made out a vardict of eighty dollars for the buildin's. There was twelve acres of clearin', at ten dollars, and eighty-eight at one, and the whull came to two hundred and eighty-six dollars and a half, after paying the men."

"Hum," said Marmaduke: "what did you give for the place?"

"Why, besides what's comin' to the Judge, I gi'n my brother Tim a hundred dollars for his bargain; but then there's a new house on't, that cost me sixty more, and I paid Moses a hundred dollars, for choppin', and loggin', and sowin'; so that the whull stood me in about two hundred and sixty dollars. But then I had a great crop off on't, and as I got twenty-six dollars and a half more than it cost, I conclude I made a pretty good trade on't."

"Yes, but you forgot that the crop was yours without the trade, and you have turned yourself out of doors for twenty-six dollars."

"Oh! the Judge is clean out," said the man, with a look of sagacious calculation; "he turned out a span of horses, that is wuth a hundred and fifty dollars of any man's money, with a bran new wagon; fifty dollars in cash; and a good note for eighty more; and a side-saddle that was valued at seven and a half—so there was jist twelve shillings betwixt us. I wanted him to turn out a set of harness, and take the cow and the sap troughs. He wouldn't—but I saw through it; he thought I should have to buy the tacklin' afore I could use the wagon and horses; but I know'd a thing or two myself; I should like to know of what use is the tacklin' to him! I offered him to trade back ag'in, for one hundred and fifty-five. But my woman said she wanted a churn, so I tuck a churn for the change."

"And what do you mean to do with your time this winter? you must remember that time is money."

"Why, as the master is gone down country, to see his mother, who, they say, is going to make a die on't, I agreed to take the school in hand till he comes back. If times doosn't get worse in the spring, I've some notion of going into trade, or maybe I may move off to the Genesee; they say they are carryin' on a great stroke of business that-a-way. If the wust comes to the wust, I can but work at my trade, for I was brought up in a shoe manufactory."

It would seem that Marmaduke did not think his society of sufficient value to attempt inducing him to remain where he was; for he addressed no further discourse to the man, but turned his attention to other subjects. After a short pause, Hiram ventured a question:

"What news does the Judge bring us from the Legislature? it's not likely that Congress has done much this session: or maybe the French haven't fit any more battles lately?"

"The French, since they have beheaded their king, have done nothing but fight," returned the Judge. "The character of the nation seems changed. I knew many French gentlemen, during our war, and they all appeared to me to be men of great humanity and goodness of heart; but these Jacobins are as bloodthirsty as bull-dogs."

"There was one Roshambow wid us, down at Yorrektown," cried the landlady; "a mighty pratty man he was, too; and their horse was the very same. It was there that the sargeant got the hurt in the leg, from the English batteries, bad luck to 'em."

"Ah! mon pauvre Roi!" murmured Monsieur Le Quoi.

"The Legislature have been passing laws," continued Marmaduke, "that the country much required. Among others, there is an act prohibiting the drawing of seines, at any other than proper seasons, in certain of our streams and small lakes; and another, to prohibit the killing of deer in the teeming months. These are laws that were loudly called for, by judicious men; nor do I despair of getting an act to make the unlawful felling of timber a criminal offence."

The hunter listened to this detail with breathless attention, and when the Judge had ended, he laughed in open derision.

"You may make your laws, Judge," he cried, "but who

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48 **Genesee**, a river which runs across New York State from south to north, almost on a line with the present city of Rochester • 67 **Roshambow**, Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Count Rochambeau (1725-1807), commander of the French forces in the action ended by the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, 1781

will you find to watch the mountains through the long summer days, or the lakes at night? Game is game, and he who finds may kill; that has been the law in these mountains for forty years, to my sartain knowledge; and I think one old law is worth two new ones. None but a green-one would wish to kill a doe with a fa'n by its side, unless his moccasins were getting old, or his leggins ragged, for the flesh is lean and coarse. But a rifle rings among the rocks along the shore, sometimes, as if fifty pieces were fired at once:—it would be hard to tell where the man stood who pulled the trigger."

"Armed with the dignity of the law, Mr. Bumppo," returned the Judge, gravely, "a vigilant magistrate can prevent much of the evil that has hitherto prevailed, and which is already rendering the game scarce. I hope to live to see the day when a man's rights in his game shall be as much respected as his title to his farm."

"Your titles and your farms are all new together," cried Natty; "but laws should be equal, and not more for one than another. I shot a deer, last Wednesday was a fortnight, and it floundered through the snow-banks till it got over a brush fence; I catch'd the lock of my rifle in the twigs in following, and was kept back, until finally the creater got off. Now I want to know who is to pay me for that deer; and a fine buck it was. If there hadn't been a fence I should have gotten another shot into it; and I never draw'd upon anything that hadn't wings three times running, in my born days.—No, no, Judge, it's the farmers that makes the game scarce, and not the hunters."

"Ter teer is not so plenty as in ter old war, Pumppo," said the Major, who had been an attentive listener, amidst clouds of smoke; "put ter lant is not mate as for ter teer to live on, put for Christians."

"Why, Major, I believe you're a friend to justice and the right, though you go so often to the grand house; but it's a hard case to a man to have his honest calling for a livelihood stopped by laws, and that too when, if right was done, he mought hunt or fish on any day in the week, or on the best flat in the Patent, if he was so minded."

"I unstertant you, Letter-stockint," returned the Major, fixing his black eyes, with a look of peculiar meaning, on the hunter; "put you didn't use to be so prutent, as to look ahet mit so much care."

"Maybe there wasn't so much occasion," said the hunter, a little sulkily; when he sank into a silence from which he was not roused for some time.

"The Judge was saying so'thin about the French," Hiram observed, when the pause in the conversation had continued a decent time.

"Yes, sir," returned Marmaduke, "the Jacobins of France seem rushing from one act of licentiousness to another. They continue those murders which are dignified by the name of executions. You have heard that they have added the death of their Queen to the long list of their crimes."

"Les monstres!" again murmured Monsieur Le Quoi, turning himself suddenly in his chair, with a convulsive start.

"The province of La Vendée is laid waste by the troops of the republic, and hundreds of its inhabitants, who are royalists in their sentiments, are shot at a time. La Vendée is a district in the southwest of France that continues yet much attached to the family of the Bourbons; doubtless Monsieur Le Quoi is acquainted with it, and can describe it more faithfully."

"Non, non, non, mon cher ami," returned the Frenchman, in a suppressed voice, but speaking rapidly, and gesticulating with his right hand, as if for mercy, while with his left he concealed his eyes.

"There have been many battles fought lately," continued Marmaduke, "and the infuriated republicans are too often victorious. I cannot say, however, that I am sorry they have captured Toulon from the English, for it is a place to which they have a just right."

"Ah—ha!" exclaimed Monsieur Le Quoi, springing on his feet, and flourishing both arms with great animation; "ces Anglais!"

The Frenchman continued to move about the room with great alacrity for a few minutes, repeating his exclamations to himself; when, overcome by the contradictory nature of his emotions, he suddenly burst out of the house, and was seen wading through the snow toward his little shop, waving his arms on high, as if to pluck down honor from the moon. His departure excited but little surprise, for the villagers were used to his manner; but Major Hartmann laughed outright, for the first time during his visit, as he lifted the mug, and observed—

"Ter Frenchman is mat—put he is goot as for notting to trink; he is trunk mit joy."

"The French are good soldiers," said Captain Hollister; "they stood us in hand a good turn, down at Yorktown; nor do I think, although I am an ignorant man about the great movements of the army, that his Excellency would have been able to march against Cornwallis, without their reinforcements."

"Ye spake the trut', sargeant," interrupted his wife, "and I would iver have ye be doing the same. It's varry pratty men is the French; and jist when I stopt the cart, the time when ye was pushing on in front it was, to kape the rig'lers in, a rigiment of the jontlemen marched by, and so I dealt them out to their liking Was it pay I got? sure did I, in good solid crowns: the divil a bit of continental could they muster among them all, for love nor money. Och! the Lord forgive me for swearing and spakeing of such vanities: but this I will say for the French, that they paid in good silver; and one glass would go a great way wid 'em, for they gin'rally handed it back wid a drop in the cup; and that's a brisk trade, Joodge, where the pay is good, and the men not over partic'lar."

"A thriving trade, Mrs. Hollister," said Marmaduke. "But what has become of Richard? he jumped up as soon as seated, and has been absent so long that I am fearful he has frozen."

"No fear of that, cousin 'duke," cried the gentleman himself; "business will sometimes keep a man warm the coldest night that ever snapt in the mountains. Betty, your husband told me, as we came out of church, that your hogs were getting mangy, so I have been out to take a look at them, and found it true. I stepped across, Doctor, and got your boy to weigh me out a pound of salts, and have been mixing it with their swill. I'll bet a saddle of venison against a gray squirrel, that they are better in a week. And now, Mrs. Hollister, I'm ready for a hissing mug of flip."

"Sure I know'd yee'd be wanting that same," said the landlady; "it's mixt and ready to the boiling. Sargeant, dear, be handing up the iron, will ye?—no the one in the far fire, it's black, ye will see. Ah! you've the thing now; look if it's not as red as a cherry."

The beverage was heated, and Richard took that kind of draught which men are apt to indulge in, who think that they have just executed a clever thing, especially when they like the liquor.

"Oh! you have a hand, Betty, that was formed to mix flip," cried Richard, when he paused for breath. "The very iron has a flavor in it. Here, John, drink, man, drink. I and you and Dr. Todd have done a good thing with the shoulder of that lad this very night. 'Duke, I made a song while you were gone—one day when I had nothing to do; so I'll sing you a verse or two, though I haven't really determined on the tune yet:—

What is life but a scene of care,
  Where each one must toil in his way?
Then let us be jolly, and prove that we are
A set of good fellows, who seem very rare,
  And can laugh and sing all the day.
    Then let us be jolly,
    And cast away folly,
  For grief turns a black head to gray.

There, 'duke, what do you think of that? There is another verse of it, all but the last line. I haven't got a rhyme for the last line yet. Well, old John, what do you think of the music? as good as one of your war songs, ha?"

"Good!" said Mohegan, who had been sharing deeply in the potations of the landlady, besides paying a proper respect to the passing mugs of the Major and Marmaduke.

"Pravo! pravo! Richart," cried the Major, whose black eyes were beginning to swim in moisture; "pravissimo! it is a goot song; put Natty Pumppo hast a petter. Letterstockint, vilt sing? olt poy, vilt sing ter song, as apout ter woots?"

"No, no, Major," returned the hunter, with a melancholy shake of the head, "I have lived to see what I thought eyes could never behold in these hills, and I have no heart left for singing. If he, that has a right to be master and ruler here, is forced to squinch his thirst, when a-dry, with snow-water, it ill becomes them that have lived by his bounty to be making merry, as if there was nothing in the world but sunshine and summer."

When he had spoken, Leather-stocking again dropped his head on his knees, and concealed his hard and wrinkled features with his hands. The change from the excessive cold without, to the heat of the bar-room, coupled with the depth and frequency of Richard's draughts, had already levelled whatever inequality there might have existed between him and the other guests, on the score of spirits; and he now held out a pair of swimming mugs of foaming flip toward the hunter, as he cried—

"Merry! ay! merry Christmas to you, old boy! Sunshine and summer! no! you are blind, Leather-stocking, 'tis moonshine and winter;—take these spectacles, and open your eyes—

So let us be jolly,
And cast away folly,
For grief turns a black head to gray.

"Hear how old John turns his quavers. What damned dull music an Indian song is after all, Major! I wonder if they ever sing by note."

While Richard was singing and talking, Mohegan was uttering dull, monotonous tones, keeping time by a gentle motion of his head and body. He made use of but few words, and such as he did utter were in his native language, and consequently only understood by himself and Natty. Without heeding Richard, he continued to sing a kind of wild, melancholy air, that rose, at times, in sudden and quite elevated notes, and then fell again into the low, quavering sounds that seemed to compose the character of his music.

The attention of the company was now much divided, the men in the rear having formed themselves into little groups, where they were discussing various matters; among the principal of which were the treatment of mangy hogs, and Parson Grant's preaching; while Dr. Todd was endeavoring to explain to Marmaduke the nature of the hurt received by the young hunter. Mohegan continued to sing, while his countenance was becoming vacant, though, coupled with his thick bushy hair, it was assuming an expression very much like brutal ferocity. His notes were gradually growing louder, and soon rose to a height that caused a general cessation in the discourse. The hunter now raised his head again, and addressed the old warrior, warmly, in the Delaware language, which, for the benefit of our readers, we shall render freely into English.

"Why do you sing of your battles, Chingachgook, and of the warriors you have slain, when the worst enemy of all is near you, and keeps the Young Eagle from his rights? I have fought in as many battles as any warrior in your tribe, but cannot boast of my deeds at such a time as this."

"Hawk-eye," said the Indian, tottering with a doubtful step from his place, "I am the Great Snake of the Delawares. I can track the Mingoes like an adder that is stealing on the whip-poor-will's eggs, and strike them like a rattlesnake, dead at a blow. The white man made the tomahawk of Chingachgook bright as the water of Otsego, when the last sun is shining; but it is red with the blood of the Maquas."

"And why have you slain the Mingo warriors? Was it not to keep these hunting grounds and lakes to your father's children? and were they not given in solemn council to the Fire-eater? and does not the blood of a warrior run in the veins of the young chief, who should speak aloud, where his voice is now too low to be heard?"

The appeal of the hunter seemed in some measure to recall the confused faculties of the Indian, who turned his face toward the listeners and gazed intently on the Judge. He shook his head, throwing his hair back from his countenance, and exposed eyes that were glaring with an expression of wild resentment. But the man was not himself. His hand seemed to make a fruitless effort to release his tomahawk, which was confined by its handle to his belt, while his eyes gradually became vacant. Richard at that instant thrusting a mug before him, his features changed to the grin of idiocy, and seizing the vessel with both hands, he sank backward on the bench and drank until satiated, when he made an effort to lay aside the mug with the helplessness of total inebriety.

"Shed not blood!" exclaimed the hunter, as he watched the countenance of the Indian in its moment of ferocity; "but he is drunk, and can do no harm. This is the way with all the savages; give them liquor, and they make dogs of themselves. Well, well—the time will come when right will be done; and we must have patience."

Natty still spoke in the Delaware language, and of course was not understood. He had hardly concluded, before Richard cried—

"Well, old John is soon sowed up. Give him a berth, Captain, in the barn, and I will pay for it. I am rich to-night, ten times richer than 'duke, with all his lands, and military lots, and funded debts, and bonds, and mortgages.

Come let us be jolly,
And cast away folly,
For grief—

Drink, King Hiram—drink, Mr. Doo-nothing—drink, sir, I say. This is a Christmas eve, which comes, you know, but once a year."

"He! he! he! the squire is quite moosical to-night,"

said Hiram, whose visage began to give marvellous signs of relaxation. "I rather guess we shall make a church on't yet, Squire?"

"A church, Mr. Doolittle! we will make a cathedral of it! bishops, priests, deacons, wardens, vestry, and choir: organ, organist, and bellows! By the Lord Harry, as Benjamin says, we will clap a steeple on the other end of it, and make two churches of it. What say you, 'duke, will you pay? ha! my cousin Judge, wil't pay!"

"Thou makest such a noise, Dickon," returned Marmaduke, "it is impossible that I can hear what Dr. Todd is saying,—I think thou observed'st, it is probable the wound will fester, so as to occasion danger to the limb in this cold weather?"

"Out of nater, sir, quite out of nater," said Elnathan, attempting to expectorate, but succeeding only in throwing a light, frothy substance, like a flake of snow, into the fire—"quite out of nater, that a wound so well dressed, and with the ball in my pocket, should fester. I s'pose, as the Judge talks of taking the young man into his house, it will be most convenient if I make but one charge on't."

"I should think one would do," returned Marmaduke, with that arch smile that so often beamed on his face; leaving the beholder in doubt whether he most enjoyed the character of his companion, or his own covert humor. The landlord had succeeded in placing the Indian on some straw in one of his outbuildings, where, covered with his own blanket, John continued for the remainder of the night.

In the mean time, Major Hartmann began to grow noisy and jocular, glass succeeded glass, and mug after mug was introduced, until the carousal had run deep into the night, or rather morning; when the veteran German expressed an inclination to return to the Mansion-house. Most of the party had already retired, but Marmaduke knew the habits of his friend too well to suggest an earlier adjournment. So soon, however, as the proposal was made, the Judge eagerly availed himself of it, and the trio prepared to depart. Mrs. Hollister attended them to the door in person, cautioning her guests as to the safest manner of leaving her premises.

"Lane on Mister Jones, Major," said she, "he's young, and will be a support to ye. Well, it's a charming sight to see ye, any way, at the Bould Dragoon; and sure it's no harm to be kaping a Christmas eve wid a light heart, for it's no telling when we may have sorrow come upon us. So good night, Joodge, and a merry Christmas to ye all, to-morrow morning."

The gentlemen made their adieus as well as they could, and taking the middle of the road, which was a fine, wide, and well-beaten path, they did tolerably well until they reached the gate of the Mansion-house: but on entering the Judge's domains, they encountered some slight difficulties. We shall not stop to relate them, but will just mention that, in the morning, sundry diverging paths were to be seen in the snow; and that once during their progress to the door, Marmaduke, missing his companions, was enabled to trace them, by one of these paths, to a spot where he discovered them with nothing visible but their heads: Richard singing in a most vivacious strain,

"Come, let us be jolly,
And cast away folly,
For grief turns a black head to gray."

[CHAPTER XV. Meanwhile, back at the mansion-house, there have been conversations between Elizabeth and Remarkable Pettibone, and between Remarkable and Ben Pump after Elizabeth has gone to bed. The latter dialogue is considerably the warmer for the steady consumption of a bottle of rum. It grows clear that the housekeeper is likely to resent Elizabeth's assumption of the rôle of mistress and that Ben enjoys talking about his seafaring past.

CHAPTER XVI. Before breakfast on Christmas morning Elizabeth steps out for some fresh air, meets Richard Jones and gets him his Christmas present—a commission as sheriff of Otsego County. Walking out to observe the "improvements" of Templeton, the two encounter Oliver Edwards, Natty Bumppo, and Chingachgook, who are debating which shall spend the single shilling they have among them for the entry fee in the traditional Christmas turkey shoot. Elizabeth offers another shilling, and Natty agrees to shoot for her; but Oliver, who shows great anxiety to win the bird, claims the right to precede his friend.

CHAPTER XVII. It seems that Natty has long had a rival in marksmanship, a woodchopper named Billy Kirby. They prepare for the test, which is to hit the head of a turkey at the distance of one hundred yards. Kirby misses; Oliver misses; Natty's gun snaps but does not fire. After some argument Natty is ruled to have had his chance. Kirby

misses again; Oliver declines a second shot; Natty, taking great care this time, kills the turkey, which Elizabeth asks Oliver to accept as a peace offering. As she and Richard turn back toward the mansion-house they meet Judge Temple, who wishes to speak to Oliver.

CHAPTER XVIII. The Judge has decided that he needs a new assistant, now that Richard is to be sheriff, and he asks Oliver to take the post. Oliver at first refuses; then, after some discussion in which Chingachgook takes the Judge's part, agrees to undertake the task as an experiment. The Temples go home, discussing Oliver's strange reluctance to accept such a promising post; the other party likewise discuss the event, Oliver remarking that he could not have foreseen a month earlier even a tentative acceptance of living and serving in the "dwelling of the greatest enemy of my race." Natty is most uncertain of the experiment, although he is aware that times are changing. Chingachgook is sure that the days when one could live by hunting are at an end. That afternoon there is a heavy rain and the snow disappears.

CHAPTER XIX. At night, however, the wind shifts; the weather turns suddenly severe; and in the morning all Templeton is covered with a sheet of ice. Oliver, in civilized clothing, arrives to take up his work; Major Hartmann departs. Three months pass as Oliver learns his duties. To the mystification of the Templeton folk, however, he spends all his leisure moments and many of his nights in Natty Bumppo's hut.

CHAPTER XX. Spring comes gradually. At the end of March Richard proposes an excursion to see Billy Kirby's "sugar bush" and a magnificent view of the valley which he has discovered. Elizabeth, Louisa Grant, Oliver, Monsieur Le Quoi, the Judge, and Richard all go on horseback. The Judge has already shown his determination to preserve the maple trees and encourage the maple-sugar industry, which is described in detail.

CHAPTER XXI. On the way to the "view" the Judge is led to reminiscence of his first travels in the region and his first meeting with Natty Bumppo. Oliver shows keen interest in the Judge's acquisition of the land and in Natty's views of the Indian rights, a subject which the Judge does not take to kindly. On the return to the village a tree falls across the path, and Oliver saves Louisa by grasping her horse's bridle. "Now, Mr. Edwards," she remarks at the end of the chapter, "both father and daughter owe their lives to you."

CHAPTER XXII. Thaws and freezes alternate until the close of April. Then one day the pigeons arrive from the south. They fly over the valley in such numbers that even the children can kill them, and are so ruthlessly destroyed that the villagers cover the ground with dead and dying birds. Natty Bumppo is disgusted at the wastefulness, but when the chance comes to humiliate Billy Kirby by bringing down a single pigeon he cannot resist the temptation and again displays incredible skill with his rifle.

CHAPTER XXIII. The season now advances rapidly. Fishing having begun, Richard organizes a night expedition to seine for bass; the first cast brings in two thousand fish. The Judge perceives that such methods are "a fearful expenditure of the choicest gifts of Providence."

CHAPTER XXIV. Elizabeth and Louisa, strolling along the shore of the lake, observe a fire on the farther side, where Natty has his cabin. The light approaches and a canoe appears, manned by Natty and Chingachgook. Natty refuses a gift of fish acquired by "such a sinful kind of fishing"; he then takes Elizabeth out in the canoe and exhibits his skill with the spear. Their expedition ends suddenly when Ben Pump, handling the seine, is knocked into the lake from Billy Kirby's boat. Ben cannot swim, but he is rescued by Natty, who entwines his spear in Ben's clothing and hair.

CHAPTER XXV. Next morning Richard expects to take the Judge to a spot where he hints coal may be found, but discovers that the Judge has spent a sleepless night after having received a letter from London. The letter is read by Richard and makes little sense to the reader; it appears, however, to convey the news of the loss of a ship which sailed from Falmouth in England about the first of September 1792. For some mysterious reason this is most upsetting to the Judge. He sends for his lawyer, Dirck Van der School, and spends the day drawing up confidential papers. Oliver is excluded from this business and is very curious; his questioning of Elizabeth and the lawyer is of no avail. For many days the Judge is uneasy and melancholy, but early in July he agrees to accompany Richard on the excursion relating to mines.

CHAPTER XXVI. As Richard and the Judge start off, Elizabeth and Louisa are ready to go out walking. The Judge warns them of the heat and suggests that they be careful not to stray too far into the forest. Oliver, who has planned to go fishing, offers to accompany the girls as their protector and is snubbed for his pains; they take

the mastiff Brave instead. Oliver then rows across the lake to Natty's cabin, where he is somewhat surprised to find Hiram Doolittle lurking in the bushes. He secures the cabin with a padlock and returns to the lake. The story then goes on as follows:]

. . . There were several places in the Otsego that were celebrated fishing-grounds for perch. One was nearly opposite to the cabin, and another, still more famous, was near a point, at the distance of a mile and a half above it, under the brow of the mountain, and on the same side of the lake with the hut. Oliver Edwards pulled his little skiff to the first, and sat, for a minute, undecided whether to continue there, with his eyes on the door of the cabin, or to change his ground, with a view to get superior game. While gazing about him, he saw the light-colored bark canoe of his old companions, riding on the water, at the point we have mentioned, and containing two figures, that he at once knew to be Mohegan and the Leather-stocking. This decided the matter, and the youth pulled, in a very few minutes, to the place where his friends were fishing, and fastened his boat to the light vessel of the Indian.

The old men received Oliver with welcoming nods, but neither drew his line from the water, nor in the least varied his occupation. When Edwards had secured his own boat, he baited his hook and threw it into the lake, without speaking.

"Did you stop at the wigwam, lad, as you rowed past?" asked Natty.

"Yes, and I found all safe; but that carpenter and justice of the peace, Mr., or as they call him, Squire, Doolittle, was prowling through the woods I made sure of the door before I left the hut, and I think he is too great a coward to approach the hounds."

"There's little to be said in favor of that man," said Natty, while he drew in a perch and baited his hook. "He craves dreadfully to come into the cabin, and has as good as asked me as much to my face; but I put him off with unsartain answers so that he is no wiser than Solomon. This comes of having so many laws that such a man may be called on to intarpret them."

"I fear he is more knave than fool," cried Edwards; "he makes a tool of that simple man, the Sheriff; and I dread that his impertinent curiosity may yet give us much trouble."

"If he harbors too much about the cabin, lad, I'll shoot the creater," said the Leather-stocking, quite simply.

"No, no, Natty, you must remember the law," said Edwards, "or we shall have you in trouble; and that, old man, would be an evil day, and sore tidings to us all."

"Would it, boy!" exclaimed the hunter, raising his eyes with a look of friendly interest, toward the youth. "You have the true blood in your veins, Mr. Oliver; and I'll support it to the face of Judge Temple, or in any court in the country. How is it, John? Do I speak the true word? Is the lad staunch, and of the right blood?"

"He is a Delaware," said Mohegan, "and my brother. The young Eagle is brave, and he will be a chief. No harm can come."

"Well, well," cried the youth, impatiently, "say no more about it, my good friends; if I am not all that your partiality would make me, I am yours through life, in prosperity as in poverty. We will talk of other matters."

The old hunters yielded to his wish, which seemed to be their law. For a short time a profound silence prevailed, during which each man was very busy with his hook and line; but Edwards, probably feeling that it remained with him to renew the discourse, soon observed, with the air of one who knew not what he said—

"How beautifully tranquil and glassy the lake is! Saw you it ever more calm and even than at this moment, Natty?"

"I have known the Otsego water for five and forty years," said Leather-stocking; "and I will say that for it, which is, that a cleaner spring or better fishing is not to be found in the land Yes, yes; I had the place to myself once, and a cheerful time I had of it. The game was plenty as heart could wish, and there was none to meddle with the ground, unless there might have been a hunting party of the Delawares crossing the hills, or, maybe, a rifling scout of them thieves, the Iroquois. There was one or two Frenchmen that squatted in the flats, further west, and married squaws, and some of the Scotch-Irishers, from the Cherry-Valley, would come on to the lake, and borrow my canoe to take a mess of parch, or drop a line for salmon-trout; but, in the main,

80 Cherry-Valley, a settlement made in 1740 about ten miles northeast of Cooperstown. It was the scene of a massacre by Indians and Tories in 1778

it was a cheerful place, and I had but little to disturb me in it. John would come, and John knows."

Mohegan turned his dark face at this appeal; and, moving his hand forward with a graceful motion of assent, he spoke, using the Delaware language—

"The land was owned by my people; we gave it to my brother, in council—to the Fire-eater; and what the Delawares give lasts as long as the waters run. Hawk-eye smoked at that Council, for we loved him."

"No, no, John," said Natty; "I was no chief, seeing that I know'd nothing of scholarship, and had a white skin. But it was a comfortable hunting-ground then, lad, and would have been so to this day, but for the money of Marmaduke Temple, and the twisty ways of the law."

"It must have been a sight of melancholy pleasure indeed," said Edwards, while his eye roved along the shores and over the hills, where the clearings, groaning with the golden corn, were cheering the forests with the signs of life, "to have roamed over these mountains, and along this sheet of beautiful water, without a living soul to speak to, or to thwart your humor."

"Haven't I said it was cheerful?" said Leather-stocking. "Yes, yes; when the trees began to be covered with leaves, and the ice was out of the lake, it was a second paradise. I have travelled the woods for fifty-three years, and have made them my home for more than forty; and I can say that I have met but one place that was more to my liking; and that was only to eyesight, and not for hunting or fishing."

"And where was that?" asked Edwards.

"Where! why up on the Catskills. I used often to go up into the mountains after wolves' skins and bears; once they paid me to get them a stuffed painter, and so I often went. There's a place in them hills that I used to climb to when I wanted to see the carryings on of the world, that would well pay any man for a barked shin or a torn moccasin. You know the Catskills, lad; for you must have seen them on your left, as you followed the river up from York, looking as blue as a piece of clear sky, and holding the clouds on their tops, as the smoke curls over the head of an Indian chief at the council fire. Well, there's the High-peak and the Round-top, which lay back like a father and mother among their children, seeing they are far above all the other hills. But the place I mean is next to the river, where one of the ridges juts out a little from the rest, and where the rocks fall, for the best part of a thousand feet, so much up and down, that a man standing on their edges is fool enough to think he can jump from top to bottom."

"What see you when you get there?" asked Edwards.

"Creation," said Natty, dropping the end of his rod into the water, and sweeping one hand around him in a circle: "all creation, lad. I was on that hill when Vaughan burned 'Sopus in the last war; and I saw the vessels come out of the Highlands as plain as I can see that lime-scow rowing into the Susquehanna, though one was twenty times further from me than the other. The river was in sight for seventy miles, looking like a curled shaving under my feet, though it was eight long miles to its banks. I saw the hills in the Hampshire grants, the highlands of the river, and all that God had done, or man could do, far as eye could reach—you know that the Indians named me for my sight, lad; and from the flat on the top of that mountain, I have often found the place where Albany stands. And as for 'Sopus, the day the royal troops burnt the town, the smoke seemed so nigh, that I thought I could hear the screeches of the women."

"It must have been worth the toil to meet with such a glorious view."

"If being the best part of a mile in the air, and having men's farms and houses at your feet, with rivers looking like ribbons, and mountains bigger than the 'Vision,' seeming to be hay-stacks of green grass under you, gives any satisfaction to a man, I can recommend the spot. When I first came into the woods to live, I used to have weak spells when I felt lonesome; and then I would go into the Catskills, and spend a few days on that hill to look at the ways of man; but it's now many a year since I felt any such longings, and I am getting too old for rugged rocks. But there's a place, a short two miles back of that very hill, that in late times I relished better than the mountain; for it was more covered with the trees, and nateral."

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35 **a place . . . hills.** Cooper is almost certainly describing North Point, the site of the Catskill Mountain House, built in 1823. It is about halfway between Albany and Kingston, on the west bank of the Hudson • 54 **when . . . 'Sopus.** Kingston, settled by the Dutch under the name of Esopus, was burned by the British under the command of General Sir John Vaughan (1748?-1795) on October 16, 1777

"And where was that?" inquired Edwards, whose curiosity was strongly excited by the simple description of the hunter.

"Why, there's a fall in the hills where the water of two little ponds, that lie near each other, breaks out of their bounds and runs over the rocks into the valley. The stream is, maybe, such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness. But the hand that made that 'Leap' never made a mill. There the water comes crooking and winding among the rocks; first so slow that a trout could swim in it, and then starting and running like a crater that wanted to make a far spring, till it gets to where the mountain divides, like the cleft hoof of a deer, leaving a deep hollow for the brook to tumble into. The first pitch is nigh two hundred feet, and the water looks like flakes of driven snow afore it touches the bottom; and there the stream gathers itself together again for a new start, and maybe flutters over fifty feet of flat rock before it falls for another hundred, when it jumps about from shelf to shelf, first turning this-away and then turning that-away, striving to get out of the hollow, till it finally comes to the plain."

"I have never hear of this spot before; it is not mentioned in the books."

"I never read a book in my life," said Leather-stocking; "and how should a man who has lived in towns and schools know anything about the wonders of the woods? No, no lad; there has that little stream of water been playing among the hills since He made the world, and not a dozen white men have ever laid eyes on it. The rock sweeps like mason-work, in a half-round, on both sides of the fall, and shelves over the bottom for fifty feet; so that when I've been sitting at the foot of the first pitch, and my hounds have run into the caverns behind the sheet of water, they've looked no bigger than so many rabbits. To my judgment, lad, it's the best piece of work that I've met with in the woods; and none know how often the hand of God is seen in the wilderness, but them that rove it for a man's life."

"What becomes of the water? In which direction does it run? Is it a tributary of the Delaware?"

"Anan!" said Natty.

"Does the water run into the Delaware?"

"No, no; it's a drop for the old Hudson, and a merry time it has till it gets down off the mountain. I've sat on the shelving rock many a long hour, boy, and watched the bubbles as they shot by me, and thought how long it would be before that very water, which seemed made for the wilderness, would be under the bottom of a vessel, and tossing in the salt sea. It is a spot to make a man solemnize. You can see right down into the valley that lies to the east of the High Peak, where, in the fall of the year, thousands of acres of woods are before your eyes, in the deep hollow, and along the side of the mountain, painted like ten thousand rainbows, by no hand of man, though without the ordering of God's providence."

"You are eloquent, Leather-stocking," exclaimed the youth.

"Anan!" repeated Natty.

"The recollection of the sight has warmed your blood, old man. How many years is it since you saw the place?"

The hunter made no reply; but, bending his ear near the water, he sat holding his breath, and listening attentively as if to some distant sound. At length he raised his head, and said—

"If I hadn't fastened the hounds with my own hands, with a fresh leash of green buckskin, I'd take a Bible oath that I heard old Hector ringing his cry on the mountain."

"It is impossible," said Edwards; "it is not an hour since I saw him in his kennel."

By this time the attention of Mohegan was attracted to the sounds; but, notwithstanding the youth was both silent and attentive, he could hear nothing but the lowing of some cattle from the western hills. He looked at the old men, Natty sitting with his hand to his ear, like a trumpet, and Mohegan bending forward, with an arm raised to a level with his face, holding the forefinger elevated as a signal for attention, and laughed aloud at what he deemed to be their imaginary sounds.

"Laugh if you will, boy," said Leather-stocking; "the hounds be out, and are hunting a deer. No man can deceive me in such a matter. I wouldn't have had the thing happen for a beaver's skin. Not that I care for the law! but the venison is lean now, and the dumb things run the flesh off their own bones for no good. Now do you hear the hounds?"

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43 **Anan,** a dialectal variation of anon, in the sense of "I beg your pardon" or "What did you say?"

Edwards started, as a full cry broke on his ear, changing from the distant sounds that were caused by some intervening hill, to confused echoes that rang among the rocks that the dogs were passing, and then directly to a deep and hollow baying that pealed under the forest on the lake shore. These variations in the tones of the hounds passed with amazing rapidity; and while his eyes were glancing along the margin of the water, a tearing of the branches of the alder and dogwood caught his attention, at a spot near them, and at the next moment a noble buck sprang on the shore, and buried himself in the lake. A full-mouthed cry followed, when Hector and the slut shot through the opening in the bushes, and darted into the lake also, bearing their breasts gallantly against the water.

CHAPTER XXVII

"I know'd it—I know'd it!" cried Natty, when both deer and hounds were in full view;—"the buck has gone by them with the wind, and it has been too much for the poor rogues; but I must break them of these tricks, or they'll give me a deal of trouble. He-ere, he-ere—shore with you, rascals—shore with you—will ye?—Oh! off with you, old Hector, or I'll hatchel your hide with my ramrod when I get ye."

The dogs knew their master's voice, and after swimming in a circle, as if reluctant to give over the chase, and yet afraid to persevere, they finally obeyed, and returned to the land, where they filled the air with their cries.

In the meantime the deer, urged by his fears, had swum over half the distance between the shore and the boats, before his terror permitted him to see the new danger. But at the sounds of Natty's voice, he turned short in his course, and for a few moments seemed about to rush back again, and brave the dogs. His retreat in this direction was, however, effectually cut off, and turning a second time, he urged his course obliquely for the centre of the lake, with an intention of landing on the western shore. As the buck swam by the fishermen, raising his nose high into the air, curling the water before his slim neck like the beak of a galley, the Leatherstocking began to sit very uneasy in his canoe.

"'Tis a noble creater!" he exclaimed; "what a pair of horns! a man might hang up all his garments on the branches. Let me see—July is the last month, and the flesh must be getting good." While he was talking, Natty had instinctively employed himself in fastening the inner end of the bark rope, that served him for a cable, to a paddle, and rising suddenly on his legs, he cast this buoy away, and cried—"Strike out, John! let her go. The creater's a fool to tempt a man in this way."

Mohegan threw the fastening of the youth's boat from the canoe, and with one stroke of his paddle sent the light bark over the water like a meteor.

"Hold!" exclaimed Edwards. "Remember the law, my old friends. You are in plain sight of the village, and I know that Judge Temple is determined to prosecute all indiscriminately, who kill deer out of season."

The remonstrance came too late: the canoe was already far from the skiff, and the two hunters were too much engaged in the pursuit to listen to his voice.



"Natty . . . passed his knife across the throat of the animal. . . ."

The buck was now within fifty yards of his pursuers, cutting the water gallantly, and snorting at each breath with terror and his exertions, while the canoe seemed to dance over the waves, as it rose and fell with the undulations made by its own motion. Leather-stocking raised his rifle and freshened the priming, but stood in suspense whether to slay his victim or not.

"Shall I, John, or no?" he said. "It seems but a poor advantage to take of the dumb thing too. I won't; it has taken to the water on its own nater, which is the

reason that God has given to a deer, and I'll give it the lake play; so, John, lay out your arm, and mind the turn of the buck; it's easy to catch them, but they'll turn like a snake."

The Indian laughed at the conceit of his friend, but continued to send the canoe forward with a velocity that proceeded much more from his skill than his strength Both of the old men now used the language of the Delawares when they spoke.

"Hugh!" exclaimed Mohegan; "the deer turns his head. Hawk-eye, lift your spear."

Natty never moved abroad without taking with him every implement that might, by possibility, be of service in his pursuits. From his rifle he never parted; and although intending to fish with the line, the canoe was invariably furnished with all of its utensils, even to its grate. This precaution grew out of the habits of the hunter, who was often led, by his necessities or his sports, far beyond the limits of his original destination. A few years earlier than the date of our tale, the Leather-stocking had left his hut on the shores of the Otsego, with his rifle and his hounds, for a few days' hunting in the hills; but before he returned he had seen the waters of Ontario. One, two, or even three hundred miles had once been nothing to his sinews, which were now a little stiffened by age. The hunter did as Mohegan advised, and prepared to strike a blow, with the barbed weapon, into the neck of the buck.

"Lay her more to the left, John," he cried, "lay her more to the left; another stroke of the paddle, and I have him."

While speaking, he raised the spear, and darted it from him like an arrow. At that instant the buck turned, the long pole glanced by him, the iron striking against his horn, and buried itself, harmlessly, in the lake

"Back water," cried Natty, as the canoe glided over the place where the spear had fallen; "hold water, John."

The pole soon reappeared, shooting upward from the lake, and as the hunter seized it in his hand, the Indian whirled the light canoe round, and renewed the chase. But this evolution gave the buck a great advantage, and it also allowed time for Edwards to approach the scene of action.

"Hold your hand, Natty!" cried the youth, "hold your hand! remember it is out of season."

This remonstrance was made as the bateau arrived close to the place where the deer was struggling with the water, his back now rising to the surface, now sinking beneath it, as the waves curled from his neck, the animal still sustaining itself nobly against the odds.

"Hurrah!" shouted Edwards, inflamed beyond prudence at the sight; "mind him as he doubles—mind him as he doubles; sheer more to the right, Mohegan, more to the right, and I'll have him by the horns; I'll throw the rope over his antlers."

The dark eye of the old warrior was dancing in his head, with a wild animation, and the sluggish repose in which his aged frame had been resting in the canoe was now changed to all the rapid inflections of practised agility. The canoe whirled with each cunning evolution of the chase, like a bubble floating in a whirlpool; and when the direction of the pursuit admitted of a straight course, the little bark skimmed the lake with a velocity that urged the deer to seek its safety in some new turn.

It was the frequency of these circuitous movements, that, by confining the action to so small a compass, enabled the youth to keep near his companions. More than twenty times both the pursued and the pursuers glided by him, just without the reach of his oars, until he thought the best way to view the sport was to remain stationary, and, by watching a favorable opportunity, assist as much as he could in taking the victim.

He was not required to wait long, for no sooner had he adopted this resolution, and risen in the boat, than he saw the deer coming bravely toward him, with an apparent intention of pushing for a point of land at some distance from the hounds, who were still barking and howling on the shore Edwards caught the painter of his skiff, and, making a noose, cast it from him with all his force, and luckily succeeded in drawing its knot close around one of the antlers of the buck.

For one instant, the skiff was drawn through the water, but in the next, the canoe glided before it, and Natty, bending low, passed his knife across the throat of the animal, whose blood followed the wound, dying the waters. The short time that was passed in the last struggles of the animal was spent by the hunters in bringing their boats together, and securing them in that position, when Leather-stocking drew the deer from the water, and laid its lifeless form in the bottom of the canoe. He placed his hands on the ribs, and on different

parts of the body of his prize, and then, raising his head, he laughed in his peculiar manner.

"So much for Marmaduke Temple's law!" he said. "This warms a body's blood, old John; I haven't killed a buck in the lake afore this, sin' many a year. I call that good venison, lad; and I know them that will relish the creater's steaks, for all the betterments in the land."

The Indian had long been drooping with his years, and perhaps under the calamities of his race, but this invigorating and exciting sport caused a gleam of sunshine to cross his swarthy face that had long been absent from his features. It was evident the old man enjoyed the chase more as a memorial of his youthful sports and deeds, than with any expectation of profiting by the success. He felt the deer, however, lightly, his hand already trembling with the reaction of his unusual exertions, and smiled with a nod of approbation, as he said, in the emphatic and sententious manner of his people—

"Good."

"I am afraid, Natty," said Edwards, when the heat of the moment had passed, and his blood began to cool, "that we have all been equally transgressors of the law. But keep your own counsel, and there are none here to betray us. Yet, how came those dogs at large? I left them securely fastened, I know, for I felt the thongs, and examined the knots, when I was at the hut."

"It has been too much for the poor things," said Natty, "to have such a buck take the wind of them. See, lad, the pieces of the buckskin are hanging from their necks yet. Let us paddle up, John, and I will call them in, and look a little into the matter."

When the old hunter landed, and examined the thongs that were yet fast to the hounds, his countenance sensibly changed, and he shook his head doubtingly.

"Here has been a knife at work," he said:—"this skin was never torn, nor is this the mark of a hound's tooth. No, no,—Hector is not in fault, as I feared."

"Has the leather been cut?" cried Edwards.

"No, no—I didn't say it had been cut, lad; but this is a mark that was never made by a jump or a bite."

"Could that rascally carpenter have dared!"

"Ay! he durst to do anything where there is no danger," said Natty: "he is a curious body, and loves to be helping other people on with their consarns. But he had best not harbor so much near the wigwam!"

In the meantime, Mohegan had been examining, with an Indian's sagacity, the place where the leather thong had been separated. After scrutinizing it closely, he said, in Delaware—

"It was cut with a knife—a sharp blade and a long handle—the man was afraid of the dogs."

"How is this, Mohegan?" exclaimed Edwards: "you saw it not! how can you know these facts?"

"Listen, son," said the warrior. "The knife was sharp, for the cut is smooth;—the handle was long, for a man's arm would not reach from this gash to the cut that did not go through the skin:—he was a coward, or he would have cut the thongs around the necks of the hounds."

"On my life," cried Natty, "John is on the scent! It was the carpenter; and he has got on the rock back of the kennel, and let the dogs loose by fastening his knife to a stick. It would be an easy matter to do it, where a man is so minded."

"And why should he do so?" asked Edwards: "who has done him wrong, that he should trouble two old men like you?"

"It's a hard matter, lad, to know men's ways, I find, since the settlers have brought in their new fashions. But is there nothing to be found out in the place? and may be he is troubled with his longings after other people's business, as he often is."

"Your suspicions are just. Give me the canoe: I am young and strong, and will get down there yet, perhaps, in time to interrupt his plans. Heaven forbid that we should be at the mercy of such a man!"

His proposal was accepted, the deer being placed in



"... the old hunter landed, and examined the thongs...."

the skiff in order to lighten the canoe, and in less than five minutes the little vessel of bark was gliding over the glassy lake, and was soon hid by the points of land, as it shot close along the shore.

Mohegan followed slowly with the skiff, while Natty called his hounds to him, bade them keep close, and, shouldering his rifle, he ascended the mountain, with an intention of going to the hut by land.

[CHAPTER XXVIII. Elizabeth and Louisa walk to a point above Natty's hut, talking about the mysterious association of the three friends and speculating on Oliver's ancestry. Thinking they hear the cries of a child, they start searching for it. Suddenly they are threatened by a female panther. Brave, the dog, dies in their defense; then Natty opportunely arrives and shoots the panther. After the frightened girls have departed, full of gratitude, Hiram Doolittle appears and accuses Natty of breaking the law by shooting a deer. Natty shows him the panther he has killed, but when he asks Doolittle to make out an order for the bounty, the magistrate tells him he must take an oath. Doolittle's real motive is to see the inside of the cabin, and when this becomes obvious Natty warns him to keep away. But Hiram is determined to make trouble.

CHAPTER XXIX. In the meantime Richard and the judge have been together, not, as it turns out, investigating possible coal deposits, but in order that Richard can demonstrate to the Judge a theory which he, Hiram Doolittle, and Jotham Riddel have concocted. This theory, to state it briefly—which Richard does not do—is that Natty, Chingachgook, and Oliver are secretly mining silver and smelting it in the hut which is so carefully guarded from prying eyes. Richard takes the Judge to a cave on the mountain back of the hut, where he shows digging tools and an excavation. There is no sign of ore, but the Judge's curiosity is roused to the point that he determines to interview Natty. Returning home, however, he meets Elizabeth and Louisa and hears their story; "and when the image of Natty again crossed his recollection, it was not as a lawless and depredating squatter, but as the preserver of his child."

CHAPTER XXX. At home, as Elizabeth and her father discuss the panther episode, Hiram Doolittle makes his appearance and, after much circumlocution, says that he thinks Natty has a deer in his cabin. The Judge tells Hiram to issue a search warrant himself, but Hiram evidently wants support and intimates to the Judge that the latter is showing partiality. The Judge then agrees to sign the warrant, calming Elizabeth by telling her that the fine will be no great matter. He goes to his office to make out the paper. Returning, he meets Oliver, and in their mutual relief at the escape of the girls, they reach a friendlier status than ever before. Oliver goes to pay his respects to the Grants. Meanwhile, however, another and highly serious cause of friction is developing:]

. . . When Hiram Doolittle had obtained his search-warrant, his first business was to procure a proper officer to see it executed. The sheriff was absent, summoning in person the grand inquest for the county; the deputy, who resided in the village, was riding on the same errand, in a different part of the settlement; and the regular constable of the township had been selected for his station from motives of charity, being lame of a leg. Hiram intended to accompany the officer as a spectator, but he felt no very strong desire to bear the brunt of the battle. It was, however, Saturday, and the sun was already turning the shadows of the pines toward the east; on the morrow the conscientious magistrate could not engage in such an expedition at the peril of his soul; and long before Monday, the venison, and all vestiges of the death of the deer, might be secreted or destroyed. Happily, the lounging form of Billy Kirby met his eye, and Hiram, at all times fruitful in similar expedients, saw his way clear at once. Jotham, who was associated in the whole business, and who had left the mountain in consequence of a summons from his coadjutor, but who failed, equally with Hiram, in the unfortunate particular of nerve, was directed to summon the wood-chopper to the dwelling of the magistrate.

When Billy appeared, he was very kindly invited to take the chair in which he had already seated himself, and was treated in all respects as if he were an equal.

"Judge Temple has set his heart on putting the deer law in force," said Hiram, after the preliminary civilities were over, "and a complaint has been laid before him that a deer has been killed. He has issued a search-warrant, and sent for me to get somebody to execute it."

Kirby, who had no idea of being excluded from the deliberative part of any affair in which he was engaged, drew up his bushy head in a reflecting attitude, and,

after musing a moment, replied by asking a few questions.

"The Sheriff is gone out of the way?"

"Not to be found."

"And his deputy too?"

"Both gone on the skirts of the Patent."

"But I saw the constable hobbling about town an hour ago."

"Yes, yes," said Hiram with a coaxing smile and knowing nod, "but this business wants a man—not a cripple."

"Why," said Billy, laughing, "will the chap make fight?"

"He's a little quarrelsome at times, and thinks he's the best man in the country at rough and tumble."

"I heard him brag once," said Jotham, "that there wasn't a man 'twixt the Mohawk Flats and the Pennsylvany line that was his match at a close hug."

"Did you?" exclaimed Kirby, raising his huge frame in his seat, like a lion stretching in his lair; "I rather guess he never felt a Varmounter's knuckles on his backbone. But who is the chap?"

"Why," said Jotham, "it's—"

"It's ag'in law to tell," interrupted Hiram, "unless you'll qualify to sarve. You'd be the very man to take him, Bill; and I'll make out a special deputation in a minute, when you will get the fees."

"What's the fees?" said Kirby, laying his large hand on the leaves of a statute-book, that Hiram had opened in order to give dignity to his office, which he turned over, in his rough manner, as if he were reflecting on a subject about which he had, in truth, already decided; "will they pay a man for a broken head?"

"They'll be something handsome," said Hiram.

"Damn the fees," said Billy, again laughing:—"does the fellow think he's the best wrestler in the county, though? what's his inches?"

"He's taller than you be," said Jotham, "and one of the biggest—"

Talkers, he was about to add, but the impatience of Kirby interrupted him. The wood-chopper had nothing fierce or even brutal in his appearance; the character of his expression was that of good-natured vanity. It was evident he prided himself on the powers of the physical man, like all who have nothing better to boast of; and, stretching out his broad hand, with the palm downward, he said, keeping his eyes fastened on his own bones and sinews—

"Come, give us a touch of the book. I'll swear, and you'll see that I'm a man to keep my oath."

Hiram did not give the wood-chopper time to change his mind, but the oath was administered without unnecessary delay. So soon as this preliminary was completed, the three worthies left the house, and proceeded by the nearest road toward the hut. They had reached the bank of the lake, and were diverging from the route of the highway, before Kirby recollected that he was now entitled to the privilege of the initiated, and repeated his question as to the name of the offender.

"Which way, which way, Squire?" exclaimed the hardy wood-chopper; "I thought it was to search a house that you wanted me, not the woods. There is nobody lives on this side of the lake, for six miles, unless you count the Leather-stocking and old John for settlers. Come, tell me the chap's name, and I warrant me that I lead you to his clearing by a straighter path than this, for I know every sapling that grows within two miles of Templetown."

"This is the way," said Hiram, pointing forward and quickening his step, as if apprehensive that Kirby would desert, "and Bumppo is the man."

Kirby stopped short, and looked from one of his companions to the other in astonishment. He then burst into a loud laugh, and cried—

"Who? Leather-stocking! he may brag of his aim and his rifle, for he has the best of both, as I will own myself, for sin' he shot the pigeon I knock under to him; but for a wrestle! why, I would take the creatur' between my finger and thumb, and tie him in a bow-knot around my neck for a Barcelony. The man is seventy, and was never anything particular for strength."

"He's a deceiving man," said Hiram, "like all the hunters; he is stronger than he seems; besides, he has his rifle."

"That for his rifle!" cried Billy: "he'd no more hurt me with his rifle than he'd fly. He is a harmless creater, and I must say that I think he has as good right to kill deer as any man on the Patent. It's his main support, and this is a free country, where a man is privileged to follow any calling he likes."

"According to that doctrine," said Jotham, "anybody may shoot a deer."

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78 Barcelony, Barcelona, a silk neckerchief

"This is the man's calling, I tell you," returned Kirby, "and the law was never made for such as he."

"The law was made for all," observed Hiram, who began to think that the danger was likely to fall to his own share, notwithstanding his management; "and the law is particular in noticing parjury."

"See here, Squire Doolittle," said the reckless wood-chopper, "I don't care the value of a beetlering for you and your parjury too. But as I have come so far, I'll go down and have a talk with the old man, and maybe we'll fry a steak of the deer together."

"Well, if you can get in peaceably, so much the better," said the magistrate "To my notion, strife is very unpopular; I prefar, at all times, clever conduct to an ugly temper."

As the whole party moved at a great pace, they soon reached the hut, where Hiram thought it prudent to halt on the outside of the top of the fallen pine, which formed a chevaux-de-frise, to defend the approach to the fortress, on the side next the village. The delay was little relished by Kirby, who clapped his hands to his mouth, and gave a loud halloo that brought the dogs out of their kennel and, almost at the same instant, the scantily covered head of Natty from the door.

"Lie down, old fool," cried the hunter; "do you think there's more painters about you?"

"Ha! Leather-stocking, I've an arrand with you," cried Kirby; "here's the good people of the state have been writing you a small letter, and they're hired me to ride post."

"What would you have with me, Billy Kirby?" said Natty, stepping across his threshold, and raising his hand over his eyes to screen them from the rays of the setting sun, while he took a survey of his visitor. "I've no land to clear; and heaven knows I would set out six trees afore I would cut down one. Down, Hector, I say; into your kennel with ye."

"Would you, old boy?" roared Billy; "then so much the better for me. But I must do my arrand. Here's a letter for you, Leather-stocking. If you can read it, it's all well, and if you can't, here's Squire Doolittle at hand to let you know what it means. It seems you mistook the twentieth of July for the first of August, that's all."

By this time Natty had discovered the lank person of Hiram, drawn up under the cover of a high stump; and all that was complacent in his manner instantly gave way to marked distrust and dissatisfaction. He placed his head within the door of his hut, and said a few words in an undertone, when he again appeared, and continued:

"I've nothing for ye, so away, afore the evil one tempts me to do you harm. I owe you no spite, Billy Kirby, and what for should you trouble an old man, who has done you no harm?"

Kirby advanced through the top of the pine, to within a few feet of the hunter, where he seated himself on the end of a log with great composure, and began to examine the nose of Hector, with whom he was familiar, from their frequently meeting in the woods, where he sometimes fed the dog from his own basket of provisions.

"You've outshot me, and I'm not ashamed to say it," said the wood-chopper, "but I don't owe you a grudge for that, Natty! though it seems that you've shot once too often, for the story goes that you've killed a buck."

"I've fired but twice to-day, and both times at the painters," returned the Leather-stocking; "see, here are the scalps! I was just going in with them to the Judge's to ask the bounty."

While Natty was speaking, he tossed the ears to Kirby, who continued playing with them, with a careless air, holding them to the dogs, and laughing at their movements when they scented the unusual game.

But Hiram, emboldened by the advance of the deputed constable, now ventured to approach also, and took up the discourse with the air of authority that became his commission. His first measure was to read the warrant aloud, taking care to give due emphasis to the most material parts, and concluding with the name of the Judge in very audible and distinct tones.

"Did Marmaduke Temple put his name to that bit of paper?" said Natty, shaking his head;—"well, well, that man loves the new ways, and his betterments, and his lands, afore his own flesh and blood. But I won't mistrust the gal· she has an eye like a full-grown buck! poor thing, she didn't choose her father, and can't help it. I know but little of the law, Mr. Doolittle; what is to be done, now you've read your commission?"

"Oh! it's nothing but form, Natty," said Hiram, endeavoring to assume a friendly aspect. "Let's go in, and talk the thing over in reason; I dare say that the money

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19 **chevaux-de-frise,** literally "horses of Friesland", large, six-sided joists studded with long iron spikes, used to block breaches in fortifications or to halt cavalry charges

can be easily found, and I partly conclude, from what passed, that Judge Temple will pay it himself."

The old hunter had kept a keen eye on the movements of his three visitors, from the beginning, and had maintained his position, just without the threshold of his cabin, with a determined manner, that showed he was not to be easily driven from his post. When Hiram drew nigher, as if expecting his proposition would be accepted, Natty lifted his hand, and motioned for him to retreat.

"Haven't I told you more than once, not to tempt me?" he said. "I trouble no man; why can't the law leave me to myself? Go back—go back, and tell your Judge that he may keep his bounty; but I won't have his wasty ways brought into my hut."

This offer, however, instead of appeasing the curiosity of Hiram, seemed to inflame it the more; while Kirby cried—

"Well, that's fair, squire; he forgives the county his demand, and the county should forgive him the fine; it's what I call an even trade, and should be concluded on the spot. I like quick dealings, and what's fair 'twixt man and man."

"I demand entrance into this house," said Hiram, summoning all the dignity he could master to his assistance, "in the name of the people; and by virtue of this warrant, and of my office, and with this peace-officer."

"Stand back, stand back, squire, and don't tempt me," said the Leather-stocking, motioning for him to retire, with great earnestness.

"Stop us at your peril," continued Hiram. "Billy! Jotham! close-up—I want testimony."

Hiram had mistaken the mild but determined air of Natty for submission, and had already put his foot on the threshold to enter, when he was seized unexpectedly by his shoulders, and hurled over the little bank toward the lake, to the distance of twenty feet. The suddenness of the movement, and the unexpected display of strength on the part of Natty, created a momentary astonishment in his invaders, that silenced all noises; but at the next instant Billy Kirby gave vent to his mirth in peals of laughter, that he seemed to heave up from his very soul.

"Well done, old stub!" he shouted: "the squire know'd you better than I did. Come, come, here's a green spot; take it out like men, while Jotham and I see fair play."

"William Kirby, I order you to do your duty," cried Hiram, from under the bank; "seize that man; I order you to seize him in the name of the people."

But the Leather-stocking now assumed a more threatening attitude; his rifle was in his hand, and its muzzle was directed toward the wood-chopper.

"Stand off, I bid ye," said Natty; "you know my aim, Billy Kirby; I don't crave your blood, but mine and yourn both shall turn this green grass red, afore you put foot into the hut."

While the affair appeared trifling, the wood-chopper seemed disposed to take sides with the weaker party; but when the fire-arms were introduced, his manner very sensibly changed. He raised his large frame from the log, and facing the hunter with an open front, he replied—

"I didn't come here as your enemy, Leather-stocking; but I don't value the hollow piece of iron in your hand so much as a broken axe-helve, so, squire, say the word, and keep within the law, and we'll soon see who's the best man of the two."

But no magistrate was to be seen! The instant the rifle was produced, Hiram and Jotham vanished; and when the wood-chopper bent his eyes about him in surprise at receiving no answer, he discovered their retreating figures moving toward the village at a rate that sufficiently indicated that they had not only calculated the velocity of a rifle-bullet, but also its probable range.

"You've scared the creaters off," said Kirby, with great contempt expressed on his broad features; "but you are not going to scare me; so, Mr. Bumppo, down with your gun, or there'll be trouble 'twixt us."

Natty dropped his rifle, and replied—

"I wish you no harm, Billy Kirby; but I leave it to yourself, whether an old man's hut is to be run down by such varmint. I won't deny the buck to you, Billy, and you may take the skin in, if you please, and show it as testimony. The bounty will pay the fine, and that ought to satisfy any man."

" 'Twill, old boy, 'twill," cried Kirby, every shade of displeasure vanishing from his open brow at the peace-offering; "throw out the hide, and that shall satisfy the law."

Natty entered the hut, and soon re-appeared, bringing with him the desired testimonial; and the wood-chopper departed, as thoroughly reconciled to the hunter as if nothing had happened. As he paced along the margin of the lake he would burst into frequent fits of laughter, while he recollected the summerset of Hiram;



The prisoners.

and, on the whole, he thought the affair a very capital joke.

Long before Billy reached the village, however, the news of his danger, and of Natty's disrespect of the law, and of Hiram's discomfiture, were in circulation. A good deal was said about sending for the Sheriff; some hints were given about calling out the posse comitatus to avenge the insulted laws; and many of the citizens were collected, deliberating how to proceed. The arrival of Billy with the skin, by removing all grounds for a search, changed the complexion of things materially. Nothing now remained but to collect the fine, and assert the dignity of the people; all of which, it was unanimously agreed, could be done as well on the succeeding Monday as on Saturday night,—a time kept sacred by a large portion of the settlers. Accordingly, all further proceedings were suspended for six-and-thirty hours.

[CHAPTER XXXI. Oliver, at the Grants, knows nothing of the encounter at the hut until, returning to the center of the town, he sees the villagers dispersing. Chester Lippet, the lawyer, tells him what has happened, and Oliver retains Lippet to defend Natty. He then goes in search of the Judge. At the mansion-house he finds Elizabeth serenely sure that the search warrant will bring no harm; she is quickly disillusioned by her father, who appears and says that Natty's obstinate resistance to the law must be punished. At this announcement Oliver loses his temper and accuses the Judge of being responsible for the impoverishment of Natty and Chingachgook. The Judge rightly regards the accusation as an attack on the validity of his title to the lands and discharges his assistant. Oliver then bids farewell to Elizabeth, who tells him to let Natty know that she is his friend.

CHAPTER XXXII. Late the following evening Richard returns from an expedition to arrest a gang of counterfeiters. He extracts the story of events from Ben Pump, after great difficulty, and at once assembles a posse to take Natty into custody. When they arrive at the hut, they find only a heap of ashes and smoldering logs. As they gaze at the embers Natty appears, to say that those who have driven the wild beasts from the wilderness have now driven an old man from the home that has been his for forty years. Richard apologizes for his duty, but takes Natty to the jail.

CHAPTER XXXIII. Natty's trial is described in detail, with much satire of frontier legal procedures. The jury acquits him of assault and battery, but finds him guilty of pointing a rifle at an officer of the law. The Judge sentences him to an hour's confinement in the stocks and a month in jail, and levies a fine of one hundred dollars, stipulating that the fine must be paid before Natty will be set free. Natty objects to this condition on the grounds that he has no money and could not earn the hundred dollars unless permitted to return to the woods. After eloquently recounting his past services to the Judge, he promises to trap and hunt and earn enough money selling the furs to pay the fine. Benjamin intervenes and offers to put up a sum of money to guarantee that the old man will pay. He is silenced for interrupting the court, and Natty marches off to the stocks, the crowd following to see his disgrace.

CHAPTER XXXIV. Ben Pump, much incensed at the verdict, insists on taking the empty place in the stocks next to Natty Bumppo. When Hiram Doolittle unwarily comes near, Ben seizes one of his legs and gives him a drubbing; as a result Ben and Natty return to the jail together. Just before nightfall they are visited by Oliver, who apparently brings words of comfort, for by eight o'clock they have ostensibly retired for the night.

CHAPTER XXXV. An hour later Elizabeth and Louisa come to the jail, with a pocketbook containing two hundred dollars for Natty. Outside they meet Oliver, disguised as a teamster and driving a yoke of oxen. Inside

they find that Natty already has a hole in the log wall and is ready to escape. Elizabeth agrees to buy powder for Natty's rifle and deliver it next day to the Vision, the mountain which overlooks Templeton. Then circumstances force her to take an active part in the jail break; amid much excitement and comings and goings she directs Oliver and Natty to the Judge's boat, and they escape across the lake. Billy Kirby, whose ox team Oliver had appropriated, delivers Ben Pump from the searching parties which, with torches blazing, scour the forest during the night.

CHAPTER XXXVI. Next morning, having purchased the powder from Monsieur Le Quoi, Elizabeth and Louisa start up the mountain. Remembering the panther, Louisa cannot go on, so Elizabeth leaves her at the edge of the woods. Natty is not on the mountaintop, but Elizabeth hears a faint cry and, following the sound, discovers Chingachgook on a small rocky terrace, watered by a spring, about a hundred feet below. He is bitterly reviewing the wrongs done his race, but is about to tell Elizabeth of Oliver's identity when they are startled by immense volumes of smoke and the noise of flames. A voice is heard crying for Chingachgook, and an instant later Oliver joins them.

CHAPTER XXXVII. Oliver has been searching for the old Indian to take him out of the way of the swiftly spreading forest fire. He and Elizabeth quickly discover that they are surrounded by flames and cannot escape; Chingachgook is wholly reconciled to dying. As Oliver, thinking the end has come, declares his love for Elizabeth, Natty Bumppo's voice is heard, the can of powder explodes, and, a moment later, Natty appears by the spring.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. It appears that he has learned from Louisa of their position on the mountain. He has explained to her the origin of the fire—carelessly dropped torches from the night search—and sent her to the village to give the alarm. He produces a buckskin to wrap around Elizabeth's flimsy clothing, straps the uncoöperative Chingachgook to his back, and leads the way to safety along the crevice which is the course of the spring. They come to a rocky platform over the cavern which has excited so much curiosity and are joined there by Ben Pump and, to their surprise, Mr. Grant, who has been searching for Louisa. Chingachgook, after a dramatic farewell to the world, dies to the accompaniment of a great flash of lightning. Rain begins to fall, and not long after voices are heard calling Elizabeth. Oliver takes her to the road, promises that all will be explained on the morrow, and leaves her to be found and taken home by her father.

CHAPTER XXXIX. Next morning many miles of woods are black and smoking, but the fire is at a stop. The villagers are sure that it was set by Oliver and Natty and, urged on by curiosity as much as by wrath, gather a large force to besiege the mysterious cavern, now stoutly barricaded. There is much slapstick parleying and bloodless fighting, but the defenders of the cave are about to be overwhelmed when Judge Temple appears and orders the fighting halted. At almost the same moment Oliver and Major Hartmann come down the mountain, having shouted that all shall be yielded and the cave opened.

CHAPTER XL. Five or six minutes later an old man with snow-white hair and a vacant eye is carried from the cave on a deerskin chair. Major Hartmann and Oliver stand beside him. Judge Temple begins to suspect the truth, and when Oliver announces that the feeble oldster was once the rightful proprietor of the very soil on which all stand the Judge recognizes Major Effingham, the father of his one-time friend and partner. Oliver is revealed as his grandson, Edward Oliver Effingham, whose father had been drowned at sea in the ship whose loss had led the Judge to call in Dirck Van der School. The villagers are sent home and explanations begun. Major Hartmann has vouched to Oliver for Judge Temple's honest dealings; he is now justified by the Judge's representations that he has never regarded the estates as his own and has sought constantly for an opportunity of restoring to the Effinghams the property which he has held as trustee. Back at the mansion-house the Judge's will is produced, completely sustaining his explanations, and Oliver is promised half the Temple properties as soon as the transfer can be arranged.

CHAPTER XLI. Early in September Elizabeth and Oliver are married, and a few days later Major Effingham dies. After a brief stay in jail, Natty and Ben Pump are pardoned by the governor. Hiram Doolittle has been appeased and has left Templeton for opportunities farther west. Richard Jones has grown humble by the discovery that his silver mining theory had been based upon Jotham Riddel's faith in a diviner, and by the revelation that all the mystery was demanded by the concealment of the major. Monsieur Le Quoi has returned to Paris. It is now a mild October morning, and Elizabeth and Oliver are

taking a walk. She informs him that her father has procured a call from one of the towns on the Hudson for Mr. Grant; there Louisa will find society which may well lead to a suitable marriage. They approach the object of their walk:]

. . . The place at which they arrived was the little spot of level ground, where the cabin of the Leather-stocking had so long stood. Elizabeth found it entirely cleared of rubbish, and beautifully laid down in turf, by the removal of sods, which, in common with the surrounding country, had grown gay, under the influence of profuse showers, as if a second spring had passed over the land. This little place was surrounded by a circle of mason-work, and they entered by a small gate, near which, to the surprise of both, the rifle of Natty was leaning against the wall. Hector and the slut reposed on the grass by its side, as if conscious that, however altered, they were lying on the ground, and were surrounded by objects with which they were familiar. The hunter himself was stretched on the earth, before a headstone of white marble, pushing aside with his fingers the long grass that had already sprung up from the luxuriant soil around its base, apparently to lay bare the inscription. By the side of this stone, which was a simple slab at the head of a grave, stood a rich monument, decorated with an urn, and ornamented with the chisel.

Oliver and Elizabeth approached the graves with a light tread, unheard by the old hunter, whose sunburnt face was working, and whose eyes twinkled as if something impeded their vision. After some little time, Natty raised himself slowly from the ground, and said aloud—

"Well, well—I'm bold to say it's all right! There's something that I suppose is reading; but I can't make anything of it; though the pipe, and the tomahawk, and the moccasins be pretty well—pretty well, for a man that, I dares to say, never seed 'ither of the things. Ah's me! there they lie, side by side, happy enough! Who will there be to put me in the 'arth when my time comes?"

"When that unfortunate hour arrives, Natty, friends shall not be wanting to perform the last offices for you," said Oliver, a little touched at the hunter's soliloquy.

The old man turned, without manifesting surprise, for he had got the Indian habits in this particular, and running his hand under the bottom of his nose, seemed to wipe away his sorrow with the action.

"You've come out to see the graves, children, have ye?" he said; "well, well, they're wholesome sights to young as well as old."

"I hope they are fitted to your liking," said Effingham; "no one has a better right than yourself to be consulted in the matter."

"Why, seeing that I ain't used to fine graves," returned the old man, "it is but little matter consarning my taste. Ye laid the Major's head to the west, and Mohegan's to the east, did ye, lad?"

"At your request it was done."

"It's so best," said the hunter; "they thought they had to journey different ways, children; though there is One greater than all, who'll bring the just together, at his own time, and who'll whiten the skin of a black-moor, and place him on a footing with princes."

"There is but little reason to doubt that," said Elizabeth, whose decided tones were changed to a soft, melancholy voice; "I trust we shall all meet again, and be happy together."

"Shall we, child, shall we?" exclaimed the hunter, with unusual fervor; "there's comfort in that thought too. But before I go, I should like to know what 'tis you tell these people, that be flocking into the country like pigeons in the spring, of the old Delaware, and of the bravest white man that ever trod the hills."

Effingham and Elizabeth were surprised at the manner of the Leather-stocking, which was unusually impressive and solemn; but, attributing it to the scene, the young man turned to the monument, and read aloud—

" 'Sacred to the memory of Oliver Effingham, Esquire, formerly a Major in his B. Majesty's 60th Foot; a soldier of tried valor; a subject of chivalrous loyalty; and a man of honesty. To these virtues, he added the graces of a Christian. The morning of his life was spent in honor, wealth, and power; but its evening was obscured by poverty, neglect, and disease, which were alleviated only by the tender care of his old, faithful, and upright friend and attendant, Nathaniel Bumppo. His descendants rear this stone to the virtues of the master, and to the enduring gratitude of the servant.' "

The Leather-stocking stared at the sound of his own name, and a smile of joy illumined his wrinkled features, as he said—

"And did ye say it, lad? have you then got the old man's name cut in the stone, by the side of his master's? God

bless ye, children! 'twas a kind thought, and kindness goes to the heart as life shortens."

Elizabeth turned her back to the speakers. Effingham made a fruitless effort before he succeeded in saying—

"It is there cut in plain marble; but it should have been written in letters of gold!"

"Show me the name, boy," said Natty, with simple eagerness; "let me see my own name placed in such honor. 'Tis a gin'rous gift to a man who leaves none of his name and family behind him, in a country where he has tarried so long."

Effingham guided his finger to the spot, and Natty followed the windings of the letters to the end with deep interest, when he raised himself from the tomb, and said—

"I suppose it's all right; and it's kindly thought, and kindly done! But what have ye put over the red-skin?"

"You shall hear—

" 'This stone is raised to the memory of an Indian Chief, of the Delaware tribe, who was known by the several names of John Mohegan; Mohican—' "

"Mo-hee can, lad, they call theirselves! 'he-can."

" 'Mohican; and Chingagook—' "

" 'Gach, boy;—'gach-gook; Chingachgook, which, intarpreted, means Big-sarpent. The name should be set down right, for an Indian's name has always some meaning in it."

"I will see it altered. 'He was the last of his people who continued to inhabit this country; and it may be said of him, that his faults were those of an Indian, and his virtues those of a man.' "

"You never said truer word, Mr. Oliver; ah's me! if you had know'd him as I did, in his prime, in that very battle where the old gentleman, who sleeps by his side, saved his life, when them thieves, the Iroquois, had him at the stake, you'd have said all that, and more too. I cut the thongs with this very hand, and gave him my own tomahawk and knife, seeing that the rifle was always my fav'rite weapon. He did lay about him like a man! I met him as I was coming home from the trail, with eleven Mingo scalps on his pole. You needn't shudder, Madam Effingham, for they was all from shaved heads and warriors. When I look about me, at these hills, where I used to could count sometimes twenty smokes, curling over the tree-tops, from the Delaware camps, it raises mournful thoughts, to think that not a red-skin is left of them all; unless it be a drunken vagabond from the Oneidas, or them Yankee Indians, who, they say, be moving up from the sea-shore; and who belong to none of God's creaters, to my seeming, being, as it were, neither fish nor flesh—neither white man nor savage. Well, well! the time has come at last, and I must go—"

"Go!" echoed Edwards, "whither do you go?"

The Leather-stocking, who had imbibed, unconsciously, many of the Indian qualities, though he always thought of himself as of a civilized being, compared with even the Delawares, averted his face to conceal the workings of his muscles, as he stooped to lift a large pack from behind the tomb, which he placed deliberately on his shoulders.

"Go!" exclaimed Elizabeth, approaching him with a hurried step; "you should not venture so far in the woods alone, at your time of life, Natty; indeed, it is imprudent. He is bent, Effingham, on some distant hunting."

"What Mrs. Effingham tells you is true, Leather-stocking," said Edwards; "there can be no necessity for your submitting to such hardships now! So throw aside your pack, and confine your hunt to the mountains near us, if you will go."

"Hardship! 'tis a pleasure, children, and the greatest that is left me on this side the grave."

"No, no; you shall not go to such a distance," cried Elizabeth, laying her white hand on his deer-skin pack— "I am right! I feel his camp-kettle, and a canister of powder! he must not be suffered to wander so far from us, Oliver; remember how suddenly Mohegan dropped away."

"I know'd the parting would come hard, children; I know'd it would!" said Natty, "and so I got aside to look at the graves by myself, and thought if I left ye the keepsake which the Major gave me when we first parted in the woods, ye wouldn't take it unkind, but would know, that, let the old man's body go where it might, his feelings stayed behind him."

"This means something more than common!" exclaimed the youth; "where is it, Natty, that you purpose going?"

The hunter drew nigh him with a confident, reasoning air, as if what he had to say would silence all objections, and replied—

"Why, lad, they tell me, that on the big lakes there's the best of hunting, and a great range, without a white man on it, unless it may be one like myself. I'm weary of living in clearings, and where the hammer is sounding in my ears from sunrise to sundown. And though I'm

much bound to ye both, children—I wouldn't say it if it was not true—I crave to go into the woods ag'in, I do."

"Woods!" echoed Elizabeth, trembling with her feelings; "do you not call these endless forests woods?"

"Ah! child, these be nothing to a man that's used to the wilderness. I have took but little comfort sin' your father come on with his settlers; but I wouldn't go far, while the life was in the body that lies under the sod there. But now he's gone, and Chingachgook is gone; and you be both young and happy. Yes! the big house has rung with merriment this month past! And now, I thought, was the time to try to get a little comfort in the close of my days. Woods! indeed! I doesn't call these woods, Madam Effingham, where I lose myself every day of my life in the clearings."

"If there be anything wanting to your comfort, name it, Leather-stocking; if it be attainable it is yours."

"You mean all for the best, lad; I know it; and so does Madam, too: but your ways isn't my ways. 'Tis like the dead there, who thought, when the breath was in them, that one went east, and one went west, to find their heavens; but they'll meet at last; and so shall we, children. Yes, ind as you've begun, and we shall meet in the land of the just at last."

"This is so new! so unexpected!" said Elizabeth, in almost breathless excitement; "I had thought you meant to live with us and die with us, Natty."

"Words are of no avail," exclaimed her husband; "the habits of forty years are not to be dispossessed by the ties of a day. I know you too well to urge you further, Natty; unless you will let me build you a hut on one of the distant hills, where we can sometimes see you, and know that you are comfortable."

"Don't fear for the Leather-stocking, children; God will see that his days be provided for, and his ind happy. I know you mean all for the best, but our ways doesn't agree. I love the woods, and ye relish the face of man; I eat when hungry, and drink when a-dry; and ye keep stated hours and rules: nay, nay, you even over-feed the dogs, lad, from pure kindness; and hounds should be gaunty to run well. The meanest of God's creaters be made for some use, and I'm formed for the wilderness; if ye love me, let me go where my soul craves to be ag'in!"

The appeal was decisive; and not another word of entreaty for him to remain was then uttered; but Elizabeth bent her head to her bosom and wept, while her husband dashed away the tears from his eyes; and, with hands that almost refused to perform their office, he produced his pocket-book, and extended a parcel of bank-notes to the hunter.

"Take these," he said, "at least take these; secure them about your person, and in the hour of need, they will do you good service."

The old man took the notes, and examined them with a curious eye.

"This, then, is some of the new-fashioned money that they've been making at Albany, out of paper! It can't be worth much to they that hasn't larning! No, no, lad— take back the stuff; it will do me no sarvice. I took kear to get all the Frenchman's powder afore he broke up, and they say lead grows where I'm going. It isn't even fit for wads, seeing that I use none but leather!—Madam Effingham, let an old man kiss your hand, and wish God's choicest blessings on you and your'n."

"Once more let me beseech you, stay!" cried Elizabeth. "Do not, Leather-stocking, leave me to grieve for the man who has twice rescued me from death, and who has served those I love so faithfully. For my sake, if not for your own, stay. I shall see you in those frightful dreams that still haunt my nights, dying in poverty and age, by the side of those terrific beasts you slew. There will be no evil, that sickness, want, and solitude can inflict, that my fancy will not conjure as your fate. Stay with us, old man, if not for your own sake, at least for ours."

"Such thoughts and bitter dreams, Madam Effingham," returned the hunter, solemnly, "will never haunt an innocent parson long. They'll pass away with God's pleasure. And if the cat-a-mounts be yet brought to your eyes in sleep, 'tis not for my sake, but to show you the power of Him that led me there to save you. Trust in God, Madam, and your honorable husband, and the thoughts for an old man like me can never be long nor bitter. I pray that the Lord will keep you in mind—the Lord that lives in clearings as well as in the wilderness—and bless you, and all that belong to you, from this time till the great day when the whites shall meet the red-skins in judgment, and justice shall be the law, and not power."

Elizabeth raised her head, and offered her colorless cheek to his salute, when he lifted his cap and touched it respectfully. His hand was grasped with convulsive

fervor by the youth, who continued silent. The hunter prepared himself for his journey, drawing his belt tighter, and wasting his moments in the little reluctant movements of a sorrowful departure. Once or twice he essayed to speak, but a rising in his throat prevented it. At length he shouldered his rifle, and cried with a clear huntsman's call that echoed through the woods—

"He-e-e-re, he-e-e-re, pups—away, dogs, away;—ye'll be footsore afore ye see the ind of the journey!"

The hounds leaped from the earth at this cry, and scenting around the graves and the silent pair, as if conscious of their own destination, they followed humbly at the heels of their master. A short pause succeeded, during which even the youth concealed his face on his grandfather's tomb. When the pride of manhood, however, had suppressed the feelings of nature, he turned to renew his entreaties, but saw that the cemetery was occupied only by himself and his wife.

"He is gone!" cried Effingham.

Elizabeth raised her face, and saw the old hunter standing, looking back for a moment, on the verge of the wood. As he caught their glances, he drew his hard hand hastily across his eyes again, waved it on high for an adieu, and uttering a forced cry to his dogs, who were crouching at his feet, he entered the forest.

This was the last that they ever saw of the Leatherstocking, whose rapid movements preceded the pursuit which Judge Temple both ordered and conducted. He had gone far toward the setting sun,—the foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent.

1822·1823

POE

Edgar Allan Poe

1809 • 1849

Probably more than any other American author, Edgar Allan Poe—as a personality—has appealed to popular imagination. Generally, people think of him as a figure who might have emerged from one of his stories or poems—mysterious, wild, abnormal. There are, to be sure, elements of strangeness in the life of this neurotic genius. But it is dangerous to guess that his tales were merely autobiographical exploitations of his weird way of living. For one thing, it is easy to see that he deliberately tried to make people look upon him as a Byronic, enigmatic poet. For another, his highly logical criticisms and the tales themselves show that he used his extraordinary mind to work out his literary effects with almost mathematical exactitude.

Poe's tragic life was a product of bad luck and instability. The son of a wandering theatrical family, he was orphaned at two and became the ward of the John Allan family of Richmond, Virginia. Never legally adopted, he could not live quite the normal life of a son in a well-to-do family. Although in his early years both Mr. and Mrs. Allan did what they could to spoil him, friction grew between him and his foster father until he was withdrawn from the University of Virginia after less than a year of attendance. There followed a period of service in the army (1827-1829), an unhappy brief career at West Point (1830-1831), and a final break with Allan (1832).

Before the break Poe had published three books of



poetry—*Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems* (1829), and *Poems* (Second Edition, 1831)—none very successful financially. Now driven to try to make a living with his pen, he began writing tales. A sign that he had some success was that one of them, "The MS. Found in a Bottle," won a one-hundred-dollar prize in 1833. Befriended by one of the contest judges, John Pendleton Kennedy (p. 589), he began a career as editor, serving on the staff of the *Southern Literary Messenger* (1835-1837), *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* (1839), *Graham's Magazine* (1841-1842), and other periodicals. Other tales won repute for him, and he was an alert and canny editor; but his fiery temper and his instability worked against his success.

Although Poe was not at all times the brooding, gloomy person tradition has painted, his life was on the whole an unhappy one. In 1831 he found a home with Mrs. Maria Clemm, mother of Poe's cousin, Virginia—a home in which poverty and sickness had made life hard. In 1835 he married thirteen-year-old Virginia, a fragile child who suffered from a devastating illness destined to end her life when she was twenty-six. To forget home troubles or what seemed bad treatment by the world, Poe periodically went on drinking sprees which completely disorganized his high-strung nerves. Between such outbreaks there were periods of sorrowful remorse. Proud because of his aristocratic upbringing and because of the high opinion he had of his abilities, he was bitter about not doing better in the world. Even in 1845, after he had won wide popularity, a collection of his verse, *The Raven and Other Poems,* and a volume of his stories, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque,* did not have much financial success He died, in mysterious circumstances, in Baltimore, October 7, 1849.

When Poe was about to start his career as a writer of tales, he evidently studied successful magazine stories with great care to find a formula for marketable fiction. He saw that, because of a complicated international copyright situation, the most remunerative market was the one for short narratives. He also found that in all the magazines—even the delicate *Godey's Lady's Book*—the tale of terror was thriving. Using the keen mind which eventually was to make him the outstanding journalistic critic of his day, he figured out a highly successful way of contriving such tales. This formula was that of the single effect, set forth in his "Review of *Twice-Told Tales.*" The writer of a tale, Poe held, should subordinate everything in it to the effect he wanted the narrative to have upon the reader. This formula he employed so well that the tales he wrote have outlasted all the less skillful narratives which originally had been his models. Two elements in the tales chiefly accounted for their success: the climactic arrangement of happenings in them and a poetic style appropriate to their unfolding.

Panel (l. to r.): The University of Virginia • Edgar Allan Poe at 32 • "On the pallid bust of Pallas . . ." • Poe's cottage at Fordham • Helen Whitman and Poe

This poetic style and a similar "single effect" formula were also important in molding Poe's poems. Using words carefully chosen for their connotations and making the most of his mastery of rhythm and tone color, he wrote a number of memorable lyrics. Some of these are too showy in technique, too deliberately blurred in meaning to satisfy modern taste; but others, such as "Romance," "To Helen," "Israfel," and "To One in Paradise," still stand as masterpieces of their kind.

Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe, 17 vols., ed. J. A. Harrison, New York, 1902 • The Poems of Edgar Allan Poe, ed. Killis Campbell, Boston, 1917 • Killis Campbell, The Mind of Poe, Cambridge, 1933 • A. H. Quinn, Edgar Allan Poe, New York, 1941

Review of "Twice-Told Tales"

Since Poe's critical writing is of peculiar value in explaining the nature of his works, and is particularly useful for the study of his technical skill, a critical essay is presented before the selections from the creative writings themselves. The tales and then the poems follow, each group chronologically arranged.

The criticism of Hawthorne's book typifies Poe's overwhelming interest in "effect"—the impact which a work has upon the reader—an interest which leads him not only to rank Hawthorne as an essayist in exactly the way he does but also to give essays, poems, and tales their respective ranks in a literary hierarchy. Even the talk about originality is talk about effect, since Poe thought of originality—as he said elsewhere—as "the reader's sense of the new." And clearly, poems are given their preëminent place because they have the greatest effect upon the highest faculty of the reader.

The most famous passage in this essay is the paragraph beginning with the words, "A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale"—a passage almost inevitably quoted in any book on the short story. Here, very specifically, Poe asserts that everything in a tale—every incident, every combination of events, every word—must aid the author in achieving a preconceived emotional effect. In a revision of the passage five years later, Poe was to make the second sentence even more specific by revising it to read in part: "He then invents such incidents, he then combines such events, and discusses them in such tone as may best serve him in establishing this preconceived effect." (The darker type indicates the addition.) What Poe means by "tone" perhaps was indicated in an earlier article in which he noted that Hawthorne's "tone is singularly effective—wild, plaintive, thoughtful, and in full accordance with his themes."

This review was published in Graham's Magazine, May 1842. Parts of it were revised and included in an article, "Tale-Writing," in Godey's Lady's Book, November 1847, which shows some interesting modifications of Poe's judgments of Hawthorne.

We said a few hurried words about Mr. Hawthorne in our last number, with the design of speaking more fully in the present. We are still, however, pressed for room, and must necessarily discuss his volumes more briefly and more at random than their high merits deserve.

The book professes to be a collection of *tales*, yet is, in two respects, misnamed. These pieces are now in their third republication, and, of course, are thrice-told. Moreover, they are by no means *all* tales, either in the ordinary or in the legitimate understanding of the term. 10 Many of them are pure essays; for example, "Sights from a Steeple," "Sunday at Home," "Little Annie's Ramble," "A Rill from the Town Pump," "The Toll-Gatherer's

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1 a few . . . words, in a notice published in the April issue of Graham's Magazine, now available in Works, ed. Harrison (hereafter referred to as Works), XI, 102-104. The earlier review makes several of the same points made by the later one. It is notable, however, that in the first review Poe says that, despite its fame, "A Rill from the Town Pump" is "the least meritorious" of Hawthorne's compositions and that the best include, in addition to those cited in this second review, "David Swan"

Day," "The Haunted Mind," "The Sister Years," "Snow-Flakes," "Night Sketches," and "Foot-Prints on the Sea-Shore." We mention these matters chiefly on account of their discrepancy with that marked precision and finish by which the body of the work is distinguished.

Of the essays just named, we must be content to speak in brief. They are each and all beautiful, without being characterised by the polish and adaptation so visible in the tales proper. A painter would at once note their leading or predominant feature, and style it *repose.* There is no attempt at effect. All is quiet, thoughtful, subdued. Yet this repose may exist simultaneously with high originality of thought; and Mr. Hawthorne has demonstrated the fact. At every turn we meet with novel combinations; yet these combinations never surpass the limits of the quiet. We are soothed as we read; and withal is a calm astonishment that ideas so apparently obvious have never occurred or been presented to us before. Herein our author differs materially from Lamb or Hunt or Hazlitt—who, with vivid originality of manner and expression, have less of the true novelty of thought than is generally supposed, and whose originality, at best, has an uneasy and meretricious quaintness, replete with startling effects unfounded in nature, and inducing trains of reflection which lead to no satisfactory result. The Essays of Hawthorne have much of the character of Irving, with more of originality, and less of finish; while, compared with the Spectator, they have a vast superiority at all points. The Spectator, Mr. Irving, and Mr. Hawthorne have in common that tranquil and subdued manner which we have chosen to denominate *repose;* but, in the case of the two former, this repose is attained rather by the absence of novel combination, or of originality, than otherwise, and consists chiefly in the calm, quiet, unostentatious expression of common-place thoughts, in an unambitious, unadulterated Saxon. In them, by strong effort, we are made to conceive the absence of all. In the essays before us the absence of effort is too obvious to be mistaken, and a strong under current of *suggestion* runs continuously beneath the upper stream of the tranquil thesis. In short, these effusions of Mr. Hawthorne are the product of a truly imaginative intellect, restrained, and in some measure repressed, by fastidiousness of taste, by constitutional melancholy and by indolence.

But it is of his tales that we desire principally to speak. The tale proper, in our opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem *too* brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water upon the rock. De Beranger has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like all immassive bodies, they lack *momentum,* and thus fail to satisfy the Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis.*

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfil the demands of high genius —should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale,

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76 De Beranger, Pierre Jean de Béranger (1780-1857), a French poet

• 83 In medio . . . ibis. You will go most safely in the middle path

as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading, would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one preestablished design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptional here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

We have said that the tale has a point of superiority even over the poem. In fact, while the *rhythm* of this latter is an essential aid in the development of the poet's highest idea—the idea of the Beautiful—the artificialities of this rhythm are an inseparable bar to the development of all points of thought or expression which have their basis in *Truth*. But Truth is often, and in very great degree, the aim of the tale. Some of the finest tales are tales of ratiocination. Thus the field of this species of composition, if not in so elevated a region on the mountain of Mind, is a table-land of far vaster extent than the domain of the mere poem. Its products are never so rich, but infinitely more numerous, and more appreciable by the mass of mankind. The writer of the prose tale, in short, may bring to his theme a vast variety of modes or inflections of thought and expression—(the ratiocinative, for example, the sarcastic, or the humorous) which are not only antagonistical to the nature of the poem, but absolutely forbidden by one of its most peculiar and indispensable adjuncts; we allude, of course, to rhythm. It may be added here, *par parenthèse,* that the author who aims at the purely beautiful in a prose tale is laboring at great disadvantage. For Beauty can be better treated in a poem. Not so with terror, or passion, or horror, or a multitude of such other points. And here it will be seen how full of prejudice are the usual animadversions against those *tales of effect,* many fine examples of which were found in the earlier numbers of Blackwood. The impressions produced were wrought in a legitimate sphere of action, and constituted a legitimate although sometimes an exaggerated interest. They were relished by every man of genius; although there were found many men of genius who condemned them without just ground. The true critic will but demand that the design intended be accomplished, to the fullest extent, by the means most advantageously applicable.

We have very few American tales of real merit—we may say, indeed, none, with the exception of "The Tales of a Traveller" of Washington Irving, and these "Twice-Told Tales" of Mr. Hawthorne. Some of the pieces of Mr. John Neal abound in vigor and originality; but in general, his compositions of this class are excessively diffuse, extravagant, and indicative of an imperfect sentiment of Art. Articles at random are, now and then, met with in our periodicals which might be advantageously compared with the best effusions of the British Magazines; but, upon the whole, we are far behind our progenitors in this department of literature.

Of Mr. Hawthorne's Tales we would say, emphatically, that they belong to the highest region of Art—an Art

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56 **par parenthèse**, by way of parenthesis • 64 **Blackwood**, a magazine in which Poe found a great deal of Gothic fiction. A tale which he wrote "à la Blackwood" parodied the Gothic technique • 76 **Mr. John Neal** (1793-1876), an American fiction writer

subservient to genius of a very lofty order. We had supposed, with good reason for so supposing, that he had been thrust into his present position by one of the impudent *cliques* which beset our literature, and whose pretensions it is our full purpose to expose at the earliest opportunity; but we have been most agreeably mistaken. We know of few compositions which the critic can more honestly commend than these "Twice-Told Tales." As Americans, we feel proud of the book.

Mr. Hawthorne's distinctive trait is invention, creation, imagination, originality—a trait which, in the literature of fiction, is positively worth all the rest. But the nature of originality, so far as regards its manifestation in letters, is but imperfectly understood. The invective or original mind as frequently displays itself in novelty of *tone* as in novelty of matter. Mr. Hawthorne is original at *all* points.

It would be a matter of some difficulty to designate the best of these tales; we repeat that, without exception, they are beautiful. "Wakefield" is remarkable for the skill with which an old idea—a well-known incident—is worked up or discussed. A man of whims conceives the purpose of quitting his wife and residing *incognito,* for twenty years, in her immediate neighborhood. Something of this kind actually happened in London. The force of Mr. Hawthorne's tale lies in the analysis of the motives which must or might have impelled the husband to such folly, in the first instance, with the possible causes of his perseverance. Upon this thesis a sketch of singular power has been constructed.

"The Wedding Knell" is full of the boldest imagination—an imagination fully controlled by taste. The most captious critic could find no flaw in this production.

"The Minister's Black Veil" is a masterly composition of which the sole defect is that to the rabble its exquisite skill will be *caviare.* The *obvious* meaning of this article will be found to smother its insinuated one. The *moral* put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the *true* import of the narrative; and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the "young lady"), has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive.

"Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" is vividly original and managed most dexterously.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is exceedingly well imagined, and executed with surpassing ability. The artist breathes in every line of it.

"The White Old Maid" is objectionable, even more than the "Minister's Black Veil," on the score of its mysticism. Even with the thoughtful and analytic, there will be much trouble in penetrating its entire import.

"The Hollow of the Three Hills" we would quote in full, had we space;—not as evincing higher talent than any of the other pieces, but as affording an excellent example of the author's peculiar ability. The subject is commonplace. A witch subjects the Distant and the Past to the view of a mourner. It has been the fashion to describe, in such cases, a mirror in which the images of the absent appear; or a cloud of smoke is made to arise, and thence the figures are gradually unfolded. Mr. Hawthorne has wonderfully heightened his effect by making the ear, in place of the eye, the medium by which the fantasy is conveyed. The head of the mourner is enveloped in the cloak of the witch, and within its magic folds there arise sounds which have an all-sufficient intelligence. Throughout this article also, the artist is conspicuous—not more in positive than in negative merits. Not only is all done that should be done, but (what perhaps is an end with more difficulty attained) there is nothing done which should not be. Every word *tells,* and there is not a word that does *not* tell. . . .

In the way of objection we have scarcely a word to say of these tales. There is, perhaps, a somewhat too general or prevalent *tone*—a tone of melancholy and mysticism. The subjects are insufficiently varied. There is not so much of *versatility* evinced as we might well be warranted in expecting from the high powers of Mr. Hawthorne. But beyond these trivial exceptions we have really none to make. The style is purity itself. Force abounds. High imagination gleams from every page. Mr. Hawthorne is a man of the truest genius. We only regret that the limits of our Magazine will not permit us to pay him that full tribute of commendation, which, under other circumstances, we should be so eager to pay.

1842

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70 Every word . . . tell . . . . The omitted passage hints that Hawthorne plagiarized from Poe in "Howe's Masquerade." The accusation is unfounded

The Fall of the House of Usher

In "The Philosophy of Composition," an essay on poetry, Poe implied something about his methods in this most famous of his tales. "It is an obvious rule of art," he said, "that effects should be made to spring from direct causes —that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment. . . ." In modern psychological terms, it might therefore be said that he regarded the work of art as a stimulus setting up a response in the reader. He also suggests that the reader reacts in certain ways in sympathy with a character in a story as the character's reaction changes or develops

These details about Poe's method of constructing a story, applied to "The Fall of the House of Usher," indicate the story's two interrelated strands of narrative—the one dealing with the emotions of the "affected" character and the one dealing with the incidents which have the effects. Studying the character (here undoubtedly the narrator), the reader will find that though, at the beginning of the tale, the "I" of the story is disturbed by "a sense of insufferable gloom," he can stand aside, as it were, and detachedly attempt to discover why he feels as he does. But as the happenings unfold, his uneasiness changes to fear, his fear grows, and his detachment decreases, until at the end he "flees aghast" and his "brain reels" as the "walls of the house rush asunder."

As one examines the tale, one may see in the strange appearance of the house, the actions of its mad inmate, Usher, the strange burial and return to life of Madeline, and the dissolution of the house, appropriate causes for such a developing emotion. But a more subtle and unified thread of narrative does even more to suggest the reason for increasing terror. This is made up of a series of increasingly weird identifications: identification, for instance, between the house and its inmates, between Usher and his sister, between works of art and actual happenings, and finally between the madness of Usher and the (at least momentary) madness of the narrator. These, more than the explicitly detailed incidents, account for the crescendo of horror which ends the tale.

Son coeur est un luth suspendu;
Sitot qu'on le touche il resonne.—BÉRANGER

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher I know not how it was, but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eyelike windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the afterdream of the reveler upon opium: the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought, which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression, and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling

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Son coeur . . . . His heart is a suspended lute which resounds as soon as it is touched. The quotation is from the poem, "Le Refus," by Pierre Jean de Béranger

than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eyelike windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with a very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had at length so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher"—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn; a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled webwork from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old woodwork which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me in silence through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the

studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceiling, the somber tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy,—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this, I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely-molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than weblike softness and tenuity,—these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous luster of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation, that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered at some length into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the gen-

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44 **the character . . . face.** As critics have noted, the description of Usher is remarkably like one appropriate for Poe. The "inordinate expansion," according to phrenologists of the day, indicated "ideality"

eral manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even faint light, and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect,—in terror. In this unnerved, in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence for many years he had never ventured forth, in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated,—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit, an effect which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had at length brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin,—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him, the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing-in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain,—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in my attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphureous luster over all. His long, improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into

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88 **the last . . . Von Weber**, No. 5 of Danses brillantes by Karl Gottlieb Reissiger (1798-1859), based on Von Weber's last waltz

vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why,—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and over-awed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light, was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his *impromptus* could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rimed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

I

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.

II

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 winged odor went away.

III

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

IV

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.

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14 **Fuseli,** Heinrich Fuseli, a Swiss painter who was taught in the Royal Academy at London • 17 **A small picture.** Compare the vault in which the body of Madeline is placed later in the story • 48 **"The Haunted Palace."** Poe said this poem was intended "to imply a mind haunted by phantoms." It should be compared with the description of Usher in the eighth paragraph of the story • 71 **Porphyrogene,** a name meaning "born to the purple"

V

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.

VI

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.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention, not so much on account of its novelty (for other men have thought thus) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones,—in order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around; above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentience—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him,—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which for years had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the Ververt and Chartreuse of Gresset; the Belphegor of Machiavelli; the Heaven and Hell of Swedenborg; the Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg; the Chiromancy of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indagine, and of De la Chambre; the Journey into the Blue Distance of Tieck; and the City of the Sun of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum*, by the Dominician Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Aegipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic,—the manual of a forgotten church,—the *Vigilioe Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesioe Maguntinoe.*

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochon-

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20 **other men.** "Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Llandaff"—Poe. See **Chemical Essays**, Vol. V • 50 **Ververt and Chartreuse,** anticlerical and licentious poems by Jean Baptiste Gresset (1709-1777) • 51 **Belphegor,** a novel by Machiavelli (1469-1527) which tells how the archdemon Balfagor visited the earth and then returned to hell • 52 **Swedenborg,** Emmanuel Swedenborg, Swedish mystic (1688-1772) • 53 **Holberg,** Ludwig Holberg (1684-1754), who published the book mentioned, in Latin, in 1741 The title brings in another mention of a journey into supernatural realms • 53 **Chiromancy,** palmistry • 53 **Robert Flud** (1547-1637), English physician and writer on pseudo-science • 54 **Jean D'Indagine,** author of **Chiromantia** (1522), a work on palmistry • 54 **De la Chambre,** Maria Cireau de la Chambre (1594-1669), French writer on palmistry • 55 **Tieck,** Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), German writer Tieck is not known to have written any such book. Perhaps Poe invented the title so as to repeat the motif of the journey from one world to another, thus foreshadowing Madeline's revival after death • 56 **Campanella,** Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), an Italian philosopher. His **Civitas Solis,** actually a Utopian treatise, serves here, by title, to connote the world beyond • 57 **Directorium Inquisitorúm** (1503) was by Nicholas Eymeric de Girone, inquisitor-general for Castile in 1536 The book gives in detail an account of the tortures of the Inquisition, and the title not only augments the suggestion of the exoticism of Usher's reading but also foreshadows the torture Madeline is to undergo • 59 **Pomponius Mela** (first century A.D.), author of a geography often concerned with strange beasts. Here a journey into distant lands, instead of a journey into the other world, is suggested • 60 **Aegipans,** goat-god Pan • 63 **Vigilioe Mortuorum . . .,** "The Watches of the Dead According to the Choir of the Church of Mayence." As the author points out, this title is definitely related to what happens in the next paragraph

driac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangement for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been also similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead, for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue, but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quavor, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much if not all of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room,—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro

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17 **precaution.** The medical man, briefly glimpsed at the start of the story, at this point serves his sole purpose in the narrative. Usher's fear of "body-snatching" causes the temporary entombment of Madeline within the House of Usher. The earlier characterization of the doctor is meager but sufficient: his "mingled expression of perplexity and cunning" motivates Usher's apprehension

upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition to which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes,—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence,—"you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirl wind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity, for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the lifelike velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the "Mad Trist" of Sir Launcelot Canning, but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand, and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild, overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his

gauntleted hand; and now, pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me) —it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been in its exact similarity of character the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:—

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold with a floor of silver, and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten:—

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement, for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound,—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast; yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide rigid opening of the eyes as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea, for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

"And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long —long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it, yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We*

have put her living in the tomb! Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I have heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—tonight—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the deathcry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the copper archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—*"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"*

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher! There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber and from that mansion I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long, tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the *"House of Usher."*

1839

Ligeia

Poe believed that this was his best story, and at least some readers who are at times distressed by Poe's lack of subtlety may share his preference. One problem he faced (one he had previously tried to cope with in a similar story, "Morella") was that of unifying a narrative which tended to break into two disunited parts—one telling of the life and death of his chief character; and another telling of her return, several years later, to the world of the living.

He did this by (1) creating, in the first part, the character Ligeia, whose characteristics were of exactly the sort to give fictional probability to her strange conquest of death in the second part; (2) emphasizing throughout the theme of metempsychosis—the belief in transmigration of souls; (3) "discussing"—as he might have put it—his incidents "in such tone as best served him in establishing the preconceived effect." In making subtle use of this last device, Poe caused a series of highly suggestive words and images, associated with Ligeia in the first portion of the narrative, to prepare for and slowly build up to her weird return in the second.

This story was published in the American Museum, September 1838, and was included in Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque (1840). Since some of the revisions in the last half of the tale interestingly suggest how

Poe improved his narrative, a few are pointed out in the footnotes.

And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.—JOSEPH GLANVILL

I cannot, for my soul, remember how, when, or even precisely where, I first became acquainted with the lady Ligeia. Long years have since elapsed, and my memory is feeble through much suffering. Or, perhaps, I cannot *now* bring these points to mind, because, in truth, the character of my beloved, her rare learning, her singular yet placid cast of beauty, and the thrilling and enthralling eloquence of her low musical language, made their way into my heart by paces so steadily and stealthily progressive that they have been unnoticed and unknown. Yet I believe that I met her first and most frequently in some large, old decaying city near the Rhine. Of her family—I have surely heard her speak. That it is of a remotely ancient date cannot be doubted. Ligeia! Ligeia! Buried in studies of a nature more than all else adapted to deaden impressions of the outward world, it is by that sweet word alone—by Ligeia—that I bring before mine eyes in fancy the image of her who is no more. And now, while I write, a recollection flashes upon me that I have *never known* the paternal name of her who was my friend and my betrothed, and who became the partner of my studies, and finally the wife of my bosom. Was it a playful charge on the part of my Ligeia? or was it a test of my strength of affection, that I should institute no inquiries upon this point? or was it rather a caprice of my own—a wildly romantic offering on the shrine of the most passionate devotion? I but indistinctly recall the fact myself—what wonder that I have utterly forgotten the circumstances which originated or attended it? And, indeed, if ever that spirit which is entitled *Romance*—if ever she, the wan and the misty-winged *Ashtophet* of idolatrous Egypt, presided, as they tell, over marriages ill-omened, then most surely she presided over mine.

There is one dear topic, however, on which my memory fails me not. It is the *person* of Ligeia. In stature she was tall, somewhat slender, and, in her latter days, even emaciated. I would in vain attempt to portray the majesty, the quiet ease, of her demeanor, or the incomprehensible lightness and elasticity of her footfall. She came and departed as a shadow. I was never made aware of her entrance into my closed study save by the dear music of her low sweet voice, as she placed her marble hand upon my shoulder. In beauty of her face no maiden ever equalled her. It was the radiance of an opium dream—an airy and spirit-lifting vision more wildly divine than the phantasies which hovered about the slumbering souls of the daughters of Delos. Yet her features were not of that regular mould which we have been falsely taught to worship in the classical labors of the heathen. "There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, Lord Verulam, speaking truly of all the forms and *genera* of beauty, "without some *strangeness* in the proportion." Yet, although I saw that the features of Ligeia were not of a classic regularity—although I perceived that her loveliness was indeed "exquisite," and felt that there was much of "strangeness" pervading it, yet I have tried in vain to detect the irregularity and to trace home my own perception of "the strange." I examined the contour of the lofty and pale forehead—it was faultless—how cold indeed that word when applied to a majesty so divine!—the skin rivalling the purest ivory, the commanding extent and repose, the gentle prominence of the regions above the temples; and then the raven-black, the glossy, the luxuriant and naturally-curling tresses, setting forth the full force of the Homeric epithet, "hyacinthe"! I looked at the delicate outlines of the nose—and nowhere but in the graceful medallions of the Hebrews had I beheld a similar perfection. There were the same luxurious smoothness of sur-

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Text: the revised version printed in the Broadway Journal, September 27, 1845 • Joseph Glanvill, English philosopher (1636-1680), associated with the Cambridge Platonists. The quotation has not been located • 31 Ashtophet, probably Ashtoreth, a Canaanitish deity who, after adoption in Egypt, had the significance Poe suggests • 47 daughters of Delos, an obscure reference, perhaps to Greek maidens who made offerings in the temple on the island of Delos • 50 Bacon, a slight misquotation, since Bacon's word is not "exquisite" but "excellent" • 62 gentle . . . temples, in Poe's day, according to phrenological lore, signified "love of life" • 67 medallions . . . Hebrews, the Roman bas-reliefs of the Jews

face, the same scarcely perceptible tendency to the aquiline, the same harmoniously curved nostrils speaking the free spirit. I regarded the sweet mouth. Here was indeed the triumph of all things heavenly—the magnificent turn of the short upper lip—the soft, voluptuous slumber of the under—the dimples which sported, and the color which spoke—the teeth glancing back, with a brilliancy almost startling, every ray of the holy light which fell upon them in her serene and placid, yet most exultingly radiant of all smiles. I scrutinized the formation of the chin—and here, too, I found the gentleness of breadth, the softness and the majesty, the fullness and the spirituality, of the Greek—the contour which the God Apollo revealed but in a dream, to Cleomenes, the son of the Athenian. And then I peered into the large eyes of Ligeia.

For eyes we have no models in the remotely antique. It might have been, too, that in these eyes of my beloved lay the secret to which Lord Verulam alludes. They were, I must believe, far larger than the ordinary eyes of our own race. They were even fuller than the fullest of the gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nourjahad. Yet it was only at intervals—in moments of intense excitement—that this peculiarity became more than slightly noticeable in Ligeia. And at such moments was her beauty—in my heated fancy thus it appeared perhaps—the beauty of being either above or apart from the earth—the beauty of the Fabulous Houri of the Turk. The hue of the orbs was the most brilliant of black, and, far over them, hung jetty lashes of great length. The brows, slightly irregular in outline, had the same tint. The "strangeness," however, which I found in the eyes, was of a nature distinct from the formation, or the color, or the brilliancy of the features, and must, after all, be referred to the *expression.* Ah, word of no meaning! behind whose vast latitude of mere sound we intrench our ignorance of so much of the spiritual. The expression of the eyes of Ligeia! How for long hours have I pondered upon it! How have I, through the whole of a midsummer night, struggled to fathom it! What was it—that something more profound than the well of Democritus—which lay far within the pupils of my beloved? What *was* it? I was possessed with a passion to discover. Those eyes! those large, those shining, those divine orbs! they became to me twin stars of Leda, and I to them devoutest of astrologers.

There is no point, among the many incomprehensible anomalies of the science of mind, more thrillingly exciting than the fact—never, I believe, noticed in the schools—that, in our endeavors to recall to memory something long forgotten, we often find ourselves *upon the very verge* of remembrance, without being able, in the end, to remember. And thus how frequently, in my intense scrutiny of Ligeia's eyes, have I felt approaching the full knowledge of their expression—felt it approaching—yet not quite be mine—and so at length entirely depart! And (strange, oh strangest mystery of all!) I found, in the commonest objects of the universe, a circle of analogies to that expression. I mean to say that, subsequently to the period when Ligeia's beauty passed into my spirit, there dwelling as in a shrine, I derived, from many existences in the material world, a sentiment such as I felt always aroused within me by her large and luminous orbs. Yet not the more could I define that sentiment, or analyze, or even steadily view it. I recognized it, let me repeat, sometimes in the survey of a rapidly-growing vine—in the contemplation of a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water. I have felt it in the ocean; in the falling of a meteor. I have felt it in the glances of unusually aged people. And there are one or two stars in heaven—(one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra) in a telescopic scrutiny of which I have been made aware of the feeling. I have been filled with it by certain sounds from stringed instruments, and not unfrequently by passages from books. Among innumerable other instances, I well remember something in a volume of Joseph Glanvill, which (perhaps merely from its quaintness—who shall say?) never failed to inspire me with the sentiment;—"And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

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14 **Cleomenes,** an Athenian sculptor whose most famous work is the Venus de' Medici. There is no legend of a revelation by Apollo to Cleomenes • 21 **Nourjahad** refers to an Oriental novel, **The History of Nourjahad** (1767) by Mrs. Frances Sheridan • 27 **Fabulous Houri,** the beautiful women who inhabit the Mohammedan heaven • 40 **Democritus,** a Greek philosopher who said that truth lies in a deep well • 72 **Lyra,** a constellation containing a binary star known as Epsilon Lyra

Length of years, and subsequent reflection, have enabled me to trace, indeed, some remote connection between this passage in the English moralist and a portion of the character of Ligeia. An *intensity* in thought, action, or speech, was possibly, in her, a result, or at least an index of that gigantic volition which, during our long intercourse, failed to give other and more immediate evidence of its existence. Of all the women whom I have ever known, she, the outwardly calm, the ever-placid Ligeia, was the most violently a prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion. And of such passion I could form no estimate, save by the miraculous expansion of those eyes which at once so delighted and appalled me—by the almost magical melody, modulation, distinctness, and placidity of her very low voice—and by the fierce energy (rendered doubly effective by contrast with her manner of utterance) of the wild words which she habitually uttered.

I have spoken of the learning of Ligeia: it was immense—such as I have never known in woman. In the classical tongues was she deeply proficient, and as far as my own acquaintance extended in regard to the modern dialects of Europe, I have never known her at fault. Indeed upon any theme of the most admired, because simply the most abstruse of the boasted erudition of the academy, have I *ever* found Ligeia at fault? How singularly—how thrillingly, this one point in the nature of my wife forced itself, at this late period only, upon my attention! I said her knowledge was such as I have never known in woman—but where breathes the man who has traversed, and successfully, *all* the wide areas of moral, physical, and mathematical science? I saw not then what I now clearly perceive, that the acquisitions of Ligeia were gigantic, were astounding; yet I was sufficiently aware of her infinite supremacy to resign myself, with a child-like confidence, to her guidance through the chaotic world of metaphysical investigation at which I was most busily occupied during the earlier years of our marriage. With how vast a triumph—with how vivid a delight—with how much of all that is ethereal in hope—did I *feel*, as she bent over me in studies but little sought—but less known—that delicious vista by slow degrees expanding before me, down whose long, gorgeous, and all untrodden path, I might at length pass onward to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden!

How poignant, then, must have been the grief with which, after some years, I beheld my well-grounded expectations take wings to themselves and fly away! Without Ligeia I was but as a child groping benighted. Her presence, her readings alone, rendered vividly luminous the many mysteries of the transcendentalism in which we were immersed. Wanting the radiant lustre of her eyes, letters, lambent and golden, grew duller than Saturnian lead. And now those eyes shone less and less frequently upon the pages over which I pored. Ligeia grew ill. The wild eyes blazed with a too-too glorious effulgence; the pale fingers became of the transparent waxen hue of the grave, and the blue veins upon the lofty forehead swelled and sank impetuously with the tides of the most gentle emotion. I saw that she must die—and I struggled desperately in spirit with the grim Azrael. And the struggles of the passionate wife were, to my astonishment, even more energetic than my own. There had been much in her stern nature to impress me with the belief that, to her, death would have come without its terrors;—but not so. Words are impotent to convey any just idea of the fierceness of resistance with which she wrestled with the Shadow. I groaned in anguish at the pitiable spectacle. I would have soothed—I would have reasoned; but, in the intensity of her wild desire for life,—for life—*but* for life—solace and reason were alike the utmost of folly. Yet not until the last instance, amid the most convulsive writhings of her fierce spirit, was shaken the external placidity of her demeanor. Her voice grew more gentle—grew more low—yet I would not wish to dwell upon the wild meaning of the quietly uttered words. My brain reeled as I hearkened entranced, to a melody more than mortal—to assumptions and aspirations which mortality had never before known.

That she loved me I should not have doubted; and I might have been easily aware that, in a bosom such as hers, love would have reigned no ordinary passion. But in death only, was I fully impressed with the strength of her affection. For long hours, detaining my hand, would she pour out before me the overflowing of a heart whose more than passionate devotion amounted to idolatry. How had I deserved to be so blessed by such confessions?

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51 transcendentalism refers less to the specific beliefs of the Concord school than to the vague, the strange, in philosophy • 53 Saturnian, pertaining to Saturn, Roman god renowned in fable as a king during a golden age • 61 Azrael, the angel of death, who separates the soul from the body

—how had I deserved to be so cursed with the removal of my beloved in the hour of her making them? But upon this subject I cannot bear to dilate. Let me say only, that in Ligeia's more than womanly abandonment to a love, alas! all unmerited, all unworthily bestowed, I at length recognized the principle of her longing with so wildly earnest a desire for the life which was now fleeing so rapidly away. It is this wild longing—it is this eager vehemence of desire for life—*but* for life—that I have no power to portray—no utterance capable of expressing.

At high noon of the night in which she departed, beckoning me, peremptorily, to her side, she bade me repeat certain verses composed by herself not many days before. I obeyed her.—They were these:

Lo! 'tis a gala night
  Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
  In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
  A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
  The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
  Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
  Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
  That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
  Invisible Woe!

That motley drama!—oh, be sure
  It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased forevermore,
  By a crowd that seized it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
  To the self-same spot,
And much of madness and more of Sin
  And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout,
  A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
  The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
  The mimes become its food,
And the seraphs sob at vermin fangs
  In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
  And over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
  Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
  Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
  And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

"O God!" half shrieked Ligeia, leaping to her feet and extending her arms aloft with a spasmodic movement, as I made an end of these lines—"O God! O Divine Father!—shall these things be undeviatingly so?—shall this Conqueror be not once conquered? Are we not part and parcel of Thee? Who—who knoweth the mysteries of the will with its vigor? Man doth not yield him to the angels, *nor unto death utterly* save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

And now, as if exhausted with emotion, she suffered her white arms to fall, and returned solemnly to her bed of death. And as she breathed her last sighs, there came mingled with them a low murmur from her lips. I bent to them my ear and distinguished, again, the concluding words of the passage in Glanvill—*"Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."*

She died;—and I, crushed into the very dust with sorrow, could no longer endure the lonely desolation of my dwelling in the dim and decaying city by the Rhine. I

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11 **At high noon** marks the beginning of a passage, including the poem and the two paragraphs following the poem, which replaced the paragraph telling of Ligeia's death in the first version of the story. This version read: "Methinks I again behold the terrific struggles of her lofty, her nearly idealized nature, with the might and terror, and the majesty, of the great Shadow. But she perished. The giant will succumbed to a power more stern. And I thought, as I gazed upon the corpse, of the wild passage in Joseph Glanville. 'The will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by the nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will' "

had no lack of what the world calls wealth. Ligeia had brought me far more, very far more than ordinarily falls to the lot of mortals. After a few months, therefore, of weary and aimless wandering, I purchased, and put in some repair, an abbey, which I shall not name, in one of the wildest and least frequented portions of fair England. The gloomy and dreary grandeur of the building, the almost savage aspect of the domain, the many melancholy and time-honored memories connected with both, had much in unison with the feelings of utter abandonment which had driven me into that remote and unsocial region of the country. Yet although the external abbey, with its verdant decay hanging about it, suffered but little alteration, I gave way, with a childlike perversity, and perchance with a faint hope of alleviating my sorrows, to a display of more than regal magnificence within.—For such follies, even in childhood, I had imbibed a taste and now they came back to me as if in the dotage of grief. Alas, I feel how much even of incipient madness might have been discovered in the gorgeous and fantastic draperies, in the solemn carvings of Egypt, in the wild cornices and furniture, in the Bedlam patterns of the carpets of tufted gold! I had become a bounden slave in the trammels of opium, and my labors and my orders had taken a coloring from my dreams. But these absurdities I must not pause to detail. Let me speak only of that one chamber, ever accursed, whither in a moment of mental alienation, I led from the altar as my bride—as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia—the fair-haired and blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine.

There is no individual portion of the architecture and decoration of that bridal chamber which is not now visibly before me. Where were the souls of the haughty family of the bride, when, through thirst of gold, they permitted to pass the threshold of an apartment *so* bedecked, a maiden and a daughter so beloved? I have said that I minutely remember the details of the chamber—yet I am sadly forgetful on topics of deep moment—and here there was no system, no keeping, in the fantastic display, to take hold upon the memory. The room lay in a high turret of the castellated abbey, was pentagonal in shape, and of capacious size. Occupying the whole southern face of the pentagon was the sole window—an immense sheet of unbroken glass from Venice—a single pane, and tinted of a leaden hue, so that the rays of either the sun or moon, passing through it, fell with a ghastly lustre on the objects within. Over the upper portion of this huge window, extended the trellis-work of an aged vine, which clambered up the massy walls of the turret. The ceiling, of gloomy-looking oak, was excessively lofty, vaulted, and elaborately fretted with the wildest and most grotesque specimens of a semi-Gothic, semi-Druidical device. From out the most central recess of this melancholy vaulting, depended, by a single chain of gold with long links, a huge censer of the same metal, Saracenic in pattern, and with many perforations so contrived that there writhed in and out of them, as if endued with a serpent vitality, a continual succession of parti-colored fires.

Some few ottomans and golden candelabra, of Eastern figure, were in various stations about—and there was the couch, too—the bridal couch—of an Indian model, and low, and sculptured of solid ebony, with a pall-like canopy above. In each of the angles of the chamber stood on end a gigantic sarcophagus of black granite, from the tombs of the kings over against Luxor, with their aged lids full of immemorial sculpture. But in draping of the apartment lay, alas! the chief phantasy of all. The lofty walls, gigantic in height—even unproportionably so—were hung from summit to foot, in vast folds, with a heavy and massive-looking tapestry—tapestry of a material which was found alike as a carpet on the floor, as a covering for the ottomans and the ebony bed, as a canopy for the bed, and as the gorgeous volutes of the curtains which partially shaded the window. The material was the richest cloth of gold. It was spotted all over, at irregular intervals, with arabesque figures, about a foot in diameter, and wrought upon the cloth in patterns of the most jetty black. But these figures partook of the true character of the arabesque only when regarded from a single point of view. By a contrivance now common, and indeed traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changeable in aspect. To one entering the room, they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities; but upon a farther advance, this appearance gradually departed; and step by step, as the visitor moved his station in the chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms which belong to the superstition of the Norman, or arise in the guilty

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22 **Bedlam**, insane; derived from Bedlam, an asylum in London • 62 **pall-like**, added to the earlier version, which spoke simply of "a canopy" • 65 **Luxor**, a center of archeological research near Thebes

slumbers of the monk. The phantasmagoric effect was vastly heightened by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind the draperies—giving a hideous and uneasy animation to the whole.

In halls such as these—in a bridal chamber such as this—I passed, with the lady of Tremaine, the unhallowed hours of the first month of our marriage—passed them with but little disquietude. That my wife dreaded the fierce moodiness of my temper—that she shunned me and loved me but little—I could not help perceiving; but it gave me rather pleasure than otherwise I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man. My memory flew back (oh, with what intensity of regret!) to Ligeia, the beloved, the august, the beautiful, the entombed. I revelled in recollections of her purity, of her wisdom, of her lofty, her ethereal nature, of her passionate, her idolatrous love. Now, then, did my spirit fully and freely burn with more than all the fires of her own. In the excitement of my opium dreams (for I was habitually fettered in the shackles of the drug) I would call aloud upon her name, during the silence of the night, or among the sheltered recesses of the glens by day, as if, through the wild eagerness, the solemn passion, the consuming ardor of my longing for the departed, I could restore her to the pathway she had abandoned—ah, *could* it be forever?—upon the earth.

About the commencement of the second month of the marriage, the Lady Rowena was attacked with sudden illness, from which her recovery was slow. The fever which consumed her rendered her nights uneasy; and in her perturbed state of half-slumber, she spoke of sounds, and of motions in and about the chamber of the turret, which I concluded had no origin save in the distemper of her fancy, or perhaps in the phantasmagoric influences of the chamber itself. She became at length convalescent—finally well. Yet but a brief period elapsed, ere a second more violent disorder again threw her upon a bed of suffering; and from this attack her frame, at all times feeble, never altogether recovered. Her illnesses were, after this epoch, of alarming character, and of more alarming recurrence, defying alike the knowledge and the great exertions of her physicians. With the increase of the chronic disease which had thus, apparently, taken too sure hold upon her constitution to be eradicated by human means, I could not fail to observe a similar increase in the nervous irritation of her temperament, and in her excitability by trivial causes of fear. She spoke again, and now more frequently and pertinaciously, of the sounds—of the slight sounds—and of the unusual motions among the tapestries, to which she had formerly alluded.

One night, near the closing in of September, she pressed this distressing subject with more than usual emphasis upon my attention. She had just awakened from an unquiet slumber, and I had been watching, with feelings half of anxiety, half of vague terror, the workings of her emaciated countenance. I sat by the side of her ebony bed, upon one of the ottomans of India. She partly arose, and spoke, in an earnest low whisper, of sounds which she *then* heard, but which I could not hear—and of motions which she *then* saw, but which I could not perceive. The wind was rushing hurriedly behind the tapestries, and I wished to show her (what, let me confess it, I could not *all* believe) that those almost inarticulate breathings, and those very gentle variations of the figures upon the wall, were but the natural effects of that customary rushing of the wind. But a deadly pallor, overspreading her face, had proved to me that my exertions to reassure her would be fruitless. She appeared to be fainting, and no attendants were within call. I remembered where was deposited a decanter of light wine which had been ordered by her physicians, and hastened across the chamber to procure it. But, as I stepped beneath the light of the censer, two circumstances of a startling nature attracted my attention. I had felt that some palpable although invisible object had passed lightly by my person; and I saw that there lay upon the golden carpet, in the very middle of the rich lustre thrown from the censer, a shadow—a faint, indefinite shadow of angelic aspect—such as might be fancied for the shadow of a shade. But I was wild with the excitement of an immoderate dose of opium, and heeded these things but little, nor spoke of them to Rowena. Having found the wine, I recrossed the chamber and poured out a goblet-ful, which I held to the lips of the fainting lady. She had now partially recovered, however, and took the vessel herself, while I sank

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14 the august, added in the later version • 47 fear, followed in the earlier version with the sentence, "Indeed reason seemed fast tottering from her throne." By cutting out the sentence, the author casts less doubt upon the perceptions of Lady Rowena, thus more effectively preparing for the reincarnation of Ligeia

upon an ottoman near me, with my eyes fastened upon her person. It was then that I became distinctly aware of a gentle foot-fall upon the carpet, and near the couch; and in a second thereafter, as Rowena was in the act of raising the wine to her lips, I saw, or may have dreamed that I saw, fall within the goblet, as if from some invisible spring in the atmosphere of the room, three or four large drops of a brilliant and ruby colored fluid. If this I saw—not so Rowena. She swallowed the wine unhesitatingly, and I forbore to speak to her of a circumstance which must, after all, I considered, have been but the suggestion of a vivid imagination, rendered morbidly active by the terror of the lady, by the opium, and by the hour.

Yet I cannot conceal it from my own perception that, immediately subsequent to the fall of the ruby-drops, a rapid change for the worse took place in the disorder of my wife; so that, on the third subsequent night, the hands of her menials prepared her for the tomb, and on the fourth, I sat alone, with her shrouded body, in that fantastic chamber which had received her as my bride. Wild visions, opium-engendered, flitted, shadow-like, before me. I gazed with unquiet eye upon the sarcophagi in the angles of the room, upon the varying figures of the drapery, and upon the writhing of the parti-colored fires in the censer overhead. My eyes then fell, as I called to mind the circumstances of a former night, to the spot beneath the glare of the censer where I had seen the faint traces of the shadow. It was there, however, no longer; and breathing with greater freedom, I turned my glances to the pallid and rigid figure upon the bed. Then rushed upon me a thousand memories of Ligeia—and then came back upon my heart, with the turbulent violence of a flood, the whole of that unutterable woe with which I had regarded *her* thus enshrouded. The night waned; and still, with a bosom full of bitter thoughts of the one only and supremely beloved, I remained gazing upon the body of Rowena.

It might have been midnight, or perhaps earlier, or later, for I had taken no note of time, when a sob, low, gentle, but very distinct, startled me from my revery.—I *felt* that it came from the bed of ebony—the bed of death. I listened in an agony of superstitious terror—but there was no repetition of the sound. I strained my vision to detect any motion in the corpse—but there was not the slightest perceptible. Yet I could not have been deceived. I *had* heard the noise, however faint, and my soul was awakened within me. I resolutely and perseveringly kept my attention riveted upon the body. Many minutes elapsed before any circumstance occurred tending to throw light upon the mystery. At length it became evident that a slight, a very feeble, and barely noticeable tinge of color had flushed up within the cheeks, and along the sunken small veins of the eyelids. Through a species of unutterable horror and awe, for which the language of mortality has no sufficiently energetic expression, I felt my heart cease to beat, my limbs grow rigid where I sat. Yet a sense of duty finally operated to restore my self-possession. I could no longer doubt that we had been precipitate in our preparations—that Rowena still lived. It was necessary that some immediate exertion be made; yet the turret was altogether apart from the portion of the abbey tenanted by the servants—there were none within call—I had no means of summoning them to my aid without leaving the room for many minutes—and this I could not venture to do. I therefore struggled alone in my endeavors to call back the spirit still hovering. In a short period it was certain, however, that a relapse had taken place; the color disappeared from both eyelid and cheek, leaving a wanness even more than that of marble; the lips became doubly shrivelled and pinched up in the ghastly expression of death; a repulsive clamminess and coldness overspread rapidly the surface of the body; and all the usual rigorous stiffness immediately supervened. I fell back with a shudder upon the couch from which I had been so startlingly aroused, and again gave myself up to passionate waking visions of Ligeia.

An hour thus elapsed when (could it be possible?) I was a second time aware of some vague sound issuing from the region of the bed. I listened—in extremity of horror. The sound came again—it was a sigh. Rushing to the corpse, I saw—distinctly saw—a tremor upon the lips. In a minute afterward they relaxed, disclosing a bright line of the pearly teeth. Amazement now struggled in my bosom with the profound awe which had hitherto reigned there alone. I felt that my vision grew dim, that my reason wandered; and it was only by a violent effort that I at length succeeded in nerving myself to the task which duty thus once more had pointed out. There was now a partial glow upon the forehead and upon the cheek and throat; a perceptible warmth pervaded the



whole frame; there was even a slight pulsation at the heart. The lady *lived;* and with redoubled ardor I betook myself to the task of restoration. I chafed and bathed the temples and the hands, and used every exertion which experience, and no little medical reading, could suggest. But in vain. Suddenly, the color fled, the pulsation ceased, the lips resumed the expression of the dead, and in an instant afterward, the whole body took upon itself the icy chilliness, the livid hue, the intense rigidity, the sunken outline, and all the loathsome peculiarities of that which has been, for many days, a tenant of the tomb.

And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia—and again (what marvel that I shudder while I write?), *again* there reached my ears a low sob from the region of the ebony bed. But why shall I minutely detail the unspeakable horrors of that night? Why shall I pause to relate how, time after time, until near the period of the gray dawn, this hideous drama of revivification was repeated; how each terrific relapse was only into a sterner and apparently more irredeemable death; how each agony wore the aspect of a struggle with some invisible foe; and how each struggle was succeeded by I know not what wild change in the personal appearance of the corpse? Let me hurry to a conclusion.

The greater part of the fearful night had worn away, and she who had been dead, once again stirred—and now more vigorously than hitherto, although arousing from a dissolution more appalling in its utter hopelessness than any. I had long ceased to struggle or to move, and remained sitting rigidly upon the ottoman, a helpless prey to a whirl of violent emotions, of which extreme awe was perhaps the least terrible, the least consuming. The corpse, I repeat, stirred and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance—the limbs relaxed—and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together, and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still imparted their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had indeed shaken off, utterly, the fetters of Death. But if this idea was not, even then, altogether adopted, I could at least doubt no longer, when arising from the bed, tottering, with feeble steps, with closed eyes, and with the manner of one bewildered in a dream, the thing that was enshrouded advanced boldly and palpably into the middle of the apartment.

I trembled not—I stirred not—for a crowd of unutterable fancies connected with the air, the stature, the demeanor of the figure, rushing hurriedly through my brain, had paralyzed—had chilled me into stone. I stirred not—but gazed upon the apparition. There was a mad disorder in my thoughts—a tumult unappeasable. Could it, indeed, be the *living* Rowena who confronted me? Could it indeed be Rowena *at all*—the fair-haired, the blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine? Why, *why* should I doubt it? The bandage lay heavily about the mouth—but then might it not be the mouth of the breathing Lady of Tremaine? And the cheeks—there were the roses as in her noon of life—yes, these might indeed be the fair cheeks of the living Lady of Tremaine. And the chin, with its dimples, as in health, might it not be hers?—but *had she then grown taller since her malady?* What inexpressible madness seized me with that thought? One bound, and I had reached her feet! Shrinking from my touch, she let fall from her head, unloosened, the ghastly cerements which had confined it, and there streamed forth, into the rushing atmosphere of the chamber, huge masses of long and dishevelled hair; *it was blacker than the raven wings of the midnight!* And now slowly opened *the eyes* of the figure which stood before me. "Here then, at least," I shrieked aloud, "can I never—can I never be mistaken—these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes—of my lost love—of the lady—of the LADY LIGEIA!"

1838·1845

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20 how each agony, and the remainder of this sentence, did not appear in the earlier version of the story • 26 she . . . dead, in the later version, replaced "the corpse of Rowena." By making this change and the one next recorded, Poe prepared for the reappearance of Ligeia by using ambiguous words to refer to the corpse • 44 the thing . . . enshrouded, in the later version, replaced "the Lady of Tremaine" of the earlier version • 47 the stature, added in the second version, perhaps to indicate more definitely that the change had taken place • 53 Could it indeed, and the remainder of this sentence, added in the revised version. This emphasizes the *contrast*, which now becomes important

The Masque of the Red Death

Once the exposition has been presented, this story so orders its happenings as to make them increasingly horrifying. The account of the ball falls into three climactically arranged parts, each terrifying in its own peculiar way. The "tone" is handled to give different emotional significance to each of these sections. The tone, by repeating symbols of death and of fleeting time, also adds to allegorical implications concerning the inevitable triumph of death over mankind.

The "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body, and especially upon the face, of the victim were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow men. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and lighthearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers, and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the Red Death.

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the sliding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different, as might have been expected from the prince's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass, whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange, the fifth with white, the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But, in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood-color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire,

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Text: the Broadway Journal, July 19, 1845 • 28 improvisatori, composers and singers of extemporary songs • 45 irregularly disposed. The arrangement of the rooms is of a sort to distress anyone with a tendency toward claustrophobia

that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hanging through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused revery or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies) there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric luster. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great fete; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in *Hernani.* There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away, and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appals; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches their ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which

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50 Hernani (1830), a lavishly costumed, romantic play by Victor Hugo • 84 the waltzers. It is important to know that, since in 1842 many considered the waltz an immoral dance, mention of waltzers adds to the depiction of revelry

had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had outHeroded Herod, and gone beyond the bound of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revelers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death His vesture was dabbed in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and while the vast assembly as if with one impulse, shrank from the centers of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revelers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave cerements and corpselike mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all. 1842

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11 **had outHeroded Herod,** a quotation from Hamlet's speech to the players, meaning, in this context, "had gone beyond the extremes of this orgy"

The Cask of Amontillado

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skillful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surrounded by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him, "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking today! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchresi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—"

"Luchresi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchresi—"

"I have no engagement;—come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are incrusted with niter."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchresi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a *roquelaire* closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaus, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed

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24 gemmary, knowledge of precious gems • 39 pipe, large barrel • 39 Amontillado, a Spanish sherry • 73 roquelaire, a knee-length cloak

down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white webwork which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Niter?" he asked at length.

"Niter," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh! —ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchresi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are embedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"Nemo me impune lacessit."

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through long walls of piled skeletons, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The niter!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grâve. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said, "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said, "a sign."

"It is this," I answered, producing from beneath the folds of my *roquelaire,* a trowel.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaus rather to glow than flame.

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30 Medoc, wine from a particular region in France • 44 arms, coat of arms. The coat of arms described by the narrator—a golden foot on a blue field, crushing a serpent—is symbolic, from his point of view, of the action of his story • 49 Nemo . . . lacessit. No one attacks me with impunity—a reiteration of the vengeful attitude of the narrator • 64 De Grâve, more accurately, Grâves, a Bordeaux wine

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchresi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the niter. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaus over the mason work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamorer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo,—the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again—

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat.*

1846

15 **In pace requiescat.** In peace may he rest

Romance

First published in 1829, this poem, like many by Poe, underwent a great deal of revision. In 1831 it was extended to about three times its original length; then, in later versions (1843, 1845), it returned to approximately its first form Professor Killis Campbell says that the passages added in 1831 "are largely personal in nature—a fact which probably explains their omission in subsequent editions." Equally important, perhaps, is the fact that they were unduly repetitious. In a letter to John Neal, Poe characterized this poem as the "best thing," in every respect save "sound," in the 1829 volume. He was "certain," he said, that the five opening lines of the second stanza had "never been surpassed." The theme is much like that of Byron's "To Romance": in each poem the author renounces romance and swears allegiance to truth.

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say,
To lisp my very earliest word,
While in the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Through gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.

1829

Sonnet—To Science

Probably composed in the spring or summer of 1829, "Sonnet—To Science" echoes ideas of John Keats and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Do not all charms fly," asked Keats, in "Lamia," "at the merest touch of cold philosophy?" The opening lines of "Lamia" show some interesting parallels to lines 9-14 of this poem. Similarly, in Chapter XIV of his **Biographia Literaria**, Coleridge had discoursed on science versus poetry.

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes,
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood

To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

1829

To Helen

Although Poe tacitly sanctioned the claim that this poem was written when he was only fourteen, it seems more likely that it was produced between 1829 and the year when it was published, 1831. It is, nevertheless, a tribute to Poe's boyhood idol, Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard of Richmond, who died in 1824, and whom he called "the first pure ideal love of my soul." As the notes suggest, some lines were felicitously revised in the 1845 edition, here reproduced.

The unity of this poem derives from both its feeling and its metaphorical expression. The imagery not only makes its heroine a haven for a desperate wanderer in darkness; it also increasingly associates Helen's type of classical beauty with the immortal splendor of Greece and Rome. In the first stanza, Helen's beauty is like "barks of yore," which carried the wanderer to his homeland, and the words "Nicean," "perfumed," and "weary, wayworn wanderer" (Ulysses) vaguely connote classical associations. In stanza two the classical quality of Helen's beauty is more clearly suggested, and "home" becomes "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome." These opening stanzas hark back to the past; the third stanza, in the present tense, likens Helen to a statue standing in a lighted window-niche, thus attributing to her not only physical beauty but also immortal beauty of soul.

Helen, thy beauty is to me
  Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
  The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
  To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
  Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
  To the Glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
  How statue-like I see thee stand,
  The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
  Are Holy Land!

1829?-1831

The City in the Sea

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst
  and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls;
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,

To Helen • 2 **Nicean**, a word about which there has been much scholarly argument. The suggestion of Mr. J. J. Jones that it is derived from the Latin poetry of Catullus seems likely • 7 **hyacinth** harks back to "Hyacinthine," a Homeric epithet for hair, probably meaning "golden" • 9 **To the Glory . . . Rome**, read, in the 1831 version, "To the beauty of fair Greece, and the grandeur of old Rome" • 11 **brilliant window-niche**, in the original version, was "that little window-niche." The change set off the heroine in light from the poet in darkness • 13 **agate lamp**, in the original, was "golden scroll." The lamp gives more of an impression of permanence and adds to the light associated with the figures of the woman

Up many and many a marvelous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,—
Not the gayly-jewelled dead,
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas,
Along that wilderness of glass;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene!

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven!
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

1831

Israfel

Poe, in the motto, took a few liberties with the description of Israfel in Sale's "Preliminary Discourse" on the Koran, thereby making the phrases of the motto more appropriate. The words added, "whose heart-strings are a lute," were probably suggested by a passage in a poem by Béranger, also used as a motto for "The Fall of the House of Usher."

The song embodies some of Poe's theories about poetry—that a true poet writes from his heart, that his song is melodious and inspiring. The final stanzas voice despair concerning a poet's hampering environment.

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
  "Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
  Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
  In her highest noon,
  The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
  While, to listen, the red levin
  (With the rapid Pleiads, even,
  Which were seven,)
  Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
  And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
  By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
  Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown-up God—
  Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
  Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
  Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
  Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

Israfel • Text: the 1845 volume

The ecstasies above
  With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
  With the fervour of thy lute—
  Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
  Is a world of sweets and sours;
  Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
  Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
  Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
  A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
  From my lyre within the sky.

1831

The Coliseum

This poem, which was at one time a soliloquy of the hero of Poe's drama, Politian, was first published in The Visiter in 1833. It is interesting in two ways: as evidence of Byron's influence on Poe and as the earliest known example of Poe's use of blank verse. The first two stanzas announce the spell to be worked by the ancient ruin; the second two show the "silence, desolation, and dim night" with a series of appropriate images; and the final stanza evokes the light and the melody which give the scene immortal power.

Type of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie),
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judaen king
Taught in the garden of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—
These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—
These stones—alas! these gray stones—are they all—
All of the famed and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from the Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
Not all the magic of our high renown—
Not all the wonder that encircles us—
Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

1833

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1 **Type**, emblem • 13 **Judaen king**, Christ • 14 **Gethsemane**, the garden near Jerusalem which was the scene of the agony and arrest of Christ, as recorded in Matthew 26:36 • 15 **Chaldee** refers to the fame of the Chaldeans as astrologers and wizards • 18 **mimic eagle**, the standard of the Roman legions • 20 **gilded hair** refers to the gilt wigs worn by fashionable Roman ladies, and continues the association of departed gold with the vanished folk of the ancient world • 36 **Memnon**, an Egyptian statue which was reputed to give forth a harplike sound when touched by the rays of the rising sun

To One in Paradise

This song first appeared, without title, in a story published in January 1834. After numerous revisions, it appeared in 1845 with the present text and title. The most fortunate revision discarded this final stanza which had reduced a melodious and moving poem to the level of sentimentality:

Alas! for that accursed time
They bore thee o'er the billow,
From Love to titled age and crime,
And an unholy pillow—
From me, and from our misty clime,
Where weeps the silver willow!

Thou wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy gray eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

1833·1834

Sonnet—Silence

About the phrase "the corporate Silence" in line 10 of this irregular sonnet, Professor Campbell wrote this illuminating note: "That is, I take it, the physical death, the death which we can perceive with the senses. His shadow (l. 13), incorporate Silence, is, then, to be construed as the tyrant that rules in the nether world, in which the spirits of the unrighteous remain till the Day of Judgment."

There are some qualities—some incorporate things,
That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!

1840

Dream-Land

In this poem, published in **Graham's Magazine**, June 1, 1844, Poe hit upon what critics called his later manner—the repetitive and rhythmic style of such lyrical works as "The Raven" and "Ulalume." The romantic depiction of a land "out of space, out of time" is representative of many

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Sonnet—Silence • **Text:** the 1845 volume

of Poe's poetic descriptions. The identification of the land as the kingdom of death adds a touch highly characteristic of the author.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.



Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the tears that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their still waters, still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the grey woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets, aghast,
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh, 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

1844

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3 Eidolon, phantom • 3 Night, here personified, as in many poems by Poe and others, as Death • 6 ultimate dim Thule, from Latin ultima Thule, the farthest land • 10 Titan, gigantic and ancient • 30 Ghouls, demons which rob graves and feed upon corpses • 42 Eldorado, a legendary place abounding in gold

The Raven

Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition" (1846) purports to tell how this poem was composed. Poe believed that the poet, like the tale writer, should subordinate everything in each work to a desired effect. He therefore—so he said—determined the length of this poem, the sound and the meaning of the refrain, the nature and the order of the happenings unfolded, the rhythm, and the suggestion of a meaning in the final lines, by considering the effect he wished to produce. Regardless of whether it is literally accurate or not (and many have doubted that it is), this account shows clearly that Poe did carefully consider every element in this poem, and it doubtless suggests how he considered it. He probably composed the poem between 1842 and 1844.

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 named Lenore—
Nameless *here* for evermore.

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.

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.

Text: the 1845 version as corrected by the author in his personal copy

"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 ebon bird beguiling all my 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."

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,
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.

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41 **Pallas,** Pallas Athene, the goddess of wisdom • 43 **all my fancy,** substituted for the "all my sad soul" of an earlier version • 76 **gloated.** "Gloat" has as one of its unusual meanings, "to refract light" • 80 **Seraphim whose foot-falls,** a correction from "angels whose faint foot-falls" • 80 **tinkled,** defended by Poe as a word description of foot-falls, "because I saw that it had . . . been suggested to my mind by the sense of the supernatural with which it was, at the moment, filled"



"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, up-starting:
"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."

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 lamplight 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

Ulalume

For a time after the first publication of "Ulalume" (American Whig Review, December 1847), Poe liked the poem best without the tenth stanza. In his final published version of the poem, however, the last ten lines were included, and they therefore appear in this text.

The first nine stanzas build up admirably the tale of a growing uneasiness, and a growing perception of the

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89 balm in Gilead. See Jeremiah 8:22 • 93 Aidenn, a place of pleasure—variant of Eden or Aden • 106 shadow, justified by Poe thus: "For the purposes of poetry it is quite sufficient that a thing is possible, or at least that the improbability be not offensively glaring. It is true that in several ways, . . . the lamp might have thrown the bird's shadow on the floor. My conception was that of the bracket candelabrum affixed against the wall, high up above the door and bust. . ."

cause of that uneasiness, on the part of the narrator. Then comes a stanza which, so far as a large number of readers are concerned, hovers so close to the ridiculous as to spoil the effect. Perhaps Poe added the final stanza, as he said he did the final stanzas of "The Raven," to avoid repelling "the artistical eye" with "a certain hardness and nakedness." Whatever his reason for writing the last stanza, many will feel that his impulse to drop it was sounder than his final impulse.

The skies they were ashen and sober;
  The leaves they were crisped and sere,
  The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
  Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
  In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
  In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
  Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
  Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
  As the scoriac rivers that roll,
  As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
  In the ultimate climes of the Pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
  In the realms of the Boreal Pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
  But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
  Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
  And we marked not the night of the year,
  (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber
  (Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
  Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
  And star-dials pointed to morn,
  As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
  And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
  Arose, with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
  Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
  She rolls through an ether of sighs,
  She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
  These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
  To point us the path to the skies,
  To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
  To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
  With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
  Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
  Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
  Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
  Wings till they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
  Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
  Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
  Let us on by this tremulous light!
  Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

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6 **Auber**, a geographic name, like Weir and Yaanek in the lines which follow, evidently invented by Poe • 11 **cypress**, a species of tree often planted about tombs. The occurrence of an alley of such trees anticipates the narrator's grim discovery • 14 **scoriac**, volcanic, a word harking back to "ashen," "crisped," and "sere" in the first stanza, words suggestive of burning • 19 **Boreal**, northern, combining the suggestion of the blighting cold of October with the burning brightness of the aurora borealis • 37 **Astarte**, or Ashtoreth, Phoenician goddess associated with earthly love. See note, p. 321 • 39 **Dian**, Diana, goddess of the moon; with the Romans, the chaste huntress typifying pure love • 43 **where . . . dies.** See Isaiah 66.24 • 44 **the Lion**, constellation of Leo, here used to signify danger • 52 **I mistrust.** This phrase of Psyche forecasts the distressing discovery at the end of the poem

Its sibyllic splendor is beaming
With hope and in beauty tonight:
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crisped and sere,
As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here!—
That I brought a dread burden down here—
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Said we, then—the two, then: "Ah can it
Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—
The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
To bar up our way and to ban it
From the secret that lies in these wolds—
From the thing that lies hidden in these wolds—
Have drawn up the spectre of a planet
From the limbo of lunary souls—
This sinfully scintillant planet
From the Hell of the planetary souls?"

1847

Eldorado

Written in the late winter or early spring of 1849, this poem was first published in Flag of Our Union, April 21, 1849. Eldorado was a fabulously rich city which early explorers of the Western world vainly sought. In 1849 the name was frequently applied to California gold fields.

Gayly bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old,
This knight so bold,
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

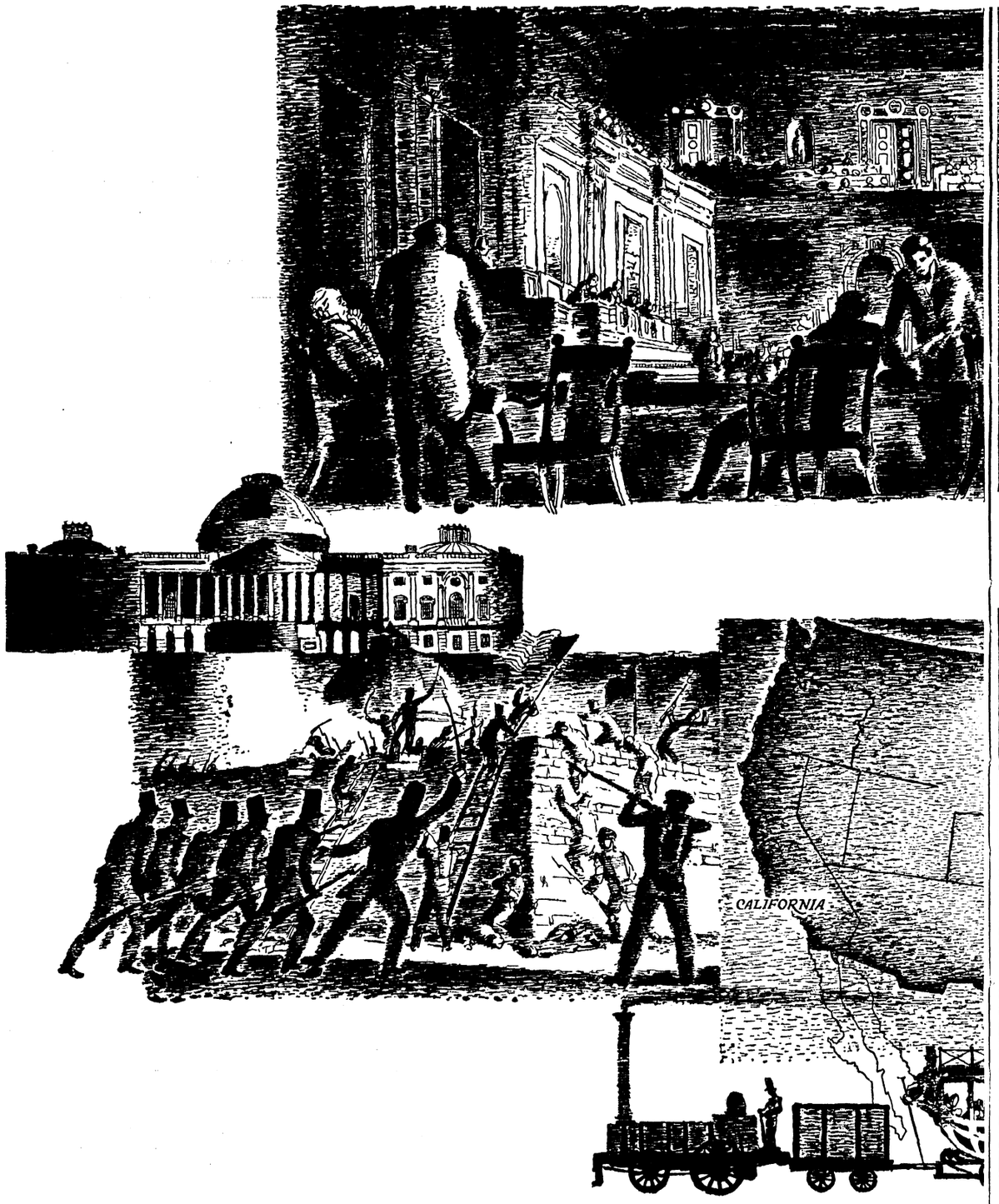
And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be,
This land of Eldorado?"

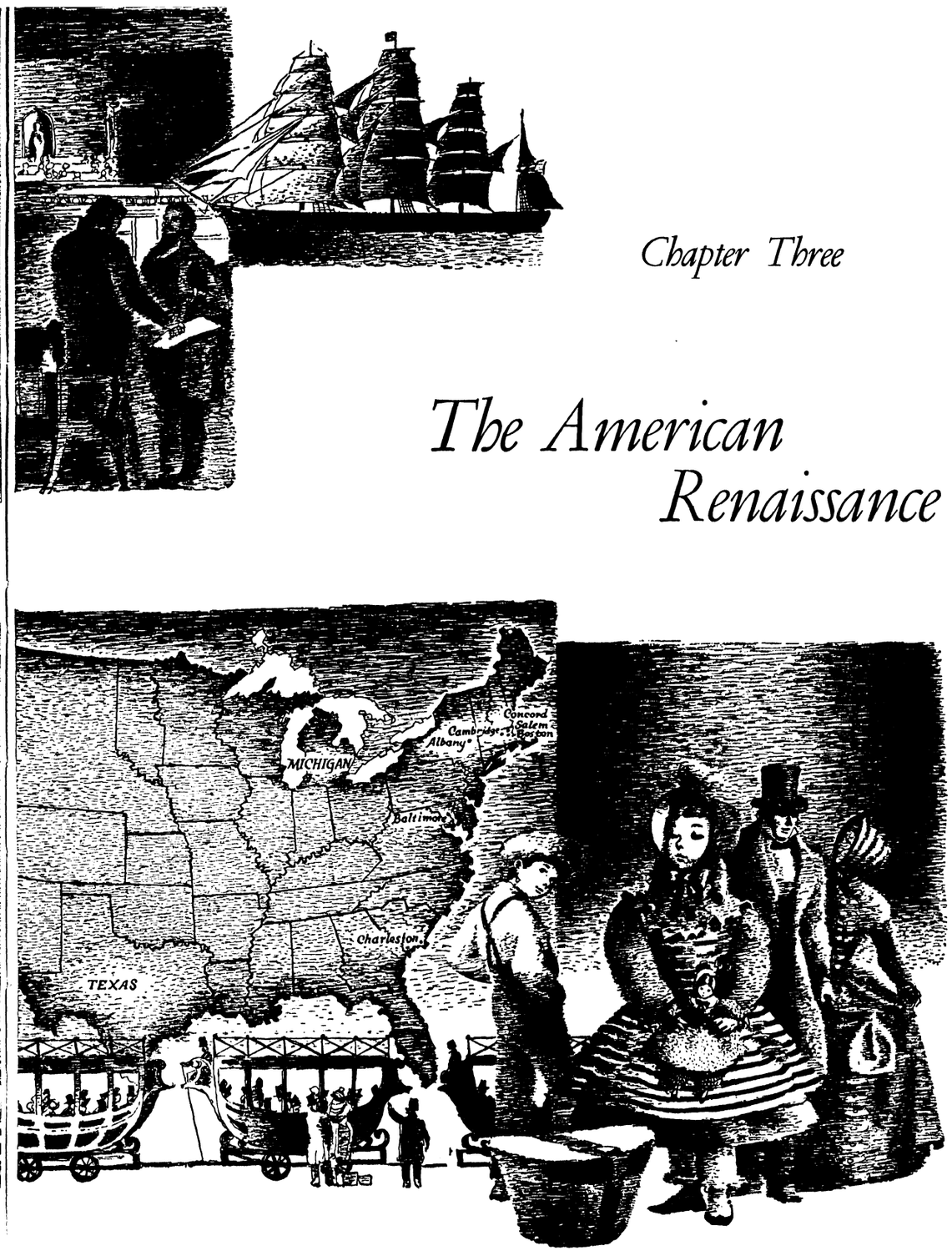
"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

1849

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64 sibyllic, oracular. In this stanza the narrator is attempting to prove that this "crystalline light" promises good fortune. Yet his talk of "tremulous light" which "flickers" actually admits distrust. Here, perhaps, as in "The Raven," at about the middle of the poem, the author "availed himself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression"





Chapter Three

The American Renaissance

Chapter 3

The American Renaissance

1829 • 1860

WE WILL SPEAK OUR OWN MINDS. "We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds." — **Emerson**

I. Intellectual Currents

Between the triumph of the frontier in Jackson's election and the days of the Civil War, the United States emerged a flourishing nation—a nation for the common man, a nation with a culture, a nation of promises.

This was the period of renaissance, the period of awakening and development, when Americans at last were to begin to speak their own minds. The writers of the era represented in this chapter belong mostly to New England; and indeed the New England writers loom large in any survey of American literature during the years from 1829 to 1860. One great writer—possibly the very greatest of the period—was outside the New England orbit: Herman Melville was born in New York and educated in the South Seas. Yet he was not entirely outside—on the periphery rather, for Melville was influenced by the New England writers, especially by Hawthorne.

The New England influence was far-reaching. It extended into the Middle West, where Emerson lectured repeatedly in the 1850's. It was evident even in the South, though largely in opposition. Aesthetic writers like Poe challenged the vogue of moral literature, defenders of the social structure of the South opposed New England abolitionism, and lusty raconteurs on plantation and frontier flouted puritanic restraints.

NEW ENGLAND in ITS GOLDEN DAY

The period of 1829-1860 in New England has had applied to it a variety of happy designations: Barrett Wendell called it "The Renaissance of New England." "The Golden Day" is Lewis Mumford's phrase. But by whatever name it is known—whether by one of these or by some other—it was the greatest literary period in the history of New England. This was a rich period, and in their writings the men of Boston and Cambridge, Concord and Salem set forth their all-embracing ideas and attitudes—ideas and attitudes on religion and the con-

ception of human nature, democracy and the common man, industry and the expanding frontier, slavery and the Civil War, science and human progress.

Changing Concepts of God and Man

The most important factor in the religious thought of New England in this period was the break with Calvinism. Boston clergymen had become increasingly liberal in the eighteenth century (as shown in the opposition between Chauncy and Edwards), but it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that Unitarianism was strongly established. The appointment in 1805 of an avowed Unitarian to the chair of Divinity at Harvard, hitherto occupied by staunch Calvinists, may be taken as marking the transition. And yet the change from Calvinism to Unitarianism was perhaps not so complete, even in eastern Massachusetts, as some have supposed. That William Ellery Channing, the most influential of the early Unitarians, should have delivered his famous "Moral Argument Against Calvinism" as late as 1820 would seem to suggest the tenacity of the old orthodox beliefs. Preaching from his Unitarian pulpit in 1831, Emerson designated the Calvinistic and Unitarian groups as the "rigid" and the "liberal" parties, respectively, and urged his hearers to "borrow something of eternal truth from both of these opinions."

The chief points of difference between Calvinism and Unitarianism as expounded by Channing and his successors can be summarized briefly: (1) The two beliefs differed in their conceptions of the Deity. Calvinism emphasized God's inexorable justice; Unitarianism stressed His benevolence. The Unitarians questioned the justice of the doctrine of election: a God who says (according to Wigglesworth) "I do save none but mine own elect" seemed arbitrary and capricious. (2) The two beliefs differed in their conceptions of Christ. According to Calvinism, Christ is literally the Son of God, the second member of the Holy Trinity. According to Unitarianism, Christ is divine only in the sense in which all men are divine or have an element, however small, of divinity in their nature. The difference between Christ and ordinary mortals becomes one of degree, not of kind. (3) The two beliefs differed in their conceptions of man. Calvinism asserted the innate depravity of man, his predestination, and the necessity of his salvation through the atoning death of Christ. Unitarianism insisted upon man's innate goodness and his spiritual freedom. The Atonement became unnecessary to Unitarians, who preferred to point to Christ's life as an example to be emulated by men already potentially good.

As a young man Channing lived for two years in Virginia, where he presumably absorbed French romantic philosophy. From Rousseau and writers of his school, Channing probably derived, and imported into the Boston of the early 1800's, the ideas of the excellence of human nature and its infinite perfectibility. The inscription on the base of Channing's statue in Boston aptly summarizes his contribution to the religious thought of New England· "He breathed into theology a humane spirit and proclaimed anew the divinity of man." In his *Flowering of New England* Van Wyck Brooks declares justly, "By raising the general estimate of human nature, which the old religion had despised, Channing gave a prodigious impulse to the creative life."

By 1820 Channing could say, "Calvinism is giving place to better views. We think the decline of Calvinism one of the most encouraging facts in our passing history." Unitarianism became the religion particularly of the fashionable and the well-to-do in and around Boston. "Whoever clung to the older faith," remarks Barrett Wendell, "did so at his social peril." Unitarianism, however, did not conquer the whole of New England. There were scattered Unitarian outposts, such as the parish of Sylvester Judd in Augusta, Maine, but the older faith continued dominant in the regions west and north of Boston.

Apart from both Calvinists and Unitarians, the Quakers were a comparatively small but important group. In early New England, Quakers were apt to be obstreperously fanatical; but by the time of John Woolman (1720-1772) their fanaticism had diminished, and in nineteenth-century New England they were, in the words of one historian, "inconspicuous and inoffensive."

Like the Calvinists, the Quakers believed in the divinity of Christ and in the Bible as the inspired word of God. Like the Calvinists, too, they insisted upon the essential sinfulness of man: "Too dark ye cannot paint the sin," Whittier, their chief representative in literature, said in "The Eternal Goodness," his best poetical statement of the Quaker belief. But Whittier in the poem objects to the "iron creeds" of the Calvinists and to their emphasis upon God's wrath; he prefers to think

of "our Lord's beatitudes." The Quakers emphasized the "inner light," which God, they believed, gave to all human beings and which afforded an infallible guide to a righteous life. Quakerism was more benevolent and humanitarian than Calvinism, and more pietistic than Unitarianism. A mere layman might experience some difficulty in distinguishing between the doctrine of the inner light and the Emersonian doctrine of intuition.

After less than three years in the Unitarian ministry, Emerson resigned his pulpit in 1832 because of a growing dissatisfaction with the official rôle of the clergyman and the formalities of the church. Unitarianism, he felt, was good as far as it went; but it did not go far enough toward the rehabilitation of the individual. The new doctrine of which Emerson became the chief interpreter is known as Transcendentalism. Emerson's *Nature,* published in 1836, was the bible of the early Transcendentalists. The "Transcendental Club" was, from 1836 until about 1844, a center of activity. Another focus was a quarterly magazine, *The Dial* (edited by Margaret Fuller, 1840-1842, and by Emerson, 1842-1844), which published many contributions by Transcendentalists during its lifetime of four years. The group as a whole was greatly influenced by the idealistic philosophies of other lands and ages: by Plato and the Neo-Platonists, by the Oriental Scriptures, by Kant and other German idealists—particularly as interpreted by Coleridge and Carlyle.

Transcendentalism has been defined philosophically as "the recognition in man of the capacity of knowing truth intuitively, or of attaining knowledge transcending the reach of the senses." It has been defined historically as follows. "New England Transcendentalism was produced by the importing of German idealism into American Unitarianism." The last definition indicates an important relation between Transcendentalism and Unitarianism and requires a consideration of the similarities and differences between the two.

Unitarianism prepared the way for Transcendentalism by insisting that man is essentially good and that man may trust his own perceptions of religious truth. Channing spoke of "the confidence which is due to our rational and moral faculties in religion" and said that "the ultimate reliance of a human being is and must be on his own mind." But it is important to observe two points of difference: (1) Channing, the Unitarian, expressed confidence in "our *rational* faculties." Emerson, the Transcendentalist, drew a sharp distinction between the "Understanding," by which he meant the rational faculty, and the "Reason," by which he meant the suprarational or intuitive faculty; and he regarded the "Reason" as much more authoritative in spiritual matters than the "Understanding." (2) The Transcendentalists carried this reliance upon the intuitive perceptions of the individual much further than conventional Unitarianism would warrant—carried it so far as to set aside even the authority of the Christian Bible. "Make your own Bible," said Emerson. "Select and collect all the words and sentences that in all your reading have been to you like the blast of a trumpet, out of Shakespeare, Seneca, Moses, John, and Paul." Emerson would renounce all authority, all standards and laws externally imposed. "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind." He proclaimed this glorification of intuition and the repudiation of all external religious authority to a Unitarian audience at Harvard in 1838. "Thank God for these good men [meaning the Saints and the Prophets] but say 'I also am a man.' " The result was a storm of protest. Emerson's Transcendentalism had gone far beyond the bounds of even liberal Unitarianism.

Transcendental thought in the abstract can be best studied in Emerson. His disciples, of whom there were many, were usually interested more in practice than in theory and attempted to apply Emerson's individualistic doctrines in various practical ways. George Ripley, for example, organized the famous utopian community at Brook Farm Theodore Parker militantly espoused reforms in church and state. Margaret Fuller advocated the emancipation of women. Henry Thoreau made a famous experiment in living at Walden Pond.

Many passages in Thoreau seem echoes of Emerson, though Thoreau's expression of the thought is always more concrete than Emerson's. "The fact is," Thoreau wrote in his journal in 1853, "I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot"—meaning by "natural philosopher" a scientific student of nature. The emphasis in the statement is significant. Mystical, transcendental passages abound in Thoreau, especially in his earlier writings, as they abound everywhere in Emerson. But as Thoreau grew older, his interest in the observation and description of the world of nature became more and more absorbing. He became

—as his journals of the 1850's attest—more of the natural philosopher and somewhat less of the Transcendentalist.

Transcendental ideas scarcely touched the writers of Boston and Cambridge. Influenced by his medical studies, Dr. Holmes approached religious problems from the scientific point of view. He objected to the Calvinistic condemnation of sinners because he believed that wrongdoing is often the result of an unfortunate heredity. Bad men, he thought, should be treated as if they were insane. On the positive side, he had no transcendental ardor, but rather a rationalistic belief in the ability of the soul, in favorable circumstances, to "build more stately mansions." Longfellow's religious thought—such as it was—was mildly Unitarian, pleasantly optimistic about life and death. And although Lowell could write appreciatively of the stimulating effect of Emerson ("... he made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us"), he was not a disciple; nor was he in sympathy with Transcendental ideas. "The word 'transcendental,' " he declared in the unsympathetic essay on Thoreau, "was the maid of all work for those who could not think." The men of Boston and Cambridge found the Concord air too rarefied for their mundane needs.

The chief spokesman of the opposition to Transcendentalism, however, was Hawthorne, who returned, in part at least, to the Calvinist position. He satirized utopian reforms on the ground that superficial reform measures avail nothing so long as the human heart, which is innately sinful, remains unregenerated. "Purify that inward sphere," he advised in "Earth's Holocaust," "and the many shapes of evil that haunt the outward will vanish of their own accord." He satirized Unitarianism and Transcendentalism in "The Celestial Railroad"; Bunyan's arduous pilgrimage seemed to him still the best way of reaching the Celestial City. In stories and novels he showed that evil is an ever-present reality, not an illusion to be brushed aside, and that self-reliant individualism alone does not save man from disaster. Hawthorne is a striking example of the persistence of the Puritan point of view in an age of liberalism and progressivism.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the Puritan inheritance affected Hawthorne alone. It was everywhere present, giving native roots and indigenous strength to New England's flowering. The religious emphasis was a Puritan trait, as was the emphasis on books and reading. The Transcendental pursuit of perfection was the old Puritan pursuit of perfection in a new guise and on different terms. The diaries of Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne continued an old Puritan practice; and the searchings of soul in Emerson and Thoreau recall passages in Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. When Emerson said that the poet "must drink water out of a wooden bowl," he was quoting the austerest of English Puritans, John Milton. The austerity of Emerson and Thoreau, and of Hawthorne, too, was of the essence of Puritanism. If the Puritan essence was considerably diluted in the other writers of the period, it nevertheless made itself felt. It came out in the ethical earnestness of Longfellow and Lowell and in their native attachments. In sum, the great period of New England literature would have been impossible without the two centuries of Puritan inheritance. It is hardly an accident that the three New England writers of the period whose works seem most likely to endure—Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne—are the writers whose roots were deepest in New England's Puritan past.

DEMOCRACY, INDUSTRIALISM, EXPANSION

From 1829 to 1860 the two major political parties in the United States were known as the Whigs and the Democrats. Conservative men of property in New England were likely to be Whigs; liberals and men of little or no property were likely to be Democrats.

The election of Andrew Jackson of Tennessee by the Democrats in 1828 is one of the great landmarks in the evolution of American democracy. The common man, whether backwoodsman, farmer, or small merchant, regarded Jackson, the conqueror of the Creek Indians and the hero of New Orleans, as a popular champion. Jackson's Whig opponent, the "aristocratic" John Quincy Adams, carried only New England and the North Atlantic states; the South and West went solidly for "Old Hickory." During the Jacksonian period, government in America became more democratic. The movement toward democracy, which had begun with the War of Independence and which had been arrested somewhat in the 1790's owing to a certain apprehension caused among the more conservative citizenry by the excesses of the French Revolution, now resumed its

onward course. State constitutions were liberalized. Religious tests and property qualifications for office were removed. Manhood suffrage was adopted generally.

New England Looks at the New Democracy

To many New Englanders, Jackson and his supporters seemed the dregs of democracy. Emerson wrote to Carlyle, "A most unfit person in the Presidency has been doing the worst things; and the worse he grew, the more popular." But it would not be fair to Emerson to suppose that this snobbish statement represents his real attitude. Like most educated men, he doubted at times the wisdom of the uneducated masses. "The mass," he wrote in a skeptical moment, "are animal, in state of pupilage, and nearer the chimpanzee." But despite moments of skepticism, he held firmly to his faith in the ultimate wisdom of the people. The belief that "God is in every man" was to him "the highest revelation." And he said in another passage on the subject, "The great mass understand what's what." It should be remembered that Emerson took sharp issue with his friend Carlyle on the subject of democracy: when Carlyle advocated what we today should call a fascist doctrine, Emerson vigorously dissented. He could think of many benefits that might come from even the "rank rabble party, the Jacksonism of the country." For one thing, this new democracy of the West might cure America of its slavish dependence upon Old World literature and Old World traditions, might "root out the hollow dilettantism of our cultivation." And he came ultimately to an admiration of Jackson himself. Writing in 1862 of the truly memorable things which he associated with the national capital, he mentioned along with the eloquence of Webster and the "sublime behaviour" of John Quincy Adams "the fine military energy of Jackson in his presidency."

Jackson's fine military energy appealed also to James Russell Lowell, who wrote in his "Latest Views of Mr. Biglow":

> Ole Hick'ry wouldn't ha' stood see-saw
> 'Bout doin' things till they wuz done with,—
> H'd smashed the tables o' the Law
> In time o' need to load his gun with;
> He couldn't see but jest one side,—
> Ef his, 'twuz God's, an' thet wuz plenty;
> An' so his *'Forrards'* multiplied
> An army's fightin' weight by twenty.

It must have required great effort for the New England mind to appreciate a man like Andrew Jackson; but the point is that the minds of Emerson and Lowell were capable of making such an accommodation. No violent adjustment was necessary, however, for a third New Englander, Nathaniel Hawthorne, for he alone among the major New England writers was a loyal member of the Democratic party and a staunch supporter of Jackson. Late in life he recorded in his journal the considered judgment, "Surely Jackson was a great man." But despite the personal challenge of Jackson himself, Emerson spoke for the generality of educated New Englanders when he said that the Whig party had the "best men"; the Democratic party, he added, had the "best cause."

The "best cause" became more and more pervasive in the literature of the period. An earlier democratic impetus had been supplied by the English Romantic Movement. When Emerson, in *The American Scholar* (p. 435), hailed as one of the "auspicious signs" the exploring and poetizing of "the near, the low, the common," he was thinking particularly of the English Romantic poets. And when Longfellow celebrated the village blacksmith, and Whittier, the barefoot boy, the inspiration was at least partly derived from Burns and Wordsworth. Thus initiated, the democratic movement in literature was broadened and deepened and made more American by the fresh impetus of Jacksonian Democracy. Lowell affords a good illustration. With him the democratic attitude evolved from the romantic and literary to the realistic and American. His celebration of Lincoln in 1865 as "New birth of our new soil, the first American" is a landmark in the democratic evolution of the New England mind. His full development in this direction is seen in his famous address on "Democracy" (1884), in which he said:

> I recollect hearing a sagacious old gentleman say in 1840 that the doing away with the property qualification for suffrage twenty years before had been the ruin of the State of Massachusetts. . . . I lived to see that Commonwealth twenty odd years later paying the interest on her bonds in gold. . . . To the door of every generation there comes a knocking, and unless the household, like the Thane of Cawdor and his wife, have been doing some deed without a name, they need not shudder. It

turns out at worst to be a poor relation who wishes to come in out of the cold.

Thus Lowell, the Brahmin, spoke for democracy and the forgotten man.

Another Brahmin, Oliver Wendell Holmes, was not visibly touched by the evolution of democratic thought in America. In *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (p. 396), he clung tenaciously to his aristocratic bias: "Self-made men?—Well, yes. Of course everybody likes and respects self-made men. It is a great deal better to be made in that way than not to be made at all. . . . But *other things being equal,* in most relations of life I prefer a man of family." His favorite subjects in poetry were aristocratic types ("Dorothy Q," "The Last Leaf," p. 392) and aristocratic heirlooms ("On Lending a Punch-Bowl"). It is not without significance in this connection that many of the writings of Dr. Holmes seem less vital and less important today than those of his more democratic contemporaries.

The Machine vs. Self-Reliance

The Jacksonian revolution affected the entire country; the industrial revolution was confined largely to the Northern states, and its effects became especially important in New England. After the War of 1812, business capital and initiative in New England were diverted from commerce to manufacturing, and the abundance of water power and skilled labor guaranteed the success of the factory system. The most striking new feature of the New England landscape about 1820 was the factory village, built near some waterfall and consisting of mills and houses for the "operatives." Conditions were much more agreeable in the new factory villages of New England than in the older manufacturing centers of England. Workers in the New England factories were mostly farmers' daughters from the surrounding country. Hawthorne in one of his rambles about the countryside remarked on the bright, cheerful faces looking out through the factory windows. A notable instance was Lowell, Massachusetts (founded in 1822), where the factory girls dressed neatly, were properly chaperoned, and published a literary weekly. By 1840 there were some 1200 cotton factories in the United States, two thirds of which were in New England.

One result of the industrial revolution in New England was the accumulation of wealth, a good deal of which was used for cultural purposes. Many New Englanders studied in Europe. The colleges of New England grew in resources and prestige. Almost every town had its free public library and its lyceum, where an instructive course of lectures was given during the winter. Emerson, and even Thoreau, lectured on many lyceum platforms. In the cities, mechanics' institutes offered vocational training. The Lowell family might be cited as illustrating the happy marriage of wealth and culture: one uncle of James Russell Lowell founded the manufacturing city which bears his name; another uncle established the famous Lowell Institute in Boston, where lectures have been given for more than a century by distinguished scientists, scholars, and men of letters.

To most New England writers of the period the industrial revolution no doubt seemed more beneficent than otherwise. One major writer, however, spoke out, loud and bold, against the mechanization of American life. Thoreau's objection was based upon the fundamental principle, Emerson's principle, of self-reliance. A man ought to do for himself the things which more and more were being done by machines: he ought to walk instead of riding on the train; he ought to build his own house, make his own clothes, bake his own bread. The machine brought on the division of labor which reduced men from integers to fractions. "Where is this division of labor to end?" Thoreau cried in *Walden,* and he added a statement the force of which is only today becoming apparent: "No doubt another *may* also think for me; but it is not therefore desirable that he should do so to the exclusion of my thinking for myself."

Compared with Thoreau's, the comments of other writers on the advancing machine age seem less decisive. Emerson entered a mild demurrer in *Self-Reliance* (p. 453), warning that "the harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good"; but, in the long run, he was willing to accept the machine as part of the "beneficent tendency." Hawthorne seems to have been apprehensive of evil results; to him, apparently, the machine was a malevolent monster. One finds in his journal the following note for a story: "A steam engine in a factory to be supposed to possess a malignant spirit; it catches one man's arm and pulls it off; seizes another by the coat-tails, and almost grapples him bodily; catches a girl by the hair, and scalps her; and finally draws a man and crushes him to death." Here was a conception

out of which Hawthorne might have developed a tale of Gothic horror, and perhaps of social prophecy.

A conspicuous and characteristic product of the industrial revolution in America was the man of big business, the captain of industry. The subject received scant attention in the literature of the period. One passage, however, is of particular interest—a passage in Emerson's *Journals* which expresses the writer's great admiration of John M. Forbes, a builder of railroads in the West in the 1860's:

> Forbes is an American to be proud of. Never was such force, good meaning, good sense, good action, combined with such domestic lovely behaviour. . . . Wherever he moves, he is the benefactor. It is of course that he should shoot well, ride well, sail well, administer railroads well, carve well, keep house well, but he was the best talker also in the company. . . .

The type has suffered at the hands of later writers. Perhaps Emerson was naïve; or possibly the type deteriorated in the post-Civil War period; or, quite likely, the American businessman was given less than justice by the satirists and "debunkers" of the 1920's.

New England Looks West with Mixed Feelings

Thinking in New England along political, economic, and social lines was conditioned not only by Jacksonian Democracy and the industrial revolution; it was conditioned also by the Westward movement. Some of the details of the movement are reserved for a later chapter. Our concern here is with its effect upon New England attitudes.

In the early years of the century New Englanders had settled in western New York and Ohio; by the 1840's they not only had occupied Indiana, Illinois, and southern Michigan, but had ventured as far as Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. A popular song summed up the invitation to the West:

> Come all ye Yankee farmers who wish to change your lot,
> Who've spunk to travel beyond your native spot. . . .

The Westward migration gave an outlet to the discontented elements, to those who wished to change their lot.

Despite the ties between New England and the West, conservative New Englanders were inclined to deprecate the Western migration. There were economic reasons for this attitude: the draining off of energetic young people tended to keep high the price of factory labor, and the revenue from sale of public lands in the West furnished an argument to Southerners for lowering the tariff. There were moral reasons also. The appeal to "spunk" to leave "your native spot" in the song quoted above was reversible since one might argue that more spunk was required to succeed in one's native place, particularly if that place was a New England farm. "The wise man stays at home," said Emerson. And possibly Whittier was thinking of those who were tempted by the West when he emphasized the noble austerity of life in New England.

> Then ask not why to these bleak hills
> I cling, as clings the tufted moss . . .
> Better with naked nerve to bear
> The needles of this goading air,
> Than, in the lap of sensual ease, forego
> The godlike power to do, the godlike
> aim to know.

By many high-minded New Englanders, migration to the West was regarded, no doubt, as a decline to a lower level. Some reformers, on the other hand, made the point that Westward migration might be checked if certain improvements were made at home. Sylvester Judd said of his fictional utopia, described in *Margaret: A Tale of the Real and Ideal* (1845), that "the mania for removing to the West, which prevails all over New England, has here subsided."

The Western theme does not bulk very large in the writings and memoirs of the authors of New England's Renaissance, but a few details may be of interest to suggest their views and attitudes.

Hawthorne was interested in the West, although his knowledge of the subject was not great. In the 1830's he traveled by stagecoach and canal boat as far as Niagara Falls and recorded his observations in a few slight but revealing sketches. While American consul at Liverpool,

he met more Westerners than he had ever seen in Salem or Concord, some of whom he viewed with disapproval. A Mr. Lilley from Ohio, for example, he described in his notebooks as "a very unfavorable specimen of American manners—an outrageous tobacco chewer and atrocious spitter on carpets." But some years later in Concord he met young William Dean Howells, an Ohioan, whose manners were irreproachable. Hawthorne was (as Howells recorded) "curious about the West, which he seemed to fancy more purely American, and said he would like to see some part of the country on which the damned shadow of Europe had not fallen."

To Lowell, as to Hawthorne, the West seemed more purely American because it was freer from European influences. (The same point was to be made at the end of the century by the historian Frederick Jackson Turner.) When "Nature" made Lincoln, Lowell said in his "Commemoration Ode" (p. 426),

> For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
> And choosing sweet clay from the breast
> Of the unexhausted West,
> With stuff untainted shaped a hero new . . .
> Nothing of Europe here. . . .

The great Americans in the early history of the Republic —Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, and the rest—possessed a culture which was largely European; but the culture of Lincoln was "untainted" by the Old World. Lowell's appreciation of this fact is all the more remarkable because, as a lifelong student of the Romance languages and literatures, he himself was an embodiment of European culture. Such an insight into the significance of the West was beyond the reach of another devotee of European literature, Longfellow, whose conception of the subject, as revealed in *Hiawatha* and *Evangeline,* was literary and romantic.

Unlike Longfellow, Thoreau was a tough, realistic writer who was qualified by temperament and personal habits to appreciate the values of the Western frontier. From Thoreau's point of view, life in New England had become too sophisticated; he spoke repeatedly of "these degenerate days." "We need the tonic of wildness," he declared in *Walden* (p. 490); and in "Walking" he said, "The West is but another name for the Wild." He praised the sturdy self-reliance of the pioneer. If the race is to retain its vigor, men must live "a primitive and frontier life." Such a life had been lived by the settlers of New England, and Thoreau liked to quote from the colonial historians, particularly from Edward Johnson, who told how the first inhabitants of Concord were forced to live in a cave and "cut their bread very thin." Such a Spartan existence was enjoyed also, he supposed, by the Western frontiersman. "Adam in Paradise," he declared, "was not so favorably situated on the whole as is the backwoodsman in America." The backwoodsman whom Thoreau envisaged, we may be sure, was not of the lawless or mercenary sort; rather he was the sober New Englander dedicated to plain living and high thinking on a farm in Michigan or Illinois. The gold rush to California was quite another matter. The greed and the gambling instinct therein displayed, he thought, were a "disgrace on mankind." The California spectacle of 1849, he said, made of God "a moneyed gentleman who scatters a handful of pennies in order to see mankind scramble for them."

If Thoreau praised the West for its primitive qualities, Emerson praised it for its astonishingly rapid acquisition of culture. He lectured many times throughout the Middle West in the 1850's. He went as far as Beloit, Wisconsin, where on January 9, 1856, he found an interested audience despite a temperature of thirty degrees below zero. The spread of culture on the frontier was to him indeed remarkable. Having heard piano music on one of his Western travels, he wrote:

> Witness the mute all hail
> The joyful traveller gives, when on the verge
> Of craggy Indian wilderness he hears
> From a log cabin stream Beethoven's notes
> On the piano, played with master's hand.

The college in Evanston blew down one night (Emerson recorded in his journal in 1857), but so great were the energy and progressivism of the founders of Northwestern that "they raised it again the next day, or built another." To Emerson, the West seemed the country of the future. He warned his Eastern readers that some day the sturdy Westerner would "gather all their laurels in his strong hands." Emerson's treatment of the West

(which one finds chiefly in his *Journals*) emphasizes his identification not only with New England but with America as well.

Slavery and Civil War

Still another influence on New England thought about political, economic, and social problems was the growing controversy over Negro slavery in the South and the tragic climax of the Civil War. The details of the antislavery movement and the rôle of Whittier as New England's chief abolitionist in literature are reserved for a later chapter, where the two sides—Northern and Southern—may more conveniently be brought together. Here we are concerned with the movement as a stimulus to thought and with the reactions of the major New England writers, Whittier excepted, to that stimulus.

Longfellow, as we might expect, was only mildly responsive. His sentiments were broadly and sincerely humanitarian; he believed that slavery was a great evil. But he was not active in reform; he disliked controversy, and he preferred to write his poems on other subjects. Longfellow did, however, compose a few poems on slavery, of which "The Slave's Dream" (p. 378) may be regarded as typical of his attitude and method of treatment. The slave in the poem falls asleep in a rice field and dreams of his former life in Africa, where he had been a king and had ridden a spirited horse bridled with golden reins. The description would be more applicable to a knight of medieval romance and it reflects Longfellow's preoccupation with European romantic literature. When the Union was threatened by the sectional dispute, he wrote the noble and justly famous poem "The Building of the Ship" (1849), which was a poetical plea—matching Webster's plea in prose—for the preservation of the Union:

> Thou too sail on, O Ship of State!
> Sail on, O Union, strong and great!

Lowell was much more vocal than his fellow Cantabrigian. He had pretty definite political convictions, and he enjoyed being in the thick of the fray. In the first series of the *Biglow Papers* (p. 414), he vigorously opposed the Mexican War, which Northern abolitionists unanimously regarded as having been precipitated by Southern strategists with the aim of extending slave territory in the Southwest:

> They jest want this Californy
> So's to lug new slave states in. . . .

He declared himself opposed to all war, "Ez fer war, I call it murder. . . ," and preferred the separation of the North and South to slavery:

> Ef I'd my way I hed ruther
> We should go to work an' part. . . .

In the second series of the *Biglow Papers* (p. 424), written in 1862 when the Army of the Potomac had met with ill success, he abandoned his early pacifism and argued for a more vigorous prosecution of the War by the North:

> Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the Lord!
> Up, Isr'el, to your tents an' grind the sword!

After the Civil War, however, Lowell directed his best poetical efforts toward reunion. Writing in 1875 in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of Washington's taking command of the colonial army, he extended the hand of reconciliation from Massachusetts to Virginia:

> Virginia gave us this imperial man . . .
> She gave us this unblemished gentleman.
> What shall we give her back but love and praise
> As in the dear old unestrangèd days. . . .

Ever responsive to changing conditions, Lowell's attitudes show, it seems fair to say, his flexibility, adaptability, and capacity for growth in his thinking on political questions.

It so happened that Lowell was usually on the side of the majority; Thoreau had a predilection for the side of the minority, often a minority of one. He had the rare personal courage to carry his convictions to their logical conclusion, even if that conclusion meant the defiance of civil law. He refused to pay taxes to a government which allowed slavery, and as a consequence spent a night in the Concord jail. The record of this

episode is given in "Civil Disobedience" (p. 479). He records in his journal that, disobedient to the Fugitive Slave Law, on at least one occasion he helped a slave escape into Canada. While John Brown was in prison awaiting execution, Thoreau made a speech in Brown's behalf at Concord, and again at Boston and at Worcester to unsympathetic audiences. In his famous "Plea for Captain John Brown" he said, "It was his peculiar doctrine that a man has a perfect right to interfere by force with the slaveholder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree with him." Thoreau is the best example in American literature of the extremely individualistic position: that a man must do what he believes to be right with utter disregard for the conventions of society and the laws of the state.

Emerson was as individualistic in theory, though in practice a good deal more amenable to laws and conventions. Nor did he have the crusading spirit of Thoreau. He was nevertheless an active opponent of slavery after 1850, and like Thoreau, he spoke publicly in defense of John Brown. The high point of his participation in public affairs came on January 1, 1863, when he read the "Boston Hymn" at a meeting to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation and was interrupted by the cheering crowd at the famous lines:

> Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
> And ever was. Pay *him.*

Alone among the great New England writers, Hawthorne did not give his approval to the antislavery movement. Possibly, from the Calvinistic point of view, chattel slavery seemed not the greatest of evils: all mankind were victims of a worse bondage—the bondage of sin. He was distrustful of reforms and reformers. reformers were likely to be impractical fanatics; reforms were superficial and as often as not proposed remedies which were worse than the disease. After the manner of the old Puritans, he believed that an inscrutable Providence would bring about the needed reform "at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it." Furthermore, as a loyal member of the Democratic party of James K. Polk and Franklin Pierce, Hawthorne subscribed to the conventional party arguments that (1) slavery was entitled to recognition and protection under the Constitution; (2) the Union was threatened with disruption by the activities of the abolitionists; and (3) the welfare and happiness of the Negro himself would be jeopardized by his emancipation. During the Civil War he found his position as a Northern Democrat embarrassing; he was looked at askance by friends and neighbors. He did not, however, join those Northern Democrats, known as Copperheads, who opposed the prosecution of the War and advocated a return to the *status quo ante bellum.* "I always thought that the War should have been avoided," he wrote in 1863, "although since it has broken out, I have longed for military success as much as any man or woman of the North." Devoted as he was to the older Union established by the founding fathers, he felt in 1863 that the permanent separation of North and South was inevitable, and persuaded himself "to be content with half the soil that was once our broad inheritance." He did not live to see the end of the War.

SCIENCE and HUMAN PROGRESS

Natural science advanced with remarkable rapidity in the nineteenth century, and its effects became more and more pervasive. In England—to mention only two of many notable publications in the scientific field—Sir Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830) established the antiquity of the earth and the gradual evolution of its surface, and Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) presented the theory of the evolution of man through a process of natural selection. In New England, as well as elsewhere in America, scientific activity in all of the fields kept pace with developments in the Old World. Benjamin Silliman at Yale published his *Elements of Chemistry* in 1830; Asa Gray at Harvard brought out a notable *Survey of Botany in the Northern United States* in 1847; Louis Agassiz of Switzerland began in 1846 a distinguished career at Harvard in the field of comparative zoölogy. The Harvard Astronomical Observatory in 1846 was equipped with the world's largest telescope; and in 1847 the American Association for the Advancement of Science was organized in Boston in order "to promote intercourse between American scientists, to give a strong and more systematic impulse to research, and to procure for the labors of scientific men increased facilities and wider usefulness." New England

writers were aware of scientific developments, and their writings reflect, in various ways and degrees, the influence of the new facts and the new theories of experimental science.

Emerson greeted the scientific movement with enthusiasm. "One of the distinctions of our century," he wrote, "has been the devotion of cultivated men to natural science; the benefits thence derived to the arts and to civilization are signal and immense." Late in life he declared, "If absolute leisure were offered me, I should run to the college or the scientific school which offered the best lectures on Geology, Chemistry, Minerals, and Botany." Although one cannot be sure that Emerson read all of the scientists to whom he refers in his writings, his scientific reading was remarkably wide and certainly included, among other things, the works of Newton, Linnæus, Buffon, Lamarck, Lyell, Gray, Agassiz, and Darwin. But Emerson was not himself a scientist, nor was he interested in science for its own sake. Science was of value to him for the moral and spiritual implications which scientific fact and theory suggested to his mind—a quite unscientific reason. He liked to draw illustrations of spiritual truth from physical phenomena ("The axioms of physics translate the law of ethics," he said), and his pages abound in analogies between natural and spiritual laws. He was delighted, furthermore, by the doctrine of evolution, particularly by the earlier evolutionary theory of Lamarck, which seemed to him to confirm his optimistic hope for mankind. Paraphrasing Lamarck, he wrote as a motto for *Nature:*

> And striving to be man, the worm
> Mounts through all the spires of form.

If the worm might become man, if the caterpillar might evolve into a philosopher, then the future of the constantly evolving human race became glorious to contemplate.

Thoreau's relation to science was much more intimate than Emerson's Thoreau was interested in nature for its own sake quite as much as for its Transcendental meanings. A student of botany and zoölogy, he liked to use the Latin names of plants and animals when he wrote about them. He sent to Agassiz for identification specimens of fishes and turtles, some of which were unknown to the Harvard professor. Thoreau did not have, however, either the equipment or the temperament of the genuine scientist. He did not go beyond description of behavior and classification. He would not murder to dissect. A hawk could be best studied, he maintained, not as a "dead specimen," but free and soaring above the fields. In short, Thoreau was, to use the phrase of his friend Ellery Channing (a nephew of William Ellery Channing), "the *poet*-naturalist."

Among the Brahmins, Longfellow and Lowell gave little attention to science, though Longfellow shared the general faith in the contributions of science to human progress. Lowell, on one occasion, twitted the Darwinians upon their arrogant assumption that evolution had supplanted God in the modern world (see his "Credidimus Jovem Regnare"). A third Brahmin, however, achieved a real distinction in science. Oliver Wendell Holmes studied medicine in Paris. From 1847 to 1882 he was professor of anatomy and physiology in the Harvard Medical School. His most famous contribution to medical science was his essay on "The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever" (1843), which materially aided the efforts of the medical profession to reduce the mortality of women in childbirth. Holmes' medical training gave him a scientific approach to his literary subjects. He became particularly interested in the problem of the bearing of heredity upon moral responsibility, which is the subject of his novel *Elsie Venner* (1861) and of other writings He stated the problem as follows in the Preface to the novel:

> Was Elsie Venner, poisoned by the venom of a crotalus [rattlesnake] before she was born, morally responsible for the 'volitional' aberrations, which translated into acts become what is known as sin, and, it may be, what is punished as crime? If, on presentation of the evidence, she becomes by the verdict of the human conscience a proper object of divine pity and not of divine wrath, as a subject of moral poisoning, wherein lies the difference between her position at the bar of judgment, human or divine, and that of the unfortunate victim who received a moral poison from a remote ancestor before he drew his first breath?

Holmes anticipated by at least a generation the approach of modern neurology. The author of many volumes

of novels, essays, and verse, he nevertheless considered his article on childbed fever his best title to fame.

Hawthorne, once again, is found perversely at odds with this self-confident, progressive, optimistic age. He discovered a danger in the new emphasis upon experimental science. In "Rappaccini's Daughter" (p. 525), in "Ethan Brand," and elsewhere, he examined the scientist and discovered that the scientist had been dehumanized. Of Dr. Rappaccini, "as true a man of science as ever distilled his own heart in an alembic," Hawthorne wrote: "His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge." Likewise, Ethan Brand, a scientist in the field of experimental psychology, became "a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment"; he "lost his hold of the magnetic chain of humanity"; he became "a fiend." Hawthorne seemed to think that the exclusive cultivation of the scientific faculty produces atrophy of soul, and creates and lets loose in the world an agent which is "fiendish" because utterly unmoral and irresponsible. The mid-nineteenth century did not take the warning seriously, failed sometimes even to recognize it. Now, a hundred years later, Hawthorne's point becomes more plainly perceptible.

HERMAN MELVILLE: EXPLORER of the WORLD and ENIGMAS

After a boyhood in New York City and Albany, a voyage to Liverpool, three years in the South Seas, a brief second residence in New York City, and a journey to London and Paris, the much-traveled Herman Melville settled in 1850, at the age of thirty-one, at "Arrowhead" near Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Obviously he was not a product of Massachusetts or a part of the literary movement of New England. But his Massachusetts residence, which lasted, with interruptions for other travels, for more than twenty years, brought him within the sphere of influence of the New England Renaissance. He met in the Berkshires many of the New England writers and struck up a stimulating and sympathetic friendship with Hawthorne, who in 1850-1851 resided at near-by Lenox. It is significant that Melville wrote his greatest book, *Moby Dick,* during the months of his close association with Hawthorne and that he dedicated the book to Hawthorne.

For like Hawthorne, Melville was concerned with the darker side of human fate. Both insisted upon the reality of evil in the world; both were skeptical of the optimism of Emerson and his benevolent theory of the Universe; both presented the tragedies of the mind and soul. Hawthorne agreed with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* where man is represented as going through life weighed down by a burden of sin. Melville called Ecclesiastes "the truest of all books . . . the fine hammered steel of woe."

Melville dwelt much upon the evil in the world. He had seen at first hand the brutality of ship captains, the depravity of Old World cities, the vices brought to the South Sea islanders by "civilized" invaders. More than that, evil appeared triumphant (as in *Pierre*), even when man's motives were virtuous. Why, Melville asked, did a good God—if indeed He is good—permit evil in His world? Melville could not accept the Universe with as much resignation as his friend Hawthorne. He persisted in challenging the sphinx riddle, courageously, defiantly.

In *Moby Dick,* which is a compendium of Melville's metaphysical speculation, Captain Ahab relentlessly pursues the White Whale only to be destroyed in the end. The allegory is susceptible of many interpretations. To Ahab "all evil was visibly personified and made practically assailable in Moby Dick." Ahab, however, is not the embodiment of unmixed good: his conduct is irrational and foolhardy; it is contrary to the well-being of others; it is motivated by revenge. Elsewhere, Ahab (and perhaps Melville) saw in Moby Dick "outrageous strength with an inscrutable malice sinewing it," and he hated chiefly the *inscrutability* of the whale. The story perhaps represents man's hopeless but heroic attempt to search out the inscrutable, to know the unknowable; the tragedy of man becomes the tragedy of his limited comprehension. But whatever the interpretation—and each reader must make his own, for the allegory with its countless ramifications is too complex to admit of a simple, categorical definition—Melville's Ahab, like Ethan Brand and other characters of Hawthorne, becomes completely obsessed with this one pursuit and sacrifices everything else to it. If the tragedy of man is his inability to possess complete knowledge of himself and

his destiny, Ahab's tragedy is his monomania, the narrow range of his interests.

Melville's chief concern was with the profound enigmas—the nature of God and man, the mystery of "Providence, Foreknowledge, Will and Fate"—and like Milton's philosophers he "found no end, in wandering mazes lost." He was not, however, indifferent to the more mundane problems of modern society, and scattered through his works one finds abundant evidence of his awareness of contemporary social questions.

His own observation of tyranny on shipboard and the exploitation of the native population on the Pacific islands had awakened in him a flaming passion for social justice in a truly democratic society. This passion expressed itself angrily in *White Jacket,* where he condemned the naval practice of flogging, and philosophically and satirically in *Mardi,* where he surveyed much of the nineteenth-century world.

The latter book is of special importance for the student of Melville's social ideas with reference to his own country. He was critical of America's faults. "Vivenza [the United States] was a braggadocio": boastfulness was getting to be a national habit; after all, God should be given some credit for our mountains and rivers. The existence of slavery nullified our noble *Declaration of Independence.* The war against Mexico was foisted upon the nation by the imperialistic action of the President. The California of the gold rush was a "golden Hell." And speaking more radically, Melville pointed out the incompleteness of our freedom: political freedom alone was not enough, for "freedom is more social than political." But despite these and many other imperfections, the young American democracy inspired in Melville an ardent faith. The West was a source of fresh hope—Westerners "were a fine young tribe; like strong new wine they worked violently in becoming clear." "In its better aspect," he declared, "Vivenza was a noble land": "Like a young tropic tree she stood, laden down with greenness, myriad blossoms, and the ripened fruit thick-hanging from one bough. She was promising as the morning. Or Vivenza might be likened to St. John, feeding on locusts and wild honey, and with prophetic voice, crying to the nations from the wilderness. Or, childlike, standing among the old robed kings and emperors of the Archipelago, Vivenza seemed a young Messiah, to whose discourse the bearded Rabbis bowed."

Like Hawthorne, Melville was a philosophical pessimist and a political optimist. It was possible to believe in original sin and still be a democrat.

THE OLD SOUTH—In OPPOSITION

Religious questions were not nearly so vital in Southern literature as in the literature of New England and in the writings of Melville. Southern writers, in general, did not concern themselves with spiritual laws, like Emerson; or with the remorse for sin, like Hawthorne; or with metaphysical speculation, like Melville. Indeed, in religious matters the cultivated Southerner was likely to be tolerant to the point of indifference. John Pendleton Kennedy's account of Frank Meriwether in *Swallow Barn* (p. 590) may be regarded as fairly typical of the gentry of the Old South:

> If my worthy cousin be somewhat over-argumentative as a politician, he restores the equilibrium of his character by a considerate coolness in religious matters. He piques himself upon being a high-churchman, but is not the most diligent frequenter of places of worship, and very seldom permits himself to get into a dispute upon points of faith. If Mr. Chub, the Presbyterian tutor in the family, ever succeeds in drawing him into this field, as he occasionally has the address to do Meriwether is sure to fly the course; he gets puzzled with scripture names, and makes some odd mistakes between Peter and Paul, and then generally turns the parson over to his wife, who, he says, has an astonishing memory.

Good form, however, required a decent respect for the outward observances of religion. Among the aristocracy, the Episcopal Church was the best form; the Presbyterian, though less good, was socially acceptable; the revivalistic evangelism of the Methodists and Baptists flourished on the frontiers west of Charleston and Richmond.

The Puritan, as in *The Yemassee,* was likely to be thought a disagreeable fellow—crabbed in temperament, morbid in the pursuit of virtue. William Gilmore Simms preferred the Cavalier type. If religious ideas became articulate in the Charleston of Simms or the Baltimore of Kennedy, they were likely to take on a ration-

alistic, eighteenth-century flavor. The following statement by Kennedy, written on his sixty-fifth birthday, might have come from Franklin or Jefferson: "I endeavor to avoid the uncharitableness of sectarian opinion, and maintain an equal mind toward the various forms in which an earnest piety shapes the divisions of the world of believers,—tolerating honest differences as the right of all sincere thinkers, and looking only to the kindly nature of Christian principle as it influences the personal lives and conduct of men, as the substantial and true test of a sound religion."

Politics, however, were quite another matter. The Old South had a genius for politics, and nothing delighted the Charleston lawyer or the Virginia planter more than a political discussion. The hero of *Swallow Barn* was a Jeffersonian Democrat who supported the rights of the states against "the ambitious designs of the general government" and preferred the agrarianism of the South to the mercantilism and industrialism of the North. In early life Kennedy doubtless agreed with his hero; but he later opposed the new Jacksonian Democracy, satirizing it vigorously in *Quodlibet.* As a result of his growing connections with the business interests of Baltimore, he abandoned his early Jeffersonian principles, became a Whig advocate of the protective tariff for manufactures, and ended as a staunch Unionist and Republican.

Simms' political course was the reverse of Kennedy's. Whereas the latter began as a states' rights man and became a Unionist, Simms began as a Unionist and became an ardent champion of states' rights. New occasions teach new duties, Simms might have said. When he opposed nullification in South Carolina in 1832, he was supporting Old Hickory and the issue was the tariff. When he advocated nullification in South Carolina twenty years later, he was supporting Calhoun and the issue was slavery.

Although Simms was more democratic in his sympathies than Kennedy—possibly because of his youthful experiences on the Southwestern frontier, the Jackson country—the two men were agreed in the belief that the business of government belonged in the abler hands of the ruling class, which was ordinarily the planter aristocracy. Considerations of wisdom, prudence, and efficiency seemed to them to dictate such a view. As to the subject races—the Indian and the Negro—writers like Kennedy and Simms believed that their state of subjection argued their intrinsic inferiority to the whites and that the white superiors of the blacks should maintain them in humane tutelage until some distant time when emancipation might prove feasible. Kennedy no doubt agreed with his Virginia planter who said in the 1820's, "The question of emancipation is exclusively our own, and every intermeddling with it from abroad will but mar its chance of success." He painted a disarming picture of the master-slave relationship at Swallow Barn, where he found "an air of contentment and good humor and kind family attachment." He looked forward to gradual emancipation and the possible success of colonizing experiments. Simms' view was substantially the same in 1835, as his treatment of the subject in *The Yemassee* suggests. His later violent championship of slavery as "a wisely devised institution of heaven" can be understood only in the light of the sectional controversy of the 1850's, the literature of which is deferred until the next chapter.

Despite democratic sympathies discoverable in the works of Emerson, Hawthorne, Melville, Simms, and other writers of the period, the complete champion of the common man, irrespective of race, does not appear in American literature before Whitman. R.S.

II. Literary Trends

FOREIGN and DOMESTIC IMPULSES

The period of 1829-1860 was rich not only in ideas but also in artistic expression. Although New England produced more than its share of great artists, other sections also nurtured authors of whom they might well have been proud. The South was represented notably by such a fine novelist as William Gilmore Simms and by several minor fiction writers; the Southwest by a great group of humorists. Both the South and the East were the background for Edgar Allan Poe, who, though he has been considered in the preceding chapter as a transitional figure, flourished in the 1830's and 1840's. New York was represented by Herman Melville, whose best fiction ranks with the finest our country has produced, and also

by a preëminent poet, Walt Whitman. The consideration of Whitman, whose notable career began near the end of this period, in 1855, and extended until 1892, we postpone until later.

In designating this period the American Renaissance, critics have had in mind, doubtless, certain similarities it had to the English Renaissance. The English period, which preceded the American by about two and a half centuries, had produced a host of great writers and literary masterpieces. In the literary productions, whether they were created by giants such as Marlowe, Spenser, and Shakespeare or by lesser men, two impulses had been operative, one foreign and the other native. The exciting discovery of foreign literary works, both old and new, had accounted in part for such works as Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* based upon the *Lives* by the Greek biographer-historian Plutarch (translated by North in 1579), and for his *Othello,* derived from an Italian *novella* by Cinthio which had first appeared during Shakespeare's lifetime. The patriotic enthusiasm of the day, which had soared during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, found expression in Shakespeare's historical plays such as *Henry IV* and *Henry V* as well as in many of his dramas with foreign settings.

Similarly, during the American Renaissance both foreign and domestic influences, old and new, were notable. Respectful study of ancient and contemporary foreign works and travel abroad, which acquainted authors with European culture, left their marks upon not only the stuff but also the form of our literature. At the same time, proud of their unique democratic system and of the vast nation whose beauty and strength they were coming to know, many authors recounted the history of their land and attempted to depict accurately native scenes and characters.

THE ESSAY—A STANDARD FORM TAKES ON NEW QUALITIES

In this period, as in the preceding one, the essay was an important literary form; but a combination of old and new influences, as well as the personal predilections of each author, gave the type distinctive qualities.

Lowell: Critical, Reminiscent

Of the famous Massachusetts men, perhaps the nearest to traditional essayists was James Russell Lowell. Yet the patterns he followed obviously were not those of abstract, relatively impersonal essays such as some British authors had written in the eighteenth century. What he wrote was, as a rule, quite personal. A large share of his prose, that which dealt with issues of the day—candidacies, governmental policies, political theories—might have appeared in newspapers and did appear in magazines which took stands on current affairs.

Such prose, however, though it served its purpose well in its time, has interest now for political rather than literary historians. The prose by Lowell most important as literature is critical or reminiscent—"Shakespeare," "Keats" (p. 422), "Emerson," or "A Good Word for Winter," and the like. In both critical and reminiscent essays an important factor is the revelation of Lowell's personality—his wit, his learning, his enthusiasm, his sensitivity, his novel way of putting things. One of his volumes bore a title which might have been used for many—"Fireside Travels." He wrote as if he were putting down on paper the sort of talk an informed professor, blessed with a good sense of humor, might deliver to an intelligent college student who had dropped in for an evening chat by the library fire in Elmwood. Lowell poured out enthusiasms, drove home points by unctuously quoting now and then from old books pulled down from towering tiers of shelves, frolicked with classical allusions or Latin quotations, rolled felicitous phrases over his tongue. In particular, Lowell was a master of the epigram—a condensation of his observation and judgment into witty or striking phrases and sentences. Despite some unevenness in his achievements, Lowell did admirable work in the field of the personal essay.

Holmes: Conversational, *Spectator*-like

Holmes, like Howell, wrote much prose of a frankly utilitarian kind, in his case prose which made use of the doctor's scientific interests and training. Whatever such writing contributed to the thought of the period—and many believe that it contributed a great deal—the work in prose which showed Holmes at his inimitable best was more like the informal talk of a New England drawing room or boarding house than like a lecture delivered in the medical school. Such work took the unique form employed in the *Breakfast-Table* series (p. 396).

Literature which Holmes knew as a boy did its part to shape his essays. He was fond of remarking how much it had meant to him to have been born and reared "among books and those who knew what was in books," to have

had a chance, as a youngster, to page through first editions of eighteenth-century classics in the large library which his forbears had collected. "All men are afraid of books," he claimed, "who have not handled them from infancy." The form of his essays had its parallels with those written in the period with which he felt a spiritual kinship—the eighteenth century. This had been the period of his boyhood idols, Addison and Steele, authors of *The Spectator,* which as *The New Yorker* of its day reviewed, laughed at, or philosophized about people and events of eighteenth-century London.

The Autocrat, the Professor, and the Poet of Holmes' series were Spectators commenting upon contemporary manners; and boarding-house society, like the club to which the Spectator had belonged, was "very luckily composed of such persons as were engaged in different ways of life, and deputed as it were out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind." Sketches introduced characters in such a way as to catch *Spectator*-like types—the landlady's daughter, for instance: "(Aet. 19+. Tender-eyed blonde. Long ringlets. Cameo pin. Gold pencil-case on a chain. Locket. Bracelet. Album. Autograph book. Accordeon. Reads Byron, Tupper, and Sylvanus Cobb, Junior, while her mother makes the puddings. Says 'Yes?' when you tell her anything.)" Essays in the form of conversation—dialogues—had been used frequently in the eighteenth century: by Shaftesbury to comment upon ethics; by Berkeley, on philosophy; by Hume, on natural religion; and by Franklin, on a variety of subjects. In a similar manner the *Autocrat* papers record many conversations of the boarding-house members. James Boswell (1740-1795) had reported the sparkling talk and what Holmes called the "bow-wow manner" of autocratic Samuel Johnson; and Holmes acknowledged indebtedness to this model in the subtitle of the *Autocrat*—"Every Man His Own Boswell." In *Tristram Shandy* (1759) Laurence Sterne had recorded meandering talk interspersed with personal essays and punctuated with dashes in a manner foreshadowing Holmes' eccentric punctuation.

Nineteenth-century publications, nevertheless, probably suggested several devices which gave the *Autocrat* papers novelty. Possibly the magazine or the annual (which first achieved remarkable popularity in this period), with its alternation of story, essay, and poems, suggested a similar intermingling of types. The dramatic interplay of personalities common to fiction may have suggested the author's habit of giving his conversations a dramatic quality and of running a plot (like one in a magazine serial story) through his papers. Like Lowell, Holmes no doubt followed the example of nineteenth-century English essayists—such as Lamb and Hazlitt—in talking intimately of his life, his personal prejudices, his feelings. His Autocrat is, in effect, Holmes airing many of his own views to fellow boarders. "He was a well-behaved gentleman at table," testified the Autocrat's landlady, "only talked a good deal, and pretty loud sometimes, and had a way of turnin' up his nose when he didn't like what folks said. . . . Many's the time I've seen that gentleman keepin' two or three of the boarders settin' round the breakfast table after the rest had swallered their meal, and things was cleared off . . . and there the little man would set . . . a-talkin' and a-talkin',—and sometimes he would laugh, and sometimes the tears would come into his eyes. . . . He was a master hand to talk when he got a-goin'."

Thoreau and Emerson: Philosophical, Transcendental

A kind of discourse distantly related to informal talk left its imprint upon Thoreau's prose works, whether short pieces or longer ones in which numerous essays were linked, such as *Walden* (p. 490). For Thoreau kept a detailed journal (see p. 498) in which, from day to day, he set down his experiences, observations, and thoughts; from this he drew materials relevant to his essays, as needed. These diaries were written with artistic care, the passages in them were carefully integrated with other parts of essays in which they were used, and the sentences were scrupulously polished, so that in the end there was less improvisation than there perhaps appeared to be. In learning to shape sentences to his needs—by studying the metaphysical poets, by translating Greek dramas and passages from Greek poets, by aping English prose masters—Thoreau became indebted to earlier authors. "Every sentence," he wrote, with these models in mind, "is the result of long probation, and should be read as if its author, had he held a plough instead of a pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight to the end."

Since the conveying of rich personal experience and meaning by straight-furrow expressions was, in Thoreau's opinion, the chief task of the writer, what shaped his prose style more than anything else was his philosophy. To see what Thoreau was trying to do, the

ing led him to care little for strictly scientific writing. He attempted, instead, in his finished works, to write in the rôle of a philosopher. The scientist, according to Transcendental beliefs, recorded the workings of the mere intellect—the "Understanding." The great writer, the man of vision, by contrast, recorded the discoveries of a faculty above mind and more important—the "Imagination" or the "Reason," which intuitively perceived in natural objects the truth of which they were symbols. Said Thoreau:

> It is the subject of the vision, the truth alone, that concerns me. The philosopher for whom rainbows, etc., can be explained never saw them. With regard to such objects, I find that it is not they themselves [with which men of science deal] that concern me; the point of interest is somewhere *between* me and them [i.e., the objects]. . . .

Seeing the inner meanings of natural phenomena, the great writer employed those phenomena, Thoreau believed, to communicate those meanings. "My thought," he explained, "is a part of the meaning of the world, and hence I use a part of the world to express my thought."

When he filled his pages with vivid details, he attempted to present them so as to make them illuminating in the Transcendental sense: he wanted to see and set down particular instances of the universal law so that readers might find his own sense of "reality"—the higher kind—in them. His stay at Walden was a search for basic truths, "for the essential facts of life," and his circumstantial record of the stay (or more precisely of an ideal stay based upon sixteen years of records in his journal) was an attempt to convey his insights in meaningful symbols. And elsewhere than in *Walden* his constant practice was to show the eternally true in terms of the particular. "There was an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him the material world as a means and a symbol," wrote Emerson. "To him there was no such thing as size. The pond was a small ocean; the Atlantic, a large Walden Pond." Thus certain that the small stood for the large, Thoreau expounded higher meanings here and there in his writings by using paradoxes or philosophical generalizations, but

Emerson, though extraordinarily concrete for a philosopher, was more abstract than Thoreau. "In reading Thoreau," he said, "I find the same thought, the same spirit that is in me, but he takes a step beyond and illustrates by excellent images that which I should have conveyed in a sleepy generality." Trained in the composition of sermons and lectures, Emerson, in speeches such as "The Divinity School Address" and in essays often largely derived from his lectures, had the interest that preachers and lecturers frequently have in generalizing, in following lines of reasoning. Perhaps it is not inaccurate to say that while Thoreau's emphasis was particularly upon concrete things, Emerson's emphasis was upon philosophical relationships.

Emerson set forth what he conceived to be the task of the philosopher in his study of his idol Plato: it was to follow the natural course of the mind as it related the One which was the Oversoul to the Many, or as it related the Many to the One.

> The mind [he wrote] is urged to ask for one cause of many effects; then for the cause of that; and again the cause . . . self-assured that it will arrive at an absolute and sufficient one,—a one that shall be all . . . . Urged by an opposite necessity, the mind returns from the one to that which is not one, but . . . many; from cause to effect; and affirms the necessary existence of variety, the self-existence of both, as each is involved in the other. These strictly-blended elements it is the problem of thought to separate and reconcile.

Such was the idea Emerson had of the method of his essays, and a reader who has a great deal of patience and some skill in dialectic can, indeed, see that the essays are constructed according to this pattern.* Most readers, however, will not care to follow the involvements of his peculiar Transcendental structure. They will find that, though some of Emerson's essays have organizations such as they have seen in other compositions, most appear to lack coherence and unity. These readers will

* For some analyses of Emerson's essays according to this principle, see W. T. Harris, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," Atlantic, 1882, CL, 238-252 • Walter Blair and Clarence Faust, "Emerson's Literary Method," Modern Philology, 1944, XLII, 79-95

agree with Carlyle's remarks to Emerson in a letter about the *First Series of Essays:*

> The sentences . . . did not . . . always entirely cohere for me. Pure genuine Saxon; strong and simple; of a clearness, of a beauty—But they did not, sometimes, rightly stick to their foregoers and their followers: the paragraph not as a beaten *ingot,* but as a beautiful square *bag of duckshot* held together by canvas!

For them, the virtue of the essays will be found chiefly in individual sentences—sentences excellent for their extraordinary proverbial quality, for their compact expression of profound thoughts. Even such small units as sentences, however, show that Emerson, like other essayists of his day, combined old materials and methods with newly discovered ones which particularly appealed to him, thereby making his own purposeful writing seem a new thing.

AMERICAN FICTION COMES Into ITS OWN

When authors of the prewar period wrote fiction, they were inclined to consider carefully whether the setting of their narratives should be remote or near at hand in both time and space. Both kinds of settings were popular in the literature which was generally admired. German and British Gothic romances—or tales of terror—utilizing exotic backgrounds were extremely popular; so were Sir Walter Scott's historical novels, the last of which appeared in 1832. Across the ocean, in addition, flourished fiction which portrayed the manners and talk of common folk. This fiction had a large audience in the United States: England's Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849) and Charles Dickens (1812-1870), who wrote about common folk, were perhaps the most popular authors in this country—native authors included—during this period. When our authors told stories, they adapted both types of settings and characterizations to their own purposes.

Hawthorne: Romance and Allegory

Poe's aim, to create "a certain unique or single effect," led him, it will be recalled, to subordinate everything in the tale to the effect—setting, characterization, incidents, and tone or style. In so doing, he skillfully utilized characteristic backgrounds, characters, and incidents of Gothic romance. But Poe believed that the most soul-stirring effect could be achieved by blurred rather than precise details. Here, of course, he differed from Hawthorne, whom he greatly admired and at times rather badly misread—differed, as a matter of fact, from most New Englanders. In this period, one who saw a Yankee village from a distance noticed first of all the tidy white-spired churches which were an important and recurrent motif in the quiet green landscape—a motif which stood for a great force in the life of the section. Founded by zealots, New England for decades had produced moralizing literature, and it continued to produce it even when its authors wrote fiction. For Hawthorne, preëminent among New England fictionists, the theme of the tale was tremendously important. Although the Gothic influence was almost as pronounced with Hawthorne as it was with Poe and though sentimental fiction and allegorical narrative shaped his fiction, these devices were subordinated to Hawthorne's own New England purpose.

As has frequently been noticed, paraphernalia of the tale of terror—animated ancestral portraits, fiendlike villains, men who sold their souls to the devil, witches, unnatural portents—figured notably in this author's tales and novels. The influence of sentimental fiction, too, is clear—even in such a masterpiece as *The Scarlet Letter.* The penalty of seduction, a chief stock-in-trade of the sentimentalists of this frequently sentimental period, is the chief substance of this great romance. A typical character of the fiction of sensibility—a child bringing sunshine into the home and gently leading parents to virtue—is little Pearl, an important character in the work. The misled feminist and the ministering angel popular in fourth-rate novels are combined in the portrayal of Hester. Calvinistic villainy common in sentimental fiction was bestowed upon Chillingworth. The sensibility of the minister and his dying glimpses of heavenly glory are hackneyed motifs in the sentimental pattern. And in the tales, as in the longer works, one familiar with the fiction of feeling will see its stuff used by Hawthorne.

From childhood, in addition, Hawthorne had read with much pleasure a type of fiction not of his own time so much as of the distant past—the allegorical narrative. When in 1843 he listed the authors he considered most notable, it is significant that along with such conventional choices as Homer, Cervantes, Shakespeare, and Milton

he named masters of fable and allegory: Aesop, Ariosto, Spenser, and "Bunyan, moulded of homeliest clay, but instinct with celestial fire." Other influences in addition to his liking for these authors encouraged him to borrow from them. Like Emerson, he had philosophical ideas about the artist's duty to give meaning to natural objects when he depicts them. The artist, he felt, cannot exactly reproduce the grandeur of nature which itself suggested truth. His "only resource," he decided, was to substitute something "that may stand instead of and suggest the truth." His Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* (p. 540) suggested that a great advantage of a Romance was that it "has fairly a right to present . . . truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the author's own choosing or creation." This truth, moreover, might be the unifying element. "In all my stories, I think," he remarked, "there is one idea running through them like an iron rod, and to which all other ideas are referred and subordinate. . . ." Lowell's comment noted the same sort of ideational unity: "It is commonly true of Hawthorne's romances," he said, "that the interest centres in one strongly defined protagonist,—perhaps we should rather say a ruling Idea, of which all the characters are fragmentary embodiments."

Subtly adapted devices of allegorical fiction—for the portrayal of background, the depiction of character, and the selection of incidents—made possible Hawthorne's amalgamation of Gothic and sentimental elements in truly impressive fiction. Reminiscent of Spenser's Forest of Error or Bower of Bliss, in which many details of background are made to stand for the author's concepts, is Hawthorne's description of the exotic garden in "Rappaccini's Daughter" (p. 525). Characters, too, are made embodiments of ideas according to allegorical formulas. Sometimes older allegorists, for instance, associated significant articles or details of dress with a character: in *Pilgrim's Progress* Christian always labors under his heavy burden; in *The Faerie Queene* the knight has his "bloudie crosse." In "The Minister's Black Veil" (p. 506) Hooper wears his puzzling but meaningful bit of crepe. Again, older allegorists at times showed physical deformities which betokened spiritual deformities, as in the cases of Bunyan's Giant Despair and Spenser's Malbecco. Similarly, Hawthorne ingeniously conceived symbolic attributes of characters to signify their import: the gleaming smile of Minister Hooper and the perfume of Beatrice, to cite only two examples.

"The Artist of the Beautiful" (p. 513) both embodies and expounds Hawthorne's critical theory. The story treats, as its author says, "the troubled life of those who strive to create the beautiful," and the opening paragraph establishes a contrast—between the artist, working in bright light, and the thwarters of the artist, standing in darkness—which is important throughout the tale. Warland, who is given the attributes of the eternal artist, is the creator of a butterfly in the beauty of which is "represented the intellect, the sensibility, the soul" of such a creator. Each of the other characters is, in one way or another, a thwarter of the artist, and each is so presented as to signify one of the hostile forces which work against art. All the details, images, and happenings in the tale are richly fused with the meaning—and this fusion is highly typical of the unique art which Hawthorne discovered for himself.

Melville: Symbol and Actuality

In 1850 Hawthorne and Melville, living a few miles apart but not yet personally acquainted, read one another's writings and found them good. What each author said about the other indicates likenesses and differences. Melville admired Hawthorne for confronting the darker aspects of life. Hawthorne wrote: "I have read Melville's works with progressive appreciation of the author. No writer ever put reality before the reader more unflinchingly than he does in *Redburn* and *White Jacket*. *Mardi* is a rich book, with depths here and there that compel a man to swim for his life. It is so good that one scarcely pardons the writer for not having brooded long over it, so as to make it a good deal better."

Clearly there was a kinship between Melville and Hawthorne in artistry as well as in philosophy. Both thought that the theme of a fictional work—that which is more than surface meaning—was very important. Both thought that an author should manipulate imagery, characterization, and plot to convey his ideas. But Hawthorne indicated a difference when he complained that his neighbor had not "brooded" enough over his material. Melville's fiction, if we may employ Hawthorne's terms, did not subdue "the Actual." "He felt instinctively," as William Ellery Sedgwick asserts in

Herman Melville, "that the effective use of a fact as symbol, having both inward and outward reference, depended on the preservation of its outward reality." Melville's aim—comparable with the way of writing which Hawthorne contrasted with his own achievement in the Preface to *The Scarlet Letter*—was "to diffuse thought and imagination through the opaque substance of today, and thus to make it a bright transparency . . . to seek, resolutely, the true and indestructible value that lay hidden in the petty and wearisome incidents, and ordinary characters. . . ." Though Hawthorne could not thus simultaneously convey meaning and a sense of actuality, he could admire others who were able to, since he recognized that writing of this type achieved an objective similar to his own in a contrasting fashion.

Mardi is perhaps not the best illustration of Melville's typical procedure. Despite Hawthorne's criticism, this work is probably closer to the New Englander's conception of "the Romance" (p. 540) than anything else Melville wrote. Romance though it is, it includes many more earthy details than Hawthorne would ever have been likely to insert into a typical piece of fiction. And when one turns to other, more typical, works by Melville —works in which he presents many particular and vivid details, based on fact and experience, representing the everyday lives of seamen—the contrast becomes very clear. His selection and presentation of such facts made them actual, near at hand rather than remote, and at the same time meaningful. "Benito Cereno" (p. 550)—not only one of Melville's most typical stories but also one of his best—is a good example. Based as it is upon a first-hand account of Captain Delano's real experience, it loses little of its factuality when it is transformed into fiction. At the same time the changes in the nature of the details and in the structure of the narrative make possible the development of a significant theme.

Simms: Romance and Reality

The portrayal of real life without much philosophizing was the purpose of several fictionists contemporary with Melville. Some of these clearly patterned their work after Washington Irving and his school: these filled "sketchbooks" with little pictures of life in a section. They combined charm of manner with truth to the pleasanter aspects of life.

William Gilmore Simms, down in the South, belonged to a somewhat sturdier tradition. According to his own avowal, Simms tried to adhere to "real life" in presenting man, not only in his happier moods but in "all his phases." Influenced by Cooper and Scott, however, in many of his novels he turned his attention to the past. Furthermore, he unfortunately followed the example of his models in creating a number of colorless heroines and stuffy heroes. Nevertheless, in presenting the comic Porgy and a scattering of poor whites and in describing Southern scenes, he did manage to infuse a good deal of reality into his pages.

HORSE SENSE and HUMOR

Still it remained for the humorists of the day, both Northern and Southwestern, to get the largest amount of common life into their depictions. Their technique for showing scenes of ordinary life was, in important ways, the freshest of the period. So far did the humor of the Southwest move in the direction of realism, as a matter of fact, that the editors have placed it in a later chapter, where its value in preparing for postwar realism may be clearly shown.

The ancestry of the New England humorists of the day, an outstanding group, is to be traced less directly to the eighteenth-century wits who inspired Holmes than to the portrayers of American character in almanacs, tales, and travel books of the nineteenth century. Scott's fiction, too, with its representation of low characters by the depiction of manners, dress, and speech, had some value as a model for these limners of folk indigenous to a particular part of the country.

Preachments figured in the writings of almost all the most notable Northern humorists. Seba Smith led the group to see the great possibilities of humorous writing with a purpose when, in 1830, he launched his creation, Jack Downing, upon a career destined to last (with some interruptions) until the eve of the Civil War. In letters which he wrote to the homefolk or to newspaper editors, Smith's character Jack told of his adventures in politics, and now and then one of the family would write Jack news of how things were going back in Downingville. Since Jack purportedly spent a great deal of time with leading public men in Washington, on the battle front during the Mexican War, and in the European

capitals, many interesting things about current controversies turned up in the letters.

So wide a following did Jack gain that many New England humorists, following his example, created Down East characters. And when, in the days of the Mexican War, James Russell Lowell was looking around for a way of preaching his views to a wide public, he, like Smith, hit upon the idea of letting one Hosea Biglow speak for him. The result was that this scion of a Brahmin family wrote some of the most memorable examples of this kind of humor.

Written to appeal chiefly to the relatively uneducated Yankee farmers and mechanics, humorous pieces had to dramatize the way of thinking prevalent in that class. According to that way of thinking the best person to point out the path to what was true and what was right was one with sound common sense—a person who had been born with a sound head, who had had experiences in the world of men rather than of books, and who arrived at his solutions of current problems on the basis of those experiences.

This philosophy, given new prestige by its triumphs in Jacksonian politics, determined the nature of the characters to appear in these papers—either horse-sense characters such as Jack Downing or Hosea Biglow, fool characters such as Birdofredum Sawin, or both. The characters blessed with common sense offered sound solutions to current problems; the chump characters urged actions which were patently muddleheaded. Since the earmarks of either kind of character would be his background, his way of thinking, his way of talking, it was necessary to show something about his environment and to let him talk a good deal. But since the pieces had to appear in the columns of the rather skimpy newspapers of the day, they had to be short.

These factors largely determined the nature of the Yankee humorous writings of Smith, Lowell, and dozens of others such as George E. Foxcraft, Tobias H. Miller, Matthew F. Whittier, and Thomas Chandler Haliburton. The characters divided sharply on the basis of their being either common-sensible or the opposite, and various devices were used to make clear to which class they belonged. Their talk was that of the uneducated—the native dialect which more and more, as time passed, was to shape the style of American literature. The talk showed, in brief snatches, what kind of minds they had, what their background and experience had been, what they had figured out on the basis of their experience. Often, if they were strong on common sense, they uttered aphorisms of the sort favored by ordinary men in America ever since the days of Poor Richard. (Examples are Jack Downing's "Sometimes rum gets folks so they can't see at all—so do the newspapers"; or Hosea Biglow's "The moral question's always plain enough; it's jes' the human-natur' side thet's tough.") Often, too, if their creators knew well the background and characteristics appropriate for them, these salty characters were portrayed with an abundance of authentic detail—and the matter as well as the manner of the fiction about them was both native and novel.

POETRY: A COMBINATION of the OLD and the NEW

The nearest approach in this period to such humor in poetry—by authors other than Lowell, of course—is offered by the songs of the Singers of the West (pp. 614-619). These were in the tradition of ancient and modern balladry—composed by the people (or by an artist who felt and thought as they did), for the people, and kept alive by the people. At this time, little attention was paid to such crude poems, but in a later period many serious poets learned much about art and life from these earthy and vigorous songs.

For the most part, the poetry of this prewar period had more of the elegance and remoteness characteristic of Poe than of the simplicity and immediacy of the author of "Hell in Texas." The background of the cultured New England poets led them to think of poetry as the height of elegance. Among the books which Holmes listed as obligatory reading for a boy of a good Boston or Cambridge family was "Pope, original edition, 15 volumes, London, 1717." Not only Holmes but others as well who had learned to like literature as youngsters in ancestral libraries had a natural tendency to worship somewhat old-fashioned literary gods. Bowdoin and Harvard were likely to encourage this tendency with their classical curriculums and their courses in writing based upon Blair's old-fashioned, square-toed *Rhetoric.* When Emerson was in Latin school, his favorite declamation was from the "Pleasures of Hope," a

typical eighteenth-century philosophizing poem written by Campbell in heroic couplets. When he versified an old nursery story for his brother, Emerson wrote:

> So erst two brethren climb'd the cloud capp'd hill,
> Ill-fated Jack and long-lamented Jill,
> Snatched from the crystal font its lucid store,
> And in full pails the precious treasure bore.
> But ah! by dull forgetfulness oppress'd
> (Forgive me, Edward), I've forgot the rest.

Many gems of expression in these lines might have been by polished Alexander Pope. The superstition that this same Pope was "the greatest poet that ever lived" was, Lowell confessed, inculcated in him by childhood teachers; and, similarly, the other famous New England authors from babyhood to manhood listened to encomiums of the older poets.

But the tradition of culture, though it fostered approval of old ideas and models, also fostered the discovery and development of new ones. The new forces it put to work in Massachusetts made certain that the prominent authors would modify, in various fashions, the ways of looking at things and the ways of voicing attitudes. Literary men of Massachusetts might be sketchily informed about the nation to the West and to the South, but in this period they were likely to widen their horizons by traveling extensively in the Old World. As Parrington has noticed, the New England Renaissance "involved three major strands: the social Utopianism that came from revolutionary France; the idealistic metaphysics that emerged from revolutionary Germany; and the new culture that spread with the development of literary romanticism . . . these strands . . . are but different, new world phases of a comprehensive European movement. . . ." The widespread revolutionary spirit invaded both the quiet Cambridge libraries and the woods by Walden Pond.

From the old and new books which they discovered abroad and at home, the New England authors took hints about poetic techniques. They learned procedures in writing from modern writers such as Goethe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats and from those of other times, such as the writers of Norse epic poems, the authors of ancient Oriental works, and Plato and the Neo-Platonists. In much of the poetry of the section, as a result, there was a combination of the old and the new—and each author's conception of poetry determined the nature of the combinations he made.

Holmes: "Florist in Verse"

Much of Holmes' poetry had a periwig-and-velvet-breeches quality about it. In such verse there were so many similarities in form and substance to that of Goldsmith, Pope, Gray, Campbell, Gay, and others of their century that Holmes appeared, in the words of one critic, to be "less a revival of the eighteenth century than its latest survival."

Holmes' kinship with the coffee-house gentry was in part a result of his paying them the tribute of imitation, in part the consequence of his seeing poetry, as they often had, as a graceful social accomplishment. "I'm a florist in verse," he sang, "and what would people say, if I came to a banquet without my boquet?" So successful was he at writing "by request of friends" that around Boston, almost invariably, first-class celebrations, anniversaries, banquets, receptions, and professional meetings were likely to list on the program an appearance of Dr. Holmes, poem in hand. Again, he wrote verse appropriate for reading at more informal gatherings, "at the breakfast table," perhaps, or "over the teacups."

All this had an important effect upon his poetry. For *vers de société* or *vers d'occasion,* he saw as well as had the Neoclassicists, had to have certain qualities of tone and form. In it deep emotion was as much out of place as it would be in a social group; the tone had to be light—wit and pathos were better than deep feeling. Much depended upon exactly the right phrasing—polished but conversational, graceful, witty, condensed. With these points in mind, Holmes wrote some of the finest familiar verse this country has produced.

Yet Holmes himself in the end considered his most typical poems evidences of his talent rather than of his genius. Eventually he came to feel that his earliest conception of poetry, that of a young man "trained after the schools of classical English verse," had represented "simple and partial views," since it had dealt too exclusively with "the constructive side of the poet's function." "I should rather say," he continued, "if I were

called upon now to define that which makes a poet, it is the power of transfiguring the experience and shows of life into an aspect which comes from his imagination and kindles that of others." His occasional poems, he told Lowell, were "for the most part to poetry as the beating of a drum or tinkling of a triangle is to the harmony of a band." True poetry, he believed, was inspired: its thought and to some extent its form came to a poet in an intuitive flash (see p. 390). Only once during his career did he feel sure that he had written a poem which was inspired—"The Chambered Nautilus" (p. 394).

This romantic concept of the inspired poet was shared by all the famous New England literary men, both those of Cambridge and those of Concord. These men differed only in their ideas about the extent to which a poem was inspired as compared with the extent to which it was consciously contrived. The Brahmins rather tended, with Holmes, to see careful artistry playing an important part. They also joined him in allowing the older conception of poet as teacher to shape their writings.

Longfellow: Master of Words and Accents

Longfellow in particular has been praised by recent scholars for his technique and scolded for his didacticism. His prosodic skill was developed most definitely, perhaps, by his achievement of the exacting task of changing over to English, without signs of painful effort, the *chansons* of French troubadours, the *lieder* of German lyricists, the *terza rima* and sonnets of Italians, the eclogues of Latin poets, the sagas of Finnish bards. However he acquired his skill, as Professor Shepard says, "Together with his thought, he had at the same moment a clear notion of the form in which it could be expressed most effectively . . . and it is for this reason that in his better work the thought seems to fill the form without crowding or inflation."

Longfellow's art concealed art largely because of its simple naturalness. Unlike most poets, he managed to get both rhyme and rhythm without using many unusual words and, as a rule, without changing the normal order of phrases and sentences. What Professor Allen, in his *American Prosody,* says about the hackneyed poem "The Village Blacksmith" hints at similar compliments which might be paid to more important achievements: "Its severe simplicity of diction and regularity of rhythm is likely to make us underestimate the technical achievements. . . . There are only two inversions in the whole piece: 'a mighty man is he' and 'onward through life he goes.' The natural speech and syntax . . . was practically unique in American versification in 1839." The representative poems by Longfellow in this volume (pp. 374-388) show his simple diction and natural grammatical arrangement. Also, it happens, they show him using without ostentation or evident difficulty each of the ordinary meters (iambic, anapestic, dactylic, and trochaic), some of them in unusual ways, and combining them with several metrical devices which are quite extraordinary. (Note the refrain of "My Lost Youth," and the spacing of accented syllables in "The Skeleton in Armor," "Jugurtha," and "The Tide Rises.")

This master of words and accents could, at times, make each word, each line do its job. The plots of his best narratives he developed in excellent order. His best lyrics—whatever might be said against their preachments—at least have the unity which development of a single thought or sentiment gives them. The unity of thought in such poems as "The Rainy Day," "The Arrow and the Song," and "Jugurtha" cannot be surpassed; in each the first part offers some image, and the second part suggests, usually with the aid of incremental repetition, the spiritual connotation in a detailed parallel. Similarly, "The Bridge" starts with a description of a scene, then passes to the meaning of the scene to the poet, and ends by applying the meaning to all men. In such simple structures, there is integration of the sort important in sonnets, a form particularly well handled by Longfellow.

Despite such prosodic skill and such unity and coherence of thought, Longfellow often failed to please for three reasons. The thought which held together a lyric of his was too often platitudinous. Secondly, more even than Holmes or Lowell, he was a bookish, library poet. One sees why Whitman complained of Longfellow's poetry being "reminiscent, polish'd, elegant, with the air of finest conventional library, picture-gallery or parlor, with ladies and gentlemen in them. . . ." Finally, although his poems were logically constructed, they were likely to be badly put together emotionally—or connotatively. That similes and metaphors should be more than handsome ornaments—that they should be as organic to the poem as the thought—he apparently

did not conceive. Hence in many of his poems he used imagery which modern readers find incongruous, and in only a few did he avoid jarring connotations.

Lowell: Pioneer in Freedom of Verse Form

Professor Howard Mumford Jones has noticed that "readers do not turn to Lowell as they do to Longfellow, for a body of verse; and though certain lyrics are individual favorites, they are such as two or three other poets might have written. 'To the Dandelion' is Keatsian; many readers confuse 'The First Snowfall' with Bryant's poem on the same theme, and 'The Present Crisis' inevitably suggests Whittier." This comparison can be carried further: *A Fable for Critics* (p. 407), with its Pope-like critiques, suggests Holmes; and "Auspex" (p. 432) might well have been written by Longfellow. Lowell perhaps busied himself too much with other matters to develop a poetic style all his own.

Yet in some of Lowell's work there are merits not discoverable in Holmes or Longfellow. His *Biglow Papers* are the most effective political satire in verse yet written in America, and *A Fable for Critics* combines sharply phrased wit with shrewd literary judgments as no other poetry in this country has. In his famous "Commemoration Ode" he showed ability in shaping a long contemplative poem beyond the skill of his fellow Brahmins. He had exactly the perception of the emotional relationship that Longfellow lacked. "My notion of a true lyric," he said, "is that the meaning should float steadfast in the centre of every stanza, while the vapory emotions . . . float up to it and over it, and wreathe it with an opal halo which seems their own, but is truly its own work. The shades of emotion over, there floats the meaning, clear and sole and sharp-cut in its luminous integrity. . . ." Lowell wrote some poems in which the figurative language thus related the emotion it connoted to the meaning as a whole: "To the Dandelion" (p. 406), "The Courtin' " (p. 424), and "Auspex" are instances. Finally, Lowell did make the sort of technical contribution to American versification best suggested by his irregular "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration." In Professor Allen's words, this poet's prosody "introduced into American poetry the freedom which we find in the first two or three decades of nineteenth-century English poetry. . . . This freedom includes a more varied placing of accents and the combination of different kinds of feet to produce a suggestiveness of tone and cadence. . . . Yet . . . Lowell's versification is more important for the lessons it teaches than for the poetic beauty it achieved."

Emerson and Thoreau: Rebels Against Nineteenth-Century Forms

Some free verse lines of the Transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, serve to set off his aims in poetry from those of the Brahmins who have just been considered:

> I will not read a pretty tale
> To pretty people in a nice saloon
> Borrowed from their expectation,
> But I will sing aloud and free
> From the heart of the world.

Thoreau, another Transcendentalist, also stated a view of writing at variance with that of the genteel Cambridge men when he wrote: "Enough has been said in these days of the charm of fluent writing. . . . The surliness with which the woodchopper speaks of his woods, handling them as indifferently as his axe, is better than the mealy-mouthed enthusiasm of the lover of nature. Better that the primrose by the river's brim be a yellow primrose, and nothing more, than that it be something less." In some ways, so far as form and substance were concerned, the most radical of the ante-bellum New England versifiers were the Transcendentalists, Emerson in a few great poems and Thoreau in even fewer.

"The form [of Transcendental poetry]," Cooke notes, "is often rugged, the verse is halting and defective. The metres stumble, and . . . rhymes are not correct. The poems are . . . metaphysical, subtle, and complicated in their thought. . . ." Unlike Longfellow, who acquired his free and easy ways with verse by echoing foreign metrical schemes, or Lowell, who came late enough to learn lessons from Shelley, the Transcendentalists found their chief models in a seventeenth-century school of unorthodox versifiers. From the metaphysical poets—Marvell, Crashaw, Donne, and others—who had rebelled against the dulcet melodiousness of Elizabethan lyricists, these rebels against the nineteenth-century saccharinity learned something about the forcefulness which results from breaking up regular patterns. It may be true, as some critics claim, that the very infrequency of the Con-

cord men's excursions into verse had something to do with the harshness of their songs. But the most important cause for their radicalism, probably, was that the nature of Transcendental poetry, like that of Transcendental prose, was influenced strongly by the philosophy of its creators.

According to this philosophy the matter and the expression of a poem, one and inseparable, were both spontaneously inspired. Theoretically, this would lead a Transcendentalist, trusting his "instinct," to set down his songs without change; actually, it did cause the Transcendentalists to tinker with initial expressions less than other poets did. And the intuitive expression, in their opinion, would carry to others the message the poets themselves had been vouchsafed. It would do this because the poets would pass on to readers the same symbols which originally had suggested eternal verities to the poets. "Things," said Emerson, "admit of being used as symbols, because nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part." The whole theory of Emerson and his group has been admirably summarized by Miss Gorely (in "Emerson's Theory of Poetry," *Poetry Review,* July-August 1931, XXII, 272-273):

> Emerson . . . believed that poetry . . . comes into being as the result of inspiration. In that moment the poet sees the very essence of things. . . . The poet makes the unseen visible by means of language. But he is not the conscious creator. Vision, also, shows him the symbols and the thought takes its own form in language that is rhythmical. Because of this, there is a certain indwelling beauty of poetry . . . poetry is spiritual and forms a link between the visible and invisible worlds.

Thus the symbols were important, and the ideas of deep perceptions for which the symbols stood were even more important—so significant that, as in earlier metaphysical poetry, they controlled everything else in a poem. The sentiment often cultivated by the Brahmin poets was practically crowded out by the thought. Since only imagery which developed such a thought was relevant, merely ornamental imagery was avoided. And the concept being expressed determined the general structure of the poem. "It is not metres, but metre-making argument," said Emerson, "that makes a poem,—a thought so passionate and alive, that, like the spirit of a plant or an animal, it has an architecture of its own and adorns nature with a new thing." This theory suggested the four chief methods for ordering material used by Emerson and Thoreau: (1) as in "The Snow-storm" (p. 468) or "Though All the Fates" (p. 503), the poet might give a description of an object or scene which embodied and implied meaning; (2) as in "Brahma" (p. 475) or "The Summer Rain" (p. 501), the poet might list a number of parallel phenomena; (3) as in "Each and All" (p. 466) or "Inspiration" (p. 502), the poet might record the process by which he arrived at a great truth; (4) as in "Rumors from an Æolian Harp" (p. 500), the poet might record a state of inspiration.

Logically, the meter in such poems should be appropriate for the emphasis of both the symbols and the truths for which the symbols stand. "There is a soberness," wrote Thoreau, "in a rough aspect, as of unhewn granite, which addresses a depth in us, but a polished surface hits only the ball of the eye." And Emerson, in "Merlin" (p. 469), pointed out that:

> The kingly bard
> Must strike the chords rudely and hard,
> As with hammer or with mace;
> That they may render back
> Artful thunder, which conveys
> Secrets of the solar track. . . .

In these ways, the Transcendental poetry of Emerson and Thoreau looked backward to seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry, forward to the poetry admired most in the third and fourth decades of the present century.

Thus in the essay, in fiction, and in poetry, the authors of the period 1829-1860 combined old and new materials and techniques. As a result, these writers gave memorable expression to the ideas about which our countrymen were excited during the American Renaissance, one of the richest periods in our literary history. W.B.



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

1807 • 1882

During his lifetime Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was the best-loved American poet, and even today his poetry is popular because it says what many people want to be told in ways generally considered "poetic." Critics who disapprove of a large share of Longfellow's verse do so because they feel that its thought is commonplace, its mood sentimental, and its form not well related to its substance. Such critics are likely to admit, however, that at his infrequent best he wrote poetry which deserves to be treasured by fastidious readers.

Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, on February 27, 1807. He was educated at Bowdoin and abroad, and he taught modern languages at Bowdoin (1829-1835) and then, after a second trip abroad, at Harvard (1837-1854). Meanwhile, his fame, which had begun to flourish when *Voices of the Night* was published in 1839, was augmented by such books as *Ballads and Other Poems* (1841) and *Evangeline* (1847). Works published after his retirement from Harvard—*Hiawatha* (1855), *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858), *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863), and *Christus: A Mystery* (1872)—brought still greater appreciation. Carefully sheltered in childhood and early manhood, never worried by poverty, the poet lived most of his days in peaceful old Craigie House in Cambridge. Professor Shepard has pictured him there as "he sat by the fireside writing verse on his knee with his eyes closed, now and then striding to the window to look down the vista of bristling elms to where the River Charles was 'writing the last letter of his name.'" When Howells saw

Panel (l. to r.): Title page of Tales of a Wayside Inn, 1863 • Cambridge in 1831 • Craigie House, Longfellow's home • Henry Wadsworth Longfellow at 33 • "Hiawatha's Wedding Journey"

him at the height of fame, he thought he was perfectly characterized as "the white Mr. Longfellow."

These and other similar details have long caused scholars to think of Longfellow's life as always sheltered and placid. Recent study by Lawrance Thompson, however, has shown that Longfellow won such peacefulness only after a youth full of storm and struggle. His fight, against odds, to become an author, his desperate sorrow following the death of his first wife in 1835, and his torture of spirit during the seven-year courtship of his second wife, Frances Appleton, all left their imprint on his life and work.

Because Europe was the background for some of his deepest emotional experiences and because he discovered new possibilities in literature during his study there, Longfellow was impelled to acquaint his countrymen with the Old World as he saw it. Culture-starved, painfully aware of their crudeness as European travel-book writers showed it, Americans were delighted with Longfellow's translations of European poems and his romantic depictions of the picturesque Old World. When he turned to the depiction of the America of the past (as he frequently did), one of his services was, in a sense, to "Europeanize" it—to show that this country, too, had mellow legends which might be given something like Old World treatments.

Much of Longfellow's verse has a simple pattern: a story is told, an object or scene is described, and then a moral which figuratively makes use of the story, object, or scene concludes the poem. The morals, some derived from German authors, have popular appeal; typical ones are: "Fight on"; "Others sorrow, too"; and "Sorrow must end." Many times there are striking figures of speech not only in the closing lines but also in earlier lines, but too often these are not related to one another or—in a basic way, at least—to the poem as a whole. The poems are written in relatively simple (sometimes prosaic) words and in memorable rhythms. When Longfellow avoids obvious preachments, sentimental tone, flat words, and loosely related figures, he does his best work. Sometimes, as in *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* he tells a story masterfully and employs a gentle sort of humor with excellent effect. At other times, as in some sonnets and in some lyrics—"Hymn to the Night" and "The Tide Rises," for instance—his economically managed imagery, his emotional restraint, his sure diction, and his masterfully handled rhythms create memorable verse.

Complete Poetical Works, ed H E. Scudder, Boston, 1893 • Samuel Longfellow, **The Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,** 2 vols., Boston, 1885-1886 • Lawrance Thompson, **Young Longfellow (1807-1843),** New York, 1938

A Psalm of Life

When, in 1838, Longfellow gave a new course on "Literature and the Literary Life" at Harvard, his study of Goethe was particularly useful in helping him to formulate a workable philosophy. The period was a trying one in Longfellow's life. His first wife's death had been and still was the cause of much sorrow. His courtship of Frances Appleton seemed doomed to failure. In Goethe, Longfellow found a suggestion for living when "the time is out of joint"—"to bear one's self doughtily in Life's battle: and make the best of things." This was the message expressed in "A Psalm of Life." "I kept it some time in manuscript," he wrote, "unwilling to show it to any one, it being a voice from my inmost heart, and expressing my feelings at a time when I was rallying from the depression of disappointment." Many repetitions have robbed the poem of its early fire, but it is important to remember that at the time it appeared this attack on acquiescence fostered by either dreamy romanticism or Calvinistic fatalism said something of significance to many readers.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
  Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
  And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
  And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
  Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
  Is our destined end or way; 10

But to act, that each to-morrow
  Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
  And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
  Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
  In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
  Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
  Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
  Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
  We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
  Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
  Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
  Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
  With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
  Learn to labor and to wait.

1838

Hymn to the Night

'Ασπασίη, τρίλλιστος

Longfellow said he wrote this poem in the summer of 1839, "while sitting at my chamber window, on one of the balmiest nights of the year. I endeavored to reproduce the impression of the hour and scene." The poem offers a way of coping with sorrow contrasting with the one suggested in "Psalm of Life." Here nighttime reveries, rather than heroic action, bring surcease of sorrow.

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
  Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
  From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
  Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
  As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
  The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
  Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
  My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
  From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
  What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
  And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
  Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
  The best-beloved Night!

1839

The Skeleton in Armor

In a letter to his father written in December 1840, Longfellow announced that he had prepared this ballad, "which has been lying by me for some time," for the press. "It is connected," he said, "with the old Round Tower at New-

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Hymn . . . • 'Ασπασίη, τρίλλιστος • Welcome, three times prayed for • 21 Orestes-like refers to the character Orestes in the plays of Aeschylus At the end of the tragedy The Choephorae, Orestes, having avenged his father by murdering his mother, is pursued by the Furies. In a sequel he finds peace

port. The skeleton in armor really exists. It was dug up near Fall River, where I saw it some two years ago. I suppose it to be the remains of one of the old Northern sea-rovers. . . . Of course, I make the tradition myself; and I think I have succeeded in giving the whole a Northern air."

Reviewing **Ballads and Other Poems** (1841), in which the ballad was published, Poe said: "In 'The Skeleton in Armor' we find a pure and perfect thesis artistically treated. . . . The metre is simple, sonorous, well-balanced, and fully adapted to the subject." Scholars have pointed out Longfellow's indebtedness in this ballad to Michael Drayton's poem on the battle of Agincourt and to Shelley's "The Fugitives."

"Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast,
Still in rude armor drest,
  Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
  Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
  Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
  From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
  No Saga taught thee!
Take heed that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
  For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
  Tamed the gerfalcon;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
  Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
  Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
  Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
  With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
  By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long winter out;
Often our midnight shout
  Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail
  Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
  Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
  Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
  Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest

Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
  By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
  Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
  To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
  The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
  Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
  I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight?
Why did they leave that night
  Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
  Among the Norsemen!
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
  With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
  When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
  Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
'Death!' was the helmsman's hail,
  'Death without quarter!'
Midships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
  Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
  With his prey laden,—
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
  Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
  Stretching to leeward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
  Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
  She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes;
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
  On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
  The sunlight hateful;

---

110 Skaw, Cape Skagen, the northern point of Jutland in Denmark

In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
  Oh, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars
Up to its native stars
  My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *skoal!*"
  Thus the tale ended.

1840·1841

The Slave's Dream

Returning from a trip abroad in 1842, Longfellow had a stormy journey. "I was not out of my berth more than twelve hours for the first twelve days," he recorded. "I was in the forward part of the vessel, where all the great waves struck and broke with voices of thunder. There, 'cribbed, cabined, and confined,' I passed fifteen days. During this time I wrote seven poems on slavery; I meditated upon them in the stormy, sleepless nights, and wrote them down with a pencil in the morning."

Shortly after arriving in America, he published these poems and one other in a volume called **Poems on Slavery**—his contribution to the antislavery crusade. In a period when most of the New Englanders of good family were saying as little as possible about this controversy, it was rather brave for him thus to speak out.

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
  His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
  Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
  He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
  The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
  Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
  Descend the mountain road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
  Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
  They held him by the hand!—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
  And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
  Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
  And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
  Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
  The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
  O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
  And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
  And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
  Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
  Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
  Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
  With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
  At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
  Nor the burning heat of day;

The Skeleton . . . • 159 **Skoal,** "the customary salutation for drinking a health in Scandinavia."—Longfellow

For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

1842

The Rainy Day

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

1842

The Bridge

I stood on the bridge at midnight
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The seaweed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight
And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, oh how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,

Each bearing his burden of sorrow
  Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
  Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
  And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,
  As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
  As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
  And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
  And its wavering image here.

1845

The Arrow and the Song

The following is Longfellow's account of the writing of this poem: "October 16, 1845. Before church, wrote 'The Arrow and the Song,' which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire, and glanced onto the paper with an arrow's speed. Literally an improvisation."

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

1845

The Jewish Cemetery at Newport

An entry in Longfellow's journal for June 9, 1852, tells of the visit to the cemetery which suggested this poem. "There are few graves," he wrote; "nearly all are low tombstones of marble, with Hebrew inscriptions, and a few words added in English or Portuguese. . . . It is a shady nook, at the corner of two dusty, frequented streets. . . ."

Professor Odell Shepard comments: "The poem . . . is written in the difficult stanza of Gray's 'Elegy' and in the mood of that poem. Comparison will show that Longfellow is as much superior to Gray in thought-structure and 'sense of the whole' as he is inferior in vividness and intensity of phrase and image."

How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their graves,
  Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
Silent beside the never-silent waves,
  At rest in all this moving up and down!

The trees are white with dust, that o'er their sleep
  Wave their broad curtains in the south-wind's breath,
While underneath these leafy tents they keep
  The long, mysterious Exodus of Death.

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
  That pave with level flags their burial-place,
Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
  And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.

The very names recorded here are strange,
  Of foreign accent, and of different climes;
Alvares and Rivera interchange
  With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

"Blessed be God, for he created Death!"
  The mourners said, "and Death is rest and peace;"
Then added, in the certainty of faith,
  "And giveth Life that nevermore shall cease."

The Jewish Cemetery . . . • **8 Exodus** refers to the Book of Exodus, which recounts the journey of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake.

Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
And not neglected; for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves and their remembrance green.

How came they here? What burst of Christian hate,
What persecution, merciless and blind,
Drove o'er the sea—that desert desolate—
These Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind?

They lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrass, in mirk and mire;
Taught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and the death of fire.

All their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah of their tears.

Anathema maranatha! was the cry
That rang from town to town, from street to street:
At every gate the accursed Mordecai
Was mocked and jeered, and spurned by Christian feet.

Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.

For in the background figures vague and vast
Of patriarchs and of prophets rose sublime,
And all the great traditions of the Past
They saw reflected in the coming time.

And thus forever with reverted look
The mystic volume of the world they read,
Spelling it backward, like a Hebrew book,
Till life became a Legend of the Dead.

But ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
And the dead nations never rise again.

1852

My Lost Youth

During a visit to Portland in 1846 Longfellow took a long walk around Munjoy's hill and down to old Fort Lawrence. Then, he says, "I lay down in one of the embrasures and listened to the lashing, lulling sound of the sea just at my feet. It was a beautiful afternoon, and the harbor was full of white sails, coming and departing." He considered writing a poem at the time, but not until 1855 did these two entries in his journal record its composition:

"March 29. A day of pain; cowering over the fire. At night, as I lie in bed, a poem comes into my mind,—a memory of Portland,—my native town, the city by the sea. . . .

"March 30. Wrote the poem; and am rather pleased with it, and with the bringing in of the two lines of the old Lapland song. . . ."

The song may be found in a book by John Scheffer, **The History of Lapland** (1674). The important passage is:

"A youth's desire is the desire of the wind,
All his essaies
Are long delaies,
No issue can they find."

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,

The Jewish Cemetery . . . • **32 Ishmael.** See Genesis 16, 21 • **32 Hagar,** a concubine of Abraham who was driven into the desert with Ishmael, her son • **34 Ghetto and Judenstrass,** quarters in which Jews are segregated • **41 Anathema maranatha,** an expression found in I Corinthians, formerly thought to be a double curse • **43 Mordecai,** the cousin of Esther. See the Book of Esther • **55 Spelling it backward.** Hebrew is printed so as to be read from right to left in contrast with other languages reading from left to right

And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drumbeat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.
And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet,
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are singing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again.

And the strange and beautiful song,
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

1855

Divina Commedia

The six sonnets under this title prefaced the three parts of Longfellow's translation of Dante's masterpiece—I and II, the "Inferno"; III and IV, the "Purgatorio"; and V and VI, the "Paradiso." They at once comment on Dante's poem and reveal what it meant to Longfellow when, in the years of his grief over the death of his second wife—the years, also, of the Civil War—he translated the poem.

I

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.

1865

II

How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
Birds build their nests; while canopied with leaves
Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled eaves
Watch the dead Christ between the living thieves,
And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
What exultations trampling on despair,
What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,
What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
This medieval miracle of song!

1865

III

I enter, and I see thee in the gloom
Of the long aisles, O poet saturnine!
And strive to make my steps keep pace with thine.
The air is filled with some unknown perfume;
The congregation of the dead make room
For thee to pass; the votive tapers shine;
Like rooks that haunt Ravenna's groves of pine
The hovering echoes fly from tomb to tomb.
From the confessionals I hear arise
Rehearsals of forgotten tragedies,
And lamentations from the crypts below;
And then a voice celestial that begins
With the pathetic words, "Although your sins
As scarlet be," and end with "as the snow."

1866

IV

With snow-white veil and garments as of flame,
She stands before thee, who so long ago
Filled thy young heart with passion and the woe
From which thy song and all its splendors came;
And while with stern rebuke she speaks thy name,
The ice about thy heart melts as the snow
On mountain heights, and in swift overflow
Comes gushing from thy lips in sobs of shame.
Thou makest full confession; and a gleam,
As of the dawn on some dark forest cast,

Divina Commedia • **5 paternoster,** literally, "Our Father"—the rosary • **10 minster gate,** cathedral door • **12 time disconsolate** refers to the Civil War • **18 Parvis,** the church porch • **20 fiends,** a richly allusive reference, literally to the gargoyles in the church, figuratively to man in a world of evil and to the sufferers in the "Inferno" • **27 this poem . . . air,** the "Inferno." Here the poet combines the images of the opening five lines of this sonnet with those describing the "fiends and dragons" • **30 poet saturnine,** Dante • **35 Ravenna,** a city in Italy frequently mentioned by Dante • **44 She,** Beatrice

Seems on thy lifted forehead to increase;
Lethe and Eunoë—the remembered dream
And the forgotten sorrow—bring at last
That perfect pardon which is perfect peace.

1866

V

I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
With forms of Saints and holy men who died,
Here martyred and hereafter glorified;
And the great Rose upon its leaves displays
Christ's Triumph, and the angelic roundelays,
With splendor upon splendor multiplied;
And Beatrice again at Dante's side
No more rebukes, but smiles her words of praise.
And then the organ sounds, and unseen choirs
Sing the old Latin hymns of peace and love
And benedictions of the Holy Ghost;
And the melodious bells among the spires
O'er all the housetops and through heaven above
Proclaim the elevation of the Host!

1867

VI

O star of morning and of liberty!
O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day that is to be!
The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines,
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
Thy flame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations, and a sound is heard,
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
In their own language hear the wondrous word,
And many are amazed and many doubt.

1867

Morituri Salutamus

When he was sixty-seven, Longfellow composed this poem for delivery at the fiftieth-anniversary celebration of the Class of 1825, Bowdoin College. The title, which means "We who are about to die salute you," was the legendary cry of gladiators to the emperor as they were about to enter the arena.

"O Caesar, we who are about to die
Salute you!" was the gladiators' cry
In the arena, standing face to face
With death and with the Roman populace.

O ye familiar scenes,—ye groves of pine,
That once were mine and are no longer mine,—
Thou river, widening through the meadows green
To the vast sea, so near and yet unseen,—
Ye halls, in whose seclusion and repose
Phantoms of fame, like exhalations, rose
And vanished,—we who are about to die,
Salute you; earth and air and sea and sky,
And the Imperial Sun that scatters down
His sovereign splendors upon grove and town.

Ye do not answer us! ye do not hear!
We are forgotten; and in your austere
And calm indifference, ye little care
Whether we come or go, or whence or where.
What passing generations fill these halls,
What passing voices echo from these walls,
Ye heed not; we are only as the blast,
A moment heard, and then forever past.

Not so the teachers who in earlier days
Led our bewildered feet through learning's maze;
They answer us—alas! what have I said?
What greetings come there from the voiceless dead?
What salutation, welcome, or reply?
What pressure from the hands that lifeless lie?
They are no longer here; they all are gone
Into the land of shadows,—all save one.
Honor and reverence, and the good repute

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54 Lethe and Eunoë. In classical mythology the Lethe is the river of forgetfulness and the Eunoë, the river of the memory of good. At the summit of the mountain of Purgatory, Dante drinks from these rivers • 60 Rose refers not only to the windows of the cathedral but also to the end of Dante's journey in the "Paradiso," when he sees the Trinity and the Blessed in the form of a rose • 70 the . . . Host, the climax of the celebration of the Mass when the Host is lifted high before the congregation • 71 star, Dante

Morituri Salutamus • 30 one, Professor A. S. Packard

That follows faithful service as its fruit,
Be unto him, whom living we salute.

The great Italian poet, when he made
His dreadful journey to the realms of shade,
Met there the old instructor of his youth,
And cried in tone of pity and of ruth:
"Oh, never from the memory of my heart
Your dear, paternal image shall depart,
Who while on earth, ere yet by death surprised,
Taught me how mortals are immortalized;
How grateful am I for that patient care
All my life long my language shall declare."

Today we make the poet's words our own,
And utter them in plaintive undertone;
Nor to the living only be they said,
But to the other living called the dead,
Whose dear, paternal images appear
Not wrapped in gloom, but roped in sunshine here;
Whose simple lives, complete and without flaw,
Were part and parcel of great Nature's law;
Who said not to their Lord, as if afraid,
"Here is thy talent in a napkin laid,"
But labored in their sphere, as men who live
In the delight that work alone can give.
Peace be to them; eternal peace and rest,
And the fulfillment of the great behest:
"Ye have been faithful over a few things,
Over ten cities shall ye reign as kings."

And ye who fill the places we once filled,
And follow in the furrows that we tilled,
Young men, whose generous hearts are beating high,
We who are old, and are about to die,
Salute you; hail you; take your hands in ours,
And crown you with our welcome as with flowers!
How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!
Book of Beginnings, Story without End,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!

Aladdin's Lamp, and Fortunatus' Purse,
That holds the treasures of the universe!
All possibilities are in its hands,
No danger daunts it, and no foe withstands;
In its sublime audacity of faith,
"Be thou removed," it to the mountain saith,
And with ambitious feet, secure and proud,
Ascends the ladder leaning on the cloud!

As ancient Priam at the Scæan gate
Sat on the walls of Troy in regal state
With the old men, too old and weak to fight,
Chirping like grasshoppers in their delight
To see the embattled hosts, with spear and shield,
Of Trojans and Achaians in the field;
So from the snowy summits of our years
We see you in the plain, as each appears,
And question of you; asking, "Who is he
That towers above the others? Which may be
Atreides, Menelaus, Odysseus,
Ajax the great, or bold Idomeneus?"

Let him not boast who puts his armor on
As he who puts it off, the battle done.
Study yourselves; and most of all note well
Wherein kind Nature meant you to excel.
Not every blossom ripens into fruit;
Minerva, the inventress of the flute,
Flung it aside, when she her face surveyed
Distorted in a fountain as she played;
The unlucky Marsyas found it, and his fate
Was one to make the bravest hesitate.
Write on your doors the saying wise and old,
"Be bold! be bold!" and everywhere, "Be bold;
Be not too bold!" Yet better the excess
Than the defect; better the more than less;
Better like Hector in the field to die,
Than like a perfumed Paris turn and fly.

And now, my classmates; ye remaining few
That number not the half of those we knew,
Ye, against whose familiar names not yet
The fatal asterisk of death is set,

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36 **the old instructor**, Brunetto Latini. Lines 38-43 are a translation of a speech in the "Inferno" • 70 **Fortunatus' Purse**, an inexhaustible purse which, according to an old tale, was given to Fortunatus by Fortune • 78 **As ancient Priam . . .** The incident treated in **Il.** 78-89 occurs in the **Iliad**, Bk. III • 98 **Marsyas**, a presumptuous Greek poet who challenged Apollo to a musical contest, lost, and was flayed alive • 104 **Hector**, a Grecian hero who bravely met his death at the hands of Achilles. For Hector's bravery, and Paris' less admirable activity, see the **Iliad**, Bks. III and XXII • 109 **fatal asterisk**, a reference to the custom of indicating which members of a college class have died by marking their names with asterisks

Ye I salute! The horologe of Time
Strikes the half-century with a solemn chime,
And summons us together once again,
The joy of meeting not unmixed with pain.
Where are the others? Voices from the deep
Caverns of darkness answer me: "They sleep!"
I name no names; instinctively I feel
Each at some well-remembered grave will kneel,
And from the inscription wipe the weeds and moss,
For every heart best knoweth its own loss.
I see their scattered gravestones gleaming white
Through the pale dusk of the impending night;
O'er all alike the impartial sunset throws
Its golden lilies mingled with the rose;
We give to each a tender thought, and pass
Out of the graveyards with their tangled grass,
Unto these scenes frequented by our feet
When we were young, and life was fresh and sweet.

What shall I say to you? What can I say
Better than silence is? When I survey
This throng of faces turned to meet my own,
Friendly and fair, and yet to me unknown,
Transformed the very landscape seems to be;
It is the same, yet not the same to me.
So many memories crowd upon my brain,
So many ghosts are in the wooded plain,
I fain would steal away, with noiseless tread,
As from a house where someone lieth dead.
I cannot go;—I pause;—I hesitate;
My feet reluctant linger at the gate;
As one who struggles in a troubled dream
To speak and cannot, to myself I seem.

Vanish the dream! Vanish the idle fears!
Vanish the rolling mists of fifty years!
Whatever time or space may intervene,
I will not be a stranger in this scene.
Here every doubt, all indecision, ends;
Hail, my companions, comrades, classmates, friends!

Ah me! the fifty years since last we met
Seem to me fifty folios bound and set
By Time, the great transcriber, on his shelves,
Wherein are written the histories of ourselves.
What tragedies, what comedies, are there;
What joy and grief, what rapture and despair!
What chronicles of triumph and defeat,
Of struggle, and temptation, and retreat!
What records of regrets, and doubts, and fears!
What pages blotted, blistered by our tears!
What lovely landscapes on the margin shine,
What sweet, angelic faces, what divine
And holy images of love and trust,
Undimmed by age, unsoiled by damp or dust!
Whose hand shall dare to open and explore
These volumes, closed and clasped forevermore?
Not mine. With reverential feet I pass;
I hear a voice that cries, "Alas! alas!
Whatever hath been written shall remain,
Nor be erased nor written o'er again;
The unwritten only still belongs to thee:
Take heed, and ponder well what that shall be."

As children frightened by a thunder-cloud
Are reassured if some one reads aloud
A tale of wonder, with enchantment fraught,
Or wild adventure, that diverts their thought,
Let me endeavor with a tale to chase
The gathering shadows of the time and place,
And banish what we all too deeply feel
Wholly to say, or wholly to conceal.

In medieval Rome, I know not where,
There stood an image with its arm in air,
And on its lifted finger, shining clear,
A golden ring with the device, "Strike here!"
Greatly the people wondered, though none guessed
The meaning that these words but half expressed,
Until a learned clerk, who at noonday
With downcast eyes was passing on his way,
Paused, and observed the spot, and marked it well,
Whereon the shadow of the finger fell;

And, coming back at midnight, delved, and found
A secret stairway leading underground.
Down this he passed into a spacious hall,
Lit by a flaming jewel on the wall;
And opposite, in threatening attitude,

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174 tale, in the famous medieval collection, Gesta Romanorum, Tale CVII

With bow and shaft a brazen statue stood.
Upon its forehead, like a coronet,
Were these mysterious words of menace set:
"That which I am, I am; my fatal aim
None can escape, not even yon luminous flame!"
Midway the hall was a fair table placed,
With cloth of gold, and golden cups enchased
With rubies, and the plates and knives were gold,
And gold the bread and viands manifold.
Around it, silent, motionless, and sad,
Were seated gallant knights in armor clad,
And ladies beautiful with plume and zone,
But they were stone, their hearts within were stone;
And the vast hall was filled in every part
With silent crowds, stony in face and heart.

Long at the scene, bewildered and amazed,
The trembling clerk in speechless wonder gazed;
Then from the table, by his greed made bold,
He seized a goblet and a knife of gold,
And suddenly from their seats the guests upsprang,
The vaulted ceiling with loud clamors rang,
The archer sped his arrow, at their call,
Shattering the lambent jewel on the wall,
And all was dark around and overhead;—
Stark on the floor the luckless clerk lay dead.

The writer of this legend then records
Its ghostly application in these words:
The image is the Adversary old,
Whose beckoning finger points to realms of gold;
Our lusts and passions are the downward stair
That leads the soul from a diviner air;
The archer, Death; the flaming jewel, Life;
Terrestrial goods, the goblet and the knife;
The knights and ladies, all whose flesh and bone
By avarice have been hardened into stone;
The clerk, the scholar whom the love of pelf
Tempts from his books and from his nobler self.

The scholar and the world! The endless strife,
The discord in the harmonies of life!
The love of learning, the sequestered nooks,
And all the sweet serenity of books;
The market-place, the eager love of gain,
Whose aim is vanity, and whose end is pain!

But why, you ask me, should this tale be told
To men grown old, or who are growing old?
It is too late! Ah, nothing is too late
Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.
Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles
Wrote his grand Œdipus, and Simonides
Bore off the prize of verse from his compeers,
When each had numbered more than fourscore years,
And Theophrastus, at fourscore and ten,
Had but begun his "Characters of Men."
Chaucer, at Woodstock with the nightingales,
At sixty wrote the Canterbury Tales;
Goethe at Weimar, toiling to the last,
Completed Faust when eighty years were past.
These are indeed exceptions; but they show
How far the gulf-stream of our youth may flow
Into the arctic regions of our lives,
Where little else than life itself survives.

As the barometer foretells the storm
While still the skies are clear, the weather warm,
So something in us, as old age draws near,
Betrays the pressure of the atmosphere.
The nimble mercury, ere we are aware,
Descends the elastic ladder of the air;
The telltale blood in artery and vein
Sinks from its higher levels in the brain;
Whatever poet, orator, or sage
May say of it, old age is still old age.
It is the waning, not the crescent moon;
The dusk of evening, not the blaze of noon;
It is not strength, but weakness; not desire,
But its surcease; not the fierce heat of fire,
The burning and consuming element,
But that of ashes and of embers spent,
In which some living sparks we still discern,
Enough to warm, but not enough to burn.

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240 Cato, Cato the Censor (234-149 B.C.) • 240 Sophocles (495-405 B.C.) is said to have written Oedipus at Colonus shortly before his death • 241 Simonides (556-467 B.C.), great Greek lyric poet • 244 Theophrastus (382-297 B.C.), author of Moral Characters • 246 Chaucer . . . sixty. At the same time Longfellow wrote, it was thought that Chaucer had been born in 1320. Modern scholars believe that 1340 was nearer the date of his birth • 248 Goethe began work on Faust in 1773, but the conclusion did not appear until 1833

What then? Shall we sit idly down and say
The night hath come; it is no longer day?
The night hath not yet come; we are not quite
Cut off from labor by the failing light;
Something remains for us to do or dare;
Even the oldest tree some fruit may bear;
Not Œdipus Coloneus, or Greek Ode,
Or tales of pilgrims that one morning rode
Out of the gateway of the Tabard Inn,
But other something, would we but begin;
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.

1874·1875

Sleep

Lull me to sleep, ye winds, whose fitful sound
  Seems from some faint Æolian harp-string caught;
  Seal up the hundred wakeful eyes of thought
  As Hermes with his lyre in sleep profound
The hundred wakeful eyes of Argus bound;
  For I am weary, and am overwrought
  With too much toil, with too much care distraught,
  And with the iron crown of anguish crowned.
Lay thy soft hand upon my brow and cheek,
  O peaceful Sleep! until from pain released
  I breathe again uninterrupted breath!
Ah, with what subtle meaning did the Greek
  Call thee the lesser mystery at the feast
Whereof the greater mystery is death!

1875

Jugurtha

The incident treated here is based on Plutarch's life of Marius, the Roman general. In Plutarch's account Jugurtha, a Numidian king defeated by the Romans, addresses his words to Hercules. But the name of Apollo, the god of manly youth and beauty, of poetry, music, and oracles, and of healing and sudden death, has more poetic associations for modern readers.

How cold are thy baths, Apollo!
  Cried the African monarch, the splendid,
As down to his death in the hollow
  Dark dungeons of Rome he descended,
  Uncrowned, unthroned, unattended;
How cold are thy baths, Apollo!

How cold are thy baths, Apollo!
  Cried the Poet, unknown, unbefriended,
As the vision that lured him to follow
  With the mist and the darkness blended,
  And the dream of his life was ended;
How cold are thy baths, Apollo!

1879·1880

The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls

The tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveller hastens toward the town,
  And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
  And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
  And the tide rises, the tide falls.

1879·1880

Sleep • 4 **Hermes**, son of Jupiter and the inventor of the lyre • 5 **Argus**, the hundred-eyed son of Zeus, who had a habit of sleeping with only two eyes at a time. Hermes, by playing wonderful music, put all his eyes to sleep at once and then slew him

Oliver Wendell Holmes

1809 • 1894

"I have always been good company for myself," said Oliver Wendell Holmes. Because he was also good company—almost always—for others, Holmes' chief contribution to our letters probably was the infusion into them of a social grace that, in those days, flourished most notably in Europe. For this reason historians have pointed out that, like the two other famed Cambridge authors, Longfellow and Lowell, in his own unique way Holmes helped adapt European culture to American needs.

It was Holmes who dubbed the social group to which he belonged "Brahmins." A Brahmin is defined in the dictionary as "a Hindu of the highest, or priestly, caste." That Holmes belonged to the highest caste in New England there can be no doubt. His birth and his rearing were in accord with the tradition of his class. He was born in an old house which had historical associations with important battles of the Revolution. He was what he called "a man of family"—one "who inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least five generations." He was educated at a leading private school, at Harvard, and abroad. In his profession, medicine, he won honors first as a scholar and later (1847-1882) as a noted professor at Harvard.

But there was nothing priestly about little Doctor Holmes. Perhaps his chief contribution to American thought was the exposition of the deterministic philosophy which stressed the way a man's nature and upbringing molded his life. Furthermore, he was enough of a conservative in his social attitude during this great period of reform to attack vigorously any notions of human regeneration. Finally, much of his most admired verse is worldly, polished, amusing, rather than profound or preachy; and such papers as *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* (1858) and *Over the Teacups* (1891) thrive chiefly because they gracefully transfer Holmes' charming talk to the printed page.

Strung together on slender threads of fiction, these collections of papers from the *Atlantic Monthly* happily combine the informal essay with informal conversation. A group of boarding-house characters who now and then voice opinions or ask questions are, for the most part, useful foils for the Autocrat, the Professor, or the Poet as each carries on his interrupted monologues. Each of the monologuists, since he has various aspects of Holmes' character, can, like his creator, talk shrewdly and wittily about hosts of subjects. In books of this type, rather than in novels such as *Elsie Venner* (1861), Holmes excelled. The novels—"medicated" novels, he called them—deal more seriously but less successfully with scientific and ethical problems. Their chief interest, aside from the ideas they express, derives from their gropings toward the form of something like the psychological fiction Henry James was later to write.

Holmes' verse, like his prose, is at its best when it is most informal. With a taste for eighteenth-century

authors formed by childhood reading in his father's library, Holmes for a long time scoffed at the idea of poetic inspiration. Although in time he came to believe that the best poetry was inspired, as a rule he himself was content to write after the models of the sociable Neoclassical authors who flourished in England between 1660 and 1720. His numerous occasional verses, his use of the mock-heroic form, his preference for ballad stanzas and heroic couplets show his kinship with the Queen Anne "gentlemen who writ with ease." "I hold it to be a gift of a certain value," he wrote Lowell, "to give that slight passing spasm of pleasure which a few ringing couplets often cause, read at the right moment. Though they are for the most part to poetry as the beating of a drum or the tinkling of a triangle is to the harmony of a band, yet it is not everybody who can get their limited significance out of these humble instruments."

Prose Works of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Riverside Edition, Boston, 1891 • **Poetical Works of Oliver Wendell Holmes,** Cambridge Edition, Boston, 1895 • J. T. Morse, **The Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes,** 2 vols., Boston, 1896 • W. S. Knickerbocker, "His Own Boswell. A Note on the Poetry of Oliver Wendell Holmes," **Sewanee Review,** October-December 1933, XLI, 454-466 • Catherine Bowen, **Yankee from Olympus,** Boston, 1944

Old Ironsides

When, in September 1830, Holmes read a newspaper report that the old and unseaworthy frigate **Constitution,** the conqueror of the **Guerrière** in the War of 1812, had been ordered destroyed, he wrote this indignant protest. Published first in the September 16, 1830 issue of the **Boston Daily Advertiser,** the poem was reprinted in many newspapers and was circulated in handbill form in Washington, D. C. The stir started by the poem caused the order to be retracted.

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
  Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
  That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
  And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
  Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
  Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
  And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
  Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
  The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
  Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunder shook the mighty deep,
  And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
  Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
  The lightning and the gale!

1830

The Ballad of the Oysterman

This mock-heroic poem emphasizes Holmes' indebtedness to the eighteenth-century light verse writers, such as Prior and Gray, who frequently wrote amusing poetry of this sort. An excellent example of the pretentious treatment of a nonheroic subject, it uses epic and ballad conventions to emphasize the incongruous elements in some of the sentimental love poetry of the 1830's.

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the river-side,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat was on the tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so straight and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite to him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the shade;
He saw her wave her handkerchief, as much as if to say,
"I'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all the folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself said he,
"I guess I'll leave the skiff at home, for fear that folks should see;
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will swim this here."

And he has leaped into the waves, and crossed the shining stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in the moonlight gleam;
Oh there were kisses sweet as dew, and words as soft as rain,—
But they have heard her father's step, and in he leaps again!

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—"Oh, what was that, my daughter?"
"'Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw into the water."
"And what is that, pray tell me, love, that paddles off so fast?"
"It's nothing but a porpoise, sir, that's been a-swimming past."

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—"Now bring me my harpoon!
I'll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the fellow soon."
Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a snow-white lamb,
Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks, like seaweed on a clam.

Alas for those two loving ones! she waked not from her swound.
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the waves was drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them, in pity of their woe,
And now they keep an oyster-shop for mermaids down below.

1830

My Aunt

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And say she reads as well,
When through a double convex lens
She just makes out to spell?

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles;
He sent her to a stylish school;
'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
"Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;—
Oh, never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back;

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12 **Leander**, according to Greek legend, nightly swam the Hellespont to visit Hero, a priestess of Aphrodite. When Leander was drowned, Hero threw herself into the sea. The comparison of the humble oysterman to this character is a typical incongruous touch

(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
  Might follow on the track;)
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
  Some powder in his pan,
"What could this lovely creature do
  Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
  Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father's arms
  His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
  And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
  On my ancestral tree.

1831

The Last Leaf

A note preceding this poem, first published in the Amateur for March 23, 1831, remarks that it "was suggested by the appearance in one of our streets of a venerable relic of the Revolution, said to be one of the party that threw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor." Students of American literature have been interested to learn that the subject was old Major Thomas Melville, Herman Melville's grandfather.

This is one of the most famous examples of Holmes' admirable light verse. Actually, the material might have been used in a very sentimental poem, but the exaggerated and incongruous imagery and the tripping verse form save it from mawkishness. Of the metrical scheme, Holmes said: "I do not recall any earlier example of this form of verse, which was commended by the fastidious Edgar Allan Poe, who made a copy of the poem which I have in his own handwriting."

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
  And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
  With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
  Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
  Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
  Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
  "They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
  In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
  On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
  Long ago—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
  In the snow;

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
  Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
  In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
  At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
  Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
  In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
  Where I cling.

1831

The Deacon's Masterpiece

or, The Wonderful "One-Hoss Shay"

A Logical Story

A satire on the great logical system of theology worked out by Calvinists and on the downfall of Calvinism, this poem was published in the Atlantic Monthly of September 1858 as part of one of the Autocrat papers. The date of the building of the deacon's masterpiece, 1755, was the year after the publication of Jonathan Edwards' greatest defense of Calvinism, Freedom of the Will; the year, too, of the Lisbon earthquake, which provoked many arguments favorable to the Calvinistic system.

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down,* but doesn't *wear out.*

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keountry 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *could n'* break daown;
"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t 's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That could n't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floors and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they could n't sell 'em,

Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—

Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there 's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You 're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day,—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore.*
And yet, *as a whole,* it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out!*

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.
The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly,* and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That 's all I say.

1858

The Chambered Nautilus

The paragraph preceding this poem when it appeared at the end of a section of **The Autocrat** gave the necessary facts about the background of the poem: "If you will look into Roget's **Bridgewater Treatise,** you will find a figure of one of these shells [the nautilus], and a section of it. The last will show you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral. Can you find no lesson in this?"

Of "The Chambered Nautilus," Holmes wrote: "I am as willing to submit this to criticism as any [poem] I have written, in form as well as substance, and I have not seen any English verse of just the same pattern." It was one work of his which he avowed had been inspired.

"The Chambered Nautilus" is unusually suggestive of Longfellow's poems. Like "Excelsior" or "The Builders," it preaches a sermon with the text "Onward and upward." The form, too, resembles Longfellow's: an object is described in the three opening stanzas, and then, in the two stanzas addressed to the nautilus at the end, the moral is drawn. Holmes seems to have been bothered very little by the incongruity—distressing to careful readers—of some of his images.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
And every chambered cell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

1858

The Boys

For many years Holmes read a poem composed for the occasion at the annual dinner of the Harvard Class of 1829. This one was written for the reunion of 1859, when he and his classmates probably were about fifty years old. It shows better perhaps than any other the way Holmes gave such verses the right mingling of wit and pathos. Even though it was written with a particular group in mind, the poem communicates its spirited humor to any reader.

Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
"Gray temples at twenty?"—Yes! *white* if we please;
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
Look close,—you will see not a sign of a flake!
We want some new garlands for those we have shed,—
And these are white roses in place of the red.

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
Of talking (in public) as if we were old:—
That boy we call "Doctor," and this we call "Judge";
It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

That fellow's the "Speaker,"—the one on the right;
"Mr. Mayor," my young one, how are you to-night?
That's our "Member of Congress," we say when we chaff;
There's the "Reverend." What's his name?—don't make me laugh.

That boy with the grave mathematical look
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
And the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true!*
So they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too!

There's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
That could harness a team with a logical chain;

The Boys • **15 Doctor,** Francis Thomas • **15 Judge,** George T. Bigelow, chief justice of Massachusetts • **17 Speaker,** Francis B. Crowninshield, speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives • **18 Mr. Mayor,** G. W. Richardson, mayor of Worcester, Massachusetts • **19 Member of Congress,** George T. Davis, whom Thackeray described as "the most agreeable dinner-companion" that he had met during his visit to America • **20 Reverend,** James Freeman Clark, a Unitarian minister and a friend of Emerson • **21 That boy,** Prof. Benjamin Peirce of Harvard

When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
We called him "The Justice," but now he's "The Squire."

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,—
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
Just read on his medal, "My country," "of thee!"

You hear that boy laughing?—You think he's all fun;
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen,—
And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOYS!

1859

Hymn of Trust

O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, Thou art near!

1859

28 **The Justice,** Benjamin R. Curtis, justice of the United States Supreme Court • 30 **Smith,** the Rev. Samuel Francis Smith, author of "America"

From

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table

When Holmes was nearly fifty, Lowell, urged to edit the new Atlantic Monthly, "made it a condition precedent" to his acceptance that Holmes should be "the first contributor to be engaged." Since Holmes was hardly a towering figure in the literary world, though he did have a fine reputation in medicine, the request rather surprised him. **The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table,** which he contributed in monthly installments, established his literary reputation and did much to establish that of the magazine.

The Autocrat papers, like the other series which followed them, are unique in form. Each paper is a printed account of a conversation, informal because of its chatty tone and because of interruptions—the author's own asides and the remarks of other boarders who sit at the table. In a sense, furthermore, the papers have some of the appeals of fiction: they have the slightest of plots running through them, and they reveal characters and the interplay between diverse personalities.

Since the speakers differ greatly, there is a good deal of variety in the attitudes expressed. Variety is also pro-

vided by the wide range of subjects discussed. A glance at the Index to The Autocrat shows that Holmes, interested in all sorts of matters, treated, among hundreds of other subjects, Aristocracy, Boating, Calamities, Drunkenness, Ears (Voluntary Movement of), Family, Hysterics, Jailers, Keats, Logical Minds, Maine (Willows in), Nerve-tapping, Old Age, Punning, Quantity, Racing (Horse), Sporting Men, Travel, Unloved, Voices, Women, and Zimmerman's Treatise on Solitude. The talk is witty and learned, allusive to both the classics and contemporary events—an excellent key to the appeal of Holmes as a talker.

A lyric conception—my friend, the Poet, said—hits me like a bullet in the forehead. I have often had the blood drop from my cheeks when it struck, and felt that I turned as white as death. Then comes a creeping as of centipedes running down the spine,—then a gasp and a great jump of the heart,—then a sudden flush and a beating in the vessels of the head,—then a long sigh, —and the poem is written.

It is an impromptu, I suppose, then, if you write it so suddenly,—I replied.

No, said he,—far from it. I said written, but I did not say *copied.* Every such poem has a soul and a body, and it is the body of it, or the copy, that men read and publishers pay for. The soul of it is born in an instant in the poet's soul. It comes to him a thought, tangled in the meshes of a few sweet words,—words that have loved each other from the cradle of the language, but have never been wedded until now. Whether it will ever fully embody itself in a bridal train of a dozen stanzas or not is uncertain; but it exists potentially from the instant that the poet turns pale with it. It is enough to stun and scare anybody, to have a hot thought come crashing into his brain, and ploughing up those parallel ruts where the wagon trains of common ideas were jogging along in their regular sequences of association. No wonder the ancients made the poetical impulse wholly external. Μῆνιν ἄειδε Θεά. Goddess,—Muse,—divine afflatus,—something outside always. *I* never wrote any verses worth reading. I can't. I am too stupid. If I ever copied any that were worth reading, I was only a medium.

[I was talking all this time to our boarders, you understand,—telling them what this poet told me. The company listened rather attentively, I thought, considering the literary character of the remarks.]

The old gentleman opposite all at once asked me if I ever read anything better than Pope's "Essay on Man"? Had I ever perused McFingal? He was fond of poetry when he was a boy,—his mother taught him to say many little pieces,—he remembered one beautiful hymn; —and the old gentleman began, in a clear, loud voice, for his years,—

> "The spacious firmament on high,
> With all the blue ethereal sky,
> And spangled heavens,"—

He stopped, as if startled by our silence, and a faint flush ran up beneath the thin white hairs that fell upon his cheek. As I looked round, I was reminded of a show I once saw at the Museum,—the Sleeping Beauty, I think they called it. The old man's sudden breaking out in this way turned every face towards him, and each kept his posture as if changed to stone. Our Celtic Bridget, or Biddy, is not a foolish fat scullion to burst out crying for a sentiment. She is of the serviceable, red-handed, broad-and-high-shouldered type; one of those imported female servants who are known in public by their amorphous style of person, their stoop forwards, and a headlong and as it were precipitous walk,—the waist plunging downwards into the rocking pelvis at every heavy foot-fall. Bridget, constituted for action, not for emotion, was about to deposit a plate heaped with something upon the table, when I saw the coarse arm stretched by my shoulder arrested,—motionless as the arm of a terra-cotta caryatid; she couldn't set the plate down while the old gentleman was speaking!

He was quite silent after this, still wearing the slight flush on his cheek. Don't ever think the poetry is dead in an old man because his forehead is wrinkled, or that his manhood has left him when his hand trembles! If they ever *were* there, they *are* there still!

By and by we got talking again.—Does a poet love the verses written through him, do you think, Sir?—said the divinity-student.

So long as they are warm from his mind,—carry any

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27 Μῆνιν ἄειδε Θεά, the opening words of the Iliad, "Goddess, sing of the wrath [of Achilles]" • 43 The spacious firmament . . . , opening lines of "Hymn" by Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

of his animal heat about them, I *know* he loves them,—I answered. When they have had time to cool, he is more indifferent.

A good deal as it is with buckwheat cakes,—said the young fellow whom they call John.

The last words, only, reached the ear of the economically organized female in black bombazine.—Buckwheat is skerce and high,—she remarked. [Must be a poor relation sponging on our landlady—pays nothing,—so she must stand by the guns and be ready to repel boarders.]

I liked the turn the conversation had taken, for I had some things I wanted to say, and so, after waiting a minute, I began again.—I don't think the poems I read you sometimes can be fairly appreciated, given to you as they are in the green state.

—You don't know what I mean by the *green state?* Well, then, I will tell you. Certain things are good for nothing until they have been kept a long while; and some are good for nothing until they have been long kept and *used.* Of the first, wine is the illustrious and immortal example. Of those which must be kept and used I will name three,—meerschaum pipes, violins, and poems. The meerschaum is but a poor affair until it has burned a thousand offerings to the cloud-compelling deities. It comes to us without complexion or flavor,—born of the sea-foam, like Aphrodite, but colorless as *pallida Mors* herself. The fire is lighted in its central shrine, and gradually the juices which the broad leaves of the Great Vegetable had sucked up from an acre and curdled into a drachm are diffused through its thirsting pores. First a discoloration, then a stain, and at last a rich, glowing, umber tint spreading over the whole surface. Nature true to her old brown autumnal hue, you see,—as true in the fire of the meerschaum as in the sunshine of October! And then the cumulative wealth of its fragrant reminiscences! he who inhales its vapors takes a thousand whiffs in a single breath; and one cannot touch it without awakening the old joys that hang around it as the smell of flowers clings to the dresses of the daughters of the house of Farina!

[Don't think I use a meerschaum myself, for I *do not,* though I have owned a calumet since my childhood, which from a naked Pict (of the Mohawk species) my grandsire won, together with a tomahawk and beaded knife-sheath; paying for the lot with a bullet-mark on his right cheek. On the maternal side I inherit the loveliest silver-mounted tobacco-stopper you ever saw. It is a little box-wood Triton, carved with charming liveliness and truth; I have often compared it to a figure in Raphael's "Triumph of Galatea." It came to me in an ancient shagreen case,—how old it is I do not know,—but it must have been made since Sir Walter Raleigh's time. If you are curious, you shall see it any day. Neither will I pretend that I am so unused to the more perishable smoking contrivance that a few whiffs would make me feel as if I lay in a ground-well on the Bay of Biscay. I am not unacquainted with that fusiform, spiral-wound bundle of chopped stems and miscellaneous incombustibles, the *cigar,* so called, of the shops,—which to "draw" asks the suction-power of a nursling infant Hercules, and to relish, the leathery palate of an old Silenus. I do not advise you, young man, even if my illustration strike your fancy, to consecrate the flower of your life to painting the bowl of a pipe, for, let me assure you, the stain of a reverie-breeding narcotic may strike deeper than you think for. I have seen the green leaf of early promise grow brown before its time under such Nicotian regimen, and thought the umbered meerschaum was dearly bought at the cost of a brain enfeebled and a will enslaved.]

Violins, too,—the sweet old Amati!—the divine Stradivarius! Played on by ancient *maestros* until the bow-hand lost its power and the flying fingers stiffened. Bequeathed to the passionate young enthusiast, who made it whisper his hidden love, and cry his inarticulate longings, and scream his untold agonies, and wail his monotonous despair. Passed from his dying hand to the cold *virtuoso,* who let it slumber in its case for a generation, till, when his hoard was broken up, it came forth once more and rode the stormy symphonies of royal orchestras, beneath the rushing bow of their lord and leader. Into lonely prisons with improvident artists; into convents from which arose, day and night, the holy hymns with which its tones were blended; and back

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28 **pallida Mors,** pale Death • 51 **Triumph of Galatea,** a famous painting. Galatea was a Naiad, a lesser goddess • 57 **Bay of Biscay,** on the Cantabrian Sea, noted for the fierce waves stirred up on it by strong winds • 72 **Amati,** Nicoló Amati (1596-1684), a great violin maker, teacher of Antonio Stradivarius • 73 **Stradivarius,** Antonio Stradivarius (1644-1737), the most famous of the Stradivari, a family of famous violin makers in Cremona

again to orgies in which it learned to howl and laugh as if a legion of devils were shut up in it; then again to the gentle *dilettante* who calmed it down with easy melodies until it answered him softly as in the days of the old *maestros*. And so given into our hands, its pores all full of music; stained, like the meerschaum, through and through, with the concentrated hue and sweetness of all the harmonies which have kindled and faded on its strings.

Now I tell you a poem must be kept *and used*, like a meerschaum, or a violin. A poem is just as porous as the meerschaum;—the more porous it is, the better. I mean to say that a genuine poem is capable of absorbing an indefinite amount of the essence of our own humanity,—its tenderness, its heroism, its regrets, its aspirations, so as to be gradually stained through with a divine secondary color derived from ourselves. So you see it must take time to bring the sentiment of a poem into harmony with our nature, by staining ourselves through every thought and image our being can penetrate.

Then again as to the mere music of a new poem; why, who can expect anything more from that than from the music of a violin fresh from the maker's hands? Now you know very well that there are no less than fifty-eight different pieces in a violin. These pieces are strangers to each other, and it takes a century, more or less, to make them thoroughly acquainted. At last they learn to vibrate in harmony and the instrument becomes an organic whole, as if it were a great seed-capsule which had grown from a garden-bed in Cremona, or elsewhere. Besides, the wood is juicy and full of sap for fifty years or so, but at the end of fifty or a hundred more gets tolerably dry and comparatively resonant.

Don't you see that all this is just as true of a poem? Counting each word as a piece, there are more pieces in an average copy of verses than in a violin. The poet has forced all these words together, and fastened them, and they don't understand it at first. But let the poem be repeated aloud and murmured over in the mind's muffled whisper often enough, and at length the parts become knit together in such absolute solidarity that you could not change a syllable without the whole world's crying out against you for meddling with the harmonious fabric. Observe, too, how the drying process takes place in the stuff of a poem just as in that of a violin. Here is a Tyrolese fiddle that is just coming to its hundredth birthday,—(Pedro Klauss, Tyroli, fecit, 1760),—the sap is pretty well out of it. And here is the song of an old poet whom Neæra cheated:—



The landlady's daughter.

"Nox erat, et cœlo fulgebat Luna sereno
Inter minora sidera,

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48 **Pedro Klauss . . . fecit, 1760,** made by Pedro Klauss in 1760 • 51 **Nox erat . . . mea.** Horace, **Epodes,** XV. The lines quoted have been translated thus by G. E. Bennett: " 'Twas night, and in a cloudless sky the moon was shining amid the lesser lights, when thou, soon to outrage the majesty of the mighty gods, didst pledge thy loyalty . . ."

Cum tu magnorum numen læsura deorum
In verba jurabas mea."

Don't you perceive the sonorousness of these old dead Latin phrases? Now I tell you that every word fresh from the dictionary brings with it a certain succulence; and though I cannot expect the sheets of the "Pactolian," in which, as I told you, I sometimes print my verses, to get so dry as the crisp papyrus that held those words of Horatius Flaccus, yet you may be sure, that, while the sheets are damp, and while the lines hold their sap, you can't fairly judge of my performances, and that, if made of the true stuff, they will ring better after a while.

[There was silence for a brief space, after my somewhat elaborate exposition of these self-evident analogies. Presently *a person* turned towards me—I do not choose to designate the individual—and said that he rather expected my pieces had given pretty good "sahtisfahction"—I had, up to this moment, considered this complimentary phrase as sacred to the use of secretaries of lyceums, and, as it has been usually accompanied by a small pecuniary testimonial, have acquired a certain relish for this moderately tepid and unstimulating expression of enthusiasm. But as a reward for gratuitous services, I confess I thought it a little below that blood-heat standard which a man's breath ought to have, whether silent, or vocal and articulate. I waited for a favorable opportunity, however, before making the remarks which follow.]

—There are single expressions, as I have told you already, that fix a man's position for you before you have done shaking hands with him. Allow me to expand a little. There are several things, very slight in themselves, yet implying other things not so unimportant. Thus, your French servant has *dévalisé* your premises and got caught. *Excusez,* says the *sergent-de-ville,* as he politely relieves him of his upper garments and displays his bust in the full day-light. Good shoulders enough,—a little marked,—traces of smallpox, perhaps, —but white. . . . *Crac!* from the *sergent-de-ville's* broad palm on the white shoulder! Now look! *Vogue la galère!* Out comes the big red V—mark of the hot iron;—he had blistered it out pretty nearly,—hadn't he?—the old rascal VOLEUR, branded in the galleys at Marseilles! [Don't! What if he has got something like this?—nobody supposes I *invented* such a story.]

My man John, who used to drive two of those six equine females which I told you I had owned,—for, look you, my friends, simple though I stand here, I am one that has been driven in his "kerridge,"—not using that term, as liberal shepherds do, for any battered old shabby-genteel go-cart which has more than one wheel, but meaning thereby a four-wheeled vehicle *with a pole,*—my man John, I say, was a retired soldier. He retired unostentatiously, as many of Her Majesty's modest servants have done before and since. John told me, that when an officer thinks he recognizes one of these retiring heroes, and would know if he has really been in the service, that he may restore him, if possible, to a grateful country, he comes suddenly upon him, and says, sharply, "Strap!" If he has ever worn the shoulder-strap, he has learned the reprimand for its ill adjustment. The old word of command flashes through his muscles, and his hand goes up in an instant to the place where the strap used to be.

[I was all the time preparing for my grand *coup,* you understand; but I saw they were not quite ready for it, and so continued,—always in illustration of the general principle I had laid down.]

Yes, odd things come out in ways that nobody thinks of. There was a legend, that, when the Danish pirates made descents upon the English coast, they caught a few Tartars occasionally, in the shape of Saxons, who would not let them go,—on the contrary, insisted on their staying, and, to make sure of it, treated them as Apollo treated Marsyas, or as Bartholinus has treated a fellow-creature in his title-page, and, having divested them of the one essential and perfectly fitting garment, indispensable in the mildest climates, nailed the same on the church-door as we do the banns of marriage, *in terrorem.*

[There was a laugh at this among some of the young folks; but as I looked at our landlady, I saw that "the

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6 **Pactolian,** from Pactolus, a small Lydian stream, celebrated in antiquity for golden sands, the source of the wealth of Croesus. Holmes refers to an imaginary magazine, giving it a name which helps develop his point • 34 **dévalisé,** plundered • 35 **Excusez,** beg pardon • 35 **sergent-de-ville,** bailiff • 40 **Vogue la galère!** Come what will! • 43 **Voleur,** thief • 65 **coup,** stroke • 75 **Apollo,** after defeating Marsyas in a musical contest, flayed him alive • 75 **Bartholinus,** Thomas Bartholinus (1619-1680), Danish physician, author of a number of works on anatomy • 79 **in terrorem,** in terror

water stood in her eyes," as it did in Christiana's when the interpreter asked her about the spider, and I fancied, but wasn't quite sure that the schoolmistress blushed, as Mercy did in the same conversation, as you remember.]

That sounds like a cock-and-bull-story,—said the young fellow whom they call John. I abstained from making Hamlet's remark to Horatio, and continued.

Not long since, the church-wardens were repairing and beautifying an old Saxon church in a certain English village, and among other things thought the doors should be attended to. One of them particularly, the front-door, looked very badly, crusted, as it were, and as if it would be all the better for scraping. There happened to be a microscopist in the village who had heard the old pirate story, and he took it into his head to examine the crust on this door. There was no mistake about it; it was a genuine historical document, of the Ziska drum-head pattern,—a real *cutis humana,* stripped from some old Scandinavian filibuster, and the legend was true.

My friend, the Professor, settled an important historical and financial question once by the aid of an exceedingly minute fragment of a similar document. Behind the pane of plate-glass which bore his name and title burned a modest lamp, signifying to the passers-by that at all hours of the night the slightest favors (or fevers) were welcome. A youth who had freely partaken of the cup which cheers and likewise inebriates, following a moth-like impulse very natural under the circumstances, dashed his fist at the light and quenched the meek luminary,—breaking through the plate-glass, of course, to reach it. Now I don't want to go into *minutiæ* at table, you know, but a naked hand can no more go through a pane of thick glass without leaving some of its cuticle, to say the least, behind it, than a butterfly can go through a sausage-machine without looking the worse for it. The Professor gathered up the fragments of glass, and with them certain very minute but entirely satisfactory documents which would have identified and hanged any rogue in Christendom who had parted with them.—The historical question, *Who did it?* and the financial question, *Who paid for it?* were both settled before the new lamp was lighted the next evening.

You see, my friends, what immense conclusions, touching our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, may be reached by means of very insignificant premises. This is eminently true of manners and forms of speech; a movement or a phrase often tells you all you want to know about a person. Thus, "How's your health?" (commonly pronounced *haàlth)* instead of, How do you do? or, How are you? Or calling your little dark entry a "hall," and your old rickety one-horse wagon a "kerridge." Or telling a person who has been trying to please you that he has given you pretty good "sahtisfahction." Or saying that you "remember of" such a thing, or that you have been "stoppin' " at Deacon Somebody's,—and other such expressions. One of my friends had a little marble statuette of Cupid in the parlor of his country-house,—bow, arrows, wings, and all complete. A visitor, indigenous to the region, looking pensively at the figure, asked the lady of the house "if that was a statoo of her deceased infant?" What a delicious, though somewhat voluminous biography, social, educational, and aesthetic, in that brief question!

[Please observe with what Machiavellian astuteness I smuggled in the particular offence which it was my object to hold up to my fellow-boarders, without too personal an attack on the individual at whose door it lay.]

That was an exceedingly dull person who made the remark, *Ex pede Herculem.* He might as well have said, "from a peck of apples you may judge of the barrel." *Ex* PEDE, to be sure! Read, instead, *Ex ungue minimi digiti pedis, Herculem, ejusque patrem, matrem, avos et proavos, filios, nepotes et pronepotes!* Talk to me about your δὸς ποῦ στῶ! Tell me about Cuvier's getting up a megatherium from a tooth, or Agassiz's drawing a portrait of an undiscovered fish from a single scale! As the

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1 Christiana, wife of Christian in Pilgrim's Progress • 7 Hamlet's remark. Act I, Scene v, ll. 166-167:

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

• 17 Ziska drum-head, so named after John Ziska (1360?-1424), Bohemian Hussite leader who was frequently cruel in the punishment of his foes • 18 cutis humana, human skin • 25 the slightest favors (or fevers), a pun of which Holmes himself had been guilty in the early days of his medical career • 31 minutiæ, minutiae, minor details • 44 touching . . . honor, the conclusion of the Declaration of Independence • 64 Machiavellian, wily, in the tradition of Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) • 69 Ex pede Herculem—"By the foot alone of Hercules," you may know him • 71 Ex . . . pronepotes. By the nail of the smallest toe of Hercules, [you may know] his father, mother, his nephews and his great-nephews, his sons • 74 δὸς ποῦ στῶ refers to the famous remark of Archimedes, "Give me a place where I can stand, and I will move the world" • 74 Cuvier, Georges Léopold Cuvier • 75 Agassiz, Louis John Rudolph Agassiz (1807-1873), Swiss naturalist who taught at Harvard

"O" revealed Giotto,—as the one word "moi" betrayed the Stratford atte-Bowe-taught Anglais,—so all a man's antecedents and possibilities are summed up in a single utterance which gives at once the gauge of his education and his mental organization.

Possibilities, Sir?—said the divinity-student; can't a man who says *Haow?* arrive at distinction?

Sir,—I replied,—in a republic all things are possible. But the man *with a future* has almost of necessity sense enough to see that any odious trick of speech or manners must be got rid of. Doesn't Sydney Smith say that a public man in England never gets over a false quantity uttered in early life? *Our* public men are in little danger of this fatal misstep, as few of them are in the habit of introducing Latin into their speeches,—for good and sufficient reasons. But they are bound to speak decent English,—unless, indeed, they are rough old campaigners, like General Jackson or General Taylor; in which case, a few scars on Priscian's head are pardoned to old fellows who have quite as many on their own, and a constituency of thirty empires is not at all particular, provided they do not swear in their Presidential Messages.

However, it is not for me to talk. I have made mistakes enough in conversation and print. I never find them out until they are stereotyped, and then I think they rarely escape me. I have no doubt I shall make half a dozen slips before this breakfast is over, and remember them all before another. How one does tremble with rage at his own intense momentary stupidity about things he knows perfectly well, and to think how he lays himself open to the impertinences of the *captatores verborum*, those useful but humble scavengers of the language, whose business it is to pick up what might offend or injure, and remove it, hugging and feeding on it as they go! I don't want to speak too slightingly of these verbal critics; —how can I, who am so fond of talking about errors and vulgarisms of speech? Only there is a difference between those clerical blunders which almost every man commits, knowing better, and that habitual grossness or meanness of speech which is unendurable to educated persons, from anybody that wears silk or broadcloth.

[I write down the above remarks this morning, January 26th, making this record of the date that nobody may think it was written in wrath, on account of any particular grievance suffered from the invasion of any *individual scarabœus grammaticus.*]

—I wonder if anybody ever finds fault with anything I say at this table when it is repeated? I hope they do, I am sure. I should be very certain that I had said nothing of much significance, if they did not.

Did you never, in walking in the fields, come across a large flat stone, which had lain, nobody knows how long, just where you found it, with the grass forming a little hedge, as it were, all round it, close to its edges,—and have you not, in obedience to a kind of feeling that told you it had been lying there long enough, insinuated your stick or your foot or your fingers under its edge and turned it over as a housewife turns a cake, when she says to herself, "It's done brown enough by this time"? What an odd revelation, and what an unforeseen and unpleasant surprise to a small community, the very existence of which you had not suspected, until the sudden dismay and scattering among its members produced by your turning the old stone over! Blades of grass flattened down, colorless, ironed; hideous crawling creatures, some of them coleopterous or horny-shelled,—turtle-bugs one wants to call them, some of them softer, but cunningly spread out and compressed like Lepine watches; (Nature never loses a crack or a crevice, mind you, or a joint in a tavern bedstead, but she always has one of her flat-pattern live timekeepers to slide into it); black glossy crickets, with their long filaments sticking out like the whips of four-horse stage-coaches; motionless, slug-like creatures, young larvæ, perhaps more horrible in their pulpy stillness than even in the infernal wriggle of maturity. But no sooner is the stone turned and the wholesome light of day let upon this compressed and blinded community of creeping things, than all of them which enjoy the luxury of legs—and some of them have a good many—rush

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1 **Giotto** (1276?-1337?), Florentine painter and architect who reputedly could draw, free hand, a perfect circle • 2 **Stratford . . . Anglais.** The reference is to the prioress in the **Canterbury Tales,** of whom Chaucer said·

> And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetishly [neatly]
> After the acole [school] of Stratford-atte-Bowe . . . .

Stratford-atte-Bowe was a Benedictine nunnery at Stratford, London, E. The French taught there was Anglo-French, which differed from that of Paris. Therefore, the way she pronounced "moi" would show her training • 11 **Sydney Smith** (1771-1845), English divine, writer, and wit • 18 **General Jackson,** Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), seventh President (1829-1837) of the United States • 18 **General Taylor,** Zachary Taylor (1784-1850), twelfth President (1849-1850) • 19 **Priscian,** Latin grammarian of the sixth century • 31 **captatores verborum,** word hunters • 46 **scarabœus grammaticus,** grammar beetle, or bookworm • 66 **coleopterous,** belonging to the beetle species of insects

round wildly, butting each other and everything in their way, and end in a general stampede for underground retreats from the region poisoned by sunshine. *Next year* you will find the grass growing tall and green where the stone lay; the ground-bird builds her nest where the beetle had his hole; the dandelion and the buttercup are growing there, and the broad fans of insect-angels open and shut over their golden disks, as the rhythmic waves of blissful consciousness pulsate through their glorified being.

—The young fellow whom they call John saw fit to say, in his very familiar way,—at which I do not choose to take offence, but which I sometimes think it necessary to repress, that I was coming it rather strong on the butterflies.

No, I replied; there is meaning in each of those images,—the butterfly as well as the others. The stone is ancient error. The grass is human nature borne down and bleached of all its colour by it. The shapes which are found beneath are the crafty beings that thrive in darkness, and the weaker organisms kept helpless by it. He who turns the stone over is whosoever puts the staff of truth to the old lying incubus, no matter whether he do it with a serious face or a laughing one. The next year stands for the coming time. Then shall the nature which had lain blanched and broken rise in its full stature and native hues in the sunshine. Then shall God's minstrels build their nests in the hearts of a newborn humanity. Then shall beauty—Divinity taking outlines and color—light upon the souls of men as the butterfly, image of the beatified spirit rising from the dust, soars from the shell that held a poor grub, which would never have found wings, had not the stone been lifted.

You never need think you can turn over any old falsehood without a terrible squirming and scattering of the horrid little population that dwells under it.

—Every real thought on every subject knocks the wind out of somebody or other. As soon as his breath comes back, he very probably begins to expend it in hard words. These are the best evidence a man can have that he has said something it was time to say. Dr. Johnson was disappointed in the effect of one of his pamphlets. "I think I have not been attacked enough for it," he said;—"attack is the reaction; I never think I have hit hard unless it rebounds."

—If a fellow attacked my opinions in print, would I reply? Not I. Do you think I don't understand what my friend, the Professor, long ago called *the hydrostatic paradox of controversy?*

Don't know what that means?—Well, I will tell you. You know, that, if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was of the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way,—*and the fools know it.*



The young fellow whom they call John.

—No, but I often read what they say about other people. There are about a dozen phrases which all come tumbling along together, like the tongs, and the shovel, and the poker, and the brush, and the bellows, in one of those domestic avalanches that everybody knows. If you get one, you get the whole lot.

What are they?—Oh, that depends a good deal on

latitude and longitude. Epithets follow the isothermal lines pretty accurately. Grouping them in two families, one finds himself a clever, genial, witty, wise, brilliant, sparkling, thoughtful, distinguished, celebrated, illustrious scholar and perfect gentleman, and first writer of the age; or a dull, foolish, wicked, pert, shallow, ignorant, insolent, traitorous, black-hearted outcast, and disgrace to civilization.

What do I think determines the set of phrases a man gets?—Well, I should say a set of influences something like these:—1st. Relationships, political, religious, social, domestic. 2nd. Oysters, in the form of suppers given to gentlemen connected with criticism. I believe in the school, the college, and the clergy; but my sovereign logic, for regulating public opinion—which means commonly the opinion of half a dozen of the critical gentry—is the following. *Major proposition.* Oysters *au naturel.* *Minor proposition.* The same "scalloped." *Conclusion.* That—(here insert entertainer's name) is clever, witty, wise, brilliant,—and the rest.

—No, it isn't exactly bribery. One man has oysters, and another epithets. It is an exchange of hospitalities; one gives a "spread" on linen, and the other on paper,—that is all. Don't you think you and I should be apt to do just so, if we were in the critical line? I am sure I couldn't resist the softening influences of hospitality. I don't like to dine out, you know,—I dine so well at our own table, [our landlady looked radiant,] and the company is so pleasant [a rustling movement of satisfaction among the boarders]; but if I did partake of a man's salt, with such additions as that article of food requires to make it palatable, I could never abuse him, and if I had to speak of him, I suppose I should hang my set of jingling epithets round him like a string of sleigh-bells. Good feeling helps society to make liars of most of us,—not absolute liars, but such careless handlers of truth that its sharp corners get terribly rounded. I love truth as chiefest among the virtues; I trust it runs in my blood; but I would never be a critic, because I know I could not always tell it. I might write a criticism of a book that happened to please me; that is another matter.

—Listen, Benjamin Franklin! This is for you, and such others of tender age as you may tell it to.

When we are as yet small children, long before the time when those two grown ladies offer us the choice of Hercules, there comes up to us a youthful angel, holding in his right hand cubes like dice, and in his left spheres like marbles. The cubes are of stainless ivory, and on each is written in letters of gold—TRUTH. The spheres are veined and streaked and spotted beneath, with a dark crimson flush above, where the light falls on them, and in a certain aspect you can make out upon every one of them the three letters L, I, E. The child to whom they are offered very probably clutches at both. The spheres are the most convenient things in the world; they roll with the least possible impulse just where the child would have them. The cubes will not roll at all; they have a great talent for standing still, and always keep right side up. But very soon the young philosopher finds that things which roll so easily are very apt to roll into the wrong corner, and to get out of his way when he most wants them, while he always knows where to find the others, which stay where they are left. Thus he learns—thus we learn—to drop the streaked and speckled globes of falsehood and to hold fast the white angular blocks of truth. But then comes Timidity, and after her Good-nature, and last of all Polite-behavior, all insisting that truth must *roll,* or nobody can do anything with it; and so the first with her coarse rasp, and the second with her broad file, and the third with her silken sleeve, do so round off and smooth and polish the snow-white cubes of truth, that, when they have got a little dingy by use, it becomes hard to tell them from the rolling spheres of falsehood.

The schoolmistress was polite enough to say that she was pleased with this, and that she would read it to her little flock the next day. But she should tell the children, she said, that there were better reasons for truth than could be found in mere experience of its convenience and the inconvenience of lying.

Yes,—I said,—but education always begins through the senses, and works up to the idea of absolute right and wrong The first thing the child has to learn about this matter is, that lying is unprofitable,—afterwards, that it is against the peace and dignity of the universe.

1858

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17 au naturel, in a natural state • 45 choice of Hercules. As a youth, according to legend, Hercules had to choose, at a meeting of the ways, between two women—Pleasure and Duty

James Russell Lowell

1819 • 1891

James Russell Lowell's background and training seemed fairly certain to make him exactly the conservative in politics and literature that his neighbor Holmes was. For several reasons, however, he diverged notably from the Brahmin pattern. Born ten years after Holmes, he belonged to a generation which was beginning to rebel against an established style of thinking and living. Moreover, his reading of foreign literature differed from that of Longfellow and Holmes and led him to form different notions about the most important tasks and methods of great writers. Finally, his acquaintanceships and friendships influenced him to depart from beaten paths in New England literature.

Lowell was born February 22, 1819, at Elmwood, a large pre-Revolutionary mansion in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on what was called "Tory Row." A member of one of the most honored Brahmin families, he had the usual sort of education at home (dame's school and Harvard) and abroad. When Longfellow retired, Lowell took the distinguished chair which Longfellow had held at Harvard and served there from 1856 until 1877. He was not only a teacher, a critic, and a poet but also an editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* (1857-1861) and of the *North American Review* (1864-1872), a minister to Spain (1877-1880), and a minister to England (1880-1885). After his return to America, Lowell continued to express himself in political essays, criticism, and poetry to the time of his death, at Elmwood, August 12, 1891. The wide range of activity represented in his life is paralleled by the wide range in the writings of this most versatile of the Cambridge authors.

In the years before his appointment at Harvard, Lowell, largely because of the influence of his first wife, Maria White, became a leading writer in behalf of abolition. His *Biglow Papers* (first series, 1848; second series, 1867) in Yankee dialect were his chief contribution to antislavery literature. These writings, in the crackerbox philosopher tradition of Jack Downing (see p. 541) and others, effectively argued for Lowell's beliefs on the basis of common sense. Most notable of his other political writings are *On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners* (1869) and *Democracy* (1884), which have a mannered elegance strikingly different from the Yankee diatribes.

In the field of belles-lettres, Lowell wrote criticism and poetry. His earliest criticism was frankly impressionistic, deriving its value from Lowell's sensitivity and his ability to state his reactions in striking phrases. Beginning in the 1850's, however, his study of the classic critics, of Goethe and of Coleridge, led him to adopt less impressionistic methods to stress the relationship between the period and the author, between the author and his work, and between the details and the whole composition. This approach appeared in *Among My Books* (first series, 1870; second series, 1876) and *My Study Windows* (1871). The essays in these volumes deal with the great authors of various lands and not only communicate Lowell's judgments in memorable terms but also employ rather systematic tests of excellence and many illuminating comparisons.

Much of the poetry which Lowell wrote might have been written by either Longfellow or Holmes: it had similar material, a similar arrangement, and a similar

form. In some of his other poems, though, he showed his kinship with the new generation, which included such writers as Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, by departing more frequently than his famous fellow townsmen from the well-established verse patterns. As a poet Lowell was versatile enough to publish the rustic Biglow verses, the sparklingly witty *Fable for Critics*, and the moralizing metrical romance, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, all in one year. Although his versatility somewhat diffused his energies, he did write some good poetry. Lowell was at his poetic best, perhaps, in some of his nature poems and in some of his odes—notably "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" (1865).

The Writings of James Russell Lowell, 10 vols , Boston, 1890 • F. H. Underwood, **The Poet and the Man**, Boston, 1893 • H E. Scudder, **James Russell Lowell**, Boston, 1906 • **Letters of James Russell Lowell**, ed. C. E. Norton, 2 vols., New York, 1906

To the Dandelion

America, in the early forties, developed a great passion for democracy—a passion shared by Lowell and his bride of 1844. In the early days of their marriage this couple had astonished some of their neighbors by insisting that old family servants sit at the table with them at mealtime. Expressive of Lowell's current enthusiasm for democracy, this song uses the humble flower as a symbol of the glory of the common man. The choice of imagery, except perhaps in part of the fourth stanza, is highly appropriate to the development of the thought. In this poem, published in **Graham's Magazine** in January 1845, Lowell showed that now and then he could write a lyric poem which had both richness and unity.

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth,—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease,
'Tis the spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:
Not in mid June the golden cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
Some woodland gap, and of a sky above,
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

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26 **Sybaris**, an ancient Greek city famous for its luxury and for the voluptuousness which flourished in its mild climate

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven and, could some wondrous secret show
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

1845

From

A Fable for Critics

Lowell wrote that "this jeu d'esprit was extemporized, I may say, so rapidly was it written. . . . I sent daily installments to a friend in New York, the late Charles Briggs. He urged me to let it be printed, and I at last consented to its anonymous publication."

As Lowell said at the outset of the poem, its plot,

. . . like an icicle's slender and slippery,
Every moment more slender, and likely to slip awry. . . .

In the main, it presents a critic explaining to Apollo what American authors of the period were like. The passages below (the titles were supplied by the editors) are the critic's remarks about the leading figures dealt with in the poem, as well as those about two minor authors famous at the time, Dana and Neal.

A long line of ancestors might be cited for the poem, notably Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" and a poem which Lowell had enjoyed reading not long before 1847—Leigh Hunt's "Feast of the Poets." For discernment, liveliness, and wit, Lowell's poem compares very favorably with these predecessors.

EMERSON

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse, the Lord knows,
Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even prose;
I'm speaking of metres; some poems have welled
From those rare depths of soul that have ne'er been excelled;
They're not epics, but that doesn't matter a pin,
In creating, the only hard thing's to begin;
A grass-blade's no easier to make than an oak;
If you've once found the way, you've achieved the grand stroke;
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,
But thrown in a heap with a crash and a clatter;
Now it is not one thing nor another alone
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly perfect may be,
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree.

"But, to come back to Emerson (whom, by the way,
I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may say,

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2 gold nails. See Ecclesiastes 12 11 "The words of the wise are as . . . nails fastened by the masters of assemblies . . ." • 5 metres, a reference to Emerson's rather bumpy versification

A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the Exchange;
He seems, to my thinking (although I'm afraid
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made),
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian's gold mist
And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist;
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got
To I don't (nor they either) exactly know what;
For though he builds glorious temples, 'tis odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected;
And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,
A convert to—nothing but Emerson.
So perfect a balance there is in his head,
That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,
Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere dab in it;
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer,
You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,
With the quiet precision of science he'll sort 'em,
But you can't help suspecting the whole a *post mortem.*

"There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's make and style,
Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Carlyle;
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,
Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer;
He sees fewer objects, but clearlier, truelier,
If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar;
That he's more of a man you might say of the one,
Of the other he's more of an Emerson;
C.'s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb,—
E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;
The one's two thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,
Where the one's most abounding, the other's to seek;
C.'s generals require to be seen in the mass,—
E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;
C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,
And rims common-sense things with mystical hues,—
E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
And looks coolly around him with sharp common-sense;
C. shows you how every-day matters unite
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,—
While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day;
C. draws all his characters quite *a la* Fuseli,—
Not sketching their bundles of muscles and thews illy,
He paints with a brush so untamed and profuse,
They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews;
E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and severe,
And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear;—
To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
The design of a white marble statue in words.
C. labors to get at the centre, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men;
E. calmly assumes the said centre as granted,
And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

"He has imitators in scores, who omit
No part of the man but his wisdom and wit,—
Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his brain,
And when he has skimmed it once, skim it again;
If at all they resemble him, you may be sure it is
Because their shoals mirror his mists and obscurities,
As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a minute,
While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected within it.

BRYANT

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified,
Save when by reflection 'tis kindled o' nights

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24 **Olympus,** dwelling place of the Grecian gods. Here Lowell is referring to Emerson's Platonic idealism • 24 **Exchange,** symbol of Emerson's practicality. When a typical Brahmin praised a Transcendentalist, he was likely to laud him for not being too impractical • 27 **Plotinus-Montaigne** repeats the claim that Emerson was a happy mixture of idealism and practicality. Plotinus (205?-270?) was the most famous of the neo-Platonic philosophers. Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (1553-1592) was a French skeptic, essayist, and moralist • 59 **Titan,** earth-born giant, contrasted here with the heaven-born Olympian • 63 **generals,** generalizations • 73 **Fuseli.** Heinrich Fuseli (1742?-1825), a German-Swiss painter, was noted for his distortions of form and the extravagance of his colors • 77 **Flaxman,** John Flaxman (1755-1826), an English sculptor who followed classic models

h a semblance of flame by the chill Northern Lights.
may rank (Griswold says so) first bard of your nation
ere's no doubt that he stands in supreme ice-olation),
r topmost Parnassus he may set his heel on,
no warm applauses come, peal following peal on,—
; too smooth and too polished to hang any zeal on:
ualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose, he has 'em,
he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm;
e stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
: being stirred up with the very North Pole.

He is very nice reading in summer, but *inter*
, we don't want *extra* freezing in winter,
e him up in the depth of July, my advice is,
en you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices.
, deduct all you can, there's enough that's right good
in him,
has a true soul for field, river, and wood in him;
l his heart, in the midst of brick walls, or where'er
it is,
ws, softens, and thrills with the tenderest charities—
you mortals that delve in this trade-ridden planet?
to old Berkshire's hills, with their limestone and
granite.
ou're one who *in loco* (add *foco* here) *desipis*,
ı will get of his outermost heart (as I guess) a piece;
you'd get deeper down if you came as a precipice,
l would break the last seal of its inwardest fountain,
ou only could palm yourself off for a mountain.
Quivis, or somebody quite as discerning,
ıe scholar who's hourly expecting his learning,
ls B. the American Wordsworth; but Wordsworth
y be rated at more than your whole tuneful herd's
worth.
, don't be absurd, he's an excellent Bryant;
, my friends, you'll endanger the life of your client,
attempting to stretch him up into a giant:
ou choose to compare him, I think there are two per-
sons fit for a parallel—Thompson and Cowper;
ɔn't mean exactly—there's something of each,
:re's T.'s love of nature, C.'s penchant to preach;
t mix up their minds so that C.'s spice of craziness
ll balance and neutralize T.'s turn for laziness,
l it gives you a brain cool, quite frictionless, quiet,
ıose internal police nips the buds of all riot,—
ɔrain like a permanent straight-jacket put on
: heart that strives vainly to burst off a button,—
A brain which, without being slow or mechanic,
Does more than a larger less drilled, more volcanic;
He's a Cowper condensed, with no craziness bitten,
And the advantage that Wordsworth before him had
written.

"But, my dear little bardlings, don't prick up your ears
Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant as peers;
If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say
There is nothing in that which is grand in its way;
He is almost the one of your poets that knows
How much grace, strength, and dignity lie in Repose;
If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise to mar
His thought's modest fulness by going too far;
'T would be well if your authors should all make a trial
Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,
And measure their writings by Hesiod's staff,
Which teaches that all has less value than half.

WHITTIER

"There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart,
And reveals the live Man, still supreme and erect,
Underneath the bemummying wrappers of sect;
There was ne'er a man born who had more of the swing
Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of thing;
And his failures arise (though he seem not to know it)
From the very same cause that has made him a poet,—
A fervor of mind which knows no separation
'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration,
As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred from not knowing
If 'twere I or mere wind through her tripod was blowing;

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97 **Griswold,** Rufus Griswold (1815-1857), a leading nineteenth-century anthologist • 106 **inter Nos,** between ourselves • 116 **in . . . desipis.** You can be foolish in a particular place. The "add foco here" adds a rather complicated pun, referring not only to "one's own fireside" but also to the then-famous Locofoco political party • 121 **Mr. Quivis,** Mr Anybody • 129 **Thompson,** properly spelled Thomson, James (1700-1748), author of **The Seasons** • 129 **Cowper,** William Cowper (1731-1800), author of **The Task.** At this point Lowell wrote this rhymed footnote:

> To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-
> versely absurd 'tis to sound his Cowper
> As people in general call him named super
> I remark that he rhymes it himself with horse-trooper.

• 152 **Hesiod** (fl. 766 B.C.), a Greek poet, author of **Works and Days**
• 164 **Pythoness,** the oracle of Delphi

Let his mind once get head in its favorite direction
And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of reflection,
While, borne with the rush of the metre along,
The poet may chance to go right or go wrong,
Content with the whirl and delirium of song;
Then his grammar's not always correct, nor his rhymes,
And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics sometimes,
Not his best, though, for those are struck off at white-heats
When the heart in his breast like a trip-hammer beats,
And can ne'er be repeated again any more
Than they could have been carefully plotted before:
Like old what's-his-name there at the battle of Hastings
(Who, however, gave more than mere rhythmical bastings),
Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights
For reform and whatever they call human rights,
Both singing and striking in front of the war,
And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor;
Anne haec, one exclaims, on beholding his knocks,
Vestis filii tui, O leather-clad Fox?
Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,
Preaching brotherly love and then driving it in
To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's spring
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a sling?

"All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard
Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave
When to look but a protest in silence was brave;
All honor and praise to the women and men
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-trodden then!
It needs not to name them, already for each
I see History preparing the statue and niche;
They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked at hard words
Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up into swords,
Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer to gain
By the reaping of men and of women than grain?
Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce wordy war, if
You scalp one another for Bank or for Tariff?
Your calling them cut-throats and knaves all day long
Doesn't prove that the use of hard language is wrong;
While the World's heart beats quicker to think of such men
As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody steel-pen,
While on Fourth-of-Julys beardless orators fright one
With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton,
You need not look shy at your sisters and brothers
Who stab with sharp words for the freedom of others;—
No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the the loyal and true
Who, for sake of the many, dared stand with the few,
Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies braved,
But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for citizens saved!

DANA

"Here comes Dana, abstractedly loitering along,
Involved in a paulo-post-future of song,
Who'll be going to write what'll never be written
Till the Muse, ere he think of it, gives him the mitten,—
Who is so well aware of how things should be done,
That his own works displease him before they're begun,—
Who so well all that makes up good poetry knows,
That the best of his poems is written in prose;
All saddled and bridled stood Pegasus waiting,
He was booted and spurred, but he loitered debating;
In a very grave question his soul was immersed,—
Which foot in the stirrup he ought to put first;
And, while this point and that he judicially dwelt on,
He, somehow or other, had written Paul Felton,
Whose beauties or faults, whichsoever you see there,
You'll allow only genius could hit upon either.
That he once was the Idle Man none will deplore,
But I fear he will never be anything more;
The ocean of song heaves and glitters before him,
The depth and the vastness and longing sweep o'er him,

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177 old what's-his-name, Taillefer, a minstrel who rode into battle at Hastings (1066) singing of Roland • **182 Thor,** Norse god of war and thunder • **183 Anne haec . . . tui.** Is this indeed the robe of thy son? • **184 Fox, George Fox (1624-1691),** English founder of the Society of Friends or Quakers • **188 Castaly's spring,** a spring on Mount Parnassus • **191 The Voice**—of God • **203 Bank or for Tariff.** Two of the hottest political issues of the period were the United States Bank and the protective tariff • **209 Harmodius and Aristogeiton,** sixth-century Greeks who slew Hipparchus, tyrant of Athens • **216 Dana.** Richard Henry Dana, Sr. (1787-1879) is an author whose fame has been eclipsed by that of his son, Richard Henry, Jr., author of **Two Years Before the Mast.** Poet and essayist, the elder Dana, somewhat too academic to win widespread fame, was important for his work on the influential **North American Review** • **229 Paul Felton,** a tale by Dana • **232 Idle Man,** a periodical edited by Dana in 1824. Lowell mentions the pseudonym in connection with Dana's retirement from literary work in 1840

He knows every breaker and shoal on the chart,
He has the Coast Pilot and so on by heart,
Yet he spends his whole life, like the man in the fable,
In learning to swim on his library-table.

NEAL

"There swaggers John Neal, who has wasted in Maine
The sinews and cords of his pugilist brain,
Who might have been poet, but that, in its stead, he
Preferred to believe that he was so already;
Too hasty to wait till Art's ripe fruit should drop,
He must pelt down an unripe and colicky crop;
Who took to the law, and had this sterling plea for it,
It required him to quarrel, and paid him a fee for it;
A man who's made less than he might have, because
He always has thought himself more than he was,—
Who, with very good natural gifts as a bard,
Broke the strings of his lyre out by striking too hard,
And cracked half the notes of a truly fine voice,
Because song drew less instant attention than noise.
Ah, men do not know how much strength is in poise,
That he goes the farthest who goes far enough,
And that all beyond that is just bother and stuff.
No vain man matures, he makes too much new wood;
His blooms are too thick for the fruit to be good;
'Tis the modest man ripens, 'tis he that achieves,
Just what's needed of sunshine and shade he receives;
Grapes, to mellow, require the cool dark of their leaves;
Neal wants balance; he throws his mind always too far,
Whisking out flocks of comets, but never a star;
He has so much muscle, and loves so to show it,
That he strips himself naked to prove he's a poet,
And, to show he could leap Art's wide ditch, if he tried,
Jumps clean o'er it, and into the hedge t' other side.
He has strength, but there's nothing about him in keeping;
One gets surelier onward by walking than leaping;
He has used his own sinews himself to distress,
And had done vastly more had he done vastly less;
In letters, too soon is as bad as too late;
Could he only have waited he might have been great;
But he plumped into Helicon up to the waist,
And muddied the stream ere he took his first taste.

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;
'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck;
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man.
The success of her scheme gave her so much delight,
That she tried it again, shortly after, in Dwight;
Only, while she was kneading and shaping the clay,
She sang to her work in her sweet childish way,
And found, when she'd put the last touch to his soul,
That the music had somehow got mixed with the whole.

COOPER

"Here's Cooper, who's written six volumes, to show
He's as good as a lord: well, let's grant that he's so;
If a person prefer that description of praise,
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than bays;
But he need take no pains to convince us he's not
(As his enemies say) the American Scott.
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read aloud
That one of his novels of which he's most proud,
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever quitting

Neal, John Neal (1793-1876), a hasty and highly productive author famous in his time as an outspoken critic of other American writers • 287 **John Bunyan Fouqué,** a combination of John Bunyan (1628-1688), author of the allegorical Pilgrim's Progress, and Baron de la Motte Fouqué (1777-1843), who wrote imaginative romances • 287 **Tieck,** Ludwig Tieck. See note, p 316 • 295 **Dwight,** John Sullivan Dwight (1813-1893), a Boston composer and music critic

Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for acquitting.
He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
His Indians, with proper respect be it said,
Are just Natty Bumppo, daubed over with red,
And his very Long Toms are the same useful Nat,
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'wester hat
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance was found
To have slipped the old fellow away underground).
All his other men-figures are clothes upon sticks,
The *dernière chemise* of a man in a fix
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's small
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the wall);
And the women he draws from one model don't vary,
All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.
When a character's wanted, he goes to the task
As a cooper would do in composing a cask;
He picks out the staves, of their qualities heedful,
Just hoops them together as tight as is needful,
And, if the best fortune should crown the attempt, he
Has made at the most something wooden and empty.

"Don't suppose I would underrate Cooper's abilities;
If I thought you'd do that, I should feel very ill at ease;
The men who have given to *one* character life
And objective existence are not very rife;
You may number them all, both prose-writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the vicar.

"There is one thing in Cooper I like, too, and that is
That on manners he lectures his countrymen gratis;
Not precisely so either, because, for a rarity,
He is paid for his tickets in unpopularity.
Now he may overcharge his American pictures,
But you'll grant there's a good deal of truth in his strictures;
And I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
And, when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will risk t' other half for the freedom to speak,
Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,
Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or lower.

"There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,
In a way to make people of common sense damn metres,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,
Who—But hey-day! What's this? Messieurs Mathews and Poe,
You mustn't fling mud-balls at Longfellow so,
Does it make a man worse that his character's such
As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?
Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive
More willing than he that his fellows should thrive;
While you are abusing him thus, even now
He would help either one of you out of a slough;
You may say that he's smooth and all that till you're hoarse,
But remember that elegance also is force;
After polishing granite as much as you will,
The heart keeps its tough old persistency still;
Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you at bay;
Why, he'll live till men weary of Collins and Gray.
I'm not over-fond of Greek metres in English,
To me rhyme's a gain, so it be not too jinglish,
And your modern hexameter verses are no more
Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like Homer;
As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon is,
So, compared to your moderns, sounds old Melesigenes;
I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps, o't is
That I've heard the old blind man recite his own rhapsodies,
And my ear with that music impregnate may be,
Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of the sea,

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316 **Long Toms.** Long Tom Coffin was the American sailor in **The Pilot** (1823) • 321 **dernière chemise,** last shirt • 339 **Adams,** Parson Adams, a memorable character in Fielding's **Joseph Andrews** • 339 **Primrose,** the amiable, garrulous Dr. Primrose in Goldsmith's **The Vicar of Wakefield** • 352 **Barnaby Rudge** (1841), a novel by Dickens in which a raven was important. Poe criticized the mechanism of the tale • 358 **Mathews,** Cornelius Mathews (1817-1889), a New York author who, like Poe, created quite a stir by attacking Longfellow • 371 **Collins,** William Collins (1721-1759), English lyrical poet • 371 **Gray,** Thomas Gray (1716-1771), English poet, author of the famous elegy • 377 **Melesigenes,** Homer

Or as one can't bear Strauss when his nature is cloven
To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of Beethoven;
But, set that aside, and 'tis truth that I speak,
Had Theocritus written in English, not Greek,
I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce change a line
In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral Evangeline.
That's not ancient nor modern, its place is apart
Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure Art,
'Tis a shrine of retreat from Earth's hubbub and strife
As quiet and chaste as the author's own life.

IRVING

"What! Irving? thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain,
You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
And the gravest sweet humor, that ever was there
Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;
Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,
I sha'n't run directly against my own preaching,
And having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison *minus* the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's honest good-will,
Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain,
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
A name either English or Yankee,—just Irving.

HOLMES

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit;
A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit;
In long poems 'tis painful sometimes, and invites
A thought of the way the new Telegraph writes,
Which pricks down its little sharp sentences spitefully
As if you got more than you'd title to rightfully,
And you find yourself hoping its wild father Lightning
Would flame in for a second and give you a fright'ning.
He has perfect sway of what *I* call a sham metre,
But many admire it, the English pentameter,
And Campbell, I think, wrote most commonly worse,
With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same kind of verse,
Nor e'er achieved aught in't so worthy of praise
As the tribute of Holmes to the grand *Marseillaise.*
You went crazy last year over Bulwer's New Timon;—
Why, if B., to the day of his dying, should rhyme on,
Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon tomes,
He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor of Holmes.
His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric
In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foes'.

LOWELL

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem."

1847-1848 • 1848

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382 **Strauss,** Johann Strauss (1804-1849), Viennese "Waltz King" • 383 **Beethoven,** Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), German composer • 385 **Theocritus,** a third-century Greek pastoral poet • 393 **from Spain** refers to Irving's return from that country in 1846 • 395 **Cervantes,** Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616), author of **Don Quixote.** Cervantes, at the time of his death, was a monk • 398 **Raphael** (1483-1520), Italian painter • 398 **Dante** (1265-1321), Italian poet • 405 **English Gentleman,** an essay by Irving • 413 **Leyden-jar,** a glass jar which condenses electricity • 416 **new Telegraph,** the Morse code • 423 **Campbell,** Thomas Campbell (1777-1844), a British poet. Holmes' early poems are frequently reminiscent of his poems • 426 **tribute,** in Section II of Holmes' **Poetry: A Metrical Essay** (1836) • 427 **Bulwer's New Timon,** a satirical poem which had appeared in 1846 • 443 **Methusalem,** or Methuselah, according to **Genesis,** died at "nine hundred sixty and nine years"

From

The Biglow Papers, First Series

Written as a protest against the Mexican War and various political events connected with it, this series of poems had a success in the years of their appearance (1847-1848) which surprised and delighted their author. Lowell's earlier poems had been relatively unpopular. These he saw pinned up in workshops; he heard them quoted everywhere and their authorship debated. They were effective propaganda.

They were effective partly because, like the writings of numerous humorists of New England at the time (notably Seba Smith, creator of Jack Downing), they appealed to the Yankee liking for Down East horse-sense philosophers who could voice their ideas—ideas of any sort arrived at by down-to-earth thinking—in amusing phrases. Chief among the characters exhibited by the papers was Hosea Biglow, intended by Lowell to represent New England's "homely common-sense vivified and heated by conscience." Biglow's rural way of feeling, thinking, and expressing himself was sure-fire appeal to an audience of Americans who had supreme respect for the intelligence of common men.

Other characters developed in the papers—a pedantic parson, for instance—were invented to serve in various ways as foils for the chief character and to attack Lowell's foes in ways impossible for the puritanical and unlearned Hosea. Birdofredum Sawin, to cite one more instance, was another Yankee farmer whom Lowell invented as "a mouthpiece of the mere drollery . . . meant to embody . . . that half-conscious unmorality which I have noticed as the recoil in gross natures from . . . puritanism." Sawin, unlike Biglow, was persuaded to join the army, and both during the War and after it his horrible experiences dragged him deeper and deeper into degradation. And the Rev. Homer Wilbur, Hosea's pastor, who edited his parishioner's poems, wrote in a learned, pedantic style which was amusingly incongruous with the earthy patois of the poems.

Because of their style and their fictional excellence the verses have had an appeal more lasting than much political satire. An accomplished linguist, Lowell appreciated and reproduced accurately the native idiom, which he praised as "racy with life and vigor and originality, bucksome . . . to our new occasions." A keen observer of life in Yankeedom, he created characters, according to critic J. R. Dennet, writing in the **Nation** (November 15, 1866, III, 397), "so life-like and, in the main, so true to nature—so good as individuals and as types that we know not where in literature to look for . . . others that excel them."

No. I
A LETTER

From Mr. Ezekiel Biglow of Jaalam to the Hon. Joseph T. Buckingham, Editor of the Boston Courier, Enclosing A Poem of His Son, Mr. Hosea Biglow

Jaylem, june 1846

Mister Eddyter:—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and fifin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hedn't gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo 's though he'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosy woodn't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figureed onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home considerabal riled, and arter I'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in flitime. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zekle, ses she, our Hosee's gut the chollery or suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses

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2 cruetin Sarjunt, recruiting sergeant. Lowell was angered into writing this paper when, like Hosea, he saw a sergeant of the sort described trying to enlist men in Boston • 4 nater, nature • 9 brass. Ezekiel is pointing out that, both literally and figuratively, the sergeant had "a lot of brass"

I, he's oney amaking pottery [*Aut insanit, aut versos facit.*—H.W.] ses i, he's ollers on hand at that ere busynes like Da & martin, and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosy he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz dreffle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum O' the last varses, but he told Hosee he didn't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosy ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes or sum such feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' didn't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this village, and I've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer'n I be.

If you print 'em I wish you'd jest let folks know who hosy's father is, cox my ant Keziah used to say it's nater to be curus ses she, she aint livin though and he's a likely kind o' lad.

EZEKIEL BIGLOW

Thrash away, you'll *hev* to rattle
  On them kittle-drums o' yourn,—
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle
  Thet is ketched with moldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,
  Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you'll toot till you are yeller
  'Fore you git ahold o' me!

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,
  Hope it aint your Sunday's best;—
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
  To stuff out a soger's chest:
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,
  Ef you must wear humps like these,
Sposin' you should try salt hay fer't,
  It would du ez slick ez grease.

'Twouldn't suit them Southun fellers,
  They're a dreffle graspin' set,
We must ollers blow the bellers
  Wen they want their irons het;
May be it's all right ez preachin',
  But *my* narves it kind o' grates,
Wen I see the overreachin'
  O' them nigger-drivin' States.

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,
  Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth,
(Helped by Yankee renegaders,)
  Thru the vartu o' the North!
We begin to think it's nater
  To take sarse an' not be riled;—
Who'd expect to see a tater
  All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
  There you hev it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no furder
  Than my Testyment fer that;
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
  It's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you've gut to git up airly
  If you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
  Make the thing a grain more right;
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
  Will excuse ye in His sight;
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
  An' go stick a feller thru,
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
  God'll send the bill to you.

Wut's the use o' meetin'-goin'
  Every Sabbath, wet or dry,
Ef it's right to go amowin'
  Feller-men like oats an' rye?

---

1 **pottery,** poetry. Here, as elsewhere, the bad spelling makes possible a pun • 1 **Aut . . . facit.** "He is either mad or is making verses." This is a note inserted by H. W., Parson Homer Wilbur, the pedantic editor of the text for book publication • 3 **Da & martin,** Day & Martin, who published rhymed advertisements of their shoeblacking • 14 **Simplex Mundishes,** Hosea's inaccurate pronunciation of **simplex mundiiis**—neat but not gaudy, unsophisticated

11 **takes . . . cotton.** The abolitionists charged that the real purpose of the Mexican War was to increase the cotton-growing territory

I dunno but wut it's pooty
  Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
But it's curus Christian dooty
  This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
  Tell they'er pupple in the face,—
It's a grand gret cemetary
  Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
  So's to lug new slave-states in
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
  An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee
  Take sech everlastin' pains,
All to git the Devil's thankee,
  Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?
Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
  Clear ez one an' one make two,
Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
  Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Tell ye jest the eend I've come to
  Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
  Any gump could larn by heart;
Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
  Hev one glory an' one shame,
Ev'y thin' thet's done inhuman
  Injers all on 'em the same.

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks
  You're agoin' to git your right,
Nor by lookin' down on black folks
  Coz you're put upon by wite;
Slavery aint o' nary color,
  'Taint the hide thet makes it wus,
All it keers fer in a feller
  'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
  I expect you'll hev to wait;
Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
  You'll begin to kal'late;
'Spose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
  All the carkiss from your bones,
Coz you helped to give a lickin'
  To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
  Whether I'd be sech a goose
Ez to jine ye,—guess you'd fancy
  The etarnal bung was loose!
She wants me fer home consumption,
  Let alone the hay's to mow,—
Ef you're arter folks o' gumption,
  You've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors thet's crowin'
  Like a cockerel three months old,—
Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
  Though they *be* so blasted bold;
Aint they a prime lot o' fellers?
  'Fore they think on't guess they'll sprout,
(Like a peach thet's got the yellers)
  With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'
  Bigger pens to cram with slaves,
Help the men thet's ollers dealin'
  Insults on your fathers' graves;
Help the strong to grind the feeble,
  Help the many agin the few,
Help the men thet call your people
  Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew!

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
  She's akneeling with the rest,
She thet ough' to ha' clung ferever
  In her grand old eagle-nest;
She thet ough' to stand so fearless
  Wile the wracks are round her hurled,
Holdin' up a beacon peerless
  To the oppressed of all the world!

---

61 want this Californy refers to the claim that California was to be admitted to statehood only in order that more slave states might be formed • 65 Yankee . . . thankee. The Yankees had a widespread reputation for striking good bargains • 88 pus, purse • 92 kal'late, calculate • 96 half-Spanish drones, the Mexicans • 111 yellers, a disease of peach trees accompanied by the sprouting of sterile shoots

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen?
Ha'n't they made your env'ys wi'z?
Wut'll make ye act like free men?
Wut'll git your dander riz?
Come, I'll tell ye wut I'm thinkin'
Is our dooty in this fix,
They'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'
In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
Call all true men to disown
The tradoocers of our people,
The enslavers o' their own;
Let our dear old Bay State proudly
Put the trumpet to her mouth,
Let her ring this messidge loudly
In the ears of all the South:—

"I'll return ye good for evil
Much ez we frail mortils can,
But I won't go help the Devil
Makin' man the cus o' man;
Call me coward, call me traiter,
Jest ez suits your mean idees,—
Here I stand a tyrant-hater,
An' the friend o' God an' Peace!"
Ef I'd *my* way I hed ruther
We should go to work an' part,—
They take one way, we take t'other,—
Guess it wouldn't break my heart;
Man hed ough' to put asunder
Them thet God has noways jined;
An' I shouldn't gretly wonder
Ef there's thousands o' my mind.

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.* Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time.* Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be κατ' εξοχήν that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Konigsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation had been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that "God would consider *a gentleman* and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession, he had placed him in"? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus.*—H. W.]

1846

No. III

WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS

The gubernatorial campaign of 1847 in Massachusetts inspired Hosea to write these bitingly satirical lines. George Nixon Briggs (Guvener B. in the poem), who had been the state executive since 1844, was running for reëlection. His opponent was General Caleb Cushing (Gineral C.), then a brigadier general, serving in Mexico. John P. Robinson, who had been a past supporter of Briggs, wrote an open letter to the newspapers telling of his support for Cushing.

Guvener B. is a sensible man;
He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;
He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,
An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;

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130 **env'ys wi'z,** envoys whiz, a reference to the impolite treatment in the period of American envoys • 154 **We . . . part,** an interesting advocacy, by Lowell, of disunion

2 **that individual,** Satan. **This note is** Parson Wilbur's learned commentary on the poem • 4 **Bishop Latimer,** Hugh Latimer (1480?-1535), English religious reformer • 6 **Cainites,** a second-century religious sect which held that Cain represented the higher power • 11 **Pescara,** Marquis Pescara (1489-1525), an Italian soldier • 14 **κατ' ἐξοχήν,** especially • 19 **Captain Vratz,** a murderer who was executed in 1682 • 26 **Exemplo . . . vivimus.** We live more by example than by reason

But John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My! aint it terrible! Wut shall we du?
We can't never choose him o' course,—thet's flat;
Guess we shall hev to come round, (don't you?)
An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;
Fer John B.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

Gineral C. is a dreffle smart man:
He's ben on all sides thet give places or pelf;
But consistency still wuz a part of his plan,—
He's ben true to *one* party—an' thet is himself;—
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

Gineral C. he goes in fer the war;
He don't vally principle more 'n an old cud;
Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,
But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an' blood?
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote for Gineral C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut aint,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage,
An' thet eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,
An' Presidunt Polk, you know, *he* is our country.
An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry;*
An' John P.
Robinson he
Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;
Sez they 're nothin' on airth but jest *fee, faw, fum:*
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half on it ign'ance, an' t' other half rum;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez it aint no sech thing; an', of course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life
Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez they did n't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we' ve gut folks to tell us
The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I vow,—
God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellers,
To start the world's team wen it gits in a slough;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez the world 'll go right, ef he hollers out Gee!

1847·1848

No. VIII

A SECOND LETTER FROM B. SAWIN, ESQ.

Birdofredum Sawin was a country boy who, unlike Hosea, had been lured into army service by the rattle of a drum and had marched off to Mexico. From time to time he wrote home to Hosea, and Hosea translated his letters into verse. Sawin soon lost his illusions and became a rascal—one of the most amusing ones in American humor.

The Whig candidate for the Presidency in 1848 was Zachary Taylor, who was not very articulate on the great issues of the day—particularly slavery—but who had won fame as the hero of Buena Vista. Birdofredum Sawin likewise based his political claims upon his military record. In this letter, a take-off on Old Zach's candidacy, Birdofredum tells of his own situation after the war.

I spose you wonder ware I be; I can't tell, fer the soul o' me,
Exactly ware I be myself,—meanin' by thet the holl o' me.

Wen I left hum, I hed two legs, an' they worn't bad ones neither,
(The scaliest trick they ever played wuz bringin' on me hither,)
Now one on 'em's I dunno ware;—they thought I wuz adyin',
An' sawed it off because they said 't wuz kin' o' mortifyin';
I'm willin' to believe it wuz, an' yit I don't see, nuther,
Wy one shoud take to feelin' cheap a minnit sooner 'n t' other,
Sence both wuz equilly to blame; but things is ez they be;
It took on so they took it off, an' thet's enough fer me:
There's one good thing, though, to be said about my wooden new one,—
The liquor can't git into it ez 't used to in the true one;
So it saves drink; an' then, besides, a feller could n't beg
A gretter blessin' then to hev one ollers sober peg;
It's true a chap 's in want o' two fer follerin' a drum,
But all the march I'm up to now is jest to Kingdom Come.

I've lost one eye, but thet's a loss it's easy to supply
Out o' the glory that I 've gut, fer thet is all my eye;
An' one is big enough, I guess, by diligently usin' it,
To see all I shall ever git by way o' pay fer losin' it;
Off'cers I notice, who git paid fer all our thumps an' kickins,
Du wal by keepin' single eyes arter the fattest pickins;
So, ez the eye 's put fairly out, I'll larn to go without it,
An' not allow *myself* to be no gret put out about it.
Now, le' me see, thet is n't all; I used, 'fore leavin' Jaalam,
To count things on my finger-eends, but sutthin' seems to ail 'em:
Ware's my left hand? O, darn it, yes, I recollect wut 's come on 't;
I haint no left arm but my right, an' thet 's gut jest a thumb on 't;
It aint so hendy ez it wuz to cal'late a sum on 't.
I've hed some ribs broke,—six (I bl'ieve),—I haint kep' no account on 'em;
Wen pensions git to be the talk, I'll settle the amount on 'em.
An' now I'm speakin' about ribs, it kin' o' brings to mind
One thet I could n't never break,—the one I lef' behind;
Ef you should see her, jest clear out the spout o' your invention
An' pour the longest sweetnin' in about an annooal pension,
An' kin' o' hint (in case, you know, the critter should refuse to be
Consoled) I aint so 'xpensive now to keep ez wut I used to be;
There 's one arm less, ditto one eye, an' then the leg thet 's wooden
Can be took off an' sot away wenever ther 's a puddin.'

I spose you think I'm comin' back ez opperlunt ez thunder,
With shiploads o' gold images an' varus sorts o' plunder;
Wal, 'fore I vullinteered, I thought this country wuz a sort o'
Canaan, a reg'lar Promised Land flowin' with rum an' water,
Ware propaty growed up like time, without no cultivation,
An' gold wuz dug ez taters be among our Yankee nation,
Ware nateral advantages were pufficly amazin',
Ware every rock there wuz about with precious stuns wuz blazin',
Ware mill-sites filled the country up ez thick ez you could cram 'em
An' desput rivers run about a beggin' folks to dam 'em;
Then there were meetinhouses, tu, chockful o' gold an' silver
Thet you could take, an' no one could n't hand ye in no bill fer;—
Thet's wut I thought afore I went, thet 's wut them fellers told us
Thet stayed to hum an' speechified an' to the buzzards sold us;
I thought thet gold-mines could be gut cheaper than Chiny asters,
An' see myself acomin' back like sixty Jacob Astors;
But sech idees soon melted down an' did n't leave a grease-spot;

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25 Jaalam, home town of Hosea and Birdofredum • 55 Jacob Astor (1763-1848), a German-American merchant, one of the richest men of the time

I vow my holl sheer o' the spiles would n't come nigh
a V spot;
Although, most anywares we 've ben, you need n't break
no locks,
Nor run no kin' o' risks, to fill your pocket full o' rocks.
I 'xpect I mentioned in my last some o' the nateral
feeturs
O' this all-fiered buggy hole in th' way o' awfle creeturs,
But I fergut to name (new things to speak on so
abounded)
How one day you 'll most die o' thust, an' 'fore the next
git drownded.
The clymit seems to me jest like a teapot made o'
pewter
Our Preudence hed, thet would n't pour (all she could
du) to suit her;
Fust place the leaves 'ould choke the spout, so 's not a
drop 'ould dreen out,
Then Prude 'ould tip an' tip an' tip, till the holl kit bust
clean out,
The kiver-hinge-pin bein' lost, tea-leaves an' tea an'
kiver
'ould all come down *kerswosh!* ez though the dam bust
in a river.
Jest so 't is here; holl months there aint a day o' rainy
weather,
An' jest ez th' officers 'ould be a layin' heads together
Ez t' how they 'd mix their drink at sech a milingtary
deepot,—
'T would pour ez though the lid wuz off the everlastin'
teapot.
The cons'quence is, thet I shall take, wen I 'm allowed
to leave here,
One piece o' propaty along, an' thet 's the shakin' fever;
It's reggilar employment, though, an' thet aint thought
to harm one,
Nor 't aint so tiresome ez it wuz with t' other leg an'
arm on;
An' it 's a consolation, tu, although it doos n't pay,
To hev it said you 're some gret shakes in any kin' o' way.
'T worn't very long, I tell ye wut, I thought o' fortin-
makin',—
One day a reg'lar shiver-de-freeze, an' next ez good ez
bakin',—
One day abrilin' in the sand, then smoth'rin' in the
mashes,—
Git up all sound, be put to bed a mess o' hacks an'
smashes.
But then, thinks I, at any rate there 's glory to be hed,—
Thet's an investment, arter all, thet may n't turn out
so bad;
But somehow, wen we'd fit an' licked, I ollers found the
thanks
Gut kin' o' lodged afore they come ez low down ez
the ranks;
The Gin'rals gut the biggest sheer, the Cunnles next, an'
so on,—
We never gut a blasted mite o' glory ez I know on;
An' spose we hed, I wonder how you 're goin' to contrive
its
Division so 's to give a piece to twenty thousand privits;
Ef you should multiply by ten the portion o' the brav'st
one,
You would n't git more 'n half enough to speak of on
a grave-stun;
We git the licks,—we're jest the grist thet 's put into
War's hoppers;
Leftenants is the lowest grade thet helps pick up the
coppers.
It may suit folks thet go agin a body with a soul in 't,
An' aint contented with a hide without a bagnet hole
in 't;
But glory is a kin' o' thing *I* sha' n't pursue no furder,
Coz thet 's the off'cers parquisite,—yourn 's on'y jest the
murder.

Wal, arter I gin glory up, thinks I at least there 's one
Thing in the bills we aint hed yit, an' thet 's the
GLORIOUS FUN;
Ef once we git to Mexico, we fairly may persume we
All day an' night shall revel in the halls o' Montezumy.
I'll tell ye wut *my* revels wuz, an' see how you would like
'em;
We never gut inside the hall: the nighest ever *I* come
Wuz stan'in sentry in the sun (an', fact, it *seemed* a
cent'ry)
A ketchin' smells o' biled an' roast thet come out thru
the entry,
An' hearin' ez I sweltered thru my passes an' repasses,

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97 bagnet, bayonet

A rat-tat-too o' knives an' forks, a clinkty-clink o' glasses:
I can't tell off the bill o' fare the Ginrals hed inside;
All I know is, thet out o' doors a pair o' soles wuz fried,
An' not a hunderd miles away frum ware this child wuz posted,
A Massachusetts citizen wuz baked an' biled an' roasted;
The on'y thing like revellin' thet ever come to me
Wuz bein' routed out o' sleep by thet darned revelee.

They say the quarrel 's settled now; fer my part I 've some doubt on 't,
't 'll take more fish-skin than folks think to take the rile clean out on 't;
At any rate I 'm so used up I can't do no more fightin',
The on'y chance thet 's left to me is politics or writin';
Now, ez the people 's gut to hev a milingtary man,
An' I aint nothin' else jest now, I've hit upon a plan;
The can'idatin' line, you know, 'ould suit me to a T,
An' ef I lose, 't wunt hurt my ears to lodge another flea;
So I 'll set up ez can'idate fer any kin' o' office,
(I mean fer any thet includes good easy-cheers an' soffies;
Fer ez tu runnin' fer a place ware work 's the time o' day,
You know thet 's wut I never did,—except the other way;)
Ef it 's the Presidential cheer fer wich I 'd better run,
Wut two legs anywares about could keep up with my one?
There aint no kin' o' quality in can'idates, it 's said,
So useful ez a wooden leg,—except a wooden head;
There's nothin' aint so poppylar—(wy, it 's a parfect sin
To think wut Mexico hez paid fer Santy Anny's pin;)—
Then I haint gut no princerples, an', sence I wuz knee-high,
I never *did* hev any gret, ez you can testify;
I 'm a decided peace-man, tu, an' go agin the war,—
Fer now the holl on 't 's gone an' past, wut is there to go *for?*
Ef, wile you 're 'lectioneerin' round, some curus chaps should beg
To know my views o' state affairs, jest answer WOODEN LEG!
Ef they aint settisfied with thet, an' kin' o' pry an' doubt
An' ax fer sutthin' deffynit, jest say ONE EYE PUT OUT!
Thet kin' o' talk I guess you 'll find 'll answer to a charm,
An' wen you 're druv tu nigh the wall, hol' up my missin' arm;
Ef they should nose round fer a pledge, put on a vartoous look
An' tell 'em thet's percisely wut I never gin nor—took!

Then you can call me "Timbertoes,"—thet 's wut the people likes;
Sutthin' combinin' morril truth with phrases sech ez strikes;
Some say the people 's fond o' this, or thet, or wut you please,—
I tell ye wut the people want is jest correct idees;
"Old Timbertoes," you see, 's a creed it 's safe to be quite bold on,
There 's nothin' in 't the other side can any ways git hold on;
It's a good tangible idee, a sutthin' to embody
Thet valooable class o' men who look thru brandy-toddy;
It gives a Party Platform, tu, jest level with the mind
Of all right-thinkin', honest folks thet mean to go it blind;
Then there air other good hooraws to dror on ez you need 'em,
Sech ez the ONE-EYED SLARTERER, the BLOODY BIRDOFREDUM:
Them 's wut takes hold o' folks thet think, ez well ez o' the masses,
An' makes you sartin o' the aid o' good men of all classes.

There 's one thing I 'm in doubt about; in order to be Presidunt,
It's absolutely ne'ssary to be a Southern residunt;
The Constitution settles thet, an' also thet a feller
Must own a nigger o' some sort, jet black, or brown, or yeller.
Now I haint no objections agin particklar climes,
Nor agin ownin' anythin' (except the truth sometimes),
But, ez I haint no capital, up there among ye, maybe,

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133 Santy Anny, General A. L. de Santa Anna, leader of the Mexican army • 146 Timbertoes refers not only to Sawin's wooden leg but also to one Enoch Timbertoes, humorous character of the day who wrote humor of the sort characterized in l. 147

You might raise funds enough fer me to buy a low-priced baby,
An' then to suit the No'thern folks, who feel obleeged to say
They hate an' cuss the very thing they vote fer every day,
Say you 're assured I go full butt fer Libbaty's diffusion

An' made the purchis on'y jest to spite the Institootion;—
But, golly! there 's the currier's hoss upon the pavement pawin'!
I 'll be more 'xplicit in my next.

Yourn,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN

1848

From

Keats

This essay on Keats was written in 1854, not long after study in Europe (1851-1852) had led Lowell to new perceptions of critical standards and procedures. He begins (in the portion of the essay not here printed) with a presentation of "those essential facts which underlie the life and make the individual man," noting particularly that Keats is a poet "in whom the moral seems to have so perfectly interfused the physical man, that you might almost say he could feel sorrow with his hands."

He then launches upon the evaluation here reprinted. In considering Keats' diction, he praises the poet for his eventual achievement of "the perfect mean of diction"—the "costly plainness" which combines richness with economy of language. Then he turns to a consideration of the poet himself, and describes his nature and his influence by contrasting him with Wordsworth and Byron. The paragraph of comparison which discriminates among the three poets offers an example of Lowell's precise though sometimes complex way of drawing distinctions. Keats, he notes, was remarkable for his "penetrative and sympathetic imagination," one which caused him, like Shakespeare, "to assimilate at a touch whatever could serve his purpose"—the things of the world as well as wisdom. Thus Keats had a sort of insight which serves a poet well. In addition, he had "the shaping faculty" which made his expression accord perfectly with his thought.

The faults of Keats' poetry are obvious enough, but it should be remembered that he died at twenty-five, and that he offends by superabundance and not poverty. That he was overlanguaged at first there can be no doubt, and in this was implied the possibility of falling back to the perfect mean of diction. It is only by the rich that the costly plainness, which at once satisfies the taste and the imagination, is attainable.

Whether Keats was original or not, I do not think it useful to discuss until it has been settled what originality is. Lord Houghton tells us that this merit [whatever it be] has been denied to Keats, because his poems take the color of the authors he happened to be reading at the time he wrote them. But men have their intellectual ancestry, and the likeness of some one of them is forever unexpectedly flashing out in the features of a descendant; it may be after a gap of several generations. In the parliament of the present every man represents a constituency of the past. It is true that Keats has the accent of the men from whom he learned to speak, but this is to make originality a mere question of externals, and in this sense the author of a dictionary might bring an action of trover against every author who used his words. It is the man behind the words that gives them value, and if Shakespeare help himself to a verse or a phrase, it is with ears that have learned of him to listen that we feel the harmony of the one, and it is the mass of his intellect that makes the other weighty with meaning. Enough that we recognize in Keats that indefinable newness and

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11 Lord Houghton. Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton (1809-1885), English poet and prose writer, published his Life of Keats in 1848 • 25 Shakespeare was regarded by Lowell as one of the peerless poets of all time. Here Lowell notes that Shakespeare could borrow a line or a phrase from a predecessor and still give the expression new values indicative of his own personality

unexpectedness which we call genius. The sunset is original every evening, though for thousands of years it has built out of the same light and vapor its visionary cities with domes and pinnacles, and its delectable mountains which night shall utterly abase and destroy.

Three men, almost contemporaneous with each other, —Wordsworth, Keats, and Byron,—were the great means of bringing back English poetry from the sandy deserts of rhetoric, and recovering for her her triple inheritance of simplicity, sensuousness, and passion. Of these, Wordsworth was the only conscious reformer, and his hostility to the existing formalism injured his earlier poems by tingeing them with something of iconoclastic extravagance. He was the deepest thinker, Keats the most essentially a poet, and Byron the most keenly intellectual of the three. Keats had the broadest mind, or at least his mind was open on more sides, and he was able to understand Wordsworth and judge Byron, equally conscious, through his artistic sense, of the greatnesses of the one and the many littlenesses of the other; while Wordsworth was isolated in a feeling of his prophetic character, and Byron had only an uneasy and jealous instinct of contemporary merit. The poems of Wordsworth, as he was the most individual, accordingly reflect the moods of his own nature; those of Keats, from sensitiveness of organization, the moods of his own taste and feeling, and those of Byron, who was impressible chiefly through the understanding, the intellectual and moral wants of the time in which he lived. Wordsworth has influenced most the ideas of succeeding poets, Keats, their forms; and Byron, interesting to men of imagination less for his writings than for what his writings indicate, reappears no more in poetry, but presents an ideal to youth made restless with vague desires not yet regulated by experience nor supplied with motives by the duties of life.

Keats certainly had more of the penetrative and sympathetic imagination which belongs to the poet, of that imagination which identifies itself with the momentary object of its contemplation, than any man of these later days. It is not merely that he has studied the Elizabethans and caught their turn of thought, but that he really sees things with their sovereign eye, and feels them with their electrified senses. His imagination was his bliss and bane. Was he cheerful, he "hops about the gravel with the sparrows"; was he morbid, he "would reject a Petrarcal coronation,—on account of my dying-day, and because women have cancers." So impressible was he as to say that he "had no nature" meaning character. But he knew what the faculty was worth, and says finely, "The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream: he awoke and found it truth." He had an unerring instinct for the poetic uses of things, and for him they had no other use. We are apt to talk of the classic *renaissance* as of a phenomenon long past, nor ever to be renewed, and to think the Greeks and Romans alone had the mighty magic to work such a miracle. To me one of the most interesting aspects of Keats is that in him we have an example of the *renaissance* going on almost under our own eyes, and that the intellectual ferment was in him kindled by a purely English leaven. He had properly no scholarship, any more than Shakespeare had, but like him he assimilated at a touch whatever could serve his purpose. His delicate senses absorbed culture at every pore. Of the self-denial to which he trained himself [unexampled in one so young] the second draft of *Hyperion* as compared with the first is a conclusive proof. And far indeed is his "Lamia" from the lavish indiscrimination of "Endymion." In his Odes he showed a sense of form and proportion which we seek vainly in almost any other English poet, and some of his sonnets (taking all qualities into consideration) are the most perfect in our language. No doubt there is something tropical and of strange overgrowth in his sudden maturity, but it *was* maturity nevertheless. Happy the young poet who has the saving fault of exuberance, if he have also the shaping faculty that sooner or later will amend it!

As every young person goes through all the world-old

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7 **Wordsworth.** William Wordsworth (1770-1850) rebelled against eighteenth-century poetry in his Preface to the 1800 edition of **Lyrical Ballads.** In 1875, Lowell was to note that throughout his two long, philosophical poems, "The Prelude" and "The Excursion," Wordsworth "seems striving to bind the wizard Imagination with the sand-ropes of dry disquisition." Nevertheless, Lowell ranked him fifth among the great English poets • 7 **Byron.** George Gordon Byron, Lord Byron (1788-1824), English poet, was famous for brilliant satires upon the life of his period • 41 **the Elizabethans,** authors of the period of Queen Elizabeth of England (1533-1603)—notably Shakespeare and Spenser, both of whom Keats admired greatly • 46 **Petrarcal coronation** refers to Francesco Petrarca, or Petrarch (1304-1374), Italian poet • 67 **Hyperion,** a poem left uncompleted, though partly revised, at Keats' death in 1821 • 68 **Lamia,** a narrative poem by Keats, published in 1820 • 69 **Endymion,** an early, rather formless poem by Keats, published in 1818

experiences, fancying them something peculiar and personal to himself, so it is with every new generation, whose youth always finds its representatives in its poets. Keats rediscovered the delight and wonder that lay enchanted in the dictionary. Wordsworth revolted at the poetic diction which he found in vogue, but his own language rarely rises above it, except when it is upborne by the thought. Keats had an instinct for fine words, which are in themselves pictures and ideas, and had more of the power of poetic expression than any modern English poet. And by poetic expression I do not mean merely a vividness in particulars, but the right feeling which heightens or subdues a passage or a whole poem to the proper tone, and gives entireness to the effect. There is a great deal more than is commonly supposed in this choice of words. Men's thoughts and opinions are in a great degree vassals of him who invents a new phrase or reapplies an old epithet. The thought or feeling a thousand times repeated becomes his at last who utters it best. This power of language is veiled in the old legends which make the invisible powers the servants of some word. As soon as we have discovered the word for our joy or sorrow we are no longer its serfs, but its lords. We reward the discoverer of an anaesthetic for the body and make him member of all the societies, but him who finds a nepenthe for the soul we elect into the small academy of the immortals.

The poems of Keats mark an epoch in English poetry; for, however often we may find traces of it in others, in them found its most unconscious expression that reaction against the barrel-organ style which had been reigning by a kind of sleepy divine right for half a century. The lowest point was indicated when there was such an utter confounding of the common and the uncommon sense that Dr. Johnson wrote verse and Burke prose. The most profound gospel of criticism was, that nothing was good poetry that could not be translated into good prose, as if one should say that the test of sufficient moonlight was that tallow-candles could be made of it. We find Keats at first going to the other extreme, and endeavoring to extract green cucumbers from the rays of tallow; but we see also incontestable proof of the greatness and purity of his poetic gift in the constant return toward equilibrium and repose in his later poems. And it is a repose always lofty and clear-aired, like that of the eagle balanced in incommunicable sunshine. In him a vigorous understanding developed itself in equal measure with the divine faculty; thought emancipated itself from expression without becoming in turn its tyrant; and music and meaning floated together, accordant as swan and shadow, on the smooth element of his verse. Without losing its sensuousness, his poetry refined itself and grew more inward, and the sensational was elevated into the typical by the control of that finer sense which underlies the senses and is the spirit of them.

1854

35 **Dr. Johnson,** Samuel Johnson (1709-1785), English author, whose verse was excellent for its common sense rather than any noteworthy passion • 35 **Burke,** Edmund Burke (1729-1797), political writer, many of whose speeches were eloquent and poetic

From • The Biglow Papers, Second Series

The Courtin'

This most famous of the **Biglow Papers** appeared in at least three versions. In the first, written to fill in a page of the book version of the first series, it contained what are now stanzas 2, 5, 4, 6, 14, and 15, in that order. In the second, these verses were supplemented with stanzas 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 24. Later, said Lowell, "I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed the poem by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it. . . ." The version below is the third.

Lowell's skill in depicting life and character, particularly well illustrated by this poem, led critic William D. Howells to call attention to the value of the **Biglow Papers** as more than "mere satire." The two series, Howells claimed, "form a creative fiction of unique excellence." Not only, he said, is there vivid depiction of character but also of scene: "We enjoy the very woods and fields in Hosea Biglow's quaintly and subtly faithful

feeling for them. They are justly subordinate to him, however, and we are not suffered to forget Mr. Lowell's creed, that human nature is the nature best worth celebrating. The landscape is but the setting for Jaalam,—shrewd, honest, moral, angular,—Hosea Biglow municipalized. The place should be on the maps, for it has as absolute existence as any in New England, and its people by slight unnerving touches are made as real."

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
  Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
  All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
  An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
  'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
  With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
  To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
  Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
  The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
  An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
  Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
  Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
  Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
  On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
  Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A-1,
  Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
  Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
  Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
  All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
  All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
  Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
  Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
  She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
  When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
  O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
  She seemed to've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
  Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
  A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
  Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat
  Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat
  But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk
  Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
  Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
  "Wal. . . . no. . . . I come dasignin' "—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
  Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
  Or don't, 'ould be presumin';

---

17 crook-necks, gourds • 19 queen's-arm, musket • 43 Ole Hunderd, "Old Hundred," a psalm tune, based on Psalm 100

Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister":
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An'. . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An 'all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday. 1861

93 like the tide alludes to the huge tide in the Bay of Fundy

Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration

This poem was read on July 21, 1865, to a group of friends and alumni who, in a broad tent raised near the grounds of Harvard College, had gathered to pay tribute to the Harvard men who had served during the recently concluded Civil War. There can be no doubt that Lowell was speaking sincerely in the ode. Former students of his were among those honored, and he himself had lost three nephews in the war.

In what is considered his greatest serious poem Lowell grapples with a question which arises in all times of war—"What possible justification is there for the sacrifices of the men who served?" He praises the faith of men which is made whole by brave actions, and sees such faith made immortal not only in the lives of contemporaries but also in the race and the nation which such men have served. In the sixth stanza, he pays reverent tribute to Lincoln, whom he cites as a great example of American insight and bravery.

Lowell tells of experiments with verse forms and justifies the form which he employed in this account of the composition of the poem written to James B. Thayer in 1877: "A long series of uniform stanzas (I am always speaking of public recitation) with regularly recurring rhymes produces somnolence among the men and a desperate resort to their fans on the part of the women. . . Now, my problem was to contrive a measure which should not be tedious by uniformity, but which should vary with varying moods, in which the transitions . . . should be managed without a jar. I at first thought of mixed rhymed and blank verses of unequal measures, like those in the chorus of 'Samson Agonistes'. . . . I wrote some stanzas . . . on this theory at first, leaving some verses without a rhyme to match. But my ear was better pleased when the rhyme, coming at a longer interval, as a far-off echo rather than instant reverberation, produced the same effect almost, and yet was grateful by unexpectedly recalling an association and faint reminiscence of consonance."

I

Weak-winged is song,
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
We seem to do them wrong,
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
Our trivial song to honor those who come
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:

Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,
A gracious memory to buoy up and save
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave
Of the unventurous throng.

II

Today our Reverend Mother welcomes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,
And offered their fresh lives to make it good:
No lore of Greece or Rome,
No science peddling with the names of things,
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
Can lift our life with wings
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,
And lengthen out our dates
With that clear fame whose memory sings
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:
Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
Not such the trumpet-call
Of thy diviner mood,
That could thy sons entice
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,
Into War's tumult rude;
But rather far that stern device
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood
In the dim, unventured wood,
The VERITAS that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath,
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the giving.

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her;
But these, our brothers, fought for her,
At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:
Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of dare to do;
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her.
Where faith made whole with deed
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed,
They saw her plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
Into the silent hollow of the past;
What is there that abides
To make the next age better for the last?
Is earth too poor to give us
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?
Some more substantial boon
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle moon?
The little that we see
From doubt is never free;
The little that we do
Is but half-nobly true;
With our laborious hiving
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
Only secure in every one's conniving,
A long account of nothings paid with loss,
Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,
After our little hour of strut and rave,
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,
Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.
Ah, there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,

---

15 **Reverend Mother,** Harvard, personified as the alma mater • 37 **Veritas,** Truth—the motto of Harvard. The lines describe the university seal

Something that gives our feeble light
A high immunity from Night,
Something that leaps life's narrow bars
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven;
A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than the Day;
A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence;
A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,
Still beaconing from the heights of undegenerate years.

V

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery meads,
To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds,
But up the steep, amid the wrath
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and stay
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword
Dreams in its easeful sheath;
But some day the live coal behind the thought,
Whether from Baäl's stone obscene,
Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men:
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my praise,
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth;
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"

Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate;
But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,
Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,

---

123 **Baäl's stone obscene,** idol worshiped by the idolatrous Baalites. See I Kings 18 • 150 **Martyr-Chief,** Lincoln, who had been assassinated April 14. This sixth section, perhaps the most famous in the poem, was added after the public recital

And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudly bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;
Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names its masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks,
Shall win a man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we enwreathe
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine them, sear.
What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our year,
Save that our brothers found this better way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.
We welcome back our bravest and our best—
Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear:
I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge and die away in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went, and who return not.—Say not so!
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack.
I see them muster in a gleaming row,

---

190 **one of . . . men,** a man worthy of comparison with the heroic Greeks and Romans celebrated in Plutarch's Lives (first century, B.C.)

• 232 **Promised Land,** the land sought by the chosen people. See Exodus 13:5

With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

IX

But is there hope to save
Even this ethereal essence from the grave?
Whatever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong
Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song?
Before my musing eye
The mighty ones of old sweep by,
Disvoiced now and insubstantial things,
As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,
Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,
And many races, nameless long ago,
To darkness driven by that imperious gust
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:
O visionary world, condition strange,
Where naught abiding is but only Change,
Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still shift
and range!
Shall we to more continuance make pretence?
Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;
And, bit by bit,
The cunning years steal all from us but woe;
Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest sow.
But, when we vanish hence,
Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,
Save to make green their little length of sods,
Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?
Was dying all they had the skill to do?
That were not fruitless: but the Soul resents
Such short-lived service, as if blind events
Ruled without her, or earth could so endure;
She claims a more divine investiture
Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;
Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;
Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,
Gives eyes to mountains blind,
Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,
And her clear trump sings succor everywhere
By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;
For soul inherits all that soul could dare:
Yea, Manhood hath a wider span
And larger privilege of life than man.
The single deed, the private sacrifice,
So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears,
Is covered up erelong from mortal eyes
With thoughtless drift of the deciduous years;
But that high privilege that makes all men peers,
That leap of heart whereby a people rise
Up to a noble anger's height,
And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink, but grow
more bright,
That swift validity in noble veins,
Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,
Of being set on flame
By the pure fire that flies all contact base
But wraps its chosen with angelic might,
These are imperishable gains,
Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
These hold great futures in their lusty reins
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

X

Who now shall sneer?
Who dare again to say we trace
Our lines to a plebeian race?
Roundhead and Cavalier!
Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
They flit across the ear:
That is best blood that hath most iron in't
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
For what makes manhood dear.
Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods crawl
Down from some victor in a border-brawl!
How poor their outworn coronets,
Matched with one leaf of that plain civic wreath
Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,

---

332 **Roundhead and Cavalier,** the Puritans and the followers of Charles I, here representing the New Englanders and the Southerners • 339 **Plantagenets,** a line of English kings • 340 **Hapsburgs, and Guelfs,** respectively, the royal family which ruled the Holy Roman Empire and the papal party in medieval Italy

Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
With vain resentments and more vain regrets!

XI

Not in anger, not in pride,
Pure from passion's mixture rude
Ever to base earth allied,
But with far-heard gratitude,
Still with heart and voice renewed,
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.
Lift the heart and lift the head!
Lofty be its mood and grave,
Not without a martial ring,
Not without a prouder tread
And a peal of exultation:
Little right has he to sing
Through whose heart in such an hour
Beats no march of conscious power,
Sweeps no tumult of elation!
'Tis no Man we celebrate,
By his country's victories great,
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
But the pith and marrow of a Nation
Drawing force from all her men,
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
For her time of need, and then
Pulsing it again through them,
Till the basest can no longer cower,
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her dower!
How could poet ever tower,
If his passions, hopes, and fears,
In his triumphs and his tears,
Kept not measure with his people?
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, advance with triumph, bend your staves!
And from every mountain-peak
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
Till the glad news be sent
Across a kindling continent,
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind!
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;
From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,
And bids her navies, that so lately hurled
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,
Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmful shore.
No challenge sends she to the elder world,
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn
Plays on her mouth, as round her mighty knees
She calls her children back, and waits the morn
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject seas."

XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow.
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

1865

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386 Katahdin . . . Monadnock, Whiteface, mountains in Maine, New Hampshire, and New York, respectively

Auspex

My heart, I cannot still it,
Nest that had song-birds in it;
And when the last shall go,
The dreary days, to fill it,
Instead of lark or linnet,
Shall whirl dead leaves and snow.

Had they been swallows only,
Without the passion stronger
That skyward longs and sings,—
Woe's me, I shall be lonely
When I can feel no longer
The impatience of their wings!

A moment, sweet delusion,
Like birds the brown leaves hover;
But it will not be long
Before their wild confusion
Fall wavering down to cover
The poet and his song.

1879·1888

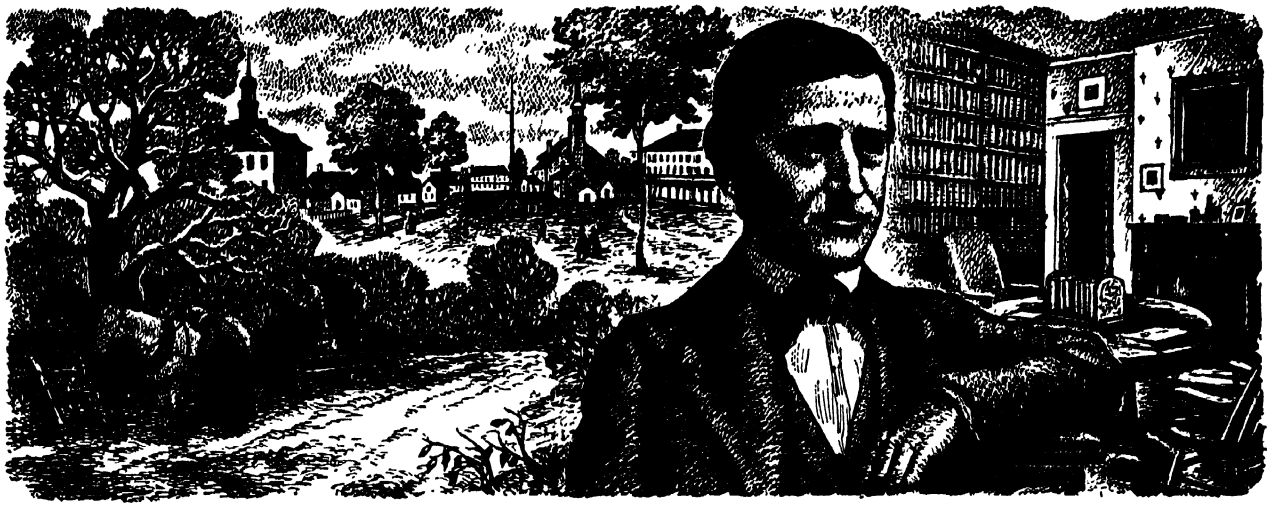
THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS: Emerson, Thoreau

Ralph Waldo Emerson

1803 · 1882

Ralph Waldo Emerson was descended from nine successive generations of ministers. His grandfather was a minister at Concord at the beginning of the American Revolution and gave encouragement to the embattled farmers who fired the shot heard around the world. His father, who was minister of the First Church, Unitarian, in Boston, Ralph Waldo's birthplace, died when Emerson was eight years old, leaving a widow and four sons in difficult financial circumstances. Nevertheless, all four sons went through Harvard, Ralph Waldo graduating in 1821. He taught school for a while, attended the Harvard Divinity School, spent a winter in Florida for his health, and, in 1829, became pastor of the Second Church of Boston and married Miss Ellen Tucker. His felicity at this time seemed perfect; in his journal he uneasily asked himself, "Can this hold?" It didn't hold, for in 1831 Ellen died, and in 1832 he resigned his pastorate because of his unwillingness to administer the Lord's Supper. In a remarkably candid sermon on the subject he said to his congregation: "It is my desire, in the office of a Christian minister, to do nothing which I cannot do with my whole heart. Having said this, I have said all. I have no hostility to this institution [the Lord's supper]; I am only stating my want of sympathy with it."

Emerson at twenty-nine possibly looked like a failure; but, as Bliss Perry has happily observed, "he pulled himself together, being of the old, unbeatable Puritan stuff." In 1833 he went abroad and visited Landor in Italy, Coleridge and Wordsworth in England, and (most important of all, because the meeting was the beginning of a lifelong friendship) Carlyle in Scotland, at Craigenputtock, "amid desolate heathery hills, where the lonely



scholar nourished his mighty heart" (see *English Traits).* Upon his return to America, he bought a house and two acres of land in Concord, married Miss Lydia Jackson, and in 1836 published his first volume, *Nature,* which Henry Seidel Canby has called "the most seminal of all American books." Except among Transcendentalists, *Nature* met with a mild reception; but the two challenging addresses which followed soon after, *The American Scholar* in 1837 and *The Divinity School Address* in 1838, made Emerson famous. *Essays, First Series* appeared in 1841, and *Essays, Second Series,* in 1844. From 1840 to 1842, he assisted Margaret Fuller in editing *The Dial,* the chief magazine of New England Transcendentalism, and was himself editor from 1842 to 1844. He lectured extensively and successfully in England in 1847-1848. In 1847 *Poems* appeared; in 1850, *Representative Men;* in 1856, *English Traits;* in 1860, *The Conduct of Life.*

In the 1840's and 1850's Emerson was in ever increasing demand as a lecturer on Lyceum platforms in New England, the middle Atlantic states, and the "Northwest." He met this demand heroically. An entry in his journal dated Beloit, Wisconsin, January 9, 1856, reads as follows: "Mercury varying from 20° to 30° below zero for the last week. . . . This climate and people are a new test for the wares of a man of letters. All his thin, watery matter freezes; 'tis only the smallest portion of alcohol that remains good. At the Lyceum, the stout Illinoisan, after a short trial, walks out of the hall." And another entry dated Kalamazoo, Michigan, February 1860: "My chief adventure was the necessity of riding in a buggy forty-eight miles to Grand Rapids; then, after the lecture, twenty more on the return; and the next morning getting back to Kalamazoo in time for the train at twelve. So I saw Michigan and its forests and Wolverines pretty thoroughly." One marvels at Emerson's hardihood and adaptability. He was enthusiastic about the development of civilization in the West. When Bret Harte accused him of naïveté, Emerson replied that he "spoke from Pilgrim experience, and knew on good grounds the resistless culture that religion effects."

Emerson kept aloof from the slavery controversy in the 1830's and 1840's. Why "this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off?" he asked in 1841; and in 1846 he had "quite other slaves to free than those Negroes, to wit, imprisoned spirits, imprisoned thoughts." But later events drove him inexorably into the ranks of the radical abolitionists. When Webster, who had previously been something of a hero in Emerson's eyes, supported the Fugitive Slave Law as a part of the Compromise of 1850, Emerson wrote of him scathingly in his journal: "The word *liberty* in the mouth of Mr. Webster sounds like the word *love* in the mouth of a

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Panel (l. to r.): "The sled and traveller stopped"; from "The Snow-Storm" • View of Concord in 1839 • Ralph Waldo Emerson at 51 • His Concord study

courtezan." The law itself Emerson called a "filthy enactment," and he added, "I will not obey it, by God" (the only instance of profanity in his writings). In 1859 he took his stand publicly as a champion of John Brown. From 1861 to 1865 he was caught up in the general hysteria of war; "Emerson," Hawthorne said in 1861, "is breathing slaughter like the rest of us." On January 1, 1863, he read the "Boston Hymn" in the Boston Music Hall. Henry James remembered "the momentousness of the occasion, the vast excited multitude, the crowded platform, the tall spare figure of Emerson" and "the immense effect with which his beautiful voice pronounced the lines"—lines, it may be noted, expressing the most intransigent of positions—

> Pay ransom to the owner
> And fill the bag to the brim.
> Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
> And ever was. Pay *him!*

In April 1865 he objected in his journal that Grant's terms of surrender were "a little too easy." Perhaps the world is yet to see the philosopher whose philosophy is proof against the excitements of war.

In his personal relations, Emerson has seemed to many readers to have been a little remote. "True love," he wrote in the essay on "Friendship," "dwells and broods on the eternal"; friends "descend to meet." Because his thoughts were so habitually fixed on the ideal, "actual society" was to him "a perpetual disappointment"—an attitude sufficiently illustrated in the references in his journal to his Concord friendships. His conversations with Margaret Fuller were "strange, cold-warm, attractive-repelling." Of his long and fruitful friendship with Thoreau he wrote in 1856, "All his resources of wit and invention are lost to me, in every experiment, year after year, that I make to hold intercourse with his mind." After the death of Hawthorne, with whom he had much less in common, he regretted that he had been unable to "conquer a friendship"; to him, the fault seemed to lie in Hawthorne's "unwillingness and caprice." To the more worldly Hawthorne, on the other hand, Emerson was "the mystic, stretching his hand out of cloud-land, in vain search for something real."

But whatever his human limitations and whatever the limitations of his thinking—"I could never give much reality to evil," he frankly admitted—as an idealist who insisted always upon the "beneficent tendency" in human life and as an inspirer of youth, Emerson was unquestionably great. James Russell Lowell, who was inclined to be skeptical of Emerson's philosophy as such, testified to the inspiring quality of his discourses. "He brought us *life*," Lowell said in "Emerson the Lecturer"; "gave us ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England, made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us." After a lecture by Emerson, his hearers "walked homeward with prouder stride over the creaking snow." To Matthew Arnold as an undergraduate at Oxford, Emerson was one of the four most stimulating contemporary "voices."

"In all my lectures," Emerson wrote, "I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man." And again, he said, "I gain my point, gain all points, whenever I can reach the young man with any statement which teaches him his own worth." Emerson had a genius, in the words of Henry James ("Emerson" in *Partial Portraits*), for "seeing character as a real and supreme thing." "He serves," James continued, "and will not wear out . . . indeed, we cannot afford to drop him. . . . He did something better than anyone else; he had a particular faculty, which has not been surpassed, for speaking to the soul in a voice of direction and authority." Emerson should be judged and appreciated, then, not primarily as a metaphysical philosopher, but as a moral teacher. If his moral teachings seem to have lost some of their early force, if Emerson for almost a generation has been "unfashionable" (Mr. T. S. Eliot could speak of the essays in 1919 as "already an encumbrance"), it is by no means certain that with a change of intellectual and moral "climate"—such a change as now seems impending—Emerson may not regain much of his old authority and influence.

The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Centenary Edition, 12 vols., Boston, 1904 • **The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson**, 10 vols., Boston, 1909-1914 • **The Heart of Emerson's Journals**, ed. Bliss Perry, Boston, 1926 • **The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson**, ed. R. L. Rusk, 7 vols., New York, 1939 • G. E. Woodberry, **Ralph Waldo Emerson**, New York, 1907 • Norman Foerster, "Emerson," **American Criticism**, Boston, 1928 • Bliss Perry, **Emerson Today**, Princeton, 1931

The American Scholar

An Oration Delivered Before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at Cambridge, August 31, 1837

The American Scholar was the most famous literary address of the century. "This grand oration," wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, "was our intellectual Declaration of Independence. Nothing like it had been heard in the halls of Harvard since Samuel Adams supported the affirmative of the question, 'Whether it be lawful to resist the chief magistrate, if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved.' " James Russell Lowell called it "our Yankee version of a lecture by Abelard." Thomas Carlyle wrote to Emerson, after having read **The American Scholar**: "I could have wept to read that speech; the clear high melody of it went tingling through my heart; I said to my wife, 'There, woman!' She read; and charges me to return for answer 'that there has been nothing met with like it since Schiller. . . .' "

The circumstances of the delivery of **The American Scholar** have been vividly reconstructed by Bliss Perry in "Emerson's Most Famous Speech," **The Praise of Folly and Other Papers**, 1923, 81-113.

Mr. President and Gentlemen, I greet you on the recommencement of our literary year Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours; nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes.

It is one of those fables which out of an unknown antiquity convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself; just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime; that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the *divided* or social state these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely sub-

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17 **Our . . . close.** Emerson's view that American literature should no longer follow European models but should be indigenous to America was by no means original with him. Other writers had been saying the same thing for a good many years (See, for example, John C. McCloskey, "The Campaign of Periodicals after the War of 1812 for National American Literature," **Publications of the Modern Language Association**, March 1935.) Emerson has been remembered in this connection, while earlier writers have been forgotten, because Emerson expressed the view more effectively

divided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute-book; the mechanic a machine; the sailor a rope of the ship.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking.* In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as Man Thinking, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs; him the future invites. Is not indeed every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: beware of the wrong one." In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after the sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find.—so entire, so boundless. Far too as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward without centre, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fibre of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Thus to him, to this schoolboy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root; one is leaf and one is flower; relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold; a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures,—when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

II. The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is

inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him short-lived actions; it went out from him immortal thoughts. It came to him business; it went from him poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence the book-learned class, who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul. Hence the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead: man hopes: genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his;—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words; manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have Shakespearized now for two hundred years.

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12 quick, living • 38 Reason. In Emersonian usage, "Reason" is supra-rational, intuitive; "Understanding" is logical, scientific. See p. 350

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated. Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets; of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some pre-established harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakspeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle;—all the rest he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakspeare's.

Of course there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

III. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork, or public labor as a penknife for an axe. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day,—are addressed as women; that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a mincing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised; and indeed there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic

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17 **Marvell.** Emerson's naming Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) as "one of the great English poets" is significant. For an informative study of Marvell's influence on Emerson, see Norman A. Brittin, "Emerson and the Metaphysical Poets," American Literature, March 1936 • 63 Gowns, academic costume • 65 wit, wisdom • 72 speculate or see. "Speculate" is from the Latin, meaning to spy out, to observe

mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world,—this shadow of the soul, or *other me*,—lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power. It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process too, this by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin. The manufacture goes forward at all hours.

The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption. Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe too the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the self-same thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean. Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flower-pot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors; in town; in the insight into trades and manufactures; in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is that it is a resource. The great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety; in the ebb and flow of the sea; in day and night; in heat and cold; and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,—these "fits of easy transmission and

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39 the corruptible . . . incorruption, I Corinthians 15:53: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption . . ." • **59 Savoyards,** inhabitants of Savoy in northwestern Italy

reflection," as Newton called them, are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live.* Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truth? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandselled savage nature; out of terrible Druids and Berserkers come at last Alfred and Shakspeare.

I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

They are such as become Man Thinking. They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observatory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months sometimes for a few facts; correcting still his old records;—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftlessness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech; often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed; and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of to-day,—this he shall hear and promulgate.

These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or

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1 **Newton,** Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), English philosopher and mathematician who discovered the laws of universal gravitation • 25 **unhandselled,** without "handsel" or gift made as a token of good luck; without, that is, artificial advantages or initial good auspices • 43 **Flamsteed,** John Flamsteed (1646-1719), English astronomer • 43 **Herschel,** Sir William Herschel (1738-1822), German astronomer in England, or his son, also a famous astronomer

war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly. Success treads on every right step. For the instinct is sure, that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers;—that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this is myself.

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, "without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution." Brave; for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the presumption that like children and women his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still; so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back; he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance, —by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may; but in proportion as a man has any thing in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter, that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits, there is the head of the table. Linnæus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman; Davy, chemistry; and Cuvier, fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged; he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men

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73 Wherever . . . table, taken from a proverb • 74 Linnæus, Carolus Linnæus (1707-1778), Swedish botanist • 76 Davy, Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829), English chemist • 76 Cuvier, Georges Léopold Cuvier (1769-1832), French naturalist

in history, men in the world of to-day, are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd." In a century, in a millennium, one or two men; that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened; yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their downtrod selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power; and power because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and this, in their sleep-walking, they dream is highest. Wake them and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are the materials strewn along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe; we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of nearer reference to the time and to this country.

Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek; the youth, romantic; the adult, reflective. I deny not, however, that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts; we cannot enjoy any thing for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

It is so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried; as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities

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77 Sicklied . . . thought. Hamlet, Act III, Scene i, l. 85

of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact that the same movement which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign—is it not?—of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia; what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye, the form and the gait of the body;—show me the ultimate reason of these matters; show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as always it does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law; and the shop, the plough, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing;—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber room, but has form and order; there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated;—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg. The most imaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt of course must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret the lower parts of nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Every thing that tends to insulate the individual,—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state,—tends to true union as well as greatness. "I learned," said the melancholy Pestalozzi, "that no man in God's wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man." Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends; in yourself slumbers the whole of Rea-

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56 **Emanuel Swedenborg** is the subject of an essay in Emerson's **Representative Men** (1850). See note, p. 316 • 77 **Pestalozzi,** Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Swiss educational reformer. His **Hints to Parents** influenced Bronson Alcott

son; it is for you to know all; it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust, some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience; with the shades of all the good and great for company; and for solace the perspective of your own infinite life; and for work the study and the communication of principles, the making those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit;—not to be reckoned one character;—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

1837

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9 complaisant, here in the unfavorable sense of too eager to please, too compliant with the wishes of others (not to be confused with "complacent")

The Divinity School Address

Delivered Before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday Evening, July 15, 1838

Emerson wrote to Carlyle, October 17, 1838, concerning the reception of this address: "The publication of my **Address to the Divinity College** . . . has been the occasion of an outcry in all our leading newspapers against my 'infidelity,' 'pantheism,' and 'atheism.' The writers warn all and sundry against me, and against whatever is supposed to be related to my connection of opinion, &c; against Transcendentalism, Goethe, and Carlyle. I am heartily sorry to see this last aspect of the storm in our washbowl." The opposition which Emerson refers to, it is important to notice, came from Unitarians as well as from the orthodox or "Calvinist" party; Emerson was not invited again to lecture at Unitarian Harvard until 1867. The core of his heresy was his denial of the special authority of the Christian revelation and his assertion of the supreme authority of the spiritual intuition belonging to each individual.

For an illuminating treatment of historical background, see C. H. Faust, "The Background of the Unitarian Opposition to Transcendentalism," **Modern Philology**, February 1938, XXXV, 297.

In this refulgent summer, it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of

flowers. The air is full of birds, and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm-of-Gilead, and the new hay. Night brings no gloom to the heart with its welcome shade. Through the transparent darkness the stars pour their almost spiritual rays. Man under them seems a young child, and his huge globe a toy. The cool night bathes the world as with a river, and prepares his eyes again for the crimson dawn. The mystery of nature was never displayed more happily. The corn and the wine have been freely dealt to all creatures, and the never-broken silence with which the old bounty goes forward has not yielded yet one word of explanation. One is constrained to respect the perfection of this world in which our senses converse. How wide; how rich; what invitation from every property it gives to every faculty of man! In its fruitful soils; in its navigable sea; in its mountains of metal and stone; in its forests of all woods; in its animals; in its chemical ingredients; in the powers and path of light, heat, attraction and life, it is well worth the pith and heart of great men to subdue and enjoy it. The planters, the mechanics, the inventors, the astronomers, the builders of cities, and the captains, history delights to honor.

But when the mind opens and reveals the laws which traverse the universe and make things what they are, then shrinks the great world at once into a mere illustration and fable of this mind. What am I? and What is? asks the human spirit with a curiosity new-kindled, but never to be quenched. Behold these outrunning laws, which our imperfect apprehension can see tend this way and that, but not come full circle. Behold these infinite relations, so like, so unlike; many, yet one. I would study, I would know, I would admire forever. These works of thought have been the entertainments of the human spirit in all ages.

A more secret, sweet, and overpowering beauty appears to man when his heart and mind open to the sentiment of virtue. Then he is instructed in what is above him. He learns that his being is without bound; that to the good, to the perfect, he is born, low as he now lies in evil and weakness. That which he venerates is still his own, though he has not realized it yet. *He ought.* He knows the sense of that grand word, though his analysis fails to render account of it. When in innocency or when by intellectual perception he attains to say,—"I love the Right; Truth is beautiful within and without for evermore. Virtue, I am thine; save me; use me; thee will I serve, day and night, in great, in small, that I may be not virtuous, but virtue";—then is the end of the creation answered, and God is well pleased.

The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of certain divine laws. It perceives that this homely game of life we play, covers, under what seem foolish details, principles that astonish. The child amidst his baubles is learning the action of light, motion, gravity, muscular force; and in the game of human life, love, fear, justice, appetite, man, and God, interact. These laws refuse to be adequately stated. They will not be written out on paper, or spoken by the tongue. They elude our persevering thought; yet we read them hourly in each other's faces, in each other's actions, in our own remorse. The moral traits which are all globed into every virtuous act and thought,—in speech we must sever, and describe or suggest by painful enumeration of many particulars. Yet, as this sentiment is the essence of all religion, let me guide your eye to the precise objects of the sentiment, by an enumeration of some of those classes of facts in which this element is conspicuous.

The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul. These laws execute themselves. They are out of time, out of space, and not subject to circumstance. Thus in the soul of man there is a justice whose retributions are instant and entire. He who does a noble deed is instantly ennobled. He who does a mean deed is by the action itself contracted. He who puts off impurity, thereby puts on purity. If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God; the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God do enter into that man with justice. If a man dissemble, deceive, he deceives himself, and goes out of acquaintance with his own being. A man in the view of absolute goodness, adores, with total humility. Every step so downward, is a step upward. The man who renounces himself, comes to himself.

See how this rapid intrinsic energy worketh everywhere, righting wrongs, correcting appearances, and bringing up facts to a harmony with thoughts. Its operation in life, though slow to the senses, is at last as sure

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83 The . . . himself. Compare Matthew 10:39: ". . . he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it"

as in the soul. By it a man is made the Providence to himself, dispensing good to his goodness, and evil to his sin. Character is always known. Thefts never enrich; alms never impoverish; murder will speak out of stone walls. The least admixture of a lie,—for example, the taint of vanity, any attempt to make a good impression, a favorable appearance,—will instantly vitiate the effect. But speak the truth, and all nature and all spirits help you with unexpected furtherance. Speak the truth, and all things alive or brute are vouchers, and the very roots of the grass underground there do seem to stir and move to bear you witness. See again the perfection of the Law as it applies itself to the affections, and becomes the law of society. As we are, so we associate. The good, by affinity, seek the good; the vile, by affinity, the vile. Thus of their own volition, souls proceed into heaven, into hell.

These facts have always suggested to man the sublime creed that the world is not the product of manifold power, but of one will, of one mind; and that one mind is everywhere active, in each ray of the star, in each wavelet of the pool; and whatever opposes that will is everywhere balked and baffled, because things are made so, and not otherwise. Good is positive. Evil is merely privative, not absolute: it is like cold, which is the privation of heat. All evil is so much death or nonentity. Benevolence is absolute and real. So much benevolence as a man hath, so much life hath he. For all things proceed out of this same spirit, which is differently named love, justice, temperance, in its different applications, just as the ocean receives different names on the several shores which its washes. All things proceed out of the same spirit, and all things conspire with it. Whilst a man seeks good ends, he is strong by the whole strength of nature. In so far as he roves from these ends, he bereaves himself of power, or auxiliaries; his being shrinks out of all remote channels, he becomes less and less, a mote, a point, until absolute badness is absolute death.

The perception of this law of laws awakens in the mind a sentiment which we call the religious sentiment, and which makes our highest happiness. Wonderful is its power to charm and to command. It is a mountain air. It is the embalmer of the world. It is myrrh and storax, and chlorine and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it. By it is the universe made safe and habitable, not by science or power. Thought may work cold and intransitive in things, and find no end or unity; but the dawn of the sentiment of virtue on the heart, gives and is the assurance that Law is sovereign over all natures; and the worlds, time, space, eternity, do seem to break out into joy.

This sentiment is divine and deifying. It is the beatitude of man. It makes him illimitable. Through it, the soul first knows itself. It corrects the capital mistake of the infant man, who seeks to be great by following the great, and hopes to derive advantages *from another,*— by showing the fountain of all good to be in himself, and that he, equally with every man, is an inlet into the deeps of Reason. When he says, "I ought"; when love warms him; when he chooses, warned from on high, the good and great deed; then, deep melodies wander through his soul from Supreme Wisdom.—Then he can worship, and be enlarged by his worship; for he can never go behind this sentiment. In the sublimest flights of the soul, rectitude is never surmounted, love is never outgrown.

This sentiment lies at the foundation of society, and successively creates all forms of worship. The principle of veneration never dies out. Man fallen into superstition, into sensuality, is never quite without the visions of the moral sentiment. In like manner, all the expressions of this sentiment are sacred and permanent in proportion to their purity. The expressions of this sentiment affect us more than all other compositions. The sentences of the oldest time, which ejaculate this piety, are still fresh and fragrant. This thought dwelled always deepest in the minds of men in the devout and contemplative East; not alone in Palestine, where it reached its purest expression, but in Egypt, in Persia, in India, in China. Europe has always owed to oriental genius its divine impulses. What these holy bards said, all sane men found agreeable and true. And the unique impression of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of this world, is proof of the subtle virtue of this infusion.

Meantime, whilst the doors of the temple stand open, day and night, before every man, and the oracles of this truth cease never, it is guarded by one stern condition; this, namely: it is an intuition. It cannot be received at second hand. Truly speaking, it is not instruction, but provocation, that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me,

or reject; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing. On the contrary, the absence of this primary faith is the presence of degradation. As is the flood, so is the ebb. Let this faith depart, and the very words it spake and the things it made become false and hurtful. Then falls the church, the state, art, letters, life. The doctrine of the divine nature being forgotten, a sickness infects and dwarfs the constitution. Once man was all; now he is an appendage, a nuisance. And because the indwelling Supreme Spirit cannot wholly be got rid of, the doctrine of it suffers this perversion, that the divine nature is attributed to one or two persons, and denied to all the rest, and denied with fury. The doctrine of inspiration is lost; the base doctrine of the majority of voices usurps the place of the doctrine of the soul. Miracles, prophecy, poetry, the ideal life, the holy life, exist as ancient history merely; they are not in the belief, nor in the aspiration of society; but, when suggested, seem ridiculous. Life is comic or pitiful as soon as the high ends of being fade out of sight, and man becomes near-sighted, and can only attend to what addresses the senses.

These general views, which, whilst they are general, none will contest, find abundant illustration in the history of religion, and especially in the history of the Christian church. In that, all of us have had our birth and nurture. The truth contained in that, you, my young friends, are now setting forth to teach. As the Cultus, or established worship of the civilized world, it has great historical interest for us. Of its blessed words, which have been the consolation of humanity, you need not that I should speak. I shall endeavor to discharge my duty to you on this occasion, by pointing out two errors in its administration, which daily appear more gross from the point of view we have just now taken.

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his World. He said, in this jubilee of sublime emotion, "I am divine. Through me, God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think." But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said, in the next age, "This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you, if you say he was a man." The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity became a Mythus, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt, before. He spoke of miracles; for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this daily miracle shines as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain.

He felt respect for Moses and the prophets, but no unfit tenderness at postponing their initial revelations to the hour and the man that now is; to the eternal revelation in the heart. Thus was he a true man. Having seen that the law in us is commanding, he would not suffer it to be commanded. Boldly, with hand, and heart, and life, he declared it was God. Thus is he, as I think, the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man.

1. In this point of view we become sensible of the first defect of historical Christianity. Historical Christianity has fallen into the error that corrupts all attempts to communicate religion. As it appears to us, and as it has appeared for ages, it is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the *person* of Jesus. The soul knows no persons. It invites every man to expand to the full circle of the universe, and will have no preferences but those of spontaneous love. But by this eastern monarchy of a Christianity, which indolence and fear have built, the friend of man is made the injurer of man. The manner in which his name is surrounded with expressions which were once sallies of admiration and love, but are now petrified into official titles, kills all generous sympathy

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44 I . . . think. The words are not Jesus' exact words, but Emerson's interpretation of Jesus' meaning • 49 Reason . . . Understanding. See note, p. 439 • 84 friend of man. When Elizabeth Peabody urged Emerson to write "friend" with a capital F, he replied, "If I did so, they would all go to sleep"

and liking. All who hear me, feel that the language that describes Christ to Europe and America is not the style of friendship and enthusiasm to a good and noble heart, but is appropriated and formal,—paints a demi-god, as the Orientals or the Greeks would describe Osiris or Apollo. Accept the injurious impositions of our early catechetical instruction, and even honesty and self-denial were but splendid sins, if they did not wear the Christian name. One would rather be

"A pagan, suckled in a creed outworn,"

than to be defrauded of his manly right in coming into nature and finding not names and places, not land and professions, but even virtue and truth foreclosed and monopolized. You shall not be a man even. You shall not own the world; you shall not dare and live after the infinite Law that is in you, and in company with the infinite Beauty which heaven and earth reflect to you in all lovely forms; but you must subordinate your nature to Christ's nature; you must accept our interpretations, and take his portrait as the vulgar draw it.

That is always best which gives me to myself. The sublime is excited in me by the great stoical doctrine, Obey thyself. That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen. There is no longer a necessary reason for my being. Already the long shadows of untimely oblivion creep over me, and I shall decease forever.

The divine bards are the friends of my virtue, of my intellect, of my strength. They admonish me that the gleams which flash across my mind are not mine, but God's; that they had the like, and were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. So I love them. Noble provocations go out from them, inviting me to resist evil; to subdue the world; and to Be. And thus, by his holy thoughts, Jesus serves us, and thus only. To aim to convert a man by miracles is a profanation of the soul. A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments. It is true that a great and rich soul, like his, falling among the simple, does so preponderate, that, as his did, it names the world. The world seems to exist for him, and they have not yet drunk so deeply of his sense as to see that only by coming again to themselves, or to God in themselves, can they grow forevermore. It is a low benefit to give me something; it is a high benefit to enable me to do somewhat of myself. The time is coming when all men will see that the gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet, natural goodness, a goodness like thine and mine, and that so invites thine and mine to be and to grow.

The injustice of the vulgar tone of preaching is not less flagrant to Jesus than to the souls which it profanes. The preachers do not see that they make his gospel not glad, and shear him of the locks of beauty and the attributes of heaven. When I see a majestic Epaminondas, or Washington; when I see among my contemporaries a true orator, an upright judge, a dear friend; when I vibrate to the melody and fancy of a poem; I see beauty that is to be desired. And so lovely, and yet with more entire consent of my human being, sounds in my ear the severe music of the bards that have sung of the true God in all ages. Now do not degrade the life and dialogues of Christ out of the circle of this charm, by insulation and peculiarity. Let them lie as they befell, alive and warm, part of human life and of the landscape and of the cheerful day.

2. The second defect of the traditionary and limited way of using the mind of Christ is a consequence of the first; this namely: that the Moral Nature, that Law of laws whose revelations introduce greatness—yea, God himself—into the open soul, is not explored as the fountain of the established teaching in society. Men have come to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead. The injury to faith throttles the preacher; and the goodliest of institutions becomes an uncertain and inarticulate voice.

It is very certain that it is the effect of conversation with the beauty of the soul, to beget a desire and need to impart to others the same knowledge and love. If utterance is denied, the thought lies like a burden on the man. Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told; somehow he publishes it with solemn joy: sometimes with pencil on canvas; sometimes with chisel on stone; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul's worship is builded; sometimes in anthems of in-

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7 catechetical instruction, the questions and answers of the catechism, much in vogue in early New England • 10 A pagan . . . outworn, Wordsworth's "The World Is Too Much with Us," l 10 • 31 not . . . vision. Acts 26:19- "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" • 56 Epaminondas, Theban statesman and general (d 362 B.C.)

definite music; but clearest and most permanent, in words.

The man enamored of this excellency becomes its priest or poet. The office is coeval with the world. But observe the condition, the spiritual limitation of the office. The spirit only can teach. Not any profane man, not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach, but only he can give, who has; he only can create, who is. The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach. Courage, piety, love, wisdom, can teach; and every man can open his door to these angels, and they shall bring him the gift of tongues. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush.

To this holy office you propose to devote yourselves. I wish you may feel your call in throbs of desire and hope. The office is the first in the world. It is of that reality that it cannot suffer the deduction of any falsehood. And it is my duty to say to you that the need was never greater of new revelation than now. From the views I have already expressed, you will infer the sad conviction, which I share, I believe, with numbers, of the universal decay and now almost death of faith in society. The soul is not preached. The Church seems to totter to its fall, almost all life extinct. On this occasion, any complaisance would be criminal which told you, whose hope and commission it is to preach the faith of Christ, that the faith of Christ is preached.

It is time that this ill-suppressed murmur of all thoughtful men against the famine of our churches;—this moaning of the heart because it is bereaved of the consolation, the hope, the grandeur that come alone out of the culture of the moral nature,—should be heard through the sleep of indolence, and over the din of routine. This great and perpetual office of the preacher is not discharged. Preaching is the expression of the moral sentiment in application to the duties of life. In how many churches, by how many prophets, tell me, is man made sensible that he is an infinite Soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; that he is drinking forever the soul of God? Where now sounds the persuasion, that by its very melody imparadises my heart, and so affirms its own origin in heaven? Where shall I hear words such as in elder ages drew men to leave all and follow,—father and mother, house and land, wife and child? Where shall I hear these august laws of moral being so pronounced as to fill my ear, and I feel ennobled by the offer of my uttermost action and passion? The test of the true faith, certainly, should be its power to charm and command the soul, as the laws of nature control the activity of the hands,—so commanding that we find pleasure and honor in obeying. The faith should blend with the light of rising and of setting suns, with the flying cloud, the singing bird, and the breath of flowers. But now the priest's Sabbath has lost the splendor of nature; it is unlovely; we are glad when it is done; we can make, we do make, even sitting in our pews, a far better, holier, sweeter, for ourselves.

Whenever the pulpit is usurped by a formalist, then is the worshipper defrauded and disconsolate. We shrink as soon as the prayers begin, which do not uplift, but smite and offend us. We are fain to wrap our cloaks about us, and secure, as best we can, a solitude that hears not. I once heard a preacher who sorely tempted me to say I would go to church no more. Men go, thought I, where they are wont to go, else had no soul entered the temple in the afternoon. A snow-storm was falling around us. The snow-storm was real, the preacher merely spectral, and the eye felt the sad contrast in looking at him, and then out of the window behind him into the beautiful meteor of the snow. He had lived in vain. He had no one word intimating that he had laughed or wept, was married or in love, had been commended, or cheated, or chagrined. If he had ever lived and acted, we were none the wiser for it. The capital secret of his profession, namely, to convert life into truth, he had not learned. Not one fact in all his experience had he yet imported into his doctrine. This man had ploughed and planted and talked and bought and sold; he had read books; he had eaten and drunken; his head aches, his heart throbs; he smiles and suffers; yet was there not a surmise, a hint, in all the discourse, that he had ever lived at all. Not a line did he draw out of real history. The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to his people his life,—life passed through the fire of thought. But of the bad preacher, it could not be told from his sermon what age of the world he fell in; whether he had a father or a child; whether he was a

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24 The Church . . . extinct. Emerson wrote in his Journals of "the corpse-cold Unitarianism of Brattle Street"

freeholder or a pauper; whether he was a citizen or a countryman; or any other fact of his biography. It seemed strange that the people should come to church. It seemed as if their houses were very unentertaining, that they should prefer this thoughtless clamor. It shows that there is a commanding attraction in the moral sentiment, that can lend a faint tint of light to dulness and ignorance coming in its name and place. The good hearer is sure he has been touched sometimes; is sure there is somewhat to be reached, and some word that can reach it. When he listens to these vain words, he comforts himself by their relation to his remembrance of better hours, and so they clatter and echo unchallenged.

I am not ignorant that when we preach unworthily, it is not always quite in vain. There is a good ear, in some men, that draws supplies to virtue out of very indifferent nutriment. There is poetic truth concealed in all the commonplaces of prayer and of sermons, and though foolishly spoken, they may be wisely heard; for each is some select expression that broke out in a moment of piety from some stricken or jubilant soul, and its excellency made it remembered. The prayers and even the dogmas of our church are like the zodiac of Denderah and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, wholly insulated from anything now extant in the life and business of the people. They mark the height to which the waters once rose. But this docility is a check upon the mischief from the good and devout. In a large portion of the community, the religious service gives rise to quite other thoughts and emotions. We need not chide the negligent servant. We are struck with pity, rather, at the swift retribution of his sloth. Alas for the unhappy man that is called to stand in the pulpit, and *not* give bread of life. Everything that befalls, accuses him. Would he ask contributions for the missions, foreign or domestic? Instantly his face is suffused with shame, to propose to his parish that they should send money a hundred or a thousand miles, to furnish such poor fare as they have at home and would do well to go the hundred or the thousand miles to escape. Would he urge people to a godly way of living;—and can he ask a fellow-creature to come to Sabbath meetings, when he and they all know what is the poor uttermost they can hope for therein? Will he invite them privately to the Lord's Supper? He dares not. If no heart warm this rite, the hollow, dry, creaking formality is too plain, than that he can face a man of wit and energy and put the invitation without terror. In the street, what has he to say to the bold village blasphemer? The village blasphemer sees fear in the face, form, and gait of the minister.

Let me not taint the sincerity of this plea by any oversight of the claims of good men. I know and honor the purity and strict conscience of numbers of the clergy. What life the public worship retains, it owes to the scattered company of pious men, who minister here and there in the churches, and who, sometimes accepting with too great tenderness the tenet of the elders, have not accepted from others, but from their own heart, the genuine impulses of virtue, and so still command our love and awe, to the sanctity of character. Moreover, the exceptions are not so much to be found in a few eminent preachers, as in the better hours, the truer inspirations of all,—nay, in the sincere moments of every man. But, with whatever exception, it is still true that tradition characterizes the preaching of this country; that it comes out of the memory, and not out of the soul; that it aims at what is usual, and not at what is necessary and eternal; that thus historical Christianity destroys the power of preaching, by withdrawing it from the exploration of the moral nature of man; where the sublime is, where are the resources of astonishment and power. What a cruel injustice it is to that Law, the joy of the whole earth, which alone can make the thought dear and rich; that Law whose fatal sureness the astronomical orbits poorly emulate;—that it is travestied and depreciated, that it is behooted and behowled, and not a trait, not a word of it articulated. The pulpit in losing sight of this Law, loses its reason, and gropes after it knows not what. And for want of this culture the soul of the community is sick and faithless. It wants nothing so much as a stern, high, stoical, Christian discipline, to make it know itself and the divinity that speaks through it. Now man is ashamed of himself; he skulks and sneaks through the world, to be tolerated, to be

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46 **Lord's Supper.** Emerson had resigned the pastorate of the Second Church in Boston in 1832 because of a disagreement with his parishioners on the nature and importance of the Lord's Supper. In a sermon, "The Lord's Supper" (printed in Miscellanies, Centenary Edition of his works), delivered to the Church September 9, 1832, he gave the reasons for his "want of sympathy" with the sacrament

pitied, and scarcely in a thousand years does any man dare to be wise and good, and so draw after him the tears and blessings of his kind.

Certainly there have been periods when, from the inactivity of the intellect on certain truths, a greater faith was possible in names and persons. The Puritans in England and America found in the Christ of the Catholic Church and in the dogmas inherited from Rome, scope for their austere piety and their longings for civil freedom. But their creed is passing away, and none arises in its room. I think no man can go with his thoughts about him into one of our churches, without feeling that what hold the public worship had on men is gone, or going. It has lost its grasp on the affection of the good and the fear of the bad. In the country, neighborhoods, half parishes are *signing off,* to use the local term. It is already beginning to indicate character and religion to withdraw from the religious meetings. I have heard a devout person, who prized the Sabbath, say in bitterness of heart, "On Sundays, it seems wicked to go to church." And the motive that holds the best there is now only a hope and a waiting. What was once a mere circumstance, that the best and the worst men in the parish, the poor and the rich, the learned and the ignorant, young and old, should meet one day as fellows in one house, in sign of an equal right in the soul, has come to be a paramount motive for going thither.

My friends, in these two errors, I think, I find the causes of a decaying church and a wasting unbelief. And what greater calamity can fall upon a nation than the loss of worship? Then all things go to decay. Genius leaves the temple to haunt the senate or the market. Literature becomes frivolous. Science is cold. The eye of youth is not lighted by the hope of other worlds, and age is without honor. Society lives to trifles, and when men die we do not mention them.

And now, my brothers, you will ask, What in these desponding days can be done by us? The remedy is already declared in the ground of our complaint of the Church. We have contrasted the Church with the Soul. In the soul then let the redemption be sought. Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution. The old is for slaves. When a man comes, all books are legible, all things transparent, all religions are forms. He is religious. Man is the wonderworker. He is seen amid miracles. All men bless and curse. He saith yea and nay, only. The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man;—indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that He speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity,—a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man,—is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed. Ah me! no man goeth alone. All men go in flocks to this saint or that poet, avoiding the God who seeth in secret. They cannot see in secret; they love to be blind in public. They think society wiser than their soul, and know not that one soul, and their soul, is wiser than the whole word. See how nations and races flit by on the sea of time and leave no ripple to tell where they floated or sunk, and one good soul shall make the name of Moses, or of Zeno, or of Zoroaster, reverend forever. None assayeth the stern ambition to be the Self of the nation and of nature, but each would be an easy secondary to some Christian scheme, or sectarian connection, or some eminent man. Once leave your own knowledge of God, your own sentiment, and take secondary knowledge, as St. Paul's or George Fox's, or Swedenborg's, and you get wide from God with every year this secondary form lasts, and if, as now, for centuries,—the chasm yawns to that breadth, that men can scarcely be convinced there is in them anything divine.

Let me admonish you, first of all, to go alone; to refuse the good models, even those which are sacred to the imagination of men, and dare to love God without mediator or veil. Friends enough you shall find who will hold up to your emulation Wesleys and Oberlins, Saints and Prophets. Thank God for these good men, but say, "I also am a man." Imitation cannot go above its model. The imitator dooms himself to hopeless mediocrity. The inventor did it because it was natural to him, and so in him it has a charm. In the imitator something else

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19 a devout person, Mrs Emerson, who is quoted in the Journals (December 3, 1837), as follows "Lidian says, it is wicked to go to Church Sundays" • **64 Zeno,** Greek philosopher, founder of the Stoic School of philosophy • **64 Zoroaster,** founder of the ancient Persian religion about 1000 B.C. • **70 George Fox.** See note, p. 410 • **79 Wesley,** John Wesley, founder of Methodism • **79 Oberlin,** Jean Frédéric Oberlin (1740-1826), Franco-German clergyman and philanthropist

is natural, and he bereaves himself of his own beauty, to come short of another man's.

Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure, and money, are nothing to you, —are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see,—but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind. Not too anxious to visit periodically all families and each family in your parish connection,—when you meet one of these men or women, be to them a divine man; be to them thought and virtue; let their timid aspirations find in you a friend; let their trampled instincts be genially tempted out in your atmosphere, let their doubts know that you have doubted, and their wonder feel that you have wondered. By trusting your own heart, you shall gain more confidence in other men For all our penny-wisdom, for all our soul-destroying slavery to habit, it is not to be doubted that all men have sublime thoughts; that all men value the few real hours of life; they love to be heard; they love to be caught up into the vision of principles. We mark with light in the memory the few interviews we have had, in the dreary years of routine and of sin, with souls that made our souls wiser; that spoke what we thought; that told us what we knew; that gave us leave to be what we inly were. Discharge to men the priestly office, and, present or absent, you shall be followed with their love as by an angel.

And, to this end, let us not aim at common degrees of merit. Can we not leave, to such as love it, the virtue that glitters for the commendation of society, and ourselves pierce the deep solitudes of absolute ability and worth? We easily come up to the standard of goodness in society. Society's praise can be cheaply secured, and almost all men are content with those easy merits; but the instant effect of conversing with God will be to put them away. There are persons who are not actors, not speakers, but influences; persons too great for fame, for display; who disdain eloquence; to whom all we call art and artist, seems too nearly allied to show and by-ends, to the exaggeration of the finite and selfish, and loss of the universal. The orators, the poets, the commanders encroach on us only as fair women do, by our allowance and homage. Slight them by preoccupation of mind, slight them, as you can well afford to do, by high and universal aims, and they instantly feel that you have right, and that it is in lower places that they must shine. They also feel your right; for they with you are open to the influx of the all-knowing Spirit, which annihilates before its broad noon the little shades and gradations of intelligence in the compositions we call wiser and wisest.

In such high communion let us study the grand strokes of rectitude: a bold benevolence, an independence of friends, so that not the unjust wishes of those who love us shall impair our freedom, but we shall resist for truth's sake the freest flow of kindness, and appeal to sympathies far in advance; and—what is the highest form in which we know this beautiful element,—a certain solidity of merit, that has nothing to do with opinion, and which is so essentially and manifestly virtue, that it is taken for granted that the right, the brave, the generous step will be taken by it, and nobody thinks of commending it. You would compliment a coxcomb doing a good act, but you would not praise an angel. The silence that accepts merit as the most natural thing in the world, is the highest applause. Such souls, when they appear, are the Imperial Guard of Virtue, the perpetual reserve, the dictators of fortune. One needs not praise their courage,—they are the heart and soul of nature. O my friends, there are resources in us on which we have not drawn. There are men who rise refreshed on hearing a threat; men to whom a crisis which intimidates and paralyzes the majority,—demanding not the faculties of prudence and thrift, but comprehension, immovableness, the readiness of sacrifice,—comes graceful and beloved as a bride. Napoleon said of Massena, that he was not himself until the battle began to go against him; then, when the dead began to fall in ranks around him, awoke his powers of combination, and he put on terror and victory as a robe. So it is in rugged crises, in unweariable endurance, and in aims which put sympathy out of the question, that the angel is shown. But these are heights that we can scarce remember and look up to without contrition and shame. Let us thank God that such things exist.

And now let us do what we can to rekindle the smouldering, nigh quenched fire on the altar. The evils of the church that now is are manifest. The question returns, What shall we do? I confess, all attempts to

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76 Massena, André Masséna (1758-1817), Marshal of Napoleon I

project and establish a Cultus with new rites and forms, seem to me vain. Faith makes us, and not we it, and faith makes its own forms. All attempts to contrive a system are as cold as the new worship introduced by the French to the goddess of Reason,—today, pasteboard and filigree, and ending tomorrow in madness and murder. Rather let the breath of new life be breathed by you through the forms already existing. For if once you are alive, you shall find they shall become plastic and new. The remedy to their deformity is first, soul, and second, soul, and evermore, soul. A whole popedom of forms one pulsation of virtue can uplift and vivify. Two inestimable advantages Christianity has given us; first the Sabbath, the jubilee of the whole world, whose light dawns welcome alike into the closet of the philosopher, into the garret of toil, and into prison-cells, and everywhere suggests, even to the vile, the dignity of spiritual being. Let it stand forevermore, a temple, which new love, new faith, new sight shall restore to more than its first splendor to mankind. And secondly, the institution of preaching,—the speech of man to men,—essentially the most flexible of all organs, of all forms. What hinders that now, everywhere, in pulpits, in lecture-rooms, in houses, in fields, wherever the invitation of men or your own occasions lead you, you speak the very truth, as your life and conscience teach it, and cheer the waiting, fainting hearts of men with new hope and new revelation?

I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty which ravished the souls of those Eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures contain immortal sentences, that have been bread of life to millions. But they have no epical integrity; are fragmentary; are not shown in their order to the intellect. I look for the new Teacher that shall follow so far those shining laws that he shall see them come full circle; shall see their rounding complete grace; shall see the world to be the mirror of the soul; shall see the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart; and shall show that the Ought, that Duty, is one thing with Science, with Beauty, and with Joy.

1838

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4 new . . . Reason. The "worship of Reason" was instituted in France in 1793 in the midst of the Reign of Terror. The use of "Reason" in this connection is Deistic and is not to be confused with Emerson's use of the word • 32 Hebrew . . . Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments

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Self-Reliance

Self-Reliance has been in the past, and perhaps is still, the best-known and most often quoted essay in American literature. "Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string," and "Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles" are only two among many examples of Emerson's gift for expressing spiritual truth in quotable form. "These lofty sentences of Emerson," Matthew Arnold wrote in 1884, "and a hundred others of like strain, I never have lost out of my memory; I never can lose them."

Emerson's belief in self-reliance follows as the logical result of his doctrine of the "over-soul." According to this doctrine, every man has something of the divine in his nature and is capable of establishing a direct relationship with the universal spirit. By means of what Emerson liked to call "the intuition of the moral sentiment," every man is capable of perceiving the highest truth. To quote from the essay: "We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity." Every man, therefore, ought to rely upon his own spiritual perceptions, ought to be self-reliant.

Emerson was an individualist, and his Self-Reliance is an extreme statement of the individualistic point of view. To the modern reader, the author may appear unmindful of social obligations when he says: "What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think"; and again,

"Are they my poor?" But Emerson was not indifferent to society. He thought of society as composed of individuals. A good society would be a society composed of good individuals. The primary obligation of the individual, therefore, is to perfect his own life. Like his Puritan forbears, Emerson believed that social salvation could be achieved only through the salvation of the individuals who compose society.

A superficial reading may leave one with the impression that Emerson's doctrine is fatally easy. He appears to say, simply, "Do as you like." It should be remembered, however, that Emerson, again like his Puritan forbears, is holding himself to an almost intolerably high standard of thinking and living. The individual must obey his own highest instinct, must "absolve" himself to himself. Self-imposed requirements, in the case of a conscientious person, may be rigorous to the last degree. "If anyone imagines that this law is lax," says Emerson, a little defiantly, "let him keep its commandment one day."

I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instil is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost, and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what *they* thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else to-morrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without preestablished harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no invention, no hope.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner nor cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the

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1 **eminent painter,** probably Washington Allston (1779-1843) • 65 **Chaos . . . Dark,** reminiscent of Milton's "Chaos and Old Night" in **Paradise Lost, Bk. I, l. 543**

face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it; so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him; he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *éclat* he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatreds of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no Lethe for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus avoid all pledges and, having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence,—must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men and put them in fear.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, "What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?" my friend suggested,—"But these impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this, the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes, why should I not say to him, "Go love thy infant; love thy woodchopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home." Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of

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21 **pit**, that part of the theater now usually known in the United States as the "orchestra." In Elizabethan times, the pit was the cheapest location in the house and was occupied by the "groundlings" (see **Hamlet**, Act III, Scene ii, l. 11), who were very outspoken in their judgments on the performance • 33 **Lethe**. See note, p. 384 • 51 **palms**, symbol of success • 77 **Barbadoes**, an island in the British West Indies in which Negro slavery was abolished in 1834

hatred must be preached, as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pules and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim.* I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then again, do not tell me, as a good man did to-day, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison if need be; but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots, and the thousand-fold Relief Societies;—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar, which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man *and* his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are penances. I do not wish to expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man, and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are: and of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life. But do your work, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blind-man's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four is not the real four; so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history; I mean "the foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we

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4 lintels. A lintel is the crosspiece above a door • 73 bench, the judge, who sits on the "bench" • 87 the foolish . . . praise, from Pope's famous satire on Addison in his "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot"

do not feel at ease, in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved but moved by a low usurping wilfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face, with the most disagreeable sensation.

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The by-standers look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversion had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loth to disappoint them.

But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself, what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day.— "Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood."—Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza;—read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency.

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23 **mow**, make grimaces • 42 **Joseph . . . flee.** The allusion is to Genesis 39-12 • 52 **Pythagoras.** See note, p. 133 • 53 **Socrates,** Greek philosopher of the fifth century B.C. • 53 **Luther,** Martin Luther (1483-1546), a leader in the Protestant Reformation • 53 **Copernicus,** Nikolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), Polish astronomer whose system superseded the Ptolemaic • 54 **Galileo** (1564-1642), Italian astronomer • 54 **Newton,** Sir Isaac Newton. See note, p. 440 • 59 **Andes,** a mountain range in South America, extending from the Isthmus of Panama to Cape Horn • 59 **Himmaleh,** or Himalaya, a mountain range between India and China in which are found the world's highest mountains

Your genuine action will explain itself and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough to-day to do right and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their health into this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed a united light on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham's voice, and dignity into Washington's port, and America into Adams's eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemera. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it today because it is not of to-day. We love it and pay it homage because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and therefore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife. Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him; I wish that he should wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom and trade and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the centre of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you and all men and all events. Ordinarily, every body in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design;—and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Cæsar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of the Hermit Antony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clarkson. Scipio, Milton called "the height of Rome;" and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, "Who are you, Sir?" Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict; it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claims to praise. That popular fable of the sot who was picked up dead-drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact that it symbolizes so well the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason and finds himself a true prince.

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15 Chatham, William Pitt, first Earl of Chatham (1708 1778), English statesman • **17 Adams,** Samuel Adams (1722-1803), Revolutionary patriot • **25 gazetted,** announced in a gazette, as, for example, a case of bankruptcy • **52 Monachism,** monasticism • **52 Antony,** St. Anthony (251-356?), Egyptian founder of monachism • **53 Fox,** George Fox See note, p 410 • **54 Wesley** (1703-1791), English preacher and founder of Methodism • **54 Clarkson,** Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), English abolitionist • **54 Scipio** (185?-129? B C), Roman general who captured and destroyed Carthage • **55 the height of Rome, Paradise Lost,** Bk. IX, l. 510 • **55 all . . . persons.** Compare Carlyle's famous dictum at the beginning of **Heroes and Hero-Worship** (1841) "For, as I take it, Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here" • **71 fable.** Such a story is told in the "Induction" to Shakespeare's **Taming of the Shrew**

Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Why all this deference to Alfred and Scanderbeg and Gustavus? Suppose they were virtuous; did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act to-day as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by a law of his own, make his own scale of men and things and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the centre of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their centre by their cause, and in the universal miracle petty and particular miracles disappear. If therefore a man claims to know and speak of God and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old mouldered nation in another country, in an-

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7 Alfred, Alfred the Great (849-901), king of the West Saxons • 7 Scanderbeg (1403-1468), Albanian patriot who opposed the Turks • 7 Gustavus, Gustavus Adolphus (1594-1632), king of Sweden • 28 parallax, the apparent displacement (or the difference in apparent direction) of an object, as seen from two different points

other world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fulness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be any thing more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say 'I think,' 'I am,' but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied and it satisfies nature in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers; he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.

This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them and are willing to let the words go; for at any time they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name;—the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over the passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea; long intervals of time, years, centuries, are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life and what is called death.

Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates; that the soul *becomes;* for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present there will be power not confident but agent. To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by

the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is, in nature, the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul.

Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—'Come out unto us.' But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. "What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love."

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, 'O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh to-day? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last.'—But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing.

The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism; and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of conscious-

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18 shoes . . . feet, an allusion to the words of God to Moses in Exodus 3.5: ". . . put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" • **47 Thor.** See note, p 410 • **47 Woden,** or Odin, is treated at length in Carlyle's **Heroes and Hero-Worship** as "the central figure of Scandinavian Paganism" • **83 antinomianism,** the doctrine that the moral law may be set aside on the ground that faith alone is necessary to salvation

ness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct,* or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat, and dog—whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society,* he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined.* If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles,* keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days and feels no shame in not 'studying a profession,' for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic open the resources of man and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations; that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatries and customs out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him;—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor and make his name dear to all history.

It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men, in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of living; their association; in their property; in their speculative views.

1. In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity, anything less than all good, is vicious Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's

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56 word made flesh. Compare John 1 14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . ." • 57 healing . . . nations. Compare Revelation 22 2: ". . . and the leaves of the tree [of life] were for the healing of the nations" • 78 God . . . good. Compare Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good"

"Bonduca," when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Audate, replies,—

> His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;
> Our valors are our best gods.

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide; him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift."

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, 'Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey.' Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the elemental thought of duty and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating every thing to the new terminology as a girl who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see,—how you can see; 'It must be somehow that you stole the light from us.' They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Travelling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination, did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In manly hours we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveller; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance that he goes, the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign and not like an interloper or a valet.

I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Palmyra, his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

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3 **His . . . gods,** from John Fletcher's **Bonduca** (1647), **Act III,** Scene i, ll. 88-89 • 22 **Zoroaster.** See note, p 451 • 26 **Let . . . obey,** inaccurately quoted from Exodus 20 19 • 33 **Locke,** John Locke See note, p 126 • 33 **Lavoisier,** Antoine Lavoisier (1743 1794), French chemist • 33 **Hutton,** James Hutton (1726-1797), English geologist • 33 **Bentham,** Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), English philosopher and jurist • 33 **Fourier,** François Fourier (1772-1837), French socialist • 83 **Thebes,** ancient ruined city in Egypt • 83 **Palmyra,** ancient ruined city in Syria

Travelling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican and the palaces I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

3. But the rage of travelling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the travelling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste, our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties, lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Gothic model? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation, but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakspeare? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakspeare will never be made by the study of Shakspeare. Do that which is assigned you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias, or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses or Dante, but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul, all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself, but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice, for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shalt reproduce the Foreworld again.

4 As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration For every thing that is given something is taken Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveller tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad-axe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave

The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His note-books impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of

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24 **Doric**, Greek or classic • 24 **Gothic**, medieval • 48 **Phidias**, Greek sculptor of the fifth century B.C. • 48 **trowel . . . Egyptians**, meaning the pyramids

accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity, entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate greater men than Plutarch's heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and in his turn the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume and do not invigorate men. The harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in their fishing-boats as to astonish Parry and Franklin, whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor and disencumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Cases, "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill and bake his bread himself."

Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation to-day, next year die, and their experience dies with them.

And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has if he see that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him and merely lies there because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire; and what the man acquires, is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and, in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that

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13 **Plutarch's heroes**, the noble Greeks and Romans of Plutarch's **Lives** • 14 **Phocion** (402-317 B.C.), Greek philosopher • 15 **Anaxagoras** (500-428 B C), Greek philosopher • 15 **Diogenes** (412?-323 B C), Greek Cynic philosopher • 21 **Hudson**, Henry Hudson (d 1611), English navigator. See note, p. 251 • 21 **Behring**, Vitus Jonassen Bering (1680-1741), Danish navigator who explored the Bering Sea • 22 **Parry**, Sir William Edward Parry (1790-1855), English explorer of the Arctic • 22 **Franklin**, Sir John Franklin (1786-1847), English explorer, was lost in the Arctic • 35 **Las Cases**. Marquis de Las Cases (1766-1842) recorded in **Mémorial de Ste. Hélène** his conversations with Napoleon at St. Helena • 64 **Caliph Ali**, Ali ben Abu Talib (602?-661), fourth caliph of Mecca • 70 **Essex**, a county in eastern Massachusetts

surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and, so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shall sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick or the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

1841

The Rhodora:

On Being Asked, Whence Is the Flower?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay,
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

1834·1839

Each and All

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down,
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone.
I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even,
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
For I did not bring home the river and sky,—
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.
The delicate shells lay on the shore,
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore
With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar.
The lover watched his graceful maid,
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed,
Nor knew her beauty's best attire
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
At last she came to his hermitage,
Like the bird from the woodlands to the cage,—
The gay enchantment was undone,

The Rhodora: • **12 Beauty . . . being.** This often-quoted line hardly represents Emerson's usual attitude More characteristic is the following from **Nature** (1836). "Beauty in nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and is not alone a solid and satisfactory good"

A gentle wife, but fairy none.
Then I said, "I covet truth;
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
I leave it behind with the games of youth":—
As I spoke, beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;
Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird;—
Beauty through my senses stole;
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

1834? • 1839

Concord Hymn

Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument, July 4, 1837

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
  Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
  And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
  Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
  Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
  We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
  When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
  To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
  The shaft we raise to them and thee.

1837

The Problem

I like a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowlèd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.
Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds

Concord Hymn • **4 fired . . . world.** The first armed clash of the American Revolution occurred at Lexington and Concord, April 19, 1775. After having retreated from Lexington, the minutemen rallied at Concord and drove the British back to Boston

The Problem • **10 Jove . . . Phidias, statue of Zeus by Phidias.** See note, p 464 • **12 Delphic oracle.** The oracles of Apollo, given in the temple at Delphi in ancient Greece • **19 hand . . . dome,** the famous dome of St. Peter's at Rome, designed by Michelangelo (1475-1564)

To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old *Chrysostom,* best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakspeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

1839-1840

The Snow-Storm

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn,
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's nightwork,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

1841

The Problem • 47 **Master,** the creative artist • 51 **Pentecost.** See Acts 2 for the account of "the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost" • 55 **prophet,** Moses and the Commandments See Exodus 32, 34 • 65 **Chrysostom.** The eloquent John of Antioch (347-407), church father, was called "Chrysostom," meaning "Golden Lips" • 65 **Augustine,** St Augustine (354-430), bishop of Hippo and author of **The City of God** • 68 **Taylor,** Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667), English bishop

The Snow-Storm • 18 **Parian,** Parian marble was used for sculptures in ancient times • 21 **Maugre,** in spite of

Grace

"Grace" was published in **The Dial** for January 1842, but Emerson did not include it in his collected **Poems** (1847) or in later collections. His reason for "rejecting" it probably was that it expresses ideas contrary to those expressed elsewhere in his writings, especially in **Self-Reliance.** In the essay he says: "Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. . . . Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. . . . What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think." Although one of his best poems, "Grace" expresses a view which must have been unusual with Emerson and which we may regard as uncharacteristic. The poem shows the influence of the English religious poets of the seventeenth century.

How much, preventing God, how much I owe
To the defenses thou hast round me set;
Example, custom, fear, occasion slow,—
These scorned bondmen were my parapet.
I dare not peep over this parapet
To gauge with glance the roaring gulf below,
The depths of sin to which I had descended,
Had not these me against myself defended.

1842

Merlin

Emerson uses Merlin, famous prophet and magician of Arthurian romance, to typify the ideal poet. The ideas of the poem are similar to those of the essay on "The Poet."

I

Thy trivial harp will never please
Or fill my craving ear;
Its chords should ring as blows the breeze,
Free, peremptory, clear.
No jingling serenader's art,
Nor tinkle of piano strings,
Can make the wild blood start
In its mystic springs.
The kingly bard
Must smite the chords rudely and hard,
As with hammer or with mace;
That they may render back
Artful thunder, which conveys
Secrets of the solar track,
Sparks of the supersolar blaze.
Merlin's blows are strokes of fate,
Chiming with the forest tone,
When boughs buffet boughs in the wood;
Chiming with the gasp and moan
Of the ice-imprisoned flood;
With the pulse of manly hearts;
With the voice of orators;
With the din of city arts;
With the cannonade of wars;
With the marches of the brave;
And prayers of might from martyrs' cave.

Great is the art,
Great be the manners, of the bard.
He shall not his brain encumber
With the coil of rhythm and number;
But, leaving rule and pale forethought,
He shall aye climb
For his rhyme.
"Pass in, pass in," the angels say,
"In to the upper doors,
Nor count compartments of the floors,
But mount to paradise
By the stairway of surprise."

Blameless master of the games,
King of sport that never shames,
He shall daily joy dispense
Hid in song's sweet influence.
Forms more cheerly live and go,
What time the subtle mind

Merlin • **5 No jingling . . . strings.** Possibly Emerson was thinking of Poe, whom he once called "the jingle man" • **29 He . . . number.** An idea in Emerson's essay "The Poet," ". . . it is not metres, but a metre-making argument that makes a poem"

Sings aloud the tune whereto
Their pulses beat,
And march their feet,
And their members are combined.

By Sybarites beguiled,
He shall no task decline;
Merlin's mighty line
Extremes of nature reconciled,—
Bereaved a tyrant of his will,
And made the lion mild.
Songs can the tempest still,
Scattered on the stormy air,
Mold the year to fair increase
And bring in poetic peace.

He shall not seek to weave,
In weak, unhappy times,
Efficacious rhymes;
Wait his returning strength.
Bird, that from the nadir's floor
To the zenith's top can soar,
The soaring orbit of the muse exceeds that journey's length.
Nor profane affect to hit
Or compass that, by meddling wit,
Which only the propitious mind
Publishes when 'tis inclined.
There are open hours
When the God's will sallies free,
And the dull idiot might see
The flowing fortunes of a thousand years;—
Sudden, at unawares,
Self-moved, fly-to the doors,
Nor sword of angels could reveal
What they conceal.

II

The rhyme of the poet
Modulates the king's affairs;
Balance-loving Nature
Made all things in pairs.
To every foot its antipode;
Each color with its counter glowed;
To every tone beat answering tones,
Higher or graver;
Flavor gladly blends with flavor;
Leaf answers leaf upon the bough;
And match the paired cotyledons.
Hands to hands, and feet to feet,
In one body grooms and brides;
Eldest rite, two married sides
In every mortal meet.
Light's far furnace shines,
Smelting balls and bars,
Forging double stars,
Glittering twins and trines.
The animals are sick with love,
Lovesick with rhyme;
Each with all propitious Time
Into chorus wove.

Like the dancers' ordered band,
Thoughts come also hand in hand;
In equal couples mated,
Or else alternated;
Adding by their mutual gage,
One to other, health and age.
Solitary fancies go
Short-lived wandering to and fro,
Most like to bachelors,
Or an ungiven maid,
Not ancestors,
With no posterity to make the lie afraid,
Or keep truth undecayed.
Perfect-paired as eagle's wings,
Justice is the rhyme of things;
Trade and counting use
The selfsame tuneful muse;
And Nemesis,
Who with even matches odd,
Who athwart space redresses

---

49 Sybarites, voluptuaries • **51 Merlin's mighty line** recalls "Marlowe's mighty line" (in Ben Jonson's "To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare," l. 30) • **67 meddling wit.** Emerson's doctrine of inspiration disparages the rôle of the intellect in artistic creation, the intellect being denoted by "meddling wit" in the present passage and by "cunning" in "The Problem," l. 11 • **78 The rhyme . . . affairs,** a romantic conception of the power of the poet found elsewhere in the nineteenth century, in the following, for example, from Shelley's **Defense of Poetry:** "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world"

The partial wrong,
Fills the just period,
And finishes the song.

Subtle rhymes, with ruin rife,
Murmur in the house of life,
Sung by the Sisters as they spin;
In perfect time and measure they
Build and unbuild our echoing clay,
As the two twilights of the day
Fold us music-drunken in.

1846·1847

Bacchus

Bring me wine, but wine which never grew
In the belly of the grape,
Or grew on vine whose tap-roots, reaching through
Under the Andes to the Cape,
Suffered no savor of the earth to scape.

Let its grapes the morn salute
From a nocturnal root,
Which feels the acrid juice
Of Styx and Erebus;
And turns the woe of Night,
By its own craft, to a more rich delight.

We buy ashes for bread;
We buy diluted wine;
Give me of the true,—
Whose ample leaves and tendrils curled
Among the silver hills of heaven
Draw everlasting dew;
Wine of wine,
Blood of the world,
Form of forms, and mould of statures,
That I intoxicated,
And by the draught assimilated,
May float at pleasure through all natures;
The bird-language rightly spell,
And that which roses say so well.

Wine that is shed
Like the torrents of the sun
Up the horizon walls,
Or like the Atlantic streams, which run
When the South Sea calls.
Water and bread,
Food which needs no transmuting,
Rainbow-flowering, wisdom-fruiting,
Wine which is already man,
Food which teach and reason can.

Wine which music is,—
Music and wine are one,—
That I, drinking this,
Shall hear far Chaos talk with me;
Kings unborn shall walk with me;
And the poor grass shall plot and plan
What it will do when it is man.
Quickened so, will I unlock
Every crypt of every rock.

I thank the joyful juice
For all I know;—
Winds of remembering
Of the ancient being blow,
And seeming-solid walls of use
Open and flow.

Pour, Bacchus! the remembering wine;
Retrieve the loss of me and mine!
Vine for vine be antidote,
And the grape requite the lote!
Haste to cure the old despair,—
Reason in Nature's lotus drenched,

Merlin • **126 Sisters,** the three goddesses of Greek mythology who determined the course of human life Clotho spun the thread, Lachesis measured its length, and Atropos cut it off

Bacchus • **9 Styx,** in Greek mythology, the river which had to be crossed in passing to the regions of the dead • **9 Erebus,** in Greek mythology, the gloomy space through which souls passed to Hades • **21 intoxicated.** The poet is obviously speaking of a "transcendental" intoxication • **51 remembering wine,** wine which causes the soul to remember. Emerson has in mind the Platonic doctrines of pre-existence and reminiscence • **54 lote.** The eating of the fruit of the lotus caused forgetfulness (compare Tennyson's poem, "The Lotus Eaters")

The memory of ages quenched;
Give them again to shine;
Let wine repair what this undid;
And where the infection slid,
A dazzling memory revive;
Refresh the faded tints,
Recut the aged prints,
And write my old adventures with the pen
Which on the first day drew,
Upon the tablets blue,
The dancing Pleiads and eternal men.

1846·1847

Ode

Inscribed to W. H. Channing

This poem was Emerson's answer to the Rev. William Henry Channing, and other reformers, who insisted that Emerson take an active part in the movement for the abolition of slavery.

Though loath to grieve
The evil time's sole patriot,
I cannot leave
My honeyed thought
For the priest's cant
Or statesman's rant.

If I refuse
My study for their politique,
Which at the best is trick,
The angry Muse
Puts confusion in my brain.

But who is he that prates
Of the culture of mankind,
Of better arts and life?
Go, blindworm, go,
Behold the famous States
Harrying Mexico
With rifle and with knife!
Or who, with accent bolder,
Dare praise the freedom-loving mountaineer?
I found by thee, O rushing Contoocook!
And in thy valleys, Agiochook!
The jackals of the Negro-holder.

The God who made New Hampshire
Taunted the lofty land
With little men;—
Small bat and wren
House in the oak:—
If earth-fire cleave
The upheaved land, and bury the folk,
The southern crocodile would grieve.
Virtue palters; Right is hence;
Freedom praised, but hid;
Funeral eloquence
Rattles the coffin-lid.

What boots thy zeal,
O glowing friend,
That would indignant rend
The northland from the south?
Wherefore? to what good end?
Boston Bay and Bunker Hill
Would serve things still;—
Things are of the snake.

The horseman serves the horse,
The neatherd serves the neat,
The merchant serves the purse,
The eater serves his meat;
'Tis the day of the chattel,
Web to weave, and corn to grind;
Things are in the saddle,
And ride mankind.

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17 **Mexico.** War with Mexico began in April 1846 and was formally concluded in February 1848. In New England the war was strongly opposed (compare Lowell's **Biglow Papers, First Series,** 1846) • 21 **Contoocook,** a river which rises in New Hampshire and flows into the Merrimac • 22 **Agiochook,** Indian name for the White Mountains • 23 **jackals.** The jackal, or wild dog, was once supposed to hunt game for the lion; the reference may be to the pursuit of fugitive slaves in New Hampshire, and in New England generally • 45 **neat,** cattle

There are two laws discrete,
Not reconciled,—
Law for man, and law for thing;
The last builds town and fleet,
But it runs wild,
And doth the man unking.

'Tis fit the forest fall,
The steep be graded,
The mountain tunnelled,
The sand shaded,
The orchard planted,
The glebe tilled,
The prairie granted,
The steamer built.

Let man serve law for man;
Live for friendship, live for love,
For truth's and harmony's behoof;
The state may follow how it can,
As Olympus follows Jove.

Yet do not I implore
The wrinkled shopman to my sounding woods,
Nor bid the unwilling senator
Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.
Every one to his chosen work;—
Foolish hands may mix and mar;
Wise and sure the issues are.
Round they roll till dark is light,
Sex to sex, and even to odd;—
The over-god
Who marries Right to Might,
Who peoples, unpeoples,—
He who exterminates
Races by stronger races,
Black by white faces,—
Knows to bring honey
Out of the lion;
Grafts gentlest scion
On pirate and Turk.

The Cossack eats Poland,
Like stolen fruit;
Her last noble is ruined,
Her last poet mute:
Straight, into double band
The victors divide;
Half for freedom strike and stand;—
The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side.

1847

Hamatreya

"Hamatreya" is based upon a passage in the Vishnu Purana (one of the sacred books of the Hindus), which Emerson transcribed in his Journals in 1845 as follows: "These and other kings who . . . have indulged the feeling that suggests 'This earth is mine—it is my son's—it belongs to my dynasty'—have all passed away. So, many who reigned before them, many who succeeded them, and many who are yet to come, have ceased or will cease to be. Earth laughs, as if smiling with autumnal flowers, to behold her Kings unable to effect the subjugation of themselves. I will repeat to you, Maitreya, the stanzas that were chanted by Earth. . . .

" 'How great is the folly of princes who are endowed with the faculty of reason, to cherish the confidence of ambition when they themselves are but foam upon the wave. . . . Foolishness has been the character of every King who has boasted, "All this earth is mine—everything is mine—it will be in my house forever,"—for he is dead. . . .'

"These were the verses, Maitreya, which Earth recited, and by listening to which ambitions fade away like snow before the sun."

Emerson's title is apparently a variant of "Maitreya" in the quoted passage.

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52 **discrete,** separate, individual, distinct (not to be confused with "discreet") • 75 **Every one . . . work.** William James justly noted Emerson's "fidelity to the limits of his genius" • 86 **honey . . . lion.** Samson found "honey in the carcase of the lion" which he had slain. See Judges 14 5-9 • 90 **Cossack eats Poland,** a frequent occurrence. Russia had appropriated Polish territory in 1772 ("the first partition of Poland"), in 1793 ("the second partition"), and in 1795 ("the third partition"). A Polish revolution in 1830 had been suppressed by the czar

Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Meriam, Flint
Possessed the land which rendered to their toil
Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool and wood.
Each of these landlords walked amidst his farm,
Saying, "'Tis mine, my children's and my name's.
How sweet the west wind sounds in my own trees!
How graceful climb those shadows on my hill!
I fancy these pure waters and the flags
Know me, as does my dog we sympathize;
And, I affirm, my actions smack of the soil."

Where are these men? Asleep beneath their grounds:
And strangers, fond as they, their furrows plough.
Earth laughs in flowers, to see her boastful boys
Earth-proud, proud of the earth which is not theirs;
Who steer the plough, but cannot steer their feet
Clear of the grave.
They added ridge to valley, brook to pond,
And sighed for all that bounded their domain;
"This suits me for a pasture; that's my park;
We must have clay, lime, gravel, granite-ledge,
And misty lowland, where to go for peat.
The land is well,—lies fairly to the south.
'Tis good, when you have crossed the sea and back,
To find the sitfast acres where you left them."
Ah! the hot owner sees not Death, who adds
Him to his land, a lump of mould the more.
Hear what the Earth says:—

EARTH-SONG

"Mine and yours;
Mine, not yours.
Earth endures;
Stars abide—
Shine down in the old sea;
Old are the shores;
But where are old men?
I who have seen much,
Such have I never seen.

"The lawyer's deed
Ran sure,
In tail,
To them, and to their heirs
Who shall succeed,
Without fail,
Forevermore.

"Here is the land,
Shaggy with wood,
With its old valley,
Mound and flood.
But the heritors?—
Fled like the flood's foam.
The lawyer, and the laws,
And the kingdom,
Clean swept herefrom.

"They called me theirs,
Who so controlled me;
Yet every one
Wished to stay, and is gone,
How am I theirs,
If they cannot hold me,
But I hold them?"

When I heard the Earth-song
I was no longer brave;
My avarice cooled
Like lust in the chill of the grave.

1847

Give All to Love

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:

Hamatreya • 1 Bulkeley . . . Flint, first settlers of Concord • 12 fond, foolish • 23 'Tis . . . them. These lines might have been written by Robert Frost • 39 In tail, entail, designating the possession of property

Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt
Valor unbending,
It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

1847

Days

"Days" is Emerson's version of a favorite theme of the early Puritans, who often preached on "redeeming the time."

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

1852? • 1857

Brahma

"Brahma" is the most notable expression of Hindu religious thought in Emerson's writings. Brahma is the underlying, unchanging reality; it can best be understood in contrast with Maya, the changing, illusory world of appearance, as shown in the following passage from the Hindu scriptures (quoted in Arthur Christy, **The Orient in American Transcendentalism**, p. 91): "Brahma is without attribute and form, Maya is endowed with both; Brahma is infinite, Maya finite; Brahma is immaculate and serene, Maya fleeting and restless; Brahma is without adjuncts, Maya is full of them; Maya is visible, Brahma invisible; Maya perceptible, Brahma imperceptible; Maya perishable, Brahma imperishable; Maya groweth, Brahma waxeth not; Maya diminisheth, Brahma waneth not; Maya appealeth to the ignorant, Brahma attracts him not; Maya is born, Brahma is birthless; Maya dieth, Brahma is deathless; Maya descendeth into cognition, Brahma is beyond cognition; Maya fructifieth, Brahma doth not, Maya dissolveth, Brahma is indissoluble; Maya palleth, Brahma is

Give . . . Love • 48 When . . . arrive. Compare in the concluding paragraph of the essay on "Friendship": "True love transcends the unworthy object and dwells and broods on the eternal . . ."

a joy forever; Maya changeth, Brahma is immutable; Maya acteth, Brahma is beyond all activity; Maya assumeth various forms, Brahma is formless; Maya is . . . manifold, Brahma is one and eternal. . . . Maya is spread everywhere enveloping the Brahma, the sage alone can pierce through the mist."

If the red slayer think he slays,
  Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
  Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
  And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
  When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
  And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
  And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
  Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

1856·1857

Terminus

The poem expresses an extraordinarily clear recognition of failing powers. Emerson was correct in thinking that at sixty-three he had reached and passed the peak of his achievement. He lived on for sixteen years after "Terminus" without adding anything significant to his literary output. A few months before his death, he lost his memory completely.

The poem shows a strong vein of realism and Yankee common sense.

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,—
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."

1866·1867

Brahma • **8 shame and fame.** Emerson intended an opposition· bad report and good report. The line must mean, "Evil and Good are to me one and the same." Emerson is said to have suggested to a puzzled reader the substitution of "Jehovah" for 'Brahma," and E. W. Emerson (**Poems**, Centenary Edition, p. 467) tells with approval the story of the child who said that the poem means simply "God everywhere." These suggestions are seriously misleading. To Jehovah, or to the God of the Christian Bible, Good and Evil are not the same • **14 sacred Seven,** the highest saints of the Hindu hierarchy

Terminus • **3 The god of bounds.** Terminus was the Roman god of boundaries • **5 fatal,** appointed by fate • **21 fault of novel,** in the lack of new • **30 nerveless reins,** weak back



Henry David Thoreau

1817 • 1862

Henry David Thoreau was born in Concord, Massachusetts, July 12, 1817. The time and place of his birth pleased him enormously: "I have never got over my surprise that I should have been born into the most estimable place in all the world, and in the very nick of time, too." He was graduated without distinction from Harvard College in 1837, the year of *The American Scholar.* After graduation, he assisted his brother John for a while in teaching a private school. He also helped his father manufacture lead pencils in the 1840's; but when their product equaled, or perhaps surpassed, the best pencils on the market, he gave up pencil making because of a desire for fresh experiences. In 1839 he and John went on a famous journey, the literary record of which, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers,* appeared ten years later. About the time of their journey together, both Henry and John fell in love with Ellen Sewall, who, perhaps wisely, refused them both.

Thoreau was a frequent contributor to *The Dial* from 1840 to 1844. In 1841, and again in 1847-1848, he was a member of Emerson's household, doing odd jobs; in 1842 John died; in 1843 Henry was a tutor in the family of William Emerson, a brother of Ralph Waldo, on Staten Island. In 1838 he had delivered before the Concord Lyceum his first lecture, in which he described his neighbors as "newly shingled and clapboarded, but if you knock, no one is at home." He continued to lecture for many years; indeed, much of his writing, like Emerson's,

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Panel (l. to r.): Winter scene near Concord • Thoreau's "study" at Walden • The hut near Walden Pond • Henry Thoreau at the age of 37 • His home in Concord

was done with the intention of using it as lecture material. Mr. Canby records lectures not only in Concord but in Boston, Salem, Portland, Bangor, Providence, Philadelphia, New Bedford, and Amherst (New Hampshire); at the last-named place, Thoreau lectured in December 1856 in the basement of the orthodox church, and, as he commented later, "helped to undermine it." But despite a good many attempts, he was not very successful as a lecturer; much less successful and less popular than Emerson, to whom he remarked, with a little bitterness, that "whatever succeeded with the audience was bad." He concluded in 1858 that "audiences go to the Lyceum to suck a sugar-plum."

On July 4, 1845, Thoreau began his famous residence at Walden Pond. "I went to the woods," he explains in a great passage in *Walden,* "because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life. . . ." On September 6, 1847, he left Walden, not from a sense of failure or disappointment but, once more, because of a desire to explore new modes of living. "I left the woods," he wrote in the concluding chapter of his book, "for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side. . . . How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity!" *Walden,* published in 1854, is the immortal record of Thoreau's rich, elemental experience. It is a mistake to think of Thoreau as a hermit during the Walden period, though he has frequently been called that. While he lived in the woods, he was often in the village, he received visitors at the Pond, and he continued to do, in and around Concord, the various odd jobs at which he was so adept: fence building, house painting, carpentering, gardening, berry picking, surveying. His aim was always, in his best phrase, to "adventure on life."

In 1846, during his residence at Walden, Thoreau was arrested because of his refusal to pay the poll tax and spent perforce a night in the Concord jail. The experience itself, as he tells us in "Civil Disobedience" (1849), was "novel and interesting enough." Through the grating of his prison cell, he saw his native village from a fresh point of view. The reason for his rebellion was his opposition to Negro slavery and the movement to increase slave territory in the Southwest. He persisted courageously in this opposition. He helped at least one fugitive slave to evade the Boston police and escape into Canada (see Thoreau's *Journal,* October 1, 1851). Along with Emerson, he gave active support to John Brown. In his *Plea for Captain John Brown,* delivered in the Concord Town Hall, October 30, 1859, when Brown was under sentence of death, Thoreau likened him to Cromwell and the early New England Puritans. When the selectmen of the village refused to sanction a memorial service to Brown, Thoreau rang the bell of the Town Hall himself.

"I have traveled a good deal in Concord," Thoreau wrote in *Walden;* he traveled a good deal in other places, too. There were three excursions to the Maine Woods (in 1846, 1853, and 1857), and four excursions to Cape Cod (in 1849, 1850, 1855, and 1857). He spent a week in Canada in 1850 with Ellery Channing, a Concord friend and neighbor. He frequently journeyed to Monadnock and the White Mountains. These excursions furnished material for much writing, which appeared in part in magazines during Thoreau's lifetime and was collected after his death (*Excursions,* 1863; *The Maine Woods,* 1864; *Cape Cod,* 1865). In 1856 he went with another Concord friend, Bronson Alcott, to New York, where he saw Whitman; shortly after the visit, he wrote to a friend, "That Walt Whitman is the most interesting fact to me at present." In 1861 he traveled as far west as Minnesota; but his health was already failing. He died of tuberculosis in Concord, May 6, 1862, before he had reached his forty-fifth birthday. When asked in his last hours by his Aunt Louisa if he had "made his peace with God," he replied, "I have never quarrelled with Him."

It is only in comparatively recent years that Thoreau has attained his present high reputation in American literature. For more than a half-century after his death, he was very generally regarded as an interesting eccentric and one of the minor Emersonians. This low estimate may be attributed in part to the influence of the derogatory essays of James Russell Lowell and Robert Louis Stevenson. Lowell, the cosmopolite, cleverly ridiculed Thoreau's provincialism and "morbid self-consciousness" ("Thoreau," *My Study Windows,* 1871). Stevenson, *bon vivant* and man of the world, objected that "Thoreau is

dry, priggish, and selfish,"—"in one word, a skulker" ("Henry David Thoreau," *Familiar Studies of Men and Books,* 1882). The growth of Thoreau's fame in the third and fourth decades of the present century has no doubt been owing not only to a recognition of his fine literary qualities but also to various special appeals which his works make to modern readers. His lessons in simplicity and economy have appealed to those who are harassed by the complexity and expense of modern life. His almost primitive intimacy with nature has come home to a generation whose mode of life is largely artificial and divorced from natural influences. His sturdy, rebellious individualism has had a special attraction for members of an increasingly regimented society. His indigenousness, deeply rooted in a particular place, has been a warning and a rebuke to a generation so mobile and migratory that many people can scarcely be said to have roots anywhere. In short, we read Thoreau for those values which we have lost and which more and more seem necessary to our health and vigor and peace of mind.

The Writings of Henry David Thoreau, Walden Edition, 20 vols., Boston, 1906 (includes the complete Journals) • The Heart of Thoreau's Journals, ed. Odell Shepard, Boston, 1927 • H. S. Salt, The Life of Henry David Thoreau, London, 1890 • H. S. Canby, Thoreau, Boston, 1939

Civil Disobedience

"Civil Disobedience" was first published in Aesthetic Papers (1849), a collection of essays edited by Elizabeth Peabody. "'Civil Disobedience' attracted no attention at the time, but has since gone round the world. It was Gandhi's source-book in his Indian campaign for Civil Resistance, and has been read and pondered by thousands who hope to find some way to resist seemingly irresistible force" (Canby, Thoreau, p. 235).

I heartily accept the motto,—"That government is best which governs least," and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—"That government is best which governs not at all;" and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

This American government,—what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be

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1 That . . . least. The idea is Jeffersonian. In his First Inaugural (1801), Jefferson advocated "a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned" • **17 Mexican war.** The Mexican War was unpopular in New England, where it was regarded as a device of the Southern Democrats to increase slave territory. Compare Lowell's protest in The Biglow Papers, First Series

imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. *It* does not keep the country free. *It* does not settle the West. *It* does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India-rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.

But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but *at once* a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience?—in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said, that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy-Yard, and behold a marine, such a man as an American government can make, or such as it can make a man with its black arts,—a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity, a man laid out alive and standing, and already, as one may say, buried under arms with funeral accompaniments, though it may be,—

> "Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
> As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
> Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
> O'er the grave where our hero we buried."

The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, and the militia, jailors, constables, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders—serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the Devil, without *intending* it, as God. A very few, as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and *men,* serve the

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67 Not . . . buried, from Charles Wolfe's "The Burial of Sir John Moore" (1817) • 73 posse comitatus, inhabitants summoned by the sheriff to assist in preserving the peace

state with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it. A wise man will only be useful as a man, and will not submit to be "clay," and "stop a hole to keep the wind away," but leave that office to his dust at least:—

> I am too high-born to be propertied,
> To be a secondary at control,
> Or useful serving-man and instrument
> To any sovereign state throughout the world."

He who gives himself entirely to his fellow-men appears to them useless and selfish; but he who gives himself partially to them is pronounced a benefactor and philanthropist.

How does it become a man to behave toward this American government to-day? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it. I cannot for an instant recognize that political organization as *my* government which is the *slave's* government also.

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable. But almost all say that such is not the case now. But such was the case, they think, in the Revolution of '75. If one were to tell me that this was a bad government because it taxed certain foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is most probable that I should not make an ado about it, for I can do without them. All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.

Paley, a common authority with many on moral questions, in his chapter on the "Duty of Submission to Civil Government," resolves all civil obligation into expediency; and he proceeds to say, "that so long as the interest of the whole society requires it, that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconveniency, it is the will of God that the established government be obeyed, and no longer. . . . This principle being admitted, the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side, and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other." Of this, he says, every man shall judge for himself. But Paley appears never to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expediency does not apply, in which a people, as well as an individual, must do justice, cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I must restore it to him though I drown myself. This, according to Paley, would be inconvenient. But he that would save his life, in such a case, shall lose it. This people must cease to hold slaves, and to make war on Mexico, though it cost them their existence as a people.

In their practice, nations agree with Paley; but does any one think that Massachusetts does exactly what is right at the present crisis?

> "A drab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
> To have her train borne up, and her soul trail in the dirt."

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South, but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here, who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, *cost what it may.* I quarrel not with far-off foes, but with those who, near at home, coöperate with, and do the bidding of, those far away, and without whom the latter would be harmless. We are accustomed to say, that the mass of

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4 **clay . . . away.** Compare Hamlet, Act V, Scene i, ll. 236-237
Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away

7 **I . . . world,** from Shakespeare's King John, Act V, Scene ii, ll 79-82 • 45 **that . . . other,** from Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy (1785) by William Paley (1743-1805), English theologian and moralist • 62 **save . . . it.** Compare Matthew 10 39 • 72 **merchants.** Emerson wrote in his Journal, May 23, 1846 "Cotton thread holds the Union together; unites John C. Calhoun and Abbott Lawrence. Patriotism for holidays and summer evenings, with music and rockets, but cotton thread is the Union"

men are unprepared; but improvement is slow, because the few are not materially wiser or better than the many. It is not so important that many should be as good as you, as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump. There are thousands who are *in opinion* opposed to slavery and to the war, who yet in effect do nothing to put an end to them; who, esteeming themselves children of Washington and Franklin, sit down with their hands in their pockets, and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing; who even postpone the question of freedom to the question of free-trade, and quietly read the prices-current along with the latest advices from Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep over them both. What is the price-current of an honest man and patriot to-day? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed, for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and God-speed, to the right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it.

All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting *for the right* is *doing* nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority. There is but little virtue in the action of masses of men. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because they are indifferent to slavery, or because there is but little slavery left to be abolished by their vote. *They* will then be the only slaves. Only *his* vote can hasten the abolition of slavery who asserts his own freedom by his vote.

I hear of a convention to be held at Baltimore, or elsewhere, for the selection of a candidate for the Presidency, made up chiefly of editors, and men who are politicians by profession; but I think, what is it to any independent, intelligent, and respectable man what decision they may come to? Shall we not have the advantage of his wisdom and honesty, nevertheless? Can we not count upon some independent votes? Are there not many individuals in the country who do not attend conventions? But no: I find that the respectable man, so called, has immediately drifted from his position, and despairs of his country, when his country has more reason to despair of him. He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus selected as the only *available* one, thus proving that he is himself *available* for any purposes of the demagogue. His vote is of no more worth than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hireling native, who may have been bought. O for a man who is a *man,* and, as my neighbor says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault: the population has been returned too large. How many *men* are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly one. Does not America offer any inducement for men to settle here? The American has dwindled into an Odd Fellow,—one who may be known by the development of his organ of gregariousness, and a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful self-reliance; whose first and chief concern, on coming into the world, is to see that the Almshouses are in good repair; and, before yet he has lawfully donned the virile garb, to collect a fund for the support of the widows and orphans that may be; who, in short, ventures to live only by the aid of the Mutual Insurance company, which has promised to bury him decently.

It is not a man's duty, as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any, even the most enormous wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support. If I devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations, I must first see, at least, that I do not pursue them sitting upon another

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5 leaven . . . lump. Compare I Corinthians 5 6 "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" • 68 Odd Fellow, a member of a secret fraternity, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, organized for mutual aid and social enjoyment, and comprising many lodges in England and America • 73 virile garb. The toga virilis, or manly toga, was assumed by Roman boys at the end of their fourteenth year

man's shoulders. I must get off him first, that he may pursue his contemplations too. See what gross inconsistency is tolerated. I have heard some of my townsmen say, "I should like to have them order me out to help put down an insurrection of the slaves, or to march to Mexico;—see if I would go;" and yet these very men have each, directly by their allegiance, and so indirectly, at least, by their money, furnished a substitute. The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve in an unjust war by those who do not refuse to sustain the unjust government which makes the war; is applauded by those whose own act and authority he disregards and sets at naught; as if the state were penitent to that degree that it hired one to scourge it while it sinned, but not to that degree that it left off sinning for a moment. Thus, under the name of Order and Civil Government, we are all made at last to pay homage to and support our own meanness. After the first blush of sin comes its indifference; and from immoral it becomes, as it were, *un*moral, and not quite unnecessary to that life which we have made.

The broadest and most prevalent error requires the most disinterested virtue to sustain it. The slight reproach to which the virtue of patriotism is commonly liable, the noble are most likely to incur. Those who, while they disapprove of the character and measures of a government, yield to it their allegiance and support are undoubtedly its most conscientious supporters, and so frequently the most serious obstacles to reform. Some are petitioning the state to dissolve the Union, to disregard the requisitions of the President. Why do they not dissolve it themselves,—the union between themselves and the state,—and refuse to pay their quota into its treasury? Do not they stand in the same relation to the state that the state does to the Union? And have not the same reasons prevented the state from resisting the Union which have prevented them from resisting the state?

How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely, and enjoy *it?* Is there any enjoyment in it, if his opinion is that he is aggrieved? If you are cheated out of a single dollar by your neighbor, you do not rest satisfied with knowing that you are cheated, or with saying that you are cheated, or even with petitioning him to pay you your due; but you take effectual steps at once to obtain the full amount, and see that you are never cheated again. Action from principle, the perception and the performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; ay, it divides the *individual,* separating the diabolical in him from the divine.

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy *is* worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than *it* would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

One would think, that a deliberate and practical denial of its authority was the only offense never contemplated by government; else, why has it not assigned its definite, its suitable and proportionate penalty? If a man who has no property refuses but once to earn nine shillings for the state, he is put in prison for a period unlimited by any law that I know, and determined only by the discretion of those who placed him there; but if he should steal ninety times nine shillings from the state, he is soon permitted to go at large again.

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go· perchance it will wear smooth,—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope, or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break

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31 requisitions . . . President, President James K. Polk's call for volunteers for the war against Mexico

the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.

As for adopting the ways which the state has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do *everything*, it is not necessary that he should do *something* wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me; and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the state has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory; but it is to treat with the utmost kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserves it. So is all change for the better, like birth and death, which convulse the body.

I do not hesitate to say, that those who call themselves Abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them. I think that it is enough if they have God on their side, without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already.

I meet this American government, or its representative, the state government, directly, and face to face, once a year—no more—in the person of its tax-gatherer; this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, Recognize me; and the simplest, most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensablest mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then. My civil neighbor, the tax-gatherer, is the very man I have to deal with,—for it is, after all, with men and not with parchment that I quarrel,—and he has voluntarily chosen to be an agent of the government. How shall he ever know well what he is and does as an officer of the government, or as a man, until he is obliged to consider whether he shall treat me, his neighbor, for whom he has respect, as a neighbor and well-disposed man, or as a maniac and disturber of the peace, and see if he can get over this obstruction to his neighborliness without a ruder and more impetuous thought or speech corresponding with his action. I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name,—if ten *honest* men only,—if *one* HONEST man, in this State of Massachusetts, *ceasing to hold slaves,* were actually to withdraw from this copartnership, and be locked up in the county jail therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once well done is done forever. But we love better to talk about it: that we say is our mission. Reform keeps many scores of newspapers in its service, but not one man. If my esteemed neighbor, the State's ambassador, who will devote his days to the settlement of the question of human rights in the Council Chamber, instead of being threatened with the prisons of Carolina, were to sit down the prisoner of Massachusetts, that State which is so anxious to foist the sin of slavery upon her sister,—though at present she can discover only an act of inhospitality to be the ground of a quarrel with her,—the Legislature would not wholly waive the subject the following winter.

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place to-day, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them; on that separate, but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her, but *against* her,—the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently

62 State's ambassador, Samuel Hoar of Concord, sent to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1844 to protest against the seizure of Negro seamen from Massachusetts, and inhospitably expelled from Charleston by "a committee of leading citizens"

and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer, asks me, as one has done, "But what shall I do?" my answer is, "If you really wish to do anything, resign your office." When the subject has refused allegiance, and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender, rather than the seizure of his goods,—though both will serve the same purpose,—because they who assert the purest right, and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property. To such the State renders comparatively small service, and a slight tax is wont to appear exorbitant, particularly if they are obliged to earn it by special labor with their hands. If there were one who lived wholly without the use of money, the State itself would hesitate to demand it of him. But the rich man—not to make any invidious comparison—is always sold to the institution which makes him rich. Absolutely speaking, the more money, the less virtue; for money comes between a man and his objects, and obtains them for him; and it was certainly no great virtue to obtain it. It puts to rest many questions which he would otherwise be taxed to answer; while the only new question which it puts is the hard but superfluous one, how to spend it. Thus his moral ground is taken from under his feet. The opportunities of living are diminished in proportion as what are called the "means" are increased. The best thing a man can do for his culture when he is rich is to endeavor to carry out those schemes which he entertained when he was poor. Christ answered the Herodians according to their condition. "Show me the tribute-money," said he;—and one took a penny out of his pocket;—if you use the money which has the image of Cæsar on it and which he has made current and valuable, that is, *if you are men of the State,* and gladly enjoy the advantages of Cæsar's government, then pay him back some of his own when he demands it. "Render therefore to Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and to God those things which are God's,"—leaving them no wiser than before as to which was which; for they did not wish to know.

When I converse with the freest of my neighbors, I perceive that, whatever they may say about the magnitude and seriousness of the question, and their regard for the public tranquillity, the long and the short of the matter is, that they cannot spare the protection of the existing government, and they dread the consequences to their property and families of disobedience to it. For my own part, I should not like to think that I ever rely on the protection of the State. But, if I deny the authority of the State when it presents its tax-bill, it will soon take and waste all my property, and so harass me and my children without end. This is hard. This makes it impossible for a man to live honestly, and at the same time comfortably, in outward respects. It will not be worth the while to accumulate property; that would be sure to go again. You must hire or squat somewhere, and raise but a small crop, and eat that soon. You must live within yourself, and depend upon yourself always tucked up and ready for a start, and not have many affairs. A man may grow rich in Turkey even, if he will be in all respects a good subject of the Turkish government. Confucius said: "If a state is governed by the principles of reason, poverty and misery are subjects of shame; if a state is not governed by the principles of reason, riches and honors are the subjects of shame." No: until I want the protection of Massachusetts to be extended to me in some distant Southern port, where my liberty is endangered, or until I am bent solely on building up an estate at home by peaceful enterprise, I can afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts, and her right to my property

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49 Show . . . God's. See Matthew 22:19-21

and life. It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would to obey. I should feel as if I were worth less in that case.

Some years ago, the State met me in behalf of the Church, and commanded me to pay a certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended, but never I myself. "Pay," it said, "or be locked up in the jail." I declined to pay. But, unfortunately, another man saw fit to pay it. I did not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to support the priest, and not the priest the schoolmaster; for I was not the State's schoolmaster, but I supported myself by voluntary subscription. I did not see why the lyceum should not present its tax-bill, and have the State to back its demand, as well as the Church. However, at the request of the selectmen, I condescended to make some such statement as this in writing:—"Know all men by these presents, that I, Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society which I have not joined." This I gave to the town clerk; and he has it. The State, having thus learned that I did not wish to be regarded as a member of that church, has never made a like demand on me since; though it said that it must adhere to its original presumption that time. If I had known how to name them, I should then have signed off in detail from all the societies which I never signed on to; but I did not know where to find a complete list.

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into a jail once on this account, for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

Thus the State never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical strength. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own fashion. Let us see who is the strongest. What force has a multitude? They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. I do not hear of *men* being *forced* to live this way or that by masses of men. What sort of life were that to live? When I meet a government which says to me, "Your money or your life," why should I be in haste to give it my money? It may be in a great strait, and not know what to do. I cannot help that. It must help itself; do as I do. It is not worth the while to snivel about it. I am not responsible for the successful working of the machinery of society. I am not the son of the engineer. I perceive that, when an acorn and a chestnut fall side by side, the one does not remain inert to make way for the other, but both obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other. If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies; and so a man.

The night in prison was novel and interesting enough. The prisoners in their shirt-sleeves were enjoying a chat and the evening air in the doorway, when I entered. But the jailer said, "Come, boys, it is time to lock up;" and so they dispersed, and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments. My roommate was introduced to me by the jailer as "a first-rate

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28 I . . . night. H. S. Canby reckons that Thoreau's famous night in jail occurred on the 23rd or 24th of July, 1846 (Thoreau, p 473)

fellow and a clever man." When the door was locked, he showed me where to hang my hat, and how he managed matters there. The rooms were whitewashed once a month; and this one, at least, was the whitest, most simply furnished, and probably the neatest apartment in the town. He naturally wanted to know where I came from, and what brought me there; and, when I had told him, I asked him in my turn how he came there, presuming him to be an honest man, of course; and, as the world goes, I believe he was. "Why," said he, "they accuse me of burning a barn; but I never did it." As near as I could discover, he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there; and so a barn was burnt. He had the reputation of being a clever man, had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on, and would have to wait as much longer; but he was quite domesticated and contented, since he got his board for nothing, and thought that he was well treated.

He occupied one window, and I the other; and I saw that if one stayed there long, his principal business would be to look out the window. I had soon read all the tracts that were left there, and examined where former prisoners had broken out, and where a grate had been sawed off, and heard the history of the various occupants of that room; for I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail. Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed, which are afterward printed in a circular form, but not published. I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape, who avenged themselves by singing them.

I pumped my fellow-prisoner as dry as I could, for fear I should never see him again; but at length he showed me which was my bed, and left me to blow out the lamp.

It was like traveling into a far country, such as I had never expected to behold, to lie there for one night. It seemed to me that I never had heard the town-clock strike before, nor the evening sounds of the village; for we slept with the windows open, which were inside the grating. It was to see my native village in the light of the Middle Ages, and our Concord was turned into a Rhine stream, and visions of knights and castles passed before me. They were the voices of old burghers that I heard in the streets. I was an involuntary spectator and auditor of whatever was done and said in the kitchen of the adjacent village-inn,—a wholly new and rare experience to me. It was a closer view of my native town. I was fairly inside of it. I never had seen its institutions before. This is one of its peculiar institutions; for it is a shire town. I began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about.

In the morning, our breakfasts were put through the hole in the door, in small oblong-square tin pans, made to fit, and holding a pint of chocolate, with brown bread, and an iron spoon. When they called for the vessels again, I was green enough to return what bread I had left; but my comrade seized it, and said that I should lay that up for lunch or dinner. Soon after he was let out to work at haying in a neighboring field, whither he went every day, and would not be back till noon; so he bade me good-day, saying that he doubted if he should see me again.

When I came out of prison,—for some one interfered, and paid that tax,—I did not perceive that great changes had taken place on the common, such as he observed who went in a youth and emerged a tottering and gray-headed man; and yet a change had to my eyes come over the scene,—the town, and State, and country,—greater than any that mere time could effect. I saw yet more distinctly the State in which I lived. I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends; that their friendship was for summer weather only; that they did not greatly propose to do right; that they were a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays are; that in their sacrifices to humanity they ran no risks, not even to their property; that after all they were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls. This may be to judge my neighbors harshly; for I believe that many of them are not aware that they have such an institution as the jail in their village.

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1 **clever**, honest, kind, obliging; see Dictionary of American English

• 65 **some . . . tax.** According to one report his Aunt Maria, "putting a shawl over her head, went to the jailer's door, and paid the tax and fees to Ellen Staples, her father the jailer being absent" (Canby, Thoreau, p. 234)

It was formerly the custom in our village, when a poor debtor came out of jail, for his acquaintances to salute him, looking through their fingers, which were crossed to represent the grating of a jail window, "How do ye do?" My neighbors did not thus salute me, but first looked at me, and then at one another, as if I had returned from a long journey. I was put into jail as I was going to the shoemaker's to get a shoe which was mended. When I was let out the next morning, I proceeded to finish my errand, and, having put on my mended shoe, joined a huckleberry party, who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct; and in half an hour,—for the horse was soon tackled,—was in the midst of a huckleberry field, on one of our highest hills, two miles off, and then the State was nowhere to be seen.

This is the whole history of "My Prisons."

I have never declined paying the highway tax, because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject; and as for supporting schools, I am doing my part to educate my fellow-countrymen now. It is for no particular item in the tax-bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the course of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man or a musket to shoot with,—the dollar is innocent,—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can, as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me, from a sympathy with the State, they do but what they have already done in their own case, or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay the tax from a mistaken interest in the individual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his going to jail, it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

This, then, is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case, lest his action be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

I think sometimes, Why, this people mean well, they are only ignorant; they would do better if they knew how: why give your neighbors this pain to treat you as they are not inclined to? But I think again, This is no reason why I should do as they do, or permit others to suffer much greater pain of a different kind. Again, I sometimes say to myself, When many millions of men, without heat, without ill will, without personal feeling of any kind, demand of you a few shillings only, without the possibility, such is their constitution, of retracting or altering their present demand, and without the possibility, on your side, of appeal to any other millions, why expose yourself to this overwhelming brute force? You do not resist cold and hunger, the winds and the waves, thus obstinately; you quietly submit to a thousand similar necessities. You do not put your head into the fire. But just in proportion as I regard this as not wholly a brute force, but partly a human force, and consider that I have relations to those millions as to so many millions of men, and not of mere brute or inanimate things, I see that appeal is possible, first and instantaneously, from them to the Maker of them, and, secondly, from them to themselves. But if I put my head deliberately into the fire, there is no appeal to fire or to the Maker of fire, and I have only myself to blame. If I could convince myself that I have any right to be satisfied with men as they are, and to treat them accordingly, and not according, in some respects, to my requisitions and expectations of what they and I ought to be, then, like a good Mussulman and fatalist, I should endeavor to be satisfied with things as they are, and say it is the will of God. And, above all, there is this difference between resisting this and a purely brute or natural force, that I can resist this with some effect; but I cannot expect, like Orpheus, to change the nature of the rocks and trees and beasts.

I do not wish to quarrel with any man or nation. I do not wish to split hairs, to make fine distinctions, or set myself up as better than my neighbors. I seek rather, I may say, even an excuse for conforming to the laws of the land. I am but too ready to conform to them. Indeed, I have reason to suspect myself on this head; and each year, as the tax-gatherer comes round, I find myself

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17 My Prisons. Silvio Pellico (1789-1854), Italian patriot, told the story of his imprisonment by the Austrians in Le mie prigioni (1832), to which Thoreau seems to allude

disposed to review the acts and position of the general and State governments, and the spirit of the people, to discover a pretext for conformity.

> "We must affect our country as our parents,
> And if at any time we alienate
> Our love or industry from doing it honor,
> We must respect effects and teach the soul
> Matter of conscience and religion,
> And not desire of rule or benefit."

I believe that the State will soon be able to take all my work of this sort out of my hands, and then I shall be no better a patriot than my fellow-countrymen. Seen from a lower point of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is very good; the law and the courts are very respectable; even this State and this American government are, in many respects, very admirable, and rare things, to be thankful for, such as a great many have described them; but seen from a point of view a little higher, they are what I have described them; seen from a higher still, and the highest, who shall say what they are, or that they are worth looking at or thinking of at all?

However, the government does not concern me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible thoughts on it. It is not many moments that I live under a government, even in this world. If a man is thought-free, fancy-free, imagination-free, that which *is not* never for a long time appearing *to be* to him, unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him.

I know that most men think differently from myself; but those whose lives are by profession devoted to the study of these or kindred subjects content me as little as any. Statesmen and legislators, standing so completely within the institution, never distinctly and nakedly behold it. They speak of moving society, but have no resting-place without it. They may be men of a certain experience and discrimination, and have no doubt invented ingenious and even useful systems, for which we sincerely thank them; but all their wit and usefulness lie within certain not very wide limits. They are wont to forget that the world is not governed by policy and expediency. Webster never goes behind government, and so cannot speak with authority about it. His words are wisdom to those legislators who contemplate no essential reform in the existing government; but for thinkers, and those who legislate for all time, he never once glances at the subject. I know of those whose serene and wise speculations on this theme would soon reveal the limits of his mind's range and hospitality. Yet, compared with the cheap professions of most reformers, and the still cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in general, his are almost the only sensible and valuable words, and we thank Heaven for him. Comparatively, he is always strong, original, and, above all, practical. Still, his quality is not wisdom, but prudence. The lawyer's truth is not Truth, but consistency or a consistent expediency. Truth is always in harmony with herself, and is not concerned chiefly to reveal the justice that may consist with wrong-doing. He well deserves to be called, as he has been called, the Defender of the Constitution. There are really no blows to be given by him but defensive ones. He is not a leader, but a follower. His leaders are the men of '87. "I have never made an effort," he says, "and never propose to make an effort; I have never countenanced an effort, and never mean to countenance an effort, to disturb the arrangement as originally made, by which the various States came into the Union." Still thinking of the sanction which the Constitution gives to slavery, he says, "Because it was a part of the original compact,—let it stand." Notwithstanding his special acuteness and ability, he is unable to take a fact out of its merely political relations, and behold it as it lies absolutely to be disposed of by the intellect,—what, for instance, it behooves a man to do here in America to-day with regard to slavery,—but ventures, or is driven to make some such desperate answer as the following, while professing to speak absolutely, and as a private man,—from which what new and singular code of social duties might be inferred? "The manner," says he, "in which the governments of those States where slavery exists are to regulate it is for their own consideration, under their responsibility to their constituents, to the general laws of propriety, humanity, and justice, and to God. Associations formed elsewhere, springing from a feeling of humanity, or other cause, have nothing whatever to do with it. They have never received any encouragement from me, and they never will."

They who know of no purer sources of truth, who have

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62 men of '87, the framers of the Constitution, in 1787

traced up its stream no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible and the Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage toward its fountain-head.

No man with a genius for legislation has appeared in America. They are rare in the history of the world. There are orators, politicians, and eloquent men, by the thousand, but the speaker has not yet opened his mouth to speak who is capable of settling the much-vexed questions of the day. We love eloquence for its own sake, and not for any truth which it may utter, or any heroism it may inspire. Our legislators have not yet learned the comparative value of free-trade and of freedom, of union, and of rectitude, to a nation. They have no genius or talent for comparatively humble questions of taxation and finance, commerce and manufactures and agriculture. If we were left solely to the wordy wit of legislators in Congress for our guidance, uncorrected by the seasonable experience and the effectual complaints of the people, America would not long retain her rank among the nations. For eighteen hundred years, though perchance I have no right to say it, the New Testament has been written; yet where is the legislator who has wisdom and practical talent enough to avail himself of the light which it sheds on the science of legislation?

The authority of government, even such as I am willing to submit to,—for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do so well,—is still an impure one: to be strictly just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellowmen. A State which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

1849

From • Walden

Where I Lived, and What I Lived For

Walden, the record of Thoreau's stay at Walden Pond from July 4, 1845, to September 6, 1847, was first published in 1854. It is Thoreau's best book and has come to be universally regarded as a great American classic. The book consists of eighteen chapters, as follows: "Economy," "Where I Lived and What I Lived For," "Reading," "Sounds," "Solitude," "Visitors," "The Bean Field," "The Village," "The Ponds," "Baker Farm," "Higher Laws," "Brute Neighbors," "House-Warming," "Former Inhabitants and Winter Visitors," "Winter Animals," "The Pond in Winter," "Spring," "Conclusion." Although "Thoreau's strength," as H. S. Canby has observed, "was in the sentence and paragraph, not in the ordered whole," F. O. Matthiessen (**American Renaissance**, pp. 168-170) has ingeniously demonstrated "the firmness with which Thoreau binds his successive links" in **Walden**.

"My purpose in going to Walden Pond," Thoreau wrote in the opening chapter, "was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business

with the fewest obstacles." The "private business" consisted chiefly of the study of nature and in reading and writing. "My residence," he added, "was more favourable, not only to thought, but to serious reading, than a university."

At a certain season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it,—took everything but a deed of it,—took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk,—cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes,* a seat?—better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said, and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard, wood-lot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms,—the refusal was all I wanted,—but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with; but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife—every man has such a wife—changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,—

> "I am monarch of all I *survey,*
> My right there is none to dispute."

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rime, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were. its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me, the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put such an

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57 **I . . . dispute,** from William Cowper's "Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk" (1782) By italicizing "survey," Thoreau makes a punning reference to his occupation as surveyor • 63 **a poet . . . rime.** The thought is Emersonian. Compare, for example, in Emerson's "The Apology" (1846):

> One harvest from thy field
> Homeward brought the oxen strong;
> A second crop thine acres yield,
> Which I gather in a song.

interval between me and the last occupant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements. To enjoy these advantages I was ready to carry it on; like Atlas, to take the world on my shoulders,—I never heard what compensation he received for that,—and do all those things which had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it; for I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted, if I could only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as I have said.

All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale—I have always cultivated a garden—was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

Old Cato, whose "De Re Rusticâ" is my "Cultivator," says,—and the only translation I have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage,—"When you think of getting a farm turn it thus in your mind, not to buy greedily; nor spare your pains to look at it, and do not think it enough to go round it once. The oftener you go there the more it will please you, if it is good." I think I shall not buy greedily, but go round and round it as long as I live, and be buried in it first, that it may please me the more at last.

The present was my next experiment of this kind, which I purpose to describe more at length, for convenience putting the experience of two years into one. As I have said, I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, "An abode without birds is like a meat

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30 Old Cato, Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C.), Roman patriot • 30 De Re Rusticâ, concerning country life • 30 Cultivator, a farm implement • 43 ode to dejection. Coleridge had written "Dejection: an Ode" (1802), and Shelley had composed "Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples" (1824) • 72 the boat. The boat which was used in 1839 by Thoreau and his brother John on the famous voyage described in A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers was purchased by Hawthorne in 1842 for seven dollars (see The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne • 82 Harivansa, a Sanskrit epic poem of the fifth century A.D.

without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hilltop near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land.*

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara, when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted;—

"There was a shepherd that did live,
And held his thoughts as high

69 **Tartary,** an indefinite region including Asia and Europe from the Sea of Japan to the Dnieper River • 71 **Damodara,** the Hindu divinity Krishna • 83 **Pleiades . . . Hyades,** constellations • 84 **Aldebaran . . . Altair,** bright stars

As were the mounts whereon his flocks
Did hourly feed him by."

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful, but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliber-

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20 **singing . . . wanderings,** the wrath of Achilles in the Iliad, the wanderings of Odysseus in the Odyssey • 44 **Vedas,** the sacred literature of the Hindus • 47 **Memnon.** His statue on the banks of the Nile made a harplike sound at sunrise • 78 **I . . . because.** This paragraph should be compared with the following equally notable passage in the last chapter of *Walden*: "I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pondside; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear, that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now"

ately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand, instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way, are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not, but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them,* who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to Heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

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16 **chief . . . forever,** an allusion to the Westminster Catechism, formulated by the famous Westminster Assembly in 1643 • 33 **dead reckoning,** the method of finding the position of a ship without the aid of celestial observations, from a record of the courses sailed and the distance made on each course • 37 **German Confederacy.** The German Confederation, set up by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, was loosely formed and inefficient. Modern, unified Germany dates from 1871 • 54 **sleepers,** railroad ties • 57 **railroads . . . Heaven.** Thoreau perhaps remembered Hawthorne's satirical sketch, "The Celestial Railroad" (1843) • 59 **We . . . us.** Emerson had expressed the same thought in the "Ode to Channing" (1846) "Things are in the saddle, And ride mankind." Despite Thoreau's disapproval of the railroad in theory, trains and trainmen had a romantic appeal for him In the chapter on "Sounds" in **Walden,** he wrote· "On this morning of the great Snow, . . . I hear the muffled tone of their engine bell from out the fog bank of their chilled breath, which announces that the cars are coming, without long delay, notwithstanding the veto of a New England northeast snow-storm, and I behold the plowmen covered with snow and rime, their heads peering above the mould-board . . I am refreshed and expanded when the freight train rattles past me, and I smell the stores which go dispensing their odors all the way from Long Wharf to Lake Champlain . . ."

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work,* we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe,"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life—I wrote this some years ago—that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter,—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news,* as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure,—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelve month, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions,—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers,—and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect: My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What

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28 Wachito River, Ouachita River in Arkansas, at that time a "frontier" region. A. B. Longstreet's "The Fight" in Georgia Scenes (1835) gives some notion of the brutality of the frontier in the old Southwest • 29 dark . . . cave, a double allusion to the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky and "The dark unfathomed caves" of Gray's elegy • 66 revolution of 1649, the English Civil War, which resulted in the victory of Cromwell and the execution of Charles I in 1649. The statement seems to show marked Puritan and democratic (or anti-royalist) sympathies • 72 French revolution. Since the great revolution of 1789, there had been frequent changes in the French government, the latest having been the revolution of 1848 and the coup d'état of 1851 • 74 Kieou-he-yu . . . messenger, from the Analects of Confucius

a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!" The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week,—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one,—with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice, "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam" go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry,—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality,* and say, This is, and no mistake; and then begin, having a *point d'appui,* below freshet and frost and fire,

38 **Brahme,** compare Emerson's "Brahma" and the introductory note for that poem, p 475 • 76 **Ulysses,** so tied as a defense against the song of the Sirens, in Bk XII of the **Odyssey** • 88 **point d'appui,** a basis of operations

a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver; it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore paws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining-rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

1854

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2 Nilometer, an instrument for measuring the height of water in the Nile during a flood • 7 cimeter, scimitar

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The Journals

April 16, 1852

As I turned round the corner of Hubbard's Grove, saw a woodchuck, the first of the season, in the middle of the field, six or seven rods from the fence which bounds the wood, and twenty rods distant. I ran along the fence and cut him off, or rather overtook him, though he started at the same time. When I was only a rod and a half off, he stopped, and I did the same; then he ran again, and I ran up within three feet of him, when he stopped again, the fence being between us. I squatted down and surveyed him at my leisure. His eyes were dull black and rather inobvious, with a faint chestnut iris, with but little expression and that more of resignation than of anger. The general aspect was a coarse grayish brown, a sort of grisel. A lighter brown next the skin, then black or very dark brown and tipped with whitish rather loosely. The head between a squirrel and a bear, flat on the top and dark brown, and darker still or black on the tip of the nose. The whiskers black, two inches long. The ears very small and roundish, set far back and nearly buried in the fur. Black feet, with long and slender claws for digging. It appeared to tremble, or perchance shivered with cold. When I moved, it gritted its teeth quite loud, sometimes striking the under jaw against the other chatteringly, sometimes grinding one jaw on the other, yet as if more from instinct than anger. Whichever way I turned, that way it headed. I took a twig a foot long and touched its snout, at which it started forward and bit the stick, lessening the distance between us to two feet, and still it held all the ground it gained. I played with it tenderly awhile with the stick, trying to open its gritting jaws. Ever its long incisors, two above and two below, were presented. But I thought it would go to sleep if I stayed long enough. It did not sit upright as sometimes, but *standing* on its fore feet with its head down, *i.e.* half sitting, half standing We sat looking at one another about half an hour, till we began to feel mesmeric influences. When I was tired, I moved away, wishing to see him run, but I could not start him. He would not stir as long as I was looking at him or could see him. I walked round him; he turned as fast and fronted me still. I sat down by his side within a foot. I talked to him *quasi* forest lingo, baby-talk, at any

rate in a conciliatory tone, and thought that I had some influence on him. He gritted his teeth less. I chewed checkerberry leaves and presented them to his nose at last without a grit; though I saw that by so much gritting of the teeth he had worn them rapidly and they were covered with a fine white powder, which, if you measured it thus, would have made his anger terrible. He did not mind any noise I might make. With a little stick I lifted one of his paws to examine it, and held it up at pleasure. I turned him over to see what color he was beneath (darker or more purely brown), though he turned himself back again sooner than I could have wished. His tail was also all brown, though not very dark, rat-tail like, with loose hairs standing out on all sides like a caterpillar brush. He had a rather mild look. I spoke to him kindly. I reached checkerberry leaves to his mouth. I stretched my hands over him, though he turned up his head and still gritted a little. I laid my hand on him, but immediately took it off again, instinct not being wholly overcome. If I had had a few fresh bean leaves, thus in advance of the season, I am sure I should have tamed him completely. It was a frizzly tail. His is a humble, terrestrial color like the partridge's, well concealed where dead wiry grass rises above darker brown or chestnut dead leaves,—a modest color. If I had had some food, I should have ended with stroking him at my leisure. Could easily have wrapped him in my handkerchief. He was not fat nor particularly lean. I finally had to leave him without seeing him move from the place. A large, clumsy, burrowing squirrel. *Arctomys,* bearmouse. I respect him as one of the natives. He lies there, by his color and habits so naturalized amid the dry leaves, the withered grass, and the bushes. A sound nap, too, he has enjoyed in his native fields, the past winter. I think I might learn some wisdom of him. His ancestors have lived here longer than mine. He is more thoroughly acclimated and naturalized than I. Bean leaves the red man raised for him, but he can do without them.

June 18, 1855

At 3 P.M., as I walked up the bank by the Hemlocks, I saw a painted tortoise just beginning its hole; then another a dozen rods from the river on the bare barren field near some pitch pines, where the earth was covered with cladonias, cinquefoil, sorrel, etc. Its hole was about two thirds done. I stooped down over it, and, to my surprise, after a slight pause it proceeded in its work, directly under and within eighteen inches of my face. I retained a constrained position for three quarters of an hour or more for fear of alarming it. It rested on its fore legs, the front part of its shell about one inch higher than the rear, and this position was not changed essentially to the last. The hole was oval, broadest behind, about one inch wide and one and three quarters long, and the dirt already removed was quite wet or moistened. It made the hole and removed the dirt with its hind legs only, not using its tail or shell, which last of course could not enter the hole, though there was some dirt on it. It first scratched two or three times with one hind foot; then took up a pinch of the loose sand and deposited it directly behind that leg, pushing it backward to its full length and then deliberately opening it and letting the dirt fall; then the same with the other hind foot. This it did rapidly, using each leg alternately with perfect regularity, standing on the other one the while, and thus tilting up its shell each time, now to this side, then to that. There was half a minute or a minute between each change. The hole was made as deep as the feet could reach, or about two inches. It was very neat about its work, not scattering the dirt about any more than was necessary. The completing of the hole occupied perhaps five minutes.

It then without any pause drew its head completely into its shell, raised the rear a little, and protruded and dropped a wet flesh-colored egg into the hole, one end foremost, the red skin of its body being considerably protruded with it. Then it put out its head again a little, slowly, and placed the egg at one side with one hind foot. After a delay of about two minutes it again drew in its head and dropped another, and so on to the fifth—drawing in its head each time, and pausing somewhat longer between the last. The eggs were placed in the hole without any *particular* care,—only well down flat and [each] out of the way of the next,—and I could plainly see them from above.

After these ten minutes or more, it without pause or turning began to scrape the moist earth into the hole with its hind legs, and, when it had half filled it, it carefully pressed it down with the edges of its hind feet, dancing on them alternately, for some time, as on its knees, tilting from side to side, pressing by the whole

weight of the rear of its shell. When it had drawn in thus all the earth that had been moistened, it stretched its hind legs further back and to each side, and drew in the dry and lichen-clad crust, and then danced upon and pressed that down, still not moving the rear of its shell more than one inch to right or left all the while, or changing the position of the forward part at all. The thoroughness with which the covering was done was remarkable. It persevered in drawing in and dancing on the dry surface which had never been disturbed, long after you thought it had done its duty, but it never moved its fore feet, nor once looked round, nor saw the eggs it had laid. There were frequent pauses throughout the whole, when it rested, or ran out its head and looked about circumspectly, at any noise or motion. These pauses were especially long during the covering of its eggs, which occupied more than half an hour. Perhaps it was hard work.

When it had done, it immediately started for the river at a pretty rapid rate (the suddenness with which it made these transitions was amusing), pausing from time to time, and I judged that it would reach it in fifteen minutes. It was not easy to detect that the ground had been disturbed there. An Indian could not have made his cache more skillfully. In a few minutes all traces of it would be lost to the eye.

The object of moistening the earth was perhaps to enable it to take it up in its hands, and also to prevent its falling back into the hole. Perhaps it also helped to make the ground more compact and harder when it was pressed down.

1852-1855·1906

Prayer

From The Dial for July 1842.

Great God, I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself,
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.

And next in value, which thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how thou'st distinguished me.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practise more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated thy designs.

1842

Rumors from an Æolian Harp

First printed in The Dial for October 1842, the poem was reprinted in the chapter entitled "Monday" in A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.

There is a vale which none hath seen,
Where foot of man has never been,
Such as here lives with toil and strife,
An anxious and a sinful life.

There every virtue has its birth,
Ere it descends upon the earth,
And thither every deed returns,
Which in the generous bosom burns.

There love is warm, and youth is young,
And poetry is yet unsung,
For Virtue still adventures there,
And freely breathes her native air.

And ever, if you hearken well,
You still may hear its vesper bell,
And tread of high-souled men go by,
Their thoughts conversing with the sky.

1842

The Summer Rain

First printed in **The Dial** for October 1842, "The Summer Rain" was reprinted in the chapter entitled "Thursday" in **A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.**

My books I'd fain cast off, I cannot read,
  'Twixt every page my thoughts go stray at large
Down in the meadow, where is richer feed,
  And will not mind to hit their proper targe.

Plutarch was good, and so was Homer too,
  Our Shakespeare's life were rich to live again,
What Plutarch read, that was not good nor true,
  Nor Shakespeare's books, unless his books were men.

Here while I lie beneath this walnut bough,
  What care I for the Greeks or for Troy town,
If juster battles are enacted now
  Between the ants upon this hummock's crown?

Bid Homer wait till I the issue learn,
  If red or black the gods will favor most,
Or yonder Ajax will the phalanx turn,
  Struggling to heave some rock against the host.

Tell Shakespeare to attend some leisure hour,
  For now I've business with this drop of dew,
And see you not, the clouds prepare a shower,—
  I'll meet him shortly when the sky is blue.

This bed of herdsgrass and wild oats was spread
  Last year with nicer skill than monarchs use,
A clover tuft is pillow for my head,
  And violets quite overtop my shoes.

And now the cordial clouds have shut all in,
  And gently swells the wind to say all's well;
The scattered drops are falling fast and thin,
  Some in the pool, some in the flower-bell.

I am well drenched upon my bed of oats;
  But see that globe come rolling down its stem,
Now like a lonely planet there it floats,
  And now it sinks into my garment's hem.

Drip, drip the trees for all the country round,
  And richness rare distills from every bough;
The wind alone it is makes every sound,
  Shaking down crystals on the leaves below.

For shame the sun will never show himself,
  Who could not with his beams e'er melt me so;
My dripping locks,—they would become an elf,
  Who in a beaded coat does gayly go.

1842

Smoke

First printed in **The Dial** for April 1843, "Smoke" was reprinted in Chapter XIII of **Walden.**

Light-wingèd smoke, Icarian bird,
Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight,
Lark without song, and messenger of dawn,
Circling above the hamlets as thy nest;
Or else, departing dream, and shadowy form
Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts;
By night star-veiling, and by day
Darkening the light and blotting out the sun;
Go thou my incense upward from this hearth,
And ask the Gods to pardon this clear flame.

1843

The Summer Rain • 4 targe, target • 11 battles . . . ants. Thoreau's famous description of the battle between the red and black ants is in Chap. XII of **Walden**

Smoke • 1 Icarian. When Icarus, in Greek mythology, flew too near the sun, the wax of his artificial wings melted, and he fell into the sea and was drowned

Inspiration

Portions of "Inspiration" are found scattered through A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. The poem should be compared with Emerson's "Merlin," p 469, noting especially the views of poetic composition expressed.

Whate'er we leave to God, God does,
  And blesses us;
The work we choose should be our own,
  God leaves alone.

If with light head erect I sing,
  Though all the Muses lend their force,
From my poor love of anything,
  The verse is weak and shallow as its source.

But if with bended neck I grope
  Listening behind me for my wit,
With faith superior to hope,
  More anxious to keep back than forward it;

Making my soul accomplice there
  Unto the flame my heart hath lit,
Then will the verse forever wear—
  Time cannot bend the line which God hath writ.

Always the general show of things
  Floats in review before my mind,
And such true love and reverence brings,
  That sometimes I forget that I am blind.

But now there comes unsought, unseen,
  Some clear divine electuary,
And I, who had but sensual been,
  Grow sensible, and as God is, am wary.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
  And sight, who had but eyes before,
I moments live, who lived but years,
  And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

I hear beyond the range of sound,
  I see beyond the range of sight,
New earths and skies and seas around,
  And in my day the sun doth pale his light.

A clear and ancient harmony
  Pierces my soul through all its din,
As through its utmost melody,—
  Farther behind than they, farther within.

More swift its bolt than lightning is,
  Its voice than thunder is more loud,
It doth expand my privacies
  To all, and leave me single in the crowd.



Walden Pond in Summer

It speaks with such authority,
  With so serene and lofty tone,
That idle Time runs gadding by,
  And leaves me with Eternity alone.

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
  And only now my prime of life;
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,
  'Tis peace's end and war's beginning strife.

It comes in summer's broadest noon,
  By a grey wall or some chance place,
Unseasoning Time, insulting June,
  And vexing day with its presuming face.

Such fragrance round my couch it makes,
  More rich than are Arabian drugs,
That my soul scents its life and wakes
  The body up beneath its perfumed rugs.

Such is the Muse, the heavenly maid,
  The star that guides our mortal course,
Which shows where life's true kernel's laid,
  Its wheat's fine flour, and its undying force.

She with one breath attunes the spheres,
  And also my poor human heart,
With one impulse propels the years
  Around, and gives my throbbing pulse its start.

I will not doubt for evermore,
  Nor falter from a steadfast faith,
For though the system be turned o'er,
  God takes not back the word which once He saith.

I will not doubt the love untold
  Which not my worth nor want has bought,
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
  And to this evening hath me brought.

My memory I'll educate
  To know the one historic truth,
Remembering to the latest date
  The only true and sole immortal youth.

Be but thy inspiration given,
  No matter through what danger sought,
I'll fathom hell or climb to heaven,
  And yet esteem that cheap which love has bought.

Fame cannot tempt the bard
  Who's famous with his God,
Nor laurel him reward
  Who has his Maker's nod.

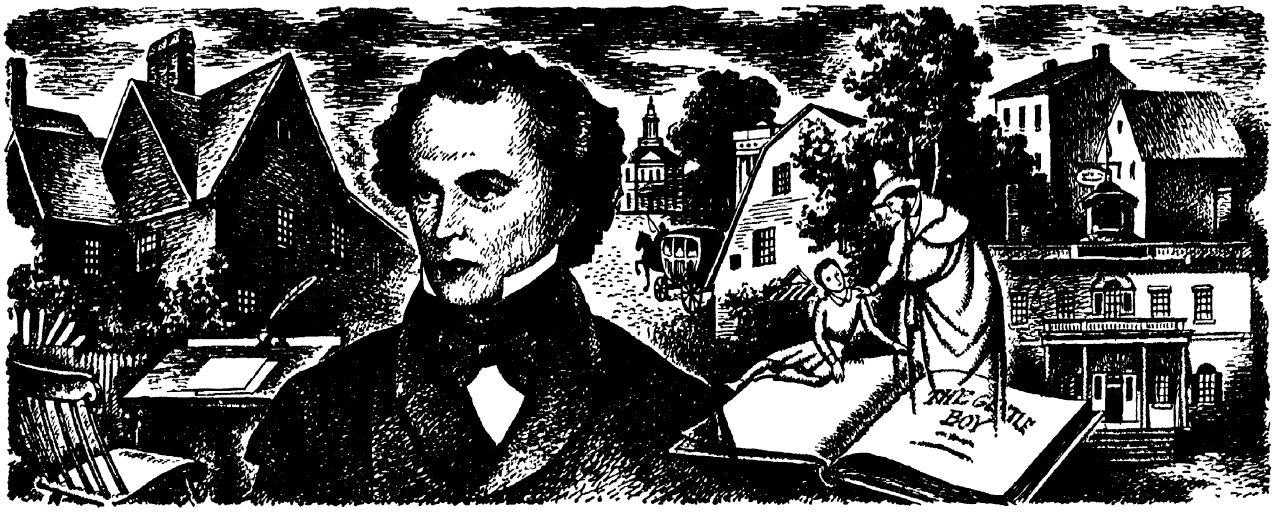
1849

Though All the Fates

In the paragraph which precedes the poem, Thoreau tells of talking with some boatmen on the Merrimack who intended, when they reached the coast, possibly to embark for "the China seas." "What grievance," he asks, "has its root among the New Hampshire hills? . . . What is wanting to human life here, that these men should make haste to the antipodes?" (See **A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.**)

Though all the fates should prove unkind,
Leave not your native land behind.
The ship, becalmed, at length stands still;
The steed must rest beneath the hill;
But swiftly still our fortunes pace,
To find us out in every place.
The vessel, though her masts be firm,
Beneath her copper bears a worm;
Around the cape, across the line,
Till fields of ice her course confine;
It matters not how smooth the breeze,
How shallow or how deep the seas,
Whether she bears Manilla twine,
Or in her hold Madeira wine,
Or China teas, or Spanish hides,
In port or quarantine she rides;
Far from New England's blustering shore,
New England's worm her hulk shall bore,
And sink her in the Indian seas,
Twine, wine, and hides, and China teas.

1849



Nathaniel Hawthorne

1804 • 1864

Nathaniel Hawthorne's first American ancestor, William Hathorne, came to Massachusetts in 1630 and, as a magistrate of the Bay Colony, was active in the 1650's in the persecution of the Quakers. William Hathorne's son, John, was one of the "witch-judges" at Salem in 1692. The seventeenth-century Hathornes were obviously men of importance, though of a sinister kind. The family declined in prominence during the century which followed. Nathaniel Hawthorne's father, a sea captain, died in Dutch Guiana when Nathaniel was only four years of age, leaving at Salem a widow and three children in reduced circumstances. Hawthorne often thought of William Hathorne, "grave, bearded, sable-cloaked and steeple-crowned progenitor," and of John Hathorne, "so conspicuous in the martyrdom of the witches that their blood may fairly be said to have left a stain upon him." He wondered if their sins might have been to blame for his family's decline and if he might have inherited some of their guilt. "I take shame upon myself for their sakes," he wrote in "The Custom House," the prefatory essay to *The Scarlet Letter,* "and pray that any curse incurred by them—as I have heard, and as the dreary and unprosperous condition of the race, for many a long year back, would argue to exist—may be now and henceforth removed." And yet, however much he might deprecate the cruelties of these early progenitors (and however alien and distasteful to them might be a descendant who was "a writer of story-books"), he could not escape his inheritance: "strong traits of their nature," he said, "have intertwined themselves with mine." It is

Panel (l. to r.): The House of the Seven Gables • Hawthorne's study • Nathaniel Hawthorne at the age of 35 • Salem • The Old Manse • Sophia Hawthorne's illustration for "The Gentle Boy" • Salem Custom House

this hereditary sense, no doubt, which explains, at least in part, Hawthorne's preoccupation with the theme of guilt and the somber tone of his stories.

He was graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825. Franklin Pierce was in the class of 1824; Longfellow was a classmate. After graduation, Hawthorne returned to his mother's house in Salem and lived there in comparative seclusion for twelve years. He later thought of himself as having been under a spell of enchantment. In a famous letter to Longfellow, written in 1837, he said: "By some witchcraft or other—for I really cannot assign any reasonable why and wherefore—I have been carried apart from the main current of life, and find it impossible to get back again. Since we last met . . . I have secluded myself from society; and yet I never meant any such thing, nor dreamed what sort of life I was going to lead. I have made a captive of myself and put me into a dungeon; and now I cannot find the key to let myself out—and if the door were open, I should be almost afraid to come out. . . . There is no fate in this world so horrible as to have no share in either its joys or sorrows. For the last ten years, I have not lived, but only dreamed about living." Those years, however, were not wasted. In his solitary chamber, Hawthorne put himself through a rigorous literary discipline. He read and wrote and destroyed much of what he had written. Recovering from a false start in *Fanshawe* (1828), a short novel based upon life at Bowdoin, he discovered the kind of composition in which he was to excel· the moral and psychological tale. After anonymous publication in magazines, his tales were first collected in *Twice-Told Tales* (1837). If these stories, as their author thought later, "have the pale tint of flowers that blossomed in too retired a shade," they illustrate, nevertheless, Hawthorne's characteristic virtues of sharpness of insight and delicacy of treatment.

We need not regret the twelve solitary years; perhaps they were necessary to Hawthorne's development as an artist. The prolongation of the period of solitude, however, might have endangered both his literary growth and his mental health. Hawthorne evidently feared as much, for soon he was attempting, in his own phrase, "to open an intercourse with the world." In 1839-1840 he was "weigher and gauger" in the Boston Custom House; for several months in 1841 he worked in the potato patch and manure pile at Brook Farm. In the meantime, he had fallen in love with Miss Sophia Peabody, whom he married in 1842. Love and marriage more than anything else, he felt, saved him from the fate of the solitary. The idyllic life of the newly married pair at the Old Manse is delightfully recorded in *The American Notebooks.*

Hawthorne returned to Salem in 1845; and in 1846 appeared a second collection of tales, entitled *Mosses from an Old Manse.* This volume, like *Twice-Told Tales,* attracted so few readers that it was with some justice that Hawthorne believed himself to be "the obscurest man of letters in America." Because of his financial needs, he was glad to accept an appointment as surveyor in the Salem Custom House. Inasmuch as he held this appointment as a loyal Democrat under the Democratic administration of James K. Polk, he was dismissed from office in 1849, after three years' service, to make room for a Whig incumbent. The loss of this place was a blow to Hawthorne. But adversity discovers virtue. The three years which followed this "misfortune" were the most productive period of his life. *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), an intense, tragic study of the psychological effects of adultery upon four people, made Hawthorne famous. His fame was enhanced by *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), a study of the decay of an old Salem family, and *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), a satire, in part, on the socialist community at Brook Farm. *The House of the Seven Gables* was written at Lenox, in the Berkshires, where Hawthorne enjoyed the stimulating companionship of Herman Melville.

From 1853 to 1857 Hawthorne was consul at Liverpool; he had been appointed to that post by his old college friend, Franklin Pierce, then President of the United States. The office was not much to Hawthorne's liking; but he made the most of the opportunity of seeing England, his impressions of which he recorded in the posthumously printed *English Notebooks* and in *Our Old Home* (1863), a collection of essays. He spent 1858-1859 in Italy and employed Italian backgrounds in his last complete novel, *The Marble Faun* (1860) He returned in 1860 to "The Wayside" in Concord, which he had purchased a short time before going abroad. The Civil War darkened his last years. He did not share the abolitionist zeal. "I always thought that the war should have been avoided," he said in 1863, "although since it has broken out, I have longed for military success as much as any man or woman of the North." His personal loyalty to Pierce, whose public opposition to the War

seemed treacherous to many, was little short of heroic (see the dedicatory letter in *Our Old Home*). His last attempts at fiction resulted in some interesting works which were still unfinished at his death *The Ancestral Footstep, Septimius Felton, Doctor Grimshawe's Secret,* and *The Dolliver Romance.*

Critics of Hawthorne have found a good deal to object to, but more to praise. Henry James, while deprecating Hawthorne's "provincialism" and his "abuse of the fanciful element," declared. "No one has had just that vision of life, and no one has had a literary form that more successfully expressed his vision." W. C. Brownell, the severest of Hawthorne's critics, objected to his "placidity" and his obsession with allegory, but found in *The Scarlet Letter* "our chief prose masterpiece." More recently, T. S. Eliot has said (in *The Athenaeum,* April 25, 1919). "Hawthorne had . . . the firmness, the true coldness, the hard coldness of the genuine artist. In consequence, the observation of moral life in *The Scarlet Letter,* in *The House of the Seven Gables,* and even in some of the tales and sketches, has solidity, has permanence, the permanence of art. It will always be of use. . . . The work of Hawthorne is truly a criticism—true because a fidelity of the artist and not a mere conviction of the man—of the Puritan morality, of the Transcendentalist morality, and of the world which Hawthorne knew. It is a criticism as Henry James's work is a criticism of the America of his times, and as the work of Turgenev and Flaubert is a criticism of the Russia and the France of theirs." Of all the writers of New England's flowering, Hawthorne seems the most certain to endure.

The Complete Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Riverside Edition, 13 vols , Boston, 1883 • **The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne,** ed Randall Stewart, New Haven, 1932 • **The English Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne,** ed Randall Stewart, New York, 1941 • Henry James, **Hawthorne,** New York, 1879 • W C. Brownell, "Hawthorne," **American Prose Masters,** New York, 1909 • Newton Arvin, **Hawthorne,** Boston, 1929 • Randall Stewart, **Nathaniel Hawthorne. A Biography,** New Haven, 1948

The Minister's Black Veil

A Parable

"The Minister's Black Veil" was first published in the **Token** for 1836 and was reprinted in **Twice-Told Tales** in 1837. The story is a fine study of the Puritan conscience. Father Hooper may be regarded as a prototype of Arthur Dimmesdale in **The Scarlet Letter** (see **The American Notebooks by Nathaniel Hawthorne,** pp. xlvii-xlviii)

Dr. William Sprague's **Annals of the American Pulpit** sets forth the story of the Rev. Joseph Moody (1700-1753), to whom Hawthorne refers in a footnote. According to Sprague, Moody wore a handkerchief: Hawthorne has substituted a more symbolic covering—a black veil. The source also differs from the story in its assignment of a reason for the donning of the mask: following the death of his wife, says Sprague, Moody "fell into a state of deep melancholy, left preaching, broke up house-keeping, and wore a handkerchief over his face." And when Moody returned to the pulpit, he "would turn his back to the people, turn up his handkerchief, and read a printed sermon. . . ."

The sexton stood in the porch of Milford meeting-house pulling lustily at the bell-rope. The old people of the village came stooping along the street. Children with bright faces tript merrily beside their parents, or mimicked a graver gait in the conscious dignity of their Sunday clothes. Spruce bachelors looked sidelong at the pretty maidens, and fancied that the Sabbath sunshine made them prettier than on week-days When the throng had mostly streamed into the porch, the sexton began to toll the bell, keeping his eye on the Reverend Mr. 10

A Parable. "Another clergyman in New England, Mr Joseph Moody, of York, Maine, who died about eighty years since, made himself remarkable by the same eccentricity that is here related of the Reverend Mr Hooper In his case, however, the symbol had a different import. In early life he had accidentally killed a beloved friend, and from that day till the hour of his own death he hid his face from men." —Hawthorne

Hooper's door. The first glimpse of the clergyman's figure was the signal for the bell to cease its summons.

"But what has good Parson Hooper got upon his face?" cried the sexton in astonishment.

All within hearing immediately turned about, and beheld the semblance of Mr. Hooper pacing slowly in his meditative way towards the meeting-house. With one accord they started, expressing more wonder than if some strange minister were coming to dust the cushions of Mr. Hooper's pulpit.

"Are you sure it is our parson?" inquired Goodman Gray of the sexton.

"Of a certainty it is good Mr. Hooper," replied the sexton. "He was to have exchanged pulpits with Parson Shute, of Westbury; but Parson Shute sent to excuse himself yesterday, being to preach a funeral sermon."

The cause of so much amazement may appear sufficiently slight. Mr. Hooper, a gentlemanly person of about thirty, though still a bachelor, was dressed with due clerical neatness, as if a careful wife had starched his band, and brushed the weekly dust from his Sunday's garb. There was but one thing remarkable in his appearance. Swathed about his forehead, and hanging down over his face so low as to be shaken by his breath, Mr. Hooper had on a black veil. On a nearer view it seemed to consist of two folds of crape, which entirely concealed his features except the mouth and chin, but probably did not intercept his sight farther than to give a darkened aspect to all living and inanimate things. With this gloomy shade before him, good Mr. Hooper walked onward at a slow and quiet pace, stooping somewhat and looking on the ground, as is customary with abstracted men, yet nodding kindly to those of his parishioners who still waited on the meeting-house steps But so wonder-struck were they that his greeting hardly met with a return.

"I can't really feel as if good Mr. Hooper's face was behind that piece of crape," said the sexton

"I don't like it," muttered an old woman, as she hobbled into the meeting-house. "He has changed himself into something awful only by hiding his face"

"Our parson has gone mad!" cried Goodman Gray, following him across the threshold.

A rumor of some unaccountable phenomenon had preceded Mr. Hooper into the meeting house, and set all the congregation astir. Few could refrain from twisting their heads towards the door; many stood upright and turned directly about; while several little boys clambered upon the seats, and came down again with a terrible racket. There was a general bustle, a rustling of the women's gowns and shuffling of the men's feet, greatly at variance with that hushed repose which should attend the entrance of the minister. But Mr Hooper appeared not to notice the perturbation of his people. He entered with an almost noiseless step, bent his head mildly to the pews on each side, and bowed as he passed his oldest parishioner, a white-haired great-grandsire, who occupied an armchair in the centre of the aisle. It was strange to observe how slowly this venerable man became conscious of something singular in the appearance of his pastor. He seemed not fully to partake of the prevailing wonder till Mr. Hooper had ascended the stairs, and showed himself in the pulpit face to face with his congregation except for the black veil. That mysterious emblem was never once withdrawn. It shook with his measured breath as he gave out the psalm; it threw its obscurity between him and the holy page as he read the Scriptures; and while he prayed, the veil lay heavily on his uplifted countenance. Did he seek to hide it from the dread Being whom he was addressing?

Such was the effect of this simple piece of crape that more than one woman of delicate nerves was forced to leave the meeting-house. Yet perhaps the pale-faced congregation was almost as fearful a sight to the minister as his black veil to them.

Mr Hooper had the reputation of a good preacher, but not an energetic one: he strove to win his people heavenward by mild, persuasive influences, rather than to drive them thither by the thunders of the Word. The sermon which he now delivered was marked by the same characteristics of style and manner as the general series of his pulpit oratory. But there was something either in the sentiment of the discourse itself, or in the imagination of the auditors, which made it greatly the most powerful effort that they had ever heard from their pastor's lips. It was tinged rather more darkly than usual with the gentle gloom of Mr. Hooper's temperament The subject had reference to secret sin, and those sad mysteries which we hide from our nearest and dearest, and would fain conceal from our own consciousness, even forgetting that the Omniscient can detect them. A subtle power was breathed into his words. Each member of the

congregation, the most innocent girl, and the man of hardened breast, felt as if the preacher had crept upon them behind his awful veil, and discovered their hoarded iniquity of deed or thought. Many spread their clasped hands on their bosoms. There was nothing terrible in what Mr. Hooper said, at least, no violence, and yet, with every tremor of his melancholy voice the hearers quaked. An unsought pathos came hand in hand with awe. So sensible were the audience of some unwonted attribute in their minister, that they longed for a breath of wind to blow aside the veil, almost believing that a stranger's visage would be discovered, though the form, gesture, and voice were those of Mr. Hooper.

At the close of the service the people hurried out with indecorous confusion, eager to communicate their pent-up amazement, and conscious of lighter spirits the moment they lost sight of the black veil. Some gathered in little circles, huddled closely together, with their mouths all whispering in the centre; some went homeward alone, wrapt in silent meditation; some talked loudly, and profaned the Sabbath-day with ostentatious laughter. A few shook their sagacious heads, intimating that they could penetrate the mystery; while one or two affirmed that there was no mystery at all, but only that Mr. Hooper's eyes were so weakened by the midnight lamp as to require a shade. After a brief interval, forth came good Mr. Hooper also, in the rear of his flock. Turning his veiled face from one group to another, he paid due reverence to the hoary heads, saluted the middle-aged with kind dignity, as their friend and spiritual guide, greeted the young with mingled authority and love, and laid his hands on the little children's heads to bless them. Such was always his custom on the Sabbath-day. Strange and bewildered looks repaid him for his courtesy. None, as on former occasions, aspired to the honor of walking by their pastor's side. Old Squire Saunders, doubtless by an accidental lapse of memory, neglected to invite Mr. Hooper to his table, where the good clergyman had been wont to bless the food almost every Sunday since his settlement. He returned, therefore, to the parsonage, and, at the moment of closing the door, was observed to look back upon the people, all of whom had their eyes fixed upon the minister. A sad smile gleamed faintly from beneath the black veil, and flickered about his mouth, glimmering as he disappeared.

"How strange," said a lady, "that a simple black veil, such as any woman might wear on her bonnet, should become such a terrible thing on Mr. Hooper's face!"

"Something must surely be amiss with Mr. Hooper's intellects," observed her husband, the physician of the village. "But the strangest part of the affair is the effect of this vagary, even on a sober-minded man like myself. The black veil, though it covers only our pastor's face, throws its influence over his whole person, and makes him ghostlike from head to foot. Do you not feel it so?"

"Truly do I," replied the lady; "and I would not be alone with him for the world. I wonder he is not afraid to be alone with himself!"

"Men sometimes are so," said her husband.

The afternoon service was attended with similar circumstances. At its conclusion, the bell tolled for the funeral of a young lady. The relatives and friends were assembled in the house, and the more distant acquaintances stood about the door, speaking of the good qualities of the deceased, when their talk was interrupted by the appearance of Mr. Hooper, still covered with his black veil. It was now an appropriate emblem. The clergyman stepped into the room where the corpse was laid, and bent over the coffin to take a last farewell of his deceased parishioner. As he stooped, the veil hung straight down from his forehead, so that, if her eyelids had not been closed for ever, the dead maiden might have seen his face Could Mr. Hooper be fearful of her glance, that he so hastily caught back the black veil? A person who watched the interview between the dead and living scrupled not to affirm that, at the instant when the clergyman's features were disclosed, the corpse had slightly shuddered, rustling the shroud and muslin cap, though the countenance retained the composure of death. A superstitious old woman was the only witness of this prodigy. From the coffin Mr. Hooper passed into the chamber of the mourners, and thence to the head of the staircase, to make the funeral prayer. It was a tender and heart-dissolving prayer, full of sorrow, yet so imbued with celestial hopes that the music of a heavenly harp, swept by the fingers of the dead, seemed faintly to be heard among the saddest accents of the minister. The people trembled, though they but darkly understood him, when he prayed that they, and himself, and all of mortal race, might be ready, as he trusted this young maiden had been, for the dreadful hour that should snatch the veil from their faces. The bearers went heavily forth, and the

mourners followed, saddening all the street, with the dead before them, and Mr. Hooper in the black veil behind.

"Why do you look back?" said one in the procession to his partner.

"I had a fancy," replied she, "that the minister and the maiden's spirit were walking hand in hand."

"And so had I at the same moment," said the other.

That night the handsomest couple in Milford village were to be joined in wedlock. Though reckoned a melancholy man, Mr. Hooper had a placid cheerfulness for such occasions which often excited a sympathetic smile where livelier merriment would have been thrown away. There was no quality of his disposition which made him more beloved than this. The company at the wedding awaited his arrival with impatience, trusting that the strange awe which had gathered over him throughout the day would now be dispelled. But such was not the result. When Mr. Hooper came, the first thing that their eyes rested on was the same horrible black veil, which had added deeper gloom to the funeral, and could portend nothing but evil to the wedding. Such was its immediate effect on the guests, that a cloud seemed to have rolled duskily from beneath the black crape and dimmed the light of the candles. The bridal pair stood up before the minister. But the bride's cold fingers quivered in the tremulous hand of the bridegroom, and her deathlike paleness caused a whisper that the maiden who had been buried a few hours before was come from her grave to be married. If ever another wedding were so dismal, it was that famous one where they tolled the wedding knell. After performing the ceremony, Mr. Hooper raised a glass of wine to his lips, wishing happiness to the newmarried couple, in a strain of mild pleasantry that ought to have brightened the features of the guests, like a cheerful gleam from the hearth. At that instant, catching a glimpse of his figure in the looking-glass, the black veil involved his own spirit in the horror with which it overwhelmed all others. His frame shuddered—his lips grew white—he spilt the untasted wine upon the carpet—and rushed forth into the darkness. For the earth, too, had on her black veil.

The next day the whole village of Milford talked of little else than Parson Hooper's black veil. That, and the mystery concealed behind it, supplied a topic for discussion between acquaintances meeting in the street, and good women gossiping at their open windows. It was the first item of news that the tavern-keeper told to his guests. The children babbled of it on their way to school. One imitative little imp covered his face with an old black handkerchief, thereby so affrighting his playmates that the panic seized himself, and he well-nigh lost his wits by his own waggery.

It was remarkable that, of all the busybodies and impertinent people in the parish, not one ventured to put the plain question to Mr. Hooper, wherefore he did this thing. Hitherto, whenever there appeared the slightest call for such interference, he had never lacked advisers, nor shown himself averse to be guided by their judgment. If he erred at all, it was by so painful a degree of self-distrust that even the mildest censure would lead him to consider an indifferent action as a crime. Yet, though so well acquainted with this amiable weakness, no individual among his parishioners chose to make the black veil a subject of friendly remonstrance. There was a feeling of dread, neither plainly confessed nor carefully concealed, which caused each to shift the responsibility upon another, till at length it was found expedient to send a deputation of the church, in order to deal with Mr. Hooper about the mystery before it should grow into a scandal. Never did an embassy so ill discharge its duties. The minister received them with friendly courtesy, but became silent after they were seated, leaving to his visitors the whole burden of introducing their important business. The topic, it might be supposed, was obvious enough. There was the black veil swathed round Mr. Hooper's forehead, and concealing every feature above his placid mouth, on which at times they could perceive the glimmering of a melancholy smile. But that piece of crape, to their imagination, seemed to hang down before his heart, the symbol of a fearful secret between him and them. Were the veil but cast aside they might speak freely of it, but not till then. Thus they sat a considerable time, speechless, confused, and shrinking uneasily from Mr. Hooper's eye, which they felt to be fixed upon them with an invisible glance. Finally, the deputies returned abashed to their constituents, pronouncing the matter too weighty to be handled, except by a

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31 famous . . . knell. The reference is to another story of Hawthorne's, "The Wedding Knell," which appeared in the same issue of the Token

council of the churches, if indeed it might not require a general synod.

But there was one person in the village unappalled by the awe with which the black veil had impressed all beside herself. When the deputies returned without an explanation, or even venturing to demand one, she, with the calm energy of her character, determined to chase away the strange cloud that appeared to be settling round Mr. Hooper, every moment more darkly than before. As his plighted wife, it should be her privilege to know what the black veil concealed. At the minister's first visit, therefore, she entered upon the subject with a direct simplicity which made the task easier both for him and her. After he had seated himself she fixed her eyes steadfastly upon the veil, but could discern nothing of the dreadful gloom that had so overawed the multitude: it was but a double fold of crape, hanging down from his forehead to his mouth, and slightly stirring with his breath.

"No," said she aloud, and smiling, "there is nothing terrible in this piece of crape, except that it hides a face which I am always glad to look upon. Come, good sir, let the sun shine from behind the cloud. First lay aside your black veil. then tell me why you put it on."

Mr. Hooper's smile glimmered faintly.

"There is an hour to come," said he, "when all of us shall cast aside our veils. Take it not amiss, beloved friend, if I wear this piece of crape till then"

"Your words are a mystery too," returned the young lady. "Take away the veil from them at least."

"Elizabeth, I will," said he, "so far as my vow may suffer me Know, then, this veil is a type and a symbol, and I am bound to wear it ever, both in light and darkness, in solitude and before the gaze of multitudes, and as with strangers, so with my familiar friends. No mortal eye will see it withdrawn. This dismal shade must separate me from the world: even you, Elizabeth, can never come behind it!"

"What grievous affliction hath befallen you," she earnestly inquired, "that you should thus darken your eyes for ever?"

"If it be a sign of mourning," replied Mr. Hooper, "I, perhaps, like most other mortals, have sorrows dark enough to be typified by a black veil."

"But what if the world will not believe that it is the type of an innocent sorrow?" urged Elizabeth. "Beloved and respected as you are, there may be whispers that you hide your face under the consciousness of secret sin. For the sake of your holy office, do away with this scandal!"

The color rose into her cheeks as she intimated the nature of the rumors that were already abroad in the village. But Mr. Hooper's mildness did not forsake him. He even smiled again—that same sad smile, which always appeared like a faint glimmering of light proceeding from the obscurity beneath the veil.

"If I hide my face for sorrow, there is cause enough," he merely replied; "and if I cover it for secret sin, what mortal might not do the same?"

And with this gentle but unconquerable obstinacy did he resist all her entreaties. At length Elizabeth sat silent. For a few moments she appeared lost in thought, considering, probably, what new methods might be tried to withdraw her lover from so dark a fantasy, which, if it had no other meaning, was perhaps a symptom of mental disease. Though of a firmer character than his own, the tears rolled down her cheeks. But in an instant, as it were, a new feeling took the place of sorrow: her eyes were fixed insensibly on the black veil, when, like a sudden twilight in the air, its terrors fell around her. She arose, and stood trembling before him.

"And do you feel it then at last?" said he mournfully.

She made no reply, but covered her eyes with her hand, and turned to leave the room. He rushed forward and caught her arm.

"Have patience with me, Elizabeth!" cried he passionately. "Do not desert me, though this veil must be between us here on earth. Be mine, and hereafter there shall be no veil over my face, no darkness between our souls! It is but a mortal veil—it is not for eternity! Oh! you know not how lonely I am, and how frightened, to be alone behind my black veil. Do not leave me in this miserable obscurity for ever!"

"Lift the veil but once and look me in the face," said she.

"Never! It cannot be!" replied Mr. Hooper.

"Then, farewell!" said Elizabeth.

She withdrew her arm from his grasp and slowly departed, pausing at the door to give one long, shuddering gaze, that seemed almost to penetrate the mystery of the black veil. But even amid his grief Mr. Hooper smiled to think that only a material emblem had separated him from happiness, though the horrors which

it shadowed forth must be drawn darkly between the fondest of lovers.

From that time no attempts were made to remove Mr. Hooper's black veil, or, by a direct appeal, to discover the secret which it was supposed to hide. By persons who claimed a superiority to popular prejudice it was reckoned merely an eccentric whim, such as often mingles with the sober actions of men otherwise rational, and tinges them all with its own semblance of insanity. But with the multitude good Mr. Hooper was irreparably a bugbear. He could not walk the streets with any peace of mind, so conscious was he that the gentle and timid would turn aside to avoid him, and that others would make it a point of hardihood to throw themselves in his way. The impertinence of the latter class compelled him to give up his customary walk at sunset to the burial-ground; for when he leaned pensively over the gate, there would always be faces behind the grave-stones peeping at his black veil. A fable went the rounds that the stare of the dead people drove him thence. It grieved him to the very depth of his kind heart to observe how the children fled from his approach, breaking up their merriest sports while his melancholy figure was yet afar off. Their instinctive dread caused him to feel more strongly than aught else that a preternatural horror was interwoven with the threads of the black crape. In truth, his own antipathy to the veil was known to be so great that he never willingly passed before a mirror, nor stooped to drink at a still fountain, lest in its peaceful bosom he should be affrighted by himself. This was what gave plausibility to the whispers, that Mr. Hooper's conscience tortured him for some great crime too horrible to be entirely concealed, or otherwise than so obscurely intimated. Thus from beneath the black veil there rolled a cloud into the sunshine, an ambiguity of sin or sorrow, which enveloped the poor minister, so that love or sympathy could never reach him. It was said that ghost and fiend consorted with him there. With self-shudderings and outward terrors he walked continually in its shadow, groping darkly within his own soul, or gazing through a medium that saddened the whole world. Even the lawless wind, it was believed, respected his dreadful secret and never blew aside the veil. But still good Mr. Hooper sadly smiled at the pale visages of the worldly throng as he passed by.

Among all its bad influences, the black veil had the one desirable effect of making its wearer a very efficient clergyman. By the aid of his mysterious emblem—for there was no other apparent cause—he became a man of awful power over souls that were in agony for sin. His converts always regarded him with a dread peculiar to themselves, affirming, though but figuratively, that, before he brought them to celestial light, they had been with him behind the black veil. Its gloom, indeed, enabled him to sympathize with all dark affections. Dying sinners cried aloud for Mr. Hooper, and would not yield their breath till he appeared; though ever, as he stooped to whisper consolation, they shuddered at the veiled face so near their own. Such were the terrors of the black veil, even when Death had bared his visage! Strangers came long distances to attend service at his church, with the mere idle purpose of gazing at his figure, because it was forbidden them to behold his face. But many were made to quake ere they departed! Once, during Governor Belcher's administration, Mr. Hooper was appointed to preach the election sermon. Covered with his black veil, he stood before the chief magistrate, the council, and the representatives, and wrought so deep an impression that the legislative measures of that year were characterized by all the gloom and piety of our earliest ancestral sway.

In this manner Mr. Hooper spent a long life, irreproachable in outward act, yet shrouded in dismal suspicions; kind and loving, though unloved, and dimly feared; a man apart from men, shunned in their health and joy, but ever summoned to their aid in mortal anguish. As years wore on, shedding their snows above his sable veil, he acquired a name throughout the New England churches, and they called him Father Hooper. Nearly all his parishioners who were of mature age when he was settled had been borne away by many a funeral: he had one congregation in the church, and a more crowded one in the church-yard; and having wrought so late into the evening, and done his work so well, it was now good Father Hooper's turn to rest.

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65 Belcher, Jonathan Belcher (1681-1757), royal governor of Massachusetts (1730-1741) • **66 election sermon,** delivered before the newly elected officers of state. An appointment to preach an election sermon was the highest honor that could be conferred upon a minister in colonial New England. Election sermons were often published (see R. W. G. Vail, "A Check List of New England Election Sermons," **Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society,** October 1935). Compare the dramatic importance of the election sermon in **The Scarlet Letter**

Several persons were visible by the shaded candlelight in the death-chamber of the old clergyman. Natural connections he had none. But there was the decorously grave though unmoved physician, seeking only to mitigate the last pangs of the patient whom he could not save. There were the deacons, and other eminently pious members of his church. There, also, was the Reverend Mr. Clark, of Westbury, a young and zealous divine, who had ridden in haste to pray by the bedside of the expiring minister. There was the nurse, no hired handmaiden of death, but one whose calm affection had endured thus long in secrecy, in solitude, amid the chill of age, and would not perish, even at the dying hour. Who, but Elizabeth! And there lay the hoary head of good Father Hooper upon the death-pillow, with the black veil still swathed about his brow and reaching down over his face, so that each more difficult gasp of his faint breath caused it to stir. All through life that piece of crape had hung between him and the world: it had separated him from cheerful brotherhood and woman's love, and kept him in that saddest of all prisons, his own heart; and still it lay upon his face, as if to deepen the gloom of his darksome chamber, and shade him from the sunshine of eternity.

For some time previous his mind had been confused, wavering doubtfully between the past and the present, and hovering forward, as it were, at intervals, into the indistinctness of the world to come. There had been feverish turns, which tossed him from side to side, and wore away what little strength he had. But in his most convulsive struggles, and in the wildest vagaries of his intellect, when no other thought retained its sober influence, he still showed an awful solicitude lest the black veil should slip aside. Even if his bewildered soul could have forgotten, there was a faithful woman at his pillow, who, with averted eyes, would have covered that aged face, which she had last beheld in the comeliness of manhood. At length the death-stricken old man lay quietly in the torpor of mental and bodily exhaustion, with an imperceptible pulse, and breath that grew fainter and fainter, except when a long, deep, and irregular inspiration seemed to prelude the flight of his spirit.

The minister of Westbury approached the bedside.

"Venerable Father Hooper," said he, "the moment of your release is at hand. Are you ready for the lifting of the veil that shuts in time from eternity?"

Father Hooper at first replied merely by a feeble motion of his head; then, apprehensive, perhaps, that his meaning might be doubtful, he exerted himself to speak.

"Yea," said he, in faint accents, "my soul hath a patient weariness until that veil be lifted."

"And is it fitting," resumed the Reverend Mr. Clark, "that a man so given to prayer, of such a blameless example, holy in deed and thought, so far as mortal judgment may pronounce; is it fitting that a father in the church should leave a shadow on his memory, that may seem to blacken a life so pure? I pray you, my venerable brother, let not this thing be! Suffer us to be gladdened by your triumphant aspect, as you go to your reward Before the veil of eternity be lifted, let me cast aside this black veil from your face!"

And thus speaking, the Reverend Mr. Clark bent forward to reveal the mystery of so many years. But exerting a sudden energy that made all the beholders stand aghast, Father Hooper snatched both his hands from beneath the bed-clothes, and pressed them strongly on the black veil, resolute to struggle if the minister of Westbury would contend with a dying man.

"Never!" cried the veiled clergyman. "On earth, never!"

"Dark old man!" exclaimed the affrighted minister, "with what horrible crime upon your soul are you now passing to the judgment?"

Father Hooper's breath heaved; it rattled in his throat; but with a mighty effort, grasping forward with his hands, he caught hold of life, and held it back till he should speak. He even raised himself in bed; and there he sat, shivering with the arms of death around him, while the black veil hung down, awful, at the last moment, in the gathered terrors of a lifetime. And yet the faint, sad smile, so often there, now seemed to glimmer from its obscurity, and linger on Father Hooper's lips.

"Why do you tremble at me alone?" cried he, turning his veiled face round the circle of pale spectators. "Trem-

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83 Why . . . black veil. In his review of Twice-Told Tales, Poe commented on this story as follows "The moral put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the true import of the narrative, and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the 'young lady') has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive." Poe's interpretation, though allowable, and even plausible, is by no means strictly necessary. Hawthorne here, as in so many places in his fiction, leaves the question open

ble also at each other! Have men avoided me, and women shown no pity, and children screamed and fled, only for my black veil? What but the mystery which it obscurely typifies has made this piece of crape so awful? When the friend shows his inmost heart to his friend; the lover to his best beloved; when man does not vainly shrink from the eye of his Creator, loathsomely treasuring up the secret of his sin; then deem me a monster, for the symbol beneath which I have lived, and die! I look around me, and, lo! on every visage a black veil!"

While his auditors shrank from one another in mutual affright, Father Hooper fell back upon his pillow, a veiled corpse, with a faint smile lingering on the lips. Still veiled, they laid him in his coffin, and a veiled corpse they bore him to the grave. The grass of many years has sprung up and withered on that grave, the burial-stone is moss-grown, and good Mr. Hooper's face is dust; but awful is still the thought that it mouldered beneath the black veil!

1836

The Artist of the Beautiful

"The Artist of the Beautiful" was first published in the Democratic Review in 1844 and was reprinted in Mosses from an Old Manse in 1846. The story may be profitably studied as an allegory of all art, and particularly as an allegory of Hawthorne's art. The delicacy of the true artist's perceptions, his meticulous attention to detail, his devotion to an artistic ideal, his lack of appreciation by a materialistic world, his ultimate satisfaction and reward, not in popular acclaim but in artistic creation itself, are some of the points suggested by the allegory, and all of these points are applicable in Hawthorne's own case.

This story offers an excellent illustration not only of Hawthorne's ideas about art but also of his skill in embodying ideas in story form. Owen Warland, the artist, is an unworldly, sensitive youth, absorbed in artistic creation. Contrasted with this pale youth are intolerant old Peter Hovenden and Robert Danforth, the blacksmith. The descriptions of Danforth are representations of his attributes in terms of physical qualities. He is mighty of arm, shaggy-headed, and "his strong voice fills the shop as with the sound of a bass viol." Danforth's son is a miniature replica of his father, "a young child of strength"—with some of the sagacious shrewdness of his grandfather. The description of the jewel case is symbolical of Owen Warland's search, and the butterfly itself is so described as to indicate that which it symbolizes: "Nature's ideal butterfly was here realized in all its perfection. . . . The rich down was visible upon its wings; the lustre of its eyes seemed instinct with spirit . . . it glistened apparently by its own radiance, and illuminated the finger and outstretched hand on which it perched with a white gleam like that of precious stones."

The narrative sets forth the many difficulties and problems of the artist, each recounted in some detail. It indicates, also, his aims, his aesthetic struggles, the nature of his achievement, and its value to him.

An elderly man, with his pretty daughter on his arm, was passing along the street, and emerged from the gloom of the cloudy evening into the light that fell across the pavement from the window of a small shop. It was a projecting window; and on the inside were suspended a variety of watches, pinchbeck, silver, and one or two of gold, all with their faces turned from the streets, as if churlishly disinclined to inform the wayfarers what o'clock it was. Seated within the shop, sidelong to the window, with his pale face bent earnestly over some

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6 pinchbeck, an alloy of copper and zinc, used to imitate gold in cheap jewelry

delicate piece of mechanism on which was thrown the concentrated lustre of a shade lamp, appeared a young man.

"What can Owen Warland be about?" muttered old Peter Hovenden, himself a retired watchmaker, and the former master of this same young man whose occupation he was now wondering at. "What can the fellow be about? These six months past I have never come by his shop without seeing him just as steadily at work as now. It would be a flight beyond his usual foolery to seek for the perpetual motion; and yet I know enough of my old business to be certain that what he is now so busy with is no part of the machinery of a watch."

"Perhaps, father," said Annie, without showing much interest in the question, "Owen is inventing a new kind of timekeeper. I am sure he has ingenuity enough."

"Poh, child! He has not the sort of ingenuity to invent anything better than a Dutch toy," answered her father, who had formerly been put to much vexation by Owen Warland's irregular genius. "A plague on such ingenuity! All the effect that ever I knew of it was to spoil the accuracy of some of the best watches in my shop. He would turn the sun out of its orbit and derange the whole course of time, if, as I said before, his ingenuity could grasp anything bigger than a child's toy!"

"Hush, father! He hears you!" whispered Annie, pressing the old man's arm. "His ears are as delicate as his feelings; and you know how easily disturbed they are. Do let us move on."

So Peter Hovenden and his daughter Annie plodded on without further conversation, until in a by-street of the town they found themselves passing the open door of a blacksmith's shop. Within was seen the forge, now blazing up and illuminating the high and dusky roof, and now confining its lustre to a narrow precinct of the coal-strewn floor, according as the breath of the bellows was puffed forth or again inhaled into its vast leathern lungs. In the intervals of brightness it was easy to distinguish objects in remote corners of the shop and the horseshoes that hung upon the wall; in the momentary gloom the fire seemed to be glimmering amidst the vagueness of uninclosed space. Moving about in this red glare and alternate dusk was the figure of the blacksmith, well worthy to be viewed in so picturesque an aspect of light and shade, where the bright blaze struggled with the black night, as if each would have snatched his comely strength from the other. Anon he drew a white-hot bar of iron from the coals, laid it on the anvil, uplifted his arm of might, and was soon enveloped in the myriads of sparks which the strokes of his hammer scattered into the surrounding gloom.

"Now, that is a pleasant sight," said the old watchmaker. "I know what it is to work in gold; but give me the worker in iron after all is said and done. He spends his labor upon a reality. What say you, daughter Annie?"

"Pray don't speak so loud, father," whispered Annie, "Robert Danforth will hear you."

"And what if he should hear me?" said Peter Hovenden. "I say again, it is a good and a wholesome thing to depend upon main strength and reality, and to earn one's bread with the bare and brawny arm of a blacksmith. A watchmaker gets his brain puzzled by his wheels within a wheel, or loses his health or the nicety of his eyesight, as was my case, and finds himself at middle age, or a little after, past labor at his own trade and fit for nothing else, yet too poor to live at his ease. So I say once again, give me main strength for my money. And then, how it takes the nonsense out of a man! Did you ever hear of a blacksmith being such a fool as Owen Warland yonder?"

"Well said, uncle Hovenden!" shouted Robert Danforth from the forge, in a full, deep, merry voice, that made the roof re-echo. "And what says Miss Annie to that doctrine? She, I suppose, will think it a genteeler business to tinker up a lady's watch than to forge a horseshoe or make a gridiron."

Annie drew her father onward without giving him time for reply.

But we must return to Owen Warland's shop, and spend more meditation upon his history and character than either Peter Hovenden, or probably his daughter Annie, or Owen's old school-fellow, Robert Danforth, would have thought due to so slight a subject. From the time that his little fingers could grasp a penknife, Owen had been remarkable for a delicate ingenuity, which sometimes produced pretty shapes in wood, principally figures of flowers and birds, and sometimes seemed to aim at the hidden mysteries of mechanism. But it was always

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11 **seek . . . motion,** the attempt, often made in times past, to invent a machine perpetually supplying its own motive forces independently of any action from without

for purposes of grace, and never with any mockery of the useful. He did not, like the crowd of school-boy artisans, construct little windmills on the angle of a barn or watermills across the neighboring brook. Those who discovered such peculiarity in the boy as to think it worth their while to observe him closely, sometimes saw reason to suppose that he was attempting to imitate the beautiful movements of Nature as exemplified in the flight of birds or the activity of little animals. It seemed, in fact, a new development of the love of the beautiful, such as might have made him a poet, a painter, or a sculptor, and which was as completely refined from all utilitarian coarseness as it could have been in either of the fine arts. He looked with singular distaste at the stiff and regular processes of ordinary machinery. Being once carried to see a steam-engine, in the expectation that his intuitive comprehension of mechanical principles would be gratified, he turned pale and grew sick, as if something monstrous and unnatural had been presented to him. This horror was partly owing to the size and terrible energy of the iron laborer; for the character of Owen's mind was microscopic, and tended naturally to the minute, in accordance with his diminutive frame and the marvellous smallness and delicate power of his fingers. Not that his sense of beauty was thereby diminished into a sense of prettiness. The beautiful idea has no relation to size, and may be as perfectly developed in a space too minute for any but microscopic investigation as within the ample verge that is measured by the arc of the rainbow. But, at all events, this characteristic minuteness in his objects and accomplishments made the world even more incapable than it might otherwise have been of appreciating Owen Warland's genius. The boy's relatives saw nothing better to be done—as perhaps there was not—than to bind him apprentice to a watchmaker, hoping that his strange ingenuity might thus be regulated and put to utilitarian purposes.

Peter Hovenden's opinion of his apprentice has already been expressed. He could make nothing of the lad. Owen's apprehension of the professional mysteries, it is true, were inconceivably quick; but he altogether forgot or despised the grand object of a watchmaker's business, and cared no more for the measurement of time than if it had been merged into eternity. So long, however, as he remained under his old master's care, Owen's lack of sturdiness made it possible, by strict injunctions and sharp oversight, to restrain his creative eccentricity within bounds; but when his apprenticeship was served out, and he had taken the little shop which Peter Hovenden's failing eyesight compelled him to relinquish, then did people recognize how unfit a person was Owen Warland to lead old blind Father Time along his daily course. One of his most rational projects was to connect a musical operation with the machinery of his watches, so that all the harsh dissonances of life might be rendered tuneful, and each flitting moment fall into the abyss of the past in golden drops of harmony. If a family clock was intrusted to him for repair,—one of those tall, ancient clocks that have grown nearly allied to human nature by measuring out the lifetime of many generations,—he would take upon himself to arrange a dance or funeral procession of figures across its venerable face, representing twelve mirthful or melancholy hours. Several freaks of this kind quite destroyed the young watchmaker's credit with that steady and matter-of-fact class of people who hold the opinion that time is not to be trifled with, whether considered as the medium of advancement and prosperity in this world or preparation for the next. His custom rapidly diminished—a misfortune, however, that was probably reckoned among his better accidents by Owen Warland, who was becoming more and more absorbed in a secret occupation which drew all his science and manual dexterity into itself, and likewise gave full employment to the characteristic tendencies of his genius. This pursuit had already consumed many months.

After the old watchmaker and his pretty daughter had gazed at him out of the obscurity of the street, Owen Warland was seized with a fluttering of the nerves, which made his hand tremble too violently to proceed with such delicate labor as he was now engaged upon.

"It was Annie herself!" murmured he. "I should have known it, by this throbbing of my heart, before I heard her father's voice. Ah, how it throbs! I shall scarcely be able to work again on this exquisite mechanism to-night. Annie! dearest Annie! thou shouldst give firmness to my heart and hand, and not shake them thus; for if I strive to put the very spirit of beauty into form and give it

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26 **The beautiful . . . rainbow.** Hawthorne perhaps thought of his work in the short tale as exemplifying this principle. The sentence is reminiscent of Ben Jonson's "In small proportions we just beauties see" from "A Pindaric Ode"

motion, it is for thy sake alone. O throbbing heart, be quiet! If my labor be thus thwarted, there will come vague and unsatisfied dreams which will leave me spiritless to-morrow."

As he was endeavoring to settle himself again to his task, the shop door opened and gave admittance to no other than the stalwart figure which Peter Hovenden had paused to admire, as seen amid the light and shadow of the blacksmith's shop. Robert Danforth had brought a little anvil of his own manufacture, and peculiarly constructed, which the young artist had recently bespoken. Owen examined the article and pronounced it fashioned according to his wish.

"Why, yes," said Robert Danforth, his strong voice filling the shop as with the sound of a bass viol, "I consider myself equal to anything in the way of my own trade; though I should have made but a poor figure at yours with such a fist as this," added he, laughing, as he laid his vast hand beside the delicate one of Owen. "But what then? I put more main strength into one blow of my sledge hammer than all that you have expended since you were a 'prentice. Is not that the truth?"

"Very probably," answered the low and slender voice of Owen. "Strength is an earthly monster. I make no pretensions to it. My force, whatever there may be of it, is altogether spiritual."

"Well, but, Owen, what are you about?" asked his old school-fellow, still in such a hearty volume of tone that it made the artist shrink, especially as the question related to a subject so sacred as the absorbing dream of his imagination. "Folks do say that you are trying to discover the perpetual motion."

"The perpetual motion? Nonsense!" replied Owen Warland, with a movement of disgust; for he was full of little petulances. "It can never be discovered. It is a dream that may delude men whose brains are mystified with matter, but not me. Besides, if such a discovery were possible, it would not be worth my while to make it only to have the secret turned to such purposes as are now effected by steam and water power. I am not ambitious to be honored with the paternity of a new kind of cotton machine."

"That would be droll enough!" cried the blacksmith, breaking out into such an uproar of laughter that Owen himself and the bell glasses on his work-board quivered in unison. "No, no, Owen! No child of yours will have iron joints and sinews. Well, I won't hinder you any more. Good night, Owen, and success, and if you need any assistance, so far as a downright blow of hammer upon anvil will answer the purpose, I'm your man."

And with another laugh the man of main strength left the shop.

"How strange it is," whispered Owen Warland to himself, leaning his head upon his hand, "that all my musings, my purposes, my passion for the beautiful, my consciousness of power to create it,—a finer, more ethereal power, of which this earthly giant can have no conception,—all, all, look so vain and idle whenever my path is crossed by Robert Danforth! He would drive me mad were I to meet him often. His hard, brute force darkens and confuses the spiritual element within me; but I, too, will be strong in my own way. I will not yield to him."

He took from beneath a glass a piece of minute machinery, which he set in the condensed light of his lamp, and, looking intently at it through a magnifying glass, proceeded to operate with a delicate instrument of steel. In an instant, however, he fell back in his chair and clasped his hands, with a look of horror on his face that made its small features as impressive as those of a giant would have been.

"Heaven! What have I done?" exclaimed he. "The vapor, the influence of that brute force,—it has bewildered me and obscured my perception. I have made the very stroke—the fatal stroke—that I have dreaded from the first. It is all over—the toil of months, the object of my life. I am ruined!"

And there he sat, in strange despair, until his lamp flickered in the socket and left the Artist of the Beautiful in darkness.

Thus it is that ideas, which grow up within the imagination and appear so lovely to it and of a value beyond whatever men call valuable, are exposed to be shattered and annihilated by contact with the practical. It is requisite for the ideal artist to possess a force of character that seems hardly compatible with its delicacy; he must keep his faith in himself while the incredulous world assails him with its utter disbelief; he must stand up against mankind and be his own sole disciple, both as respects his genius and the objects to which it is directed.

For a time Owen Warland succumbed to this severe but inevitable test. He spent a few sluggish weeks with his head so continually resting in his hands that the

towns-people had scarcely an opportunity to see his countenance. When at last it was again uplifted to the light of day, a cold, dull, nameless change was perceptible upon it. In the opinion of Peter Hovenden, however, and that order of sagacious understandings who think that life should be regulated, like clockwork, with leaden weights, the alteration was entirely for the better. Owen now, indeed, applied himself to business with dogged industry. It was marvellous to witness the obtuse gravity with which he would inspect the wheels of a great old silver watch; thereby delighting the owner, in whose fob it had been worn till he deemed it a portion of his own life, and was accordingly jealous of its treatment. In consequence of the good report thus acquired, Owen Warland was invited by the proper authorities to regulate the clock in the church steeple. He succeeded so admirably in this matter of public interest that the merchants gruffly acknowledged his merits on 'Change; the nurse whispered his praises as she gave the potion in the sick-chamber; the lover blessed him at the hour of appointed interview; and the town in general thanked Owen for the punctuality of dinner time. In a word, the heavy weight upon his spirits kept everything in order, not merely within his own system, but wheresoever the iron accents of the church clock were audible. It was a circumstance, though minute, yet characteristic of his present state, that, when employed to engrave names or initials on silver spoons, he now wrote the requisite letters in the plainest possible style, omitting a variety of fanciful flourishes that had heretofore distinguished his work in this kind.

One day, during the era of this happy transformation, old Peter Hovenden came to visit his former apprentice.

"Well, Owen," said he, "I am glad to hear such good accounts of you from all quarters, and especially from the town clock yonder, which speaks in your commendation every hour of the twenty-four. Only get rid altogether of your nonsensical trash about the beautiful, which I nor nobody else, nor yourself to boot, could ever understand, —only free yourself of that, and your success in life is as sure as daylight. Why, if you go on in this way, I should even venture to let you doctor this precious old watch of mine, though, except my daughter Annie, I have nothing else so valuable in the world."

"I should hardly dare touch it, sir," replied Owen, in a depressed tone; for he was weighed down by his old master's presence.

"In time," said the latter,—"in time, you will be capable of it."

The old watchmaker, with the freedom naturally consequent on his former authority, went on inspecting the work which Owen had in hand at the moment, together with other matters that were in progress. The artist, meanwhile, could scarcely lift his head. There was nothing so antipodal to his nature as this man's cold, unimaginative sagacity, by contact with which everything was converted into a dream except the densest matter of the physical world. Owen groaned in spirit and prayed fervently to be delivered from him.

"But what is this?" cried Peter Hovenden abruptly, taking up a dusty bell glass, beneath which appeared a mechanical something, as delicate and minute as the system of a butterfly's anatomy. "What have we here? Owen! Owen! there is witchcraft in these little chains, and wheels, and paddles. See! with one pinch of my finger and thumb I am going to deliver you from all future peril."

"For Heaven's sake," screamed Owen Warland, springing up with wonderful energy, "as you would not drive me mad, do not touch it! The slightest pressure of your finger would ruin me forever."

"Aha, young man! And is it so?" said the old watchmaker, looking at him with just enough of penetration to torture Owen's soul with the bitterness of worldly criticism. "Well, take your own course; but I warn you again that in this small piece of mechanism lives your evil spirit. Shall I exorcise him?"

"You are my evil spirit," answered Owen, much excited,—"you and the hard, coarse world! The leaden thoughts and the despondency that you fling upon me are my clogs, else I should long ago have achieved the task that I was created for."

Peter Hovenden shook his head, with the mixture of contempt and indignation which mankind, of whom he was partly a representative, deem themselves entitled to feel towards all simpletons who seek other prizes than the dusty one along the highway. He then took his leave, with an uplifted finger and a sneer upon his face that haunted the artist's dreams for many a night afterwards. At the time of his old master's visit, Owen was probably on the point of taking up the relinquished task; but, by this sinister event, he was thrown back into the state whence he had been slowly emerging.

But the innate tendency of his soul had only been accumulating fresh vigor during its apparent sluggishness. As the summer advanced he almost totally relinquished his business, and permitted Father Time, so far as the old gentleman was represented by the clocks and watches under his control, to stray at random through human life, making infinite confusion among the train of bewildered hours. He wasted the sunshine, as people said, in wandering through the woods and fields and along the banks of streams. There, like a child, he found amusement in chasing butterflies or watching the motions of water insects. There was something truly mysterious in the intentness with which he contemplated these living playthings as they sported on the breeze or examined the structure of an imperial insect whom he had imprisoned. The chase of butterflies was an apt emblem of the ideal pursuit in which he had spent so many golden hours; but would the beautiful idea ever be yielded to his hand like the butterfly that symbolized it? Sweet, doubtless, were these days, and congenial to the artist's soul. They were full of bright conceptions, which gleamed through his intellectual world as the butterflies gleamed through the outward atmosphere, and were real to him, for the instant, without the toil, and perplexity, and many disappointments of attempting to make them visible to the sensual eye Alas that the artist, whether in poetry, or whatever other material, may not content himself with the inward enjoyment of the beautiful, but must chase the flitting mystery beyond the verge of his ethereal domain, and crush its frail being in seizing it with material grasp. Owen Warland felt the impulse to give external reality to his ideas as irresistibly as any of the poets or painters who have arrayed the world in a dimmer and fainter beauty, imperfectly copied from the richness of their visions.

The night was now his time for the slow progress of re-creating the one idea to which all his intellectual activity referred itself. Always at the approach of dusk he stole into the town, locked himself within his shop, and wrought with patient delicacy of touch for many hours. Sometimes he was startled by the rap of the watchman, who, when all the world should be asleep, had caught the gleam of lamplight through the crevices of Owen Warland's shutters. Daylight, to the morbid sensibility of his mind, seemed to have an intrusiveness that interfered with his pursuits. On cloudy and inclement days, therefore, he sat with his head upon his hands, muffling, as it were, his sensitive brain in a mist of indefinite musings; for it was a relief to escape from the sharp distinctness with which he was compelled to shape out his thoughts during his nightly toil.

From one of these fits of torpor he was aroused by the entrance of Annie Hovenden, who came into the shop with the freedom of a customer, and also with something of the familiarity of a childish friend. She had worn a hole through her silver thimble, and wanted Owen to repair it.

"But I don't know whether you will condescend to such a task," said she, laughing, "now that you are so taken up with the notion of putting spirit into machinery."

"Where did you get that idea, Annie?" said Owen, starting in surprise.

"Oh, out of my own head," answered she, "and from something that I heard you say, long ago, when you were but a boy and I a little child. But come; will you mend this poor thimble of mine?"

"Anything for your sake, Annie," said Owen Warland, —"anything, even were it to work at Robert Danforth's forge."

"And that would be a pretty sight!" retorted Annie, glancing with imperceptible slightness at the artist's small and slender frame. "Well, here is the thimble"

"But that is a strange idea of yours," said Owen, "about the spiritualization of matter."

And then the thought stole into his mind that this young girl possessed the gift to comprehend him better than all the world besides. And what a help and strength would it be to him in his lonely toil if he could gain the sympathy of the only being whom he loved! To persons whose pursuits are insulated from the common business of life—who are either in advance of mankind or apart from it—there often comes a sensation of moral cold that makes the spirit shiver as if it had reached the frozen solitudes around the pole. What the prophet, the poet, the reformer, the criminal, or any other man with human yearnings, but separated from the multitude by a peculiar lot, might feel, poor Owen felt.

"Annie," cried he, growing pale as death at the thought, "how gladly would I tell you the secret of my pursuit! You, methinks, would estimate it rightly. You, I know, would hear it with a reverence that I must not expect from the harsh material world."

"Would I not? to be sure I would!" replied Annie Hovenden, lightly laughing. "Come; explain to me quickly what is the meaning of this little whirligig, so delicately wrought that it might be a plaything for Queen Mab. See! I will put it in motion."

"Hold!" exclaimed Owen, "hold!"

Annie had but given the slightest possible touch, with the point of a needle, to the same minute portion of complicated machinery which has been more than once mentioned, when the artist seized her by the wrist with a force that made her scream aloud. She was affrighted at the convulsion of intense rage and anguish that writhed across his features. The next instant he let his head sink upon his hands.

"Go, Annie," murmured he; "I have deceived myself, and must suffer for it. I yearned for sympathy and thought, and fancied, and dreamed that you might give it me; but you lack the talisman, Annie, that should admit you into my secrets. That touch has undone the toil of months and the thought of a lifetime! It was not your fault, Annie; but you have ruined me!"

Poor Owen Warland! He had indeed erred, yet pardonably; for if any human spirit could have sufficiently reverenced the processes so sacred in his eyes, it must have been a woman's. Even Annie Hovenden, possibly, might not have disappointed him had she been enlightened by the deep intelligence of love.

The artist spent the ensuing winter in a way that satisfied any persons who had hitherto retained a hopeful opinion of him that he was, in truth, irrevocably doomed to inutility as regarded the world, and to an evil destiny on his own part. The decease of a relative had put him in possession of a small inheritance. Thus freed from the necessity of toil, and having lost the steadfast influence of a great purpose,—great, at least, to him,—he abandoned himself to habits from which it might have been supposed the mere delicacy of his organization would have availed to secure him. But when the ethereal portion of a man of genius is obscured, the earthly part assumes an influence the more uncontrollable, because the character is now thrown off the balance to which Providence had so nicely adjusted it, and which, in coarser natures, is adjusted by some other method. Owen Warland made proof of whatever show of bliss may be found in riot. He looked at the world through the golden medium of wine, and contemplated the visions that bubble up so gayly around the brim of the glass, and that people the air with shapes of pleasant madness, which so soon grow ghostly and forlorn. Even when this dismal and inevitable change had taken place, the young man might still have continued to quaff the cup of enchantments, though its vapor did but shroud life in gloom and fill the gloom with spectres that mocked at him. There was a certain irksomeness of spirit, which, being real, and the deepest sensation of which the artist was now conscious, was more intolerable than any fantastic miseries and horrors that the abuse of wine could summon up. In the latter case he could remember, even out of the midst of his trouble, that all was but a delusion; in the former, the heavy anguish was his actual life.

From this perilous state he was redeemed by an incident which more than one person witnessed, but of which the shrewdest could not explain or conjecture the operation on Owen Warland's mind It was very simple. On a warm afternoon of spring, as the artist sat among his riotous companions with a glass of wine before him, a splendid butterfly flew in at the open window and fluttered about his head.

"Ah," exclaimed Owen, who had drank freely, "are you alive again, child of the sun and playmate of the summer breeze, after your dismal winter's nap? Then it is time for me to be at work!"

And, leaving his unemptied glass upon the table, he departed and was never known to sip another drop of wine.

And now, again, he resumed his wanderings in the woods and fields. It might be fancied that the bright butterfly, which had come so spirit-like into the window as Owen sat with the rude revellers, was indeed a spirit commissioned to recall him to the pure, ideal life that had so etherealized him among men. It might be fancied that he went forth to seek this spirit in its sunny haunts, for still, as in the summer time gone by, he was seen to steal gently up wherever a butterfly had alighted, and lose himself in contemplation of it. When it took flight his eyes followed the winged vision, as if its airy track would show the path to heaven. But what could be the purpose

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5 **Queen Mab,** "the fairies' midwife," who delivers men of their dreams See the famous description in **Romeo and Juliet,** Act I, Scene iv, ll 53-94 Hawthorne's idea of a "spiritualized mechanism" as presented in this story may have owed something to Shakespeare's description of Queen Mab's chariot

of the unseasonable toil, which was again resumed, as the watchman knew by the lines of lamplight through the crevices of Owen Warland's shutters? The towns-people had one comprehensive explanation of all these singularities. Owen Warland had gone mad! How universally efficacious—how satisfactory, too, and soothing to the injured sensibility of narrowness and dulness—is this easy method of accounting for whatever lies beyond the world's most ordinary scope! From St. Paul's days down to our poor little Artist of the Beautiful, the same talisman had been applied to the elucidation of all mysteries in the words or deeds of men who spoke or acted too wisely or too well. In Owen Warland's case the judgment of his towns-people may have been correct. Perhaps he was mad. The lack of sympathy—that contrast between himself and his neighbors which took away the restraint of example—was enough to make him so. Or possibly he had caught just so much of the ethereal radiance as served to bewilder him, in an earthly sense, by its intermixture with the common daylight.

One evening, when the artist had returned from a customary ramble and had just thrown the lustre of his lamp on the delicate piece of work so often interrupted, but still taken up again, as if his fate were embodied in its mechanism, he was surprised by the entrance of old Peter Hovenden. Owen never met this man without a shrinking of the heart. Of all the world he was most terrible, by reason of a keen understanding which saw so distinctly what it did see, and disbelieved so uncompromisingly in what it could not see. On this occasion the old watchmaker had merely a gracious word or two to say.

"Owen, my lad," said he, "we must see you at my house to-morrow night."

The artist began to mutter some excuse.

"Oh, but it must be so," quoth Peter Hovenden, "for the sake of the days when you were one of the household. What, my boy! don't you know that my daughter Annie is engaged to Robert Danforth? We are making an entertainment, in our humble way, to celebrate the event."

"Ah!" said Owen.

That little monosyllable was all he uttered; its tone seemed cold and unconcerned to an ear like Peter Hovenden's; and yet there was in it the stifled outcry of the poor artist's heart, which he compressed within him like a man holding down an evil spirit. One slight outbreak, however, imperceptible to the old watchmaker, he allowed himself. Raising the instrument with which he was about to begin his work, he let it fall upon the little system of machinery that had, anew, cost him months of thought and toil. It was shattered by the stroke!

Owen Warland's story would have been no tolerable representation of the troubled life of those who strive to create the beautiful, if, amid all other thwarting influences, love had not interposed to steal the cunning from his hand. Outwardly he had been no ardent or enterprising lover; the career of his passion had confined its tumults and vicissitudes so entirely within the artist's imagination that Annie herself had scarcely more than a woman's intuitive perception of it; but, in Owen's view, it covered the whole field of his life. Forgetful of the time when she had shown herself incapable of any deep response, he had persisted in connecting all his dreams of artistical success with Annie's image; she was the visible shape in which the spiritual power that he worshipped, and on whose altar he hoped to lay a not unworthy offering, was made manifest to him. Of course he had deceived himself; there were no such attributes in Annie Hovenden as his imagination had endowed her with. She, in the aspect which she wore to his inward vision, was as much a creature of his own as the mysterious piece of mechanism would be were it ever realized. Had he become convinced of his mistake through the medium of successful love,—had he won Annie to his bosom, and there beheld her fade from angel into ordinary woman,—the disappointment might have driven him back, with concentrated energy, upon his sole remaining object. On the other hand, had he found Annie what he fancied, his lot would have been so rich in beauty that out of its mere redundancy he might have wrought the beautiful into many a worthier type than he had toiled for; but the guise in which his sorrow came to him, the sense that the angel of his life had been snatched away and given to a rude man of earth and iron, who could neither need nor appreciate her ministra-

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9 St. Paul's. The reference is to Acts 26 24: ". . . Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad"

tions,—this was the very perversity of fate that makes human existence appear too absurd and contradictory to be the scene of one other hope or one other fear. There was nothing left for Owen Warland but to sit down like a man that had been stunned.

He went through a fit of illness. After his recovery his small slender frame assumed an obtuser garniture of flesh than it had ever before worn. His thin cheeks became round; his delicate little hand, so spiritually fashioned to achieve fairy task-work, grew plumper than the hand of a thriving infant. His aspect had a childishness such as might have induced a stranger to pat him on the head—pausing, however, in the act, to wonder what manner of child was here. It was as if the spirit had gone out of him, leaving the body to flourish in a sort of vegetable existence. Not that Owen Warland was idiotic. He could talk, and not irrationally. Somewhat of a babbler, indeed, did people begin to think him; for he was apt to discourse at wearisome length of marvels of mechanism that he had read about in books, but which he had learned to consider as absolutely fabulous. Among them he enumerated the Man of Brass, constructed by Albertus Magnus, and the Brazen Head of Friar Bacon; and, coming down to later times, the automata of a little coach and horses, which it was pretended had been manufactured for the Dauphin of France; together with an insect that buzzed about the ear like a living fly, and yet was but a contrivance of minute steel springs. There was a story, too, of a duck that waddled, and quacked, and ate; though, had any honest citizen purchased it for dinner, he would have found himself cheated with the mere mechanical apparition of a duck.

"But all these accounts," said Owen Warland, "I am now satisfied are mere impositions."

Then, in a mysterious way, he would confess that he once thought differently. In his idle and dreamy days he had considered it possible, in a certain sense, to spiritualize machinery, and to combine with the new species of life and motion thus produced a beauty that should attain to the ideal which Nature has proposed to herself in all her creatures, but has never taken pains to realize. He seemed, however, to retain no very distinct perception either of the process of achieving this object or of the design itself.

"I have thrown it all aside now," he would say. "It was a dream such as young men are always mystifying themselves with. Now that I have acquired a little common sense, it makes me laugh to think of it."

Poor, poor and fallen Owen Warland! These were the symptoms that he had ceased to be an inhabitant of the better sphere that lies unseen around us. He had lost his faith in the invisible, and now prided himself, as such unfortunates invariably do, in the wisdom which rejected much that even his eye could see, and trusted confidently in nothing but what his hand could touch This is the calamity of men whose spiritual part dies out of them and leaves the grosser understanding to assimilate them more and more to the things of which alone it can take cognizance; but in Owen Warland the spirit was not dead nor passed away; it only slept.

How it awoke again is not recorded. Perhaps the torpid slumber was broken by a convulsive pain. Perhaps, as in a former instance, the butterfly came and hovered about his head and reinspired him,—as indeed this creature of the sunshine had always a mysterious mission for the artist,—reinspired him with the former purpose of his life. Whether it were pain or happiness that thrilled through his veins, his first impulse was to thank Heaven for rendering him again the being of thought, imagination, and keenest sensibility that he had long ceased to be.

"Now for my task," said he. "Never did I feel such strength for it as now."

Yet, strong as he felt himself, he was incited to toil the more diligently by an anxiety lest death should surprise him in the midst of his labors. This anxiety, perhaps, is common to all men who set their hearts upon anything so high, in their own view of it, that life becomes of importance only as conditional to its accomplishment. So long as we love life for itself, we seldom dread the losing it. When we desire life for the attainment of an object, we recognize the frailty of its texture. But, side by side with this sense of insecurity, there is a vital faith in our invulnerability to the shaft of death while engaged in any task that seems assigned by Provi-

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23 **Albertus Magnus** (1193-1280), Bavarian philosopher and schoolman • 23 **Brazen . . . Bacon.** Friar Bacon (1214-1294) was an English philosopher who, according to legend, made a head of brass • 26 **Dauphin,** from 1349 to 1830, the title of the eldest son of the king of France; here the reference is specifically to the son of Louis XVI

dence as our proper thing to do, and which the world would have cause to mourn for should we leave it unaccomplished. Can the philosopher, big with the inspiration of an idea that is to reform mankind, believe that he is to be beckoned from this sensible existence at the very instant when he is mustering his breath to speak the word of light? Should he perish so, the weary ages may pass away—the world's, whose life sand may fall, drop by drop—before another intellect is prepared to develop the truth that might have been uttered then. But history affords many an example where the most precious spirit, at any particular epoch manifested in human shape, has gone hence untimely, without space allowed him, so far as mortal judgment could discern, to perform his mission on the earth. The prophet dies, and the man of torpid heart and sluggish brain lives on. The poet leaves his song half sung, or finishes it, beyond the scope of mortal ears, in a celestial choir. The painter—as Allston did—leaves half his conception on the canvas to sadden us with its imperfect beauty, and goes to picture forth the whole, if it be no irreverence to say so, in the hues of heaven. But rather such incomplete designs of this life will be perfected nowhere. This so frequent abortion of man's dearest projects must be taken as a proof that the deeds of earth, however etherealized by piety or genius, are without value, except as exercises and manifestations of the spirit. In heaven, all ordinary thought is higher and more melodious than Milton's song. Then, would he add another verse to any strain that he had left unfinished here?

But to return to Owen Warland. It was his fortune, good or ill, to achieve the purpose of his life. Pass we over a long space of intense thought, yearning effort, minute toil, and wasting anxiety, succeeded by an instant of solitary triumph: let all this be imagined; and then behold the artist, on a winter evening, seeking admittance to Robert Danforth's fireside circle There he found the man of iron, with his massive substance thoroughly warmed and attempered by domestic influences. And there was Annie, too, now transformed into a matron, with much of her husband's plain and sturdy nature, but imbued, as Owen Warland still believed, with a finer grace, that might enable her to be the interpreter between strength and beauty. It happened, likewise, that old Peter Hovenden was a guest this evening at his daughter's fireside, and it was his well-remembered expression of keen, cold criticism that first encountered the artist's glance.

"My old friend Owen!" cried Robert Danforth, starting up, and compressing the artist's delicate fingers within a hand that was accustomed to gripe bars of iron. "This is kind and neighborly to come to us at last. I was afraid your perpetual motion had bewitched you out of the remembrance of old times."

"We are glad to see you," said Annie, while a blush reddened her matronly cheek. "It was not like a friend to stay from us so long."

"Well, Owen," inquired the old watchmaker, as his first greeting, "how comes on the beautiful? Have you created it at last?"

The artist did not immediately reply, being startled by the apparition of a young child of strength that was tumbling about on the carpet,—a little personage who had come mysteriously out of the infinite, but with something so sturdy and real in his composition that he seemed moulded out of the densest substance which earth could supply. This hopeful infant crawled towards the new-comer, and setting himself on end, as Robert Danforth expressed the posture, stared at Owen with a look of such sagacious observation that the mother could not help exchanging a proud glance with her husband. But the artist was disturbed by the child's look, as imagining a resemblance between it and Peter Hovenden's habitual expression. He could have fancied that the old watchmaker was compressed into this baby shape, and looking out of those baby eyes, and repeating, as he now did, the malicious question:—

"The beautiful, Owen! How comes on the beautiful? Have you succeeded in creating the beautiful?"

"I have succeeded," replied the artist, with a momentary light of triumph in his eyes and a smile of sunshine, yet steeped in such depth of thought that it was almost sadness. "Yes, my friends, it is the truth. I have succeeded."

"Indeed!" cried Annie, a look of maiden mirthfulness peeping out of her face again. "And is it lawful now, to inquire what the secret is?"

"Surely; it is to disclose it that I have come," answered

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3 **big**, pregnant • 8 **sand**, of the hourglass • 19 **Allston**. Washington Allston (1779-1843) left his picture "Belshazzar's Feast" unfinished at his death

Owen Warland. "You shall know, and see, and touch, and possess the secret! For, Annie,—if by that name I may still address the friend of my boyish years,—Annie, it is for your bridal gift that I have wrought this spiritualized mechanism, this harmony of motion, this mystery of beauty. It comes late, indeed; but it is as we go onward in life, when objects begin to lose their freshness of hue and our souls their delicacy of perception, that the spirit of beauty is most needed. If,—forgive me, Annie,—if you know how to value this gift, it can never come too late."

He produced, as he spoke, what seemed a jewel box. It was carved richly out of ebony by his own hand, and inlaid with a fanciful tracery of pearl, representing a boy in pursuit of a butterfly, which, elsewhere, had become a winged spirit, and was flying heavenward; while the boy, or youth, had found such efficacy in his strong desire that he ascended from earth to cloud, and from cloud to celestial atmosphere, to win the beautiful. This case of ebony the artist opened, and bade Annie place her finger on its edge. She did so, but almost screamed as a butterfly fluttered forth, and, alighting on her finger's tip, sat waving the ample magnificence of its purple and gold-speckled wings, as if in prelude to a flight. It is impossible to express by words the glory, the splendor, the delicate gorgeousness which were softened into the beauty of this object. Nature's ideal butterfly was here realized in all its perfection; not in the pattern of such faded insects as flit among earthly flowers, but of those which hover across the meads of paradise for child-angels and the spirits of departed infants to disport themselves with. The rich down was visible upon its wings; the lustre of its eyes seemed instinct with spirit. The firelight glimmered around this wonder—the candles gleamed upon it, but it glistened apparently by its own radiance, and illuminated the finger and outstretched hand on which it rested with a white gleam like that of precious stones. In its perfect beauty, the consideration of size was entirely lost. Had its wings overreached the firmament, the mind could not have been more filled or satisfied.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" exclaimed Annie. "Is it alive? Is it alive?"

"Alive? To be sure it is," answered her husband. "Do you suppose any mortal has skill enough to make a butterfly, or would put himself to the trouble of making one, when any child may catch a score of them in a summer's afternoon? Alive? Certainly! But this pretty box is undoubtedly of our friend Owen's manufacture; and really it does him credit."

At this moment the butterfly waved its wings anew, with a motion so absolutely lifelike that Annie was startled, and even awestricken; for, in spite of her husband's opinion, she could not satisfy herself whether it was indeed a living creature or a piece of wondrous mechanism.

"Is it alive?" she repeated, more earnestly than before.

"Judge for yourself," said Owen Warland, who stood gazing in her face with fixed attention.

The butterfly now flung itself upon the air, fluttered round Annie's head, and soared into a distant region of the parlor, still making itself perceptible to sight by the starry gleam in which the motion of its wings enveloped it. The infant on the floor followed its course with his sagacious little eyes. After flying about the room, it returned in a spiral curve and settled again on Annie's finger.

"But is it alive?" exclaimed she again; and the finger on which the gorgeous mystery had alighted was so tremulous that the butterfly was forced to balance himself with his wings. "Tell me if it be alive, or whether you created it."

"Wherefore ask who created it, so it be beautiful?" replied Owen Warland. "Alive? Yes, Annie; it may well be said to possess life, for it has absorbed my own being into itself; and in the secret of that butterfly, and in its beauty,—which is not merely outward, but deep as its whole system,—is represented the intellect, the imagination, the sensibility, the soul of an Artist of the Beautiful! Yes; I created it. But"—and here his countenance somewhat changed—"this butterfly is not now to me what it was when I beheld it afar off in the day-dreams of my youth."

"Be it what it may, it is a pretty plaything," said the blacksmith, grinning with childlike delight. "I wonder whether it would condescend to alight on such a great clumsy finger as mine? Hold it hither, Annie."

By the artist's direction, Annie touched her finger's tip to that of her husband; and, after a momentary delay, the butterfly fluttered from one to the other. It preluded a second flight by a similar, yet not precisely the same, waving of wings as in the first experiment; then, ascend-

ing from the blacksmith's stalwart finger, it rose in a gradually enlarging curve to the ceiling, made one wide sweep around the room, and returned with an undulating movement to the point whence it had started.

"Well, that does beat all nature!" cried Robert Danforth, bestowing the heartiest praise that he could find expression for; and, indeed, had he paused there, a man of finer words and nicer perception could not easily have said more. "That goes beyond me, I confess. But what then? There is more real use in one downright blow of my sledge hammer than in the whole five years' labor that our friend Owen has wasted on this butterfly."

Here the child clapped his hands and made a great babble of indistinct utterance, apparently demanding that the butterfly should be given him for a plaything.

Owen Warland, meanwhile, glanced sidelong at Annie, to discover whether she sympathized in her husband's estimate of the comparative value of the beautiful and the practical. There was, amid all her kindness towards himself, amid all the wonder and admiration with which she contemplated the marvelous work of his hands and incarnation of his idea, a secret scorn—too secret, perhaps, for her own consciousness, and perceptible only to such intuitive discernment as that of the artist. But Owen, in the latter stages of his pursuit, had risen out of the region in which such a discovery might have been torture. He knew that the world, and Annie as the representative of the world, whatever praise might be bestowed, could never say the fitting word nor feel the fitting sentiment which should be the perfect recompense of an artist who, symbolizing a lofty moral by a material trifle,—converting what was earthly to spiritual gold,—had won the beautiful into his handiwork. Not at this latest moment was he to learn that the reward of all high performance must be sought within itself, or sought in vain. There was, however, a view of the matter which Annie and her husband, and even Peter Hovenden, might fully have understood, and which would have satisfied them that the toil of years had here been worthily bestowed. Owen Warland might have told them that this butterfly, this plaything, this bridal gift of a poor watchmaker to a blacksmith's wife, was, in truth, a gem of art that a monarch would have purchased with honors and abundant wealth, and have treasured it among the jewels of his kingdom as the most unique and wondrous of them all. But the artist smiled and kept the secret to himself.

"Father," said Annie, thinking that a word of praise from the old watchmaker might gratify his former apprentice, "do come and admire this pretty butterfly."

"Let us see," said Peter Hovenden, rising from his chair, with a sneer upon his face that always made people doubt, as he himself did, in everything but a material existence. "Here is my finger for it to alight upon. I shall understand it better when once I have touched it."

But, to the increased astonishment of Annie, when the tip of her father's finger was pressed against that of her husband, on which the butterfly still rested, the insect drooped its wings and seemed on the point of falling to the floor. Even the bright spots of gold upon its wings and body, unless her eyes deceived her, grew dim, and the glowing purple took a dusky hue, and the starry lustre that gleamed around the blacksmith's hand became faint and vanished.

"It is dying! it is dying!" cried Annie, in alarm.

"It has been delicately wrought," said the artist, calmly. "As I told you, it has imbibed a spiritual essence—call it magnetism, or what you will. In an atmosphere of doubt and mockery its exquisite susceptibility suffers torture, as does the soul of him who instilled his own life into it It has already lost its beauty; in a few moments more its mechanism would be irreparably injured."

"Take away your hand, father!" entreated Annie, turning pale. "Here is my child; let it rest on his innocent hand. There, perhaps, its life will revive and its colors grow brighter than ever."

Her father, with an acrid smile, withdrew his finger. The butterfly then appeared to recover the power of voluntary motion, while its hues assumed much of their original lustre, and the gleam of starlight, which was its most ethereal attribute, again formed a halo round about it. At first, when transferred from Robert Danforth's hand to the small finger of the child, this radiance grew so powerful that it positively threw the little fellow's shadow back against the wall. He, meanwhile, extended his plump hand as he had seen his father and mother do, and watched the waving of the insect's wings with infantine delight. Nevertheless, there was a certain odd expression of sagacity that made Owen Warland feel

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34 **the reward . . . itself.** Hawthorne here speaks in the tone of Milton's "Lycidas": " 'But not the praise,' Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears . . ."

as if here were old Peter Hovenden, partially, and but partially, redeemed from his hard scepticism into childish faith.

"How wise the little monkey looks!" whispered Robert Danforth to his wife.

"I never saw such a look on a child's face," answered Annie, admiring her own infant, and with good reason, far more than the artistic butterfly. "The darling knows more of the mystery than we do."

As if the butterfly, like the artist, were conscious of something not entirely congenial in the child's nature, it alternately sparkled and grew dim. At length it arose from the small hand of the infant with an airy motion that seemed to bear it upward without an effort, as if the ethereal instincts with which its master's spirit had endowed it impelled this fair vision involuntarily to a higher sphere. Had there been no obstruction, it might have soared into the sky and grown immortal. But its lustre gleamed upon the ceiling; the exquisite texture of its wings brushed against that earthly medium; and a sparkle or two, as of stardust, floated downward and lay glimmering on the carpet. Then the butterfly came fluttering down, and, instead of returning to the infant, was apparently attracted towards the artist's hand.

"Not so! not so!" murmured Owen Warland, as if his handiwork could have understood him. "Thou has gone forth out of thy master's heart. There is no return for thee."

With a wavering movement, and emitting a tremulous radiance, the butterfly struggled, as it were, towards the infant, and was about to alight upon his finger; but while it still hovered in the air, the little child of strength, with his grandsire's sharp and shrewd expression in his face, made a snatch at the marvellous insect and compressed it in his hand. Annie screamed. Old Peter Hovenden burst into a cold and scornful laugh. The blacksmith, by main force, unclosed the infant's hand, and found within the palm a small heap of glittering fragments, whence the mystery of beaury had fled forever. And as for Owen Warland, he looked placidly at what seemed the ruin of his life's labor, and which was yet no ruin. He had caught a far other butterfly than this. When the artist rose high enough to achieve the beautiful, the symbol by which he made it perceptible to mortal senses became of little value in his eyes while his spirit possessed itself in the enjoyment of the reality.

1844

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18 soared . . . immortal, reminiscent of Belinda's lock, in Pope's **Rape of the Lock**, Canto V, ll. 113-150

Rappaccini's Daughter

"Rappaccini's Daughter" is perhaps Hawthorne's most vivid and forceful study of the tragic isolation of an abnormal personality. The poison in Beatrice's physical nature symbolizes this abnormality, which has been produced by her solitary life. The flowers possibly symbolize her thoughts, solitary thoughts which other people cannot share. The story seems to mean that it is tragic to be so unlike other people that one is cut off from normal relations with them. "There was an awful doom," Hawthorne has Beatrice say, "the effect of my father's fatal love of science, which estranged me from all society of my kind. . . . I would fain have been loved, not feared." The story's interest is enhanced by the latitude of interpretation allowed the reader.

A secondary theme is Hawthorne's distrust of science, which he shared with other writers of the romantic generation, notably with Wordsworth ("A Poet's Epitaph"), Keats ("Lamia"), and Poe ("Sonnet to Science").

"Rappaccini's Daughter" was first published in the **Democratic Review** in 1844 and was reprinted in **Mosses from an Old Manse** in 1846.

A young man, named Giovanni Guasconti, came, very long ago, from the more southern region of Italy, to pursue his studies at the University of Padua. Giovanni, who had but a scanty supply of gold ducats in his pocket,

took lodgings in a high and gloomy chamber of an old edifice which looked not unworthy to have been the palace of a Paduan noble, and which, in fact, exhibited over its entrance the armorial bearings of a family long since extinct. The young stranger, who was not unstudied in the great poem of his country, recollected that one of the ancestors of this family, and perhaps an occupant of this very mansion, had been pictured by Dante as a partaker of the immortal agonies of his Inferno. These reminiscences and associations, together with the tendency to heartbreak natural to a young man for the first time out of his native sphere, caused Giovanni to sigh heavily as he looked around the desolate and ill-furnished apartment.

"Holy Virgin, signor!" cried old Dame Lisabetta, who, won by the youth's remarkable beauty of person, was kindly endeavoring to give the chamber a habitable air, "what a sigh was that to come out of a young man's heart! Do you find this old mansion gloomy? For the love of Heaven, then, put your head out of the window, and you will see as bright sunshine as you have left in Naples."

Guasconti mechanically did as the old woman advised, but could not quite agree with her that the Paduan sunshine was as cheerful as that of southern Italy. Such as it was, however, it fell upon a garden beneath the window and expended its fostering influences on a variety of plants, which seemed to have been cultivated with exceeding care.

"Does this garden belong to the house?" asked Giovanni.

"Heaven, forbid, signor, unless it were fruitful of better pot herbs than any that grow there now," answered old Lisabetta. "No, that garden is cultivated by the own hands of Signor Giacomo Rappaccini, the famous doctor, who, I warrant him, has been heard of as far as Naples. It is said that he distils these plants into medicines that are as potent as a charm Oftentimes you may see the signor doctor at work, and perchance the signora, his daughter, too, gathering the strange flowers that grow in the garden."

The old woman had now done what she could for the aspect of the chamber; and, commending the young man to the protection of the saints, took her departure.

Giovanni still found no better occupation than to look down into the garden beneath his window. From its appearance, he judged it to be one of those botanic gardens which were of earlier date in Padua than elsewhere in Italy or in the world. Or, not improbably, it might once have been the pleasure-place of an opulent family; for there was the ruin of a marble fountain in the centre, sculptured with rare art but so wofully shattered that it was impossible to trace the original design from the chaos of remaining fragments. The water, however, continued to gush and sparkle into the sunbeams as cheerfully as ever A little gurgling sound ascended to the young man's window, and made him feel as if the fountain were an immortal spirit that sung its song unceasingly and without heeding the vicissitudes around it, while one century imbodied it in marble and another scattered the perishable garniture on the soil All about the pool into which the water subsided grew various plants, that seemed to require a plentiful supply of moisture for the nourishment of gigantic leaves, and, in some instances, flowers gorgeously magnificent. There was one shrub in particular, set in a marble vase in the midst of the pool, that bore a profusion of purple blossoms, each of which had the lustre and richness of a gem; and the whole together made a show so resplendent that it seemed enough to illuminate the garden, even had there been no sunshine. Every portion of the soil was peopled with plants and herbs, which, if less beautiful, still bore tokens of assiduous care, as if all had their individual virtues, known to the scientific mind that fostered them. Some were placed in urns, rich with old carving, and others in common garden pots; some crept serpent-like along the ground or climbed on high, using whatever means of ascent was offered them One plant had wreathed itself round a statue of Vertumnus, which was thus quite veiled and shrouded in a drapery of hanging foliage, so happily arranged that it might have served a sculptor for a study.

While Giovanni stood at the window he heard a rustling behind a screen of leaves, and became aware that a person was at work in the garden. His figure soon emerged into view, and showed itself to be that of no common laborer, but a tall, emaciated, sallow, and sickly-looking man, dressed in a scholar's garb of black. He was beyond the middle term of life, with grey hair, a thin, grey beard, and a face singularly marked with in-

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79 **Vertumnus,** Roman god of the changing year, or the seasons and their products

tellect and cultivation, but which could never, even in his more youthful days, have expressed much warmth of heart.

Nothing could exceed the intentness with which this scientific gardener examined every shrub which grew in his path: it seemed as if he was looking into their inmost nature, making observations in regard to their creative essence, and discovering why one leaf grew in this shape and another in that, and wherefore such and such flowers differed among themselves in hue and perfume. Nevertheless, in spite of this deep intelligence on his part, there was no approach to intimacy between himself and these vegetable existences. On the contrary, he avoided their actual touch or the direct inhaling of their odors with a caution that impressed Giovanni most disagreeably; for the man's demeanor was that of one walking among malignant influences, such as savage beasts, or deadly snakes, or evil spirits, which, should he allow them one moment of license, would wreak upon him some terrible fatality. It was strangely frightful to the young man's imagination to see this air of insecurity in a person cultivating a garden, that most simple and innocent of human toils, and which had been alike the joy and labor of the unfallen parents of the race Was this garden, then, the Eden of the present world? And this man, with such a perception of harm in what his own hands caused to grow,—was he the Adam?

The distrustful gardener, while plucking away the dead leaves or pruning the too luxuriant growth of the shrubs, defended his hands with a pair of thick gloves. Nor were these his only armor. When, in his walk through the garden, he came to the magnificent plant that hung its purple gems beside the marble fountain, he placed a kind of mask over his mouth and nostrils, as if all this beauty did but conceal a deadlier malice; but, finding his task still too dangerous, he drew back, removed the mask, and called loudly, but in the infirm voice of a person affected with inward disease,—

"Beatrice! Beatrice!"

"Here am I, my father. What would you?" cried a rich and youthful voice from the window of the opposite house—a voice as rich as a tropical sunset, and which made Giovanni, though he knew not why, think of deep hues of purple or crimson and of perfumes heavily delectable. "Are you in the garden?"

"Yes, Beatrice," answered the gardener, "and I need your help."

Soon there emerged from under a sculptured portal the figure of a young girl, arrayed with as much richness of taste as the most splendid of the flowers, beautiful as the day, and with a bloom so deep and vivid that one shade more would have been too much. She looked redundant with life, health, and energy; all of which attributes were bound down and compressed, as it were, and girdled tensely, in their luxuriance, by her virgin zone. Yet Giovanni's fancy must have grown morbid while he looked down into the garden; for the impression which the fair stranger made upon him was as if here were another flower, the human sister of those vegetable ones, as beautiful as they, more beautiful than the richest of them, but still to be touched only with a glove, nor to be approached without a mask. As Beatrice came down the garden path, it was observable that she handled and inhaled the odor of several of the plants which her father had most sedulously avoided.

"Here, Beatrice," said the latter, "see how many needful offices require to be done to our chief treasure. Yet, shattered as I am, my life might pay the penalty of approaching it so closely as circumstances demand. Henceforth, I fear, this plant must be consigned to your sole charge."

"And gladly will I undertake it," cried again the rich tones of the young lady, as she bent towards the magnificent plant and opened her arms as if to embrace it. "Yes, my sister, my splendor, it shall be Beatrice's task to nurse and serve thee; and thou shalt reward her with thy kisses and perfumed breath, which to her is as the breath of life."

Then, with all the tenderness in her manner that was so strikingly expressed in her words, she busied herself with such attentions as the plant seemed to require, and Giovanni, at his lofty window, rubbed his eyes and almost doubted whether it were a girl tending her favorite flower, or one sister performing the duties of affection to another. The scene soon terminated. Whether Dr. Rappaccini had finished his labors in the garden, or that his watchful eye had caught the stranger's face, he now took his daughter's arm and retired. Night was already closing in; oppressive exhalations seemed to proceed from the plants and steal upward past the open window, and Giovanni, closing the lattice, went to his couch and dreamed of a rich flower and beautiful girl. Flower and maiden were different, and yet the same, and fraught with some strange peril in either shape.

But there is an influence in the light of morning that tends to rectify whatever errors of fancy, or even of judgment, we may have incurred during the sun's decline, or among the shadows of the night, or in the less wholesome glow of moonshine. Giovanni's first movement, on starting from sleep, was to throw open the window and gaze down into the garden which his dreams had made so fertile of mysteries. He was surprised and a little ashamed to find how real and matter-of-fact an affair it proved to be, in the first rays of the sun which gilded the dew-drops that hung upon leaf and blossom, and, while giving a brighter beauty to each rare flower, brought everything within the limits of ordinary experience. The young man rejoiced that, in the heart of the barren city, he had the privilege of overlooking this spot of lovely and luxuriant vegetation. It would serve, he said to himself, as a symbolic language to keep him in communion with Nature. Neither the sickly and thought-worn Dr. Giacomo Rappaccini, it is true, nor his brilliant daughter, were now visible; so that Giovanni could not determine how much of the singularity which he attributed to both was due to their own qualities and how much to his wonder-working fancy; but he was inclined to take a most rational view of the whole matter.

In the course of the day he paid his respects to Signor Pietro Baglioni, professor of medicine in the university, a physician of eminent repute, to whom Giovanni had brought a letter of introduction. The professor was an elderly personage, apparently of genial nature, and habits that might almost be called jovial. He kept the young man to dinner, and made himself very agreeable by the freedom and liveliness of his conversation, especially when warmed by a flask or two of Tuscan wine. Giovanni, conceiving that men of science, inhabitants of the same city, must needs be on familiar terms with one another, took an opportunity to mention the name of Dr. Rappaccini. But the professor did not respond with so much cordiality as he had anticipated.

"Ill would it become a teacher of the divine art of medicine," said Professor Pietro Baglioni, in answer to a question of Giovanni, "to withhold due and well-considered praise of a physician so eminently skilled as Rappaccini; but, on the other hand, I should answer it but scantily to my conscience were I to permit a worthy youth like yourself, Signor Giovanni, the son of an ancient friend, to imbibe erroneous ideas respecting a man who might hereafter chance to hold your life and death in his hands. The truth is, our worshipful Dr. Rappaccini has as much science as any member of the faculty—with perhaps one single exception—in Padua, or all Italy; but there are certain grave objections to his professional character."

"And what are they?" asked the young man.

"Has my friend Giovanni any disease of body or heart, that he is so inquisitive about physicians?" said the professor, with a smile. "But as for Rappaccini, it is said of him—and I, who know the man well, can answer for its truth—that he cares infinitely more for science than for mankind. His patients are interesting to him only as subjects for some new experiment. He would sacrifice human life, his own among the rest, or whatever else was dearest to him, for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge."

"Methinks he is an awful man indeed," remarked Guasconti, mentally recalling the cold and purely intellectual aspect of Rappaccini. "And yet, worshipful professor, is it not a noble spirit? Are there many men capable of so spiritual a love of science?"

"God forbid," answered the professor, somewhat testily; "at least, unless they take sounder views of the healing art than those adopted by Rappaccini. It is his theory that all medicinal virtues are comprised within those substances which we term vegetable poisons. These he cultivates with his own hands, and is said even to have produced new varieties of poison, more horribly deleterious than Nature, without the assistance of this learned person, would ever have plagued the world withal. That the signor doctor does less mischief than might be expected with such dangerous substances is undeniable. Now and then, it must be owned, he has effected, or seemed to effect, a marvellous cure; but, to tell you my private mind, Signor Giovanni, he should receive little credit for such instances of success,—they being probably the work of chance,—but should be held strictly accountable for his failures, which may justly be considered his own work."

The youth might have taken Baglioni's opinions with many grains of allowance had he known that there was a professional warfare of long continuance between him and Dr. Rappaccini, in which the latter was generally thought to have gained the advantage. If the reader be

inclined to judge for himself, we refer him to certain black-letter tracts on both sides, preserved in the medical department of the University of Padua.

"I know not, most learned professor," returned Giovanni, after musing on what had been said of Rappaccini's exclusive zeal for science,—"I know not how dearly this physician may love his art; but surely there is one object more dear to him. He has a daughter."

"Aha!" cried the professor, with a laugh. "So now our friend Giovanni's secret is out. You have heard of this daughter, whom all the young men in Padua are wild about, though not half a dozen have ever had the good hap to see her face. I know little of the Signora Beatrice save that Rappaccini is said to have instructed her deeply in his science, and that, young and beautiful as fame reports her, she is already qualified to fill a professor's chair. Perchance her father destines her for mine! Other absurd rumors there be, not worth talking about or listening to. So now, Signor Giovanni, drink off your glass of lachryma."

Guasconti returned to his lodgings somewhat heated with the wine he had quaffed, and which caused his brain to swim with strange fantasies in reference to Dr. Rappaccini and the beautiful Beatrice. On his way, happening to pass by a florist's, he bought a fresh bouquet of flowers.

Ascending to his chamber, he seated himself near the window, but within the shadow thrown by the depth of the wall, so that he could look down into the garden with little risk of being discovered. All beneath his eye was a solitude. The strange plants were basking in the sunshine, and now and then nodding gently to one another, as if in acknowledgment of sympathy and kindred. In the midst, by the shattered fountain, grew the magnificent shrub, with its purple gems clustering all over it; they glowed in the air, and gleamed back again out of the depths of the pool, which thus seemed to overflow with colored radiance from the rich reflection that was steeped in it. At first, as we have said, the garden was a solitude. Soon, however,—as Giovanni had half hoped, half feared, would be the case,—a figure appeared beneath the antique sculptured portal, and came down between the rows of plants, inhaling their various perfumes as if she were one of those beings of old classic fable that lived upon sweet odors. On again beholding Beatrice, the young man was even startled to perceive how much her beauty exceeded his recollection of it; so brilliant, so vivid, was its character, that she glowed amid the sunlight, and, as Giovanni whispered to himself, positively illuminated the more shadowy intervals of the garden path. Her face being now more revealed than on the former occasion, he was struck by its expression of simplicity and sweetness,—qualities that had not entered into his idea of her character, and which made him ask anew what manner of mortal she might be. Nor did he fail again to observe, or imagine, an analogy between the beautiful girl and the gorgeous shrub that hung its gem-like flowers over the fountain,—a resemblance which Beatrice seemed to have indulged a fantastic humor in heightening, both by the arrangement of her dress and the selection of its hues.

Approaching the shrub, she threw open her arms, as with a passionate ardor, and drew its branches into an intimate embrace—so intimate that her features were hidden in its leafy bosom and her glistening ringlets all intermingled with the flowers.

"Give me thy breath, my sister," exclaimed Beatrice; "for I am faint with common air. And give me this flower of thine, which I separate with gentlest fingers from the stem and place it close beside my heart."

With these words the beautiful daughter of Rappaccini plucked one of the richest blossoms of the shrub, and was about to fasten it in her bosom. But now, unless Giovanni's draughts of wine had bewildered his senses, a singular incident occurred. A small orange-colored reptile, of the lizard or chameleon species, chanced to be creeping along the path, just at the feet of Beatrice. It appeared to Giovanni,—but, at the distance from which he gazed, he could scarcely have seen anything so minute, —it appeared to him, however, that a drop or two of moisture from the broken stem of the flower descended upon the lizard's head. For an instant the reptile contorted itself violently, and then lay motionless in the sunshine. Beatrice observed this remarkable phenomenon, and crossed herself, sadly, but without surprise; nor did she therefore hesitate to arrange the fatal flower in her bosom. There it blushed, and almost glimmered with the dazzling effect of a precious stone, adding to her dress and aspect the one appropriate charm which nothing else

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20 lachryma, a rich, sweet Neapolitan wine

in the world could have supplied. But Giovanni, out of the shadow of his window, bent forward and shrank back, and murmured and trembled.

"Am I awake? Have I my senses?" said he to himself. "What is this being? Beautiful shall I call her, or inexpressibly terrible?"

Beatrice now strayed carelessly through the garden, approaching closer beneath Giovanni's window, so that he was compelled to thrust his head quite out of its concealment in order to gratify the intense and painful curiosity which she excited. At this moment there came a beautiful insect over the garden wall; it had, perhaps, wandered through the city, and found no flowers or verdure among those antique haunts of men until the heavy perfumes of Dr. Rappaccini's shrubs had lured it from afar. Without alighting on the flowers, this winged brightness seemed to be attracted by Beatrice, and lingered in the air and fluttered about her head. Now, here it could not be but that Giovanni Guasconti's eyes deceived him. Be that as it might, he fancied that, while Beatrice was gazing at the insect with childish delight, it grew faint and fell at her feet; its bright wings shivered; it was dead—from no cause that he could discern, unless it were the atmosphere of her breath. Again Beatrice crossed herself and sighed heavily as she bent over the dead insect.

An impulsive movement of Giovanni drew her eyes to the window. There she beheld the beautiful head of the young man—rather a Grecian than an Italian head, with fair, regular features, and a glistening of gold among his ringlets—gazing down upon her like a being that hovered in mid air. Scarcely knowing what he did, Giovanni threw down the bouquet which he had hitherto held in his hand.

"Signora," said he," there are pure and healthful flowers. Wear them for the sake of Giovanni Guasconti."

"Thanks, signor," replied Beatrice, with her rich voice, that came forth as it were like a gush of music, and with a mirthful expression half childish and half woman-like. "I accept your gift, and would fain recompense it with this precious purple flower; but if I toss it into the air it will not reach you. So Signor Guasconti must even content himself with my thanks."

She lifted the bouquet from the ground, and then, as if inwardly ashamed at having stepped aside from her maidenly reserve to respond to a stranger's greeting, passed swiftly homeward through the garden. But few as the moments were, it seemed to Giovanni, when she was on the point of vanishing beneath the sculptured portal, that his beautiful bouquet was already beginning to wither in her grasp. It was an idle thought; there could be no possibility of distinguishing a faded flower from a fresh one at so great a distance.

For many days after this incident the young man avoided the window that looked into Dr. Rappaccini's garden, as if something ugly and monstrous would have blasted his eyesight had he been betrayed into a glance. He felt conscious of having put himself, to a certain extent, within the influence of an unintelligible power by the communication which he had opened with Beatrice. The wisest course would have been, if his heart were in any real danger, to quit his lodgings and Padua itself at once; the next wiser, to have accustomed himself, as far as possible, to the familiar and daylight view of Beatrice—thus bringing her rigidly and systematically within the limits of ordinary experience. Least of all, while avoiding her sight, ought Giovanni to have remained so near this extraordinary being that the proximity and possibility even of intercourse should give a kind of substance and reality to the wild vagaries which his imagination ran riot continually in producing. Guasconti had not a deep heart—or, at all events, its depths were not sounded now; but he had a quick fancy and an ardent southern temperament, which rose every instant to a higher fever pitch. Whether or no Beatrice possessed those terrible attributes, that fatal breath, the affinity with those so beautiful and deadly flowers which were indicated by what Giovanni had witnessed, she had at least instilled a fierce and subtle poison into his system. It was not love, although her rich beauty was a madness to him; nor horror, even while he fancied her spirit to be imbued with the same baneful essence that seemed to pervade her physical frame; but a wild offspring of both love and horror that had each parent in it, and burned like one and shivered like the other. Giovanni knew not what to dread; still less did he know what to hope; yet hope and dread kept a continual warfare in his breast, alternately vanquishing one another and starting up afresh to renew the contest. Blessed are all simple emotions, be they dark or bright! It is the lurid intermixture of the two that produces the illuminating blaze of the infernal regions.

Sometimes he endeavored to assuage the fever of his

spirit by a rapid walk through the streets of Padua or beyond its gates: his footsteps kept time with the throbbings of his brain, so that the walk was apt to accelerate itself to a race. One day he found himself arrested; his arm was seized by a portly personage, who had turned back on recognizing the young man and expended much breath in overtaking him.

"Signor Giovanni! Stay, my young friend!" cried he. "Have you forgotten me? That might well be the case if I were as much altered as yourself."

It was Baglioni, whom Giovanni had avoided ever since their first meeting, from a doubt that the professor's sagacity would look too deeply into his secrets. Endeavoring to recover himself, he stared forth wildly from his inner world into the outer one and spoke like a man in a dream.

"Yes; I am Giovanni Guasconti. You are Professor Pietro Baglioni. Now let me pass!"

"Not yet, not yet, Signor Giovanni Guasconti," said the professor, smiling, but at the same time scrutinizing the youth with an earnest glance. "What! did I grow up side by side with your father? and shall his son pass me like a stranger in these old streets of Padua? Stand still, Signor Giovanni; for we must have a word or two before we part."

"Speedily, then, most worshipful professor, speedily," said Giovanni, with feverish impatience. "Does not your worship see that I am in haste?"

Now, while he was speaking there came a man in black along the street, stooping and moving feebly like a person in inferior health. His face was all overspread with a most sickly and sallow hue, but yet so pervaded with an expression of piercing and active intellect that an observer might easily have overlooked the merely physical attributes and have seen only this wonderful energy. As he passed, this person exchanged a cold and distant salutation with Baglioni, but fixed his eyes upon Giovanni with an intentness that seemed to bring out whatever was within him worthy of notice. Nevertheless, there was a peculiar quietness in the look, as if taking merely a speculative, not a human, interest in the young man.

"It is Dr. Rappaccini!" whispered the professor when the stranger had passed. "Has he ever seen your face before?"

"Not that I know," answered Giovanni, starting at the name.

"He *has* seen you! he must have seen you!" said Baglioni, hastily. "For some purpose or other, this man of science is making a study of you. I know that look of his! It is the same that coldly illuminates his face as he bends over a bird, a mouse, or a butterfly, which, in pursuance of some experiment, he has killed by the perfume of a flower; a look as deep as Nature itself, but without Nature's warmth of love. Signor Giovanni, I will stake my life upon it, you are the subject of one of Rappaccini's experiments!"

"Will you make a fool of me?" cried Giovanni, passionately. "*That,* signor professor, were an untoward experiment."

"Patience! patience!" replied the imperturbable professor. "I tell thee, my poor Giovanni, that Rappaccini has a scientific interest in thee. Thou hast fallen into fearful hands! And the Signora Beatrice,—what part does she act in this mystery?"

But Guasconti, finding Baglioni's pertinacity intolerable, here broke away, and was gone before the professor could again seize his arm. He looked after the young man intently and shook his head.

"This must not be," said Baglioni to himself. "The youth is the son of my old friend, and shall not come to any harm from which the arcana of medical science can preserve him. Besides, it is too insufferable an impertinence in Rappaccini, thus to snatch the lad out of my own hands, as I may say, and make use of him for his infernal experiments. This daughter of his! It shall be looked to. Perchance, most learned Rappaccini, I may foil you where you little dream of it!"

Meanwhile Giovanni had pursued a circuitous route, and at length found himself at the door of his lodgings. As he crossed the threshold he was met by old Lisabetta, who smirked and smiled, and was evidently desirous to attract his attention; vainly, however, as the ebullition of his feelings had momentarily subsided into a cold and dull vacuity. He turned his eyes full upon the withered face that was puckering itself into a smile, but seemed to behold it not. The old dame, therefore, laid her grasp upon his cloak.

"Signor! signor!" whispered she, still with a smile over the whole breadth of her visage, so that it looked not unlike a grotesque carving in wood, darkened by centuries. "Listen, signor! There is a private entrance into the garden!"

"What do you say?" exclaimed Giovanni, turning quickly about, as if an inanimate thing should start into feverish life. "A private entrance into Dr. Rappaccini's garden?"

"Hush! hush! not so loud!" whispered Lisabetta, putting her hand over his mouth. "Yes; into the worshipful doctor's garden, where you may see all his fine shrubbery. Many a young man in Padua would give gold to be admitted among those flowers."

Giovanni put a piece of gold into her hand.

"Show me the way," said he.

A surmise, probably excited by his conversation with Baglioni, crossed his mind, that this interposition of old Lisabetta might perchance be connected with the intrigue, whatever were its nature, in which the professor seemed to suppose that Dr. Rappaccini was involving him. But such a suspicion, though it disturbed Giovanni, was inadequate to restrain him. The instant that he was aware of the possibility of approaching Beatrice, it seemed an absolute necessity of his existence to do so. It mattered not whether she were angel or demon; he was irrevocably within her sphere, and must obey the law that whirled him onward, in ever-lessening circles, towards a result which he did not attempt to foreshadow; and yet, strange to say, there came across him a sudden doubt whether this intense interest on his part were not delusory; whether it were really of so deep and positive a nature as to justify him in now thrusting himself into an incalculable position; whether it were not merely the fantasy of a young man's brain, only slightly or not at all connected with his heart.

He paused, hesitated, turned half about, but again went on. His withered guide led him along several obscure passages, and finally undid a door, through which, as it was opened, there came the sight and sound of rustling leaves, with the broken sunshine glimmering among them. Giovanni stepped forth, and, forcing himself through the entanglement of a shrub that wreathed its tendrils over the hidden entrance, stood beneath his own window in the open area of Dr. Rappaccini's garden.

How often is it the case that, when impossibilities have come to pass and dreams have condensed their misty substance into tangible realities, we find ourselves calm, and even coldly self-possessed, amid circumstances which it would have been a delirium of joy or agony to anticipate! Fate delights to thwart us thus. Passion will choose his own time to rush upon the scene, and lingers sluggishly behind when an appropriate adjustment of events would seem to summon his appearance. So was it now with Giovanni. Day after day his pulses had throbbed with feverish blood at the improbable idea of an interview with Beatrice, and of standing with her, face to face, in this very garden, basking in the Oriental sunshine of her beauty, and snatching from her full gaze the mystery which he deemed the riddle of his own existence. But now there was a singular and untimely equanimity within his breast. He threw a glance around the garden to discover if Beatrice or her father were present, and, perceiving that he was alone, began a critical observation of the plants.

The aspect of one and all of them dissatisfied him; their gorgeousness seemed fierce, passionate, and even unnatural. There was hardly an individual shrub which a wanderer, straying by himself through a forest, would not have been startled to find growing wild, as if an unearthly face had glared at him out of the thicket. Several also would have shocked a delicate instinct by an appearance of artificialness indicating that there had been such commixture, and, as it were, adultery, of various vegetable species, that the production was no longer of God's making, but the monstrous offspring of man's depraved fancy, glowing with only an evil mockery of beauty. They were probably the result of experiment, which in one or two cases had succeeded in mingling plants individually lovely into a compound possessing the questionable and ominous character that distinguished the whole growth of the garden. In fine, Giovanni recognized but two or three plants in the collection, and those of a kind that he well knew to be poisonous. While busy with these contemplations he heard the rustling of a silken garment, and, turning, beheld Beatrice emerging from beneath the sculptured portal.

Giovanni had not considered with himself what should be his deportment; whether he should apologize for his intrusion into the garden, or assume that he was there with the privity at least, if not by the desire, of Dr. Rappaccini or his daughter; but Beatrice's manner placed him at his ease, though leaving him still in doubt by what agency he had gained admittance. She came lightly along the path and met him near the broken fountain. There was surprise in her face, but brightened by a simple and kind expression of pleasure.

"You are a connoisseur in flowers, signor," said Beatrice, with a smile, alluding to the bouquet which he had flung her from the window. "It is no marvel, therefore, if the sight of my father's rare collection has tempted you to take a nearer view. If he were here, he could tell you many strange and interesting facts as to the nature and habits of these shrubs; for he has spent a lifetime in such studies, and this garden is his world."

"And yourself, lady," observed Giovanni, "if fame says true,—you likewise are deeply skilled in the virtues indicated by these rich blossoms and these spicy perfumes. Would you deign to be my instructress, I should prove an apter scholar than if taught by Signor Rappaccini himself."

"Are there such idle rumors?" asked Beatrice, with the music of a pleasant laugh. "Do people say that I am skilled in my father's science of plants? What a jest is there! No; though I have grown up among these flowers, I know no more of them than their hues and perfume; and sometimes methinks I would fain rid myself of even that small knowledge. There are many flowers here, and those not the least brilliant, that shock and offend me when they meet my eye. But pray, signor, do not believe these stories about my science. Believe nothing of me save what you see with your own eyes."

"And must I believe all that I have seen with my own eyes?" asked Giovanni, pointedly, while the recollection of former scenes made him shrink. "No, signora; you demand too little of me. Bid me believe nothing save what comes from your own lips."

It would appear that Beatrice understood him. There came a deep flush to her cheek; but she looked full into Giovanni's eyes, and responded to his gaze of uneasy suspicion with a queenlike haughtiness.

"I do so bid you, signor," she replied. "Forget whatever you may have fancied in regard to me. If true to the outward senses, still it may be false in its essence; but the words of Beatrice Rappaccini's lips are true from the depths of the heart outward. Those you may believe."

A fervor glowed in her whole aspect and beamed upon Giovanni's consciousness like the light of truth itself; but while she spoke there was a fragrance in the atmosphere around her, rich and delightful, though evanescent, yet which the young man, from an indefinable reluctance, scarcely dared to draw into his lungs. It might be the odor of the flowers. Could it be Beatrice's breath which thus embalmed her words with a strange richness, as if by steeping them in her heart? A faintness passed like a shadow over Giovanni and flitted away; he seemed to gaze through the beautiful girl's eyes into her transparent soul, and felt no more doubt or fear.

The tinge of passion that had colored Beatrice's manner vanished; she became gay, and appeared to derive a pure delight from her communion with the youth not unlike what the maiden of a lonely island might have felt conversing with a voyager from the civilized world. Evidently her experience of life had been confined within the limits of that garden. She talked now about matters as simple as the daylight or summer clouds, and now asked questions in reference to the city, or Giovanni's distant home, his friends, his mother, and his sisters—questions indicating such seclusion, and such lack of familiarity with modes and forms, that Giovanni responded as if to an infant. Her spirit gushed out before him like a fresh rill that was just catching its first glimpse of the sunlight and wondering at the reflections of earth and sky which were flung into its bosom. There came thoughts, too, from a deep source, and fantasies of a gemlike brilliancy, as if diamonds and rubies sparkled upward among the bubbles of the fountain. Ever and anon there gleamed across the young man's mind a sense of wonder that he should be walking side by side with the being who had so wrought upon his imagination, whom he had idealized in such hues of terror, in whom he had positively witnessed such manifestations of dreadful attributes,—that he should be conversing with Beatrice like a brother, and should find her so human and so maidenlike. But such reflections were only momentary; the effect of her character was too real not to make itself familiar at once.

In this free intercourse they had strayed through the garden, and now, after many turns among its avenues, were come to the shattered fountain, beside which grew the magnificent shrub, with its treasury of glowing blossoms. A fragrance was diffused from it which Giovanni recognized as identical with that which he had attributed to Beatrice's breath, but incomparably more powerful. As her eyes fell upon it, Giovanni beheld her press her hand to her bosom as if her heart were throbbing suddenly and painfully.

"For the first time in my life," murmured she, addressing the shrub, "I had forgotten thee."

"I remember, signora," said Giovanni, "that you once promised to reward me with one of these living gems for the bouquet which I had the happy boldness to fling to your feet. Permit me now to pluck it as a memorial of this interview."

He made a step towards the shrub with extended hand; but Beatrice darted forward, uttering a shriek that went through his heart like a dagger. She caught his hand and drew it back with the whole force of her slender figure. Giovanni felt her touch thrilling through his fibres.

"Touch it not!" exclaimed she, in a voice of agony. "Not for thy life! It is fatal!"

Then, hiding her face, she fled from him and vanished beneath the sculptured portal. As Giovanni followed her with his eyes, he beheld the emaciated figure and pale intelligence of Dr. Rappaccini, who had been watching the scene, he knew not how long, within the shadow of the entrance.

No sooner was Guasconti alone in his chamber than the image of Beatrice came back to his passionate musings, invested with all the witchery that had been gathering around it ever since his first glimpse of her, and now likewise imbued with a tender warmth of girlish womanhood. She was human; her nature was endowed with all gentle and feminine qualities; she was worthiest to be worshipped; she was capable, surely, on her part, of the height and heroism of love. Those tokens which he had hitherto considered as proofs of a frightful peculiarity in her physical and moral system were now either forgotten, or, by the subtle sophistry of passion transmitted into a golden crown of enchantment, rendering Beatrice the more admirable by so much as she was the more unique. Whatever had looked ugly was now beautiful; or, if incapable of such a change, it stole away and hid itself among those shapeless half ideas which throng the dim region beyond the daylight of our perfect consciousness. Thus did he spend the night, nor fell asleep until the dawn had begun to awake the slumbering flowers in Dr. Rappaccini's garden, whither Giovanni's dreams doubtless led him. Up rose the sun in his due season, and, flinging his beams upon the young man's eyelids, awoke him to a sense of pain. When thoroughly aroused, he became sensible of a burning and tingling agony in his hand—in his right hand—the very hand which Beatrice had grasped in her own when he was on the point of plucking one of the gemlike flowers. On the back of that hand there was now a purple print like that of four small fingers, and the likeness of a slender thumb upon his wrist.

Oh, how stubbornly does love,—or even that cunning semblance of love which flourishes in the imagination, but strikes no depth of root into the heart,—how stubbornly does it hold its faith until the moment comes when it is doomed to vanish into thin mist! Giovanni wrapped a handkerchief about his hand and wondered what evil thing had stung him, and soon forgot his pain in a reverie of Beatrice.

After the first interview, a second was in the inevitable course of what we call fate. A third; a fourth, and a meeting with Beatrice in the garden was no longer an incident in Giovanni's daily life, but the whole space in which he might be said to live; for the anticipation and memory of that ecstatic hour made up the remainder. Nor was it otherwise with the daughter of Rappaccini. She watched for the youth's apearance, and flew to his side with confidence as unreserved as if they had been playmates from early infancy—as if they were such playmates still. If, by any unwonted chance, he failed to come at the appointed moment, she stood beneath the window and sent up the rich sweetness of her tones to float around him in his chamber and echo and reverberate throughout his heart: "Giovanni! Giovanni! Why tarriest thou? Come down!" And down he hastened into that Eden of poisonous flowers.

But, with all this intimate familiarity, there was still a reserve in Beatrice's demeanor, so rigidly and invariably sustained that the idea of infringing it scarcely occurred to his imagination. By all appreciable signs, they loved; they had looked love with eyes that conveyed the holy secret from the depths of one soul into the depths of the other, as if it were too sacred to be whispered by the way; they had even spoken love in those gushes of passion when their spirits darted forth in articulated breath like tongues of long-hidden flame, and yet there had been no seal of lips, no clasp of hands, nor any slightest caress such as love claims and hallows. He had never touched one of the gleaming ringlets of her hair; her garment—so marked was the physical barrier between them—had never been waved against him by a breeze. On the few occasions when Giovanni had seemed tempted to overstep the limit, Beatrice grew so sad, so stern, and withal wore such a look of desolate separation,

shuddering at itself, that not a spoken word was requisite to repel him. At such times he was startled at the horrible suspicions that rose, monster-like, out of the caverns of his heart and stared him in the face; his love grew thin and faint as the morning mist, his doubts alone had substance. But, when Beatrice's face brightened again after the momentary shadow, she was transformed at once from the mysterious, questionable being whom he had watched with so much awe and horror; she was now the beautiful and unsophisticated girl whom he felt that his spirit knew with a certainty beyond all other knowledge.

A considerable time had now passed since Giovanni's last meeting with Baglioni. One morning, however, he was disagreeably surprised by a visit from the professor, whom he had scarcely thought of for whole weeks, and would willingly have forgotten still longer. Given up as he had long been to a pervading excitement, he could tolerate no companions except upon condition of their perfect sympathy with his present state of feeling. Such sympathy was not to be expected from Professor Baglioni.

The visitor chatted carelessly for a few minutes about the gossip of the city and the university, and then took up another topic.

"I have been reading an old classic author lately," said he, "and met with a story that strangely interested me. Possibly you may remember it. It is of an Indian prince, who sent a beautiful woman as a present to Alexander the Great. She was as lovely as the dawn and gorgeous as the sunset; but what especially distinguished her was a certain rich perfume in her breath—richer than a garden of Persian roses. Alexander, as was natural to a youthful conqueror, fell in love at first sight with this magnificent stranger; but a certain sage physician, happening to be present, discovered a terrible secret in regard to her."

"And what was that?" asked Giovanni, turning his eyes downward to avoid those of the professor.

"That this lovely woman," continued Baglioni, with emphasis, "had been nourished with poisons from her birth upward, until her whole nature was so imbued with them that she herself had become the deadliest poison in existence. Poison was her element of life. With that rich perfume of her breath she blasted the very air. Her love would have been poison—her embrace death. Is not this a marvellous tale?"

"A childish fable," answered Giovanni, nervously starting from his chair. "I marvel how your worship finds time to read such nonsense among your graver studies."

"By the by," said the professor, looking uneasily about him, "what singular fragrance is this in your apartment? Is it the perfume of your gloves? It is faint, but delicious; and yet, after all, by no means agreeable. Were I to breathe it long, methinks it would make me ill. It is like the breath of a flower, but I see no flowers in the chamber."

"Nor are there any," replied Giovanni, who had turned pale as the professor spoke, "nor, I think, is there any fragrance except in your worship's imagination. Odors, being a sort of element combined of the sensual and the spiritual, are apt to deceive us in this manner. The recollection of a perfume, the bare idea of it, may easily be mistaken for a present reality."

"Ay; but my sober imagination does not often play such tricks," said Baglioni; "and, were I to fancy any kind of odor, it would be that of some vile apothecary drug, wherewith my fingers are likely enough to be imbued. Our worshipful friend Rappaccini, as I have heard, tinctures his medicaments with odors richer than those of Araby. Doubtless, likewise, the fair and learned Signora Beatrice would minister to her patients with draughts as sweet as a maiden's breath; but woe to him that sips them!"

Giovanni's face evinced many contending emotions. The tone in which the professor alluded to the pure and lovely daughter of Rappaccini was a torture to his soul; and yet the intimation of a view of her character, opposite to his own, gave instantaneous distinctness to a thousand dim suspicions, which now grinned at him like so many demons. But he strove hard to quell them and to respond to Baglioni with a true lover's perfect faith

"Signor professor," said he, "you were my father's friend; perchance, too, it is your purpose to act a friendly part towards his son. I would fain feel nothing towards you save respect and deference; but I pray you to observe, signor, that there is one subject on which we must

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24 **author.** The reference is to Sir Thomas Browne's **Pseudodoxia Epidemica**, Bk. VII, Chap 17. Hawthorne had copied in his notebooks "A story there passeth of an Indian King, that sent unto Alexander a fair woman fed with Aconites and other poysons, with this intent, either by converse or copulation complexionally to destroy him" • 68 **odors . . . Araby,** reminiscent of Shakespeare's "perfumes of Arabia," **Macbeth,** Act V, Scene i, l. 57

not speak. You know not the Signora Beatrice. You cannot, therefore, estimate the wrong—the blasphemy, I may even say—that is offered to her character by a light or injurious word."

"Giovanni! my poor Giovanni!" answered the professor, with a calm expression of pity, "I know this wretched girl far better than yourself. You shall hear the truth in respect to the poisoner Rappaccini and his poisonous daughter; yes, poisonous as she is beautiful. Listen; for, even should you do violence to my gray hairs, it shall not silence me. That old fable of the Indian woman has become a truth by the deep and deadly science of Rappaccini and in the person of the lovely Beatrice."

Giovanni groaned and hid his face.

"Her father," continued Baglioni, "was not restrained by natural affection from offering up his child in this horrible manner as the victim of his insane zeal for science; for, let us do him justice, he is as true a man of science as ever distilled his own heart in an alembic. What, then, will be your fate? Beyond a doubt you are selected as the material of some new experiment. Perhaps the result is to be death, perhaps a fate more awful still. Rappaccini, with what he calls the interest of science before his eyes, will hesitate at nothing."

"It is a dream," muttered Giovanni to himself; "surely it is a dream."

"But," resumed the professor, "be of good cheer, son of my friend. It is not yet too late for the rescue Possibly we may even succeed in bringing back this miserable child within the limits of ordinary nature, from which her father's madness has estranged her. Behold this little silver vase! It was wrought by the hands of the renowned Benvenuto Cellini, and is well worthy to be a love gift to the fairest dame in Italy. But its contents are invaluable. One little sip of this antidote would have rendered the most virulent poisons of the Borgias innocuous. Doubt not that it will be as efficacious against those of Rappaccini. Bestow the vase, and the precious liquid within it, on your Beatrice, and hopefully await the result."

Baglioni laid a small, exquisitely wrought silver vial on the table and withdrew, leaving what he had said to produce its effect upon the young man's mind.

"We will thwart Rappaccini yet," thought he, chuckling to himself, as he descended the stairs; "but, let us confess the truth of him, he is a wonderful man—a wonderful man indeed; a vile empiric, however, in his practice, and therefore not to be tolerated by those who respect the good old rules of the medical profession."

Throughout Giovanni's whole acquaintance with Beatrice, he had occasionally, as we have said, been haunted by dark surmises as to her character; yet so thoroughly had she made herself felt by him as a simple, natural, most affectionate, and guileless creature, that the image now held up by Professor Baglioni looked as strange and incredible as if it were not in accordance with his own original conception. True, there were ugly recollections connected with his first glimpses of the beautiful girl; he could not quite forget the bouquet that withered in her grasp, and the insect that perished amid the sunny air, by no ostensible agency save the fragrance of her breath. These incidents, however, dissolving in the pure light of her character, had no longer the efficacy of facts, but were acknowledged as mistaken fantasies, by whatever testimony of the senses they might appear to be substantiated. There is something truer and more real than what we can see with the eyes and touch with the finger. On such better evidence had Giovanni founded his confidence in Beatrice, though rather by the necessary force of her high attributes than by any deep and generous faith on his part. But now his spirit was incapable of sustaining itself at the height to which the early enthusiasm of passion had exalted it; he fell down, grovelling among earthly doubts, and defiled therewith the pure whiteness of Beatrice's image. Not that he gave her up; he did but distrust He resolved to institute some decisive test that should satisfy him, once for all, whether there were those dreadful peculiarities in her physical nature which could not be supposed to exist without some corresponding monstrosity of soul. His eyes, gazing down afar, might have deceived him as to the lizard, the insect, and the flowers; but if he could witness, at the distance of a few paces, the sudden blight of one fresh and healthful flower in Beatrice's hand, there would be room for no further question. With this idea he hastened to the florist's and purchased a bouquet that was still gemmed with the morning dew-drops.

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34 **Benvenuto Cellini** (1500-1571), Italian author and artist in metal

• 37 **Borgias**, Cesare Borgia (1476-1507), Italian cardinal and military leader, and his sister, Lucrezia Borgia (1480-1519), both were wicked and unscrupulous

It was now the customary hour of his daily interview with Beatrice. Before descending into the garden, Giovanni failed not to look at his figure in the mirror,—a vanity to be expected in a beautiful young man, yet, as displaying itself at that troubled and feverish moment, the token of a certain shallowness of feeling and insincerity of character. He did gaze, however, and said to himself that his features had never before possessed so rich a grace, nor his eyes such vivacity, nor his cheeks so warm a hue of superabundant life.

"At least," thought he, "her poison has not yet insinuated itself into my system. I am no flower to perish in her grasp."

With that thought he turned his eyes on the bouquet, which he had never once laid aside from his hand. A thrill of indefinable horror shot through his frame on perceiving that those dewy flowers were already beginning to droop; they wore the aspect of things that had been fresh and lovely yesterday. Giovanni grew white as marble, and stood motionless before the mirror, staring at his own reflection there as at the likeness of something frightful. He remembered Baglioni's remark about the fragrance that seemed to pervade the chamber. It must have been the poison in his breath! Then he shuddered—shuddered at himself. Recovering from his stupor, he began to watch with curious eye a spider that was busily at work hanging its web from the antique cornice of the apartment, crossing and recrossing the artful system of interwoven lines—as vigorous and active a spider as ever dangled from an old ceiling. Giovanni bent towards the insect, and emitted a deep, long breath. The spider suddenly ceased its toil; the web vibrated with a tremor originating in the body of the small artisan. Again Giovanni sent forth a breath, deeper, longer, and imbued with a venomous feeling out of his heart: he knew not whether he were wicked, or only desperate. The spider made a convulsive gripe with his limbs and hung dead across the window.

"Accursed! accursed!" muttered Giovanni, addressing himself. "Hast thou grown so poisonous that this deadly insect perished by thy breath?"

At that moment a rich, sweet voice come floating up from the garden.

"Giovanni! Giovanni! It is past the hour! Why tarriest thou? Come down!"

"Yes," muttered Giovanni again."She is the only being whom my breath may not slay! Would that it might!"

He rushed down, and in an instant was standing before the bright and loving eyes of Beatrice. A moment ago his wrath and despair had been so fierce that he could have desired nothing so much as to wither her by a glance; but with her actual presence there came influences which had too real an existence to be at once shaken off: recollections of the delicate and benign power of her feminine nature, which had so often enveloped him in a religious calm; recollections of many a holy and passionate outgush of her heart, when the pure fountain had been unsealed from its depths and made visible in its transparency to his mental eye; recollections which, had Giovanni known how to estimate them, would have assured him that all this ugly mystery was but an earthly illusion, and that, whatever mist of evil might seem to have gathered over her, the real Beatrice was a heavenly angel. Incapable as he was of such high faith, still her presence had not utterly lost its magic. Giovanni's rage was quelled into an aspect of sullen insensibility. Beatrice, with a quick spiritual sense, immediately felt that there was a gulf of blackness between them which neither he nor she could pass. They walked on together, sad and silent, and came thus to the marble fountain and to its pool of water on the ground, in the midst of which grew the shrub that bore gem-like blossoms. Giovanni was affrighted at the eager enjoyment—the appetite, as it were—with which he found himself inhaling the fragrance of the flowers.

"Beatrice," asked he, abruptly, "whence came this shrub?"

"My father created it," answered she, with simplicity.

"Created it! created it!" repeated Giovanni. "What mean you, Beatrice?"

"He is a man fearfully acquainted with the secrets of Nature," replied Beatrice; "and, at the hour when I first drew breath, this plant sprang from the soil, the offspring of his science, of his intellect, while I was but his earthly child. Approach it not!" continued she, observing with terror that Giovanni was drawing nearer to the shrub. "It has qualities that you little dream of. But I, dearest Giovanni,—I grew up and blossomed with the plant and was nourished with its breath. It was my sister, and I loved it with a human affection; for, alas!— hast thou not suspected it?—there was an awful doom."

Here Giovanni frowned so darkly upon her that

Beatrice paused and trembled. But her faith in his tenderness reassured her, and made her blush that she had doubted for an instant.

"There was an awful doom," she continued, "the effect of my father's fatal love of science, which estranged me from all society of my kind. Until Heaven sent thee, dearest Giovanni, oh, how lonely was thy poor Beatrice!"

"Was it a hard doom?" asked Giovanni, fixing his eyes upon her.

"Only of late have I known how hard it was," answered she, tenderly. "Oh, yes; but my heart was torpid, and therefore quiet."

Giovanni's rage broke forth from his sullen gloom like a lightning flash out of a dark cloud.

"Accursed one!" cried he, with venomous scorn and anger. "And, finding thy solitude wearisome, thou hast severed me likewise from all the warmth of life and enticed me into thy region of unspeakable horror!"

"Giovanni!" exclaimed Beatrice, turning her large bright eyes upon his face. The force of his words had not found its way into her mind; she was merely thunderstruck.

"Yes, poisonous thing!" repeated Giovanni, beside himself with passion. "Thou hast done it! Thou hast blasted me! Thou hast filled my veins with poison! Thou hast made me as hateful, as ugly, as loathsome and deadly a creature as thyself—a world's wonder of hideous monstrosity! Now, if our breath be happily as fatal to ourselves as to all others, let us join our lips in one kiss of unutterable hatred, and so die!"

"What has befallen me?" murmured Beatrice, with a low moan out of her heart. "Holy Virgin, pity me, a poor heart-broken child!"

"Thou,—dost thou pray?" cried Giovanni, still with the same fiendish scorn. "Thy very prayers, as they come from thy lips, taint the atmosphere with death. Yes, yes; let us pray! Let us to church and dip our fingers in the holy water at the portal! They that come after us will perish as by a pestilence! Let us sign crosses in the air! It will be scattering curses abroad in the likeness of holy symbols!"

"Giovanni," said Beatrice, calmly, for her grief was beyond passion, "why dost thou join thyself with me thus in those terrible words? I, it is true, am the horrible thing thou namest me. But thou,—what hast thou to do, save with one other shudder at my hideous misery to go forth out of the garden and mingle with thy race, and forget that there ever crawled on earth such a monster as poor Beatrice?"

"Dost thou pretend ignorance?" asked Giovanni, scowling upon her. "Behold! this power have I gained from the pure daughter of Rappaccini."

There was a swarm of summer insects flitting through the air in search of the food promised by the flower odors of the fatal garden. They circled round Giovanni's head, and were evidently attracted towards him by the same influence which had drawn them for an instant within the sphere of several of the shrubs. He sent forth a breath among them, and smiled bitterly at Beatrice as at least a score of the insects fell dead upon the ground

"I see it! I see it!" shrieked Beatrice. "It is my father's fatal science! No, no, Giovanni; it was not I! Never! never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee pass away, leaving but thine image in mine heart; for, Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food. But my father,—he has united us in this fearful sympathy. Yes; spurn me, tread upon me, kill me! Oh, what is death after such words as thine? But it was not I. Not for a world of bliss would I have done it."

Giovanni's passion had exhausted itself in its outburst from his lips. There now came across him a sense, mournful, and not without tenderness, of the intimate and peculiar relationship between Beatrice and himself. They stood, as it were, in an utter solitude, which would be made none the less solitary by the densest throng of human life. Ought not, then, the desert of humanity around them to press this insulated pair closer together? If they should be cruel to one another, who was there to be kind to them? Besides, thought Giovanni, might there not still be a hope of his returning within the limits of ordinary nature, and leading Beatrice, the redeemed Beatrice, by the hand? O, weak, and selfish, and unworthy spirit, that could dream of an earthly union and earthly happiness as possible, after such deep love had been so bitterly wronged as was Beatrice's love by Giovanni's blighting words! No, no; there could be no such hope. She must pass heavily, with that broken heart, across the borders of Time—she must bathe her hurts in some fount of paradise, and forget her grief in the light of immortality, and *there* be well.

But Giovanni did not know it.

"Dear Beatrice," said he, approaching her, while she shrank away as always at his approach, but now with a different impulse, "dearest Beatrice, our fate is not yet so desperate. Behold! there is a medicine, potent, as a wise physician has assured me, and almost divine in its efficacy. It is composed of ingredients the most opposite to those by which thy awful father has brought this calamity upon thee and me. It is distilled of blessed herbs. Shall we not quaff it together, and thus be purified from evil?"

"Give it me!" said Beatrice, extending her hand to receive the little silver vial which Giovanni took from his bosom. She added, with a peculiar emphasis, "I will drink; but do thou await the result."

She put Baglioni's antidote to her lips; and, at the same moment, the figure of Rappaccini emerged from the portal and came slowly towards the marble fountain. As he drew near, the pale man of science seemed to gaze with a triumphant expression at the beautiful youth and maiden, as might an artist who should spend his life in achieving a picture or a group of statuary and finally be satisfied with his success. He paused; his bent form grew erect with conscious power; he spread out his hands over them in the attitude of a father imploring a blessing upon his children; but those were the same hands that had thrown poison into the stream of their lives. Giovanni trembled. Beatrice shuddered nervously, and pressed her hand upon her heart.

"My daughter," said Rappaccini, "thou art no longer lonely in the world. Pluck one of those precious gems from thy sister shrub and bid thy bridegroom wear it in his bosom. It will not harm him now. My science and the sympathy between thee and him have so wrought within his system, that he now stands apart from common men, as thou dost, daughter of my pride and triumph, from ordinary women. Pass on, then, through the world, most dear to one another and dreadful to all besides!"

"My father," said Beatrice, feebly,—and still as she spoke she kept her hand upon her heart,—"wherefore didst thou inflict this miserable doom upon thy child?"

"Miserable!" exclaimed Rappaccini. "What mean you, foolish girl? Dost thou deem it misery to be endowed with marvellous gifts against which no power nor strength could avail an enemy—misery, to be able to quell the mightiest with a breath—misery, to be as terrible as thou art beautiful? Wouldst thou, then, have preferred the condition of a weak woman, exposed to all evil and capable of none?"

"I would fain have been loved, not feared," murmured Beatrice, sinking down upon the ground. "But now it matters not. I am going, father, where the evil which thou hast striven to mingle with my being will pass away like a dream—like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden. Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like lead within my heart; but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. Oh, was there not, from the first, more poison in thy nature than in mine?"

To Beatrice,—so radically had her earthly part been wrought upon by Rappaccini's skill,—as poison had been life, so the powerful antidote was death; and thus the poor victim of man's ingenuity and of thwarted nature, and of the fatality that attends all such efforts of perverted wisdom, perished there, at the feet of her father and Giovanni. Just at that moment Professor Pietro Baglioni looked forth from the window, and called loudly, in a tone of triumph mixed with horror, to the thunderstricken man of science,—

"Rappaccini! Rappaccini! and is *this* the upshot of your experiment!"

1844



Preface to "The House of the Seven Gables"

The following Preface is the best example of Hawthorne's criticism of his own writings. The critical points are generally applicable not only to **The House of the Seven Gables** but to his works as a whole. Of particular interest is his distinction between the "Novel" and the "Romance." As examples of the Novel, Hawthorne had in mind no doubt the works of such writers as Thackeray and Trollope. His own works he preferred to call "Romances."

In the preface to the **Scarlet Letter**, Hawthorne has symbolically indicated what he believes is the proper "atmosphere" for the creation of a "Romance": "Moonlight, in a familiar room, falling so white upon the carpet, and showing all its figures so distinctly,—making every object so minutely visible, yet so unlike a morning or noontide visibility,—is a medium the most suitable for a romance-writer to get acquainted with his illusive guests. There is the little domestic scenery of the well-known apartment . . . all . . . details, so completely seen, are so spiritualized by the unusual light, that they seem to lose their actual substance, and become things of intellect. Nothing is too small or too trifling to undergo this change, and acquire dignity thereby. A child's shoe; the doll . . . ; the hobby-horse,—whatever, in a word, has been used or played with, during the day, is now invested with a quality of strangeness and remoteness, though still almost as vividly present as by daylight. Thus, therefore, the floor of our familiar room has become a neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and fairy-land, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other."

When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume, had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former—while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart—has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation. If he thinks fit, also, he may so manage his atmospherical medium as to bring out or mellow the lights, and deepen and enrich the shadows, of the picture. He will be wise, no doubt, to make a very moderate use of the privileges here stated, and, especially, to mingle the Marvelous rather as a slight, delicate, and evanescent flavor, than as any portion of the actual substance of the dish offered to the public. He can hardly be said, however, to commit a literary crime, even if he disregard this caution.

In the present work the author has proposed to himself —but with what success, fortunately, it is not for him to judge—to keep undeviatingly within his immunities. The point of view in which this tale comes under the Romantic definition lies in the attempt to connect a bygone time with the very present that is flitting away from us. It is a legend, prolonging itself, from an epoch now gray in the distance down into our own broad daylight, and bringing along with it some of its legendary mist, which the reader, according to his pleasure, may either disregard or allow it to float almost imperceptibly about the characters and events for the sake of a picturesque effect. The narrative, it may be, is woven of so humble a texture as to require this advantage, and, at the same time, to render it the more difficult of attainment.

Many writers lay very great stress upon some definite moral purpose, at which they profess to aim their works. Not to be deficient in this particular, the author has provided himself with a moral;—the truth, namely, that the wrongdoing of one generation lives into the successive ones, and, divesting itself of every temporary advantage, becomes a pure and uncontrollable mischief;—and he would feel it a singular gratification, if this romance

might effectually convince mankind—or, indeed, any one man—of the folly of tumbling down an avalanche of ill-gotten gold, or real estate, on the heads of an unfortunate posterity, thereby to maim and crush them, until the accumulated mass shall be scattered abroad in its original atoms. In good faith, however, he is not sufficiently imaginative to flatter himself with the slightest hope of this kind. When romances do really teach anything, or produce any effective operations, it is usually through a far more subtle process than the ostensible one. The author has considered it hardly worth his while, therefore, relentlessly to impale the story with its moral, as with an iron rod,—or, rather, as by sticking a pin through a butterfly,—thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude A high truth, indeed, fairly, finely, and skillfully wrought out, brightening at every step, and crowning the final development of a work of fiction, may add an artistic glory, but is never any truer, and seldom any more evident, at the last page than at the first.

The reader may perhaps choose to assign an actual locality to the imaginary events of this narrative. If permitted by the historical connection,—which, though slight, was essential to his plan,—the author would very willingly have avoided anything of this nature. Not to speak of other objections, it exposes the romance to an inflexible and exceedingly dangerous species of criticism, by bringing his fancy-pictures almost into positive contact with the realities of the moment. It has been no part of his object, however, to describe local manners, nor in any way to meddle with the characteristics of a community for whom he cherishes a proper respect and a natural regard. He trusts not to be considered as unpardonably offending, by laying out a street that infringes upon nobody's private rights, and appropriating a lot of land which had no visible owner, and building a house, of materials long in use for constructing castles in the air. The personages of the tale—though they give themselves out to be of ancient stability and considerable prominence—are really of the author's own making, or, at all events, of his own mixing; their virtues can shed no luster, nor their defects redound, in the remotest degree, to the discredit of the venerable town of which they profess to be inhabitants. He would be glad, therefore, if—especially in the quarter to which he alludes—the book may be read strictly as a romance, having a great deal more to do with the clouds overhead than with any portion of the actual soil of the County of Essex.

1851

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43 venerable town, Salem, Massachusetts

DOWN EAST HUMORIST: Seba Smith

Seba Smith

1792 • 1868

When, in January 1830, Editor Seba Smith of the *Portland* (Maine) *Courier* decided he should do something to stimulate interest in his languishing newspaper, he invented the humorous character Jack Downing to say his say about contemporary politics. The homespun commentator was such a success that from 1830 down to the eve of the Civil War Smith turned out the "Downing Letters," important in the development of American humor and of a type of political argument destined to prove very significant in our national history.

Jack and the members of the Downing family who exchanged letters with him were both believable and



amusing. Smith's background had equipped him well for writing about Yankees, both authentically and humorously. Born in a Buckfield, Maine, log cabin, reared in Buckfield or other Down East towns until he was twenty-three, he was well acquainted with Yankee ways of thinking, talking, and living. The vividness with which he portrayed Downingville, the lifelikeness of the speech of the Downings, and the verisimilitude of their actions all made his rustics believable. (Emerson notes that his old Concord neighbor, Ezra Ripley, never could be persuaded that Jack was not a living man.) Smith's study at Bowdoin (1815-1818) and his travel in the South probably helped him acquire the objectivity often valuable for humor.

In addition to the appeals of the characterization and the humor, there was the appeal of the political satire. At first Smith had his hero wander into the Maine legislature and write naïvely about state politics. Later he had Jack go to Washington, D. C., and comment on national issues and personalities. Writing of his adventures in the Kitchen Cabinet (unofficial advisers) of Jackson and of his friendships with public men, Downing wittingly or unwittingly said laughable things about the partisan struggles of the day—the fight against the national bank, the nullification struggle, and others. This illiterate but shrewd common man discoursing on national affairs appealed to readers not only in the Jacksonian period which produced him but also in later periods, as he continued his letters during succeeding administrations. Frequently, newspaper wits nominated him for the governorship or the Presidency, and early cartoonists of the day who wanted a symbol for the United States often pictured Jack. Even today, Uncle Sam is simply Jack Downing with whiskers. Jack was the ancestor of a whole series of horse sense humorists, such as Hosea Biglow, Bill Arp, Kin Hubbard, and Will Rogers, who have delighted great masses of Americans and influenced their political thinking.

My Thirty Years Out of the Senate, New York, 1859 • Mary Alice Wyman, **Two American Pioneers: Seba Smith and Elizabeth Oakes Smith,** New York, 1927 • Walter Blair, **Horse Sense in American Humor,** Chicago, 1942

From

My Thirty Years Out of the Senate

Accompanied by a number of his official and unofficial advisers, President Jackson spent part of the summer of 1833 taking a trip which carried him to several of the

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Panel (l. to r.)· News of the day • Storytelling session in a New England country store • The Yankee peddler

chief cities of the North. At each stop there were large demonstrations, partly because of the President's personal popularity, partly because of general approval in the North of his recent stand on nullification. Jack Downing, in his letter dated June 10, tells of the reception at Philadelphia. Subsequent letters, here reprinted, offer additional details about the journey.

MAJOR DOWNING SHAKES HANDS FOR THE PRESIDENT AT PHILADELPHIA, WHILE ON THE GRAND TOUR DOWN EAST

Philadelphia, June 10, 1833

To Uncle Joshua Downing, Postmaster, up in Downingville, in the State of Maine, with care and speed

Dear Uncle Joshua:—We are coming on, full chisel. I've been trying, ever since we started, to get a chance to write a little to you; but when we've been on the road I couldn't catch my breath hardly long enough to write my name, we kept flying so fast; and when we made any stop, there was such a jam around us there wasn't elbow room enough for a miskeeter to turn round without knocking his wings off.

I'm most afraid now we shall get to Downingville before this letter does, so that we shall be likely to catch you all in the suds before you think of it. But I understand there is a *fast mail* goes on that way, and I mean to send it by that, so I'm in hopes you'll get it time enough to have the children's faces washed and their heads combed, and the gals get on their clean gowns. And if Sargent Joel *could* have time enough to call out my old Downingville company and get their uniforms brushed up a little, and come down the road as fur as your new barn to meet us, there's nothing that would please the President better. As for victuals, most anything won't come amiss; we are as hungry as bears after traveling a hundred miles a day. A little fried pork and eggs, or a pot of baked beans and an Indian pudding would suit us much better than the soft stuff they give here in these great cities.

The President wouldn't miss of seeing you for anything in the world, and he will go to Downingville if he has legs and arms enough left when he goes to Portland to carry him there. But, for fear that anything should happen that he shouldn't be able to come, you had better meet us in Portland, say about the 22d; and then you can go up to Downingville with us.

This traveling with the President is capital fun, after all, if it wasn't so plaguy tiresome. We come into Baltimore on a railroad, and we flew over the ground like a harrycane. There isn't a horse in this country that could keep up with us, if he should go upon the clean clip. When we got to Baltimore, the streets were filled with folks as thick as the spruce trees down in your swamp. There we found Black Hawk, a little, old, dried up Indian king. And I thought the folks looked at him and the prophet about as much as they did at me and the President. I gave the President a wink that this Indian fellow was taking the shine off us a little; so we concluded we wouldn't have him with us any more, but go on without him.

I can't stop to tell you, in this letter, how we got along to Philadelphy, though we had a pretty easy time some of the way in the steamboats. And I can't stop to tell you of half of the fine things I have seen here. They took us up into a great hall this morning, as big as a meeting-house, and then the folks begun to pour in by thousands to shake hands with the President—Federalists and all, it made no difference. There was such a stream of 'em coming in that the hall was full in a few minutes, and it was so jammed up around the door that they couldn't get out again if they were to die. So they had to knock out some of the windows, and go out t'other way.

The President shook hands with all his might an hour or two, 'till he got so tired he couldn't hardly stand it. I took hold and shook for him once in a while to help him along, but at last he got so tired he had to lay down on a soft bench, covered with cloth, and shake as well as he could; and when he couldn't shake, he'd nod to 'em as they come along And at last he got so beat out, he couldn't only wrinkle his forehead and wink. Then I kind of stood behind him, and reached my arm round under his, and shook for him for about half an hour as tight as I could spring. Then we concluded it was best to adjourn for to-day.

And I've made out to get away up into the garret in the tavern long enough to write this letter. We shall be off tomorrow or next day for York; and if I can possibly get breathing time enough there, I shall write to you again.

Give my love to all the folks in Downingville, and believe me your loving neffu,

MAJOR JACK DOWNING

1833

MAJOR DOWNING DESCRIBES THE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT AT BOSTON

Boston, Tuesday, June 25, 1833

To the Editor of the Portland Courier

My Dear Old Friend:—I'm keeping house with the President to-day, and bein' he's getting considerable better, I thought I'd catch a chance when he was taking a knap, and write a little to let you know how we get along. This ere sickness of the President has been a bad pull-back to us. He hasn't been able to go out since Sunday afternoon, and I've been watchin' with him this two nights, and if I wasn't as tough as a halter, I should be half dead by this time.

And if the President wasn't tougher than a catamount, he'd kick the bucket before he'd been round to see one half the notions there is in Boston. Poor man, he has a hard time of it; you've no idea how much he has to go through. It's worse than being dragged through forty knot-holes.

To be bamboozled about from four o'clock in the morning till midnight, rain or shine—jammed into one great house to eat a breakfast, and into another great house to eat a dinner, and into another to eat supper, and into two or three others between meals, to eat cooliations, and to have to go out and review three or four regiments of troops, and then to be jammed into Funnel Hall two hours, and shake hands with three or four thousand folks, and then to go into the State House and stand there two or three hours, and see all Boston streaming through it like a river through a saw-mill, and then to ride about the city awhile in a fine painted covered wagon, with four or five horses to draw it, and then ride awhile in one without any cover to it, finney-fined off to the top notch, and then get on to the horses and ride awhile a horseback, and then run into a great picture-room and see more fine pictures than you could shake a stick at in a week, and then go into some grand gentleman's house, and shake hands a half an hour with a flock of ladies, and then after supper go and have a little still kind of a hubbub all alone with three or four hundred particular friends, and talk an hour or two, and take another cooliation, and then go home, and about midnight get ready to go to bed, and up again at four o'clock the next morning and at it. And if this aint enough to tucker a feller out, I don't know what is. The President wouldn't have stood it till this time, if he hadn't sent me and Mr. Van Buren to some of the parties, while he staid at home to rest.



Jack shaking hands for the President.

The President's got so much better, I think we shall be able to start for Salem to-morrow, for we must go through with it now we've begun, as hard work as 'tis. I think we shall get to Portland about the 4th of July; so, if you get your guns and things all ready, you can kill two birds with one stone. I hope you'll be pretty careful there how you point your guns. They pointed 'em so careless at New York that a wad come within six inches of making daylight shine through the President.

Now I think on't, there is the most rascally set of fellers skulking about somewhere in this part of the country that ever I heard of, and I wish you would blow 'em up. They are worse than the pickpockets. I mean them are fellers that's got to writing letters and putting my name to 'em, and sending of 'em to the printers. And I heard there was one sassy feller last Saturday, down to Newburyport, that got on to a horse, and rid about town calling himself Major Jack Down-

ing, and all the soldiers and the folks marched up and shook hands with him, and thought it was me. Isn't it Mr. Shakespeare that says something about "he that steals my munnypus steals trash, but he that steals my name ought to have his head broke?" I wish you would find that story and print it.

Your old friend,

MAJOR JACK DOWNING

1833

THE PRESIDENT AND THE REST OF 'EM TURN A SHORT CORNER AT CONCORD, AND SET THEIR FACES TOWARD WASHINGTON

Concord, Nu Hamsheer, June 30, 1833

To the Editor of the Portland Courier

My Dear Old Friend.—The jig is all up about our going to Portland and Downingville, I've battled the watch with the President this two days about it, and told him he must go there if he had the breath of life in him; and he kept telling me he certainly would, if horses could carry him there.

But the President isn't very well, and that ain't the worst of it; there's been a little difficulty bruin' among us, and the President's got so riled about it, that he's finally concluded to start on his way back to-morrow. I can't help it; but I feel bad enough about it to cry a barrel of tears.

I don't know how they will stan' it in Downingville, when they come to get the news. I'm afraid there will be a master uproar there, for you know they are all great Demokrats. But the stage is jest agoing to start.

In haste, from your friend,

MAJOR JACK DOWNING

1833

COUSIN NABBY DESCRIBES THE UNUTTERABLE DISAPPOINTMENT AT DOWNINGVILLE BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT DIDN'T COME

Downingville, July 8, 1833

To the Editor of the Portland Courier

Respectable Sir:—As Cousin Jack is always so mity budge in writing letters to you, and as he and the President showed us a most provoking trick, and run off like a stream of chalk, back to Washington, without coming here, after they had promised over and over again that they would come, and we had got all slicked up and our clean gownds on, and more good victuals cooked than there ever was in all Downingville before—I say, Mr. Editor, I declare it's too bad; we are all as mad as blazes about it, and I mean to write and tell you all about it, if I live; and if Cousin Jack don't like it, he may lump it; so there now.

Ye see Cousin Jack writ to us that he and the President and some more gentlemen should be here the 4th of July, and we must spring to it and brush up and see how smart we could look, and how many fine things we could show to the President. This was a Saturday before the 4th of July come a Thursday. The letter was to Uncle Joshua, the Postmaster. Most all the folks in Downingville were at the Post-Office waiting when the mail come in, for we expected to hear from Jack.

Uncle Joshua put on his spettacles and opened the mail, and hauled out the papers and letters in a bunch. In a minute I see one to Uncle Joshua with the President's name on the outside; so I knew it was from Jack, for the President always puts his name on Jack's letters. We all cried out to Uncle Joshua to open it, and let us know what was in it. But he's such a provoking odd old man, he wouldn't touch it 'till he got every one of the papers and letters sorted and put up in their places. And then he took it and set down in his armchair, and took out his tobacker box and took a chaw of tobacker, and then he broke open the seal and sot and chawed and read to himself. We all stood tiptoe, with our hearts in our mouths, and he must needs read it over to himself three times, chawing his old quid, and once in a while giving us a knowing wink, before he would tell us what was in it. And he wouldn't tell us arter all, but, says he, "You must all be ready to put the best side out Thursday morning; there'll be business to attend to, such as Downingville never see before."

At that we all turned and run, and such a hubbub as we were in from that time 'till Thursday morning, I guess you never see. Such a washing and scrubbing, and making new clothes and mending old ones, and baking and cooking Every thing seemed to be in a clutter all over the neighborhood. Sargent Joel flew round like a ravin' distracted rooster. He called out his com-

pany every morning before sunrise, and marched 'em up and down the road three hours every day. He sent to the store and got a whole new set of buttons, and had 'em sowed on to his regimental coat, and had a new piece of red put round the collar. And had his trowses washed and his boots greased, and looked as though he might take the shine off of most anything. But the greatest rumpus was at Uncle Joshua's; for they said the President must stay there all night. And Ant Keziah was in such a pucker to have everything nice, I didn't know but she would fly off the handle.

She had every part of the house washed from garret to cellar, and the floors all sanded, and a bunch of green bushes put into all the fire places. And she baked three overn-full of dried punkin pies, besides a few dried huckleberry pies, and cake, and a great pot of pork and beans. But the worst trouble was to fix up the bed so as to look nice; for Ant Keziah declared the President should have as good a night's lodging in her house as he had in New York or Boston. So she put on two feather beds on top the straw bed, and a bran-new calico quilt that she made the first summer after she was married, and never put it on a bed before. And to make it look as nice as the New York beds, she took her red silk gown and ripped it up and made a blanket to spread over the top. And then she hung up some sheets all round the bedroom, and the gals brought in a whole handful of roses and pinks, and pinned 'em up round as thick as flies in August.

After we got things pretty much fixed, Uncle Joshua started off to meet Cousin Jack and the President, and left Sargent Joel to put matters to rights, and told us we must all be ready and be paraded in the road by nine o'clock Thursday morning. Well, Thursday morning come, and we all mustered as soon as it was daylight and dressed up. The children were all washed, and had their clean aprons on and their heads combed, and were put under the care of the schoolmarm, to be paraded along with her scholars.

About eight o'clock, all the village got together down the road as fur as Uncle Joshua's new barn; and Sargent Joel told us how to stand, as he said, in military order. He placed Bill Johnson and Cousin Ephraim out a little ways in front, with each of 'em a great long fowling piece with a smart charge in to fire a salute, and told 'em as soon as the President hove in sight to



The unutterable disappointment at Downingville.

let drive, only to be careful and pint their guns up, so as not to hurt anybody. Then come Sargent Joel and his company; and then come the schoolmarm and the children; and then come all the women and gals over sixteen with Ant Keziah at their head; and then come all the men in town that owned horses riding on horseback; and all the boys that Sargent Joel didn't think was large enough to walk in the procession got up and sot on the fences along by the side of the road.

There we stood 'till about nine o'clock, when, sure enough, we saw somebody come riding out of the woods down the hill. The boys all screamed, ready to split their throats, "Hoorah for Jackson," and Bill Johnson fired off his gun. Cousin Ephraim, who ain't so easily fluttered, held on to his and didn't fire, for he couldn't see anybody but Uncle Joshua on his old gray horse. Along come Uncle Joshua, on a slow trot, and we looked and looked, and couldn't see anybody coming behind him.

Then they all begun to look at one another as wild as hawks, and turn all manner of colors. When Uncle Joshua got up so we could see him pretty plain, he looked as cross as a thunder-cloud. He rid up to Sar-

gent Joel, and says he, "You may all go home about your business, for Jack and the President are half way to Washington by this time."

My stars! what a time there was then. I never see so many folks boiling over mad before. Bill Johnson threw his gun over into the field as much as ten rods, and hopped up and down, and struck his fists together like all possessed. Sargent Joel marched back and forth across the road two or three times, growing redder and redder, till at last he drew out his sword and fetched a blow across a hemlock stump, and snapped it off like a pipe-stem. Ant Keziah fell down in a conniption fit; and it was an hour before we could bring her tu and get her into the house. And when she come to go round the house and see the victuals she had cooked up, and go into the bedroom and see her gown all cut up, she went into conniption fits again. But she's better to-day, and has gone to work to try to patch up her gown again.

I thought I would jest let you know about these things, and if you are a mind to send word on to Cousin Jack and the President, I'm willing. You may tell 'em there aint five folks in Downingville that would hoorah for Jackson now, and hardly one that would vote for him, unless 'tis Uncle Joshua, and he wouldn't if he wasn't afraid of losing the Post-Office.

Your respected friend,

NABBY DOWNING

1833

Melville

Herman Melville

1819 • 1891

Herman Melville, whom John Freeman has called "the most powerful of all the great American writers," was born in New York City in 1819. When he was eleven years of age, his family moved to Albany, where he became a student in the Albany Academy. Two years later his father, a merchant, died in debt. During the seven ensuing years the boy was variously occupied, clerking in a bank and in his brother's store in Albany, working on his uncle's farm at Pittsfield. At the age of twenty, he shipped as a sailor on a merchantman bound for Liverpool. The reasons for his so doing we must take from *Redburn,* which appears to be a pretty literal account of Melville's own experiences: "Sad disappointments in several plans which I had sketched for my future life; the necessity of doing something for myself, united to a naturally roving disposition, had now conspired within me, to send me to sea as a sailor." After a short stay in Liverpool, where he was shocked by the brutality and misery of the great city, he returned with his ship, sobered and matured, one must believe, by this early introduction to a world of violence and crime. Of his life during the next three or four years little is known except that he taught school in Albany and Pittsfield and tried his hand at writing.

The most decisive event of Melville's life came on January 3, 1841, when at the age of twenty-one he shipped at New Bedford on the *Acushnet,* a whaler, for the South Seas. This whale-ship was for him, in the words of Ishmael in *Moby Dick,* "my Yale College and my Harvard." Melville was gone three years and nine



months, returning to Boston in October 1844. For his life during this period one is forced to draw largely upon *Typee, Omoo, White Jacket,* and *Moby Dick,* though Mr. C. R. Anderson has exposed some of the errors (in Mr. Mumford's biography, for example) which result from the unwary use of these fictional works for biographical purposes. The exact details of Melville's wanderings in the Pacific are in large measure still uncertain. But it is known that, after some eighteen months on the *Acushnet,* Melville deserted, July 9, 1842, at the Marquesas Islands. After a month or two among the cannibals he escaped to Tahiti; further travels may have taken him to Japan. Finally, on August 17, 1843, he joined the crew of the frigate *United States* at Honolulu and remained with this ship until his arrival at Boston more than a year later.

The eight or nine years following his return from his voyages were Melville's great productive period. He poured forth a veritable torrent of books: *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847), *Mardi* (1849), *Redburn* (1849), *White Jacket* (1850), *Moby Dick* (1851), and *Pierre* (1852). It was inevitable, perhaps, that there should be a falling off after such extraordinary productivity. Melville seemed to have a premonitory sense of this in 1851, when, at the age of thirty-two, he wrote to Hawthorne: "From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. Three weeks have scarcely passed, at any time between then and now, that I have not unfolded within myself. But I feel that I am now come to the inmost leaf of the bulb, and that shortly the flower must fall to the mold." He lived on for forty years; but he failed to write another book as great as *Moby Dick,* and his productivity steadily diminished: *Israel Potter* (1855); *The Piazza Tales* (1856), which includes "Benito Cereno"; *The Confidence Man* (1857); two volumes of poetry, *Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1866) and *Clarel* (1876); and *Billy Budd,* written near the end of his life and not published until 1924.

Mr. Thorp notes "five determining influences" in Melville's literary career: "the religious orthodoxy of his home, which left its imprint, though he revolted from it; his contact with the brutalities of a sailor's life and with savage societies which impelled him to question the premises of western civilization; his reading in philosophy and belles-lettres, which, though unmethodical, was prodigious between 1846 and 1851 [notably, Rabelais, Sir Thomas Browne, Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists, the Bible, and Carlyle]; his friendships with artists and men of letters in New York who advanced his interests and educated him in his craft; and the sympathy of Hawthorne, which more than any other factor contributed to the fruition of his genius." This last influence is of special interest. From the summer of 1850 till the autumn of 1851, Melville and Hawthorne were near neighbors and frequent companions, the former residing at Pittsfield, the latter at Lenox. Melville was somewhat extravagant in his admiration of his new friend (see his extraordinary letters to Hawthorne, in Thorp's *Melville*); Hawthorne, though reserved and older, gave to Melville a sympathetic understanding such as he had not known before and would never know again. *Moby Dick* was dedicated

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Panel (l. to r.)· Disaster • The clipper Nightingale • Herman Melville at 45 • Melville in the South Seas

to Hawthorne, and Hawthorne's letter of acknowledgment and appreciation—unfortunately lost, as are all of his letters to Melville—was to Melville a "joy-giving and exultation-breeding letter." After Hawthorne left the Berkshires, their friendly intimacy was interrupted; but in 1856, when Melville was on a recuperative journey to Italy and the Holy Land, the two men met again in England. After this meeting, Hawthorne wrote in his journal the best contemporary characterization of Melville that we have: "We took a pretty long walk together, and sat down in a hollow among the sand hills (sheltering ourselves from the high, cool wind) and smoked a cigar. Melville, as he always does, began to reason of Providence and futurity, and of everything that lies beyond human ken, and informed me that he had 'pretty much made up his mind to be annihilated'; but still he does not seem to rest in that anticipation; and, I think, will never rest until he gets hold of a definite belief. It is strange how he persists—and has persisted ever since I knew him, and probably long before—in wandering to-and-fro over these deserts, as dismal and monotonous as the sand hills amid which we were sitting. He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other . . . he has a very high and noble nature . . . " *(The English Notebooks).*

Melville began, in *Typee* and *Omoo,* with delightful narratives of travels in the South Seas, written in a simple, straightforward style. There is no allegory here, and no bitterness, except for occasional satirical sallies at the missionaries and the "civilized" nations. *Redburn* and *White Jacket,* also, are simple narratives, though imbued with darker elements: the former delves into the slums of Liverpool; the latter is an angry exposure of the cruelties practiced on board a frigate of the American Navy. The transition to allegory came in *Mardi*—a confused and confusing book, effective in parts, but lacking integration. Melville reached his full stature in *Moby Dick,* a powerful allegory of good and evil. By this time, too, his prose style had changed from one of Defoe-like simplicity to one of magnificent rhythms, which, while recalling Sir Thomas Browne's, were Melville's own. *Pierre,* in which Melville attempted for the first time the structure of the novel, has something of the power of *Moby Dick,* though it is much less successful as literary art. Among the productions after 1852, one may mention "Benito Cereno" (1856) and *Billy Budd* (1890?) as deserving to rank with his best work, always excepting the matchless *Moby Dick. Billy Budd* is of special interest because the book shows that Melville retained his creative power and also because its conclusion may throw some light on Melville's state of mind in his old age. Both Ahab, in *Moby Dick,* and Pierre went down in defeat, and that defeat perhaps was Melville's own. Billy Budd, a handsome young sailor, goes down in defeat also—he is hanged for the accidental killing of a man. But his defeat is not one of defiance, like Ahab's, or of despair, like Pierre's. Just before the trap is sprung, he blesses the Captain, his friend, who, compelled by naval law, has pronounced the death sentence with great reluctance. Mr. Freeman finds here an indication that Melville achieved in his later years an inward peace, a reconciliation with life.

Melville's reputation as one of the very greatest of American writers dates from about 1920. His early works were enjoyed by many readers, most of whom, however, were estranged by the obscurity and pessimism of *Mardi, Moby Dick,* and *Pierre.* After about 1860, Melville was a forgotten author. There were always, to be sure, a few readers, particularly in England, who knew his books; but "oblivion" is hardly too strong a term to describe Melville's fate for a half century and more. The almost total eclipse of his fame is sufficiently attested by the fact that he was given just one sentence in Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America,* published in 1900: "Herman Melville, with his books about the South Seas, which Robert Louis Stevenson is said to have declared the best ever written, and with his novels of maritime adventure, began a career of literary promise, which never came to fruition." The exciting rediscovery occurred in both England and America about the time of the centenary of Melville's birth. The enthusiasm of the 1920's may be explained in various ways. It is perhaps sufficient here to say that his splendid literary qualities were for the first time recognized by a considerable number of readers and that the postwar mood of disillusionment and despair vibrated sympathetically with the mood of *Moby Dick* and *Pierre.* His fame, tardily established, bids fair to continue with little, if any, abatement.

The Works of Herman Melville, 16 vols., London, 1922-1924 • R. M. Weaver, Herman Melville, Mariner and Mystic, New York, 1921 • John Freeman, Herman Melville, London, 1926 • Lewis Mumford, Herman Melville, New York, 1929 • Willard Thorp, Herman Melville, Representative Selections, Cincinnati, 1938 • C. R. Anderson, Melville in the South Seas, New York, 1939

Benito Cereno

"Benito Cereno" was first printed serially in **Putnam's Monthly Magazine** in October, November, and December 1855, and was reprinted, with minor revisions, in **Piazza Tales** in 1856. Melville derived the principal facts of his narrative from Chapter XVIII of Amasa Delano's **Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres . . .**, Boston, 1817; but the artistry which made of the facts a literary masterpiece was Melville's own. Delano's chapter is reprinted in Harold H. Scudder's "Melville's 'Benito Cereno' and Captain Delano's Voyages," **Publications of the Modern Language Association**, June 1928, XLIII.

The late Edward J. O'Brien regarded "Benito Cereno" as "the noblest short story in American literature" (**Twenty-Five Finest Short Stories**, New York, 1931). The story is indeed remarkable for its atmosphere and suggestion, its cumulative suspense, its horror, its pictorial qualities, its portrayal of contrasting types of character. Only in **Moby Dick** perhaps is Melville's power more fully revealed.

In the year 1799, Captain Amasa Delano, of Duxbury, in Massachusetts, commanding a large sealer and general trader, lay at anchor with a valuable cargo, in the harbor of St Maria—a small, desert, uninhabited island towards the southern extremity of the long coast of Chili. There he had touched for water.

On the second day, not long after dawn, while lying in his berth, his mate came below, informing him that a strange sail was coming into the bay. Ships were then not so plenty in those waters as now. He rose, dressed, and went on deck.

The morning was one peculiar to that coast. Everything was mute and calm; everything gray. The sea, though undulated into long roods of swells, seemed fixed, and was sleeked at the surface like waved lead that has cooled and set in the smelter's mould. The sky seemed a gray surtout. Flights of troubled gray fowl, kith and kin with flights of troubled gray vapors among which they were mixed, skimmed low and fitfully over the waters, as swallows over meadows before storms. Shadows present, foreshadowing deeper shadows to come.

To Captain Delano's surprise, the stranger, viewed through the glass, showed no colors; though to do so upon entering a haven, however unhabited in its shores, where but a single other ship might be lying, was the custom among peaceful seamen of all nations. Considering the lawlessness and loneliness of the spot, and the sort of stories, at that day, associated with those seas, Captain Delano's surprise might have deepened into some uneasiness had he not been a person of a singularly undistrustful good nature, not liable, except on extraordinary and repeated incentives, and hardly then, to indulge in personal alarms, any way involving the imputation of malign evil in man. Whether, in view of what humanity is capable, such a trait implies, along with a benevolent heart, more than ordinary quickness and accuracy of intellectual perception, may be left to the wise to determine.

But whatever misgivings might have obtruded on first seeing the stranger, would almost, in any seaman's mind, have been dissipated by observing that the ship, in navigating into the harbor, was drawing too near the land; a sunken reef making out off her bow. This seemed to prove her a stranger, indeed, not only to the sealer, but the island; consequently, she could be no wonted freebooter on that ocean. With no small interest, Captain Delano continued to watch her—a proceeding not much facilitated by the vapors partly mantling the hull, through which the far matin light from her cabin streamed equivocally enough; much like the sun—by this time hemisphered on the rim of the horizon, and, apparently, in company with the strange ship, entering the harbor—which, wimpled by the same low, creeping clouds, showed not unlike a Lima intriguante's one sinister eye peering

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54 Lima, the capital of Peru • 54 intriguante, a woman who carries on an illicit love affair

across the Plaza from the Indian loop-hole of her dusk *saya-y-manta.*

It might have been but a deception of the vapors, but, the longer the stranger was watched the more singular appeared her manoeuvers. Ere long it seemed hard to decide whether she meant to come in or no—what she wanted, or what she was about. The wind, which had breezed up a little during the night, was now extremely light and baffling, which the more increased the apparent uncertainty of her movements.

Surmising, at last, that it might be a ship in distress, Captain Delano ordered his whale-boat to be dropped, and, much to the wary opposition of his mate, prepared to board her, and, at the least, pilot her in. On the night previous, a fishing-party of the seamen had gone a long distance to some detached rocks out of sight from the sealer, and, an hour or two before daybreak, had returned, having met with no small success. Presuming that the stranger might have been long off soundings, the good captain put several baskets of the fish, for presents, into his boat, and so pulled away. From her continuing too near the sunken reef, deeming her in danger, calling to his men, he made all haste to apprise those on board of their situation. But, some time ere the boat came up, the wind, light though it was, having shifted, had headed the vessel off, as well as partly broken the vapors from about her.

Upon gaining a less remote view, the ship, when made signally visible on the verge of the leaden-hued swells, with the shreds of fog here and there raggedly furring her, appeared like a white-washed monastery after a thunderstorm, seen perched upon some dun cliff among the Pyrenees. But it was no purely fanciful resemblance which now, for a moment, almost led Captain Delano to think that nothing less than a ship-load of monks was before him. Peering over the bulwarks were what really seemed, in the hazy distance, throngs of dark cowls; while, fitfully revealed through the open port-holes, other dark moving figures were dimly descried, as of Black Friars pacing the cloisters.

Upon a still nigher approach, this appearance was modified, and the true character of the vessel was plain —a Spanish merchantman of the first class, carrying Negro slaves, amongst other valuable freight, from one colonial port to another. A very large, and, in its time, a very fine vessel, such as in those days were at intervals encountered along that main; sometimes superseded Acapulco treasure-ships, or retired frigates of the Spanish king's navy, which, like superannuated Italian palaces, still, under a decline of masters, preserved signs of former state.

As the whale-boat drew more and more nigh, the cause of the peculiar pipe-clayed aspect of the stranger was seen in the slovenly neglect pervading her. The spars, ropes, and great part of the bulwarks, looked woolly, from long unacquaintance with the scraper, tar, and the brush. Her keel seemed laid, her ribs put together, and she launched, from Ezekiel's Valley of Dry Bones

In the present business in which she was engaged, the ship's general model and rig appeared to have undergone no material change from their original warlike and Froissart pattern However, no guns were seen.

The tops were large, and were railed about with what had once been octagonal net-work, all now in sad disrepair. These tops hung overhead like three ruinous aviaries, in one of which was seen perched on a ratlin, a white noddy, a strange fowl, so called from its lethargic somnambulistic character, being frequently caught by hand at sea. Battered and mouldy, the castellated forecastle seemed some ancient turret, long ago taken by assault, and then left to decay. Toward the stern, two high-raised quarter galleries—the balustrades here and there covered with dry, tindery sea-moss—opening out from the unoccupied state-cabin, whose dead-lights, for all the mild weather, were hermetically closed and calked —these tenantless balconies hung over the sea as if it were the grand Venetian canal. But the principal relic of faded grandeur was the ample oval of the shield-like stern-piece, intricately carved with the arms of Castile and Leon, medallioned about by groups of mythological or symbolical devices; uppermost and central of which was a dark satyr in a mask, holding his foot on the prostrate neck of a writhing figure, likewise masked.

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2 **saya-y-manta,** skirt and shawl • 48 **Acapulco,** a Mexican port on the Pacific Ocean • 58 **Ezekiel's . . . Bones.** See Ezekiel 37.1-10 • 62 **Froissart,** Jean Froissart (1337-1410), author of the famous **Chronicles.** "Froissart pattern" apparently means that the ship was of medieval design • 63 **tops,** platforms in the mast • 74 **dead-lights,** shutters on the cabin windows to keep out water • 80 **Castile and Leon,** formerly kingdoms in Spain

Whether the ship had a figure-head, or only a plain beak, was not quite certain, owing to canvas wrapped about that part, either to protect it while undergoing a re-furbishing, or else decently to hide its decay. Rudely painted or chalked, as in a sailor freak, along the forward side of a sort of pedestal below the canvas, was the sentence, *"Seguid vuestro jefe"* (follow your leader); while upon the tarnished head-boards, near by, appeared, in stately capitals, once gilt, the ship's name "SAN DOMINICK," each letter streakingly corroded with tricklings of copper-spike rust; while, like mourning weeds, dark festoons of sea-grass slimily swept to and fro over the name, with every hearse-like roll of the hull.

As, at last, the boat was hooked from the bow along toward the gangway amidship, its keel, while yet some inches separated from the hull, harshly grated as on a sunken coral reef. It proved a huge bunch of conglobated barnacles adhering below the water to the side like a wen—a token of baffling airs and long calms passed somewhere in those seas.

Climbing the side, the visitor was at once surrounded by a clamorous throng of whites and blacks, but the latter outnumbering the former more than could have been expected, Negro transportation-ship as the stranger in port was. But, in one language, and as with one voice, all poured out a common tale of suffering; in which the Negresses, of whom there were not a few, exceeded the others in their dolorous vehemence. The scurvy, together with a fever, had swept off a great part of their number, more especially the Spaniards. Off Cape Horn, they had narrowly escaped shipwreck; then, for days together, they had lain tranced without wind; their provisions were low; their water next to none; their lips that moment were baked.

While Captain Delano was thus made the mark of all eager tongues, his one eager glance took in all the faces, with every other object about him.

Always upon first boarding a large and populous ship at sea, especially a foreign one, with a nondescript crew such as Lascars or Manilla men, the impression varies in a peculiar way from that produced by first entering a strange house with strange inmates in a strange land. Both house and ship—the one by its walls and blinds, the other by its high bulwarks like ramparts—hoard from view their interiors till the last moment; but in the case of the ship there is this addition: that the living spectacle it contains, upon its sudden and complete disclosure, has, in contrast with the blank ocean which zones it, something of the effect of enchantment. The ship seems unreal; these strange costumes, gestures, and faces, but a shadowy tableau just emerged from the deep, which directly must receive back what it gave.

Perhaps it was some such influence, as above is attempted to be described, which, in Captain Delano's mind, heightened whatever, upon a staid scrutiny, might have seemed unusual; especially the conspicuous figures of four elderly grizzled Negroes, their heads like black, doddered willow tops, who, in venerable contrast to the tumult below them, were couched sphynx-like, one on the starboard cat-head, another on the larboard, and the remaining pair face to face on the opposite bulwarks above the main-chains. They each had bits of unstranded old junk in their hands, and, with a sort of stoical self-content, were picking the junk into oakum, a small heap of which lay by their sides. They accompanied the task with a continuous, low, monotonous chant; droning and druling away like so many gray-headed bag-pipers playing a funeral march.

The quarter-deck rose into an ample elevated poop, upon the forward verge of which, lifted, like the oakum-pickers, some eight feet above the general throng, sat along in a row, separated by regular spaces, the cross-legged figures of six other blacks; each with a rusty hatchet in his hand, which, with a bit of brick and a rag, he was engaged like a scullion in scouring; while between each two was a small stack of hatchets, their rusted edges turned forward awaiting a like operation. Though occasionally the four oakum-pickers would briefly address some person or persons in the crowd below, yet the six hatchet-polishers neither spoke to others, nor breathed a whisper among themselves, but sat intent upon their task, except at intervals, when, with the peculiar love in Negroes of uniting industry with pastime, two-and-two they sideways clashed their hatchets together, like cymbals, with a barbarous din. All six, unlike the generality, had the raw aspect of unsophisticated Africans.

But that first comprehensive glance which took in

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40 Lascars, East Indian sailors • 58 doddered, having lost their branches because of age or decay • 62 main-chains, attached to the mainmast

those ten figures, with scores less conspicuous, rested but an instant upon them, as, impatient of the hubbub of voices, the visitor turned in quest of whomsoever it might be that commanded the ship.

But as if not unwilling to let nature make known her own case among his suffering charge, or else in despair of restraining it for the time, the Spanish captain, a gentlemanly, reserved-looking, and rather young man to a stranger's eye, dressed with singular richness, but bearing plain traces of recent sleepless cares and disquietudes, stood passively by, leaning against the mainmast, at one moment casting a dreary, spiritless look upon his excited people, at the next an unhappy glance toward his visitor. By his side stood a black of small stature, in whose rude face, as occasionally, like a shepherd's dog, he mutely turned it up into the Spaniard's, sorrow and affection were equally blended.

Struggling through the throng, the American advanced to the Spaniard, assuring him of his sympathies, and offering to render whatever assistance might be in his power. To which the Spaniard returned for the present but grave and ceremonious acknowledgments, his national formality dusked by the saturnine mood of ill-health.

But losing no time in mere compliments, Captain Delano, returning to the gangway, had his basket of fish brought up; and as the wind still continued light, so that some hours at least must elapse ere the ship could be brought to the anchorage, he bade his men return to the sealer, and fetch back as much water as the whale-boat could carry, with whatever soft bread the steward might have, all the remaining pumpkins on board, with a box of sugar, and a dozen of his private bottles of cider.

Not many minutes after the boat's pushing off, to the vexation of all, the wind entirely died away, and the tide turning, began drifting back the ship helplessly seaward. But trusting this would not long last, Captain Delano sought, with good hopes, to cheer up the strangers, feeling no small satisfaction that, with persons in their condition he could—thanks to his frequent voyages along the Spanish main—converse with some freedom in their native tongue.

While left alone with them, he was not long in observing some things tending to heighten his first impressions; but surprise was lost in pity, both for the Spaniards and blacks, alike evidently reduced from scarcity of water and provisions; while long-continued suffering seemed to have brought out the less good-natured qualities of the Negroes, besides, at the same time, impairing the Spaniard's authority over them. But, under the circumstances, precisely this condition of things was to have been anticipated. In armies, navies, cities, or families, in nature herself, nothing more relaxes good order than misery. Still, Captain Delano was not without the idea, that had Benito Cereno been a man of greater energy, misrule would hardly have come to the present pass. But the debility, constitutional or induced by the hardships, bodily and mental, of the Spanish captain, was too obvious to be overlooked. A prey to settled dejection, as if long mocked with hope he would not now indulge it, even when it had ceased to be a mock, the prospect of that day or evening at furthest, lying at anchor, with plenty of water for his people, and a brother captain to counsel and befriend, seemed in no perceptible degree to encourage him. His mind appeared unstrung, if not still more seriously affected. Shut up in these oaken walls, chained to one dull round of command, whose unconditionality cloyed him, like some hypochondriac abbot he moved slowly about, at times suddenly pausing, starting, or staring, biting his lip, biting his finger-nail, flushing, paling, twitching his beard, with other symptoms of an absent or moody mind. This distempered spirit was lodged, as before hinted, in as distempered a frame. He was rather tall, but seemed never to have been robust, and now with nervous suffering was almost worn to a skeleton. A tendency to some pulmonary complaint appeared to have been lately confirmed. His voice was like that of one with lungs half gone—hoarsely suppressed, a husky whisper. No wonder that, as in this state he tottered about, his private servant apprehensively followed him. Sometimes the Negro gave his master his arm, or took his handkerchief out of his pocket for him; performing these and similar offices with that affectionate zeal which transmutes into something filial or fraternal acts in themselves but menial; and which has gained for the Negro the repute of making the most pleasing body-servant in the world, one, too, whom a master need be on no stiffly superior terms with, but may treat with familiar trust; less a servant than a devoted companion.

Marking the noisy indocility of the blacks in general, as well as what seemed the sullen inefficiency of the

whites, it was not without humane satisfaction that Captain Delano witnessed the steady good conduct of Babo.

But the good conduct of Babo, hardly more than the ill-behavior of others, seemed to withdraw the half-lunatic Don Benito from his cloudy languor. Not that such precisely was the impression made by the Spaniard on the mind of his visitor. The Spaniard's individual unrest was, for the present, but noted as a conspicuous feature in the ship's general affliction. Still, Captain Delano was not a little concerned at what he could not help taking for the time to be Don Benito's unfriendly indifference toward himself. The Spaniard's manner, too, conveyed a sort of sour and gloomy disdain, which he seemed at no pains to disguise. But this the American in charity ascribed to the harassing effects of sickness, since, in former instances, he had noted that there are peculiar natures on whom prolonged physical suffering seems to cancel every social instinct of kindness; as if forced to black bread themselves, they deemed it but equity that each person coming nigh them should, indirectly, by some slight or affront, be made to partake of their fare.

But ere long Captain Delano bethought him that, indulgent as he was at the first, in judging the Spaniard, he might not, after all, have exercised charity enough. At bottom it was Don Benito's reserve which displeased him; but the same reserve was shown toward all but his personal attendant Even the formal reports which, according to sea-usage, were at stated times made to him by some petty underling, either a white, mulatto or black, he hardly had patience enough to listen to, without betraying contemptuous aversion His manner upon such occasions was, in its degree, not unlike that which might be supposed to have been his imperial countryman's, Charles V., just previous to the anchoritish retirement of that monarch from the throne.

This splenetic disrelish of his place was evinced in almost every function pertaining to it. Proud as he was moody, he condescended to no personal mandate. Whatever special orders were necessary, their delivery was delegated to his body-servant, who in turn transferred them to their ultimate destination, through runners, alert Spanish boys or slave boys, like pages or pilot-fish within easy call continually hovering around Don Benito. So that to have beheld this undemonstrative invalid gliding about, apathetic and mute, no landsman could have dreamed that in him was lodged a dictatorship beyond which, while at sea, there was no earthly appeal.

Thus, the Spaniard, regarded in his reserve, seemed as the involuntary victim of mental disorder. But, in fact, his reserve might, in some degree, have proceeded from design. If so, then here was evinced the unhealthy climax of that icy though conscientious policy, more or less adopted by all commanders of large ships, which, except in signal emergencies, obliterates alike the manifestation of sway with every trace of sociality, transforming the man into a block, or rather into a loaded cannon, which, until there is call for thunder, has nothing to say.

Viewing him in this light, it seemed but a natural token of the perverse habit induced by a long course of such hard self-restraint, that, notwithstanding the present condition of his ship, the Spaniard should still persist in a demeanor, which, however harmless, or it may be, appropriate, in a well-appointed vessel, such as the San Dominick might have been at the outset of the voyage, was anything but judicious now. But the Spaniard, perhaps, thought that it was with captains as with gods. reserve, under all events, must still be their cue. But probably this appearance of slumbering dominion might have been but an attempted disguise to conscious imbecility—not deep policy, but shallow device. But be all this as it might, whether Don Benito's manner was designed or not, the more Captain Delano noted its pervading reserve, the less he felt uneasiness at any particular manifestation of that reserve toward himself.

Neither were his thoughts taken up by the captain alone Wonted to the quiet orderliness of the sealer's comfortable family of a crew, the noisy confusion of the San Dominick's suffering host repeatedly challenged his eye. Some prominent breaches, not only of discipline but of decency, were observed. These Captain Delano could not but ascribe, in the main, to the absence of those subordinate deck-officers to whom, along with higher duties, is entrusted what may be styled the police department of a populous ship. True, the old oakum-pickers appeared at times to act the part of monitorial constables to their countrymen, the blacks; but though

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36 Charles V (1500-1558), Holy Roman Emperor and king of Spain • 44 pilot-fish, so named because often seen with a shark, as if acting as a pilot to the shark

occasionally succeeding in allaying trifling outbreaks now and then between man and man, they could do little or nothing toward establishing general quiet. The San Dominick was in the condition of a transatlantic emigrant ship, among whose multitude of living freight are some individuals, doubtless, as little troublesome as crates and bales, but the friendly remonstrances of such with their ruder companions are of not so much avail as the unfriendly arm of the mate. What the San Dominick wanted was, what the emigrant ship has, stern superior officers. But on these decks not so much as a fourth-mate was to be seen.

The visitor's curiosity was roused to learn the particulars of those mishaps which had brought about such absenteeism, with its consequences; because, though deriving some inkling of the voyage from the wails which at the first moment had greeted him, yet of the details no clear understanding had been had. The best account would, doubtless, be given by the captain. Yet at first the visitor was loth to ask it, unwilling to provoke some distant rebuff. But plucking up courage, he at last accosted Don Benito, renewing the expression of his benevolent interest, adding, that did he (Captain Delano) but know the particulars of the ship's misfortunes, he would, perhaps, be better able in the end to relieve them. Would Don Benito favor him with the whole story.

Don Benito faltered; then, like some somnambulist suddenly interfered with, vacantly stared at his visitor, and ended by looking down on the deck. He maintained this posture so long, that Captain Delano, almost equally disconcerted, and involuntarily almost as rude, turned suddenly from him, walking forward to accost one of the Spanish seamen for the desired information. But he had hardly gone five paces, when, with a sort of eagerness, Don Benito invited him back, regretting his momentary absence of mind, and professing readiness to gratify him.

While most part of the story was being given, the two captains stood on the after part of the main-deck, a privileged spot, no one being near but the servant.

"It is now a hundred and ninety days," began the Spaniard, in his husky whisper, "that this ship, well officered and well manned, with several cabin passengers—some fifty Spaniards in all—sailed from Buenos Ayres bound to Lima, with a general cargo, hardware, Paraguay tea and the like—and," pointing forward, "that parcel of Negroes, now not more than a hundred and fifty, as you see, but then numbering over three hundred souls. Off Cape Horn we had heavy gales. In one moment, by night, three of my best officers, with fifteen sailors, were lost, with the main-yard; the spar snapping under them in the slings, as they sought, with heavers, to beat down the icy sail. To lighten the hull, the heavier sacks of mata were thrown into the sea, with most of the water-pipes lashed on deck at the time. And this last necessity it was, combined with the prolonged detentions afterwards experienced, which eventually brought about our chief causes of suffering. When—"

Here there was a sudden fainting attack of his cough, brought on, no doubt, by his mental distress. His servant sustained him, and drawing a cordial from his pocket placed it to his lips. He a little revived. But unwilling to leave him unsupported while yet imperfectly restored, the black with one arm still encircled his master, at the same time keeping his eye fixed on his face, as if to watch for the first sign of complete restoration, or relapse, as the event might prove.

The Spaniard proceeded, but brokenly and obscurely, as one in a dream.

—"Oh, my God! rather than pass through what I have, with joy I would have hailed the most terrible gales; but—"

His cough returned and with increased violence; this subsiding, with reddened lips and closed eyes he fell heavily against his supporter.

"His mind wanders. He was thinking of the plague that followed the gales," plaintively sighed the servant; "my poor, poor master!" wringing one hand, and with the other wiping the mouth. "But be patient, Señor," again turning to Captain Delano, "these fits do not last long; master will soon be himself."

Don Benito reviving, went on; but as this portion of the story was very brokenly delivered, the substance only will here be set down.

It appeared that after the ship had been many days tossed in storms off the Cape, the scurvy broke out, carrying off numbers of the whites and blacks. When at last they had worked round into the Pacific, their spars and sails were so damaged, and so inadequately handled

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54 water-pipes, large casks of water

by the surviving mariners, most of whom were become invalids, that, unable to lay her northerly course by the wind, which was powerful, the unmanageable ship, for successive days and nights, was blown northwestward, where the breeze suddenly deserted her, in unknown waters, to sultry calms. The absence of the water-pipes now proved as fatal to life as before their presence had menaced it. Induced, or at least aggravated, by the more than scanty allowance of water, a malignant fever followed the scurvy; with the excessive heat of the lengthened calm, making such short work of it as to sweep away, as by billows, whole families of the Africans, and a yet larger number, proportionably, of the Spaniards, including, by a luckless fatality, every remaining officer on board. Consequently, in the smart west winds eventually following the calm, the already rent sails, having to be simply dropped, not furled, at need, had been gradually reduced to the beggar's rags they were now. To procure substitutes for his lost sailors, as well as supplies of water and sails, the captain, at the earliest opportunity, had made for Baldivia, the southernmost civilized port of Chili and South America; but upon nearing the coast the thick weather had prevented him from so much as sighting that harbor. Since which period, almost without a crew, and almost without canvas and almost without water, and, at intervals, giving its added dead to the sea, the San Dominick had been battle-dored about by contrary winds, inveigled by currents, or grown weedy in calms. Like a man lost in woods, more than once she had doubled upon her own track.

"But throughout these calamities," huskily continued Don Benito, painfully turning in the half embrace of his servant, "I have to thank those Negroes you see, who, though to your inexperienced eyes appearing unruly, have, indeed, conducted themselves with less of restlessness than even their owner could have thought possible under such circumstances."

Here he again fell faintly back. Again his mind wandered; but he rallied, and less obscurely proceeded.

"Yes, their owner was quite right in assuring me that no fetters would be needed with his blacks; so that while, as is wont in this transportation, these Negroes have always remained upon deck—not thrust below, as in the Guinea-men—they have, also, from the beginning, been freely permitted to range within given bounds at their pleasure."

Once more the faintness returned—his mind roved—but, recovering, he resumed:

"But it is Babo here to whom, under God, I owe not only my own preservation, but likewise to him, chiefly, the merit is due, of pacifying his more ignorant brethren, when at intervals tempted to murmurings."

"Ah, master," sighed the black, bowing his face, "don't speak of me; Babo is nothing; what Babo has done was but duty."

"Faithful fellow!" cried Captain Delano. "Don Benito, I envy you such a friend; slave I cannot call him."

As master and man stood before him, the black upholding the white, Captain Delano could not but bethink him of the beauty of that relationship which could present such a spectacle of fidelity on the one hand and confidence on the other. The scene was heightened by the contrast in dress, denoting their relative positions. The Spaniard wore a loose Chili jacket of dark velvet; white small-clothes and stockings, with silver buckles at the knee and instep; a high-crowned sombrero, of fine grass; a slender sword, silver mounted, hung from a knot in his sash—the last being an almost invariable adjunct, more for utility than ornament, of a South American gentleman's dress to this hour. Excepting when his occasional nervous contortions brought about disarray, there was a certain precision in his attire, curiously at variance with the unsightly disorder around: especially in the belittered Ghetto, forward of the mainmast, wholly occupied by the blacks.

The servant wore nothing but wide trowsers, apparently, from their coarseness and patches, made out of some old topsail; they were clean, and confined at the waist by a bit of unstranded rope, which, with his composed, deprecatory air at times, made him look something like a begging friar of St. Francis.

However unsuitable for the time and place, at least in the blunt-thinking American's eyes, and however strangely surviving in the midst of all his afflictions, the toilette of Don Benito might not, in fashion at least, have gone beyond the style of the day among South Americans of his class. Though on the present voyage sailing from Buenos Ayres, he had avowed himself a native and resident of Chili, whose inhabitants had not so generally

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44 Guinea-men, ships trading with Guinea in West Africa

adopted the plain coat and once plebeian pantaloons; but, with a becoming modification, adhered to their provincial costume, picturesque as any in the world. Still, relatively to the pale history of the voyage, and his own pale face, there seemed something so incongruous in the Spaniard's apparel, as almost to suggest the image of an invalid courtier tottering about London streets in the time of the plague.

The portion of the narrative which, perhaps, most excited interest, as well as some surprise, considering the latitudes in question, was the long calms spoken of, and more particularly the ship's so long drifting about. Without communicating the opinion, of course, the American could not but impute at least part of the detentions both to clumsy seamanship and faulty navigation. Eyeing Don Benito's small, yellow hands, he easily inferred that the young captain had not got into command at the hawse-hole but the cabin-window; and if so, why wonder at incompetence, in youth, sickness, and gentility united?

But drowning criticism in compassion, after a fresh repetition of his sympathies, Captain Delano, having heard out his story, not only engaged, as in the first place, to see Don Benito and his people supplied in their immediate bodily needs, but, also, now further promised to assist him in procuring a large permanent supply of water, as well as some sails and rigging; and, though it would involve no small embarrassment to himself, yet he would spare three of his best seamen for temporary deck officers; so that without delay the ship might proceed to Conception, there fully to refit for Lima, her destined port.

Such generosity was not without its effect, even upon the invalid. His face lighted up; eager and hectic, he met the honest glance of his visitor. With gratitude he seemed overcome.

"This excitement is bad for master," whispered the servant, taking his arm, and with soothing words gently drawing him aside.

When Don Benito returned, the American was pained to observe that his hopefulness, like the sudden kindling in his cheek, was but febrile and transient.

Ere long, with a joyless mien, looking up towards the poop, the host invited his guest to accompany him there, for the benefit of what little breath of wind might be stirring.

As, during the telling of the story, Captain Delano had once or twice started at the occasional cymballing of the hatchet-polishers, wondering why such an interruption should be allowed, especially in that part of the ship, and in the ears of an invalid; and moreover, as the hatchets had anything but an attractive look, and the handlers of them still less so, it was, therefore, to tell the truth, not without some lurking reluctance, or even shrinking, it may be, that Captain Delano, with apparent complaisance, acquiesced in his host's invitation. The more so, since, with an untimely caprice of punctilio, rendered distressing by his cadaverous aspect, Don Benito, with Castilian bows, solemnly insisted upon his guest's preceding him up the ladder leading to the elevation; where, one on each side of the last step, sat for armorial supporters and sentries two of the ominous file. Gingerly enough stepped good Captain Delano between them, and in the instant of leaving them behind, like one running the gauntlet, he felt an apprehensive twitch in the calves of his legs.

But when, facing about, he saw the whole file, like so many organ-grinders, still stupidly intent on their work, unmindful of everything beside, he could not but smile at his late fidgety panic.

Presently, while standing with his host, looking forward upon the decks below, he was struck by one of those instances of insubordination previously alluded to. Three black boys, with two Spanish boys, were sitting together on the hatches, scraping a rude wooden platter, in which some scanty mess had recently been cooked. Suddenly, one of the black boys, enraged at a word dropped by one of his white companions, seized a knife, and, though called to forbear by one of the oakum-pickers, struck the lad over the head, inflicting a gash from which blood flowed.

In amazement, Captain Delano inquired what this meant. To which the pale Don Benito dully muttered, that it was merely the sport of the lad.

"Pretty serious sport, truly," rejoined Captain Delano. "Had such a thing happened on board the Bachelor's Delight, instant punishment would have followed."

At these words, the Spaniard turned upon the American one of his sudden, staring, half-lunatic looks; then, relapsing into his torpor, answered, "Doubtless, doubtless, Señor."

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18 **hawse-hole,** one of the holes in the bow of a ship, through which a cable passes. The statement means that the captain had had no experience as a common sailor • 30 **Conception,** Concepción, a city on the Chilean coast

Is it, thought Captain Delano, that this hapless man is one of those paper captains I've known, who by policy wink at what by power they cannot put down? I know no sadder sight than a commander who has little of command but the name.

"I should think, Don Benito," he now said, glancing towards the oakum-picker who had sought to interfere with the boys, "that you would find it advantageous to keep all your blacks employed, especially the younger ones, no matter at what useless task, and no matter what happens to the ship. Why, even with my little band, I find such a course indispensable. I once kept a crew on my quarter-deck thrumming mats for my cabin, when, for three days, I had given up my ship—mats, men, and all—for a speedy loss, owing to the violence of a gale, in which we could do nothing but helplessly drive before it."

"Doubtless, doubtless," muttered Don Benito.

"But," continued Captain Delano, again glancing upon the oakum-pickers and then at the hatchet-polishers, near by, "I see you keep some, at least, of your host employed."

"Yes," was again the vacant response.

"Those old men there, shaking their pows from their pulpits," continued Captain Delano, pointing to the oakum-pickers, "seem to act the part of old dominies to the rest, little heeded as their admonitions are at times. Is this voluntary on their part, Don Benito, or have you appointed them shepherds to your flock of black sheep?"

"What posts they fill, I appointed them," rejoined the Spaniard in an acrid tone, as if resenting some supposed satiric reflection.

"And these others, these Ashantee conjurors here," continued Captain Delano, rather uneasily eyeing the brandished steel of the hatchet-polishers, where, in spots, it had been brought to a shine, "this seems a curious business they are at, Don Benito?"

"In the gales we met," answered the Spaniard, "what of our general cargo was not thrown overboard was much damaged by the brine. Since coming into calm weather, I have had several cases of knives and hatchets daily brought up for overhauling and cleaning."

"A prudent idea, Don Benito. You are part owner of ship and cargo, I presume; but not of the slaves, perhaps?"

"I am owner of all you see," impatiently returned Don Benito, "except the main company of blacks, who belonged to my late friend Alexandro Aranda."

As he mentioned this name, his air was heart-broken; his knees shook; his servant supported him.

Thinking he divined the cause of such unusual emotion, to confirm his surmise, Captain Delano, after a pause, said: "And may I ask, Don Benito, whether—since awhile ago you spoke of some cabin passengers—the friend, whose loss so afflicts you, at the outset of the voyage accompanied his blacks?"

"Yes."

"But died of the fever?"

"Died of the fever.—Oh, could I but—"

Again quivering, the Spaniard paused.

"Pardon me," said Captain Delano, lowly, "but I think that, by a sympathetic experience, I conjecture, Don Benito, what it is that gives the keener edge to your grief. It was once my hard fortune to lose, at sea, a dear friend, my own brother, then supercargo. Assured of the welfare of his spirit, its departure I could have borne like a man; but that honest eye, that honest hand—both of which had so often met mine—and that warm heart; all, all—like scraps to the dogs—to throw all to the sharks! It was then I vowed never to have for fellow-voyager a man I loved, unless, unbeknown to him, I had provided every requisite, in case of a fatality, for embalming his mortal part for interment on shore. Were your friend's remains now on board this ship, Don Benito, not thus strangely would the mention of his name affect you."

"On board this ship?" echoed the Spaniard. Then, with horrified gestures, as directed against some spectre, he unconsciously fell into the ready arms of his attendant, who, with a silent appeal toward Captain Delano, seemed beseeching him not again to broach a theme so unspeakably distressing to his master.

This poor fellow now, thought the pained American, is the victim of that sad superstition which associates goblins with the deserted body of man, as ghosts with an abandoned house. How unlike are we made! What to me, in like case, would have been a solemn satis-

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33 **Ashantee**, a native kingdom in West Africa • **64 supercargo**, an officer in a merchant ship whose duty is to manage the business affairs of the voyage

faction, the bare suggestion, even, terrifies the Spaniard into this trance. Poor Alexandro Aranda! what would you say could you here see your friend—who, on former voyages, when you, for months, were left behind, has, I dare say, often longed, and longed, for one peep at you—now transported with terror at the least thought of having you anyway nigh him.

At this moment, with a dreary grave-yard toll, betokening a flaw, the ship's forecastle bell, smote by one of the grizzled oakum-pickers, proclaimed ten o'clock, through the leaden calm, when Captain Delano's attention was caught by the moving figure of a gigantic black, emerging from the general crowd below, and slowly advancing toward the elevated poop. An iron collar was about his neck, from which depended a chain, thrice wound round his body; the terminating links padlocked together at a broad band of iron, his girdle.

"How like a mute Atufal moves," murmured the servant.

The black mounted the steps of the poop, and, like a brave prisoner, brought up to receive sentence, stood in unquailing muteness before Don Benito, now recovered from his attack.

At the first glimpse of his approach, Don Benito had started, a resentful shadow swept over his face; and, as with the sudden memory of bootless rage, his white lips glued together.

This is some mulish mutineer, thought Captain Delano, surveying, not without a mixture of admiration, the colossal form of the Negro.

"See, he waits your question, master," said the servant.

Thus reminded, Don Benito, nervously averting his glance, as if shunning, by anticipation, some rebellious response, in a disconcerted voice, thus spoke:—

"Atufal, will you ask my pardon now?"

The black was silent.

"Again, master," murmured the servant, with bitter upbraiding eyeing his countryman, "again, master; he will bend to master yet."

"Answer," said Don Benito, still averting his glance, "say but the one word, *pardon,* and your chains shall be off."

Upon this, the black, slowly raising both arms, let them lifelessly fall, his links clanking, his head bowed; as much as to say, "No, I am content."

"Go," said Don Benito, with inkept and unknown emotion.

Deliberately as he had come, the black obeyed.

"Excuse me, Don Benito," said Captain Delano, "but this scene surprises me; what means it, pray?"

"It means that that Negro alone, of all the band, has given me peculiar cause of offence. I have put him in chains; I—"

Here he paused; his hand to his head, as if there were a swimming there, or a sudden bewilderment of memory had come over him; but meeting his servant's kindly glance seemed reassured, and proceeded:—

"I could not scourge such a form. But I told him he must ask my pardon As yet he has not. At my command, every two hours he stands before me."

"And how long has this been?"

"Some sixty days."

"And obedient in all else? And respectful?"

"Yes."

"Upon my conscience, then," exclaimed Captain Delano, impulsively, "he has a royal spirit in him, this fellow."

"He may have some right to it," bitterly returned Don Benito, "he says he was king in his own land."

"Yes," said the servant, entering a word, "those slits in Atufal's ears once held wedges of gold; but poor Babo here, in his own land, was only a poor slave; a black man's slave was Babo, who now is the white's."

Somewhat annoyed by these conversational familiarities, Captain Delano turned curiously upon the attendant, then glanced inquiringly at his master, but, as if long wonted to these little informalities, neither master nor man seemed to understand him.

"What, pray, was Atufal's offence, Don Benito?" asked Captain Delano; "if it was not something very serious, take a fool's advice, and, in view of his general docility, as well as in some natural respect for his spirit, remit him his penalty."

"No, no, master never will do that," here murmured the servant to himself, "proud Atufal must first ask master's pardon. The slave there carries the padlock, but master here carries the key."

His attention thus directed, Captain Delano now noticed for the first time, that, suspended by a slender silken cord, from Don Benito's neck, hung a key. At

once, from the servant's muttered syllables, divining the key's purpose, he smiled and said:—"So, Don Benito—padlock and key—significant symbols, truly."

Biting his lip, Don Benito faltered.

Though the remark of Captain Delano, a man of such native simplicity as to be incapable of satire or irony, had been dropped in playful allusion to the Spaniard's singularly evidenced lordship over the black; yet the hypochondriac seemed in some way to have taken it as a malicious reflection upon his confessed inability thus far to break down, at least, on a verbal summons, the entrenched will of the slave. Deploring this supposed misconception, yet despairing of correcting it, Captain Delano shifted the subject; but finding his companion more than ever withdrawn, as if still sourly digesting the lees of the presumed affront above-mentioned, by-and-by Captain Delano likewise became less talkative, oppressed, against his own will, by what seemed the secret vindictiveness of the morbidly sensitive Spaniard. But the good sailor, himself of a quite contrary disposition, refrained, on his part, alike from the appearance as from the feeling of resentment, and if silent, was only so from contagion.

Presently the Spaniard, assisted by his servant, somewhat discourteously crossed over from his guest; a procedure which, sensibly enough, might have been allowed to pass for idle caprice of ill-humor, had not master and man, lingering round the corner of the elevated skylight, began whispering together in low voices. This was unpleasing. And more: the moody air of the Spaniard, which at times had not been without a sort of valetudinarian stateliness, now seemed anything but dignified; while the menial familiarity of the servant lost its original charm of simple-hearted attachment.

In his embarrassment, the visitor turned his face to the other side of the ship. By so doing, his glance accidentally fell on a young Spanish sailor, a coil of rope in his hand, just stepped from the deck to the first round of the mizzen-rigging. Perhaps the man would not have been particularly noticed, were it not that, during his ascent to one of the yards, he, with a sort of covert intentness, kept his eye fixed on Captain Delano, from whom, presently, it passed, as if by a natural sequence, to the two whisperers.

His own attention thus redirected to that quarter, Captain Delano gave a slight start. From something in Don Benito's manner just then, it seemed as if the visitor had, at least partly, been the subject of the withdrawn consultation going on—a conjecture as little agreeable to the guest as it was little flattering to the host.

The singular alternations of courtesy and ill-breeding in the Spanish captain were unaccountable, except on one of two suppositions—innocent lunacy, or wicked imposture.

But the first idea, though it might naturally have occurred to an indifferent observer, and, in some respects, had not hitherto been wholly a stranger to Captain Delano's mind, yet, now that, in an incipient way, he began to regard the stranger's conduct something in the light of an intentional affront, of course the idea of lunacy was virtually vacated. But if not a lunatic, what then? Under the circumstances, would a gentleman, nay, any honest boor, act the part now acted by his host? The man was an impostor. Some low-born adventurer, masquerading as an oceanic grandee; yet so ignorant of the first requisites of mere gentlemanhood as to be betrayed into the present remarkable indecorum. That strange ceremoniousness, too, at other times evinced, seemed not uncharacteristic of one playing a part above his real level. Benito Cereno—Don Benito Cereno—a sounding name. One, too, at that period, not unknown, in the surname, to supercargoes and sea captains trading along the Spanish Main, as belonging to one of the most enterprising and extensive mercantile families in all those provinces; several members of it having titles; a sort of Castilian Rothschild, with a noble brother, or cousin, in every great trading town of South America. The alleged Don Benito was in early manhood, about twenty-nine or thirty. To assume a sort of roving cadetship in the maritime affairs of such a house, what more likely scheme for a young knave of talent and spirit? But the Spaniard was a pale invalid. Never mind. For even to the degree of simulating mortal disease, the craft of some tricksters had been known to attain. To think that, under the aspect of infantile weakness, the most savage energies might be couched—those velvets of the Spaniard but the silky paw to his fangs.

From no train of thought did these fancies come; not

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76 Rothschild. The Rothschilds were a family of wealthy bankers who flourished first in Germany and later in England from the eighteenth to the present century

from within, but from without; suddenly, too, and in one throng, like hoar frost; yet as soon to vanish as the mild sun of Captain Delano's good-nature regained its meridian.

Glancing over once more towards his host—whose side-face, revealed above the skylight, was now turned toward him—he was struck by the profile, whose clearness of cut was refined by the thinness incident to ill-health, as well as ennobled about the chin by the beard. Away with suspicion. He was a true off-shoot of a true hidalgo Cereno.

Relieved by these and other better thoughts, the visitor, lightly humming a tune, now began indifferently pacing the poop, so as not to betray to Don Benito that he had at all mistrusted incivility, much less duplicity; for such mistrust would yet be proved illusory, and by the event; though, for the present, the circumstance which had provoked that distrust remained unexplained. But when that little mystery should have been cleared up, Captain Delano thought he might extremely regret it, did he allow Don Benito to become aware that he had indulged in ungenerous surmises. In short, to the Spaniard's black-letter text, it was best, for a while, to leave open margin.

Presently, his pale face twitching and overcast, the Spaniard, still supported by his attendant, moved over towards his guest, when, with even more than his usual embarrassment, and a strange sort of intriguing intonation in his husky whisper, the following conversation began:—

"Señor, may I ask how long you have lain at this isle?"

"Oh, but a day or two, Don Benito."

"And from what port are you last?"

"Canton."

"And there, Señor, you exchanged your seal-skins for teas and silks, I think you said?"

"Yes. Silks, mostly."

"And the balance you took in specie, perhaps?"

Captain Delano, fidgeting a little, answered—

"Yes; some silver; not a very great deal, though."

"Ah—well. May I ask how many men have you, Señor?"

Captain Delano slightly started, but answered—

"About five-and-twenty, all told."

"And at present, Señor, all on board, I suppose?"

"All on board, Don Benito," replied the Captain, now with satisfaction.

"And will be to-night, Señor?"

At this last question, following so many pertinacious ones, for the soul of him Captain Delano could not but look very earnestly at the questioner, who, instead of meeting the glance, with every token of craven discomposure dropped his eyes to the deck; presenting an unworthy contrast to his servant, who, just then, was kneeling at his feet, adjusting a loose shoe-buckle; his disengaged face meantime, with humble curiosity, turned openly up into his master's downcast one.

The Spaniard, still with a guilty shuffle, repeated his question:

"And—and will be to-night, Señor?"

"Yes, for aught I know," returned Captain Delano— "but nay," rallying himself into fearless truth, "some of them talked of going off on another fishing party about midnight."

"Your ships generally go—go more or less armed, I believe, Señor?"

"Oh, a six-pounder or two, in case of emergency," was the intrepidly indifferent reply, "with a small stock of muskets, sealing-spears, and cutlasses, you know."

As he thus responded, Captain Delano again glanced at Don Benito, but the latter's eyes were averted; while abruptly and awkwardly shifting the subject, he made some peevish allusion to the calm, and then, without apology, once more, with his attendant, withdrew to the opposite bulwarks, where the whispering was resumed.

At this moment, and ere Captain Delano could cast a cool thought upon what had just passed, the young Spanish sailor, before mentioned, was seen descending from the rigging. In act of stooping over to spring inboard to the deck, his voluminous, unconfined frock, or shirt, of coarse woolen, much spotted with tar, opened out far down the chest, revealing a soiled under garment of what seemed the finest linen, edged, about the neck, with a narrow blue ribbon, sadly faded and worn. At this moment the young sailor's eye was again fixed on the whisperers, and Captain Delano thought he observed a

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11 hidalgo, a title denoting a Spanish nobleman • 22 black-letter, a style of type, also known as Gothic or Old English, which was copied by the early printers from a form of manuscript letter current at the time The phrase in this connection connotes strangeness and unfamiliarity • 23 open margin, without marginal gloss or commentary • 33 Canton, in China

lurking significance in it, as if silent signs, of some Freemason sort, had that instant been interchanged.

This once more impelled his own glance in the direction of Don Benito, and, as before, he could not but infer that himself formed the subject of the conference. He paused. The sound of the hatchet-polishing fell on his ears. He cast another swift side-look at the two. They had the air of conspirators. In connection with the late questionings, and the incident of the young sailor, these things now begat such return of involuntary suspicion, that the singular guilelessness of the American could not endure it. Plucking up a gay and humorous expression, he crossed over to the two rapidly, saying:—"Ha, Don Benito, your black here seems high in your trust; a sort of privy-counsellor, in fact."

Upon this, the servant looked up with a good-natured grin, but the master started as from a venomous bite. It was a moment or two before the Spaniard sufficiently recovered himself to reply; which he did, at last, with cold constraint:—"Yes, Señor, I have trust in Babo."

Here Babo, changing his previous grin of mere animal humor into an intelligent smile, not ungratefully eyed his master.

Finding that the Spaniard now stood silent and reserved, as if involuntarily, or purposely giving hint that his guest's proximity was inconvenient just then, Captain Delano, unwilling to appear uncivil even to incivility itself, made some trivial remark and moved off; again and again turning over in his mind the mysterious demeanor of Don Benito Cereno.

He had descended from the poop, and, wrapped in thought, was passing near a dark hatchway, leading down into the steerage, when, perceiving motion there, he looked to see what moved. The same instant there was a sparkle in the shadowy hatchway, and he saw one of the Spanish sailors, prowling there, hurriedly placing his hand in the bosom of his frock, as if hiding something. Before the man could have been certain who it was that was passing, he slunk below out of sight. But enough was seen of him to make it sure that he was the same young sailor before noticed in the rigging.

What was that which so sparkled? thought Captain Delano. It was no lamp—no match—no live coal. Could it have been a jewel? But how come sailors with jewels? —or with silk-trimmed under-shirts either? Has he been robbing the trunks of the dead cabin-passengers? But if so, he would hardly wear one of the stolen articles on board ship here. Ah, ah—if, now, that was, indeed, a secret sign I saw passing between this suspicious fellow and his captain awhile since; if I could only be certain that, in my uneasiness, my senses did not deceive me, then—

Here, passing from one suspicious thing to another, his mind revolved the strange questions put to him concerning his ship.

By a curious coincidence, as each point was recalled, the black wizards of Ashantee would strike up with their hatchets, as in ominous comment on the white stranger's thoughts. Pressed by such enigmas and portents, it would have been almost against nature, had not, even into the least distrustful heart, some ugly misgivings obtruded.

Observing the ship now helplessly fallen into a current, with enchanted sails, drifting with increased rapidity seaward; and noting that, from a lately intercepted projection of the land, the sealer was hidden, the stout mariner began to quake at thoughts which he barely durst confess to himself. Above all, he began to feel a ghostly dread of Don Benito. And yet when he roused himself, dilated his chest, felt himself strong on his legs, and coolly considered it—what did all these phantoms amount to?

Had the Spaniard any sinister scheme, it must have reference not so much to him (Captain Delano) as to his ship (the Bachelor's Delight). Hence the present drifting away of the one ship from the other, instead of favoring any such possible scheme, was, for the time at least, opposed to it. Clearly any suspicion, combining such contradictions, must needs be delusive. Besides, was it not absurd to think of a vessel in distress—a vessel by sickness almost dismanned of her crew—a vessel whose inmates were parched for water—was it not a thousand times absurd that such a craft should, at present, be of a piratical character; or her commander, either for himself or those under him, cherish any desire but for speedy relief and refreshment? But then, might not general distress, and thirst in particular, be affected? And might not that same undiminished Spanish crew, alleged to have perished off to a remnant, be at that very moment lurking in the hold? On heart-broken pretence of entreating

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86 **affected,** pretended

a cup of cold water, fiends in human form had got into lonely dwellings, nor retired until a dark deed had been done. And among the Malay pirates, it was no unusual thing to lure ships after them into their treacherous harbors, or entice boarders from a declared enemy at sea, by the spectacle of thinly manned or vacant decks, beneath which prowled a hundred spears with yellow arms ready to upthrust them through the mats. Not that Captain Delano had entirely credited such things. He had heard of them—and now, as stories, they recurred. The present destination of the ship was the anchorage. There she would be near his own vessel. Upon gaining that vicinity, might not the San Dominick, like a slumbering volcano, suddenly let loose energies now hid?

He recalled the Spaniard's manner while telling his story. There was a gloomy hesitancy and subterfuge about it. It was just the manner of one making up his tale for evil purposes, as he goes. But if that story was not true, what was the truth? That the ship had unlawfully come into the Spaniard's possession? But in many of its details, especially in reference to the more calamitous parts, such as the fatalities among the seamen, the consequent prolonged beating about, the past sufferings from obstinate calms, and still continued suffering from thirst; in all these points, as well as others, Don Benito's story had corroborated not only the wailing ejaculations of the indiscriminate multitude, white and black, but likewise—what seemed impossible to be counterfeit—by the very expression and play of every human feature, which Captain Delano saw. If Don Benito's story was, throughout, an invention, then every soul on board, down to the youngest Negress, was his carefully drilled recruit in the plot: an incredible inference. And yet, if there was ground for mistrusting his veracity, that inference was a legitimate one.

But those questions of the Spaniard. There, indeed, one might pause. Did they not seem put with much the same object with which the burglar or assassin, by daytime, reconnoitres the walls of a house? But, with ill purposes, to solicit such information openly of the chief person endangered, and so, in effect, setting him on his guard; how unlikely a procedure was that. Absurd, then, to suppose that those questions had been prompted by evil designs. Thus, the same conduct, which, in this instance, had raised the alarm, served to dispel it. In short, scarce any suspicion or uneasiness, however apparently reasonable at the time, which was not now, with equal apparent reason, dismissed.

At last, he began to laugh at his former forebodings; and laugh at the strange ship for, in its aspect someway siding with them, as it were; and laugh, too, at the odd-looking blacks, particularly those old scissors-grinders, the Ashantees; and those bed-ridden old knitting women, the oakum-pickers; and almost at the dark Spaniard himself, the central hobgoblin of all.

For the rest, whatever in a serious way seemed enigmatical, was now good-naturedly explained away by the thought that, for the most part the poor invalid scarcely knew what he was about; either sulking in black vapors, or putting idle questions without sense or object. Evidently, for the present, the man was not fit to be entrusted with the ship. On some benevolent plea withdrawing the command from him, Captain Delano would yet have to send her to Conception in charge of his second mate, a worthy person and good navigator—a plan not more convenient for the San Dominick than for Don Benito; for, relieved from all anxiety, keeping wholly to his cabin, the sick man, under the good nursing of his servant, would probably, by the end of the passage, be in a measure restored to health, and with that he should also be restored to authority.

Such were the American's thoughts They were tranquilizing. There was a difference between the idea of Don Benito's darkly pre-ordaining Captain Delano's fate, and Captain Delano's lightly arranging Don Benito's. Nevertheless, it was not without something of relief that the good seaman presently perceived his whale-boat in the distance. Its absence had been prolonged by unexpected detention at the sealer's side, as well as its returning trip lengthened by the continual recession of the goal.

The advancing speck was observed by the blacks. Their shouts attracted the attention of Don Benito, who, with a return of courtesy, approaching Captain Delano, expressed satisfaction at the coming of some supplies, slight and temporary as they must necessarily prove.

Captain Delano responded; but while doing so, his attention was drawn to something passing on the deck below: among the crowd climbing the landward bulwarks, anxiously watching the coming boat, two blacks, to all appearances accidentally incommoded by one of the sailors, violently pushed him aside, which the sailor

someway resenting, they dashed him to the deck, despite the earnest cries of the oakum-pickers.

"Don Benito," said Captain Delano quickly, "do you see what is going on there? Look!"

But, seized by his cough, the Spaniard staggered, with both hands to his face, on the point of falling. Captain Delano would have supported him, but the servant was more alert, who, with one hand sustaining his master, with the other applied the cordial. Don Benito restored, the black withdrew his support, slipping aside a little, but dutifully remaining within call of a whisper. Such discretion was here evinced as quite wiped away, in the visitor's eyes, any blemish of impropriety which might have attached to the attendant, from the indecorous conferences before mentioned; showing, too, that if the servant were to blame, it might be more the master's fault than his own, since, when left to himself, he could conduct thus well.

His glance called away from the spectacle of disorder to the more pleasing one before him, Captain Delano could not avoid again congratulating his host upon possessing such a servant, who, though perhaps a little too forward now and then, must upon the whole be invaluable to one in the invalid's situation.

"Tell me, Don Benito," he added, with a smile—"I should like to have your man here, myself—what will you take for him? Would fifty doubloons be any object?"

"Master wouldn't part with Babo for a thousand doubloons," murmured the black, overhearing the offer, and taking it in earnest, and, with the strange vanity of a faithful slave, appreciated by his master, scorning to hear so paltry a valuation put upon him by a stranger. But Don Benito, apparently hardly yet completely restored, and again interrupted by his cough, made but some broken reply.

Soon his physical distress became so great, affecting his mind, too, apparently, that, as if to screen the sad spectacle, the servant gently conducted his master below.

Left to himself, the American, to while away the time till his boat should arrive, would have pleasantly accosted some one of the few Spanish seamen he saw; but recalling something that Don Benito had said touching their ill conduct, he refrained; as a ship-master indisposed to countenance cowardice or unfaithfulness in seamen.

While, with these thoughts, standing with eye directed forward toward that handful of sailors, suddenly he thought that one or two of them returned the glance and with a sort of meaning. He rubbed his eyes, and looked again; but again seemed to see the same thing. Under a new form, but more obscure than any previous one, the old suspicions recurred, but, in the absence of Don Benito, with less of panic than before. Despite the bad account given of the sailors, Captain Delano resolved forthwith to accost one of them. Descending the poop, he made his way through the blacks, his movement drawing a queer cry from the oakum-pickers, prompted by whom, the Negroes, twitching each other aside, divided before him; but, as if curious to see what was the object of this deliberate visit to their Ghetto, closing in behind, in tolerable order, followed the white stranger up. His progress thus proclaimed as by mounted kings-at-arms, and escorted as by a Caffre guard of honor, Captain Delano, assuming a good-humored, off-handed air, continued to advance; now and then saying a blithe word to the Negroes, and his eye curiously surveying the white faces, here and there sparsely mixed in with the blacks, like stray white pawns venturously involved in the ranks of the chess-men opposed.

While thinking which of them to select for his purpose, he chanced to observe a sailor seated on the deck engaged in tarring the strap of a large block, a circle of blacks squatted round him inquisitively eyeing the process.

The mean employment of the man was in contrast with something superior in his figure. His hand, black with continually thrusting it into the tar-pot held for him by a Negro, seemed not naturally allied to his face, a face which would have been a very fine one but for its haggardness. Whether this haggardness had aught to do with criminality, could not be determined; since, as intense heat and cold, though unlike, produce like sensations, so innocence and guilt, when, through casual association with mental pain, stamping any visible impress, use one seal—a hacked one.

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18 conduct. According to Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms (1848), quoted in the Dictionary of American English, the intransitive use of the verb "conduct" without the reflexive pronoun was common in New England, both in speech and in writing. Bartlett deplored the usage as an "offensive barbarism" • 62 kings-at-arms, the chief heraldic officers of England • 63 Caffre, Kafir, a tribe of South Africa

Not again that this reflection occurred to Captain Delano at the time, charitable man as he was. Rather another idea. Because observing so singular a haggardness combined with a dark eye, averted as in trouble and shame, and then, again recalling Don Benito's confessed ill opinion of his crew, insensibly he was operated upon by certain general notions which, while disconnecting pain and abashment from virtue, invariably link them with vice.

If, indeed, there be any wickedness on board this ship, thought Captain Delano, be sure that man there has fouled his hand in it, even as now he fouls it in the pitch. I don't like to accost him. I will speak to this other, this old Jack here on the windlass.

He advanced to an old Barcelona tar, in ragged red breeches and dirty nightcap, cheeks trenched and bronzed, whiskers dense as thorn hedges. Seated between two sleepy-looking Africans, this mariner, like his younger shipmate, was employed upon some rigging—splicing a cable—the sleepy-looking blacks performing the inferior function of holding the outer parts of the ropes for him.

Upon Captain Delano's approach, the man at once hung his head below its previous level; the one necessary for business. It appeared as if he desired to be thought absorbed, with more than common fidelity, in his task. Being addressed, he glanced up, but with what seemed a furtive, diffident air, which sat strangely enough on his weather-beaten visage, much as if a grizzly bear, instead of growling and biting, should simper and cast sheep's eyes. He was asked several questions concerning the voyage—questions purposely referring to several particulars in Don Benito's narrative, not previously corroborated by those impulsive cries greeting the visitor on first coming on board. The questions were briefly answered, confirming all that remained to be confirmed of the story. The Negroes about the windlass joined in with the old sailor; but, as they became talkative, he by degrees became mute, and at length quite glum, seemed morosely unwilling to answer more questions, and yet, all the while, this ursine air was somehow mixed with his sheepish one.

Despairing of getting into unembarrassed talk with such a centaur, Captain Delano, after glancing round for a more promising countenance, but seeing none, spoke pleasantly to the blacks to make way for him; and so, amid various grins and grimaces, returned to the poop, feeling a little strange at first, he could hardly tell why, but upon the whole with regained confidence in Benito Cereno.

How plainly, thought he, did that old whiskerando yonder betray a consciousness of ill desert. No doubt, when he saw me coming, he dreaded lest I, apprised by his Captain of the crew's general misbehavior, came with sharp words for him, and so down with his head. And yet—and yet, now that I think of it, that very old fellow, if I err not, was one of those who seemed so earnestly eyeing me here awhile since. Ah, these currents spin one's head around almost as much as they do the ship. Ha, there now's a pleasant sort of sunny sight; quite sociable, too.

His attention had been drawn to a slumbering Negress, partly disclosed through the lace-work of some rigging, lying, with youthful limbs carelessly disposed, under the lee of the bulwarks, like a doe in the shade of a woodland rock. Sprawling at her lapped breasts, was her wide-awake fawn, stark naked, its black little body half lifted from the deck, crosswise with its dam's; its hands, like two paws, clambering upon her; its mouth and nose ineffectually rooting to get at the mark; and meantime giving a vexatious half-grunt, blending with the composed snore of the Negress.

The uncommon vigor of the child at length roused the mother. She started up, at a distance facing Captain Delano. But as if not at all concerned at the attitude in which she had been caught, delightedly she caught the child up, with maternal transports, covering it with kisses.

There's naked nature, now; pure tenderness and love, thought Captain Delano, well pleased.

This incident prompted him to remark the other Negresses more particularly than before. He was gratified with their manners; like most uncivilized women, they seemed at once tender of heart and tough of constitution; equally ready to die for their infants or fight for them. Unsophisticated as leopardesses; loving as doves. Ah! thought Captain Delano, these, perhaps, are some of the very women whom Ledyard saw in Africa, and gave such a noble account of.

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15 Barcelona, a seaport in Spain • 87 Ledyard, John Ledyard (1751-1788), American traveler

These natural sights somehow insensibly deepened his confidence and ease. At last he looked to see how his boat was getting on; but it was still pretty remote. He turned to see if Don Benito had returned; but he had not.

To change the scene, as well as to please himself with a leisurely observation of the coming boat, stepping over into the mizzen-chains, he clambered his way into the starboard quarter-gallery—one of those abandoned Venetian-looking water-balconies previously mentioned—retreats cut off from the deck. As his foot pressed the half-damp, half-dry sea-mosses matting the place, and a chance phantom cats-paw—an islet of breeze, unheralded, unfollowed—as this ghostly cats-paw came fanning his cheek; as his glance fell upon the row of small, round dead-lights—all closed like coppered eyes of the coffined—and the state-cabin door, once connecting with the gallery, even as the dead-lights had once looked out upon it, but now calked fast like a sarcophagus lid; and to a purple-black, tarred-over panel, threshold, and post; and he bethought him of the time, when that state-cabin and this state-balcony had heard the voices of the Spanish king's officers, and the forms of the Lima viceroy's daughters had perhaps leaned where he stood—as these and other images flitted through his mind, as the cats-paw through the calm, gradually he felt rising a dreamy inquietude, like that of one who alone on the prairie feels unrest from the repose of the noon.

He leaned against the carved balustrade, again looking off toward his boat; but found his eye falling upon the ribbon grass, trailing along the ship's waterline, straight as a border of green box; and parterres of sea-weed, broad ovals and crescents, floating nigh and far, with what seemed long formal alleys between, crossing the terraces of swells, and sweeping round as if leading to the grottoes below. And overhanging all was the balustrade by his arm, which, partly stained with pitch and partly embossed with moss, seemed the charred ruin of some summer-house in a grand garden long running to waste.

Trying to break one charm, he was but becharmed anew. Though upon the wide sea, he seemed in some far inland country; prisoner in some deserted chateau, left to stare at empty grounds, and peer out at vague roads, where never wagon or wayfarer passed.

But these enchantments were a little disenchanted as his eye fell on the corroded main-chains. Of an ancient style, massy and rusty in link, shackle and bolt, they seemed even more fit for the ship's present business than the one for which she had been built.

Presently he thought something moved nigh the chains. He rubbed his eyes, and looked hard. Groves of rigging were about the chains; and there, peering from behind a great stay, like an Indian from behind a hemlock, a Spanish sailor, a marlingspike in his hand, was seen, who made what seemed an imperfect gesture toward the balcony, but immediately, as if alarmed by some advancing step along the deck within, vanished into the recesses of the hempen forest, like a poacher.

What meant this? Something the man had sought to communicate, unbeknown to any one, even to his captain. Did the secret involve aught unfavorable to his captain? Were those previous misgivings of Captain Delano's about to be verified? Or, in his haunted mood at the moment, had some random, unintentional motion of the man, while busy with the stay, as if repairing it, been mistaken for a significant beckoning?

Not unbewildered, again he gazed off for his boat. But it was temporarily hidden by a rocky spur of the isle. As with some eagerness he bent foward, watching for the first shooting view of its beak, the balustrade gave way before him like charcoal. Had he not clutched an outreaching rope he would have fallen into the sea The crash, though feeble, and the fall, though hollow, of the rotten fragments, must have been overheard. He glanced up. With sober curiosity peering down upon him was one of the old oakum-pickers, slipped from his perch to an outside boom; while below the old Negro, and, invisible to him, reconnoitering from a port-hole like a fox from the mouth of its den, crouched the Spanish sailor again. From something suddenly suggested by the man's air, the mad idea now darted into Captain Delano's mind, that Don Benito's plea of indisposition, in withdrawing below, was but a pretense: that he was engaged there maturing his plot, of which the sailor, by some means gaining an inkling, had a mind to warn the stranger against; incited, it may be, by gratitude for a kind word on first boarding the ship. Was it from foreseeing some possible interference like this, that Don Benito had, beforehand, given such a bad character of his sailors, while praising the Negroes; though, indeed, the former seemed as docile as the latter the contrary? The whites, too, by nature, were the shrewder race. A man with some evil design, would he not be likely to

speak well of that stupidity which was blind to his depravity, and malign that intelligence from which it might not be hidden? Not unlikely, perhaps. But if the whites had dark secrets concerning Don Benito, could then Don Benito be any way in complicity with the blacks? But they were too stupid. Besides, who ever heard of a white so far a renegade as to apostatize from his very species almost, by leaguing in against it with Negroes? These difficulties recalled former ones. Lost in their mazes, Captain Delano, who had now regained the deck, was uneasily advancing along it, when he observed a new face; an aged sailor seated cross-legged near the main hatchway. His skin was shrunk up with wrinkles like a pelican's empty pouch; his hair frosted; his countenance grave and composed. His hands were full of ropes, which he was working into a large knot. Some blacks were about him obligingly dipping the strands for him, here and there, as the exigencies of the operation demanded.

Captain Delano crossed over to him, and stood in silence surveying the knot; his mind, by a not uncongenial transition, passing from its own entanglements to those of the hemp. For intricacy such a knot he had never seen in an American ship, or indeed any other. The old man looked like an Egyptian priest, making Gordian knots for the temple of Ammon. The knot seemed a combination of double-bowline-knot, treble-crown-knot, back-handed-well-knot, knot-in-and-out-knot, and jamming-knot.

At last, puzzled to comprehend the meaning of such a knot, Captain Delano addressed the knotter:—

"What are you knotting there, my man?"

"The knot," was the brief reply, without looking up.

"So it seems; but what is it for?"

"For some one else to undo," muttered back the old man, plying his fingers harder than ever, the knot being now nearly completed.

While Captain Delano stood watching him, suddenly the old man threw the knot toward him, saying in broken English,—the first heard in the ship,—something to this effect: "Undo it, cut it, quick." It was said lowly, but with such condensation of rapidity, that the long, slow words in Spanish, which had preceded and followed, almost operated as covers to the brief English between.

For a moment, knot in hand, and knot in head, Captain Delano stood mute; while, without further heeding him the old man was now intent upon other ropes. Presently there was a slight stir behind Captain Delano. Turning, he saw the chained Negro, Atufal, standing quietly there. The next moment the old sailor rose, muttering, and, followed by his subordinate Negroes, removed to the forward part of the ship, where in the crowd he disappeared.

An elderly Negro, in a clout like an infant's, and with a pepper and salt head, and a kind of attorney air, now approached Captain Delano. In tolerable Spanish, and with a good-natured, knowing wink, he informed him that the old knotter was simple-witted, but harmless; often playing his odd tricks. The Negro concluded by begging the knot, for of course the stranger would not care to be troubled with it. Unconsciously, it was handed to him. With a sort of congé, the Negro received it, and, turning his back, ferreted into it like a detective custom-house officer after smuggled laces. Soon, with some African word, equivalent to pshaw, he tossed the knot overboard.

All this is very queer now, thought Captain Delano, with a qualmish sort of emotion; but, as one feeling incipient sea-sickness, he strove, by ignoring the symptoms, to get rid of the malady Once more he looked off for his boat. To his delight, it was now again in view, leaving the rocky spur astern.

The sensation here experienced, after at first relieving his uneasiness, with unforeseen efficacy soon began to remove it. The less distant sight of that well-known boat—showing it, not as before, half blended with the haze, but with outline defined, so that its individuality, like a man's, was manifest; that boat, *Rover* by name, which, though now in strange seas, had often pressed the beach of Captain Delano's home, and, brought to its threshold for repairs, had familiarly lain there, as a Newfoundland dog; the sight of that household boat evoked a thousand trustful associations, which, contrasted with previous suspicions, filled him not only with lightsome confidence, but somehow with half humorous self-reproaches at his former lack of it.

"What, I, Amasa Delano—Jack of the Beach, as they called me when a lad—I, Amasa; the same that, duck-satchel in hand, used to paddle along the waterside to

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25 Gordian knot, in classical mythology, an intricate knot tied by Gordius and cut by Alexander the Great with his sword • 26 Ammon, Amen, an Egyptian deity

the school-house made from the old hulk—I, little Jack of the Beach, that used to go berrying with cousin Nat and the rest; I to be murdered here at the ends of the earth, on board a haunted pirate-ship by a horrible Spaniard? Too nonsensical to think of! Who would murder Amasa Delano? His conscience is clean. There is some one above. Fie, fie, Jack of the Beach! you are a child indeed; a child of the second childhood, old boy; you are beginning to dote and drule, I'm afraid."

Light of heart and foot, he stepped aft, and there was met by Don Benito's servant, who, with a pleasing expression, responsive to his own present feelings, informed him that his master had recovered from the effects of his coughing fit, and had just ordered him to go present his compliments to his good guest, Don Amasa, and say that he (Don Benito) would soon have the happiness to rejoin him.

There now, do you mark that? again thought Captain Delano, walking the poop. What a donkey I was. This kind gentleman who here sends me his kind compliments, he, but ten minutes ago, dark-lantern in hand, was dodging round some old grind-stone in the hold, sharpening a hatchet for me, I thought. Well, well; these long calms have a morbid effect on the mind, I've often heard, though I never believed it before. Ha! glancing towards the boat; there's *Rover;* good dog; a white bone in her mouth. A pretty big bone though, seems to me.—What? Yes, she has fallen afoul of the bubbling tide-rip there. It sets her the other way, too, for the time. Patience.

It was now about noon, though, from the grayness of everything, it seemed to be getting toward dusk.

The calm was confirmed. In the far distance, away from the influence of land, the leaden ocean seemed laid out and leaded up, its course finished, soul gone, defunct. But the current from landward, where the ship was, increased; silently sweeping her further and further toward the tranced waters beyond.

Still, from his knowledge of those latitudes, cherishing hopes of a breeze, and a fair and fresh one, at any moment, Captain Delano, despite present prospects, buoyantly counted upon bringing the San Dominick safely to anchor ere night. The distance swept over was nothing; since, with a good wind, ten minutes' sailing would retrace more than sixty minutes' drifting. Meantime, one moment turning to mark *Rover* fighting the tide-rip, and the next to see Don Benito approaching, he continued walking the poop.

Gradually he felt a vexation arising from the delay of his boat; this soon merged into uneasiness; and at last— his eye falling continually, as from a stage-box into the pit, upon the strange crowd before and below him, and, by-and-by, recognizing there the face—now composed to indifference—of the Spanish sailor who had seemed to beckon from the main-chains—something of his old trepidations returned.

Ah, thought he—gravely enough—this is like the ague: because it went off, it follows not that it won't come back.

Though ashamed of the relapse, he could not altogether subdue it; and so, exerting his good-nature to the utmost, insensibly he came to a compromise.

Yes, this is a strange craft; a strange history, too, and strange folks on board. But—nothing more.

By way of keeping his mind out of mischief till the boat should arrive, he tried to occupy it with turning over and over, in a purely speculative sort of way, some lesser peculiarities of the captain and crew. Among others, four curious points recurred:

First, the affair of the Spanish lad assailed with a knife by the slave boy; an act winked at by Don Benito. Second, the tyranny in Don Benito's treatment of Atufal, the black; as if a child should lead a bull of the Nile by the ring in his nose. Third, the trampling of the sailor by the two Negroes; a piece of insolence passed over without so much as a reprimand. Fourth, the cringing submission to their master of all the ships' underlings, mostly blacks; as if by the least inadvertence they feared to draw down his despotic displeasure.

Coupling these points, they seemed somewhat contradictory. But what then, thought Captain Delano, glancing toward his now nearing boat—what then? Why, Don Benito is a very capricious commander. But he is not the first of the sort I have seen; though it's true he rather exceeds any other. But as a nation—continued he in his reveries—these Spaniards are all an odd set; the very word Spaniard has a curious, conspirator, Guy-Fawkish twang to it. And yet, I dare say, Spaniards in

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87 Guy-Fawkish. On November 5, 1605, Guy Fawkes attempted to set fire to barrels of gunpowder which had been placed under the English Houses of Parliament

the main are as good folks as any in Duxbury, Massachusetts. Ah, good! At last *Rover* has come.

As, with its welcome freight, the boat touched the side, the oakum-pickers, with venerable gestures, sought to restrain the blacks, who, at the sight of three gurried water-casks in its bottom, and a pile of wilted pumpkins in its bow, hung over the bulwarks in disorderly raptures.

Don Benito, with his servant, now appeared; his coming, perhaps, hastened by hearing the noise. Of him Captain Delano sought permission to serve out the water, so that all might share alike, and none injure themselves by unfair excess. But sensible, and, on Don Benito's account, kind as this offer was, it was received with what seemed impatience; as if aware that he lacked energy as a commander, Don Benito, with the true jealousy of weakness, resented as an affront any interference. So, at least, Captain Delano inferred.

In another moment the casks were being hoisted in, when some of the eager Negroes accidentally jostled Captain Delano, where he stood by the gangway; so that, unmindful of Don Benito, yielding to the impulse of the moment, with good-natured authority he bade the blacks stand back; to enforce his words making use of a half-mirthful, half-menacing gesture. Instantly the blacks paused, just where they were, each Negro and Negress suspended in his or her posture, exactly as the word had found them—for a few seconds continuing so—while, as between the responsive posts of a telegraph, an unknown syllable ran from man to man among the perched oakum-pickers. While the visitor's attention was fixed by this scene, suddenly the hatchet-polishers half rose, and a rapid cry came from Don Benito.

Thinking that at the signal of the Spaniard he was about to be massacred, Captain Delano would have sprung for his boat, but paused, as the oakum-pickers dropping down into the crowd with earnest exclamations, forced every white and every Negro back, at the same moment, with gestures friendly and familiar, almost jocose, bidding him, in substance, not be a fool. Simultaneously the hatchet-polishers resumed their seats, quietly as so many tailors, and at once, as if nothing had happened, the work of hoisting in the casks was resumed, whites and blacks singing at the tackle.

Captain Delano glanced toward Don Benito. As he saw his meagre form in the act of recovering itself from reclining in the servant's arms, into which the agitated invalid had fallen, he could not but marvel at the panic by which himself had been surprised on the darting supposition that such a commander, who, upon a legitimate occasion, so trivial, too, as it now appeared, could lose all self-command, was, with energetic iniquity, going to bring about his murder.

The casks being on deck, Captain Delano was handed a number of jars and cups by one of the steward's aids, who, in the name of his captain, entreated him to do as he had proposed—dole out the water. He complied, with republican impartiality as to this republican element, which always seeks one level, serving the oldest white no better than the youngest black; excepting, indeed, poor Don Benito, whose condition, if not rank, demanded an extra allowance. To him, in the first place, Captain Delano presented a fair pitcher of the fluid; but, thirsting as he was for it, the Spaniard quaffed not a drop until after several grave bows and salutes. A reciprocation of courtesies which the sight-loving Africans hailed with clapping hands.

Two of the less wilted pumpkins being reserved for the cabin table, the residue were minced up on the spot for the general regalement. But the soft bread, sugar, and bottled cider, Captain Delano would have given the whites alone, and in chief Don Benito; but the latter objected; which disinterestedness not a little pleased the American; and so mouthfuls all around were given alike to whites and blacks; excepting one bottle of cider, which Babo insisted upon setting aside for his master.

Here it may be observed that as, on the first visit of the boat, the American had not permitted his men to board the ship, neither did he now; being unwilling to add to the confusion of the decks.

Not uninfluenced by the peculiar good-humor at present prevailing, and for the time oblivious of any but benevolent thoughts, Captain Delano, who, from recent indications, counted upon a breeze within an hour or two at furthest, dispatched the boat back to the sealer, with orders for all the hands that could be spared immediately to set about rafting casks to the watering-place and filling them. Likewise he bade word be carried to his chief officer, that if, against present expectation, the ship was not brought to anchor by sunset, he need

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5 **gurried**, fouled with gurry, or the offal of fish

be under no concern; for as there was to be a full moon that night, he (Captain Delano) would remain on board ready to play the pilot, come the wind soon or late.

As the two captains stood together, observing the departing boat—the servant, as it happened, having just spied a spot on his master's velvet sleeve, and silently engaged rubbing it out—the American expressed his regrets that the San Dominick had no boats; none, at least, but the unseaworthy old hulk of the long-boat, which, warped as a camel's skeleton in the desert, and almost as bleached, lay pot-wise inverted amidships, one side a little tipped, furnishing a subterraneous sort of den for family groups of the blacks, mostly women and small children; who, squatting on old mats below, or perched above in the dark dome, on the elevated seats, were descried, some distance within, like a social circle of bats, sheltering in some friendly cave; at intervals, ebon flights of naked boys and girls, three or four years old, darting in and out of the den's mouth.

"Had you three or four boats now, Don Benito," said Captain Delano, "I think that, by tugging at the oars, your Negroes here might help along matters some Did you sail from port without boats, Don Benito?"

"They were stove in the gales, Señor."

"That was bad. Many men, too, you lost then. Boats and men. Those must have been hard gales, Don Benito."

"Past all speech," cringed the Spaniard.

"Tell me, Don Benito," continued his companion with increased interest, "tell me, were these gales immediately off the pitch of Cape Horn?"

"Cape Horn?—who spoke of Cape Horn?"

"Yourself did, when giving me an account of your voyage," answered Captain Delano, with almost equal astonishment at this eating of his own words, even as he ever seemed eating his own heart, on the part of the Spaniard. "You yourself, Don Benito, spoke of Cape Horn," he emphatically repeated.

The Spaniard turned, in a sort of stooping posture, pausing an instant, as one about to make a plunging exchange of elements, as from air to water.

At this moment a messenger-boy, a white, hurried by, in the regular performance of his function carrying the last expired half-hour forward to the forecastle, from the cabin time-piece, to have it struck at the ship's large bell.

"Master," said the servant, discontinuing his work on the coat sleeve, and addressing the rapt Spaniard with a sort of timid apprehensiveness, as one charged with a duty, the discharge of which, it was foreseen, would prove irksome to the very person who had imposed it, and for whose benefit it was intended, "master told me never mind where he was, or how engaged, always to remind him, to a minute, when shaving-time comes. Miguel has gone to strike the half-hour afternoon. It is *now,* master. Will master go into the cuddy?"

"Ah—yes," answered the Spaniard, starting, as from dreams into realities; then turning upon Captain Delano, he said that ere long he would resume the conversation.

"Then if master means to talk more to Don Amasa," said the servant, "why not let Don Amasa sit by master in the cuddy, and master can talk, and Don Amasa can listen, while Babo here lathers and strops."

"Yes," said Captain Delano, not unpleased with this sociable plan, "yes, Don Benito, unless you had rather not, I will go with you."

"Be it so, Señor."

As the three passed aft, the American could not but think it another strange instance of his host's capriciousness, this being shaved with such uncommon punctuality in the middle of the day. But he deemed it more than likely that the servant's anxious fidelity had something to do with the matter; inasmuch as the timely interruption served to rally his master from the mood which had evidently been coming upon him.

The place called the cuddy was a light deck-cabin formed by the poop, a sort of attic to the large cabin below. Part of it had formerly been the quarters of the officers; but since their death all the partitionings had been thrown down, and the whole interior converted into one spacious and airy marine hall; for absence of fine furniture and picturesque disarray of odd appurtenances, somewhat answering to the wide, cluttered hall of some eccentric bachelor-squire in the country, who hangs his shooting-jacket and tobacco-pouch on deer antlers, and keeps his fishing-rod, tongs, and walking-stick in the same corner.

The similitude was heightened, if not originally suggested, by glimpses of the surrounding sea; since, in one aspect, the country and the ocean seem cousins-german.

The floor of the cuddy was matted. Overhead, four or five old muskets were stuck into horizontal holes along the beams. On one side was a claw-footed old table

lashed to the deck; a thumbed missal on it, and over it a small, meagre crucifix attached to the bulk-head. Under the table lay a dented cutlass or two, with a hacked harpoon, among some melancholy old rigging, like a heap of poor friars' girdles. There were also two long, sharp-ribbed settees of Malacca cane, black with age, and uncomfortable to look at as inquisitors' racks, with a large, misshapen arm-chair, which, furnished with a rude barber's crotch at the back, working with a screw, seemed some grotesque engine of torment. A flag locker was in one corner, open, exposing various colored bunting, some rolled up, others half unrolled, still others tumbled. Opposite was a cumbrous washstand, of black mahogany, all of one block, with a pedestal, like a font, and over it a railed shelf, containing combs, brushes, and other implements of the toilet. A torn hammock of stained grass swung near; the sheets tossed, and the pillow wrinkled up like a brow, as if whoever slept here slept but illy, with alternate visitations of sad thoughts and bad dreams.

The further extremity of the cuddy, overhanging the ship's stern, was pierced with three openings, windows or port-holes, according as men or cannon might peer, socially or unsocially, out of them. At present neither men nor cannon were seen, though huge ring-bolts and other rusty iron fixtures of the woodwork hinted of twenty-four-pounders.

Glancing toward the hammock as he entered, Captain Delano said, "You sleep here, Don Benito?"

"Yes, Señor, since we got into mild weather."

"This seems a sort of dormitory, sitting-room, sail-loft, chapel, armory, and private closet all together, Don Benito," added Captain Delano, looking round.

"Yes, Señor; events have not been favorable to much order in my arrangements."

Here the servant, napkin on arm, made a motion as if waiting his master's good pleasure. Don Benito signified his readiness, when, seating him in the Malacca arm-chair, and for the guest's convenience drawing opposite one of the settees, the servant commenced operations by throwing back his master's collar and loosening his cravat.

There is something in the Negro which, in a peculiar way, fits him for avocations about one's person. Most Negroes are natural valets and hair-dressers; taking to the comb and brush congenially as to the castinets, and flourishing them apparently with almost equal satisfaction. There is, too, a smooth tact about them in this employment, with a marvelous, noiseless, gliding briskness, not ungraceful in its way, singularly pleasing to behold, and still more so to be the manipulated subject of. And above all is the great gift of good-humor. Not the mere grin or laugh is here meant. Those were unsuitable. But a certain easy cheerfulness, harmonious in every glance and gesture; as though God had set the whole Negro to some pleasant tune.

When to this is added the docility arising from the unaspiring contentment of a limited mind, and that susceptibility of blind attachment sometimes inhering in indisputable inferiors, one readily perceives why those hypochondriacs, Johnson and Byron—it may be something like the hypochondriac, Benito Cereno—took to their hearts, almost to the exclusion of the entire white race, their serving men, the Negroes, Barber and Fletcher. But if there be that in the Negro which exempts him from the inflicted sourness of the morbid or cynical mind, how, in his most prepossessing aspects, must he appear to a benevolent one? When at ease with respect to exterior things, Captain Delano's nature was not only benign, but familiarly and humorously so. At home, he had often taken rare satisfaction in sitting in his door, watching some free man of color at his work or play. If on a voyage he chanced to have a black sailor, invariably he was on chatty, and half-gamesome terms with him. In fact, like most men of a good, blithe heart, Captain Delano took to Negroes, not philanthropically, but genially, just as other men to Newfoundland dogs.

Hitherto the circumstances in which he found the San Dominick had repressed the tendency. But in the cuddy, relieved from his former uneasiness, and, for various reasons, more sociably inclined than at any previous period of the day, and seeing the colored servant, napkin on arm, so debonair about his master, in a business so familiar as that of shaving, too, all his old weakness for Negroes returned.

Among other things, he was amused with an odd instance of the African love of bright colors and fine shows, in the black's informally taking from the flag-locker a great piece of bunting of all hues, and lavishly tucking it under his master's chin for an apron.

The mode of shaving among the Spaniards is a little different from what it is with other nations. They have

a basin, specifically called a barber's basin, which on one side is scooped out, so as accurately to receive the chin, against which it is closely held in lathering; which is done, not with a brush, but with soap dipped in the water of the basin and rubbed on the face.

In the present instance salt-water was used for lack of better; and the parts lathered were only the upper lip, and low down under the throat, all the rest being cultivated beard.

The preliminaries being somewhat novel to Captain Delano he sat curiously eying them, so that no conversation took place, nor, for the present, did Don Benito appear disposed to renew any.

Setting down his basin, the Negro searched among the razors, as for the sharpest, and having found it, gave it an additional edge by expertly stropping it on the firm, smooth, oily skin of his open palm; he then made a gesture as if to begin, but midway stood suspended for an instant, one hand elevating the razor, the other professionally dabbling among the bubbling suds on the Spaniard's lank neck. Not unaffected by the close sight of the gleaming steel, Don Benito nervously shuddered; his usual ghastliness was heightened by the lather, which lather, again, was intensified in its hue by the contrasting sootiness of the Negro's body. Altogether the scene was somewhat peculiar, at least to Captain Delano, nor, as he saw the two thus postured, could he resist the vagary, that in the black he saw a headsman, and in the white a man at the block. But this was one of those antic conceits, appearing and vanishing in a breath, from which, perhaps, the best regulated mind is not always free.

Meantime the agitation of the Spaniard had a little loosened the bunting from around him, so that one broad fold swept curtain-like over the chair-arm to the floor, revealing, amid a profusion of armorial bars and ground-colors—black, blue and yellow—a closed castle in a blood-red field diagonal with a lion rampant in a white.

"The castle and the lion," exclaimed Captain Delano—"why, Don Benito, this is the flag of Spain you use here. It's well it's only I, and not the King, that sees this," he added with a smile, "but"—turning toward the black,—"it's all one, I suppose, so the colors be gay;" which playful remark did not fail somewhat to tickle the Negro.

"Now, master," he said, readjusting the flag, and pressing the head gently further back into the crotch of the chair; "now, master," and the steel glanced nigh the throat.

Again Don Benito faintly shuddered.

"You must not shake so, master. See, Don Amasa, master always shakes when I shave him. And yet master knows I never yet have drawn blood, though it's true, if master will shake so, I may some of these times. Now, master," he continued. "And now, Don Amasa, please go on with your talk about the gale, and all that; master can hear, and between times, master can answer."

"Ah yes, these gales," said Captain Delano; "but the more I think of your voyage, Don Benito, the more I wonder, not at the gales, terrible as they must have been, but at the disastrous interval following them. For here, by your account, have you been these two months and more getting from Cape Horn to St. Maria, a distance which I myself, with a good wind, have sailed in a few days. True, you had calms, and long ones, but to be becalmed for two months, that is, at least, unusual. Why, Don Benito, had almost any other gentleman told me such a story, I should have been half disposed to a little incredulity."

Here an involuntary expression came over the Spaniard, similar to that just before on the deck, and whether it was the start he gave, or a sudden gawky roll of the hull in the calm, or a momentary unsteadiness of the servant's hand, however it was, just then the razor drew blood, spots of which stained the creamy lather under the throat; immediately the black barber drew back his steel, and remaining in his professional attitude, back to Captain Delano, and face to Don Benito, held up the trickling razor, saying, with a sort of half humorous sorrow, "See, master—you shook so—here's Babo's first blood."

No sword drawn before James the First of England, no assassination in that timid King's presence, could have produced a more terrified aspect than was now presented by Don Benito.

Poor fellow, thought Captain Delano, so nervous he can't even bear the sight of barber's blood; and this unstrung, sick man, is it credible that I should have imagined he meant to spill all my blood, who can't endure the sight of one little drop of his own? Surely, Amasa Delano, you have been beside yourself this day. Tell it not when you get home, sappy Amasa. Well, well, he looks like a murderer, doesn't he? More like as if himself were to be done for. Well, well, this day's experience shall be a good lesson.

Meantime, while these things were running through

the honest seaman's mind, the servant had taken the napkin from his arm, and to Don Benito had said—"But answer Don Amasa, please, master, while I wipe this ugly stuff off the razor, and strop it again."

As he said the words, his face was turned half round, so as to be alike visible to the Spaniard and the American, and seemed, by its expression, to hint, that he was desirous, by getting his master to go on with the conversation, considerately to withdraw his attention from the recent annoying accident. As if glad to snatch the offered relief, Don Benito resumed, rehearsing to Captain Delano, that not only were the calms of unusual duration, but the ship had fallen in with obstinate currents; and other things he added, some of which were but repetitions of former statements, to explain how it came to pass that the passage from Cape Horn to St. Maria had been so exceedingly long; now and then mingling with his words, incidental praises, less qualified than before, to the blacks, for their general good conduct. These particulars were not given consecutively, the servant, at convenient times, using his razor, and so, between the intervals of shaving, the story and panegyric went on with more than usual huskiness.

To Captain Delano's imagination, now again not wholly at rest, there was something so hollow in the Spaniard's manner, with apparently some reciprocal hollowness in the servant's dusky comment of silence, that the idea flashed across him, that possibly master and man, for some unknown purpose, were acting out, both in word and deed, nay, to the very tremor of Don Benito's limbs, some juggling play before him Neither did the suspicion of collusion lack apparent support, from the fact of those whispered conferences before mentioned. But then, what could be the object of enacting this play of the barber before him? At last, regarding the notion as a whimsy, insensibly suggested, perhaps, by the theatrical aspect of Don Benito in his harlequin ensign, Captain Delano speedily banished it.

The shaving over, the servant bestirred himself with a small bottle of scented waters, pouring a few drops on the head, and then diligently rubbing; the vehemence of the exercise causing the muscles of his face to twitch rather strangely.

His next operation was with comb, scissors and brush; going round and round, smoothing a curl here, clipping an unruly whisker-hair there, giving a graceful sweep to the temple-lock, with other impromptu touches evincing the hand of a master; while, like any resigned gentleman in barber's hands, Don Benito bore all, much less uneasily, at least, than he had done the razoring; indeed, he sat so pale and rigid now, that the Negro seemed a Nubian sculptor finishing off a white statue-head.

All being over at last, the standard of Spain removed, tumbled up, and tossed back into the flag-locker, the Negro's warm breath blowing away any stray hair which might have lodged down his master's neck; collar and cravat readjusted; a speck of lint whisked off the velvet lapel; all this being done; backing off a little space, and pausing with an expression of subdued self-complacency, the servant for a moment surveyed his master, as, in toilet at least, the creature of his own tasteful hands.

Captain Delano playfully complimented him upon his achievement; at the same time congratulating Don Benito.

But neither sweet waters, nor shampooing, nor fidelity, nor sociality, delighted the Spaniard Seeing him relapsing into forbidding gloom, and still remaining seated, Captain Delano, thinking that his presence was undesired just then, withdrew, on pretense of seeing whether, as he had prophesied, any signs of a breeze were visible.

Walking forward to the mainmast, he stood awhile thinking over the scene and not without some undefined misgivings, when he heard a noise near the cuddy, and turning, saw the Negro, his hand to his cheek. Advancing, Captain Delano perceived that the cheek was bleeding. He was about to ask the cause, when the Negro's wailing soliloquy enlightened him.

"Ah, when will master get better from his sickness; only the sour heart that sour sickness breeds made him serve Babo so; cutting Babo with the razor, because, only by accident, Babo had given master one little scratch; and for the first time in so many a day, too. Ah, ah, ah," holding his hand to his face.

Is it possible, thought Captain Delano; was it to wreak in private his Spanish spite against this poor friend of his, that Don Benito, by his sullen manner, impelled me to withdraw? Ah, this slavery breeds ugly passions in man.—Poor fellow!

He was about to speak in sympathy to the Negro, but with a timid reluctance he now re-entered the cuddy.

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51 Nubian, one of the Negro tribe of Nubia, in eastern Africa

Presently master and man came forth; Don Benito leaning on his servant as if nothing had happened.

But a sort of love-quarrel, after all, thought Captain Delano.

He accosted Don Benito, and they slowly walked together. They had gone but a few paces, when the steward —a tall, rajah-looking mulatto, orientally set off with a pagoda turban formed by three or four Madras handkerchiefs wound about his head, tier on tier—approaching with a salaam, announced lunch in the cabin

On their way thither, the two captains were preceded by the mulatto, who, turning round as he advanced, with continual smiles and bows, ushered them on, a display of elegance which quite completed the insignificance of the small bare-headed Babo, who, as if not unconscious of inferiority, eyed askance the graceful steward. But in part, Captain Delano imputed his jealous watchfulness to that peculiar feeling which the full-blooded African entertains for the adulterated one. As for the steward, his manner, if not bespeaking much dignity of self-respect, yet evidenced his extreme desire to please, which is doubly meritorious, as at once Christian and Chesterfieldian.

Captain Delano observed with interest that while the complexion of the mulatto was hybrid, his physiognomy was European—classically so.

"Don Benito," whispered he, "I am glad to see this usher-of-the-golden-rod of yours; the sight refutes an ugly remark once made to me by a Barbados planter, that when a mulatto has a regular European face, look out for him; he is a devil. But see, your steward here has features more regular than King George's of England, and yet there he nods, and bows, and smiles; a king, indeed—the king of kind hearts and polite fellows. What a pleasant voice he has, too!"

"He has, Señor."

"But, tell me, has he not, so far as you have known him, always proved a good, worthy fellow?" said Captain Delano, pausing, while with a final genuflexion the steward disappeared into the cabin; "come, for the reason just mentioned, I am curious to know."

"Francesco is a good man," rather sluggishly responded Don Benito, like a sort of phlegmatic appreciator, who would neither find fault nor flatter.

"Ah, I thought so. For it were strange, indeed, and not very creditable to us white-skins, if a little of our blood mixed with the African's, should, far from improving the latter's quality, have the sad effect of pouring vitriolic acid into black broth; improving the hue, perhaps, but not the wholesomeness."

"Doubtless, doubtless, Señor, but"—glancing at Babo —"not to speak of Negroes, your planter's remark I have heard applied to the Spanish and Indian intermixtures in our provinces. But I know nothing about the matter," he listlessly added.

And here they entered the cabin.

The lunch was a frugal one. Some of Captain Delano's fresh fish and pumpkins, biscuit and salt beef, the reserved bottle of cider, and the San Dominick's last bottle of Canary.

As they entered, Francesco, with two or three colored aids, was hovering over the table giving the last adjustments. Upon perceiving their master they withdrew, Francesco making a smiling congé, and the Spaniard, without condescending to notice it, fastidiously remarking to his companion that he relished not superfluous attendance.

Without companions, host and guest sat down, like a childless married couple, at opposite ends of the table, Don Benito waving Captain Delano to his place, and, weak as he was, insisting upon that gentleman being seated before himself

The Negro placed a rug under Don Benito's feet, and a cushion behind his back, and then stood behind, not his master's chair, but Captain Delano's. At first, this a little surprised the latter But it was soon evident that, in taking his position, the black was still true to his master; since by facing him he could the more readily anticipate his slightest want.

"This is an uncommonly intelligent fellow of yours, Don Benito," whispered Captain Delano across the table.

"You say true, Señor"

During the repast, the guest again reverted to parts of Don Benito's story, begging further particulars here and there. He inquired how it was that the scurvy and fever should have committed such wholesale havoc upon the whites, while destroying less than half of the blacks. As if this question reproduced the whole scene of plague before the Spaniard's eyes, miserably reminding him of his solitude in a cabin where before he had had so many friends and officers round him, his hand shook, his face became hueless, broken words escaped; but directly the sane memory of the past seemed replaced by insane terrors of the present. With starting eyes he stared before

him at vacancy. For nothing was to be seen but the hand of his servant pushing the Canary over toward him. At length a few sips served partially to restore him. He made random reference to the different constitutions of races, enabling one to offer more resistance to certain maladies than another. The thought was new to his companion.

Presently Captain Delano, intending to say something to his host concerning the pecuniary part of the business he had undertaken for him, especially—since he was strictly accountable to his owners—with reference to the new suit of sails, and other things of that sort; and naturally preferring to conduct such affairs in private, was desirous that the servant should withdraw; imagining that Don Benito for a few minutes could dispense with his attendance. He, however, waited awhile; thinking that, as the conversation proceeded, Don Benito, without being prompted, would perceive the propriety of the step.

But it was otherwise. At last catching his host's eye, Captain Delano, with a slight backward gesture of his thumb, whispered, "Don Benito, pardon me, but there is an interference with the full expression of what I have to say to you."

Upon this the Spaniard changed countenance; which was imputed to his resenting the hint, as in some way a reflection upon his servant. After a moment's pause, he assured his guest that the black's remaining with them could be of no disservice; because since losing his officers he had made Babo (whose original office, it now appeared, had been captain of the slaves) not only his constant attendant and companion, but in all things his confidant.

After this, nothing more could be said; though, indeed, Captain Delano could hardly avoid some little tinge of irritation upon being left ungratified in so inconsiderable a wish, by one, too, for whom he intended such solid services. But it is only his querulousness, thought he; and so filling his glass he proceeded to business.

The price of the sails and other matters was fixed upon. But while this was being done, the American observed that, though his original offer of assistance had been hailed with hectic animation, yet now when it was reduced to a business transaction, indifference and apathy were betrayed. Don Benito, in fact, appeared to submit to hearing the details more out of regard to common propriety, than from any impression that weighty benefit to himself and his voyage was involved.

Soon, his manner became still more reserved. The effort was vain to seek to draw him into social talk. Gnawed by his splenetic mood, he sat twitching his beard, while to little purpose the hand of his servant, mute as that on the wall, slowly pushed over the Canary.

Lunch being over, they sat down on the cushioned transom; the servant placing a pillow behind his master. The long continuance of the calm had now affected the atmosphere. Don Benito sighed heavily, as if for breath.

"Why not adjourn to the cuddy," said Captain Delano; "there is more air there." But the host sat silent and motionless.

Meantime his servant knelt before him with a large fan of feathers. And Francesco coming in on tiptoes, handed the Negro a little cup of aromatic waters, with which at intervals he chafed his master's brow; smoothing the hair along the temples as a nurse does a child's. He spoke no word. He only rested his eye on his master's as if, amid all Don Benito's distress, a little to refresh his spirit by the silent sight of fidelity.

Presently the ship's bell sounded two o'clock; and through the cabin-windows a slight rippling of the sea was discerned; and from the desired direction.

"There," exclaimed Captain Delano, "I told you so, Don Benito, look!"

He had risen to his feet, speaking in a very animated tone, with a view the more to rouse his companion. But though the crimson curtain of the stern-window near him that moment fluttered against his pale cheek, Don Benito seemed to have even less welcome for the breeze than the calm.

Poor fellow, thought Captain Delano, bitter experience has taught him that one ripple does not make a wind, any more than one swallow a summer. But he is mistaken for once. I will get his ship in for him, and prove it.

Briefly alluding to his weak condition, he urged his host to remain quietly where he was, since he (Captain Delano) would with pleasure take upon himself the responsibility of making the best use of the wind.

Upon gaining the deck, Captain Delano started at the unexpected figure of Atufal, monumentally fixed at the threshold, like one of those sculptured porters of black marble guarding the porches of Egyptian tombs.

But this time the start was, perhaps, purely physical. Atufal's presence, singularly attesting docility even in sullenness, was contrasted with that of the hatchet-polish-

ers, who in patience evinced their industry; while both spectacles showed, that lax as Don Benito's general authority might be, still, whenever he chose to exert it, no man so savage or colossal but must, more or less, bow.

Snatching a trumpet which hung from the bulwarks, with a free step Captain Delano advanced to the forward edge of the poop, issuing his orders in his best Spanish. The few sailors and many Negroes, all equally pleased, obediently set about heading the ship toward the harbour.

While giving some directions about setting a lower stu'n'-sail, suddenly Captain Delano heard a voice faithfully repeating his orders. Turning, he saw Babo, now for the time acting, under the pilot, his original part of captain of the slaves. This assistance proved valuable. Tattered sails and warped yards were soon brought into some trim. And no brace or halyard was pulled but to the blithe songs of the inspirited Negroes.

Good fellows, thought Captain Delano, a little training would make fine sailors of them. Why see, the very women pull and sing, too. These must be some of those Ashantee Negresses that make such capital soldiers, I've heard. But who's at the helm? I must have a good hand there.

He went to see.

The San Dominick steered with a cumbrous tiller, with large horizontal pullies attached. At each pulley-end stood a subordinate black, and between them, at the tiller-head, the responsible post, a Spanish seaman, whose countenance evinced his due share in the general hopefulness and confidence at the coming of the breeze.

He proved the same man who had behaved with so shame-faced an air on the windlass.

"Ah,—it is you, my man," exclaimed Captain Delano —"well, no more sheep's-eyes now;—look straight forward and keep the ship so. Good hand, I trust? And want to get into the harbor, don't you?"

The man assented with an inward chuckle, grasping the tiller-head firmly. Upon this, unperceived by the American, the two blacks eyed the sailor intently.

Finding all right at the helm, the pilot went forward to the forecastle, to see how matters stood there.

The ship now had way enough to breast the current. With the approach of evening the breeze would be sure to freshen.

Having done all that was needed for the present, Captain Delano, giving his last orders to the sailors, turned aft to report affairs to Don Benito in the cabin perhaps additionally incited to rejoin him by the hope of snatching a moment's private chat while his servant was engaged upon deck.

From opposite sides, there were, beneath the poop two approaches to the cabin; one further forward than the other, and consequently communicating with a longer passage. Marking the servant still above, Captain Delano taking the nighest entrance—the one last named, and at whose porch Atufal still stood—hurried on his way, till arrived at the cabin threshold, he paused an instant, little to recover from his eagerness. Then, with the words of his intended business upon his lips, he entered. As he advanced toward the seated Spaniard, he heard another footstep, keeping time with his. From the opposite door a salver in hand, the servant was likewise advancing.

"Confound the faithful fellow," thought Captain Delano; "what a vexatious coincidence."

Possibly, the vexation might have been something different, were it not for the brisk confidence inspired by the breeze. But even as it was, he felt a slight twinge from a sudden indefinite association in his mind of Babo with Atufal.

"Don Benito," said he, "I give you joy; the breeze will hold, and will increase. By the way, your tall man at time-piece, Atufal, stands without. By your order, course?"

Don Benito recoiled, as if at some bland satirical touch delivered with such adroit garnish of apparent good breeding as to present no handle for retort.

He is like one flayed alive, thought Captain Delano where may one touch him without causing a shrink?

The servant moved before his master, adjusting cushion; recalled to civility, the Spaniard stiffly replied "You are right. The slave appears where you saw him according to my command; which is, that if at the given hour I am below, he must take his stand and abide my coming."

"Ah now, pardon me, but that is treating the poor fellow like an ex-king indeed. Ah, Don Benito," smiling "for all the license you permit in some things, I fear lest at bottom, you are a bitter hard master."

Again Don Benito shrank; and this time, as the good sailor thought, from a genuine twinge of his conscience

Again conversation became constrained. In vain Captain Delano called attention to the now perceptible m

tion of the keel gently cleaving the sea; with lack-lustre eye, Don Benito returned words few and reserved.

By-and-by, the wind having steadily risen, and still blowing right into the harbour, bore the San Dominick swiftly on. Rounding a point of land, the sealer at distance came into open view.

Meantime Captain Delano had again repaired to the deck, remaining there some time. Having at last altered the ship's course, so as to give the reef a wide berth, he returned for a few moments below.

I will cheer up my poor friend, this time, thought he.

"Better and better, Don Benito," he cried as he blithely re-entered: "there will soon be an end to your cares, at least for awhile. For when, after a long, sad voyage, you know, the anchor drops into the haven, all its vast weight seems lifted from the captain's heart. We are getting on famously, Don Benito. My ship is in sight. Look through this side-light here; there she is; all a-taunt-o! The Bachelor's Delight, my good friend. Ah, how this wind braces one up. Come, you must take a cup of coffee with me this evening. My old steward will give you as fine a cup as ever any sultan tasted. What say you, Don Benito, will you?"

At first, the Spaniard glanced feverishly up, casting a longing look toward the sealer, while with mute concern his servant gazed into his face. Suddenly the old ague of coldness returned, and dropping back to his cushions he was silent.

"You do not answer. Come, all day you have been my host; would you have hospitality all on one side?"

"I cannot go," was the response.

"What? It will not fatigue you. The ships will lie together as near as they can, without swinging foul. It will be little more than stepping from deck to deck; which is but as from room to room. Come, come, you must not refuse me."

"I cannot go," decisively and repulsively repeated Don Benito.

Renouncing all but the last appearance of courtesy, with a sort of cadaverous sullenness, and biting his thin nails to the quick, he glanced, almost glared, at his guest, as if impatient that a stranger's presence should interfere with the full indulgence of his morbid hour. Meantime the sound of the parted waters came more and more gurglingly and merrily in at the windows; as reproaching him for his dark spleen; as telling him that, sulk as he might, and go mad with it, nature cared not a jot; since, whose fault was it, pray?

But the foul mood was now at its depth, as the fair wind at its height.

There was something in the man so far beyond any mere unsociality or sourness previously evinced, that even the forbearing good-nature of his guest could no longer endure it. Wholly at a loss to account for such demeanor, and deeming sickness with eccentricity, however extreme, no adequate excuse, well satisfied, too, that nothing in his own conduct could justify it, Captain Delano's pride began to be roused. Himself became reserved. But all seemed one to the Spaniard. Quitting him, therefore, Captain Delano once more went to the deck.

The ship was now within less than two miles of the sealer. The whale-boat was seen darting over the interval.

To be brief, the two vessels, thanks to the pilot's skill, ere long in neighborly style lay anchored together.

Before returning to his own vessel, Captain Delano had intended communicating to Don Benito the smaller details of the proposed services to be rendered. But, as it was, unwilling anew to subject himself to rebuffs, he resolved, now that he had seen the San Dominick safely moored, immediately to quit her, without further allusion to hospitality or business. Indefinitely postponing his ulterior plans, he would regulate his future actions according to future circumstances. His boat was ready to receive him; but his host still tarried below. Well, thought Captain Delano, if he has little breeding, the more need to show mine. He descended to the cabin to bid a ceremonious, and, it may be, tacitly rebukeful adieu. But to his great satisfaction, Don Benito, as if he began to feel the weight of that treatment with which his slighted guest had, not indecorously, retaliated upon him, now supported by his servant, rose to his feet, and grasping Captain Delano's hand, stood tremulous; too much agitated to speak. But the good augury hence drawn was suddenly dashed, by his resuming all his previous reserve, with augmented gloom, as, with half-averted eyes, he silently reseated himself on his cushions. With a corresponding return of his own chilled feelings, Captain Delano bowed and withdrew.

He was hardly midway in the narrow corridor, dim as a tunnel, leading from the cabin to the stairs, when a sound, as of the tolling for execution in some jail-yard, fell on his ears. It was the echo of the ship's flawed bell,

striking the hour, drearily reverberated in this subterranean vault. Instantly, by a fatality not to be withstood, his mind, responsive to the portent, swarmed with superstitious suspicions. He paused. In images far swifter than these sentences, the minutest details of all his former distrusts swept through him.

Hitherto, credulous good-nature had been too ready to furnish excuses for reasonable fears. Why was the Spaniard, so superfluously punctilious at times, now heedless of common propriety in not accompanying to the side his departing guest? Did indisposition forbid? Indisposition had not forbidden more irksome exertion that day. His last equivocal demeanor recurred. He had risen to his feet, grasped his guest's hand, motioned toward his hat; then, in an instant, all was eclipsed in sinister muteness and gloom. Did this imply one brief, repentant relenting at the final moment, from some iniquitous plot, followed by remorseless return to it? His last glance seemed to express a calamitous, yet acquiescent farewell to Captain Delano forever. Why decline the invitation to visit the sealer that evening? Or was the Spaniard less hardened than the Jew, who refrained not from supping at the board of him whom the same night he meant to betray? What imported all those day-long enigmas and contradictions, except they were intended to mystify, preliminary to some stealthy blow? Atufal, the pretended rebel, but punctual shadow, that moment lurked by the threshold without. He seemed a sentry, and more. Who, by his own confession, had stationed him there? Was the Negro now lying in wait?

The Spaniard behind—his creature before; to rush from darkness to light was the involuntary choice.

The next moment, with clenched jaw and hand, he passed Atufal, and stood unharmed in the light. As he saw his trim ship lying peacefully at her anchor, and almost within ordinary call; as he saw his household boat, with familiar faces in it, patiently rising and falling on the short waves by the San Dominick's side; and then, glancing about the decks where he stood, saw the oakum-pickers still gravely plying their fingers; and heard the low, buzzing whistle and industrious hum of the hatchet-polishers, still bestirring themselves over their endless occupation; and more than all, as he saw the benign aspect of nature, taking her innocent repose in the evening; the screened sun in the quiet camp of the west shining out like the mild light from Abraham's tent; as his charmed eye and ear took in all these, with the chained figure of the black, the clenched jaw and hand relaxed. Once again he smiled at the phantoms which had mocked him, and felt something like a tinge of remorse, that, by harbouring them even for a moment, he should, by implication, have betrayed an atheist doubt of the ever-watchful Providence above.

There was a few minutes' delay, while, in obedience to his orders, the boat was being hooked along to the gangway. During this interval, a sort of saddened satisfaction stole over Captain Delano, at thinking of the kindly offices he had that day discharged for a stranger. Ah, thought he, after good actions one's conscience is never ungrateful, however much so the benefited party may be.

Presently, his foot, in the first act of descent into the boat, pressed the first round of the side-ladder, his face presented inward upon the deck. In the same moment, he heard his name courteously sounded; and, to his pleased surprise, saw Don Benito advancing—an unwonted energy in his air, as if, at the last moment, intent upon making amends for his recent discourtesy. With instinctive good feeling, Captain Delano, withdrawing his foot, turned and reciprocally advanced. As he did so, the Spaniard's nervous eagerness increased, but his vital energy failed; so that, the better to support him, the servant, placing his master's hand on his naked shoulder, and gently holding it there, formed himself into a sort of crutch.

When the two captains met, the Spaniard again fervently took the hand of the American, at the same time casting an earnest glance into his eyes, but, as before, too much overcome to speak.

I have done him wrong, self-reproachfully thought Captain Delano; his apparent coldness has deceived me; in no instance has he meant to offend.

Meantime, as if fearful the continuance of the scene might too much unstring his master, the servant seemed anxious to terminate it. And so, still presenting himself as a crutch, and walking between the two captains, he advanced with them toward the gangway; while still, as if full of kindly contrition, Don Benito would not let go the hand of Captain Delano, but retained it in his, across the black's body.

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22 **the Jew . . . betray,** an allusion to Judas' betrayal of Jesus. See Matthew 26

Soon they were standing by the side, looking over into the boat, whose crew turned up their curious eyes. Waiting a moment for the Spaniard to relinquish his hold, the now embarrassed Captain Delano lifted his foot, to overstep the threshold of the open gangway; but still Don Benito would not let go his hand. And yet, with an agitated tone, he said, "I can go no further; here I must bid you adieu. Adieu, my dear, dear Don Amasa. Go—go!" suddenly tearing his hand loose, "go, and God guard you better than me, my best friend."

Not unaffected, Captain Delano would now have lingered; but catching the meekly admonitory eye of the servant, with a hasty farewell he descended into his boat, followed by the continual adieus of Don Benito, standing rooted in the gangway.

Seating himself in the stern, Captain Delano, making a last salute, ordered the boat shoved off. The crew had their oars on end. The bowsmen pushed the boat a sufficient distance for the oars to be lengthwise dropped. The instant that was done, Don Benito sprang over the bulwarks, falling at the feet of Captain Delano; at the same time, calling toward his ship, but in tones so frenzied, that none in the boat could understand him. But, as if not equally obtuse, three sailors, from three different and distant parts of the ship, splashed into the sea, swimming after their captain, as if intent upon his rescue.

The dismayed officer of the boat eagerly asked what this meant. To which Captain Delano, turning a disdainful smile upon the unaccountable Spaniard, answered that, for his part, he neither knew nor cared; but it seemed as if Don Benito had taken it into his head to produce the impression among his people that the boat wanted to kidnap him. "Or else—give way for your lives," he wildly added, starting at a clattering hubbub in the ship, above which rang the tocsin of the hatchet-polishers; and seizing Don Benito by the throat he added, "this plotting pirate means murder!" Here, in apparent verification of the words, the servant, a dagger in his hand, was seen on the rail overhead, poised, in the act of leaping, as if with desperate fidelity to befriend his master to the last, while, seemingly to aid the black, the three white sailors were trying to clamber into the hampered bow. Meantime, the whole host of Negroes, as if inflamed at the sight of their jeopardized captain, impended in one sooty avalanche over the bulwarks.

All this, with what preceded, and what followed, occurred with such involutions of rapidity, that past, present, and future seemed one.

Seeing the Negro coming, Captain Delano had flung the Spaniard aside, almost in the very act of clutching him and, by the unconscious recoil, shifting his place, with arms thrown up, so promptly grappled the servant in his descent, that with dagger presented at Captain Delano's heart, the black seemed of purpose to have leaped there as to his mark. But the weapon was wrenched away, and the assailant dashed down into the bottom of the boat, which now, with disentangled oars, began to speed through the sea.

At this juncture, the left hand of Captain Delano, on one side, again clutched the half-reclined Don Benito, heedless that he was in a speechless faint, while his right foot, on the other side, ground the prostrate Negro, and his right arm pressed for added speed on the after oar, his eye bent forward, encouraging his men to their utmost.

But here, the officer of the boat, who had at last succeeded in beating off the towing sailors, and was now, with face turned aft, assisting the bowsman at his oar, suddenly called to Captain Delano, to see what the black was about; while a Portuguese oarsman shouted to him to give heed to what the Spaniard was saying.

Glancing down at his feet, Captain Delano saw the freed hand of the servant aiming with a second dagger—a small one, before concealed in his wool—with this he was snakishly writhing up from the boat's bottom, at the heart of his master, his countenance lividly vindictive, expressing the centred purpose of his soul; while the Spaniard, half-choked, was vainly shrinking away, with husky words, incoherent to all but the Portuguese.

That moment, across the long-benighted mind of Captain Delano, a flash of revelation swept, illuminating in unanticipated clearness his host's whole mysterious demeanor, with every enigmatic event of the day, as well as the entire past voyage of the San Dominick. He smote Babo's hand down, but his own heart smote him harder. With infinite pity he withdrew his hold from Don Benito. Not Captain Delano, but Don Benito, the black, in leaping into the boat, had intended to stab.

Both the black's hands were held, as, glancing up towards the San Dominick, Captain Delano, now with the scales dropped from his eyes, saw the Negroes, not in misrule, not in tumult, not as if frantically concerned

for Don Benito, but with mask torn away, flourishing hatchets and knives, in ferocious piratical revolt. Like delirious black dervishes, the six Ashantees danced on the poop. Prevented by their foes from springing into the water, the Spanish boys were hurrying up to the topmost spars, while such of the few Spanish sailors, not already in the sea, less alert, were descried, helplessly mixed in, on deck, with the blacks.

Meantime Captain Delano hailed his own vessel, ordering the ports up, and the guns run out. But by this time the cable of the San Dominick had been cut; and the fag-end, in lashing out, whipped away the canvas shroud about the beak, suddenly revealing, as the bleached hull swung round toward the open ocean, death for the figurehead, in a human skeleton; chalky comment on the chalked words below, *"Follow your leader."*

At the sight, Don Benito, covering his face, wailed out: "'Tis he, Aranda! my murdered, unburied friend!"

Upon reaching the sealer, calling for ropes, Captain Delano bound the Negro, who made no resistance, and had him hoisted to the deck. He would then have assisted the now almost helpless Don Benito up the side; but Don Benito, wan as he was, refused to move, or be moved, until the Negro should have been first put below out of view. When, presently assured that it was done, he no more shrank from the ascent.

The boat was immediately dispatched back to pick up the three swimming sailors. Meantime, the guns were in readiness, though, owing to the San Dominick having glided somewhat astern of the sealer, only the aftermost one could be brought to bear. With this, they fired six times; thinking to cripple the fugitive ship by bringing down her spars. But only a few inconsiderable ropes were shot away. Soon the ship was beyond the gun's range, steering broad out of the bay; the blacks thickly clustering round the bowsprit, one moment with taunting cries toward the whites, the next with upthrown gestures hailing the now dusky moors of ocean—cawing crows escaped from the hand of the fowler.

The first impulse was to slip the cables and give chase. But, upon second thoughts, to pursue with whale-boat and yawl seemed more promising.

Upon inquiring of Don Benito what firearms they had on board the San Dominick, Captain Delano was answered that they had none that could be used; because, in the earlier stages of the mutiny, a cabin-passenger, since dead, had secretly put out of order the locks of what few muskets there were. But with all his remaining strength, Don Benito entreated the American not to give chase, either with ship or boat; for the Negroes had already proved themselves such desperadoes, that, in case of a present assault, nothing but a total massacre of the whites could be looked for. But, regarding this warning as coming from one whose spirit had been crushed by misery, the American did not give up his design.

The boats were got ready and armed. Captain Delano ordered his men into them. He was going himself when Don Benito grasped his arm.

"What! have you saved my life, Señor, and are you now going to throw away your own?"

The officers also, for reasons connected with their interests and those of the voyage, and a duty owing to the owners, strongly objected against their commander's going. Weighing their remonstrances a moment, Captain Delano felt bound to remain; appointing his chief mate —an athletic and resolute man, who had been a privateer's-man—to head the party. The more to encourage the sailors, they were told, that the Spanish captain considered his ship as good as lost; that she and her cargo, including some gold and silver, were worth more than a thousand doubloons. Take her, and no small part should be theirs. The sailors replied with a shout.

The fugitives had now almost gained an offing. It was nearly night; but the moon was rising. After hard, prolonged pulling, the boats came up on the ship's quarters, at a suitable distance laying upon their oars to discharge their muskets. Having no bullets to return, the Negroes sent their yells. But upon the second volley, Indian-like, they hurtled their hatchets. One took off a sailor's fingers. Another struck the whale-boat's bow, cutting off the rope there, and remaining stuck in the gunwale like a woodman's axe. Snatching it, quivering from its lodgment, the mate hurled it back. The returned gauntlet now stuck in the ship's broken quarter-gallery, and so remained.

The Negroes giving too hot a reception, the whites kept a more respectful distance. Hovering now just out of reach of the hurtling hatchets, they, with a view to the

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73 offing, a good distance from the shore where there is deep water and no need of a pilot

close encounter which must soon come, sought to decoy the blacks into entirely disarming themselves of their most murderous weapons in a hand-to-hand fight, by foolishly flinging them, as missiles, short of the mark, into the sea. But ere long, perceiving the stratagem, the Negroes desisted, though not before many of them had to replace their lost hatchets with handspikes; an exchange which, as counted upon, proved, in the end, favorable to the assailants.

Meantime, with a strong wind, the ship still clove the water; the boats alternately falling behind, and pulling up, to discharge fresh volleys.

The fire was mostly directed toward the stern, since there, chiefly, the Negroes, at present, were clustering. But to kill or maim the Negroes was not the object. To take them, with the ship, was the object. To do it, the ship must be boarded; which could not be done by boats while she was sailing so fast.

A thought now struck the mate. Observing the Spanish boys still aloft, high as they could get, he called to them to descend to the yards, and cut adrift the sails. It was done. About this time, owing to causes hereafter to be shown, two Spaniards, in the dress of sailors, and conspicuously showing themselves, were killed; not by volleys, but by deliberate marksman's shots; while, as it afterward appeared, by one of the general discharges, Atufal, the black, and the Spaniard at the helm likewise were killed. What now, with the loss of the sails, and loss of leaders, the ship became unmanageable to the Negroes.

With creaking masts, she came heavily round to the wind; the prow slowly swinging into view of the boats, its skeleton gleaming in the horizontal moonlight, and casting a gigantic ribbed shadow upon the water. One extended arm of the ghost seemed beckoning the whites to avenge it.

"Follow your leader!" cried the mate; and, one on each bow, the boats boarded. Sealing-spears and cutlasses crossed hatchets and handspikes. Huddled upon the long-boat amidships, the Negresses raised a wailing chant, whose chorus was the clash of the steel.

For a time, the attack wavered; the Negroes wedging themselves to beat it back; the half-repelled sailors, as yet unable to gain a footing, fighting as troopers in the saddle, one leg sideways flung over the bulwarks, and one without, plying their cutlasses like carters' whips. But in vain. They were almost overborne, when rallying themselves into a squad as one man, with a huzza, they sprang inboard, where, entangled, they involuntarily separated again. For a few breaths' space there was a vague, muffled, inner sound, as of submerged sword-fish rushing hither and thither through shoals of black-fish. Soon, in a reunited band, and joined by the Spanish seamen, the whites came to the surface, irresistibly driving the Negroes toward the stern. But a barricade of casks and sacks from side to side, had been thrown up by the mainmast. Here the Negroes faced about, and though scorning peace or truce, yet fain would have had respite. But, without pause, overleaping the barrier, the unflagging sailors again closed. Exhausted, the blacks now fought in despair. Their red tongues lolled, wolf-like, from their black mouths. But the pale sailors' teeth were set; not a word was spoken; and, in five minutes more, the ship was won.

Nearly a score of the Negroes were killed. Exclusive of those by the balls, many were mangled; their wounds—mostly inflicted by the long-edged sealing-spears—resembling those shaven ones of the English at Preston Pans, made by the poled scythes of the Highlanders. On the other side, none were killed, though several were wounded; some severely, including the mate. The surviving Negroes were temporarily secured, and the ship towed back into the harbor at midnight, once more lay anchored.

Omitting the incidents and arrangements ensuing, suffice it that, after two days spent in refitting, the ships sailed in company for Conception in Chili, and thence for Lima in Peru; where, before the vice-regal courts, the whole affair, from the beginning, underwent investigation.

Though, midway on the passage, the ill-fated Spaniard, relaxed from constraint, showed some signs of regaining health with free-will; yet, agreeably to his own foreboding, shortly before arriving at Lima, he relapsed, finally becoming so reduced as to be carried ashore in arms. Hearing of his story and plight, one of the many religious institutions of the City of Kings opened an hospitable refuge to him, where both physician and priest were his nurses, and a member of the order volunteered to be his

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68 **Preston Pans.** At the battle of Prestonpans in 1745, the Scotch Highlanders supported the Young Pretender against the English

one special guardian and consoler, by night and by day.

The following extracts, translated from one of the official Spanish documents, will, it is hoped, shed light on the preceding narrative, as well as, in the first place, reveal the true port of departure and true history of the San Dominick's voyage, down to the time of her touching at the island of St. Maria.

But, ere the extracts come, it may be well to preface them with a remark.

The document selected, from among many others, for partial translation, contains the deposition of Benito Cereno; the first taken in the case. Some disclosures therein were, at the time, held dubious for both learned and natural reasons. The tribunal inclined to the opinion that the deponent, not undisturbed in his mind by recent events, raved of some things which could never have happened. But subsequent depositions of the surviving sailors, bearing out the revelations of their captain in several of the strangest particulars, gave credence to the rest. So that the tribunal, in its final decision, rested its capital sentences upon statements which, had they lacked confirmation, it would have deemed it but duty to reject.

I, DON JOSE DE ABOS AND PADILLA, His Majesty's Notary for the Royal Revenue, and Register of this Province, and Notary Public of the Holy Crusade of this Bishopric, etc.

Do certify and declare, as much as is requisite in law, that, in the criminal cause commenced the twenty-fourth of the month of September, in the year seventeen hundred and ninety-nine, against the Negroes of the ship San Dominick, the following declaration before me was made:

Declaration of the first witness, DON BENITO CERENO.

The same day, and month, and year, His Honor, Doctor Juan Martinez de Rozas, Councilor of the Royal Audience of this Kingdom, and learned in the law of this Intendency, ordered the captain of the ship San Dominick, Don Benito Cereno, to appear; which he did in his litter, attended by the monk Infelez; of whom he received the oath, which he took by God, our Lord, and a sign of the Cross; under which he promised to tell the truth of whatever he should know and should be asked;—and being interrogated agreeably to the tenor of the act commencing the process, he said, that on the twentieth of May last, he set sail with his ship from the port of Valparaiso, bound to that of Callao; loaded with the produce of the country besides thirty cases of hardware and one hundred and sixty blacks, of both sexes, mostly belonging to Don Alexandro Aranda, gentleman, of the city of Mendoza; that the crew of the ship consisted of thirty-six men, besides the persons who went as passengers; that the Negroes were in part as follows: . . .

[*Here, in the original, follows a list of some fifty names, descriptions, and ages, compiled from certain recovered documents of Aranda's, and also from recollections of the deponent, from which portions only are extracted.*]

—One, from about eighteen to nineteen years, named José, and this was the man that waited upon his master, Don Alexandro, and who speaks well the Spanish, having served him four or five years; . . . A mulatto, named Francesco, the cabin steward, of a good person and voice, having sung in the Valparaiso churches, native of the province of Buenos Ayres, aged about thirty-five years. A smart Negro, named Dago, who had been for many years a grave-digger among the Spaniards, aged forty-six years. . . . Four old Negroes, born in Africa, from sixty to seventy, but sound, caulkers by trade, whose names are as follows:—the first was named Muri, and he was killed (as was also his son named Diamelo); the second, Nacta; the third, Yola, likewise killed; the fourth, Ghofan, and six full-grown Negroes, aged from thirty to forty-five, all raw, and born among the Ashantees—Matiluqui, Yan, Lecbe, Mapenda, Yambaio, Akim; four of whom were killed; . . . a powerful Negro named Atufal, who being supposed to have been a chief in Africa, his owner set great store by him. . . . And a small Negro of Senegal, but some years among the Spaniards, aged about thirty, which Negro's name was Babo; . . . that he does not remember the names of the others, but that still expecting the residue of Don Alexandro's papers will be found, will then take due account of them all, and remit to the court; . . . and thirty-nine women and children of all ages.

[*The catalogue over, the deposition goes on:*]

. . . That all the Negroes slept upon deck, as is customary in this navigation, and none wore fetters, because the owner, his friend Aranda, told him that they were all tractable; . . . that on the seventh day after leaving port, at three o'clock in the morning, all the Spaniards being asleep except the two officers on the watch, who were the boatswain, Juan Robles, and the carpenter, Juan Bautista Gayete, and the helmsman and his boy, the Negroes revolted suddenly, wounded dangerously the boatswain and the carpenter, and

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52 [Here . . . extracted.] The brackets and bracketed material are Melville's throughout • 76 Senegal, a province in West Africa

successively killed eighteen men of those who were sleeping upon deck, some with hand-spikes and hatchets, and others by throwing them alive overboard, after tying them; that of the Spaniards upon deck, they left about seven, as he thinks, alive and tied, to manoeuvre the ship, and three or four more who hid themselves, remained also alive. Although in the act of revolt the Negroes made themselves masters of the hatchway, six or seven wounded went through it to the cockpit, without any hindrance on their part; that in the act of revolt, the mate and another person, whose name he does not recollect, attempted to come up through the hatchway, but being quickly wounded, were obliged to return to the cabin; that the deponent resolved at break of day to come up the companion-way, where the Negro Babo was, being the ringleader, and Atufal, who assisted him, and having spoken to them, exhorted them to cease committing such atrocities, asking them, at the same time, what they wanted and intended to do, offering, himself, to obey their commands; that, notwithstanding this, they threw, in his presence, three men, alive and tied, overboard, that they told the deponent to come up, and that they would not kill him; which having done, the Negro Babo asked him whether there were in those seas any Negro countries where they might be carried, and he answered them, No, that the Negro Babo afterward told him to carry them to Senegal, or to the neighbouring islands of St. Nicholas; and he answered, that this was impossible, on account of the great distance, the necessity involved of rounding Cape Horn, the bad condition of the vessel, the want of provisions, sails, and water; but that the Negro Babo replied to him he must carry them in any way; that they would do and conform themselves to everything the deponent should require as to eating and drinking; that after a long conference, being absolutely compelled to please them, for they threatened to kill all the whites if they were not, at all events, carried to Senegal, he told them that what was most wanting for the voyage was water; that they would go near the coast to take it and thence they would proceed on their course; that the Negro Babo agreed to it; and the deponent steered toward the intermediate ports, hoping to meet some Spanish or foreign vessel that would save them; that within ten or eleven days they saw the land, and continued their course by it in the vicinity of Nasca; that the deponent observed that the Negroes were now restless and mutinous, because he did not effect the taking in of water, the Negro Babo having required, with threats, that it should be done, without fail, the following day; he told him he saw plainly that the coast was steep, and the rivers designated in the maps were not to be found, with other reasons suitable to the circumstances; that the best way would be to go to the island of Santa Maria, where they might water easily, it being a solitary island, as the foreigners did; that the deponent did not go to Pisco, that was near, nor make any other port of the coast, because the Negro Babo had intimated to him several times, that he would kill all the whites the very moment he should perceive any city, town, or settlement of any kind on the shores to which they should be carried: that having determined to go to the island of Santa Maria, as the deponent had planned, for the purpose of trying whether, on the passage or near the island itself, they could find any vessel that should favor them, or whether he could escape from it in a boat to the neighbouring coast of Arruco, to adopt the necessary means he immediately changed his course, steering for the island; that the Negroes Babo and Atufal held daily conferences, in which they discussed what was necessary for their design of returning to Senegal, whether they were to kill all the Spaniards, and particularly the deponent; that eight days after parting with the coast of Nasca, the deponent being on the watch a little after day-break, and soon after the Negroes had their meeting, the Negro Babo came to the place where the deponent was, and told him that he had determined to kill his master, Don Alexandro Aranda, both because he and his companions could not otherwise be sure of their liberty, and that to keep the seamen in subjection, he wanted to prepare a warning of what road they should be made to take did they or any of them oppose him, and that, by means of the death of Don Alexandro, that warning would best be given; but, that what this last meant, the deponent did not at the time comprehend, nor could not, further than that the death of Don Alexandro was intended; and moreover the Negro Babo proposed to the deponent to call the mate Raneds, who was sleeping in the cabin, before the thing was done, for fear, as the deponent understood it, that the mate, who was a good navigator, should be killed with Don Alexandro and the rest; that the deponent, who was the friend, from youth of Don Alexandro, prayed and conjured, but all was useless; for the Negro Babo answered him that the thing could not be prevented, and that all the Spaniards risked their death if they should attempt to frustrate his will in this matter, or any other; that, in this conflict, the deponent called the mate, Raneds, who was forced to go apart, and immediately the Negro Babo commanded the Ashantee Matiluqui and the Ashantee Lecbe to go and commit the murder; that those two went down with hatchets to the berth of Don Alexandro; that, yet half alive and mangled, they dragged him on deck; that they were going to throw him overboard in that state, but the Negro Babo stopped them, bidding the murder be completed on the deck before him, which was done, when, by his orders, the body

was carried below, forward; that nothing more was seen of it by the deponent for three days; . . . that Don Alonzo Sidonia, an old man, long resident at Valparaiso, and lately appointed to a civil office in Peru, whither he had taken passage, was at the time sleeping in the berth opposite Don Alexandro's; that awakening at his cries, surprised by them, and at the sight of the Negroes with their bloody hatchets in their hands, he threw himself into the sea through a window which was near him and was drowned, without it being in the power of the deponent to assist or take him up; . . . that, a short time after killing Aranda, they brought upon deck his german-cousin, of middle-age, Don Francisco Masa, of Mendoza, and the young Don Joaquin, Marques de Aramboalaza, then lately from Spain, with his Spanish servant Ponce, and the three young clerks of Aranda, José Mozairi, Lorenzo Bargas, and Hermenegildo Gandix, all of Cadiz; that Don Joaquin and Hermenegildo Gandix, the Negro Babo, for purposes hereafter to appear, preserved alive; but Don Francisco Masa, José Mozairi, and Lorenzo Bargas, with Ponce the servant, besides the boatswain, Juan Robles, the boatswain's mates, Manuel Viscaya and Roderigo Hurta, and four of the sailors, the Negro Babo ordered to be thrown alive into the sea, although they made no resistance, nor begged for anything else but mercy; that the boatswain, Juan Robles, who knew how to swim, kept the longest above water, making acts of contrition, and, in the last words he uttered, charged this deponent to cause mass to be said for his soul to our Lady of Succour: . . . that, during the three days which followed, the deponent, uncertain what fate had befallen the remains of Don Alexandro, frequently asked the Negro Babo where they were, and, if still on board, whether they were to be preserved for interment ashore, entreating him so to order it; that the Negro Babo answered nothing till the fourth day, when at sunrise, the deponent coming on deck, the Negro Babo showed him a skeleton, which had been substituted for the ship's proper figurehead—the image of Christopher Colon, the discoverer of the New World; that the Negro Babo asked him whose skeleton that was, and whether, from its whiteness, he should not think it a white's; that, upon discovering his face, the Negro Babo, coming close, said words to this effect: "Keep faith with the blacks from here to Senegal, or you shall in spirit, as now in body, follow your leader," pointing to the prow; . . . that the same morning the Negro Babo took by succession each Spaniard forward, and asked him whose skeleton that was, and whether, from its whiteness, he should not think it a white's; that each Spaniard covered his face; that then to each the Negro Babo repeated the words in the first place said to the deponent; . . . that they (the Spaniards), being then assembled aft, the Negro Babo harangued them, saying that he had now done all; that the deponent (as navigator for the Negroes) might pursue his course, warning him and all of them that they should, soul and body, go the way of Don Alexandro, if he saw them (the Spaniards) speak or plot anything against them (the Negroes)—a threat which was repeated every day; that, before the events last mentioned, they had tied the cook to throw him overboard, for it is not known what thing they heard him speak, but finally the Negro Babo spared his life, at the request of the deponent; that a few days after, the deponent, endeavoring not to omit any means to preserve the lives of the remaining whites, spoke to the Negroes peace and tranquillity, and agreed to draw up a paper, signed by the deponent and the sailors who could write, as also by the Negro Babo, for himself and all the blacks, in which the deponent obliged himself to carry them to Senegal, and they not to kill any more, and he formally to make over to them the ship, with the cargo, with which they were for that time satisfied and quieted. . . . But the next day, the more surely to guard against the sailors' escape, the Negro Babo commanded all the boats to be destroyed but the long-boat, which was unseaworthy, and another, a cutter in good condition, which knowing it would yet be wanted for towing the water casks, he had it lowered down into the hold.

[*Various particulars of the prolonged and perplexed navigation ensuing here follow, with incidents of a calamitous calm, from which portion one passage is extracted, to wit:*]

—That on the fifth day of the calm, all on board suffering much from the heat, and want of water, and five having died in fits, and mad, the Negroes became irritable, and for a chance gesture, which they deemed suspicious—though it was harmless—made by the mate, Raneds, to the deponent in the act of handing a quadrant, they killed him; but that for this they were afterwards sorry, the mate being the only remaining navigator on board, except the deponent.

—That omitting other events, which daily happened, and which can only serve uselessly to recall past misfortunes and conflicts, after seventy-three days' navigation, reckoned from the time they sailed from Nasca, during which they navigated under a scanty allowance of water, and were afflicted with the calms before mentioned, they at last arrived at the island of Santa Maria, on the seventeenth of the month of August, at about six o'clock in the afternoon, at which hour they cast anchor very near the American ship, Bache-

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2 days; . . . The dots indicating omissions are Melville's throughout

lor's Delight, which lay in the same bay, commanded by the generous Captain Amasa Delano; but at six o'clock in the morning, they had already descried the port, and the Negroes became uneasy, as soon as at distance they saw the ship, not having expected to see one there; that the Negro Babo pacified them, assuring them that no fear need be had; that straightway he ordered the figure on the bow to be covered with canvas, as for repairs, and had the decks a little set in order; that for a time the Negro Babo and the Negro Atufal conferred; that the Negro Atufal was for sailing away, but the Negro Babo would not, and, by himself, cast about what to do; that at last he came to the deponent, proposing to him to say and do all that the deponent declares to have said and done to the American captain; . . . that the Negro Babo warned him that if he varied in the least, or uttered any word, or gave any look that should give the least intimation of the past events or present state, he would instantly kill him, with all his companions, showing a dagger, which he carried hid, saying something which, as he understood it, meant that that dagger would be alert as his eye; that the Negro Babo then announced the plan to all his companions, which pleased them; that he then, the better to disguise the truth, devised many expedients, in some of them uniting deceit and defense; that of this sort was the device of the six Ashantees before named, who were his bravoes; that them he stationed on the break of the poop, as if to clean certain hatchets (in cases, which were part of the cargo), but in reality to use them, and distribute them at need, and at a given word he told them; that, among other devices, was the device of presenting Atufal, his right hand man, as chained, though in a moment the chains could be dropped; that in every particular he informed the deponent what part he was expected to enact in every device, and what story he was to tell on every occasion, always threatening him with instant death if he varied in the least: that, conscious that many of the Negroes would be turbulent, the Negro Babo appointed the four aged Negroes, who were calkers, to keep what domestic order they could on the decks; that again and again he harangued the Spaniards and his companions, informing them of his intent, and of his devices, and of the invented story that this deponent was to tell; charging them lest any of them varied from that story; that these arrangements were made and matured during the interval of two or three hours, between their first sighting the ship and the arrival on board of Captain Amasa Delano; that this happened at about half-past seven o'clock in the morning, Captain Amasa Delano coming in his boat, and all gladly receiving him; that the deponent, as well as he could force himself, acting then the part of principal owner, and a free captain of the ship, told Captain Amasa Delano, when called upon, that he came from Buenos Ayres, bound to Lima, with three hundred Negroes; that off Cape Horn, and in a subsequent fever, many Negroes had died; that also, by similar casualties, all the sea officers and the greatest part of the crew had died.

[*And so the deposition goes on, circumstantially recounting the fictitious story dictated to the deponent by Babo, and through the deponent imposed upon Captain Delano; and also recounting the friendly offers of Captain Delano, with other things, but all of which is here omitted. After the fictitious story, etc., the deposition proceeds:*]

—that the generous Captain Amasa Delano remained on board all the day, till he left the ship anchored at six o'clock in the evening, deponent speaking to him always of his pretended misfortunes, under the forementioned principles, without having had it in his power to tell a single word, or give him the least hint, that he might know the truth and state of things; because the Negro Babo, performing the office of an officious servant with all the appearance of submission of the humble slave, did not leave the deponent one moment; that this was in order to observe the deponent's actions and words, for the Negro Babo understands well the Spanish; and besides, there were thereabouts some others who were constantly on the watch, and likewise understood the Spanish; . . . that upon one occasion, while deponent was standing on the deck conversing with Amasa Delano, by a secret sign the Negro Babo drew him (the deponent) aside, the act appearing as if originating with the deponent; that then, he being drawn aside, the Negro Babo proposed to him to gain from Amasa Delano full particulars about his ship, and crew, and arms; that the deponent asked "For what?" that the Negro Babo answered he might conceive; that, grieved at the prospect of what might overtake the generous Captain Amasa Delano, the deponent at first refused to ask the desired questions, and used every argument to induce the Negro Babo to give up this new design; that the Negro Babo showed the point of his dagger; that, after the information had been obtained the Negro Babo again drew him aside, telling him that that very night he (the deponent) would be captain of two ships instead of one, for that, great part of the American's ship's crew being to be absent fishing, the six Ashantees, without any one else, would easily take it; that at this time he said other things to the same purpose; that no entreaties availed; that before Amasa Delano's coming on board, no hint had been given

touching the capture of the American ship: that to prevent this project the deponent was powerless; . . . —that in some things his memory is confused, he cannot distinctly recall every event; . . . —that as soon as they had cast anchor at six of the clock in the evening, as has before been stated, the American Captain took leave, to return to his vessel; that upon a sudden impulse, which the deponent believes to have come from God and his angels, he, after the farewell had been said, followed the generous Captain Amasa Delano as far as the gunwale, where he stayed, under the pretense of taking leave, until Amasa Delano should have been seated in his boat; that on shoving off, the deponent sprang from the gunwale into the boat, and fell into it, he knows not how, God guarding him; that—

[*Here, in the original, follows the account of what further happened at the escape, and how the San Dominick was retaken, and of the passage to the coast; including in the recital many expressions of "eternal gratitude" to the "generous Captain Amasa Delano." The deposition then proceeds with recapitulatory remarks, and a partial renumeration of the Negroes, making record of their individual part in the past events, with a view to furnishing, according to command of the court, the data whereon to found the criminal sentences to be pronounced. From this portion is the following:*]

—That he believes that all the Negroes, though not in the first place knowing to the design of revolt, when it was accomplished, approved it. . . . That the Negro, José, eighteen years old, and in the personal service of Don Alexandro, was the one who communicated the information to the Negro Babo, about the state of things in the cabin, before the revolt; that this is known, because, in the preceding midnight, he used to come from his berth, which was under his master's, in the cabin, to the deck where the ringleader and his associates were, and had secret conversations with the Negro Babo, in which he was several times seen by the mate; that, one night, the mate drove him away twice; . . . that this same Negro José was the one who, without being commanded to do so by the Negro Babo, as Lecbe and Matiluqui were, stabbed his master, Don Alexandro, after he had been dragged half-lifeless to the deck; . . . that the mulatto steward, Francesco, was of the first band of revolters, that he was, in all things, the creature and tool of the Negro Babo; that, to make his court, he, just before a repast in the cabin, proposed, to the Negro Babo, poisoning a dish for the generous Captain Amasa Delano; this is known and believed, because the Negroes have said it; but that the Negro Babo, having another design, forbade Francesco; . . . that the Ashantee Lecbe was one of the worst of them; for that, on the day the ship was retaken, he assisted in the defense of her, with a hatchet in each hand, with one of which he wounded, in the breast, the chief mate of Amasa Delano, in the first act of boarding; this all knew, that, in sight of the deponent, Lecbe struck, with a hatchet, Don Francisco Masa when, by the Negro Babo's orders, he was carrying him to throw him overboard, alive; besides participating in the murder, before mentioned, of Don Alexandro Aranda, and others of the cabin-passengers, that, owing to the fury with which the Ashantees fought in the engagement with the boats, but this Lecbe and Yan survived; that Yan was bad as Lecbe; that Yan was the man who, by Babo's command, willingly prepared the skeleton of Don Alexandro, in a way the Negroes afterward told the deponent, but which he, so long as reason is left him, can never divulge; that Yan and Lecbe were the two who, in a calm by night, riveted the skeleton to the bow; this also the Negroes told him; that the Negro Babo was he who traced the inscription below it, that the Negro Babo was the plotter from first to last; he ordered every murder, and was the helm and keel of the revolt; that Atufal was his lieutenant in all, but Atufal, with his own hand, committed no murder, nor did the Negro Babo; . . . that Atufal was shot, being killed in the fight with the boats, ere boarding, . . . that the Negresses, of age, were knowing to the revolt, and testified themselves satisfied at the death of their master, Don Alexandro, that, had the Negroes not restrained them, they would have tortured to death, instead of simply killing, the Spaniards slain by command of the Negro Babo; that the Negresses used their utmost influence to have the deponent made away with; that, in the various acts of murder, they sang songs and danced—not gaily, but solemnly; and before the engagement with the boats, as well as during the action, they sang melancholy songs to the Negroes, and that this melancholy tone was more inflaming than a different one would have been, and was so intended; that all this is believed because the Negroes have said it

—that of the thirty-six men of the crew, exclusive of the passengers (all of whom are now dead), which the deponent had knowledge of, six only remained alive, with four cabin-boys and ship-boys, not included with the crew, . . . —that the negroes broke an arm of one of the cabin-boys and gave him strokes with hatchets.

[*Then follow various random disclosures referring to various periods of time. The following are extracted:*]

—That during the presence of Captain Amasa Delano on board, some attempts were made by the sailors, and one by Hermenegildo Gandix, to convey hints to him of the true

state of affairs; but that these attempts were ineffectual, owing to fear of incurring death, and, furthermore, owing to the devices which offered contradictions to the true state of affairs, as well as owing to the generosity and piety of Amasa Delano, incapable of sounding such wickedness; . . . that Luys Galgo, a sailor about sixty years of age, and formerly of the king's navy, was one of those who sought to convey tokens to Captain Amasa Delano; but his intent, though undiscovered, being suspected, he was, on a pretense, made to retire out of sight, and at last into the hold, and there was made away with. This the negroes have since said; . . . that one of the ship-boys feeling, from Captain Amasa Delano's presence, some hopes of release, and not having enough prudence, dropped some chanceword respecting his expectations, which being overheard and understood by a slave-boy with whom he was eating at the time, the latter struck him on the head with a knife, inflicting a bad wound, but of which the boy is now healing; that likewise, not long before the ship was brought to anchor, one of the seamen, steering at the time, endangered himself by letting the blacks remark some expression in his countenance, arising from a cause similar to the above; but this sailor, by his heedful after conduct, escaped; . . . that these statements are made to show the court that from the beginning to the end of the revolt, it was impossible for the deponent and his men to act otherwise than they did; . . . —that the third clerk, Hermenegildo Gandix, who before had been forced to live among the seamen, wearing a seaman's habit, and in all respects appearing to be one for the time, he, Gandix, was killed by a musket ball fired through mistake from the boats before boarding, having in his fright run up the mizzen-rigging, calling to the boats—"don't board," lest upon their boarding the Negroes should kill him; that this inducing the Americans to believe he some way favored the cause of the Negroes, they fired two balls at him, so that he fell wounded from the rigging, and was drowned in the sea; . . . —that the young Don Joaquin, Marques de Aramboalaza, like Hermenegildo Gandix, the third clerk, was degraded to the office and appearance of a common seaman; that upon one occasion, when Don Joaquin shrank, the Negro Babo commanded the Ashantee Lecbe to take tar and heat it, and pour it upon Don Joaquin's hands; . . . —that Don Joaquin was killed owing to another mistake of the Americans, but one impossible to be avoided, as upon the approach of the boats, Don Joaquin, with a hatchet tied edge out and upright to his hand, was made by the Negroes to appear on the bulwarks; whereupon, seen with arms in his hands and in a questionable attitude, he was shot for a renegade seaman; . . . —that on the person of Don Joaquin was found secreted a jewel, which, by papers that were discovered, proved to have been meant for the shrine of our Lady of Mercy in Lima; a votive offering, beforehand prepared and guarded, to attest his gratitude, when he should have landed in Peru, his last destination, for the safe conclusion of his entire voyage from Spain; . . . —that the jewel, with the other effects of the late Don Joaquin, is in the custody of the brethren of the Hospital de Sacerdotes, awaiting the disposition of the honorable court; . . . —that, owing to the condition of the deponent, as well as the haste in which the boats departed for the attack, the Americans were not forewarned that there were, among the apparent crew, a passenger and one of the clerks, disguised by the Negro Babo; . . . —that, besides the Negroes killed in the action, some were killed after the capture and re-anchoring at night, when shackled to the ring-bolts on deck; that these deaths were committed by the sailors, ere they could be prevented. That so soon as informed of it, Captain Amasa Delano used all his authority, and, in particular with his own hand, struck down Martinez Gola, who, having found a razor in the pocket of an old jacket of his, which one of the shackled Negroes had on, was aiming it at the Negro's throat; that the noble Captain Amasa Delano also wrenched from the hand of Bartholomew Barlo, a dagger secreted at the time of the massacre of the whites, with which he was in the act of stabbing a shackled Negro, who, the same day, with another Negro, had thrown him down and jumped upon him; . . . —that, for all the events, befalling through so long a time, during which the ship was in the hands of the Negro Babo, he cannot here give account, but that, what he has said is the most substantial of what occurs to him at present, and is the truth under the oath which he has taken; which declaration he affirmed and ratified, after hearing it read to him.

He said that he is twenty-nine years of age, and broken in body and mind; that when finally dismissed by the court, he shall not return home to Chili, but betake himself to the monastery on Mount Agonia without; and signed with his honor, and crossed himself, and for the time, departed as he came, in his litter, with the monk Infelez, to the Hospital de Sacerdotes.

BENITO CERENO

DOCTOR ROZAS.

If the deposition have served as the key to fit into the lock of the complications which precede it, then, as a vault whose door has been flung back, the San Dominick's hull lies open to-day.

Hitherto the nature of this narrative besides rendering

the intricacies in the beginning unavoidable, has more or less required that many things, instead of being set down in the order of occurrence, should be retrospectively, or irregularly given; this last is the case with the following passages, which will conclude the account:

During the long, mild voyage to Lima, there was, as before hinted, a period during which the sufferer a little recovered his health, or, at least in some degree, his tranquillity. Ere the decided relapse which came, the two captains had many cordial conversations—their fraternal unreserve in singular contrast with former withdrawments.

Again and again, it was repeated, how hard it had been to enact the part forced on the Spaniard by Babo.

"Ah, my dear friend," Don Benito once said, "at those very times when you thought me so morose and ungrateful, nay when, as you now admit, you half thought me plotting your murder, at those very times my heart was frozen; I could not look at you, thinking of what, both on board this ship and your own, hung, from other hands, over my kind benefactor. And as God lives, Don Amasa, I know not whether desire for my own safety alone could have nerved me to that leap into your boat, had it not been for the thought that, did you, unenlightened, return to your ship, you, my best friend, with all who might be with you, stolen upon, that night, in your hammocks, would never in this world have wakened again. Do but think how you walked this deck, how you sat in this cabin, every inch of ground mined into honeycombs under you. Had I dropped the least hint, made the least advance toward an understanding between us, death, explosive death—yours as mine—would have ended the scene."

"True, true," cried Captain Delano, starting, "you saved my life, Don Benito, more than I yours; saved it, too, against my knowledge and will."

"Nay, my friend," rejoined the Spaniard, courteous even to the point of religion, "God charmed your life, but you saved mine. To think of some things you did—those smilings and chattings, rash pointings and gesturings. For less than these, they slew my mate, Raneds; but you had the Prince of Heaven's safe conduct through all ambuscades."

"Yes, all is owing to Providence, I know; but the temper of my mind that morning was more than commonly pleasant, while the sight of so much suffering, more apparent than real, added to my good-nature, compassion, and charity, happily interweaving the three. Had it been otherwise, doubtless, as you hint, some of my interferences might have ended unhappily enough. Besides, those feelings I spoke of enabled me to get the better of momentary distrust, at times when acuteness might have cost me my life, without saving another's. Only at the end did my suspicions get the better of me, and you know how wide of the mark they then proved."

"Wide indeed," said Don Benito, sadly; "you were with me, all day; stood with me, sat with me, talked with me, looked at me, ate with me, drank with me; and yet your last act was to clutch for a monster, not only an innocent man, but the most pitiable of all men. To such degree many malign machinations and deceptions impose. So far may even the best men err, in judging the conduct of one with the recesses of whose condition he is not acquainted. But you were forced to it; and you were in time undeceived. Would that, in both respects, it was so ever, and with all men."

"You generalize, Don Benito; and mournfully enough. But the past is passed; why moralize upon it? Forget it. See, yon bright sun has forgotten it all, and the blue sea, and the blue sky; these have turned over new leaves."

"Because they have no memory," he dejectedly replied; "because they are not human."

"But these mild trades that now fan your cheek, Don Benito, do they not come with a human-like healing to you? Warm friends, steadfast friends are the trades."

"With their steadfastness they but waft me to my tomb, Señor," was the foreboding response.

"You are saved," cried Captain Delano, more and more astonished and pained; "you are saved: what has cast such a shadow upon you?"

"The Negro."

There was silence, while the moody man sat, slowly and unconsciously gathering his mantle about him, as if it were a pall.

There was no more conversation that day.

But if the Spaniard's melancholy sometimes ended in muteness upon topics like the above, there were others upon which he never spoke at all; on which, indeed, all his old reserves were piled. Pass over the worst and, only to elucidate, let an item or two of these be cited. The dress so precise and costly, worn by him on the day whose events have been narrated, had not willingly been put on. And that silver-mounted sword, apparent symbol of des-

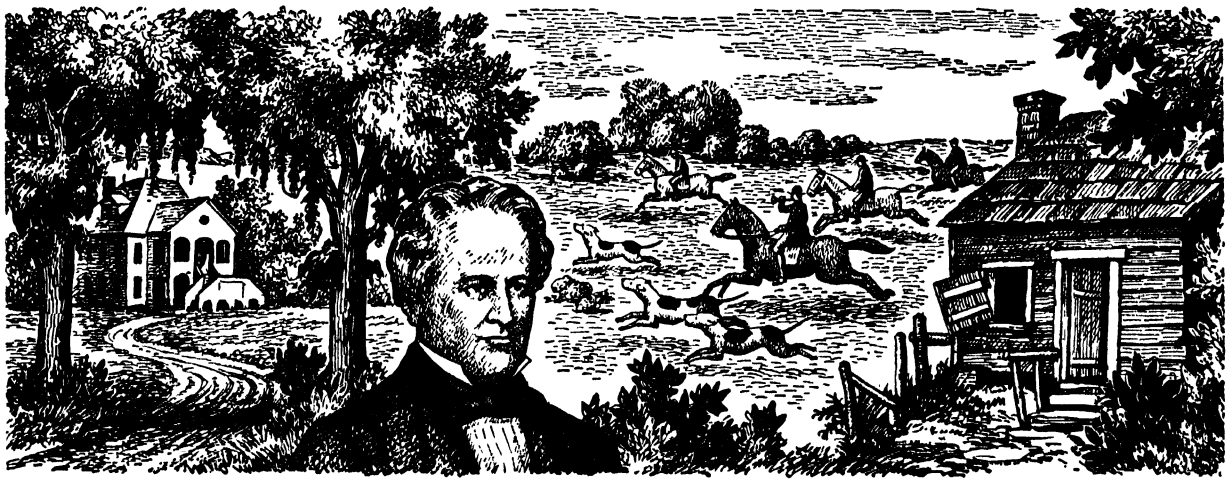
potic command, was not, indeed, a sword, but the ghost of one. The scabbard, artificially stiffened, was empty.

As for the black—whose brain, not body, had schemed and led the revolt, with the plot—his slight frame, inadequate to that which it held, had at once yielded to the superior muscular strength of his captor, in the boat. Seeing all was over, he uttered no sound, and could not be forced to. His aspect seemed to say, since I cannot do deeds, I will not speak words. Put in irons in the hold, with the rest, he was carried to Lima. During the passage, Don Benito did not visit him. Nor then, nor at any time after, would he look at him. Before the tribunal he refused. When pressed by the judges he fainted. On the testimony of the sailors alone rested the legal identity of Babo.

Some months after, dragged to the gibbet at the tail of a mule, the black met his voiceless end. The body was burned to ashes; but for many days, the head, that hive of subtlety, fixed on a pole in the Plaza, met, unabashed, the gaze of the whites; and across the Plaza looked towards St. Bartholomew's church, in whose vaults slept then, as now, the recovered bones of Aranda: and across the Rimac bridge looked toward the monastery, on Mount Agonia without; where, three months after being dismissed by the court, Benito Cereno, borne on the bier, did, indeed, follow his leader.

1856

NOVELISTS OF THE OLD SOUTH: Kennedy, Simms



John Pendleton Kennedy

1795 • 1870

Kennedy was a literary amateur; to him, as to William Byrd, writing was a gentlemanly accomplishment rather than a profession. His activities were many and varied. The son of well-to-do and socially prominent parents in Baltimore, he received his formal education in a private preparatory school and at Baltimore College. He participated briefly in the War of 1812 at the Battle of Bladensburg, studied law in Baltimore, and was elected to

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Panel (l. to r.): Woodlands, Simms' South Carolina home • William Gilmore Simms • Southern fox-hunt • Slave quarters

the Maryland legislature. For three terms (1838-1844), he was a Whig member of Congress, where he staunchly advocated the benefits of internal improvements and of the protective tariff. He was appointed secretary of the Navy by President Fillmore, and had an active part in organizing Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan in 1852. In the meantime, as a result of his marriage to the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer in Baltimore, he had become more and more closely identified with the business life of that city. He was a public-spirited citizen and the recipient of many offices and honors.

It is surprising that, in the midst of such political, business, and social activity, Kennedy should have found time to write as much as he did. His writings, like his public activities, were extremely varied. He wrote several political works: *Annals of Quodlibet* (1840), a satire on Jacksonian democracy; *A Defense of the Whigs* (1843); and *Letters of Mr. Paul Ambrose on the Great Rebellion in the United States* (1865), a plea for the settlement of sectional differences and the preservation of the Union. He wrote the biography of his friend (and the biographer of Patrick Henry) in the two-volume *Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt* (1849). He is remembered in literature, however, not for his political and biographical productions, but for three fictional works, "unlike enough," says Parrington, "to have been written by different men": *Swallow Barn* (1832), a collection of sketches of plantation life in Virginia; *Horse-Shoe Robinson* (1835), a historical romance of South Carolina in the American Revolution; and *Rob of the Bowl* (1838), a romance of colonial Maryland.

Opinion may reasonably differ as to which of these three works is the best. Parrington preferred the "light and whimsical cavalier romance" of *Rob of the Bowl*. *Horse-Shoe Robinson* presents a more substantial action, culminating in the Battle of King's Mountain; it challenges comparison with Simms' *The Partisan*, which was published in the same year and deals with the same materials. *Swallow Barn* is a pleasant portrayal of social life and manners in the Virginia of the 1820's: a portrayal, in the words of the author's Preface, of "the mellow, bland, and sunny luxuriance of her old-time society." Kennedy was admirably qualified to paint such a picture: his mother was from Virginia and he himself had spent much of his youth in the Old Dominion; and his residence in Baltimore gave him just the right detachment. If he seems to have seen only what was fair in that old-time society, one must remember that the narrator, Mark Littleton, was honor-bound, after having enjoyed the bountiful hospitality of Swallow Barn, to report nothing except the good.

Swallow Barn, ed. J. B. Hubbell, New York, 1929 • **Horse-Shoe Robinson**, ed. E. E. Leisy, New York, 1927 • V. L. Parrington, "John Pendleton Kennedy," **The Romantic Revolution in America**, New York, 1927

From

Swallow Barn

Swallow Barn is an authentic, if somewhat romantic, account of life among the landed gentry of Virginia in the 1820's, as observed and reported by the author, who appears in the book as Mark Littleton, a guest at Swallow Barn. The following chapters, which describe the house and its master, will suggest the tone of Kennedy's book.

The life at the fictional Swallow Barn is less elegant than at William Byrd's Westover; Swallow Barn indeed seems rather plain and homespun in comparison. The provincialism of Meriwether, who seldom traveled beyond the confines of Virginia, contrasts sharply, too, with the cosmopolitanism of Byrd, who was as much at home in London as in Williamsburg. And Kennedy's style is less polished than Byrd's, for Byrd had taken the Restoration Wits—Wycherly and Congreve—as his models, while Kennedy followed the plainer models of Goldsmith and Irving.

Despite the interesting differences, however, Kennedy and Byrd are the most distinguished representatives of the Virginia tradition in literature before the Civil War, and Kennedy in **Swallow Barn** carried on the Byrd tradi-

tion. At Swallow Barn as at Westover a century earlier, one finds leisureliness and hospitality, an agrarian economy, a love of good living, a civilized society with Episcopal overtones—a way of life, in short, modeled after that of the landed gentry of England. Whatever one may think of the justification of such a society in a democratic world, many of the great Virginians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries belonged to such a society, and made substantial contributions to human freedom as well as to the amenities of living.

One of the books in Meriwether's library was a folio edition of Captain John Smith's "Travels and Adventures." After reading the book during the whole of a rainy day at Swallow Barn, Mark Littleton expressed great admiration for its author, and "marvelled," he said, "why our countrymen, and especially those of Virginia, have not taken more pains to exalt the memory of Smith." Littleton liked particularly Smith's dedication of his book to the Duchess of Richmond: "What a fine knightly tone is there," he exclaimed, "in this commendation of the graces of his mistress, and what a world of adventure does it suggest!" Kennedy himself in Swallow Barn caught something of the "knightly tone" characteristic of earlier Virginia writers.

Parrington justly said of Kennedy's book: "Nowhere else does the plantation life of the Old Dominion in the days before its decline appear so vividly as in these pages." Kennedy in his preface distinguished the chief characteristics of the life described as: "its good fellowship, its hearty and constitutional companionableness, the thriftless gaiety of the people, their dogged but amiable invincibility of opinion, and that overflowing hospitality which knows no ebb."

Chapter I

SWALLOW BARN

Swallow Barn is an aristocratical old edifice which sits, like a brooding hen, on the southern bank of the James River. It looks down upon a shady pocket or nook, formed by an indentation of the shore, from a gentle acclivity thinly sprinkled with oaks whose magnificent branches afford habitation to sundry friendly colonies of squirrels and woodpeckers.

This time-honored mansion was the residence of the family of Hazards. But in the present generation, the spells of love and mortgage have translated the possession to Frank Meriwether, who having married Lucretia, the eldest daughter of my late Uncle Walter Hazard, and lifted some gentlemanlike incumbrances which had been sleeping for years upon the domain, was thus inducted into the proprietary rights. This adjacency of his own estate gave a territorial feature to this alliance, of which the fruits were no less discernible in the multiplication of Negroes, cattle, and poultry, than in a flourishing clan of Meriwethers.

The main building is more than a century old. It is built with thick brick walls, but one story in height, and surmounted by a double-faced or hipped roof, which gives the idea of a ship bottom upwards. Later buildings have been added to this, as the wants or ambition of the family have expanded. These are all constructed of wood, and seem to have been built in defiance of all laws of congruity, just as convenience required. But they form altogether an agreeable picture of habitation, suggesting the idea of comfort in the ample space they fill, and in their conspicuous adaptation to domestic uses.

The hall door is an ancient piece of walnut, which has grown too heavy for its hinges, and by its daily travel has furrowed the floor in a quadrant, over which it has an uneasy journey. It is shaded by a narrow porch, with a carved pediment upheld by massive columns of wood, somewhat split by the sun. An ample court-yard, inclosed by a semicircular paling, extends in front of the whole pile, and is traversed by a gravel road leading from a rather ostentatious iron gate, which is swung between two pillars of brick surmounted by globes of cut stone. Between the gate and the house a large willow spreads its arched and pendent drapery over the grass. A bridle rack stands within the inclosure, and near it a ragged horse-nibbled plum-tree—the current belief being that a plum-tree thrives on ill usage—casts its skeleton shadow on the dust.

Some Lombardy poplars, springing above a mass of shrubbery, partially screen various supernumerary buildings at a short distance in the rear of the mansion. Amongst these is to be seen the gable end of a stable, with the date of its erection stiffly emblazoned in black bricks near the upper angle, in figures set in after the fashion of the work on a girl's sampler. In the same quarter a pigeon-box, reared on a post and resembling a huge

tee-totum, is visible, and about its several doors and windows a family of pragmatical pigeons are generally strutting, bridling, and bragging at each other from sunrise until dark.

Appendant to this homestead is an extensive tract of land which stretches some three or four miles along the river, presenting alternately abrupt promontories mantled with pine and dwarf oak, and small inlets terminating in swamps. Some sparse portions of forest vary the landscape, which, for the most part, exhibits a succession of fields clothed with Indian corn, some small patches of cotton or tobacco plants, with the usual varieties of stubble and fallow grounds. These are inclosed by worm fences of shrunken chestnut, where lizards and ground-squirrels are perpetually running races along the rails.

A few hundred steps from the mansion, a brook glides at a snail's pace towards the river, holding its course through a wilderness of laurel and alder, and creeping around islets covered with green mosses. Across this stream is thrown a rough bridge, which it would delight a painter to see; and not far below it an aged sycamore twists its roots into a grotesque framework to the pure mirror of a spring, which wells up its cool waters from a bed of gravel and runs gurgling to the brook. There it aids in furnishing a cruising ground to a squadron of ducks who, in defiance of all nautical propriety, are incessantly turning up their sterns to the skies. On the grass which skirts the margin of the spring, I observe the family linen is usually spread out by some three or four Negro women, who chant shrill music over their wash-tubs, and seem to live in ceaseless warfare with sundry little besmirched and bow-legged blacks, who are never tired of making somersets, and mischievously pushing each other on the clothes laid down to dry.

Beyond the bridge, at some distance, stands a prominent object in the perspective of this picture,—the most venerable appendage to the establishment—a huge barn with an immense roof hanging almost to the ground, and thatched a foot thick with sunburnt straw, which reaches below the eaves in ragged flakes. It has a singularly drowsy and decrepit aspect. The yard around it is strewed knee-deep with litter, from the midst of which arises a long rack resembling a chevaux de frise, which is ordinarily filled with fodder. This is the customary lounge of half a score of oxen and as many cows, who sustain an imperturbable companionship with a sickly wagon, whose parched tongue and drooping swingle-trees, as it stands in the sun, give it a most forlorn invalid character; whilst some sociable carts under the sheds, with their shafts perched against the walls, suggest the idea of a set of gossiping cronies taking their ease in a tavern porch. Now and then a clownish hobble-de-hoy colt, with long fetlocks and disordered mane, and a thousand burs in his tail, stalks through this company. But as it is forbidden ground to all his tribe, he is likely very soon to encounter a shower of corn-cobs from some of the Negro men; upon which contingency he makes a rapid retreat across the bars which imperfectly guard the entrance to the yard, and with an uncouth display of his heels bounds away towards the brook, where he stops and looks back with a saucy defiance; and after affecting to drink for a moment, gallops away with a braggart whinny to the fields.

Chapter II

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

The master of this lordly domain is Frank Meriwether. He is now in the meridian of life—somewhere about forty-five. Good cheer and an easy temper tell well upon him. The first has given him a comfortable, portly figure, and the latter a contemplative turn of mind, which inclines him to be lazy and philosophical.

He has some right to pride himself on his personal appearance, for he has a handsome face, with a dark blue eye and a fine intellectual brow. His head is growing scant of hair on the crown, which induces him to be somewhat particular in the management of his locks in that locality, and these are assuming a decided silvery hue.

It is pleasant to see him when he is going to ride to the Court House on business occasions. He is then apt to make his appearance in a coat of blue broadcloth, as-

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1 **tee-totum**, a child's toy, somewhat like a top, twirled by the fingers • 13 **worm fences**, fences made with rails in a zigzag pattern • 43 **chevaux de frise**. See note, p. 298 • 47 **swingle-tree**, or single-tree, is the pivoted bar to which the traces of a harnessed horse are fixed • 52 **hobble-de-hoy**, an awkward, gawky youth between boy and man

tonishingly glossy, and with an unusual amount of plaited ruffle strutting through the folds of a Marseilles waistcoat. A worshipful finish is given to this costume by a large straw hat, lined with green silk. There is a magisterial fulness in his garments which betokens condition in the world, and a heavy bunch of seals, suspended by a chain of gold, jingles as he moves, pronouncing him a man of superfluities.

It is considered rather extraordinary that he has never set up for Congress: but the truth is, he is an unambitious man, and has a great dislike to currying favor—as he calls it. And, besides, he is thoroughly convinced that there will always be men enough in Virginia willing to serve the people, and therefore does not see why he should trouble his head about it. Some years ago, however, there was really an impression that he meant to come out. By some sudden whim, he took it into his head to visit Washington during the session of Congress, and returned, after a fortnight, very seriously distempered with politics. He told curious anecdotes of certain secret intrigues which had been discovered in the affairs of the capital, gave a clear insight into the views of some deep-laid combinations, and became, all at once, painfully florid in his discourse, and dogmatical to a degree that made his wife stare. Fortunately, this orgasm soon subsided, and Frank relapsed into an indolent gentleman of the opposition; but it had the effect to give a much more decided cast to his studies, for he forthwith discarded the "Richmond Whig" from his newspaper subscription, and took to "The Enquirer," like a man who was not to be disturbed by doubts. And as it was morally impossible to believe all that was written on both sides, to prevent his mind from being abused, he from this time forward took a stand against the re-election of Mr. Adams to the Presidency, and resolved to give an implicit faith to all alleged facts which set against his administration. The consequence of this straightforward and confiding deportment was an unexpected complimentary notice of him by the Executive of the State. He was put into the commission of the peace, and having thus become a public man against his will, his opinions were observed to undergo some essential changes. He now thinks that a good citizen ought neither to solicit nor decline office; that the magistracy of Virginia is the sturdiest pillar which supports the fabric of the Constitution; and that the people, "though in their opinions they may be mistaken, in their sentiments they are never wrong;"—with some such other dogmas as, a few years ago, he did not hold in very good repute. In this temper, he has of late embarked on the millpond of county affairs, and notwithstanding his amiable character and his doctrinary republicanism, I am told he keeps the peace as if he commanded a garrison, and administers justice like a Cadi.

He has some claim to supremacy in this last department; for during three years he smoked segars in a lawyer's office in Richmond, which enabled him to obtain a bird's-eye view of Blackstone and the Revised Code. Besides this, he was a member of a Law Debating Society, which ate oysters once a week in a cellar; and he wore, in accordance with the usage of most promising law students of that day, six cravats, one over the other, and yellow-topped boots, by which he was recognized as a blood of the metropolis. Having in this way qualified himself to assert and maintain his rights, he came to his estate, upon his arrival at age, a very model of landed gentlemen. Since that time his avocations have had a certain literary tincture; for having settled himself down as a married man, and got rid of his superfluous foppery, he rambled with wonderful assiduity through a wilderness of romances, poems, and dissertations, which are now collected in his library, and, with their battered blue covers, present a lively type of an army of continentals at the close of the war, or a hospital of invalids. These have all, at last, given way to the newspapers—a miscellaneous study very attractive and engrossing to country gentlemen. This line of study has rendered Meriwether a most perilous antagonist in the matter of legislative proceedings.

A landed proprietor, with a good house and a host of servants, is naturally a hospitable man. A guest is one of his daily wants. A friendly face is a necessary of life, without which the heart is apt to starve, or a luxury without

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34 Mr. Adams, John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States (1825-1829) • 53 Cadi, a Mohammedan magistrate • 57 Blackstone, the famous Commentaries of Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), English jurist. In his "Speech for Conciliation with the Colonies" (1775), Edmund Burke commented on the popularity of this work in America: "I hear that they have sold nearly as many of Blackstone's Commentaries in America as in England" • 63 a blood, a man of spirit and fashion • 72 continentals, American soldiers in the Revolutionary War

which it grows parsimonious. Men who are isolated from society by distance, feel these wants by an instinct, and are grateful for the opportunity to relieve them. In Meriwether, the sentiment goes beyond this. It has, besides, something dialectic in it. His house is open to every body, as freely almost as an inn. But to see him when he has had the good fortune to pick up an intelligent, educated gentleman,—and particularly one who listens well!—a respectable, assentatious stranger!—All the better if he has been in the Legislature, or better still, if in Congress. Such a person caught within the purlieus of Swallow Barn, may set down one week's entertainment as certain —inevitable, and as many more as he likes—the more the merrier. He will know something of the quality of Meriwether's rhetoric before he is gone.

Then again, it is very pleasant to see Frank's kind and considerate bearing towards his servants and dependents. His slaves appreciate this, and hold him in most affectionate reverence, and, therefore, are not only contented, but happy under his dominion.

Meriwether is not much of a traveller. He has never been in New England, and very seldom beyond the confines of Virginia. He makes now and then a winter excursion to Richmond, which, I rather think, he considers as the centre of civilization; and towards autumn, it is his custom to journey over the mountain to the Springs, which he is obliged to do to avoid the unhealthy season in the tide-water region. But the upper country is not much to his taste, and would not be endured by him if it were not for the crowds that resort there for the same reason which operates upon him; and I may add,—though he would not confess it—for the opportunity this concourse affords him for discussion of opinions.

He thinks lightly of the mercantile interest, and, in fact, undervalues the manners of the large cities generally. He believes that those who live in them are hollow-hearted and insincere, and wanting in that substantial intelligence and virtue, which he affirms to be characteristic of the country. He is an ardent admirer of the genius of Virginia, and is frequent in his commendation of a toast in which the state is compared to the mother of the Gracchi:—indeed, it is a familiar thing with him to speak of the aristocracy of talent as only inferior to that of the landed interest,—the idea of a freeholder inferring to his mind a certain constitutional pre-eminence in all the virtues of citizenship, as a matter of course.

The solitary elevation of a country gentleman, well to do in the world, begets some magnificent notions. He becomes as infallible as the Pope; gradually acquires a habit of making long speeches; is apt to be impatient of contradiction, and is always very touchy on the point of honor. There is nothing more conclusive than a rich man's logic any where, but in the country, amongst his dependents, it flows with the smooth and unresisted course of a full stream irrigating a meadow, and depositing its mud in fertilizing luxuriance. Meriwether's sayings, about Swallow Barn, import absolute verity. But I have discovered that they are not so current out of his jurisdiction. Indeed, every now and then, we have quite obstinate discussions when some of the neighboring potentates, who stand in the same sphere with Frank, come to the house; for these worthies have opinions of their own, and nothing can be more dogged than the conflict between them. They sometimes fire away at each other with a most amiable and unconvincable hardihood for a whole evening, bandying interjections, and making bows, and saying shrewd things with all the courtesy imaginable. But for unextinguishable pertinacity in argument, and utter impregnability of belief, there is no disputant like your country-gentleman who reads the newspapers. When one of these discussions fairly gets under weigh, it never comes to an anchor again of its own accord; —it is either blown out so far to sea as to be given up for lost, or puts into port for distress for want of documents, —or is upset by a call for the boot-jack and slippers—which is something like the previous question in Congress.

If my worthy cousin be somewhat over-argumentative as a politician, he restores the equilibrium of his character by a considerate coolness in religious matters. He piques himself upon being a high-churchman, but is not the most diligent frequenter of places of worship, and very seldom permits himself to get into a dispute upon points of faith. If Mr. Chub, the Presbyterian tutor in the family, ever succeeds in drawing him into this field, as he occasionally has the address to do, Meriwether is sure to fly the course; he gets puzzled with scripture names, and

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41 the Gracchi, brothers and reforming statesmen in Rome in the second century B.C. • 76 the previous question, in parliamentary practice, the question whether the main issue shall be voted on at once without further debate • 80 high-churchman, a member of the party of the Episcopal Church which attaches much importance to forms and ceremonies

makes some odd mistakes between Peter and Paul, and then generally turns the parson over to his wife, who, he says, has an astonishing memory.

He is somewhat distinguished as a breeder of blooded horses; and, ever since the celebrated race between Eclipse and Henry, has taken to this occupation with a renewed zeal, as a matter affecting the reputation of the state. It is delightful to hear him expatiate upon the value, importance, and patriotic bearing of this employment, and to listen to all his technical lore touching the mystery of horse-craft. He has some fine colts in training, which are committed to the care of a pragmatical old Negro, named Carey, who, in his reverence for the occupation, is the perfect shadow of his master. He and Frank hold grave and momentous consultations upon the affairs of the stable, in such a sagacious strain of equal debate, that it would puzzle a spectator to tell which was the leading member in the council. Carey thinks he knows a great deal more upon the subject than his master, and their frequent intercourse has begot a familiarity in the old Negro which is almost fatal to Meriwether's supremacy. The old man feels himself authorized to maintain his positions according to the freest parliamentary form, and sometimes with a violence of asseveration that compels his master to abandon his ground, purely out of faint-heartedness. Meriwether gets a little nettled by Carey's doggedness, but generally turns it off in a laugh. I was in the stable with him, a few mornings after my arrival, when he ventured to expostulate with the venerable groom upon a professional point, but the controversy terminated in its customary way. "Who sot you up, Master Frank, to tell me how to fodder that 'ere cretur, when I as good as nursed you on my knee?"

"Well, tie up your tongue, you old mastiff," replied Frank, as he walked out of the stable, "and cease growling, since you will have it your own way;"—and then, as we left the old man's presence, he added, with an affectionate chuckle—"a faithful old cur, too, that snaps at me out of pure honesty; he has not many years left, and it does no harm to humor him!"

1832

William Gilmore Simms

1806 • 1870

"By far the most virile and interesting figure of the Old South" is Parrington's just estimate of William Gilmore Simms. Though born in the most aristocratic of Southern cities, Charleston, South Carolina, Simms did not belong to the aristocracy. The death of his mother and his father's removal to Mississippi left the boy to the care of an impoverished grandmother. His schooling was irregular; for a time, he was apprenticed to a druggist. At the age of eighteen, he visited his father in Mississippi, where he saw the mixed life of the frontier. After his return to Charleston, he first experimented in poetry and journalism and then turned to the writing of fiction, his first novel appearing in 1833. Two years later he achieved a popular success with *The Yemassee.* For a good while his works were more favorably received in the North than in his native city, where an eighteenth-century classical taste in literature persisted longer than almost anywhere else. By marriage in 1836 he connected himself with the planter aristocracy and acquired the country estate, midway between Charleston and Augusta, known as "The Woodlands."

In the 1850's he became the leader of a group of younger writers in Charleston, which included the poets Paul Hamilton Hayne and Henry Timrod; he was in-

strumental, together with the other members of the group, in founding the distinguished though short-lived *Russell's Magazine* (1857-1860). In the 1850's, also, he became an active opponent of abolitionism and contributed to the Southern manifesto, *The Pro-Slavery Argument* (Charleston, 1853).

Simms was a prolific writer: Trent's "partial bibliography" lists eighty separate publications, thirty-five of which are classified as "romances, novelettes, and collected stories." His best writing includes three kinds of fiction: (1) the "border romance," of which *Guy Rivers* (1834), *Richard Hurdis* (1838), and *The Border Beagles* (1840) are examples; (2) the romance of Indian warfare, of which *The Yemassee* (1835) is the best illustration; and (3) the romance of the American Revolution, the kind in which he was most prolific and most successful. From the many titles in the last category, the following may be selected: *The Partisan* (1835), *Mellichampe* (1836), and *Katharine Walton* (1851), which form a trilogy; and *Woodcraft* (1854) and *The Forayers* (1855), which present Simms' best comic character, Captain Porgy.

Simms has not been much read in the present century, but there is reason to believe that with the better study of American literature his worth will be increasingly recognized. The late Professor Trent, in our only full-length biography of Simms, summarized his merits as follows: "The romances of Simms deal with an eventful period, when a young people was struggling for its rights. They show how high and low, rich and poor, were animated by a common patriotism, how they suffered for the cause they espoused, how they triumphed through their bravery and faith. They make the reader familiar with great characters like Marion, and with historic events of no little importance to a nation destined to greatness. Moreover, they are full of the freshness of swamp and forest, of the languorous charm of Southern climate and scenery. They are full of the heroic deeds of common, unlettered men. . . . No one will ever do the same work as well, and it was worth doing."

The Yemassee, ed. Alexander Cowie, New York, 1937 (The other romances are out of print) • William P. Trent, **William Gilmore Simms**, Boston, 1892 • V. L. Parrington, "William Gilmore Simms," **The Romantic Revolution in America**, New York, 1927

From

The Forayers

The time of **The Forayers** is the summer of 1781; the place, the vicinity of Orangeburg, about one hundred miles northwest of Charleston, in South Carolina. Against this background, Simms tells a vigorous and enormously complicated story of adventures in love and battle. The action centers upon the changing fortunes of his hero, Willie Sinclair, who is a major in Marion's troop of cavalry. He is the almost superhuman hero of romance, scouting the enemy, fighting the outlaws who plunder the countryside, and, of course, making love to the heroine. Sinclair's father is a Loyalist who bitterly resents his son's support of the Patriot cause. A picturesque outlaw, Hell-Fire Dick, and a capable villain, Inglehardt, add appreciably to the hero's difficulties. Simms' story, unfinished at the end of the book (the heroine has just been mysteriously abducted), is continued and completed in **Eutaw: a Sequel to the Forayers** (1856).

The selection given here is an interlude which has only a slight connection with the main action of the novel. The British army under Lord Rawdon has just entered Orangeburg; the American forces commanded by General Nathanael Greene have taken a position a few miles away. During this brief respite from fighting, the Falstaffian Captain Porgy, of Marion's men, entertains at dinner a distinguished company. Our hero is not an invited guest, though he intrudes at the end of the banquet with a private message for General Marion. The account of Porgy's hospitality shows us Simms in one of his most zestful moods.

Chapter XLIII

THE FROG CONCERT AND CAMPAIGN

The army of Greene were taking rest for the first time for several days, at the close of that which witnessed their insulting demonstrations before the garrison of

Orangeburg. We have seen that their camp lay only four miles from that village:—a mellow sunset overspread the scene, and gentle breezes from the west cooled off sweetly the heat of a day, the ardency of which had severely tried all parties. The utmost languor for a while pervaded the encampment. The troops lay about upon the grass, under the trees, with half-shut eyes, enjoying that dreamy sensation which supervenes after fatigue, and before recuperation—mind and body in concert, as it were, for mutual restoration. But few of the groups visible in our foreground, were capable of exertion, and but few, indeed, of those whom we do not see, were any more equal to it than those immediately before our eyes. Here and there, some important adjutant, ensign, or corporal, might be found, restlessly employed, giving orders about the use of moonshine. Troopers who had thrown their chief burdens on the loins of their horses, were, perhaps, the most lively; and groups of these were to be seen, busy in consuming the last drops of sunshine and Jamaica at command, while flirting the cards at "old sledge" from well-thumbed and greasy packs of "pictures," pitching quoits, or grooming horses. We confess that Marion's men were the chief sinners after this fashion; his boys of Santee, Pedee, Waccamaw, and the parish country generally, having a sort of natural calling for the fine arts, were busy with cards and coppers at every rest: Cards and dice constituted so many fine arts in their hands. It was the boast of some of them that they could extract all sorts of music, fun, and philosophy, from the four aces.

To this general rest and languor of the army, there were, however, some striking exceptions. The command of Marion stretched toward the Caw-caw. In the woods of this region, an hour before sunset, there might be seen a squad of twenty troopers, dark, bronzed, half-naked young savages, following with some interest, the speech and movements of a large, broad-shouldered, and great-bellied personage, wearing the uniform—somewhat doubtful, indeed, because of rents, stains, and deficiencies—of a captain of dragoons. He was on foot, and by no means active of movement, though taking his steps with the confidence of a war-horse, and the solid firmness of an elephant. He was a fine-looking fellow, in spite of the too great obtrusion upon the sight of his abdominal territory, a region which he, nevertheless, endeavored to circumscribe within reasonable bounds by a girthing of leather, only half covered with a crimson sash, which no doubt had the desired effect in some degree, though at some sacrifice of the wearer's comforts. His face was full almost as the moon at full, of a ruddy brown, his head massive, chin large and prominent eyes, bright but small, and mouth eager with animation. His nose was decidedly intellectual. At his elbow stood a Negro, jacket off, and arms akimbo, who followed the motions of his superior with a mixed air of deference and assurance. Around these two the troopers were gathered. Before the group, slaughtered and skinned, hanging from a tree, was one of the lean beeves of the country—a poor skinny beast, weighing some two hundred pounds, gross, bone, meat, skin, offal! Near at hand stood a small, rickety, covered wagon, the contents of which we may conjecture. It was one of Marion's recent captures from the convoy of Stewart; and contained, no doubt, some resources, the value of which may be guessed from the mysterious looks which were, every now and then, cast upon it by passing groups of thirsty dragoons, the very glances of whom are apt to burst locks, and consume stores.

Our captain was busy with the commissariat of the brigade—not as the head of it, by no means, but as premier—head-counsellor, and legal and moral adviser.

"I tell you, Fickling, it will never do. Tell me there were no better beeves to be had! You have just taken what they please to give you. You are too modest. It is the infirmity of your family, whenever the interest is not absolutely and directly your own. We do this business of foraging for all the army, yet it seems that the meanest share is always to fall to us. Tell me nothing of Colonel Lee. He has an independent legion; let him pick up his own beeves. As for the field-officers, I do not see that their official position confers upon them any right to better tastes and appetites than a poor captain of partisan cavalry. I thank my stars that I have tastes which are as well cultivated as any brigadier or colonel in the army. And shall my tastes be defrauded, because these epauletted buffalos are greedy, and you are mealy-mouthed? Why the devil don't you assert yourself, man, and assist

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20 Jamaica, rum from Jamaica in the West Indies • 20 old sledge, card game better known as "seven-up" • 24 Santee . . . Waccamaw, rivers in South Carolina • 82 partisan, pertaining to a detached body of troops engaged in making forays and harassing an enemy

us, as you should, when the distribution of the beef takes place? You are a fool, Fickling, for your submission! Colonel Lee's man steps before you, and says, 'Colonel Lee;' and Colonel Washington's man starts up, and says, 'Colonel Washington'—and these, and a score of others, even while they speak, clap hands on the best pieces, and choose the fattest flanks; and when all are served, you steal up, with finger in your mouth, and murmur, 'Is anything left for General Marion?' Is that the way to do business? I tell you, 'No, sir!' Your true way is to take the best that offers—lay bold hands on it—nay, thrust it through with your naked sabre, and say, 'Marion's brand!' Do the thing as you should, with the proper look and manner, and not a rapscallion in the army, representing no matter what division, dare lay hands on it after that! If they do, let me be at your elbow next time, with two or three fellows of my choosing!"

"But, Captain Porgy—"

"But me no buts, Mr. Fickling. I'll have you out of your office, if you do not but against this sort of distribution. You are to provide us; and, if you do not comprehend that our soldiers are just as deserving of good food as any continentals in the service, you are not fit for our service, and I'll have you out of it. General Marion himself submits quite too much to this sort of treatment. If there is a fine horse in the brigade, it is immediately wanted for some one of Lee's dragoons—some d—d henchman or bugleman—and off the colonel goes to Greene and tells him that his legion wants horses, and that Marion has enough and to spare, and we are called upon to dismount, and provide other people. Yet are we kept day and night on the trot—off to-day for the Pon-pon and Savannah, to-morrow for the Pedee—now running down tories, now cattle; seeking information, scouting, spying, called out at all hours; and how is this to be done, if we are to give up our horses. The brigade has covered all this low country, from the Pedee to the Savannah, for three years and more, and the best that is got in the forays that we alone make, are served out to these hungry feeders. I won't submit to it. They shall neither have my horses nor my cattle; and if you take any more such beef as this, Fickling, when better is to be had, we'll turn you, neck and heels, out of your department."

"But, Captain Porgy—"

"See to it!"

"But—"

"See to it! That's all! I say no more—to you!—Tom!"

"Sah!"

"Get our share of that carrion! See what you can do with it. We must have soup, I suppose. Make a pilaw. We have plenty of pepper now. You can hardly get a decent steak from the beast. But do what you can. I must see after something more. We are to have company to-night. I have asked the great men, the big-wigs, the governor, Generals Marion and Sumter, the colonels of the brigade, Maham, Singleton, and a few others. Have everything ready by ten o'clock. Did you succeed in getting any melons?"

"I empty one patch, maussa."

"Whose?"

"I dunn know quite 'zackly, but he's a fiel' jes' yer on de back ob de village. De melons is quite 'spectable."

"Ripe?"

"As de sunshine kin make 'em."

"Good! Do as much stealing in an honest way as you can! D—n the patriotism that can't eat stolen fruits!"

"Wha' else you guine hab, maussa."

"Who knows what I can get? I must look. There ought to be frogs here in abundance, and of good size Not such as we can find in a rice reserve, Tom, but passable in war-time, and delicate enough for hot weather. I shall look out for a young alligator or two."

"Dat'll do! Gi' me two young alligator tail, and de frog, and I gi' you fus' rate tuttle soup and ball, and steak"

"Must have a ragout, Tom. Have you seen no pigs about, Tom!"

"Nebber yer de fus' squeak, maussa."

"Well"—with a grunt—"we must do as we can. Come, boys, are you ready?"

"Ay, ay, captain!" from a score of voices; and a dozen active young fellows presented themselves, armed with wooden spears and knives.

"Where's George Dennison?"

A voice answered from the foot of a tree.

"Come along, George; don't be lazy. What you shall see this evening will enable you to beat Homer in a

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19 **But . . . buts.** Quoted from Henry Fielding's **Rape Upon Rape, or The Justice Caught in His Own Trap** (1730), Act II, Scene XI • 51 **pilaw,** rice boiled with meat

new epic, in which cranes and frogs shall figure to posterity."

And, following the corpulent captain, the whole party pushed down to the swamp.

"There's a battalion for you, George Dennison. Not a rascal under six feet—half a dozen nearer seven. I chose them specially for the expedition. They are our cranes, and are all eager for the war."

"And the frogs are sounding for the conflict. Hear their tongues, already. The concert for the evening is begun. Hear the chirruping overture:—

"'Fry bacon—tea-table!
Coyong! coyong! coyong!
Supper on table—supper on table,
Eat if you're able!
Blood an' 'ounds—blood an' 'ounds.'

"By the way, captain, a frog concert, would not be a bad speculation in the great cities of Europe. How a score or two of musical fellows, who had once or twice slept in our swamps, or lingered after sunset along our rice-fields, would make capital out of it! And such a sensation. What a hurly-burly, subdued to order, they could make of it."

"No doubt! The notes and tones occupy every note of the *gamut!* It is a rare original music. But the secret would lie in making the music tributary to satire. The frogs should furnish a running commentary on the follies and vices of society as in Aristophanes, only adapted to our times. It would task art admirably to work out of it an opera—the Loves of the Frogs! Little Squeaka, the dreaming sentimental damsel, just emerging into society —coming out; in her train some half a dozen Jockos—minnows of fashion, that sing in a love-lisp always—Therubina! ah! Therubina! Oh the rich fun of such a farcical! Of what a delightful variety would the affair admit! The lover, the villain, the priest, the mother—all the usual varieties, not forgetting Arlecchino. Of course, the frogs are not less fortunate than their betters. They have a Jack Pudding among them. The squirrels have I know."

"Don't forget the duenna! Hear her falsetto, squeaking through a score of crevices in her broken teeth:—

"'On your knees, O,
Not a sneeze, O,
Don't you hear your mother coming?
'To be kissed, O,
By the priest, O,
Is the saintliest sort of mumming

"'O, alack, O,
Such a smack, O,
Makes the very echoes jealous;'
'But it proves, O,
Holy loves, O,
Most particularly zealous.'

"'Hark that drumming!'
'Mother coming!'
'And that pother?'
''Tis your father!'
'Awful sounds, O!'
'Blood and 'ounds, O!'—

"In full fresco swells the chorus,
From the motley group before us;
Sighing, swelling,
Barking, belling—
Such a moaning, such intoning,
So much groaning, honing, droning,
Calling, falling, bawling, drawling,
Speaking, shrieking, squeezing, squeaking,

"All subsiding to a quiver,
And a shiver,
Only to ascend, in thunder,
Rolling up and roaring under—
Blood and 'ounds, O! blood and 'ounds, O!
Awful sounds, breaking bounds,
Setting all the woods a-shaking,
Setting all the bog a-quaking,
All the swampy empire waking,
With the eternal blood and 'ounds, O

"Rending, raging,
Battle waging,
'Yond all musical assuaging—

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28 **Aristophanes.** The reference is to **The Frogs**, a satirical comedy by Aristophanes (448-330 B.C.) • 37 **Arlecchino**, a blundering servant in Italian masked comedy

O'er all mortal sounds uproarious,
O'er all mortal sense victorious,
Like the diapason glorious,—
That through pipes and stops,
Shrieks, and bounds, and hops,
Foams, and frisks, and frolics,
Rolls and rages, rocks and rollicks,
Feeding every mortal stopper, ah!
Of the grand Italian opera!"

Thus it was that the rustic poet of the partisans, gave forth extempore an embodiment of the music of the frog-pondians.

"Hurrah!" cried Porgy, "hurrah, Geordie—why, man, you are native, to frog manor born, with all the pipes and bellows of the swamp in your own wind-bags; or to requite you in your own coin:—

"Worthy venison,
Geordie Dennison,
You will soon require a stopper, O,
Scaring off with greater clamor,
Every leap-frog from his amour,
Turning every mother's son of 'em
Making fun of 'em,—
To a hopper off, from a hopper, O!"

And thus doggrelizing as they went, the two led their laughing cohort down into the swamp.

The Caw-caw was in full concert. Bull and bell, squeak and shriek, moan and groan All the artistes were in exercise, engaged, no doubt, in some rehearsal, preparatory to some great ceremonial—the bridal, possibly, of the young princess of the pondians.

Porgy and his corps, with their pointed spears of wood, wooden forks, baskets, and knives, stole down into the lagunes. What a picture for the stage! What an action for the burlesque drama! But the matter was a serious one enough for one of the parties. Long will the frogs of that ilk remember with wailing the raid of the cranes of that day. Could you have seen those long, gaunt backwoodsmen, each with shaft, prong, or trident, striding hither and thither in the bog, and lake, striding right and left, poised above their great-eyed enemies, and plunging forward to grapple the wounded and squalling victim before he should sheer off, or, as George Dennison said afterward, describing the affair in sonorous heroics:—

"Could you have seen that theatre of frogs,
As each in due delight and bog immersed,
Sprawled out, at length, in slime and sandy bed;
Great legs of green or brown outstretching wide;
Great arms thrown out as if embracing heaven;
With eyes dilating, big as Bullace grapes,
Upturned, and gloating as with rapturous rage;
Great flattened jaws, that, ever and anon,
Distending with voluminous harmonies,
Sent forth their correspondences of sound,
In due obedience to the choragus,
Who still, at proper intervals, pour'd out
The grand refrain—sonorous, swelling still,
Till, at the last, the apex diapason
Was caught, was won, in glorious 'Blood and 'ounds!' "

It was a war of shallow waters. Habitual croakers are only justified when they perish. They have nothing to complain of. They always seem to anticipate their fate, and this seems to prove it only just execution after judgment—which, of course, is legal and becoming. Our partisans had grown expert in this sort of warfare. The Caw-caw swamp was a region in which the frogs held populous communities and cities, and—you know the proverb—"Thick grass is easier cut than thin." It was a massacre! Every spearman could count his score or two of slain, and, really, a very pretty spectacle they made when, emerging from the swamp, each carried his victims aloft, transfixed upon a sharp and slender rod, run through at the neck, eyes wider than ever, and legs and arms spread about in all directions. Nor was this all. No less than three young alligators and three times as many terrapins were surprised and captured, almost without a struggle, and borne off in triumph to the camp! The wailing in the Caw-caw that night was not greatly lessened by the loss of so many sonorous voices, since we may reasonably suppose that maternal suffering sent up such extra clamors for the absence of precious young ones, as more than atoned for the diminished forces of the community.

"On your lives, boys, not a word of what we have been doing," said Captain Porgy. They all swore to keep faith.

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34 **lagunes,** lagoons • 50 **Bullace,** a kind of plum

"There are thousands of clever people in the world," he added, "who require to be surprised into happiness. Some of my guests, to-night, are probably of this description. I shall teach them a new pleasure—nay, a new moral in a new pleasure—teach them how absurd it is to despise any of the gifts of Providence."

And, following out this policy, it was with great secrecy that the spoils of the frog campaign were conveyed to his quarters, and delivered over to the custody of Tom, his cook. Tom, we may add, like every sensible cook, made a sufficient mystery of his art to keep prying curiosity away from the kitchen whenever he was engaged in any of his culinary combinations. Let us leave these for other parties, and for proceedings of more imposing consequence if less attractive performance. We shall seek to be present when supper is on the table.

Chapter XLV

DOINGS IN THE APOLLO CHAMBER

Our partisan division of the army, with their horses, occupied no small extent of territory. Our Captain Porgy, himself, with his little personal equipage, demanded considerable space. He was the person always to secure that "ample room and verge enough," which, as he himself said, were essential to his individual girth. "My breadth of belt," he was wont to say, "implies a fair field; and, having that, I ask no favors." Besides being of social habits, his mess was always a large one. Among his immediate associates, retainers rather, he kept not only his cook, but his poet; the one almost as necessary as the other. Then, he never was without a guest, and whenever his commissariat was particularly well supplied, he was sure to have a full table. Such an idea as a good table, without an adequate number of guests to enjoy it, seemed to him a thing vile, unreasonable, inhuman, and utterly unchristian. We have seen that, particularly fortunate in his foray among the green-jacketed denizens of the Caw-caw, he had made arrangements for a larger circle than usual. His own tastes and purposes requiring it, Captain Porgy usually chose his own ground whenever tents were to be pitched. He had a great eye to proper localities.

"The open woods, on the south and west," was his rule. "Let the swamp and thicket cover my back on the east. That east wind has been of evil tendency from the earliest periods of time. The Bible speaks of it. A bad-tempered person, soured and surly, growling always, and insufferable from bile and conceit, is said to fill his bowels with the east wind. It has a bad effect on the best bowels. Give me just opening enough on the east for the purposes of draught, but let your tent be open to the full pressure of the winds from south and west. You need, in our climate, an eastern opening at the dinner-hour, dining at three, or thereabout; but beware of it after the sun has set. Don't sleep with the east wind blowing upon you. If you do, face it—let your feet receive it first. Every wind that blows has a specific quality. The east, northeast, and southeast, are all or more or less pernicious, muddy, insidious, hateful. Our natural winds in midsummer are from the south and west. The south persuades you to languor, pleasantly relaxes, discourages the exertion which would be too exhaustive for the season. The west is the agitator, the thunder-storm wind, that purges and purifies; the northwest is the cleaning wind, that sweeps up the sky, and brushes off all its cobwebs. Each wind having thus a specific mission, it is wonderful that men who build know so little of the means of ventilation. Now, you see, I choose my ground with an open pine-forest in front, that is south and west and northwest. I take care that the land slopes down from me in all these directions. If there be hill, swamp, or dense thicket, I put them, with the devil, behind me. I have here chosen the very pleasantest spot in the whole encampment. There is not one of these continental officers who knows anything of the subject. Yet, to the health of an army, a difference of fifty yards in the location of a camp, is very frequently all the difference between life and death!"

And, in that broad, terrace-like spread of wood and thicket, he had chosen the most agreeable region. The pine-woods opened at his feet, and spread away almost interminably, giving the necessary degree of shade, yet leaving free passage for the wind.

"Free circulation, Geordie Dennison," said he, as with hands outspread he seemed to welcome the gentle play of the breezes reeking up from the southwest—"that is the secret of health—free circulation for the winds, the

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Apollo Chamber. An Elizabethan reminiscence· Ben Jonson used to meet his followers in the Apollo Room at the Devil Tavern • **17 partisan division,** Marion's men • **21 ample . . . enough,** from Thomas Gray's "The Bard," l. 51

waters, and the blood. It is stagnation that is death. This is the reason why a pine-forest is more healthy than any other. It is the only forest that suffers free play to the winds. Hence you hear the music in a pine-forest which you hear in no other. The breezes pour through, and swell up, until all the tree-tops become so many organ-pipes. The vulgar notion is that there is some virtue in the odor of the pines to neutralize malaria. But this is all nonsense. Pine-woods that have a dense undergrowth, are not more healthy than any other. It is the shape of the tree, a tall column, without lateral branches, naked a hundred feet high, and arching above, umbrella fashion, into a grand ceiling, which shuts out the intense heat of the sun, and suffers free exercise to the breeze. Here it plays with delight and impunity. In the dense thickets it trickles only, and finally stagnates; and hence the fevers of uncleared lands. Bays, swamps, ponds, are unhealthy, not because of the water which they contain, but because of the dense thickets which they nurture. The hottest place in the world in midsummer, is a deep forest or thicket, with a close undergrowth. Fools talk of decaying vegetation as the secret of disease; yet when our fevers are raging most, vegetation has not begun to decay. Gardens, fields, forests, are never more fresh and beautiful, never more vigorous and verdant, than when death seems lurking under every flower, like some venomous reptile watching for and creeping to the ear of the unconscious sleeper. But, Geordie Dennison, boy, once suppose that the air is stagnant in any locality, and you need not suppose the necessity for its impregnation by any deleterious agent. A stagnant atmosphere is, *per se,* malaria. And that fact that we can assign a distinct locality for the disease—that we can say with confidence, to sleep here is death, while you may sleep with safety within half a mile—establishes the fact conclusively that the atmosphere is localized—no matter by what cause —though even that is a matter which I have considered also—and once let the atmosphere be fixed, and it is only in degree that it differs from that of an old sink or well. It is putrid, and to inhale it is a danger. You can not impregnate with miasma any region, where the winds are allowed to penetrate freely from three points of the compass, and where they do penetrate. When we are very sickly, you will always find a pressure of winds, daily from a single quarter, for a long-continued period of time. The atmosphere loses its equilibrium, as it were; the winds lack their *balance;* and running one course only, they run into a *cul de sac,* as water that can not escape, rises to a level with its source, becomes a pond, and stagnates. A thunder-storm purifies, not from its electricity, as some contend, but because it is a storm. All storms purify because they agitate. They disperse the local atmosphere over a thousand miles of space, and restore its equilibrium."

"But, Captain Porgy, were it not better that you should be thinking of your supper and company, instead of philosophizing here about the atmosphere?"

"It is because I am thinking of my company and supper, Master Geordie, that I do philosophize about the atmosphere. A wholesome atmosphere is half of a good supper. We can eschew the water. We need not drink that, if we can find any other liquor; but make what wry faces we will, the atmosphere we must drink, even though we know it to be impregnated with poison. Better drink the vilest ditch-water a thousand times. That may disorder the stomach, but the other must vitiate the lungs and so directly disease the blood and the heart. I am trying to teach you, sir, that in giving a good supper or dinner to your friends, you are to serve it up in properly-ventilated apartments."

"Well, we have it airy enough here."

"True; but had it been left to anybody else, ten to one you would have had our tents pitched in a villanous thicket where we never could have got a breath of air. Look, now, at the Legion encamped on the left; they are in a bottom, the breeze passing clean over their heads. Their camp-master had no idea of what was the duty to be done, beyond the simply getting room enough for the horses and wagons of some three hundred men. Sir, the partisan cavalry have never been so healthy as when I have been permitted to select the ground for their bivouac."

"That's true!"

"To be sure it's true; and you see the fruits of it in the pleasant sleeps that we enjoy, and the hardy elasticity with which we travel. There never was any people so exposed as ours have been, night and day, in all weathers, and the most wearisome marches, that have ever enjoyed such admirable health. And they owe it to me, sir—to me,

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48 cul de sac, literally, bottom of a bag; a passage with only one outlet

Geordie Dennison—yet, d—n 'em, they are not half so grateful for this blessing as for my soups and suppers. They would readily compound to drink any quantity of malaria, if they could swallow a pint of my rum-punch after it."

"Ah, they regard the rum-punch as the antidote, and there is nothing unreasonable, therefore, in their practice. But, captain, the hour latens."

"*Latens!* By what right do you use that word?"

"It's a good word, captain."

"So it is; but I never heard it used before."

"Very likely; but would you permit that argument to be used against any new dish that Tom should put on the table to-night!"

"No, sir; no, Geordie, you are right. You could not have answered me better if you had argued a thousand years. And I will remember the word;—so, as the hour *latens,* Geordie, get up and help me with these tables. I must summon Frampton and Millhouse. We shall need their knives and hatchets. I have invited thirty-one guests, Geordie, not counting you and Lance; we three will make the number thirty-four. There's no such table to be spread in camp to-night. Think of it;—a simple captain of militia giving a supper to thirty guests, and upon such short commons as are allowed us. Half of the poor devils in camp think it monstrous impudent of me to give a supper at all—and to thirty persons——"

"They can't guess how it's to be done."

"No! indeed! the blockheads! But their vexation increases when they find my guests all outranking myself. The envious rascals! Beware of envy, Geordie—it is the dirtiest, sneakingest, meanest little passion in the world, the younger brother of vanity, furnishing all the venom to its sleek-skinned and painted senior."

"And you are to have the governor, captain?"

"Ay, he accepts. John Rutledge is a great fellow, without affectation, Geordie—no pretender—one of the few men who really do *think.* The greater number, even when they greatly rank, only repeat each other—they do not think. Thought, George Dennison, is really confined to a very few. Men, as a race, are not thinking animals. They are gregarious and imitative. They go in droves and follow a leader, whom they contrive after a while to mimic after a monkey fashion. Thought is always an individual. But—where is that boy Frampton? Sound your whistle, George."

The whistle was sounded.

"Now help me with these poles. There are forty cut. We must have crotch-sticks—two, four, six, eight, ten, twelve—it will require twenty-four; we must make our tables solid."

Lance Frampton now appeared, followed by half a dozen young troopers, bearing slim green poles upon their shoulders, forked sticks, and all the appliances necessary to the construction of the rustic tables and seats of the company. Long practice had made all of them familiar with the rude sort of manufacture which was required. The crotch-sticks were soon driven upright into the ground, in frequent parallels; cross pieces were laid in the crotchets of these, and the poles were stretched along, forming a crossed table with four ends, for so many dignitaries, and capable to accommodate forty guests with ease. Of a similar, but stouter fashion, were the seats for the guests. It was surprising how soon the area was filled—how soon the mechanical preparations for the feast were fashioned. The amphitheatre beneath the pines was ample. Porgy, as he boasted, had the proper eye for locality. When reared and steadied, stanchioned and strengthened, the tables were covered with great oak-leaves, green, looking very clean, nice, and fresh—a verdant tablecloth.

"Now, see that you have torches, Lance; for, though we have a glorious moon, we need torches for the dark corners. Many of the guests will bring their Negroes to wait. But we shall need some waiters besides. Engage some of these young chaps. They shall sweep the platters clean. Forget nothing, boy. We are to have big wigs to supper, remember. Geordie, come with me to *our* wagon. I think we shall astonish these epauleted gentry to-night."

And the two turned off to another part of the wood where stood the little wagon already described—a sort of covered box—a thing which one man might have rolled, but to which a couple of stout hackneys were harnessed, when taken.

"Little," said Porgy, as he unlocked the cover of the vehicle, "little did stuttering Pete dream what he lost and we gained when we cut off the four wagons of Stewart. His eyes opened only upon the big wagons. He never gave a look at the one little one upon which I fastened—as if the most precious commodities were not always packed in the smallest compass! Yet, look there, Geordie."

The poet looked in:—

"Lemons, captain."

"Ay, lemons and white sugar, and nutmegs, and cloves, and spices of all sorts, and an anchor of Geneva, and a box of cocoa, and a bag of coffee, and a good supply of old Jamaica, and, see you that keg?—tongues, beef-tongues, English beef-tongues. Now please you to read the name on the cover; ay! Lord Rawdon's own prog, by the pipers, specially selected for his table and palate. We shall astonish these wooden-headed continentals to-night, Geordie! won't we? You thought me mad, didn't you, when I invited so many? But I knew what I was about. They shall stare, they shall sup, though they lament for ever, after the acquisition of such a taste as their vulgar fortunes can never hereafter satisfy. But mum! Not a word in anticipation."

And Porgy closed the wagon with haste and locked it, as half a dozen troopers lounged carelessly by, looking, with some curiosity as they passed, to the proceedings of the two.

"Stay here, Geordie, and keep watch till I return. I must put Millhouse on duty over this wagon, or there will be a Flemish account of its contents when supper's called. The morals of the dragoon service, imply theft as a necessity. A good scout has all the capabilities of a good pickpocket."

And, moralizing as he went, Porgy hurried off for succor. Dennison was relieved by Millhouse, a one-armed trooper of iron aspect, and as stubborn of purpose as a mule. The wagon was safe in his keeping as long as his left arm could lift sabre or pistol—and he was duly armed with both.

The next visit of our host was to Tom, the cook, who had a precinct of his own, some twenty-five yards from the spot where the tables had been spread. The terrapin soup was discussed, the *ragout;* the stew; the boiled tongues; nothing escaped attention. Then, a survey was taken of the crockery; the bowls, plates, dishes; the knives and forks; the spoons of iron, the drinking vessels of delph, tin, or calabash. These commodities were too frail of character, not to need the greatest care and attention; and every feast given by our captain, mortified him with the slenderness of his resources. But there was no remedy. If half a dozen good bowls of delph, and platters of tin, could be provided for the more distinguished guests, the rest might surely be satisfied with clean calabashes. We will suppose our captain satisfied in respect to these things. He was in the midst of the examination, however, venting his annoyances at his limited resources, in uneasy exclamations, when a messenger from Rutledge brought him the note from that personage apprizing him that Greene and Lee would appear among his guests. The governor wrote:—

"I shall take the liberty, my dear Captain Porgy, of bringing with me a couple of additional guests, in General Greene and Colonel Lee, knowing that your provision will not only be ample, but that the taste which usually presides over your banquets will give to our friends from Rhode Island and Virginia such a notion of the tastes of Apicius and Lucullus, as certainly never yet dawned upon them in their own half-civilized regions. Your own courtesy will do the rest and will, I trust, sufficiently justify the confidence with which I have insisted upon their coming. "Yours,

"JOHN RUTLEDGE."

"Humph!" exclaimed Porgy, "I should not have ventured to ask General Greene, not that I stand in awe of his epaulettes, but it is so rare to find a *parvenu* who would not hold such an invitation from a poor captain of militia, to be a piece of impertinence and presumption. Our own folks know me too well to exhibit any such *gaucherie.* As for Lee, he is a popinjay! I should never ask him myself; but have no objection that he should occasionally appear among gentlemen who can teach him, by example, how gentlemen can be good fellows without any loss of dignity.—Geordie—your pen and a scrap of paper. I hope I diminish none of your verses by consuming your foolscap."

The pen and paper were had, and our captain wrote:—

"Governor Rutledge can take no liberty for the propriety of which his name is not a sufficient guaranty. Captain Porgy will be most happy to welcome any guests whom he may think proper to bring."

This written, he handed it to the messenger. It was

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4 anchor of Geneva, ten gallon container of Holland gin • 23 Flemish account, an account showing a loss or deficit • 36 ragout, a highly seasoned dish made of pieces of meat stewed with vegetables • 60 Apicius (d. 37 A D), notorious Roman epicure under Tiberius • 60 Lucullus (d. 57 B C.), wealthy Roman general famous for his banquets • 68 parvenu, one newly risen to position, an upstart • 72 gaucherie, clumsiness

then that Greene's cook uncovered a small tumbril or box in a wheelbarrow, containing the uncooked provisions which had been destined for his own table. Porgy looked at the bloody and livid meats with unqualified disgust.

"But," said he *sotto voce,* "we can't reject them. Here, Tom."

The cook appeared, apron in front and knife in hand.

"Tom, take charge of these provisions. They are sent by the general—General Greene, do you hear? Use them. Cook them. Turn them into soup, hash, steak, what you will!" then, as the messengers of Rutledge and Greene disappeared—"but d—m you, boy, don't let them show themselves upon my table. The meat is villanously butchered. That alone should condemn it. Make it up for some of these young fellows that have been working for us. And—Tom—"

"Well, maussa—talk quick."

"Don't forget the balls. Let there be a plenty in the soup."

"Psho, maussa, enty I know."

"Enough! Begone!"

The active mind of our corpulent captain began to grow restless. He had seen to everything that he could think of, and grew peevish from nothing to do. Suddenly he stuck his fingers into his hair.

"No! the vessels for the punch; Geordie. By heavens, I had almost forgotten. Let us after the punchbowls, and then for the manufacture. *You* are good at that; a poet should be. Curious problem, Geordie—the affinity between poetry and the bottle."

"Not at all. It only implies the ardency of the poet. It is so with the orator. You never saw poet or orator yet, that was not ardent and fond of the juices of the grape."

"Not the didactic orders, surely. But how is it, then, that Bacchus is not your deity instead of Apollo?"

"Because Apollo, with virtues of his own, includes those of Bacchus. He is a ripener of Bacchus, and loves not the wine less, nor is less the true god of it, because he employs a vintner. I see no difficulty in the matter."

"And, perhaps, there is none. Yet what would Apollo say, or Bacchus even, to such a punchbowl as ours."

And he pointed to an enormous calabash, holding a couple of gallons at the least, that, duly valued and taken care of, had survived all the vicissitudes of the campaign.

"They would, either of them, feel that there was wholesome propriety in the vessel. It is one which Ceres has presented for the occasion, to a kindred deity. Boon nature has provided where vulgar art has failed. It would be much more staggering to either of the ancient gods to try them with the Jamaica, instead of the blood of Tuscany."

"Ah! they never got such liquor on Olympus. Their nectar was a poor wishy-washy sort of stuff, of not more body than some of those thin vaporing French and German liquors, of which we have had a taste occasionally. Their wine of Tuscany, nay, the Falernian of Horace, would not take rank now-a-days with the juices of the common corn, prepared according to our process. Drinking whiskey or Jamaica, Nero might have been a fool, a wretch, a murderer—might fire his city or butcher his mother—might have committed any crime, but cowardice! Whiskey or Jamaica might have saved Rome from Gaul and Vandal. The barbarians, be sure, drank the most potent beverages."

"A notion deserving of study. We drink deep now-a-days. Will our descendants beat us? Will they laugh at our potations, which rarely leave a gentleman on his legs after midnight?"

"Ah! say nothing of our progeny. Do not build upon the degenerates. It may be that the milksops will fancy it bad taste, nay, even immoral, on the part of their ancestors, to have swallowed Jamaica or whiskey at all. In proportion as their heads are weak, will they pronounce ours vicious, and just because we have a certain amount of strength in our virtue—a certain quality of brawn and blood and muscle, to keep our sentiment from etherealizing—growing into mere thin air—will they presume to stroke their beards in self-complaisant satisfaction, thanking God that such poor *publicans,* have given way to a more saintly race of sinners. I am half inclined to thank my stars that, when I disappear, the race of Porgy will not be continued in the person of one who prides himself upon having no head—for a bottle!"

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49 Ceres, Roman goddess of growing vegetation • 58 Falernian, Italian sweet wine • 81 publicans . . . sinners, an allusion to the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. See Luke 18:9-14

"Yes! save us from all degenerate children. But, captain, will this *one* calabash of punch suffice for forty? Impossible! Two gallons among forty! Never in the world! Why, sir, there are three generals, and one governor, a score of colonels, and others of inferior rank, who are emulous of great men's virtues. Two gallons to forty such persons."

"Oh! don't stop to calculate. Luckily there are two calabashes."

And the little wagon yielded up the desired article.

"Make it rich, Geordie."

"Captain Porgy, when they drink of this liquor, each man will feel that his will has been made. He will feel that he has no more care in life—will fold his robes about him for flight."

"Or fall! Well, give us a taste. I profess to be a very competent judge of what a good Jamaica punch should be."

Smacks his lips.

"The proportions are good: the acid has yielded to the embrace of the sugar with the recognition of a perfect faith, and both succumb to the spirit, as with the recognition of a perfect deity. Next to poetry, Geordie, you are an adept at punch."

Geordie somewhat proudly:—

"Yes, captain, on this score I feel safe. I am not always certain of my verses. I sometimes feel that they lack the sweet and the ardent—but I am never doubtful of the perfect harmony that prevails among all the elements when I manufacture punch."

Porgy quaffs off the contents of the *dipper*.

"Geordie, you are a benefactor. When this war ceases, you shall partake my fortunes. You shall live with me; and, between punch and poetry, we will make the latter end of life a felicitous *finale* to a very exciting drama. By the way, Geordie, talking of poetry and punch reminds me. You must be prepared with something good to-night. I shall have you out. You shall give us some heroic ballad. I know you have not been drowsing in that thicket for nothing. Have you got anything ready?"

"I *have* been doing a trifle, but—"

"None of your buts. Get aside, and memorize it. These two vessels of punch, meanwhile, we will put under lock and key, and yield to the guardianship of Sergeant Millhouse."

Chapter XLVI

HOW PORGY FEASTED THE CAPTAINS

With vulgar people, a dinner party is the occasion of much fuss and fidgeting. The vulgar egotism is always on the *qui vive* lest something should go wrong—lest something should be wanting to the proper effect—lest, in brief, some luckless excess or deficiency should certainly convey to the guest the secret of those deficiencies, in taste, manners, experiences, and resources, which would, if known, be fatal to the claims of good breeding and high ton which the host is most anxious to establish. Those, on the contrary, who feel assured on such points are apt to take the events of a dinner-table coolly and with comparative indifference. A blunder or a deficiency of steward or servant, occasions little or no concern; is never allowed to disturb the equilibrium of the master, who takes for granted that such small matters will be ascribed, by every sensible guest, to the right cause, and for the opinion of all other persons he cares not a button.

The result of this equanimity is to enable him to keep *his mind "in hand"* for the entertainment of his company. He is able to observe and to minister with promptness and full resource, as his wits are not disordered by any feverish workings of his *amour propre*. He sees what is wanting at a glance; supplies the deficiency with a nod; his servants are duly taught in the value of his nod and glance; and the skill of the host, by which the guests are diverted, enables Jack and Gill to wipe up the water which they have spilt so awkwardly, in their uphill progress, without attracting any notice—without filling the scene with most admired disorder.

Our host *knows* his company, and conjures up the special topic which appeals directly to the tastes or the fancies of each. He is vigilant even while he seems most at ease; when his indifference is most apparent, it is made to cover a becoming solicitude for the comfort of the humblest person present. He provides himself with the proper cue to all your prejudices and affections, as by a divine instinct, so that he steers clear of the one,

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48 on . . . vive, on the alert • 54 high ton, fashion or style • 68 amour propre, self-esteem

and shapes his course directly for the other; and when the waters are unluckily ruffled, by some bull-headed companion, who treads on his neighbor's toes without even suspecting that he has corns, our host is at hand to pour oil upon the troubled waters, and soothe to calm the temper which is ruffled. He contrives, at the same time, that the offender shall be taught the nature of his offence, without being brought up to the halberds and set in pillory,

"Pour encourager les autres."

There was nothing doubtful about the *aplomb* of Captain Porgy. Having prepared his feast according to the full extent of his resources; drilled his awkward squad to the utmost of his capacity and their susceptibilities; seen that they were in sufficient numbers for proper attendance; and made, in brief, all his preparations, he gave himself no further concern, but prepared to receive his guests, with the easy good nature, the frank politeness, the smiling grace, of an old-school gentleman. And it is quite an error to talk, as we are apt to do, of the formality of the old-school gentleman. The gentleman of two hundred or one hundred years ago, differed very slightly in his bearing from the same class at the present day. In due degree as his ceremonials ran into formalities, did he lose the character of the gentleman. In no period was mere form and buckram ever confounded, by sensible people, with politeness and refinement.

Never was gentleman more perfectly at ease in crowded assembly, yet more solicitous of the claims of all about him, than our corpulent captain. His shrewd good sense, nice tastes, playful humors, and frank spirit, all harmonizing happily, enabled him to play the host generally to the equal satisfaction of all his company. He had the proper welcome for each as he drew nigh; the proper word, which set each person at his ease, and prepared him for the development of all his conversational resources.

Among the first of his guests to appear were Governor Rutledge and General Greene. "The really great," said Porgy to Lance Frampton who stood behind him, "never keep the table waiting."

The approach to the scene was through a great natural avenue of lofty green pines, through which the moon was peeping curiously with a bright smile, a disinterested spectator of the proceedings. Music timed the approaches of the guests, the army band having been secured for the evening. Porgy welcomed his guests at the entrance of the area in which his tables had been spread.

"General Greene, Captain Porgy," said Rutledge. Greene took the outstretched hand of the host, saying:—

"What I have heard of you, Captain Porgy, makes me trespass without fear of the consequences."

"And what I know of General Greene enables me to welcome him with every hope of the consequences. I am very grateful to Governor Rutledge for doing that which, as a poor captain of militia, I should scarcely have ventured to do myself."

"I knew my customers both, my dear captain," said Rutledge, "and knew how little was necessary to render the regular and volunteer service grateful to each other."

"Be seated, gentlemen," said Porgy, "while I put myself on duty for a while;" and he resumed his place at the opening of the avenue, while Sumter, Marion, and the rest severally presented themselves, were welcomed and conducted to the interior by young Frampton, who did the duties of an aid. Colonel Lee was among the latest to appear.

"My dear Porgy," said he condescendingly—"I am late; but the cavalry of the legion is on vigilant duty to-night, and a good officer you know—eh!"

And he left it to our host to conceive the rest.

"Col. Lee may be forgiven, if late among his friends, when we know that his enemies rarely reproach him for a like remissness."

The grace of Porgy's manner happily blended with the grave dignity of his address. Lee smiled at the compliment:—

"Always ready, Porgy—never to be outdone in the play of compliment, or the retort courteous;" and while speaking he was ushered in with other visitors.

The company was at length assembled. The music ceased. A single bugle sounded from the amphitheatre, and the guests disposed themselves without confusion under the whispered suggestions of Lieutenant Framp-

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8 halberds, a frame made with halberds (a long-handled, pointed weapon in use in the sixteenth century) to which soldiers were tied to be flogged • 10 Pour . . . autres, to encourage the others. The quotation is from Voltaire's Candide (1759): "Dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un amiral pour encourager les autres" (In this country it is well to kill an admiral now and then to encourage the others)

ton. Porgy took his place at the head of the table, standing, till all were seated.

"Gentlemen," said he, "be pleased to find places at the board. Colonel Singleton, you are my *vis-a-vis*. Governor Rutledge will you honor me by sitting at my right. General Greene, I have presumed to assign you the seat at my left."

Right and left of Singleton, Marion and Sumter were placed. At one end of the table crossing the centre of the board, Colonel Lee was seated, Colonel Maham occupied the other. Carrington, Horry, Mellichampe, St. Julien, and others found places between these several termini. Scarcely had they been seated when four great calabash tureens were placed severally at the extremities, the odorous vapors from which appealed gratefully to every nostril in company.

"Turtle soup!" was the delighted murmur.

"And lemons!"

And as the smoking vessels were set before the governor and General Greene, the former exclaimed:—

"Faith, Captain Porgy, your last voyage to the West Indies seems to have been a highly prosperous adventure."

"In truth," said Greene, "I am half inclined to think that there must have been some such enterprise, of which General Marion has forgotten to apprize me."

"I begin seriously to suspect him," said Rutledge. "The fact is that General Marion is so fond of secret enterprises, and audacious ones—does things with so much despatch, and thinks it so easy to do the impossible, that I half believe he has made a three nights' run for the Havana, or sent off a favorite squad on a sortie in that direction. Say, general, is it not so? Let us know the truth of it. You found, among your captures at Georgetown, some ready-rigged sloop or schooner, and sent her out on a cruise in anticipation of this very occasion."

"Nay, governor, the merits of the enterprise, such as it was and the fruits thereof, are due entirely to our host. It was his adventure wholly, though we share the spoils."

"But, where—where—where—" began Peter Horry, stuttering, "where the devil did he—did he—get 'em—turtles and lemons! I don't—don't—understand it—at all."

"Better not press the inquiry, Horry," said Singleton with a sly smile upon the company—"the discovery will hardly add to your own laurels."

"How—my laurels! What—what—I want to—to know—have my laurels—to do—to do—with the matter?"

"Let's have it, Colonel Singleton," said Rutledge eagerly. "Out with the story. Colonel Horry is so seldom to be caught napping that I shall rejoice to have one story at his expense."

"Ay, ay, the story, Singleton," from a dozen voices around the board.

"Tell—tell—tell, if you will," stuttered Horry—"only be sure, and tell—the—the—truth, and shame—you know who."

"The adventure illustrates the military character of the two gentlemen most admirably," said Singleton. "Colonel Horry is a gentleman of large eyes and grapples with objects of magnitude always. It is Captain Porgy's pleasure to be discriminating and select. The lemons and a variety of other edibles are furnished, unwillingly, I grant you, by Lord Rawdon himself. They form a part of the supplies brought up by Colonel Stewart. In dashing at Stewart's convoy, Horry passed a mean little wagon in the rear, as quite unworthy his regards. He swept off as you know three or four others of considerable value to the army. But the very littleness of this wagon which Horry had despised, fixed the regards of our host. He quietly possessed himself of it, and was rewarded with the private stores designed for Lord Rawdon himself." The story produced a laugh at the expense of Horry.

"Who—who—who—the devil," said he, "would have thought—of—of—anything good in—that rickety concern? I'd like to know, Captain Porgy, what you got besides the lemons?"

"White sugars, coffee, tea, spices, Spanish sweetmeats, preserved ginger, three kegs of Jamaica, and a goodly variety besides!"

"The d—l!—and—and—I to miss 'em all."

"But you got loads of bacon and flour, Horry."

"Several bales of blankets."

"Ay, and a bathing-tub and complete set of chamber crockery!"

"What," said Rutledge, "was there a bathing-tub and chamber crockery?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Who could have wanted that, I wonder?"

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4 vis-a-vis, one who sits opposite, face to face

"Some young ensign of the buffs or blues," said Porgy, "whose mother was duly considerate of the young man's skin in a warm climate. You should have discovered Colonel Horry's visage when that wagon was burst open and the contents revealed. The bathing-tub and furniture filled the wagon."

"What did he say, Porgy? Tell us that!"

"Say! Ah! What was it, colonel? Deliver it yourself: nobody can repeat it half so well."

"Re—re—peat it yourself, if you can!" said Horry stuttering and dipping up his soup with increased rapidity.

"Out with it, Captain Porgy. Horry's speech."

Porgy nodded to Singleton, who answered:—

"I heard it, and as Horry permits will deliver it. He said, stamping his feet in a rage: 'Throw out the d——d basins, and break up the blasted tub. Who would have thought of any fellow being such a bloody booby as to bring a bathing-tub and chamber crockery into a pond and bush country?"

And slightly imitating the stammer of Horry so as to give a lively idea of his manner, Singleton set the table in a roar. When the laugh had subsided:—

"But did he break up the crockery, Porgy?"

"Every bowl and basin. He was merciless. You never saw such havoc. His broadsword played elephant in the crockery shop to perfection, and the dragoons, delighted with the humors of their colonel, went into the work of demolition with a rush."

"I had—no—no—no use for the d——d—d——d—d——d things," said Horry; "and I was—de—de—de—termined to give the d——d puppy that owned them a lesson."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"But where did the turtles come from?"

"From the genius of my cook, Tom," said Porgy. "The turtle are terrapin from the Caw-caw."

"Not the alligator terrapin, captain, I hope," said Sumter. "I could never bring myself to eat any of that order."

"You have done it on this occasion," said Porgy.

"And very effectually too, general," said Singleton, "since I have helped you to a second supply, and you seem in a fair way to need a third."

Sumter looked a little blank.

"Do not be discomfited, general," said Porgy, "since I took the precaution to have all their tails cut off before they were hashed up for the soup."

"But what did you do with the tails?"

"Ah! they were made into balls, with a due proportion of beef and bacon."

"You have caught me beyond escape, captain, since I confess to have done as much execution on the balls as on the soup."

"And you are surprised into a wisdom, general, that has cured you of the prejudices of twenty years! What we call the alligator terrapin is the best of the tribe—the fattest, richest, best flavored. It requires only that skill in the dressing which my man Tom supplies."

The bugle sounded. Sergeant Millhouse marshalled the waiters to their stations, and the emptied vessels were removed. With another blast of the bugle, new dishes were set on the table.

"A noble-looking fish," said Greene. "What fish is this, Captain Porgy?"

"The greatest delicacy of a fresh-water river, this is the Edisto blue cat—for very nice people a most discouraging name.—Gentlemen, look to yourselves. Here is boiled fish, such as George the Third can not procure; dressed in a style which would not discredit the table of our great ally, the king of France. Men of *goût* will of course prefer the boiled—for the undeveloped taste, the fry is abundant. There are perch and trout in those several dishes. They are all fresh from the Edisto within five hours."

"Your troopers have been busy, captain."

"Ay, sir, and my cook. He was fortunate in his search along the river this morning, to come upon three or four fish-traps, which he emptied without leave. Governor, the melted butter is beside you. By-the-way, those naval biscuit are also from the stores of my Lord Rawdon.—General, do not dream of defiling that fish with vinegar. It is an abomination in this case. The fish only entreats the butter, and the dressing is complete."

The eye of Porgy swept the table. The guests discussed the fish with the relish of starving men. There was a cessation. The finger of Porgy was lifted. Millhouse's bugle gave tongue, and the fish was superseded with a variety of dishes.

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65 Edisto, river in South Carolina • 69 goût, taste • 83 discussed, tried the quality of, by consuming. Compare Scott, in Guy Mannering (1815): "A tall, stout, country-looking man was busy discussing huge slices of cold boiled beef"

"General Greene—Governor Rutledge—suffer me to persuade you both to the ragout which is before me."

"What is it, captain?"

"Try it, general. It is the alerta—the green alerta—a sort of chicken you will find it, but far superior. The stew is of the *lagarta,* according to the Spaniards, and a dish quite as rare as exquisite on table. Gentlemen, interspersed with these dishes you will find more familiar, but inferior ones. There are hams and tongues, both from the stores of Lord Rawdon, and, in fact, most of this course will be found of foreign character. You will please ask me for no more revelations touching my mode of procuring supplies, as I have no wish to expose the breaking of any more crockery. It is not every one of our partisans who can bear, with so much equanimity as Colonel Horry, the story of his own acquisitions, and how made."

"This—what do you call it?" said Greene.

"Alerta!"

"Is delicious!"

"And nothing could be more savory than this stew, Captain Porgy."

"Yes, indeed, governor—the Spaniards have the merit of the discovery. But gentlemen, with this course, it is time to spiritualize the feast."

The speaker's finger was uplifted, and two enormous bowls of punch were set down at the two ends of the table.

"Gentlemen, we owe a great deal to the providence of Lord Rawdon."

"And the improvidence of Horry," whispered Rutledge, "for, of a verity, had he captured these spoils, he would never have made the same use of them as our host has done."

"Sir," said Porgy with solemnity, "he would have wasted them—naked, upon his dragoons.—Gentlemen, you will please fill for a sentiment. Colonel Singleton, see that your end of the table charges duly."

"We are ready, captain."

Porgy rising:—

"Gentlemen, our first regular sentiment: 'The cause of Liberty—the cause of the American continent—the cause of all continents wherever man has a living soul!'"

"Music." And the bands struck up.

"Captain Porgy," said Lee, "send me, if you please, a second supply of that dish which you call the alerta. I don't know what sort of bird it is, but the savor is that of young pigeons. It is wonderfully nice."

"I agree with you, Lee," said Colonel Williams, "though I have no more idea what the bird is than of the mansions of the moon. Let me trouble you also, Captain Porgy."

"I must also trespass, captain," said Carrington. "Ordinarily, I seldom suffer myself to eat of dishes of which I know nothing; but these foreign meats come to us under good guaranties, though half the time without a name at all."

"Unless French, which is so much Greek to me," said Maham. "Captain, that *lagarta* stew is princely."

"No crowned head in Europe enjoys the like. Shall I help you, Colonel Maham?"

"Thank you, yes. But I thought you called it foreign."

"So it is—in one sense; but this is not imported. It is wholly domestic."

"Well, foreign or domestic, it is first rate," said Greene. "I will try a little more of it, Captain Porgy."

"Ah! general,"—with a smile—"suffer me to say that it is only in the militia service, after all, that the taste properly refines. Governor, shall I serve you?"

"Thank you, I will mince a little of your *lagarta,* captain," and a sly glance of Rutledge apprized the captain of his suspicions. But the face of Porgy made no revelations.

"Gentlemen," said Singleton, at the other end of the table, "fill your glasses."

"Ready, all," said Porgy.

Singleton rose, and gave:—

"South Carolina—almost freed from the footsteps of the foreign tyrant, and rising to the full assertion of her own sovereignty!"

A brilliant burst from John Rutledge, brief, but like a fiery tongue speaking to the soul, followed this sentiment; and the music rose into a triumphant peal as his voice died away upon the echoes. Other sentiments succeeded other speeches; Rutledge, Greene, Marion, Sumter, Lee, were all duly honored with toasts, and all responded, each after his own fashion, all unaffectedly, simply, and with the proper earnestness of soldiers. And the punch

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4 **alerta,** Spanish word meaning "on the alert"; here used for "frog"
• 6 **lagarta,** alligator

flowed anew into fresh goblets, and the merriment grew high, and some of the grave barons began to sing in snatches, and the volunteer toasts filled up the pauses in the conversation. Meanwhile, a score of melons were placed upon the board, and the preserved fruits from the West Indies, guava and ginger, were crowded upon the board, and provoked new merriment at the expense of Rawdon, who lost, and Horry who refused to find the prize.

And while they gashed deeply the purple centres of the melons, Rutledge suddenly said to Porgy:—

"And now, captain, that you have had your triumph, that all present have borne testimony in the least equivocal manner to the merits of your feast, I would fain know of what those foreign dishes were compounded, of which, knowing nothing, all have partaken so freely. Hams and tongues, fresh from Britain, designed for my Lord Rawdon's own table, have been sent away from yours uncut—proof of homage, the most profound, to yet preferable meats. Pray tell us, then, what were the elements of your *lagarta* and your *alerta*—your *ragouts* and stews."

"Ay, ay," seconded the company, "let us know. What were the birds?"

"I should really be pleased to know, Captain Porgy," said General Greene, bowing, "touching those birds."

"There need be no mystery in it now, general, since, as Governor Rutledge says, the feast has triumphed. But I am afraid I shall too greatly confound you, when I state that the dishes contained no birds at all. The stew of *alerta* was compounded chiefly of the race which helped Homer in the construction of an epic—a race which Milton describes as the—

"'Small infantry
Warred on by cranes.'"

"You surely do not mean *frogs,* Captain Porgy?" cried Lee, with affected horror in his accents.

"Your guess is a sagacious one, and worthy of the legion, Colonel Lee."

"Good heavens! and is it come to this, that the soldiers of liberty should be reduced to the necessity of frog-eating?"

"Necessity, Colonel Lee!" exclaimed Rutledge. "By heavens, sir, it should be matter of taste and preference, sir, if only in due deference to our great Gallic ally; but, of a truth, sir, after to-day's feast, it should be a new argument in behalf of liberty, that she has brought us to such rare fine feeding and such improved tastes."

"And the other dish, Captain Porgy," demanded Sumter, "the stew with the Spanish name?"

"The name speaks for itself—*lagarta.* It is of the great lizard family—the cayman—in vulgar speech, the alligator. But the specimens employed, gentlemen, were mere juveniles; young vagabonds, whose affectionate parents had hardly suffered them out of sight before. They had probably never fed on larger prey than their neighbors of the alerta family."

"One question, Captain Porgy," said Carrington; "be so good as to inform me, if, among your several unfamiliar dishes, I have had the happiness to eat of the rattlesnake, the viper, the moccasin, or the boa-constrictor?"

"Alas! colonel, I grieve to say that you have not. I should have been pleased to have got a couple of young chicken-snakes, but I was not fortunate in the search. We got glimpse of a few runners [black-snakes], but they were quite too swift of foot for the hunters. The chicken-snake is of unexceptionable tenderness; the runner is a little too muscular, if not previously well sodden; but, unless near a hencoop, or a corncrib, it is not easy to find the chicken-snake. I repeat my regrets that I could not secure this delicacy for my table. But another time, Colonel Carrington, should you sup with me, I will make a special effort in your behalf."

"I thank you, sir; do not suffer your regrets to disturb you. For that matter, I am half doubtful whether your *alerta* and *lagarta,* of which I have, in my ignorance, partaken somewhat too freely, will continue to lie lightly on my soul or stomach."

"Have no fears, sir; and the better to secure their repose, do me the honor, sir, of a bowl of punch with me. Gentlemen, I entreat the whole table to our companionship."

And the vessels were filled and emptied.

"And now, gentlemen," continued the host, "I give you—The poets, who minister at once to Apollo, to Bacchus, and to Mars, and beg to introduce you to the

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32 Homer. See Iliad, Bk. III, l. 6 • 33 Milton. The quotation is from Paradise Lost, Bk I, ll. 575-576 • 45 Gallic ally, France • 66 [black-snakes], Simms' brackets

only representative of the faculty in our squadron, Mr. George Dennison, my ensign. If I mistake not, he has been this day as busy with the muse, as I with my cook; and, if we will suffer him, he will bring us gifts from Parnassus not unworthy of those which we have enjoyed from the provision-wagon of Lord Rawdon."

"In which Horry, going from Dan to Beersheba, could see nothing."

"Having a taste for baths, warming-pans, and chamber-furniture."

"'Nough of that—that—Singleton! I—I—I'm a sinner be—be—beyond salvation, if I ever pass a little mean-looking wagon again, without seeing what's in it."

"But—Mr. Dennison," said Rutledge.

"George! Geordie!" said Porgy, good-humoredly. The poet, hitherto the only silent person at table, now rose—a tall, slender person, of bright, lively eye, mouth full of expression, Grecian nose, and great forehead rising up like a tower. His cheeks were flushed, his frame trembled, and there was an evident quivering of the lip which was discernible to every eye about him. Dennison sang the verses, which he wrote, in a clear, military voice, shrill like a clarion. There was, perhaps, no great deal of music in his composition, but enough for the present purpose, and of the kind best suited, perhaps, for a military gathering—bold, free, eager and full of animation. His ballad had been the work of that very afternoon.

He had no prefaces. But, waiting till the music hushed, and the voices, he then began:—

The Battle Feast

To the dark and bloody feast,
  Haste ye battle vultures, haste;
There is banquet, man and beast,
  For your savage taste:
Never on such costly wassail
  Did ye flesh your beaks before;
Come, ye slaves of Hesse Cassel,
  To be sold no more!

Small your cost to George of Britain,
  One and sixpences sterling down
Yet for this, ye sorry chapmen,
  Each will lose his crown;
Freedom knows no price for valor,
  Yours is measured by the groat,
Britain pays in gold and silver,
  We in steel and shot.

Recreants, ye from Scottish Highlands,
  Lately rebels to the throne
Of that brutal foreign despot,
  Now, whose sway ye own;
Ye are welcome to the banquet,
  Which is spread for all who come,
Where the eater is the eaten,
  And the deathsman goes to doom.

And ye braggart sons of Erin,
  Loathing still the sway ye bear,
Groaning in the very fetters,
  Ye would make us wear;
Ever writhing, ever raging,
  'Neath the bonds ye can not break—
Here the bloody banquet woos ye,
  Gather and partake!

Stoop, ye vultures, to the issue,
  It will be ere set of sun!
Mark whose valor bides the longest,
  Blood of price or blood of none.
Comes the Tartan of Glenorchy,
  Comes the sullen Saxon boor,
Comes the light-heeled German yager
  Crowding to the shore!

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7 from . . . Beersheba, throughout the whole region, Dan and Beersheba being, respectively, the northern and southern limits of Palestine in early Old Testament times • 36 slaves of Hesse Cassel. "The Hessians, hired at so much per head to the crown of Britain, for the war in America, formed no small portion of the British army."—Simms • 39 One . . . down. "We are not sure that Master George Dennison is altogether right in this statement of the hire of the Hessian per head, but the difference is immaterial, whether in poetry or history."—Simms • 40 chapmen, merchants, traders • 46 Recreants . . . Highlands. "The exiled rebels of '45, when settled in America, almost wholly proved adherents of that monarch whom, as followers of the Stuarts, they opposed to the knife. The disasters of '45 cured them of all propensity to rebellion. Even the Macdonalds, the famous Hector—Flora who saved the Pretender—all became loyal to George the Third in America, and fought against the patriots."—Simms • 66 Tartan of Glenorchy, Scotch Highlander. "Tartan" is Scotch plaid • 68 yager, or jäger, a German rifleman, originally a hunter

Who shall meet them by the water
On the mountain, in the vale,
Meet them with the stroke of slaughter
Till the right arm fail?
Wherefore ask? Yon pealing summons
Finds fit answer, sharp and soon,
Answer fit for peers and commons,
Yager and dragoon.

Lo! the soul that makes a nation,
Which, from out the ranks of toil,
Upward springs in day of peril,
Soul to save the soil!
Comes a high and mighty aspect,
From the shores of Powhatan;—
Lo! in him the nation's hero,
Glorious perfect man!

Follows, rugged as his mountains,
Daring man from Bennington;
Blacksmith stout from Narraganset,
Good where deeds are done:
Comes the keen-eyed Santee rifle,
Sleepless still and swift as flame,
Rowel rashing, bullet winging
Man of deadly aim.

Stoop, ye vultures, to the issue,
Stoop, and scour the bloody plain
Flesh your beaks where fat the carnage,
Mountains up the slain:
Whose the skull your talon rendeth
Eye, within your dripping beak,
Speechless tongue that loosely lolleth
On divided cheek!

In the tartan of Glenorchy,
Scarlet of the Saxon boor,
Gray frock of the Hessian yager
Strewn from mount to shore,
Read the fate of hireling valor,
Read the doom of foreign foe,
Know that he who smites for freedom,
Ever strikes the deadly blow!

It was in the midst of the compliments of the party to the poet, that Willie Sinclair stole in to the table, and plucked the sleeve of Marion, who rose quickly and quietly, and went out with him in silence. The company sat at the table some time longer.

"Why your poet seems a genuine Birserker, Captain Porgy. This chant was worthy to be sung in the hall of Odin. Does he fight as bravely as he sings."

"Every bit, sir, and he goes into battle with the same convulsive sort of tremor with which he begins to sing or to recite. But that passes off in a few moments, and then he fairly rages. In fact, sir, it is not easy for him to arrest himself, and he sometimes shows himself rather too savage in strife—with rather too great an appetite for blood."

"You are as fortunate, Captain Porgy, in your poet as your cook; I would I could persuade them from you!—Who?—Do you say?"

These last words were spoken to Lieutenant Frampton, who had whispered something into Rutledge's ear.

"Colonel Sinclair, your excellency. He waits you without, along with General Marion."

"Instantly"—and, watching his opportunity, while beakers were filling, Rutledge stole away. Greene followed his example, so did Sumter and the elder officers; the young ones remained, and soon Captain Porgy, his veneration no longer active, was in full flight, keeping the table in a roar, with merry jest, jibe, and story, till the hours grew something smaller than the stars, and the moon had a hooded, downcast looking visage, as if she had seen or heard something to shock her modesty. Let us leave the revellers while they make a final onslaught upon the punchbowls.

1855

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14 shores of Powhatan, eastern Virginia, where Powhatan, an Indian chief, flourished in the early seventeenth century. The "glorious perfect man" of the passage is, of course, George Washington • **18 Bennington**, in Vermont. The reference is to John Stark, American Revolutionary general • **19 Narranganset**, in Rhode Island. The reference is to Nathanael Greene • **23 Rowel**, a small wheel attached to spurs, with radiating sharp points • **23 rashing**, cutting • **24 Man . . . aim**, an allusion to the American Revolutionary generals, Thomas Sumter and Francis Marion • **42 Willie Sinclair**. The hero of the book makes this brief appearance at Captain Porgy's banquet. See introductory note, p. 596



Singers of the West

In the new country being opened up by the emigrants, new songs were made which caught the spirit of the times in various ways. The four which follow show something of their variety: one was made for a political campaign, one was written by a composer of popular songs who was just starting his career in Cincinnati, two were the works of forgotten movers or settlers. All were ballads or ballad-like songs, and all, with the possible exception of "The Wolverine's Song," had widespread oral currency.

The Wolverine's Song

Most memorable, perhaps, of all Presidential campaigns before 1860 was the one of 1840, in which Harrison and Tyler, "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," were elected. The Whig party, after having done badly in the local elections of 1839, met in December of that year and managed to nominate William Henry Harrison, hero of the battle of Tippecanoe, for the Presidency and John Tyler as his running mate. For several months Harrison's chances seemed hopeless. Then an opposition newspaper in Baltimore printed an attack on Harrison which hooted at his boorishness: "Give him a barrel of hard cider and a pension of two thousand a year, and, our word for it, he will sit the remainder of his days in a log cabin by the side of a sea coal fire and study moral philosophy."

Harrison was well-to-do and well-educated, but instead of pointing this out, his supporters made the remarks about his ignorance the basis of a campaign playing up Harrison as a Western Indian fighter and log-cabin settler. The General discarded his high silk hat for a broad-brimmed one, and all the publicity about him made him the symbol of the log-cabin, hard-cider West.

"The chief means of popular excitement," said a Harrison campaigner, "were the glee clubs, which never before

Panel (l. to r.): Conestoga wagons, moving westward • A house-raising in the new territory • Forty-Niners

or since have been so effectively used." Said a Van Buren supporter: "Songs rang in my ears wherever I went, morning, noon, and night. . . . Men, women and children did nothing but sing. It worried, annoyed, dumfounded, crushed the Democrats, but there was no use trying to escape." One of the hundreds of such pieces, the song which follows, taken from **The Log Cabin Minstrel**, appeals to the "Wolverines"—the Michigan men.

Ye hard fisted, log cabin, Wolverine boys,
Whom slander and ridicule never annoys,
Now come up to the scratch, for your country demands
The prayers of your hearts and the work of your hands;
For a race of vile "soap-locks" and ruffle-gay knaves
Have seized on our birthrights, and made us all slaves!
Come, then, to the rescue—be fearless and true,
And we'll put them to flight with Old Tippecanoe!
Make way for Tippecanoe!
He's death on a Tory, that Tippecanoe!

They call him a Granny—they say he is poor,
And lives in a Cabin befitting a boor!
And they say that he never drinks Port or Champagne,
But Cider as hard as his dwelling is plain!—
Well, what if he does? Still, his table is spread
With such as his purse will afford; and a bed—
Though coarser than Martin Van Buren's, 'tis true,
Is kept for the stranger by Tippecanoe!
Huzza for Tippecanoe!
He's death on a Tory, that Tippecanoe!

We know that Van Buren can ride in his coach,
With servants, forbidding the vulgar's approach,
We know that his fortune such things will allow,
And we know that our candidate follows the plough;
But what if he does? Who was bolder to fight
In his country's defence on that perilous night
When nought save his valor sufficed to subdue
Our foes at the battle of Tippecanoe?
Huzza for Tippecanoe!
He dropped the red Locos at Tippecanoe!

They call him a coward, the dastardly slaves!
Whose courage preserved them from infantile graves,
And gave them that life which they ignobly spend
Traducing their own and their Country's best friend.
But slander and ridicule ne'er can efface
That long-settled, well-settled, deep-settled trace
Of gratitude, marked on the heart that is true!
He's after you, Matty, that Tippecanoe!
Make way for Tippecanoe!
He's death on a Tory, that Tippecanoe!

1840

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5 **soap-locks**, hair made shiny and curly with the aid of soap • 8 **Tippecanoe**, a two-hour battle in November 1811, during which the force of eleven hundred men under Harrison defeated the Indians led by Tecumseh. Harrison thus won his nickname • 30 **Locos**, abbreviation for Locofoco, a nickname of a wing of the anti-Whig Democratic party, 1835-1837 • 32 **Whose . . . graves.** The inspired poet exaggerated somewhat the results of Harrison's victory over the Indians

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Oh! Susanna

Stephen Collins Foster 1826 • 1864

"My Old Kentucky Home," "Swanee River," "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair," "Old Black Joe"—these were only a few of the songs by Stephen Collins Foster, the most popular song writer in American history. Foster was born of Scotch-Irish parents in Pittsburgh, July 4, 1826. Though he was scantily educated, he discovered in the late 1840's his extraordinary gifts as a composer. Introduced, as a rule, by singers in minstrel shows, Foster's ballad-like compositions often became nationally famous, and many are still remembered and sung.

Foster was living in Cincinnati when his song "Oh! Susanna" was introduced in 1847 by singers in Andrew's Eagle Ice-Cream Saloon in Pittsburgh. Within less than two years at least twenty editions had been published by various publishers, and several minstrel troupes were singing it wherever they stopped.

The song was becoming tremendously popular in January 1848, when gold was discovered in California. For the great throng of Forty-Niners who crossed the continent westward, this was the favorite song. The nonsense rhymes had no relevance whatever to the gold rush, but the amusing words and the jaunty tune made the song unforgettable.

I come from Alabama
Wid my banjo on my knee.
I'm gwan to Louisiana,
My true love for to see.
It rain'd all night the day I left,
The weather it was dry,
The sun so hot I froze to death,
Susanna, don't you cry.

Chorus

Oh! Susanna Oh! don't you cry for me,
I've come from Alabama wid my banjo on my knee.
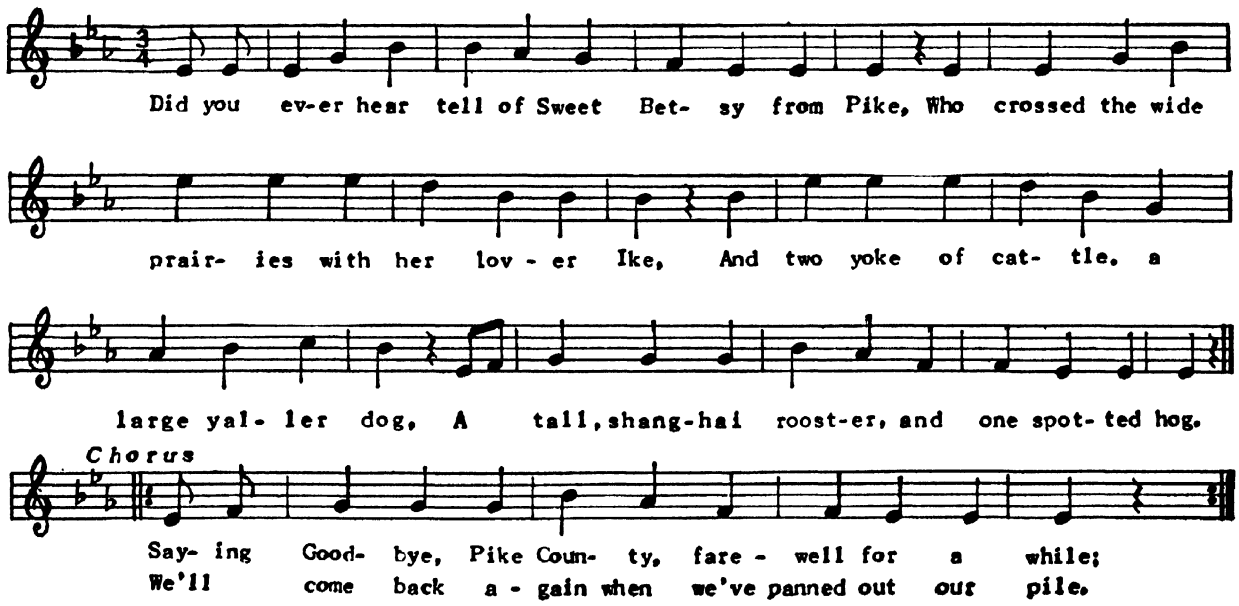
I jumped aboard de telegraph,
And trabbelled down de ribber,
De 'lectric fluid magnified,
And killed five hundred nigger.
De bullgine bust, de horse run off,
I really thought I'd die,
I shut my eyes to hold my breath,
Susanna, don't you cry.

I had a dream de odder night,
When eb'ry ting was still;
I thought I saw Susanna,
A-coming down de hill.
The buckwheat cake war in her mouth,
The tear was in her eye,
Says I, I'm coming from de South,
Susanna, don't you cry.

I soon will be in New Orleans,
And den I'll look all round,
And when I find Susanna,
I'll fall upon the ground.
But if I do not find her,
Dis darkie'll surely die,
And when I'm dead and buried,
Susanna, don't you cry.

1847·1848

Sweet Betsy from Pike



Pike County, Missouri, was the birthplace of many of the earliest emigrants to cross the plains, and the type of emigrants from this county was peculiar enough so that Westerners soon were talking of "Pikes." In 1855 the California humorist Phoenix, describing a migrating train from Pike County, said: "Each family consists of a man in butternut-colored clothing driving the oxen; a wife in butternut-colored clothing riding in the wagon, holding a butternut baby, and seventeen butternut children running promiscuously about the establishment; all are barefoot, dusty, and smell unpleasantly." In time "Pike" became the term for similar specimens not only from Missouri but also from other Middle Western or Southern states. "The Pike," said Bayard Taylor, "is the Anglo-Saxon relapsed into semi-barbarism . . . long, lathy, sallow . . . he takes naturally to whisky . . . has the 'shakes' his life long at home . . . distrusts men in 'store clothes.' . . ." An anonymous singer, in the 1850's, invented the following account of the travels Westward of two such poor whites. The chorus is the same as in the first stanza except in the instances where changed choruses appear.

Did you ever hear tell of Sweet Betsy from Pike,
Who crossed the wide prairies with her lover Ike,
And two yoke of cattle, a large yaller dog,
A tall, shanghai rooster, and one spotted hog.

Chorus

Saying, "Good-bye, Pike County, farewell for a while;
We'll come back again when we've panned out our pile."

One evening quite early they camped on the Platte,
'Twas near by the road on a green shady flat;
Where Betsy, quite tired, lay down for repose,
While with wonder Ike gazed on his Pike County rose.

They soon reached the desert, where Betsy gave out,
And down on the sand she lay rolling about;
While Ike in great terror looked on in surprise,
Saying, "Betsy, get up, you'll get sand in your eyes."

Chorus

Saying, "Good-bye, Pike County, farewell for a while;
I'd go back tonight, if it was but a mile."

Sweet Betsy got up in a great deal of pain,
And declared she'd go back to Pike County again;
Then Ike heaved a sigh and they fondly embraced,
And she traveled around with his arm round her waist.

The Injuns came down in a wild yelling horde,
And Betsy was skeered they would scalp her adored;
Behind the front wagon wheel Betsy did crawl,
And there she fought Injuns with musket and ball.

The alkali desert was burning and bare,
And Isaac's soul shrank from the death that lurked there:
"Dear old Pike County, I'll go back to you."
Says Betsy, "You'll go by yourself if you do."

The wagon tipped over with a terrible crash,
And out on the prairie rolled all sorts of trash;
A few baby clothes done up with great care
Looked rather suspicious; but 'twas all on the square.

The shanghai ran off and the cattle all died,
The last piece of bacon that morning was fried;
Poor Ike got discouraged, and Betsy got mad,
The dog wagged his tail and looked wonderfully sad.

They swam the wide rivers and crossed the tall peaks,
And camped on the prairie for weeks upon weeks.
Starvation and cholera and hard work and slaughter.
They reached California spite of hell and high water.

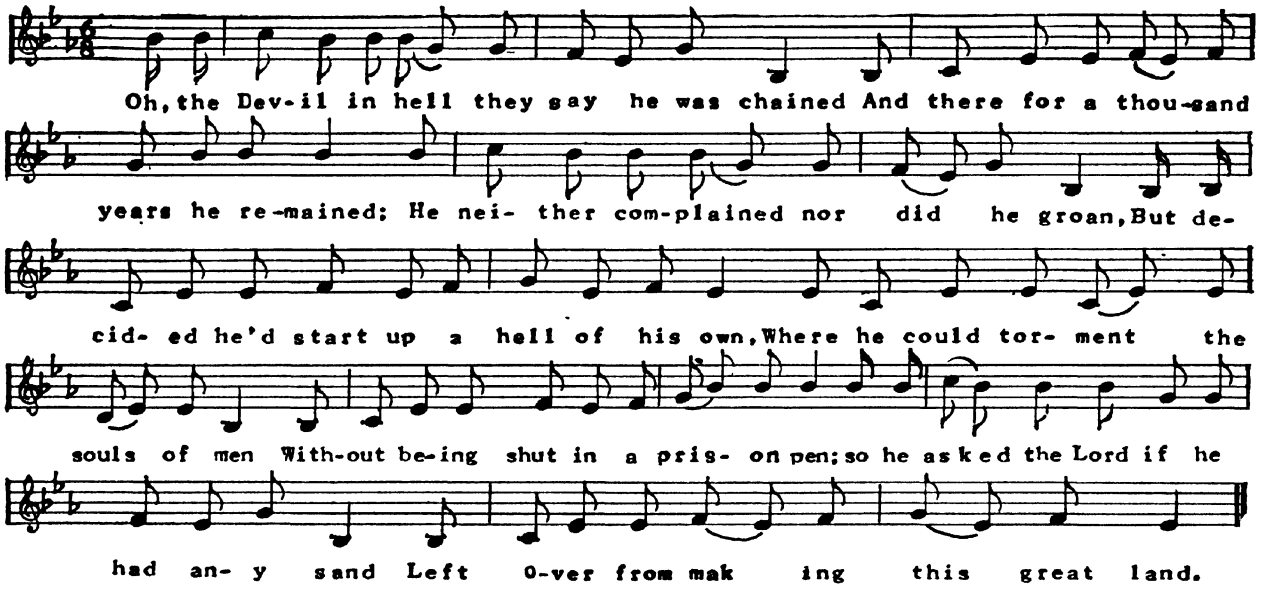
Long Ike and sweet Betsy got married of course,
But Ike getting jealous obtained a divorce;
And Betsy well satisfied, said with a shout:
"Good-bye, you big lummox, I'm glad you backed out!"

Chorus

Saying, "Good-bye, dear Isaac, farewell for a while,
But come back in time to replenish my pile."

1855?

Hell in Texas



The year gold was discovered in California, Texas was ceded by Mexico to the United States. The great stretch of territory thus secured had several climates, some of which were fairly distressing. In "Hell in Texas," a ballad composer told in rollicking words a fanciful story of the way Texas got some of its least attractive features.

Oh, the Devil in hell they say he was chained,
And there for a thousand years he remained;
He neither complained nor did he groan,
But decided he'd start up a hell of his own,
Where he could torment the souls of men
Without being shut in a prison pen;
So he asked the Lord if He had any sand
Left over from making this great land.

The Lord He said, "Yes, I have plenty on hand,
But it's away down south on the Rio Grande,
And, to tell you the truth, the stuff is so poor
I doubt if 'twill do for hell any more."
The Devil went down and looked over the truck,
And he said if it came as a gift he was stuck,
For when he'd examined it carefully and well
He decided the place was too dry for a Hell.

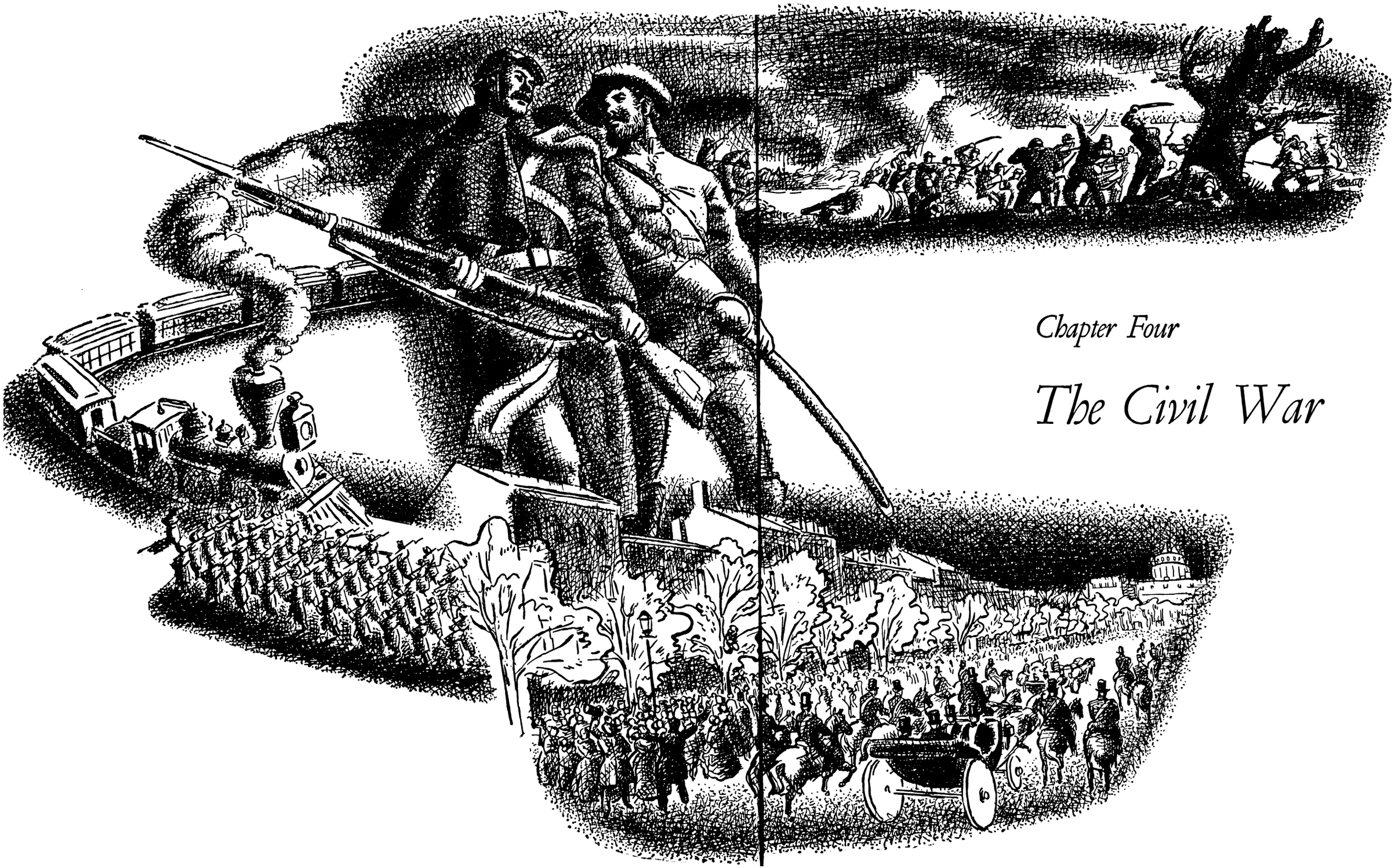
But the Lord just to get the stuff off His hands
He promised the Devil He'd water the land,
For he had some old water that was of no use,
A regular bog hole that stunk like the deuce.
So the grant it was made and the deed it was given;
The Lord He returned to His place up in heaven.
The Devil soon saw he had everything needed
To make up a hell and so he proceeded.

He scattered tarantulas over the roads,
Put thorns on the cactus and horns on the toads,
He sprinkled the sands with millions of ants
So the man that sits down must wear soles on his pants.

He lengthened the horns of the Texas steer,
And added an inch to the jack rabbit's ear;
He put water puppies in all of the lakes,
And under the rocks he put rattlesnakes.

He hung thorns and brambles on all of the trees,
He mixed up the dust with jiggers and fleas;
The rattlesnake bites you, the scorpion stings,
The mosquito delights you by buzzing his wings.
The heat in the summer's a hundred and ten,
Too hot for the Devil and too hot for men;
And all who remained in that climate soon bore
Cuts, bites, stings, and scratches, and blisters galore.

He quickened the buck of the bronco steed,
And poisoned the feet of the centipede;
The wild boar roams in the black chaparral;
It's a hell of a place that we've got for a hell.
He planted red pepper beside of the brooks;
The Mexicans use them in all that they cook.
Just dine with a Greaser and then you will shout,
"I've hell on the inside as well as the out!"



Chapter Four

The Civil War

Chapter 4

The Civil War

1850 · 1865

OVER THE CARNAGE ROSE PROPHETIC A VOICE.

"Over the carnage rose prophetic a voice,
Be not dishearten'd, affection shall solve the problems of freedom yet,
Those who love each other shall become invincible,
They shall yet make Columbia victorious." —Whitman

I. Intellectual Currents

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

The Civil War was the bloodiest conflict which the world had seen up to that time, and it struck a blow which was almost fatal to the American Union. The issues were complex and confused. On the Northern side, the primary objective of the abolitionists was the destruction of slavery as an institution, while the aim of the nationalists was the preservation of the Union. On the Southern side, many fought to defend slavery—an institution whose rights had been guaranteed by the Constitution—while others believed that the basic issue was the vindication of the sovereignty of the individual state. Beneath these immediate issues lay the conflict between two radically different forms of society: the democratic, industrial economy of the North and the aristocratic, agrarian economy of the South.

Although the causes of conflict were deeply imbedded in the American past, a series of dramatic events in the 1850's precipitated the outbreak of war in 1861.

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which compelled the return of runaway slaves to their owners, fanned the fires of abolitionism. Emerson declared that he would not obey it; Thoreau actually helped at least one fugitive slave to escape into Canada, and the gentle-souled Whitman implied in one of his poems that he would aid all such fugitives with his "firelock" if the occasion should arise. A decisive incident occurred in Boston in 1854, when an infuriated mob organized by the Anti-Slavery Society attempted to rescue Anthony Burns, a fugitive slave, from the police, and United States troops intervened to enforce the law.

The rival efforts of Northerners and Southerners to control Kansas, where the issue of slavery was to be decided by popular vote, resulted in bloody strife in that territory in 1855. In a famous speech called "The Crime Against Kansas," Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts spoke too harshly of Senator Butler of South Carolina; whereupon Butler's young kinsman, Preston Brooks, assaulted Sumner on the floor of the Senate and inflicted an injury from which Sumner never fully recovered. The controversy over Kansas hastened the or-

ganization, in 1856, of the Republican party on a platform opposing the extension of slavery.

Sectional bitterness was increased still further in 1857 by the Dred Scott decision of Chief Justice Taney. Having been taken by his owner into a free state and then brought back into a slave state, Dred sued for his freedom. The Supreme Court denied his petition, declaring that since a Negro was not a citizen, he did not have access to the courts. The decision was attacked by Lincoln in his great debates with Stephen A. Douglas. Still more dramatic and more far-reaching in its effects was the attempt of John Brown, a fanatical abolitionist, to foment an insurrection of slaves in Virginia. After having captured the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry in October 1859, he was arrested by a company of marines under Colonel Robert E. Lee, and was later tried and executed. Emerson and Thoreau spoke out in Brown's defense, while Southerners were horrified by the threat of a black uprising. The "martyrdom" of Brown contributed enormously to the rise of sectional feeling. He became the subject of a stirring battle song (p. 663) which Northern soldiers were to sing during the war: "John Brown's body lies a-moldering in the grave,/His soul is marching on!"

The election to the Presidency in 1860 of the Republican nominee, Abraham Lincoln, precipitated the secession movement in the South. The new party was exclusively the party of the North; political lines were more completely sectional than ever before. Since Lincoln had declared that "this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free," and the Republican party vigorously opposed the extension of slavery, Southern extremists believed that they were forced to choose between abolition and secession. South Carolina seceded from the Union in December 1860, and by February 1861, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas had followed her example. Shortly thereafter, the Confederate States of America was organized in Montgomery, Alabama, with Jefferson Davis as president. On April 12, 1861, the Confederate batteries in Charleston harbor fired on the federal garrison in Fort Sumter. Soon after this decisive event marking the opening of the war, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina joined the Confederacy.

The choice between state and nation was a difficult one for many Southerners to make. The old constitutional argument that the states were older than the Union (true of course of only the original thirteen) and that the Union consequently derived its authority from the states was no doubt intellectually convincing to some. But loyalty is based in the emotions rather than in the intellect. The most distinguished officer of the Confederate army, Robert E. Lee, resigned his commission in the United States Army when Virginia seceded because, as he put it, "I have been unable to make up my mind to raise my hand against my native state, my relatives, my children, and my home." A New England writer, Hawthorne, expressed sympathy with Lee's view when he said, with a touch of irony: "If a man loves his own State and is content to be ruined with her, let us shoot him if we can, but allow him an honorable burial in the soil he fights for."

At the outset of the war, the South believed that cotton alone was a guarantee of victory; that if deprived of cotton, the textile industry—and therefore the entire economy—of the North and of England would collapse. The Southern expectation was not realized. England, though on the point of doing so in 1862, never recognized the Confederacy. The issue was to be decided by arms alone, and the overwhelming superiority of the North in population and resources permitted little doubt of the eventual outcome. It is hardly necessary here to recount the shifting tides of battle during the four years of war. The turning point came in July 1863, when Lee was defeated at Gettysburg and Vicksburg capitulated after a long siege. The surrender of Lee to Grant at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, in effect terminated the war. The assassination of Lincoln five days later plunged the nation into the turmoil of reconstruction, which for the South proved to be more trying in many ways than the war itself.

ATTACKERS and DEFENDERS of SLAVERY

From the foregoing brief survey it is clear that slavery was the great issue before the American people, and it is not surprising that slavery was the subject of much of the literature, both Northern and Southern, during the decade which preceded the Civil War.

In the North, the two chief representatives of anti-slavery literature were John Greenleaf Whittier (p. 635) and Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. Both writers were motivated by a sincere devotion to the cause of human

freedom. Whittier's poems were characterized by a fiery intensity rarely equalled even in polemical verse. His "Ichabod" (p. 638) was a scorching condemnation of Webster for his support of the Fugitive Slave Law:

> Let not the land once proud of him
> Insult him now,
> Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
> Dishonored brow.

A better, though equally partisan, poem was his "Massachusetts to Virginia" (p. 636), with its swinging rhythm and its impressive roll-call of the Massachusetts counties. If the author's zeal caused him to forget that New Englanders had once been actively engaged in the slave trade, as when he said to Virginia,

> But that one dark loathsome burden ye must stagger with alone,
> And reap the bitter harvest which ye yourselves have sown!

the poem was none the less effective both as an indictment of the South and as a summons to action at home. Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* published in 1852, reached a larger number of readers than did all of Whittier's poems combined; indeed, the novel immediately became, and remained for many years, a best seller. It was dramatized and was long successful on the stage. Mrs. Stowe's appeal was more sentimental than Whittier's; her book emphasized the pathos of the traffic in Christian souls.

Among the early defenders of slavery was John Pendleton Kennedy, the Baltimore novelist (p. 589). Although he has been considered as a creator of romantic fiction, it should be recalled here that in *Swallow Barn,* published in 1832, he presented a reassuring picture of the friendly relations which existed between master and slaves on a Virginia plantation.

The abolitionist attacks of the 1840's and 1850's called forth a more elaborate and more vigorous defense. Calhoun pointed out that slavery was a necessary part of the Southern economy and that its abolition would destroy the South:

> The Southern States are an aggregate, in fact, of communities, not of individuals. Every plantation is a little community, with the master at its head, who concentrates in himself the united interests of capital and labor, of which he is the common representative. These small communities aggregated make the State in all, whose action, labor, and capital is equally represented and perfectly harmonized. Hence the harmony, the union, the stability of that section.

With the rising tide of sectional feeling, Southern apologists carried the argument to still greater extremes. William Gilmore Simms doubtless spoke for a substantial body of Southern opinion when he declared in 1852 that "slavery is a wisely devised institution of heaven devised for the benefit, improvement, and safety, morally, socially, and physically, of a barbarous and inferior race, who would otherwise perish by famine or by filth, by the sword, by disease, by waste, and destinies forever gnawing, consuming, and finally destroying."

The final step in the Southern defense carried the war to the enemy. The condition of the slaves on Southern plantations, it was argued, was infinitely better than that of the workers, or wage-slaves, in Northern factories and mines. William J. Grayson's *The Hireling and the Slave* (p. 642), published in 1854, pointed the contrast in Pope-like couplets: in Northern industrial communities,

> Gaunt Famine prowls around his pauper prey,
> And daily sweeps his ghastly hosts away;
> Unburied corpses taint the summer air,
> And crime and outrage revel with despair . . .

while on the Southern plantation,

> Warm social joys surround the Negro's cot,
> The evening dance its merriment imparts,
> Love, with its rapture, fills their youthful hearts,
> And placid age, the task of labor done,
> Enjoys the summer shade, the winter sun.

A middle position between the extremes of Northern abolitionism and Southern eulogy was taken by Webster and Lincoln. Throughout the controversy the aim of both men was not to destroy slavery but to preserve the Union, and both incurred the ill will of the abolitionists. Although they believed that slavery was an evil and op-

posed its extension, they were willing to respect its constitutional rights in the slave states if thereby the Union might be saved. Webster's desire for his country was best expressed in the noble peroration, "Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever." Lincoln's attitude as late as August 1862 was expressed in the famous letter to Horace Greeley (p. 672): "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. . . . What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union." The Emancipation Proclamation, announced on January 1, 1863, was a shrewd political weapon as well as a great humanitarian document. It united the cause of the Negro with that of the Union and gave to the Civil War in the eyes of the world the dignity of a crusade for human liberty.

THE LITERATURE of the WAR YEARS

Much of our best literature dealing with the Civil War was not written until many years later—Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* in 1895, for example, and Stephen Vincent Benét's *John Brown's Body* in 1928. During the war itself, the memorable literature on the subject of the war was small in amount: a few poems by Whittier and Timrod, several popular songs, the great speeches of Lincoln, and Whitman's fine collection of poems, *Drum-Taps.*

Since Whittier's work as propagandist had been largely accomplished before the outbreak of the war, he was content during its course to write an occasional poem. In "Barbara Frietchie" (p. 639) he celebrated an instance of loyalty to "the old flag" in the border state of Maryland, though it was a loyalty which he and other abolitionists had done much to undermine. In "Laus Deo" (p. 640) he rejoiced at the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. The amendment marked the final triumph of the cause for which he had labored, with energy and self-sacrifice, for thirty years.

While Whittier did his best work before and after the war, actual hostilities had the magical effect on Henry Timrod (p 651), the Southern poet, of calling forth poems far superior to anything else he ever wrote. "Ethnogenesis" (p. 652) and "The Cotton Boll" (p. 653) are compositions which entitle Timrod to a higher rank among our poets than he has yet been accorded. In these poems he reiterated many of the traditional Southern arguments: the Constitution recognized slavery, and the Bible did not prohibit it; the bondslave of the South was treated more humanely than the wage slave of the North; Southern cotton was necessary to the prosperity and happiness of the world. In eloquent, moving verse he described his conception of the South's mission and of the Southern character. The exportation of cotton under a system of free trade, he thought, would bind the nations together in lasting peace. The Southern character and its influence on the rest of the world were typified for him in the Gulf Stream, which ". . . through the cold, untempered ocean pours its genial streams."

The war also called forth Lincoln's finest utterances. The *First Inaugural* (p. 667) faced the difficult situation already created by the secession of seven Southern states. Lincoln asserted that the Union was indissoluble, and that no force other than that necessary to hold federal property and collect federal duties would be used against the erring states. He concluded with an appeal "to the better angels of our nature." *The Gettysburg Address* (p. 673), second only to the Declaration of Independence, is our most classic expression of the American democratic ideal; it was so phrased as to be always applicable. America was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Americans should "highly resolve . . . that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth." Delivered a little more than a month before Lee's surrender and the author's death, the *Second Inaugural* (p. 675) regarded the war as the righteous judgment of God on both North and South for the sin of slavery. The task before us, he said, was to proceed, "with malice toward none, with charity for all . . . to bind up the nation's wounds . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations." Lincoln's humane and wise view of postwar policy made his death a tragic loss to the South.

Walt Whitman (p. 676) had brought out three editions of *Leaves of Grass* (p. 677) before the war began and had laid down his basic principles in those volumes. He espoused Emerson's doctrine of the divinity of man, and, prompted by his larger and warmer sympathies, applied it literally and concretely to all men. He espoused, too, Emerson's belief in a transcendental intuition, which fused perhaps indistinguishably in his mind with an inherited Quaker belief in the inner light. His

Quaker inheritance (which possibly was fully as important as the Emersonian influence) contributed also to his independence, his sense of brotherhood with all men, and his love of peace. His mysticism, which became more emphasized in his later life, seems a blend of Emerson, the Quakers, and the Orient. His celebration of the body, however, was derived from none of these sources: it shocked Emerson particularly and drove him to opposition.

Whitman was a great equalitarian—his very catalogues were symbols of the equalizing power of his democracy. The "Myself" of "Song of Myself," his longest poem, was Everyman. The experiences related in his poems were partly actual and partly imaginary. So great was his faculty of empathy that he could project himself into the personalities of others in a very real sense and thus become "the hounded slave" or "the mashed fireman." He took his stand for absolute equality; he desired nothing for himself which others could not have in the same measure. It was natural that such a complete democrat should oppose slavery, and equally natural that such a sensitive sympathizer with all men should not bear arms against the slave owner. The war wrought no change in Whitman's basic ideas and attitudes. He was still "the caresser of life," still "a Southerner soon as a Northerner." His war poems reveal no partisan rage like Whittier's or Timrod's, nor were they concerned with the issues of the war. He felt a profound compassion for all soldiers and the mothers of soldiers, whether Yankee or Rebel.

Aside from polemics and sectional rancor, with which he was not at all concerned, Whitman's *Drum-Taps* (p. 704) affords the richest account of the war to be found in our poetry. One group of poems conveys the excitement of the early enlistments—the scholar is torn from his school; the bridegroom, from his bride. Another group pictures military scenes as sharply as a camera, and more suggestively—the cavalrymen slumping in their saddles while the horses drink from a stream, the shadowy forms of men and horses around the campfire on a mountainside. Other poems describe hospital scenes with modern realism or reveal the poignant suffering of the mother just notified of her son's death.

Though the war contributed little to Whitman's ideas, and changed not at all his fundamental attitudes, it stimulated the poet and clarified and spiritualized his poetry. He was never again to sing so lustily (and as some thought, sensually) of the "jolly bodily phase." His poetry became more mystical. His greatest poem reflects these changes. "When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom'd" (p. 709) was written as an elegy on the death of Lincoln. Due emphasis is given to the grief of the poet, memorialized by "lilac and star and bird"; due emphasis is given also to the sorrow of the nation, the funeral procession, and the tolling of bells. But these details are the background of the poet's mystical exaltation in the hymn to death. In the poem's burning core, America and the war and Lincoln are forgotten.

Except in such moments of mystical release, Whitman never forgot America. "Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood" (p. 720) celebrated the restoration of the Union and the new solidarity of "these states." "Democratic Vistas" revealed an acute concern for the evils, more and more apparent, in our rapidly developing industrialism. But in the poems after the Civil War, Whitman returned with an increasing frequency and a growing intensity to the mood of the Lincoln poem in his ultimate quest of a "passage to India." R.S.

II. Literary Trends

Varied though they are, the selections in this chapter are alike in being works intended to persuade. The appeals made during the bitter controversy about slavery and kindred matters, and during the consequent war, urged moderation or fierce opposition. And the poems of Walt Whitman, though they did not deal with slavery, eloquently preached the poet's doctrines about the individual and society. It was only natural that all such writings, since they were meant to influence opinions and beliefs, not only conformed to ways of thinking and feeling then current, but also took forms particularly likely to appeal to the tastes of the day. Some of the authors, nevertheless, created literature which was to have other than historical interest long after the controversy had ended.

Works dealing with the slavery controversy, naturally, were quite likely to reflect the spirit of the times by

being intemperate. Objective historians have, of course, made clear that neither side was blameless—that neither North nor South had a monopoly upon virtue. As was all too human, the people on each side felt that they were wholly right and their opponents wholly wrong. "Both [parties]," Lincoln observed in his *Second Inaugural*, "read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other." Each party asked such aid with superb confidence that God and right were on its side and the forces of evil on the other. This belief often found expression in literary productions strongly tinged with melodrama—productions in which one group of characters was pictured as too villainous, another group too innocent, to remain quite believable to readers of later, less impassioned times. The acrimony and the anger which then seemed inevitable were eventually to appear extreme to readers far in time from the contest.

Modern readers are likely, also, to perceive a rather quaint quality in the two extremes of literary style which the taste of the day obviously approved. One extreme sort was literary, learned, allusive, usually solemn, often highly ornate and figurative. Such a style is represented in the passage in Grayson's *The Hireling and the Slave* which portrays child laborers in the North:

> There, unconcerned, the philanthropic eye
> Beholds each phase of human misery;
> Sees the worn child compelled in mines to slave
> Through narrow seams of coal, a living grave,
> Driven from the breezy hill, the sunny glade,
> By ruthless hearts, the drudge of labor made,
> Unknown the boyish sport, the hours of play,
> Stripped of the common boon, the light of day,
> Harnessed like brutes, like brutes to tug, and strain
> And drag, on hands and knees, the loaded wain . . . .

Such ink-stained phrases as "the philanthropic eye," "the breezy hill, the sunny glade," "unknown the boyish sport," "the common boon," and "the loaded wain" give the verse a tone which would be disastrous to a poem written to sway readers today. At the other extreme was a vernacular style, unlearned, earthy, humorous, homely in any figures of speech which it happened to employ. This style is represented by a passage expressing ideas somewhat similar to those of Grayson—the comment of W. T. Thompson's homespun humorous character, Major Jones, upon the sad plight of the charwomen of Philadelphia:

> The servant galls was scrubbin the doresteps of the houses and washin off the pavements in front of 'em. I looked at 'em as I rode along in the hack, and I couldn't help feelin sorry to see such butiful, rosy-cheeked white galls, down in the dirt and slop in the streets, doin work that is only fit for niggers. They say here they aint nothin but slewers—but I seed sum that I would tuck for respectable white galls if I had seed 'em in Georgia.

Here, in a style which was the Southern counterpart of Hosea Biglow's Yankee versifying, the author used ungrammatical phrases, misspellings, and words which, if they were found in argumentative writings today, would prejudice many against the author. Many of the works of the period just before and during the war, modern readers may feel, went too far—in passages or in wholes —in the direction of highfalutin language or of the vulgar language of democracy. We of the present period tend to prefer writings which, like those of Emerson and Thoreau—or of Lincoln—avoided both extremes.

Whether moderns like the two styles or not, they should have little trouble understanding the attitudes to which the two ways of writing appealed—attitudes which have coexisted for a long time. One attitude was that bookish learning provided the best clues to truth and virtue; the other was that experience and common sense taught men best what was true and virtuous. As far back as the 1720's and 1730's, the two kinds of appeal had been illustrated by Cotton Mather and Benjamin Franklin. The ideal author, Mather said, "could not have writ as he does if he had not read very much in his time." "And his composures," Mather went on, "are not only a cloth of gold but stuck with as many jewels as the gown of a Russian ambassador." Franklin's Widow Silence Dogood and Poor Richard, by contrast, depended upon the teachings of experience rather than the teachings of books, and tended to use the simple language of farm folk and mechanics. Later, the Jeffersonian aristocrat and the Jacksonian common man provided a similar contrast. In recent times, the opposing attitudes have again been exemplified—on the one hand by "brain trusters" and theorists in government, and on the other by "practical" men who have been chiefly schooled by

experience. The contrasting styles, in other words, dramatically represent two continuous American attitudes.

ORATORY

The chief instrument for dispute in the period, by general agreement at the time, was oratory. Rightly or wrongly, it was still assumed that nothing so swayed public opinion as speeches. The function now jointly performed by books, the newspapers, moving pictures, and the radio was then chiefly performed by speakers addressing public meetings or legislative bodies.

To be sure, all oratory—even the best—is likely to lose much of its force when, instead of being spoken, it is translated into print. The excitement of the occasion and the reactions of the audience are lost, as are any impressions made by the physical appearance of the speaker and by the sound of his voice. Those who saw massive, dark-browed Daniel Webster and heard his thunderous voice always were tremendously impressed (there was a saying that no human being was ever really so great as Webster appeared to be), and all who wrote of him in retrospect were sure that his great presence had much to do with his forensic power. Similarly, speeches delivered by even lesser men lost much of their power when they became printed instead of uttered words.

But modern readers find that there are barriers above and beyond the usual ones to appreciation of the oratory of the mid-century. The most formidable barrier is the style—or rather styles—of spoken discourse. In this field of literature, as in others, there were at the time two extremes. One was discoverable in the talks of local politicians delivered to neighbors and, at times, in the speeches of national figures. This extreme was parodied in an unsigned skit which went the rounds of the newspapers in the 1840's; it purported to be a speech of Candidate Earth, who wanted his backwoods neighbors to elect him sheriff. Said he:

> Now, gentlemen, don't you think they ought to make me sheriff? I say, if Bob Black has floated farther on a log, killed more Injuns, or stayed longer under water than I have, elect him; if not, I say what has he done to qualify him for the office of sheriff? Did any of you ever know him to call for a quart? I never did; I have known him to call for several half-pints in the course of a day, but I never did know him to step forward manfully and say, "Give us a quart of your best." Then I say again, what has Bob Black done to qualify him for sheriff?

In similar (though probably even less literate) language, Davy Crockett and other backwoods candidates regularly appealed for votes. And the very simplicity of the diction, its very freedom from adornment, recommended the speakers to constituents who believed they prized horse sense above "book larnin'." The other extreme was represented not only in the orations of men still remembered for their eloquence—Daniel Webster, Wendell Phillips, Henry Clay—but also of a number who have been pretty well forgotten: John Randolph, George McDuffie, Seargent S. Prentiss, William C. Preston, Thomas Corwin, and others. Often the style used by these men was to the style of Candidate Earth as the style of Grayson was to that of Major Jones.

At the time, even when their words were not heard but read, these orators were extraordinarily effective. Time after time, they moved audiences to scornful laughter, to tears, to cheers, and constantly they molded public opinion both in the centers of learning and in the backwoods territory of Candidate Earth. (Whether they admitted it or not, backwoods folk were awed by learning.) The usually calm Professor George Ticknor of Harvard supplied an instance when, the evening after he had heard a speech by Webster, he wrote an account of his reactions in a letter: "Three or four times I thought my temples would burst with the gush of blood . . . . When I came out I was almost afraid to come near him [Webster]. It seemed to me as if he was like the mount that might not be touched and that burned with fire. I was beside myself, and am so still." As one reads other comments upon orations of the period, one sees that this picture of the transported speaker and awestruck listeners is quite common.

Eloquence, many believed, was essentially like poetry. Irresistibly it mastered the speaker. "True eloquence," said Webster in 1826, in his speech on Adams and Jefferson, "comes, if it come at all, like the outbreaking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force." And the inspiration which so mastered the

speaker communicated itself to the audience. "By eloquence," said Bryant in his *Lectures on Poetry*—also in 1826, "I understand those appeals to our moral perceptions that produce emotion as soon as they are uttered. It is in these that the orator is himself affected with the feelings he would communicate, that his eyes glisten, and his frame seems to dilate, and his voice acquires an unwonted melody, and his sentences arrange themselves into a sort of measure and harmony, and the listener is chained in involuntary and breathless attention."

Some of the most admired passages in the oratory of the day, in consequence, were remarkably figurative and rhythmic—poetic prose of a fairly deep purple hue. Particularly admired, for instance, was the conclusion of Webster's most celebrated speech in the Senate, the "Reply to Hayne" of 1830:

> When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterwards"; but everywhere, spread all over it in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart,—Liberty *and* Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!

Customarily many who commended the great oratory of the day cited this passage or similar ones. Our appreciation for such flights is tepid. The reason, of course, is that there has been a change in taste during the last century.

In the years before the Civil War, there were already some portents of the change in taste which eventually was to take place. In 1857, Edward G. Parker, in his book *The Golden Age of American Oratory*, indicated that the age which he had in mind was then, after exactly a hundred years, about to end. He saw two reasons for its conclusion. First, what he called "the age of chivalry" was closing and, said he, "A brazen age, anti-sentimental, succeeds; an age when sordid, calculating interest rather than conscious merit dares to run after reason." Secondly, "the growing taste of our people for reading" was bringing into prominence a new kind of persuasive composition—"accurate rhetorical composition, rather than the dashing vigor and vivacious sparkle of spontaneous oratory."

Whether for the reasons he suggested or not, Parker's prophecy about the changes in American taste was, in general, to come true. Even as he wrote, some at least had begun to lose their liking for what Parker characterized as "the oratory of America . . . bursting from the lips of Prophets" and to prefer, as he feared they might, "the less contagious influences of logic, and figures and facts." By 1850, Webster, for instance, had developed what students of his work call his "mature style"—a style which, compared with his earliest efforts, had greatly gained in simplicity. Edwin P. Whipple, in "Daniel Webster as a Master of English Style" (1879), wrote: "The mature style of Webster is perfect of its kind, being in words the express image of his mind and character,—plain, terse, clear, forcible; and rising to the level of lucid statement and argument into passages of superlative eloquence only when his whole nature is stirred by some grand sentiment. . . ." Although there are passages of eloquence in Webster's great speech of March 7, 1850, most of the address is devoted to his version of history, to arguments justifying his attitude, set forth massively to be sure, but for the most part somewhat simply and somewhat moderately—at least for the times—and the address is excellently organized. Only in the most famous passage in the speech—that on "peaceable secession" does Webster's eminence in the florid school of oratory become obvious. John C. Calhoun, generally ranked below Webster at the time, may be preferred by most readers today. The reason was suggested by a comment made upon his style by a critic of oratory in 1849. "Mr. Calhoun," E. L. Magoon wrote in *Living Orators in America*, "flaunts in no gaudy rhetorical robes of scarlet

and gold, but comes into the forum clothed in the simplest garb, with firm hands grasping the reins of fancy, and intent only on giving a reason for the faith that is in him." Readers today admire the relatively simple dress and the tight grip upon the reins, and find Calhoun's logic and his clarity admirable.

LINCOLN

Although modern readers can endure reading the speeches of Webster and Calhoun, they will probably find more moving the work of the one speaker of the Golden Age of Oratory who, by general consent, has become a classic author—Abraham Lincoln. At least four of Lincoln's speeches—*Farewell to Springfield, First Inaugural, Gettysburg Address,* and *Second Inaugural Address* (see pp. 666-676)—whether one agrees or disagrees with their interpretation of history, were great utterances. Even though they are set down in print and read years after their delivery, these works have the stamp of great literature upon them.

A student of Lincoln's collected speeches will find that a surprising amount of his work is not slightly below but far below these masterpieces in excellence. His first speech, delivered in 1832 when, as a gangling, ill-dressed youth of twenty-three, he was running for the state legislature, went this way:

> I presume you-all know who I am. I am humble Abe Lincoln. I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the legislature. My politics are short and sweet like the old woman's dance. I am in favor of a national bank. I am in favor of the internal improvements system, and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected I shall be thankful. If not it will be all the same.

The speech, to be sure, is somewhat better than that of Candidate Earth, but clearly its eloquence is in a similar style. And many of Lincoln's later speeches, among them the historic debates with Douglas, now appear to have little more than a certain homespun straightforwardness, well adapted to public debate, to recommend them. At times, by contrast, especially during his early career, Lincoln indulged in spread-eagle melodramatic oratory as tawdry as any produced by speakers at the time. There was, for instance, a campaign speech of 1840, in which he said:

> I know that the great volcano at Washington, aroused and directed by the spirit that reigns there, is belching forth the lava of political corruption in a current broad and deep, which is sweeping with frightful velocity over the whole length and breadth of the land, bidding fair to leave unscathed no green spot or living thing; while on its bosom are riding, like demons on the wave of hell, the imps of the evil spirit, and fiendishly taunting all who dare to resist its destroying course with the hopelessness of their efforts; and knowing this, I cannot deny that all may be swept away. Broken by it, I, too, may be; bow to it, I never will. The probability that we may fall in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just. It shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of its Almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world beside, and I standing up boldly alone, hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors.

Clearly the figurative language here used was meant to appeal to the current taste for purple passages. But Lincoln did manage, at least in his later years, to achieve greatness as a composer of speeches. Many of his contemporaries did not particularly appreciate him. At the Gettysburg dedication, the speech generally admired was not Lincoln's but a two-hour showpiece, orotund, florid, full of allusions to ancient history, which was intoned by Edward Everett. The day after the dedication, November 20, 1863, many newspapers enthusiastically praised Everett's oration, but not until February 1865 did any commentator note, in print, that Lincoln's short speech had been a great utterance—and that commentator was an Englishman.

Just why Lincoln managed to steer away as he did from both the crude utterances of a small-town politician and the fustian elegance of the popular orator is something of a problem. The very fact that he, unlike many of the leaders of the day, was self-schooled probably was important. While others among his contemporaries had studied the classical rules and examples of

oratory in college, Lincoln had learned his art chiefly in frontier political debates and in clashes in law courts. Because he relied upon the teachings of experience, he shared the democratic belief in common sense and its direct expression, and that fact, too, was significant. Literary influences upon Lincoln, nevertheless, were important, and fortunately some of the most notable were those of authors who achieved forceful expression by means of simplicity and restraint—Robert Burns, William Shakespeare, and the translators of the Bible into the King James version. Finally, Lincoln's own character and feeling as they developed during the trying years of his Presidency were powerfully influential upon his thought and the form of its expression. As Edward Dewitt Jones remarks, somewhat flossily, in his study of orators, *Lords of Speech,* "The graces of an orator's presence, the charm of his voice and manner, are ephemeral; while the grandeur of his thoughts, the magnanimity of his soul and the soundness of his reasoning live after him. It is the substance of his speeches, together with the chaste beauty of a style which matches the sheer beauty of his spirit, that lifts Abraham Lincoln into the small and elect company of the world's supreme masters of public speech." Lincoln, despite the intemperance of the times in which he lived, was a temperate man and an extremely sincere man. He was also something of a poet. His utterances, therefore, could outlast both the crude mouthings of the folksy politicians and the highly ornate orations of less temperate, less sincere, and less poetic speakers of the age.

POETRY

Two passages of verse by James Russell Lowell, one published in 1845, the other in 1846, show how one author active in this period could use both the high style and the low style of poetry in persuasive compositions. Lines in "The Present Crisis" (1845) read:

> Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops, fellest of the giant brood,
> Son of brutish Force and Darkness, who have drenched the earth with blood,
> Famished in his self-made desert, blinded by our purer day,
> Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his miserable prey;—
> Shall we guide his gory fingers where our helpless children play?

The first of the *Biglow Papers,* the next year, had this stanza:

> Aint it cute to see a Yankee
> Take sech everlastin' pains,
> All to git the Devil's thankee
> Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?
> Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
> Clear ez one an' one make two,
> Chaps that make black slaves o' niggers
> Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Few other authors could switch at will, as their contemporary Lowell could, from one extreme of style to the other. In general the writers of the Civil War period tended toward one or the other of the two styles of popular appeal.

Some of the popular songs show how both styles might be adapted to a single tune, "John Brown's Body" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (p. 662), for instance, as well as the two versions of "Dixie" (p. 660). Grayson and Timrod, although they heatedly disagreed about the definition of poetry, both followed the literary rather than the illiterate tradition in their verse. Grayson modeled his versification after what he called the "School of Dryden and Pope," writing his most representative poetry in heroic couplets. "I have faith," he wrote in his unpublished "Autobiography," "in the ancient classical models, the masters directly or indirectly of all the great poets of modern times." Timrod, by contrast, frankly acknowledged indebtedness to such authors as Milton, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. In some poems (see "Charleston," p. 657, and "Ode," p. 659), he used the simple ballad stanza or a slight adaptation; in perhaps more ("Ethnogenesis" and "The Cotton Boll") he employed the irregular ode form which had been employed by Wordsworth and Tennyson with marked success. But Grayson, disciple of Neoclassical poets, and Timrod, disciple of nineeteenth-century poets and Milton, were alike in using diction of a highly literary nature.

Whittier tried at times to write formidably literary verse, and his use of dialect in poetry was infrequent. Nevertheless, at his most effective he was a writer of songs which were relatively simple—almost in the man-

ner of folk songs—both in metrical form and in the kind of words used. The Quaker poet's country rearing, his brief schooling, and his particular admiration for the artless songs of Robert Burns all led him to write unpretentious poems. Never, it appears, did he give much consideration to matters of technique. His aim, as he stated it, was

> To paint, forgetful of the tricks of art,
> With pencil dipped alone in colors of the heart.

As a rule, therefore, no sign appeared of his striving for novelty of effect. All his life, his favorite measures were ballad measure, octosyllabics, and iambic pentameter—quite conventional forms of verse, and he used a vocabulary and figures of speech which were far from complex. His were "journalistic" poems which, because of their almost rustic directness and simplicity, appealed greatly to many untutored readers.

Whittier's songs resemble most other poems of the period, both literary and unliterary, proslavery and antislavery, in their depiction of the friends and the foes of the poet. Sure that his Quaker inner light had shown him what attitudes to take, Whittier conceived of the abolitionists as engaged in a "moral warfare," girded "in God's own might" and "in conflict with unholy powers," and he constantly pictured the struggle in such terms. Vouchsafed similar visions, as they believed, other poets on both sides were similarly intemperate. The author of a famous version of "Dixie" urged Southerners to battle "Till the spoilers are defeated,/Till the Lord's work is completed." Julia Ward Howe saw the Northern army clothed in righteousness and proclaimed that "God was marching on." Timrod saw the enemy as "the Goth," and confidently expected the Lord to release the Confederacy from "the great burthen of our country's wrong." For both North and South, it was as clear-cut as that. Such were the signs of bitter partisanship in many melodramatic poems.

WALT WHITMAN, WAR-BORN POET

Although, like other poets, he was a controversialist, Walt Whitman made no contribution worth noting to the argument about slavery. His poems about the Civil War are concerned with the experiences and the sufferings shared by men and women of both sides. However, Whitman found himself as a poet in the years when the nation was deeply engaged in the controversy about slavery, and he himself saw his own wartime experiences as the "final reasons-for-being" of his mature songs. Hence, despite the fact that he lived on and wrote on for many years after Appomattox, Whitman was in a very real sense a war-born poet. His poetry, though it seemed strange to readers when it first appeared, was, we now can see, molded by the literature being produced at the time he began to write. For instance, Emerson's poetry obviously left its mark. Perhaps even more important, the oratory and the styles of the 1840's and 1850's left their imprint upon the form of Whitman's poetry.

Whitman was like the orators of the day in that he wanted to preach to men the ways of righteous thinking and living. In notebooks which he filled when he was working toward the writing of *Leaves of Grass,* he voiced his determination to "elevate, enlarge, purify, deepen and make happy the attributes of the body and soul of man." Furthermore, as he considered how he would deliver this message to his countrymen, evidently he was not sure, for some time, whether his medium was to be oratory or poetry. His considering oratory was hardly surprising, since the accepted medium for social or religious preachments was the oration or the sermon, and he was fascinated all his life by public speaking and public speakers. Possibly his inability to succeed as an orator was an important factor leading to his final decision to become a poet. In his early New York days, so he said, Whitman "haunted the courts to witness notable trials, and . . . heard all the famous actors and actresses." Over the years, he listened to Webster, Garrison, Beecher, Clay, Everett, and Phillips, as well as less famous orators. His "Poem of Joys" contains an interesting description of the great speaker swaying his audience:

> O the orator's joys!
> To inflate the chest—to roll the thunder of the voice out from the ribs and throat,
> To make the people rage, weep, hate, desire, with yourself,
> To lead America—to quell America with a great tongue.

speare by Booth and Forrest which were then fashionable, and he himself loved to intone sonorous lines from the dramas while riding Broadway omnibuses, tramping with friends, and strolling by the seashore. He knew and greatly admired, too, literature which approximated the oratorical effect he wanted—the lecture-essays of Emerson, the songs of Ossian, translations of Greek and Latin dramas and epics, the exhortatory parts of the Bible, and their adaptations and paraphrases in sermons.

In the notes that Whitman wrote for his early works, there were passages which might have done for either lectures or poems. One scrap of paper bears the caption "Poem—Religious," and then, underneath this title is written "or lecture on Religion"; and one note, though it was headed "lecture," eventually was utilized as part of a poem. As a reciter of his own poetry, he attempted (though unfortunately with questionable success) to use the resonant tones, the modulations, the gesticulations of an old-school public speaker. As late as 1888, in his final Preface, he spoke of his art as a "new and national declamatory expression." There can be little question that the methods of oratory were important in shaping Whitman's style. In a note on "style" for his projected lectures he wrote: "besides direct addressing *to You* another leading trait of Lectures may well be—strong assertion —('I say') it is so?)—launched out with fire, or emphasis, or enthusiasm, or anger." This oratorical device occurs frequently in the poems, as in the line, "And I say to any man or woman, Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million universes." Other oratorical devices which are used time after time include apostrophes, rhetorical questions, aphorisms, exclamations, alliterative phrases, and parenthetical asides. Often the phrasal order is that of oratory—lines which loosely balance on both sides of a pause, or series of parallel structures all of which contribute to a periodic sentence. (See, for example, the opening stanza of "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," p. 700.) Such devices, in Whitman's poems, pretty regularly perform functions of rhymes and stanzas in more conventional poems: they hold lines together and set off units of thought.

The scheme of *Leaves of Grass* as a whole and the schemes of individual poems, moreover, have noteworthy resemblances to oratory. Whitman evidently hoped that the dynamic presence of a great orator—that it would, as he said, "possess, more than any other known book, the magnetism of living flesh and blood, sitting near the reader, & looking & talking." Like the collected works of a great orator, it would convey, in addition to the personality of the speaker, his gospel, developed and modulated in a number of individual compositions on varied topics. There is evidence, in the whole book, that Whitman attempted to unfold his beliefs in this fashion. In quite a few of the poems, too, there are organizations typically used by orators as well as by some poets—ideas developed by analogy, by passages of narrative, by comparison and contrast, and quite a number which are developed in the style of Emerson's lectures and poems.

But although eventually Whitman's poems, in their form, thus resembled oratory, even as he conceived of them they differed from oratory. In one of his self-criticisms the poet found fault with his method of composing and delivering lectures. "The trouble," he said, "is often the endeavor (from the habit of forming the rhythmic style of *Leaves of Grass*) involuntarily to preserve a sort of rhythm in the Lecture sentences,—It seems to me this rhythm, for them, is not only not necessary, but is often dangerous to their character-requirements—which, for speaking purposes, need to be abrupt. . . ." Whitman conceived of his free verse poems as "chants," more rhythmical than spoken discourses and corresponding, in some ways, to the arias or recitatives of operas. Toward his free verse, after starting as a quite conventional poet, he worked his way slowly. According to Emory Holloway, in his Introduction to *The Uncollected Prose and Poetry of Walt Whitman,* "he began versifying with the simplest of forms . . . then made use of more difficult stanza forms . . .; next he wrote a little blank verse . . . ; then he made private experiments with some of the very material he was to work over, through several years, for the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*. . . ." When this first edition appeared, concludes Holloway, his verse was disciplined, "poise and sweeping rhythm were added, and a standard of line length was adopted which would fit the bold but delicate burden of his song." What he evolved was a form blending prose and poetry, which carried still further liberating tendencies in poetry which had been initiated by a num-

ber of his predecessors including, notably, Emerson and Thoreau. His lines, characteristically, corresponded to the grammatical-phrasings or at least the thought-phrasings of speech. His rhythms were, as he put it, "in a loose and free metre of his own, of an irregular length of lines, apparently lawless at first perusal, although on closer examination a certain regularity appears, like the recurrence of lesser and larger waves on the sea-shore, rolling in without intermission, and fitfully rising and falling." And he found, as later poets were to find, that patterns of repeated vowel and consonant sounds could do much to unify parts and wholes.

Whitman not only broke away from some of the conventions of versification; he also broke away from some of the conventions of style. He was distressed by "stock poetical touches" and by ornamentation as such in poetry. "*No ornaments!*" he sternly enjoined himself, "especially no ornamental adjectives, unless they have come molten hot, and imperiously prove themselves. No ornamental similes at all—not one. *perfect transparent clearness. . . .*" His dislike for what he called "drawing room poetry" led him, in general, to use relatively simple words and to avoid an excess of figurative language. His feelings about common speech led him to interject it into a style not then thought hospitable to it. Most orators who employed the more literary style, as we have seen, tended to disdain the use of words in the vernacular. Whitman, however, from the early days of his career, appreciated the force of humble speech, and praised such speech for growing out of human life. In his youth, he was an avid searcher after colloquial and slang phrases with life to them, and his early prose is dotted with expressions such as "loaded down to the guards," "they do say," "some pumpkins," and "a great place and *no* mistake." "Slang," he wrote, "profoundly consider'd, is the lawless germinal element, below all words and sentences, and behind all poetry, and proves a certain perennial rankness and protestantism in speech . . . an attempt of common humanity to escape from bald literalism, and express itself illimitably, which in highest walks produces poets and poems." He reveled in nicknames for men of different states (Kentucky Corn Crackers, Michigan Wolverines, Connecticut Wooden Nutmegs, etc.); in original place-names (Hog-eye, Lick-skillet, Rake-pocket, and Steal-easy, Texas, for instance); in the racy and imaginative phrases of bus drivers, laborers, railroad men, and boatmen. The result was that with the rolling periods and some of the more elegant diction characteristic of oratory, Whitman intermingled localisms, bits of slang, common talk. In Section 6 of "Song of Myself," for instance, along with sonorous and dignified lines comparable to those of oratory, occur lines like these:

> Or I guess it [the grass] is the handkerchief of the Lord,
> A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt. . . .
>
> * * *
>
> Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff. . . .
>
> * * *
>
> And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.
>
> * * *
>
> The smallest sprout shows there is really no death. . . .

To mingle such homely phrasings, as Whitman typically did, with the highfalutin style of heightened oratory represented a daring experiment.

These details about the form of Whitman's poetry suggest that in several ways he was a culmination of some important literary tendencies of his period. They may perhaps do more—suggest to modern readers ways of approach to him. They imply that he should be read differently from most poets—as a man with a message, as a chanting orator, as an experimenter with a form which blends poetry with prose and mingles the words of everyday talk with those of more formal literature. He should be read not only as a wartime poet of the past but also as a pioneer breaking a trail toward modern poetic achievements. W.B.



John Greenleaf Whittier

1807 • 1892

The background of John Greenleaf Whittier in more than one way helped make him one of the most effective battlers for abolition. Born on a farm near Haverhill, Massachusetts, educated in country schools, long a worker on his father's farm and at the cobbler's bench, he saw things through the eyes of a common man and his words were drawn from nature rather than art. From Robert Burns, his first and most important model, he learned a simple style of versifying which pleased ordinary readers. A member of a religious sect which had contributed many great opponents of the slave system, Whittier followed the promptings of his Quaker inner light to work zealously for reform.

For several decades Whittier devoted a large share of his energy to the antislavery cause. He was successful in practical politics, winning his own election to the Massachusetts legislature in 1835, acting as a lobbyist at the State House, and giving assistance to political leaders who were helpful to abolitionism. As a pamphleteer and as an editor of various periodicals, notably of the *National Era* (1845-1860), he attacked slavery ferociously. Finally, as a poet he composed fiery or touching songs which spoke directly to hosts of readers. His propagandistic verse, though far from great as poetry, was admirable as rhetoric. After broadside or newspaper publication, this work was brought together chiefly in *Poems Written During the Progress of the Abolition Question . . .* (1837), *Voices of Freedom*

Panel (l. to r.): Plantation life • Senate debate on the slavery question • In the cotton fields

(1846), *Songs of Labor and Other Poems* (1850), and *In War Time and Other Poems* (1863).

After the war, Whittier turned to a field of work in which he had already shown proficiency—the portrayal of New England. It was as a local colorist that he did his most distinguished writing. (See Chapter 5 for this phase of his career.)

The Complete Poetical and Prose Works, 7 vols, Boston, 1888-1889
• Whitman Bennett, Whittier, Bard of Freedom, Chapel Hill, 1941

The Moral Warfare

When Freedom, on her natal day,
Within her war-rocked cradle lay,
An iron race around her stood,
Baptized her infant brow in blood;
And, through the storm which round her swept,
Their constant ward and watching kept.

Then, where our quiet herds repose
The roar of baleful battle rose,
And brethren of a common tongue
To mortal strife as tigers sprung,
And every gift on Freedom's shrine
Was man for beast, and blood for wine!

Our fathers to their graves have gone;
Their strife is past, their triumph won;
But sterner trials wait the race
Which rises in their honored place;
A moral warfare with the crime
And folly of an evil time.

So let it be. In God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight,
And, strong in Him whose cause is ours
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapons He has given,—
The Light, and Truth, and Love of Heaven.

1838

Massachusetts to Virginia

Whittier printed the following explanatory note with a later edition of the poem: "Written on reading an account of the proceedings of the citizens of Norfolk, Virginia, in reference to George Latimer, the alleged fugitive slave, who was seized in Boston without warrant at the request of James B. Grey, of Norfolk, claiming to be his master. The case caused great excitement North and South, and led to the presentation of a petition to Congress, signed by more than fifty thousand citizens of Massachusetts, calling for such laws and proposed amendments to the Constitution as should relieve the Commonwealth from all further participation in the crime of oppression. George Latimer himself was finally given free papers for the sum of four hundred dollars."

"Massachusetts to Virginia" is one of the most stirring of Whittier's poems against slavery. The use of place names, rich in association, is particularly effective.

The blast from Freedom's Northern hills, upon its Southern way,
Bears greeting to Virginia from Massachusetts Bay;
No word of haughty challenging, nor battle bugle's peal,
Nor steady tread of marching files, nor clang of horsemen's steel.

No trains of deep-mouthed cannon along our highways go;
Around our silent arsenals untrodden lies the snow;
And to the land-breeze of our ports, upon their errands far,
A thousand sails of commerce swell, but none are spread for war.

We hear thy threats, Virginia! thy stormy words and high
Swell harshly on the Southern winds which melt along our sky;
Yet, not one brown, hard hand foregoes its honest labor here,
No hewer of our mountain oaks suspends his axe in fear.

Wild are the waves which lash the reefs along St. George's bank;
Cold on the shores of Labrador the fog lies white and dank;

---

13 St. George's bank, off Newfoundland

Through storm, and wave, and blinding mist, stout are the hearts which man
The fishing-smacks of Marblehead, the sea-boats of Cape Ann.

The cold north light and wintry sun glare on their icy forms,
Bent grimly o'er their straining lines or wrestling with the storms;
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as the waves they roam,
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against their rocky home.

What means the Old Dominion? Hath she forgot the day
When o'er her conquered valleys swept the Briton's steel array?
How side by side, with sons of hers, the Massachusetts men
Encountered Tarleton's charge of fire, and stout Cornwallis, then?

Forgets she how the Bay State, in answer to the call
Of her old House of Burgesses, spoke out from Faneuil Hall?
When, echoing back her Henry's cry, came pulsing in each breath
Of Northern winds the thrilling sounds of "Liberty or Death!"

What asks the Old Dominion? If now her sons have proved
False to their fathers' memory, false to the faith they loved;
If she can scoff at Freedom, and its great charter spurn,
Must we of Massachusetts from truth and duty turn?

We hunt your bondmen, flying from Slavery's hateful hell;
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the bloodhound's yell;
We gather, at your summons, above our fathers' graves,
From Freedom's holy altar-horns to tear your wretched slaves!

Thank God! not yet so vilely can Massachusetts bow;
The spirit of her early time is with her even now;
Dream not because her Pilgrim blood moves slow and calm and cool,
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a sister's slave and tool!

All that a sister State should do, all that a free State may,
Heart, hand, and purse we proffer, as in our early day;
But that one dark loathsome burden ye must stagger with alone,
And reap the bitter harvest which ye yourselves have sown!

Hold, while ye may, your struggling slaves, and burden God's free air
With woman's shriek beneath the lash, and manhood's wild despair;
Cling closer to the "cleaving curse" that writes upon your plains
The blasting of Almighty wrath against a land of chains.

Still shame your gallant ancestry, the cavaliers of old,
By watching round the chambles where human flesh is sold;
Gloat o'er the newborn child, and count his market value, when
The maddened mother's cry of woe shall pierce the slaver's den!

Lower than plummet soundeth, sink the Virginia name,
Plant, if ye will, your fathers' graves with rankest weeds of shame;
Be, if ye will, the scandal of God's fair universe;
We wash our hands forever of your sin and shame and curse.

A voice from lips whereon the coal from Freedom's shrine hath been,

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16 **Marblehead . . . Cape Ann**, on the Massachusetts coast • 24 **Tarleton . . . Cornwallis**, commanders of the British army in Virginia in the American Revolution • 26 **Faneuil Hall**, in Boston, is famous as the scene of patriotic meetings • 27 **Henry's cry**, an allusion to Patrick Henry's "Speech in the Virginia Convention of Delegates," March 23, 1775 • 31 **great charter**, translating England's Magna Charta, refers here to the Declaration of Independence • 36 **altar-horns**, an allusion to I Kings 1 50-53, where Adonijah, fearing King Solomon, "caught hold on the horns of the altar," and was spared • 44 **which . . . sown** seems less than fair in view of Massachusetts' and New England's participation in the slave trade in colonial times • 47 **cleaving curse**, a reference to Deuteronomy 13 17: "And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand" • 50 **shambles**, strictly, a place where butcher's meat is sold or animals are slaughtered for meat • 53 **Lower . . . soundeth** echoes **The Tempest**, Act, III, sc iii, ll 101-102: "I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded/And with him there lie mudded" • 57 **lips . . . coal.** Compare Isaiah 6:6-7: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged"

Thrilled, as but yesterday, the hearts of Berkshire's mountain men:
The echoes of that solemn voice are sadly lingering still
In all our sunny valleys, on every wind-swept hill.

And when the prowling man-thief came hunting for his prey
Beneath the very shadow of Bunker's shaft of gray,
How, through the free lips of the son, the father's warning spoke;
How, from its bonds of trade and sect, the Pilgrim city broke!

A hundred thousand right arms were lifted up on high,
A hundred thousand voices sent back their loud reply;
Through the thronged towns of Essex the startling summons rang,
And up from bench and loom and wheel her young mechanics sprang!

The voice of free, broad Middlesex, of thousands as of one,
The shaft of Bunker calling to that of Lexington;
From Norfolk's ancient villages, from Plymouth's rocky bound
To where Nantucket feels the arms of ocean close her round;

From rich and rural Worcester, where through the calm repose
Of cultured vales and fringing woods the gentle Nashua flows,
To where Wachuset's wintry blasts the mountain larches stir,
Swelled up to Heaven the thrilling cry of "God save Latimer!"

And sandy Barnstable rose up, wet with the salt sea spray;
And Bristol sent her answering shout down Narragansett Bay!
Along the broad Connecticut old Hampden felt the thrill,
And the cheer of Hampshire's woodmen swept down from Holyoke Hill.

The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons and daughters,
Deep calling unto deep aloud, the sound of many waters!
Against the burden of that voice what tyrant power shall stand?
No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her land!

Look to it well, Virginians! In calmness we have borne,
In answer to our faith and trust, your insult and your scorn;
You've spurned our kindest counsels; you've hunted for our lives;
And shaken round our hearths and homes your manacles and gyves!

We wage no war, we lift no arm, we fling no torch within
The fire-damps of the quaking mine beneath your soil of sin;
We leave ye with your bondmen, to wrestle, while ye can,
With the strong upward tendencies and god-like soul of man!

But for us and for our children, the vow which we have given
For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven,
No slave-hunt in our borders,—no pirate on our strand!
No fetters in the Bay State,—no slave upon our land!

1843

Ichabod

In his collected poems Whittier supplied the following note to "Ichabod": "This poem was the outcome of the surprise and grief and forecast of evil consequences which I felt on reading the seventh of March speech of Daniel Webster in support of the 'compromise' and the Fugitive Slave Bill. No partisan or personal enmity dictated it. On the contrary my admiration of the splendid personality and intellectual power of the great senator was never stronger than when I laid down his speech, and, in one of the saddest moments of my life, penned my protest . . . in tones of stern and sorrowful rebuke."

The title is taken from I Samuel 4:21: "And she named the child Ichabod, saying, the glory is departed from Israel."

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58 **Berkshire . . . Essex . . . Middlesex . . . Norfolk . . . Plymouth . . . Worcester . . . Barnstable . . . Bristol . . . Hampden . . . Hampshire,** counties in Massachusetts • 62 **Bunker's shaft,** the monument on Bunker Hill, near Boston • 72 **Nantucket,** an island south of Cape Cod • 75 **Wachuset,** a mountain near Fitchburg, Massachusetts • 79 **Connecticut,** river which flows through Massachusetts • 82 **Deep . . . waters.** Compare Psalms 42.7 "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts" • 90 **fire-damps,** properly fire damp, a combustible gas formed by the decomposition of coal, or the explosive mixture of this gas with air

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Revile him not,—the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains,—
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

1850

Barbara Frietchie

The story of "Barbara Frietchie" was told to Whittier in a letter by a Mrs. Southworth of Georgetown, D. C., whose account Whittier regarded as authentic. The historical authenticity of the narrative has been denied by Allen Tate, who remarks in his **Stonewall Jackson**: "Among the women . . . whom General Jackson never saw, was an old woman named Barbara Frietchie." But whether fact or myth, the story became in Whittier's hands one of the most successful ballads of the Civil War.

"Barbara Frietchie" was first printed in the **Atlantic Monthly**, October 1863.

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

1863

Laus Deo

Whittier supplied the following note to this poem: "On hearing the bells ring on the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. The resolution was adopted by Congress, January 31, 1865. The ratification by the requisite number of states was announced December 18, 1865."

The Latin title means "Praise be to God." Writing with Hebraic fervor, Whittier drew extensively (as the footnotes will point out) upon the imagery and phraseology of the Old Testament.

It is done!
Clang of bell and roar of gun
Send the tidings up and down.
How the belfries rock and reel!
How the great guns, peal on peal,
Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O Bells!
Every stroke exulting tells
Of the burial hour of crime.
Loud and long, that all may hear,
Ring for every listening ear
Of Eternity and Time!

Let us kneel:
God's own voice is in that peal,
And this spot is holy ground.
Lord, forgive us! What are we,
That our eyes this glory see,
That our ears have heard the sound!

For the Lord
On the whirlwind is abroad;
In the earthquake He has spoken;
He has smitten with His thunder

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19 Lord . . . whirlwind. Compare Job 38:1: "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind"

The iron walls asunder,
And the gates of brass are broken!

Loud and long
Lift the old exulting song;
Sing with Miriam by the sea,
He has cast the mighty down;
Horse and rider sink and drown;
"He hath triumphed gloriously!"

Did we dare,
In our agony of prayer,
Ask for more than He has done?
When was ever His right hand
Over any time or land
Stretched as now beneath the sun?

How they pale,
Ancient myth and song and tale,
In this wonder of our days,
When the cruel rod of war
Blossoms white with righteous law,
And the wrath of man is praise!

Blotted out!
All within and all about
Shall a fresher life begin;

Freer breathe the universe
As it rolls its heavy curse
On the dead and buried sin!

It is done!
In the circuit of the sun
Shall the sound thereof go forth.
It shall bid the sad rejoice,
It shall give the dumb a voice,
It shall belt with joy the earth!

Ring and swing,
Bells of joy! On morning's wing
Send the song of praise abroad!
With a sound of broken chains
Tell the nations that He reigns,
Who alone is Lord and God!

1865

24 **gates . . . broken.** Compare Psalms 107 16: "For he hath broken the gates of brass" • 27 **Sing . . . gloriously.** Compare Exodus 15 21: "And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea" • 34 **His . . . Stretched.** Compare Isaiah 23 11: "He [the Lord] stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms" • 40 **rod . . . Blossoms.** Compare Numbers 17 8 " . . the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms"

William J. Grayson

1788 • 1863

Of the hundreds of books and pamphlets which make up proslavery literature the most readable today are probably those by William J. Grayson. As one of his biographers has said, Grayson "was a very temperate advocate of state rights, and a very amiable defender of Southern institutions." Calhoun doubtless had a sharper mind when it came to political analysis, and other Southern leaders loomed larger than Grayson in their day: William Harper (*Memoir on Slavery,* 1838), Thomas R. Dew (*Essay on Slavery,* 1849), George Fitzhugh (*Sociology for the South,* 1854), and Albert Taylor Bledsoe (*Essay on Liberty and Slavery,* 1856), to name a few

examples. Grayson, however, succeeded in condensing most of the favorite Southern arguments into short space and reasonably attractive form, so that he provides perhaps the most convenient view of the defense of the institution which nearly split the Union.

Grayson was a down-state South Carolinian, born in Beaufort District in 1788. From Columbia College, later the University of South Carolina, where he was graduated in 1809, he proceeded to law and politics. He sat in the state legislature, served two terms in the national House of Representatives, and from 1841 until 1853 was Collector of the Port of Charleston. In the conservative literary circles of Charleston he had a leading place as a contributor to the newspapers and to such magazines as *DeBow's Review* and the *Southern Literary Messenger.* Unlike Calhoun he rejected secession as an instrument to obtain what the South wanted, and a letter to Governor Seabrook, published in 1850, helped to halt a strong movement for separation. His Unionist sentiment, however, did not keep him from defending slavery, first in a series of essays published in the Charleston *Courier* and reprinted as *Letters to Curtius* (1851) and then in the poem for which he is best known today, *The Hireling and the Slave* (1854). He was also the author of a number of pamphlets and a biography of his friend and college classmate, James Louis Petigru. The last-named book appeared in 1866, three years after Grayson's death; he who reads it now can find between the lines its author's deep grief at the tragedy of the Civil War.

Like most of his Charleston contemporaries Grayson was somewhat old-fashioned in his literary tastes, happier with Dryden and Pope than with most of the poets of his own time. For reasons which he gives in his Preface he chose to write his best-remembered poem in heroic couplets. As a poet he can scarcely merit much attention. His ideas, however, were those of a class and a time which the serious student, observing the South of the present day, cannot afford to ignore. As Parrington has said, Grayson was "an intelligent and humane writer who might be blind to certain evils in slavery but whose eyes were open to the social ills that grew rankly in the muck of industrialism." Southern agrarianism still has its force as one of the recurrent protests against mechanization in American life. Its roots are to be found in the views of the planter aristocracy which Grayson ably represented.

Selected Poems by William J. Grayson, selected and compiled by Mrs. W. H. Armstrong, with introd by J J Dickinson, New York and Washington, 1907 • V. L. Parrington, **The Romantic Revolution in America, 1800-1860,** New York, 1927 • G. A. Wauchope, "William John Grayson," **Library of Southern Literature,** ed. E. A. Alderman and others, Atlanta, 1907, V, 2011-2073 • W. S. Jenkins, **Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South,** Chapel Hill, 1935

From

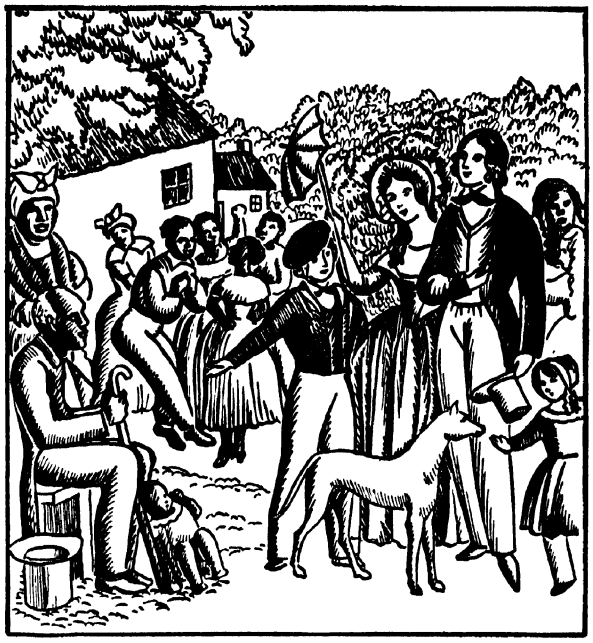
The Hireling and the Slave

Grayson's most ambitious poem consists of nearly sixteen hundred lines in heroic couplets, together with the Preface reprinted here and more than twenty pages of explanatory notes (of which the longest have been omitted). He argues that the state of the slave is essentially the same as that of the pauperized workman of England; both are forced to labor hard for their subsistence. The hireling, however, does not always obtain his reward, being subject to starvation, vice, brutality, military service, and expulsion from his home—evils which the slave ordinarily escapes. Part I describes the miserable condition of the free laborer and attacks the meddling of abolitionists. The portion here reprinted is that directed at Harriet Beecher Stowe, together with the concluding summary of the advantages of the slave system of economy. Part II is largely an account of the pleasures of plantation life, of which the first portion is selected here. Its pictures of cabin life, Christmas pleasures, dancing, and church worship are the type of thing which Southern writers of the postwar era recalled with nostalgia. Note that Grayson appealed strongly to nationalistic, anti-British feeling. In lines 743-758 of Part I he effectively presents the ruling-class philosophy, with its emphasis upon order and industry. The vitriolic treatment of Mrs. Stowe and the contemptuous allusions to "Utopian" reformers are significant revelations of the Southern mind in the 1850's.

The malignant abuse lavished on the slaveholders of America by writers in this country and England can be accounted for but in one way consistently with any degree of charitable consideration for the slanderers. They have no knowledge of the thing abused. They substitute an ideal of their own contriving for the reality. They regard slavery as a system of chains, whips, and tortures. They consider its abuses as its necessary condition, and a cruel master its fair representative. Mr. Clarkson took up the subject, originally, as a fit one for a college exercise in rhetoric, and it became a rhetorical exercise for life to himself and his followers. With these people the cruelty of slavery is an affair of tropes and figures. But they have dealt so long in metaphorical fetters and prisons, that they have brought themselves to believe that the Negroes work in chains and live in dungeons.

To prove the evils of slavery, they collect, from all quarters, its abuses, and show the same regard for fairness and common sense as they would do to gather all the atrocities of their own country committed by husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, priest and people, and denounce these several relations in life in consequence of their abuses.

The laborer suffers wrong and cruelty in England, but they say it is against the law, against public opinion; he may apply to the courts for redress; these are open to him. Cruelty to the slave is equally against the law. It is equally condemned by public opinion; and as to the courts of law being open to the pauper hireling, we may remember the reply of Sheridan to a similar remark, Yes, and so are the London hotels: justice and a good dinner at a public house are equally within his reach. If, in consequence of the evils incident to hireling labor—because there are severe, heartless, grinding employers, and miserable, starving hirelings, it were proposed to abolish hireling labor, it would be quite as just and logical as the argument to abolish slavery because there are sufferings among slaves, and hard hearts among masters. The cruelty or suffering is no more a necessary part of the one system than of the other. Notwithstanding its abuses and miseries, the hireling system works beneficially with white laborers; and so also, notwithstanding hard masters, slavery, among a Christian people, is advantageous to the Negro. But to establish the



"Slave Labor," from an old cartoon. The companion picture, "Free Labor," appears on page 649.

hireling system with Africans would be as wise as to endeavor to bestow the constitutional government of England on Ashantee or Dahomey. In both cases there would be an equal amount of abstract truth and practical absurdity.

Slavery is that system of labor which exchanges subsistence for work, which secures a life-maintenance from the master to the slave, and gives a life-labor from the slave to the master. The slave is an apprentice for life, and owes his labor to his master; the master owes support, during life, to the slave. Slavery is the Negro system of labor. He is lazy and improvident. Slavery makes all work, and it insures homes, food, and clothing for all. It permits no idleness, and it provides for sickness, infancy, and old age. It allows no tramping or skulking, and it knows no pauperism.

This is the whole system substantially. All cruelty is an abuse; does not belong to the institution; is now pun-

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Text: The Hireling and Slave, Chicora, and Other Poems, Charleston, 1856, the second edition of the title poem • **10 Clarkson,** Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), English abolitionist, whose interest in slavery was roused by the subject set for a Latin essay competition at Cambridge, 1785 • **31 Sheridan,** Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), English dramatist and statesman, famous for his championship of the poor • **48 Ashantee or Dahomey,** Negro kingdoms in West Africa, now colonial dependencies of Great Britain and France, respectively

ished, and may be in time prevented. The abuses of slavery are as open to all reforming influences as those of any other civil, social, or political condition. The improvement in the treatment of the slave is as marked as in that of any other laboring class in the world. If it be true of the English soldier or sailor that his condition has been ameliorated in the last fifty years, it is quite as true of the Negro.

If slavery is subject to abuses, it has its advantages also. It establishes more permanent, and, therefore, kinder relations between capital and labor. It removes what Stuart Mill calls "the widening and imbittering feud between the class of labor and the class of capital." It draws the relation closer between master and servant. It is not an engagement for days or weeks, but for life. There is no such thing with slavery as a laborer for whom nobody cares or provides. The most wretched feature in hireling labor is the isolated, miserable creature who has no home, no work, no food, and in whom no one is particularly interested. *This is seen among hirelings only.*

The sale of slaves is thought to be a great evil to the slave. But what is it substantially more than a transfer of labor from one employer to another? Is this an evil to the laborer? Would it be considered an evil by the European hireling if the laws required every master, before he dismissed his workmen, to secure to them another employer? Would it be an evil to the hireling to be certain of obtaining work—to be safe from the misery of having no employer, no work, while he is starving for bread? The sale of the slave is the form in which the laws secure the slave from this misery of the hireling—secure to him a certainty of employment and a certainty of subsistence. The hireling has neither

I do not say that slavery is the best system of labor, but only that it is the best for the Negro in this country In a nation composed of the same race or similar races, where the laborer is intelligent, industrious, and provident, money-wages may be better than subsistence. Even under all advantages there are great defects in the hireling system, for which, hitherto, no statesman has discovered an adequate remedy. In hireling states there are thousands of idlers, trampers, poachers, smugglers, drunkards, and thieves, who make theft a profession. There are thousands who suffer for want of food and clothing, from inability to obtain them. For these two classes—those who will not work, and those who cannot—there is no sufficient provision. Among slaves there are no trampers, idlers, smugglers, poachers, and none suffer from want. Every one is made to work, and no one is permitted to starve. Slavery does for the Negro what European schemers in vain attempt to do for the hireling. It secures work and subsistence for all. It secures more order and subordination also. The master is a Commissioner of the Poor on every plantation, to provide food, clothing, medicine, houses, for his people. He is a police-officer to prevent idleness, drunkeness, theft, or disorder. I do not mean by formal appointment of law, but by virtue of his relation to his slaves. There is, therefore, no starvation among slaves. There are, comparatively, few crimes. If there are paupers in slave states, they are the hirelings of other countries, who have run away from their homes. Pauperism began with them when serfage was abolished.

But you must confess, it is said, that slavery is an evil. True enough; in the same sense in which the hireling's hard labor is an evil. But the poet tells us that there are worse things in the world than hard labor, "withouten that would come a heavier bale," and so there are worse things for the Negro than slavery in a Christian land. Archbishop Hughes, in his late visit to Cuba, asked the Africans if they wished to return to their native country; the answer was always *no.* If the African is happier here than in his own country, can we say that, for him, the establishment of slavery is an evil? If the master is contented with his part in the system, with what reason can we regard it as an evil, so far as he is concerned? Slaves and masters are equally satisfied. The discontented are those who are neither.

What more can be required of slavery, in reference to the Negro, than has been done? It has made him, from

12 Mill, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), English writer on politics and economics. His Principles of Political Economy (1848) contains numerous comments to this effect, but the editors have not located the exact sentence quoted • 54 order and subordination. "One of the best arrangements for the relief of the hireling laborer is the provision made in France of houses where the children of laborers are taken in when the laborers go to work in the morning, are carefully attended during the day, and restored to the parents on their return at night. A similar provision for the care of children is found on every plantation "—Grayson • 67 the poet, James Thomson (1700-1748), in The Castle of Indolence (1748) • 71 Hughes, John Hughes (1797-1864), first archbishop of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of New York

a savage, an orderly and efficient laborer; it supports him in comfort and peace; it restrains his vices; it improves his mind, morals, and manners; it instructs him in Christian knowledge.

But the quarrel is with the master, and the design is to calumniate and injure him. And why this attack on the master? Who, among its pretended friends, will dare to say that they have done for the African race what the slaveholders of North America have done and are doing? What Abolitionist has bestowed on the Negro the same enduring patience, the same useful education, the same care and attendance? Who among them has done, or given, or sacrificed as much? Under the master's care, the miserable black savage has been fed, clothed, instructed in useful arts, and made an important contributor to the business and enjoyments of the world. What have the Abolitionists done, what have they given, for the Negro race? They use the slave for the purposes of self-glorification only, indifferent about his present or future condition. They are ambitious to bring about a great social revolution—what its effects may be they do not care to inquire.

All Christians believe that the affairs of the world are directed by Providence for wise and good purposes. The coming of the Negro to North America makes no exception to the rule. His transportation was a rude mode of emigration; the only practicable one in his case; not attended with more wretchedness than the emigrant ship often exhibits even now, notwithstanding the passenger law. What the purpose of his coming is we may not presume to judge. But we can see much good already resulting from it—good to the Negro in his improved condition; to the country whose rich fields he has cleared of the forest, and made productive in climates unfit for the labor of the white man; to the Continent of Africa in furnishing, as it may ultimately, the only means for civilizing its people.

The end of slavery, then, would seem to be, present good to the slave himself, to the country in which he labors and the world at large, and future good to his race. Whether Mr. Clarkson or Lord Carlisle approve or disapprove of the mode in which it has pleased divine Providence to bring all this about, the event will probably be the same. It may be doubted whether these gentlemen and their friends could have administered the affairs of the world more wisely, whatever our opinion may be of their wisdom or benevolence. As they will never have the power to try, this must remain among the other unsettled questions that perplex the ingenuity of mankind.

There is, however, a plain, practicable mode in which these anti-slavery zealots may confer freedom on thousands, year after year, without offense to any party. The plan is simple and easy. Let them show their sympathy for the Negro, not by eloquent speeches, but more eloquent acts; not with sentiment, but with sovereigns. They can buy any number of Negroes and carry them where they please. For such a purpose the government would not object. Efficient laborers are wanted in the West Indies. Here is a ready way to procure them. They may, in this manner, bestow freedom on many of the slaves of America, confer a benefit on their colonies, and gratify their own excited sensibilities with something more profound than unprofitable words. They feel profoundly for the Negro; let them feel to the amount of a million a year. This would be better than bringing Coolies from Asia and Negroes from Africa by a system of very doubtful character. It would convince the world that their sympathy is an honest one, and not the offspring of vanity or arrogance.

An ingenious lady of South Carolina, in a very admirable letter, has made a similar proposal to the Duchess of Sutherland. But Her Grace is a near relation of the priest in the fable, who refused a half crown to a suppliant, but was ready enough to give him a blessing. The Abolitionists all belong to this benevolent class of world-menders, who are willing at all times to help every body, if it cost them no more than pretty phrases.

In the remarks made in reference to the condition of the hireling in Europe—of England especially—I have no feeling but compassion for the unfortunate paupers, and intend no reproach to their country. I venerate

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41 Lord Carlisle, G. W. F. Howard (1802-1864), seventh Earl of Carlisle. He was one of the philanthropists to whom Mrs. Stowe sent copies of Uncle Tom's Cabin and who entertained her when she visited England in 1853 • 73 Duchess of Sutherland, Harriet Elizabeth Georgiana Leveson-Gower (1806-1868), wife of the second Duke of Sutherland. After reading Uncle Tom's Cabin she led a group of prominent Englishwomen in the framing of An Affectionate and Christian Address (1853), a petition signed by over 500,000 women urging their American sisters to work for the abolition of slavery

England as the great mother of nations, as our teacher in law, literature, civil and political liberty. The facts relating to the poverty, vice, brutality, and ignorance of the British laborer are taken, as may be seen from the notes attached, from English authorities; they can be multiplied a hundred fold. In adverting to them, I have merely desired to show that there is a poor and suffering class in all countries, the richest and most civilized not excepted—laborers who get their daily bread by daily work, and that the slave is as well provided for as any other. The poor we shall have with us always; and whether the poor hireling or the poor slave is most the object of pity or subject of distress, is the only question proposed, and the true one at issue.

In comparing their several conditions, no contempt is implied, certainly none intended for the situation of the hireling poor. All honest labor is worthy of honor, that of the faithful slave not less so than any other. Moralists are accustomed to weigh the advantages and evils of the highest and lowest, the palace and cottage; what forbids us to do so with the good and ill of the two humblest stations of civilized life?

It may be thought unnecessary to invite public attention again to the subject of slavery. But if the subject be trite, it is also of incalculable and unceasing interest. I have endeavored to diversify the mode, if not the matter of the argument, by throwing the remarks offered into verse. I have done so, not only for the reason assigned, but with the additional purpose of offering some variety to the poetic forms that are almost universally prevalent. The poetry of the day is, for the most part, subtile and transcendental in its character. Every sentiment, reflection, or description is wrought into elaborate modes of expression from remote and fanciful analogies. The responses of the Muses have become as mystical and sometimes as obscure as those of more ancient oracles, and disdain the older and homelier forms of English verse.

It has occurred to me that a return to the more sober style of an earlier period may not be an unreasonable experiment on the public taste. The fashion in dress and furniture now and then goes back a century or two; why not the fashion of verse? The school of Dryden and Pope is not entirely forgotten. May we not imitate the poetry of Queen Anne's time as well as the tables and chairs? The common measure of that period, applied to a didactic subject, may diversify the dishes presented to the public, and provide for its appetite the same kind of relief that bread and butter or beef and pudding would offer after a long indulgence in more refined and elaborate dishes. The most fastidious appetite may tolerate an occasional change of diet, and exchange dainties now and then for plainer fare.

FROM PART FIRST

There Stowe, with prostituted pen, assails
One half her country in malignant tales;
Careless, like Trollope, whether truth she tells,
And anxious only how the libel sells,
To slander's mart she furnishes supplies,
And feeds its morbid appetite for lies
On fictions fashioned with malicious art,
The venal pencil, and malignant heart,
With fact distorted, inference unsound,
Creatures in fancy, not in nature found—
Chaste Quadroon virgins, saints of sable hue,
Martyrs, than zealous Paul more tried and true,
Demoniac masters, sentimental slaves,
Mulatto cavaliers, and Creole knaves—
Monsters each portrait drawn, each story told!
What then? The book may bring its weight in gold;
Enough! upon the crafty rule she leans,
That makes the purpose justify the means,
Concocts the venom, and, with eager gaze,
To Glasgow flies for patron, pence, and praise,
And for a slandered country finds rewards
In smiles or sneers of duchesses and lords.

For profits and applauses poor as these,
To the false tale she adds its falser Keys

603 **Trollope,** Mrs Frances M. Trollope (1780-1863), English writer, author of **Domestic Manners of the Americans** (1832), a book much resented in the United States • 620 **To Glasgow . . . praise.** "Among her profits for Uncle Tom, Mrs Stowe received a penny apiece subscription in Scotland from the laboring people, who starve sometimes for the want of potatoes"—Grayson • 622 **In smiles . . . lords.** In a long note Grayson suggests that Mrs. Stowe has overlooked cannibalism as a charge against the slaveholders "It will be as authentic as the rest of her facts, and as readily believed by her Northern and European readers" • 624 **Keys.** "Mrs Stowe has published what she calls a Key to her tale It is a compilation of all the slanders and crimes among slaveholders; just as she would write a story denouncing matrimony, and make a Key, from the courts or gossiping chronicles, of all the cruelties, murders, and adulteries of husbands and wives, representing the crimes as the normal condition of the relation."—Grayson

Of gathered slanders—her ignoble aim,
With foes to traffic in her country's shame.

Strange power of nature, from whose efforts flow
Such diverse forms as Nightingale and Stowe!
One glares a torch of discord; one a star
Of blessing shines amid the wrecks of war;
One prone to libel; one to deeds of love;
The vulture-spirit one, and one the dove;
In various joys their various natures deal,
One leaves her home to wound it, one to heal;
That to expose its sorrows, not deplore;
To help and cheer, this seeks a foreign shore.

Far from her country, where Marmora flows,
On Mercy's errand England's daughter goes,
To tend the suffering sick with woman's care,
To snatch the bleeding soldier from despair;
Bend o'er his couch, his languid head sustain,
With tender hand assuage the pangs of pain,
Watch o'er the dying moments of the brave,
And smooth, at least, his passage to the grave;
Love's labor this, and—her's no common fame!
With the heart's homage millions bless her name.

Not such with Stowe, the wish or power to please,
She finds no joys in gentle deeds like these;
A moral scavenger, with greedy eye,
In social ills her coarser labors lie;
On fields where vice eludes the light of day,
She hunts up crimes as beagles hunt their prey;
Gleans every dirty nook—the felon's jail,
And hangman's mem'ry, for detraction's tale,
Snuffs up pollution with a pious air,
Collects a rumor here, a slander there;
With hatred's ardor gathers Newgate spoils,
And trades for gold the garbage of her toils.

In sink and sewer thus, with searching eye,
Through mud and slime unhappy wretches pry;
In fetid puddles dabble with delight,
Search every filthy gathering of the night;
Fish from its depths, and to the spacious bag
Convey with care the black, polluted rag;
With reeking waifs secure the nightly bed,
And turn their noisome stores to daily bread.

These use the Negro, a convenient tool,
That yields substantial gain or party rule,
Gives what without it they could never know,
To Chase distinction, courtly friends to Stowe,
To Parker, themes for miracles of rant,
And Beecher, blesses with new gifts of cant.
The master's task has been the black to train,
To form his mind, his passions to restrain;
With anxious care and patience to impart
The knowledge that subdues the savage heart,
To give the Gospel lessons that control
The rudest breast, and renovate the soul—
Who does, or gives as much, of all who raise
Their sland'rous cry for foreign pence or praise;
Of all the knaves who clamor and declaim
For party power or philanthropic fame,
Or use the Negro's fancied wrongs and woes
As pretty themes for maudlin verse or prose?

Taught by the master's efforts, by his care
Fed, clothed, protected many a patient year,
From trivial numbers now to millions grown,
With all the white man's useful arts their own,
Industrious, docile, skilled in wood and field,
To guide the plow, the sturdy axe to wield,
The Negroes schooled by slavery embrace
The highest portion of the Negro race;
And none the savage native will compare,
Of barbarous Guinea, with its offspring here.

If bound to daily labor while he lives,
His is the daily bread that labor gives;
Guarded from want, from beggary secure,
He never feels what hireling crowds endure,
Nor knows, like them, in hopeless want to crave,
For wife and child, the comforts of the slave,
Or the sad thought that, when about to die,
He leaves them to the cold world's charity,

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628 **Nightingale, Florence** Nightingale (1820-1910), who attained world-wide renown by organizing the British military hospital system in the Crimean War (1854-1856) • 637 **Marmora,** the inland sea on which Istanbul is situated, between the Dardanelles and the Bosporus • 670 **Chase,** Salmon P Chase (1808-1873), antislavery leader who was governor of Ohio at the time Grayson wrote • 671 **Parker,** Theodore Parker (1810-1860), Boston clergyman, an active agent in assisting slaves to escape from the South • 672 **Beecher,** Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), Brooklyn clergyman, brother of Mrs. Stowe, and long active in the antislavery crusade

And sees them slowly seek the poor-house door—
The last, vile, hated refuge of the poor.

Still Europe's saints, that mark the motes alone
In other's eyes, yet never see their own,
Grieve that the slave is never taught to write,
And reads no better than the hireling white;
Do their own plowmen no instruction lack,
Have whiter clowns more knowledge than the black?
Has the French peasant, or the German boor,
Of learning's treasure any larger store;
Have Ireland's millions, flying from the rule
Of those who censure, ever known a school?
A thousand years and Europe's wealth impart
No means to mend the hireling's head or heart;
They build no schools to teach the pauper white,
Their toiling millions neither read nor write;
Whence, then, the idle clamor when they rave
Of schools and teachers for the distant slave?

And why the soft regret, the coarse attack,
If Justice punish the offending black?
Are whites not punished? When Utopian times
Shall drive from earth all miseries and crimes,
And teach the world the art to do without
The cat, the gauntlet, and the brutal knout,
Banish the halter, galley, jails, and chains,
And strip the law of penalties and pains;
Here, too, offense and wrong they may prevent,
And slaves, with hirelings, need no punishment:
Till then, what lash of slavery will compare
With the dread scourge that British soldiers bear?
What gentle rule, in Britain's Isle, prevails,
How rare her use of gibbets, stocks, and jails!
How much humaner than a master's whip,
Her penal colony and convict ship!
Whose code of law can darker pages show,
Where blood for smaller misdemeanors flow?
The trifling theft or trespass, that demands
For slaves light penance from a master's hands,
Where Europe's milder punishments are known,
Incurs the penalty of death alone.

And yet the master's lighter rule insures
More order than the sternest code secures;
No mobs of factious workmen gather here,
No strikes we dread, no lawless riots fear;
Nuns, from their convent driven, at midnight fly,
Churches, in flames, ask vengeance from the sky,
Seditious schemes in bloody tumults end,
Parsons incite, and senators defend,
But not where slaves their easy labors ply,
Safe from the snare, beneath a master's eye;
In useful tasks engaged, employed their time,
Untempted by the demagogue to crime,
Secure they toil, uncursed their peaceful life,
With labor's hungry broils and wasteful strife.
No want to goad, no faction to deplore,
The slave escapes the perils of the poor.

FROM PART SECOND

Where hireling millions toil, in doubt and fear,
For food and clothing all the weary year,
Content and grateful if their masters give
The boon they beg—to labor and to live;
While dreamers task their idle wits to find
A short-hand method to enrich mankind,
And Fourier's scheme or Owen's plans entice
Expectant thousands with some deep device
For raising wages, for abating toil,
And reaping crops from ill-attended soil:
If, while the anxious multitudes appear,
Now glad with hope, now yielding to despair,
A seraph form, descending from the skies,
In mercy sent, should meet their wond'ring eyes,

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704 **refuge . . . poor.** "None submit to entering the poor-house except in extreme want. Some are hardly able to walk before they will apply.—London Labor, etc."—Grayson • 720 **schools . . . slave.** Grayson cites some statements regarding illiteracy in Great Britain and France and insists that slaves learn to read if they wish and are able to do so • 730 **punishment.** In 1846, says Grayson, 2468 persons were whipped in England. His note compares such punishment with that of slaves • 747 **Nuns . . . fly.** "A convent was destroyed by the mob near Boston. Churches, there and elsewhere have been burned by rioters. Violence and outrage are increasing yearly at the North. In Boston, lately, an officer of the federal government was murdered, while in the discharge of his duty, by a gang of white and black ruffians, instigated by men of wealth and by clergymen."—Grayson. The allusions are to the burning of an Ursuline convent in Charlestown in 1834 and to the Anthony Burns affair of 1854. Anti-Catholic feeling was strong at the time Grayson wrote, and violent interference with the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law was common • 756 **strife.** "The late Preston strike lost to the parties—masters and workmen—over two millions of dollars, and ended where it began."—Grayson. A seven months' lockout of the cotton-spinners at Preston, in Lancashire, England, in 1853-1854, is here referred to • 765 **Fourier's . . . plans,** allusions to the socialism of F. M. C. Fourier (1772-1837), whose ideas were adopted at Brook Farm and elsewhere in the 1840's, and of Robert Owen (1771-1858), who in 1824-1828 had attempted to found an ideal community at New Harmony, Indiana

And, smiling, offer to each suppliant there
The promised good that fills the laborer's prayer—
Food, clothing, freedom from the wants, the cares,
The pauper hireling ever feels or fears;
And, at their death, these blessings to renew,
That wives and children may enjoy them too,
That, when disease or age their strength impairs,
Subsistence and a home should still be theirs—
What wonder would the gracious boon impart,
What grateful rapture swell the peasant's heart!
How freely would the hungry list'ners give
A life-long labor thus secure to live!

And yet the life, so unassailed by care,
So blessed with moderate work, with ample fare,
With all the good the starving pauper needs,
The happier slave on each plantation leads;
Safe from harassing doubts and annual fears,
He dreads no famine in unfruitful years;
If harvests fail from inauspicious skies,
The master's providence his food supplies;
No paupers perish here for want of bread,
Or lingering live, by foreign bounty fed;
No exiled trains of homeless peasants go,
In distant climes, to tell their tales of woe:
Far other fortune, free from care and strife,
For work, or bread, attends the Negro's life,
And Christian slaves may challenge as their own,
The blessings claimed in fabled states alone—
The cabin home, not comfortless, though rude,
Light daily labor, and abundant food,
The sturdy health that temperate habits yield,
The cheerful song that rings in every field,
The long, loud laugh, that freemen seldom share,
Heaven's boon to bosoms unapproached by care,
And boisterous jest and humor unrefined,
That leave, though rough, no painful sting behind;
While, nestling near, to bless their humble lot,
Warm social joys surround the Negro's cot,
The evening dance its merriment imparts,
Love, with his rapture, fills their youthful hearts,
And placid age, the task of labor done,
Enjoys the summer shade, the winter sun,
And, as through life no pauper want he knows,
Laments no poor-house penance at its close.

Safe in Ambition's trumpet call to strife,
No conscript fears harass his quiet life,



While the crushed peasant bleeds—a worthless thing,
The broken toy of emperor or king;
Calm in his peaceful home, the slave prepares
His garden-spot, and plies his rustic cares;
The comb and honey that his bees afford,
The eggs in ample gourd compactly stored,
The pig, the poultry, with a chapman's art,
He sells or barters at the village mart,
Or, at the master's mansion, never fails
An ampler price to find and readier sales.

There, when December's welcome frosts recall
The friends and inmates of the crowded hall,
To each glad nursling of the master's race
He brings his present, with a cheerful face
And offered hand—of warm, unfeigning heart,
In all his master's joys he claims a part,
And, true as clansman to the Highland chief,
Mourns every loss, and grieves in all his grief;
When Christmas now, with its abundant cheer
And thornless pleasure, speeds the parting year,
He shares the common joy—the early morn
Wakes hunter, clamorous hound, and echoing horn,
Quick steps are heard, the merry season named,
The loiterers caught, the wonted forfeit claimed,
In feasts maturing busy hands appear,
And jest and laugh assail the ready ear;
Whose voice, than his, more gayly greets the dawn,

Whose foot so lightly treads the frosty lawn,
Whose heart as merrily, where mirth prevails,
On every side the joyous season hails?
Around the slaughtered ox—a Christmas prize,
The slaves assembling stand with eager eyes,
Rouse, with their dogs, the porker's piercing cry,
Or drag its squealing tenant from the sty;
With smile and bow receive their winter dues,
The strong, warm clothing and substantial shoes,
Blankets adorned with stripes of border red,
And caps of wool that warm the woollier head;
Then clear the barn, the ample area fill,
In the gay jig display their vigorous skill;
No dainty steps, no mincing measures here—
Ellsler's trained graces—seem to float in air,
But hearts of joy and nerves of living steel,
On floors that spring beneath the bounding reel;
Proud on his chair, with magisterial glance
And stamping foot, the fiddler rules the dance;
Draws, if he nods, the still unwearied bow,
And gives a joy no bearded bands bestow;
The triple holiday, on angel wings,
With every fleeting hour a pleasure brings;
No ennui clouds, no coming cares annoy,
Nor wants nor sorrows check the Negro's joy.

His, too, the Christian privilege to share
The weekly festival of praise and prayer;
For him the Sabbath shines with holier light,
The air grows balmier, and the sky more bright;
Winter's brief suns with warmer radiance glow,
With softer breath the gales of autumn blow,
Spring with new flowers more richly strews the ground,
And summer spreads a fresher verdure round;
The early shower is past; the joyous breeze
Shakes patt'ring rain-drops from the rustling trees,
And with the sun, the fragrant offerings rise
From Nature's censers to the bounteous skies;
With cheerful aspect, in his best array,
To the far forest church he takes his way;
With kind salute the passing neighbor meets,
With awkward grace the morning traveler greets,
And joined by crowds, that gather as he goes,
Seeks the calm joy the Sabbath morn bestows.
There no proud temples to devotion rise,
With marble domes that emulate the skies,
But bosomed deep in ancient trees, that spread
Their limbs o'er mouldering mansions of the dead,
Moss-cinctured oaks and solemn pines between,
Of modest wood, the house of God is seen,
By shaded springs, that from the sloping land
Bubble and sparkle through the silver sand,
Where high o'er arching laurel blossoms blow,
Where fragrant bays breathe kindred sweets below,
And elm and ash their blended arms entwine
With the bright foliage of the mantling vine:
In quiet chat, before the hour of prayer,
Masters and slaves in scattered groups appear;
Loosed from the carriage, in the shades around,
Impatient horses neigh and paw the ground;
No city discords break the silence here,
No sounds unmeet offend the listener's ear;
But rural melodies of flocks and birds,
The lowing, far and faint, of distant herds,
The mocking-bird, with minstrel pride elate,
The partridge whistling for its absent mate,
The thrush's solitary notes prolong,
Bold, merry blackbirds swell the general song;
The crested cardinal, of scarlet hue,
The jay, with restless wing of softer blue,
The cawing crow—upon the loftiest pine
Cautious and safe—their various voices join.

When now the pastor lifts his earnest eyes,
And hands outstretched, a suppliant to the skies,
No rights of pomp or pride beguile the soul,
No organs peal, no clouds of incense roll,
But, line by line, untutored voices raise,
Like the wild birds, their simple notes of praise,
And hearts of love, with true devotion, bring
Incense more pure to Heaven's eternal King;
On glorious themes their humble thoughts employ,
And rise transported with no earthly joy;
The blessing said, the service o'er, again
Their swelling voices raise the sacred strain;
Lingering, they love to sing of Jordan's shore,
Where sorrows cease, and toil is known no more. . . .

1853?•1854

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860 Ellsler, Fanny Elssler (1810-1884), Austrian dancer who toured the United States in 1841 • 929 Jordan's shore. "In these country churches, where sometimes three or four hundred slaves assemble with a dozen whites, the delight of the Negroes is in their spiritual songs and hymns. . . . The Sunday service is a source of infinite enjoyment to them and they conduct themselves with perfect decorum and attention."—*Grayson*

Henry Timrod

1828 • 1867

"No writer of equal stature in this country," Professor E. W. Parks justly observes, "has received so little attention" as Henry Timrod, the "Laureate of the Confederacy."

Timrod attended the Coates School in Charleston, South Carolina—his birthplace—and studied for a year and a half at the University of Georgia. After trying the law in the office of James Louis Petigru in Charleston, he turned to tutoring in planters' families. Later he was a contributor to *Russell's Magazine* (1857-1860), a journal of literary promise published in Charleston and edited by his friend Paul Hamilton Hayne. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, Timrod enlisted in the Confederate army, but because of ill health was able to serve less than a year. Undertaking, after a partial recuperation, the work of a war correspondent, he observed at close range the battle of Shiloh. In 1864 he edited a newspaper in Columbia, South Carolina; this position ended abruptly when Columbia was taken by Sherman's army. The three remaining years of his life were a losing struggle against poverty and disease. His poems were collected, with a memoir, by Paul Hamilton Hayne in 1873.



Timrod's early verses were imitative of Wordsworth. The war called forth his latent originality and inspired his best poems. These poems, though romantic in their ardor, are remarkable for certain classical qualities; indeed, it is the fusion of romantic and classical elements that gives to Timrod's poetry a special distinction. To quote Professor Parks again: "Although sincerity and throbbing emotion beat through his words in passionate undertones, the passion never carries the verse into formlessness of thought or reference. Instead an almost classic coolness and restraint appears, from first to last, in his war poems. . . . He saw a poem as a whole, yet as composed of lines, and his best poems combine a clear distinction of line with a sense of rounded completeness." Other noteworthy merits of Timrod's verse are the mastery of the sustained, or epic, simile (see, particularly, the simile of the Cornwall mine in "The Cotton Boll"), and the classic purity of his diction.

Poems of Henry Timrod, ed. P. H. Hayne, New York, 1873 • J. B. Hubbell, **The Last Years of Henry Timrod**, Durham, North Carolina, 1941 • E. W. Parks, "Southern Poetry," **Segments of Southern Thought**, Athens, Georgia, 1938

Ethnogenesis

Written During the Meeting of the First Southern Congress, at Montgomery, February, 1861

The following poem was first printed, with the title "Ode, on the Meeting of the Southern Congress," in the Charleston Mercury, September 26, 1861. The title "Ethnogenesis," which was substituted when the poem was reprinted in the Charleston Courier, January 31, 1862, is a Greek coinage meaning "the birth of a nation." At once ardent and restrained, the poem expresses the patriotic spirit of the newly formed Confederate States of America.

I

Hath not the morning dawned with added light?
And shall not evening call another star
Out of the infinite regions of the night,
To mark this day in Heaven? At last, we are
A nation among nations; and the world
Shall soon behold in many a distant port
  Another flag unfurled!
Now, come what may, whose favor need we court?
And, under God, whose thunder need we fear?
  Thank him who placed us here
Beneath so kind a sky—the very sun
Takes part with us; and on our errands run
All breezes of the ocean; dew and rain
Do noiseless battle for us; and the Year,
And all the gentle daughters in her train,
March in our ranks, and in our service wield
Long spears of golden grain!
A yellow blossom as her fairy shield,
June flings her azure banner to the wind,
  While in the order of their birth
Her sisters pass, and many an ample field
Grows white beneath their steps, till now, behold,
  Its endless sheets unfold
THE SNOW OF SOUTHERN SUMMERS! Let the earth
Rejoice! beneath those fleeces soft and warm
  Our happy land shall sleep
  In a repose as deep
As if we lay intrenched behind
Whole leagues of Russian ice and Arctic storm!

II

And what if, mad with wrongs themselves have wrought,
  In their own treachery caught,
  By their own fears made bold,
  And leagued with him of old,
Who long since in the limits of the North
Set up his evil throne, and warred with God—
What if, both mad and blinded in their rage,
Our foes should fling us down their mortal gage,
And with a hostile step profane our sod!
We shall not shrink, my brothers, but go forth
To meet them, marshaled by the Lord of Hosts,
And overshadowed by the mighty ghosts
Of Moultrie and Eutaw—who shall foil
Auxiliars such as these? Nor these alone,
  But every stock and stone
  Shall help us; but the very soil,
And all the generous wealth it gives to toil,
And all for which we love our noble land,
Shall fight beside, and through us; sea and strand,
  The heart of woman, and her hand,
Tree, fruit, and flower, and every influence,
  Gentle, or grave, or grand;
  The winds in our defence
Shall seem to blow; to us the hills shall lend
  Their firmness and their calm;
And in our stiffened sinews we shall blend
  The strength of pine and palm!

III

Nor would we shun the battle-ground,
  Though weak as we are strong;
Call up the clashing elements around,
  And test the right and wrong!

24 Snow refers to cotton, of the importance of which to the South Timrod had an exaggerated conception. Contrast Lanier's later protest in "Corn" against the tyranny of "coquette cotton" • 34 limits . . . North. When Satan (according to Milton) revolted in Heaven against God, he withdrew with his followers to the North. See particularly Paradise Lost, Bk. V, l. 755: "At length into the limits of the North/They came . . ." • 42 Moultrie and Eutaw. The repulse of the British at Sullivan's Island, June 28, 1776, was led by General William Moultrie, for whom the fort on the island was later named. Eutaw Springs was the scene of an American attack on a British outpost, September 8, 1781. Hence, the "mighty ghosts" are the ghosts of Revolutionary patriots who fought at these places • 44 stock and stone, every senseless thing

On one side, creeds that dare to teach
What Christ and Paul refrained to preach;
Codes built upon a broken pledge,
And Charity that whets a poniard's edge;
Fair schemes that leave the neighboring poor
To starve and shiver at the schemer's door,
While in the world's most liberal ranks enrolled,
He turns some vast philanthropy to gold;
Religion, taking every mortal form
But that a pure and Christian faith makes warm,
Where not to vile fanatic passion urged,
Or not in vague philosophies submerged,
Repulsive with all Pharisaic leaven,
And making laws to stay the laws of Heaven!
And on the other, scorn of sordid gain,
Unblemished honor, truth without a stain,
Faith, justice, reverence, charitable wealth,
And, for the poor and humble, laws which give,
Not the mean right to buy the right to live,
  But life, and home, and health!
To doubt the end were want of trust in God,
    Who, if he has decreed
  That we must pass a redder sea
Than that which rang to Miriam's holy glee,
  Will surely raise at need
  A Moses with his rod!

IV

But let our fears—if fears we have—be still,
And turn us to the future! Could we climb
Some mighty Alp, and view the coming time,
The rapturous sight would fill
  Our eyes with happy tears!
Not only for the glories which the years
Shall bring us; not for lands from sea to sea,
And wealth, and power, and peace, though these shall be;
But for the distant peoples we shall bless,
And the hushed murmurs of a world's distress:
For, to give labor to the poor,
  The whole sad planet o'er,
And save from want and crime the humblest door,
Is one among the many ends for which
  God makes us great and rich!
The hour perchance is not yet wholly ripe
When all shall own it, but the type
Whereby we shall be known in every land
Is that vast gulf which lips our Southern strand,
And through the cold, untempered ocean pours
Its genial streams, that far off Arctic shores
May sometimes catch upon the softened breeze
Strange tropic warmth and hints of summer seas.

1861

The Cotton Boll

First printed in the Charleston Mercury, September 3, 1861, "The Cotton Boll" is Timrod's most successful poem. It is remarkable, among other things, for its fluency and precision, its eloquence and restraint, and its mastery of the expanded or epic simile and a varied, flexible meter.

While I recline
At ease beneath
This immemorial pine,
Small sphere!
(By dusky fingers brought this morning here
And shown with boastful smiles),
I turn thy cloven sheath,
Through which the soft white fibres peer,
That, with their gossamer bands,
Unite, like love, the sea-divided lands,
And slowly, thread by thread,
Draw forth the folded strands,
Than which the trembling line,
By whose frail help yon startled spider fled
Down the tall spear-grass from his swinging bed,

Ethnogenesis • 61 creeds . . . preach. Timrod asserts that the creed of the abolitionists has no Biblical authority • 63 pledge refers to the protection of slavery under the Constitution • 65 neighboring poor, the underpaid workers in Northern factories • 75 the other, the other side, meaning the South • 83 redder sea. The reference is to the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites and their subsequent rejoicing, recorded in Exodus 14:15. It is interesting to note that Whittier, speaking for the North, used the same Biblical story in "Laus Deo" • 95 distant . . . bless, presumably through the exportation of cotton • 105 gulf, the Gulf Stream

The Cotton Boll • 5 dusky fingers, of a Negro slave

Is scarce more fine;
And as the tangled skein
Unravels in my hands,
Betwixt me and the noonday light,
A veil seems lifted, and for miles and miles
The landscape broadens on my sight,
As, in the little boll, there lurked a spell
Like that which, in the ocean shell,
With mystic sound,
Breaks down the narrow walls that hem us round,
And turns some city lane
Into the restless main,
With all his capes and isles!

Yonder bird,
Which floats, as if at rest,
In those blue tracts above the thunder, where
No vapors cloud the stainless air,
And never sound is heard,
Unless at such rare time
When, from the City of the Blest,
Rings down some golden chime,
Sees not from his high place
So vast a cirque of summer space
As widens round me in one mighty field,
Which, rimmed by seas and sands,
Doth hail its earliest daylight in the beams
Of gray Atlantic dawns;
And, broad as realms made up of many lands,
Is lost afar
Behind the crimson hills and purple lawns
Of sunset, among plains which roll their streams
Against the Evening Star!
And lo!
To the remotest point of sight,
Although I gaze upon no waste of snow,
The endless field is white;
And the whole landscape glows,
For many a shining league away,
With such accumulated light
As Polar lands would flash beneath a tropic day!
Nor lack there (for the vision grows,
And the small charm within my hands—
More potent even than the fabled one,
Which oped whatever golden mystery
Lay hid in fairy wood or magic vale,
The curious ointment of the Arabian tale—
Beyond all mortal sense
Doth stretch my sight's horizon, and I see,
Beneath its simple influence,
As if with Uriel's crown,
I stood in some great temple of the Sun,
And looked, as Uriel, down!)
Nor lack there pastures rich and fields all green
With all the common gifts of God,
For temperate airs and torrid sheen
Weave Edens of the sod;
Through lands which look one sea of billowy gold
Broad rivers wind their devious ways;
A hundred isles in their embraces fold
A hundred luminous bays;
And through yon purple haze
Vast mountains lift their plumèd peaks cloud-crowned;
And, save where up their sides the ploughman creeps,
An unhewn forest girds them grandly round,
In whose dark shades a future navy sleeps!
Ye Stars, which, though unseen, yet with me gaze
Upon this loveliest fragment of the earth!
Thou Sun, that kindlest all thy gentlest rays
Above it, as to light a favorite hearth!
Ye Clouds, that in your temples in the West
See nothing brighter than its humblest flowers!
And you, ye Winds, that on the ocean's breast
Are kissed to coolness ere ye reach its bowers!
Bear witness with me in my song of praise,
And tell the world that, since the world began
No fairer land hath fired a poet's lays,
Or given a home to man!

But these are charms already widely blown!
His be the meed whose pencil's trace
Hath touched our very swamps with grace,
And round whose tuneful way
All Southern laurels bloom,
The Poet of "The Woodlands," unto whom

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22 As, as if • 61 ointment . . . tale, in the story describing the adventures of Haroun Al Raschid in the Arabian Nights • 65 Uriel, regent of the Sun, described in Milton's Paradise Lost, Bk. III • 98 Poet . . . Woodlands, a reference to William Gilmore Simms (1806-1870) and his country estate near Charleston. Simms wrote a good many poems (including a poem entitled "The Edge of the Swamp"), though he is best known for his prose romances

Alike are known
The flute's low breathing and the trumpet's tone,
And the soft west wind's sighs;
But who shall utter all the debt,
O Land wherein all powers are met
That bind a people's heart,
The world doth owe thee at this day,
And which it never can repay,
Yet scarcely deigns to own!
Where sleeps the poet who shall fitly sing
The source wherefrom doth spring
That mighty commerce which, confined
To the mean channels of no selfish mart,
Goes out to every shore
Of this broad earth, and throngs the sea with ships
That bear no thunders; hushes hungry lips
In alien lands;
Joins with a delicate web remotest strands;
And gladdening rich and poor,
Doth gild Parisian domes,
Or feed the cottage-smoke of English homes,
And only bounds its blessings by mankind!
In offices like these, thy mission lies,
My Country! and it shall not end
As long as rain shall fall and Heaven bend
In blue above thee; though thy foes be hard
And cruel as their weapons, it shall guard
Thy hearth-stones as a bulwark; make thee great
In white and bloodless state;
And haply, as the years increase—
Still working through its humbler reach
With that large wisdom which the ages teach—
Revive the half-dead dream of universal peace!
As men who labor in that mine
Of Cornwall, hollowed out beneath the bed
Of ocean, when a storm rolls overhead,
Hear the dull booming of the world of brine
Above them, and a mighty muffled roar
Of winds and waters, yet toil calmly on,
And split the rock, and pile the massive ore,
Or carve a niche, or shape the archèd roof;
So I, as calmly, weave my woof
Of song, chanting the days to come,
Unsilenced, though the quiet summer air
Stirs with the bruit of battles, and each dawn
Wakes from its starry silence to the hum
Of many gathering armies. Still,
In that we sometimes hear,
Upon the Northern winds, the voice of woe
Not wholly drowned in triumph, though I know
The end must crown us, and a few brief years
Dry all our tears,
I may not sing too gladly. To Thy will
Resigned, O Lord! we cannot all forget
That there is much even Victory must regret.
And, therefore, not too long
From the great burthen of our country's wrong
Delay our just release!
And, if it may be, save
These sacred fields of peace
From stain of patriot or of hostile blood!
Oh, help us, Lord! to roll the crimson flood
Back on its course, and while our banners wing
Northward, strike with us! till the Goth shall cling
To his own blasted altar-stones, and crave
Mercy; and we shall grant it, and dictate
The lenient future of his fate
There, where some rotting ships and crumbling quays
Shall one day mark the Port which ruled the Western seas.

1861

Carolina

First printed in the Charleston Courier, March 8, 1862, and reprinted there, November 12 of the same year, "Carolina" is perhaps the most fervid of all the patriotic lyrics written during the Civil War.

I

The despot treads thy sacred sands,
Thy pines give shelter to his bands,
Thy sons stand by with idle hands,
Carolina!

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133 Cornwall, on the southwest coast of England • 162 Goth. Timrod uses this uncomplimentary name to refer to the people of the North • 167 Port, New York

He breathes at ease thy airs of balm,
He scorns the lances of thy palm;
Oh! who shall break thy craven calm,
Carolina!
Thy ancient fame is growing dim,
A spot is on thy garment's rim;
Give to the winds thy battle hymn,
Carolina!

II

Call on thy children of the hill,
Wake swamp and river, coast and rill,
Rouse all thy strength and all thy skill,
Carolina!
Cite wealth and science, trade and art,
Touch with thy fire the cautious mart,
And pour thee through the people's heart,
Carolina!
Till even the coward spurns his fears,
And all thy fields and fens and meres
Shall bristle like thy palm with spears,
Carolina!

III

Hold up the glories of thy dead;
Say how thy elder children bled,
And point to Eutaw's battle-bed,
Carolina!
Tell how the patriot's soul was tried,
And what his dauntless breast defied;
How Rutledge ruled and Laurens died,
Carolina!
Cry! till thy summons, heard at last,
Shall fall like Marion's bugle-blast
Re-echoed from the haunted Past,
Carolina!

IV

I hear a murmur as of waves
That grope their way through sunless caves,
Like bodies struggling in their graves,
Carolina!
And now it deepens; slow and grand
It swells, as, rolling to the land,
An ocean broke upon thy strand,
Carolina!
Shout! let it reach the startled Huns!
And roar with all thy festal guns!
It is the answer of thy sons,
Carolina!

V

They will not wait to hear thee call;
From Sachem's Head to Sumter's wall
Resounds the voice of hut and hall,
Carolina!
No! thou hast not a stain, they say,
Or none save what the battle-day
Shall wash in seas of blood away,
Carolina!
Thy skirts indeed the foe may part,
Thy robe be pierced with sword and dart,
They shall not touch thy noble heart,
Carolina!

VI

Ere thou shalt own the tyrant's thrall
Ten times ten thousand men must fall;
Thy corpse may hearken to his call,
Carolina!
When, by thy bier, in mournful throngs
The women chant thy mortal wrongs,
'Twill be their own funereal songs,
Carolina!
From thy dead breast by ruffians trod
No helpless child shall look to God;
All shall be safe beneath thy sod,
Carolina!

VII

Girt with such wills to do and bear,
Assured in right, and mailed in prayer,
Thou wilt not bow thee to despair,
Carolina!

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17 **Cite**, summon or call • 27 **Eutaw's battle-bed.** See note, p. 652 • 31 **Rutledge**, John Rutledge (1739-1800), governor of South Carolina • 31 **Laurens**, John Laurens (1754-1782), Revolutionary soldier and South Carolinian, killed in battle • 34 **Marion**, Francis Marion (1732-1795), Revolutionary general and South Carolinian • 45 **Huns**, here applied to the soldiers of the North • 50 **Sachem's . . . wall**, that is, from the mountains to the sea • 74 **mailed . . . prayer**, reminiscent of St. Paul's Christian armor, described in Ephesians 6

Throw thy bold banner to the breeze!
Front with thy ranks the threatening seas
Like thine own proud armorial trees,
Carolina!
Fling down thy gauntlet to the Huns,
And roar the challenge from thy guns;
Then leave the future to thy sons,
Carolina!

1862



Fort Sumter

Charleston

"Charleston" was first printed in the Charleston Mercury, December 13, 1862.

Calm as that second summer which precedes
The first fall of the snow,
In the broad sunlight of heroic deeds
The City bides the foe.

As yet, behind their ramparts stern and proud,
Her bolted thunders sleep—
Dark Sumter, like a battlemented cloud,
Looms o'er the solemn deep.

No Calpe frowns from lofty cliff or scar
To guard the holy strand;
But Moultrie holds in leash her dogs of war
Above the level sand.

And down the dunes a thousand guns lie couched
Unseen beside the flood—
Like tigers in some Orient jungle crouched
That wait and watch for blood.

Meanwhile, through streets still echoing with trade,
Walk grave and thoughtful men
Whose hands may one day wield the patriot's blade
As lightly as the pen.

And maidens with such eyes as would grow dim
Over a bleeding hound
Seem each one to have caught the strength of him
Whose sword she sadly bound.

Thus girt without and garrisoned at home,
Day patient following day,
Old Charleston looks from roof and spire and dome
Across her tranquil bay.

Ships, through a hundred foes, from Saxon lands
And spicy Indian ports
Bring Saxon steel and iron to her hands
And Summer to her courts.

But still, along yon dim Atlantic line,
The only hostile smoke
Creeps like a harmless mist above the brine
From some frail, floating oak.

Shall the Spring dawn, and she, still clad in smiles
And with an unscathed brow,
Rest in the strong arms of her palm-crowned isles
As fair and free as now?

We know not; in the temple of the Fates
God has inscribed her doom;
And, all untroubled in her faith, she waits
The triumph or the tomb.

1862

7 Sumter, a fort on an island at the entrance of Charleston harbor, the firing upon which by the Confederates in April 1861 precipitated the Civil War • 9 Calpe, Gibraltar • 11 Moultrie. See note, p. 652 • 29 foes, the Federal blockade

Spring

"Spring" was first printed in the Charleston Southern Illustrated News, April 4, 1863

Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of Autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

Already, here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,
Small as might deck, upon a gala day,
The forehead of a fay.

In gardens you may note amid the dearth
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows need must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start,
If from a beech's heart,
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
"Behold me! I am May!"

Ah! who would couple thoughts of war and crime
With such a blessèd time!
Who in the west wind's aromatic breath
Could hear the call of Death!

Yet not more surely shall the Spring awake
The voice of wood and brake,
Then she shall rouse, for all her tranquil charms,
A million men to arms.

There shall be deeper hues upon her plains
Than all her sunlit rains,
And every gladdening influence around,
Can summon from the ground.

Oh! standing on this desecrated mould,
Methinks that I behold,
Lifting her bloody daisies up to God,
Spring kneeling on the sod,

And calling, with the voice of all her rills,
Upon the ancient hills
To fall and crush the tyrants and the slaves
Who turn her meads to graves.

1863

Ode

Mr. Parks says of the poem: "Timrod's 'Ode' has the supreme artistic merit of throbbing with vibrant emotion in its effect upon the reader, yet of possessing a classic coolness of phrase which might have been carved from stone. The poet indulges in no histrionic exhibitionism, but this controlled and inevitable verse leaves nothing to be said." The poem has been often compared with William Collins' "How Sleep the Brave."

The "Ode" was first printed in the Charleston Courier as "Ode Sung on the Occasion of Decorating the Graves of the Confederate Dead, at Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston, S. C."

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
  Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
Though yet no marble column craves
  The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth,
  The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
  The shaft is in the stone!

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
  Which keep in trust your storied tombs,
Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
  And these memorial blooms.

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
  More proudly on these wreaths today,
Than when some cannon-moulded pile
  Shall overlook this Bay.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
  There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
  By mourning beauty crowned!

1866

Civil War Singers

Compared with Revolutionary War songs, those chanted by soldiers and civilians during the Civil War had somewhat less courtliness, less of the British manner about them. The colloquial language, however, which had begun to influence much popular literature, was an element in remarkably few: words and phrases were still likely to be oratorical. The meters of many were determined by the older tunes for which they were written—"The Star-Spangled Banner," "The Campbells Are Coming," "Hearts of Oak," and so on. Although there were exceptions—"The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Maryland," for instance—those best remembered were distinguished less for their sentiment and phrasing than for their rhythms and their tunes. Quite a large number continued to be popular down into modern times.

F. F. Browne, Bugle Echoes, a Collection of Poems of the Civil War, Northern and Southern, New York, 1886 • G E Eggleston, American War Ballads and Lyrics, 2 vols , New York, 1889 • E. A. Dolph, Sound Off! Soldier Songs, New York, 1929

Dixie

Daniel Decatur Emmett 1815 • 1904

On Broadway, in 1859, "Dixie," the most stirring tune associated with the war, had its first public performance The author and composer of the first of many versions was Daniel Decatur Emmett, who was born, the son of an Irish blacksmith of Southern origin, in Mt. Vernon, Ohio, in 1815. Emmett had the most elementary sort of education before, at seventeen, he entered the United States army. He served for three years as a fifer. Discharged, he traveled with circus bands and in time became a composer and singer in minstrel troupes. It was for Bryant's Minstrels that he composed his famous song, a "walk-around," rendered by the whole company. The composition was introduced to the South by a chorus in John Brougham's New Orleans production of Pocahontas shortly before the war began. The Confederate regiments of Louisiana marched to a military version of the song, and soon its use in Southern armies was widespread. The nonsense words as well as the lively tune evidently had great appeal.

I wish I was in de land ob cotton,
Old times dar am not forgotten;
  Look away! Look away! Look away! Dixie Land!
In Dixie Land whar I was born in,
Early on one frosty mornin',
  Look away! Look away! Look away! Dixie Land!

Chorus

Den I wish I was in Dixie! Hooray! Hooray!
In Dixie's Land we'll take our stand, to lib an' die in Dixie.
Away! away! away down South in Dixie.
Away! away! away down South in Dixie.

Ole missus marry "Will-de-weaber";
Willum was a gay deceaber,
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!
But when he put his arm around her,
He smiled as fierce as a forty-pounder;
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!

His face was sharp as a butcher's cleaber;
But dat did not seem to greab her;
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!
Ole missus acted de foolish part,
And died for a man dat broke her heart,
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!

Now here's a health to de next ole missus,
An' all the gals dat want to kiss us;
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!
But if you want to drive 'way sorrow,
Come hear dis song tomorrow;
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!

Dar's buckwheat cakes and Injin batter,
Makes you fat or a little fatter,
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!
Den hoe it down an' scratch your grabble,
To Dixie's land I'm bound to trabble;
  Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!

1859

Dixie

Albert Pike 1809 • 1891

The best-known "literary" version of "Dixie" was written by Albert Pike, born and educated in Massachusetts but transplanted to the South as a young man. Pike was a newspaper editor and a lawyer who had a commission in the Confederate army. His words for the song were popular during the war, but in time they dropped from general memory in favor of Emmett's humbler version written to the same tune.

Southrons, hear your country call you!
Up! lest worse than death befall you!
  To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

Lo! all beacon fires are lighted,
Let our hearts be now united!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

Chorus

Advance the flag of Dixie!
Hurrah! Hurrah!
For Dixie's land we'll take our stand,
To live or die for Dixie!
To arms! To arms!
And conquer peace for Dixie!
To arms! To arms!
And conquer peace for Dixie!

Hear the Northern thunders mutter!
Northern flags in South winds flutter!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
Send them back your fierce defiance!
Stamp upon the cursed alliance!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

Fear no danger! shun no labor!
Lift up rifle, pike and sabre!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
Shoulder pressing close to shoulder,
Let the odds make each heart bolder!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

How the South's great heart rejoices,
At your cannon's ringing voices;
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
For faith betrayed and pledges broken,
Wrongs inflicted, insults spoken!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

Strong as lions, swift as eagles,
Back to their kennels hunt these beagles!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
Cut the unequal bonds asunder!
Let them hence each other plunder!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

Swear upon your country's altar,
Never to give up or falter;
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
Till the spoilers are defeated,
Till the Lord's work is completed.
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

Halt not till our Federation,
Secures among earth's Powers its station!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
Then at peace and crowned with glory,
Hear your children tell the story!
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

If the loved ones weep in sadness,
Victory soon shall bring them gladness.
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!
Exultant pride soon banish sorrow;
Smiles chase tears away tomorrow.
To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!

1861

My Maryland

James Ryder Randall 1839 • 1908

Upon hearing of the attack by the Massachusetts troops on his native city, Baltimore, James Ryder Randall wrote "My Maryland." At the time he composed the poem, Randall was a teacher in Louisiana, unacceptable for military duty because of poor health. He turned from teaching to journalism, and was in newspaper work until his death in 1908.

"My Maryland" appeared first in the New Orleans Delta, but shortly it was reprinted in newspapers throughout the South. The tune for which the verses were designed was the German song "Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum."

The despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland!
His torch is at thy temple door,
Maryland!
Avenge the patriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore,
And be the battle-queen of yore,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Hark, to an exiled son's appeal,
Maryland!
My Mother-State, to thee I kneel,
Maryland!
For life and death, for woe and weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beautious limbs with steel!
Maryland! My Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!
Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day,
Maryland!
Come! with thy panoplied array,
Maryland!
With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,
With Watson's blood at Monterey,
With fearless Lowe and dashing May,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Dear Mother! burst the tyrant's chain,
Maryland!
Virginia should not call in vain,
Maryland!
She meets her sisters on the plain—
"Sic semper," 'tis the proud refrain
That baffles minions back amain,
Maryland!
Arise, in majesty again,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,
Maryland!
Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,
Maryland!
Come! to thine own heroic throng,
That stalks with Liberty along,
And ring thy dauntless Slogan-song,
Maryland! My Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,
Maryland!
For thou wast ever bravely meek,
Maryland!
But lo! there surges forth a shriek
From hill to hill, from creek to creek—
Potomac calls to Chesapeake,
Maryland! My Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,
Maryland!
Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!
Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the shot, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
Maryland! My Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder-hum,
Maryland!
The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,
Maryland!
She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb—
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!
She breathes—she burns! she'll come! she'll come!
Maryland! My Maryland!

1861

Battle Hymn of the Republic

Julia Ward Howe 1819 • 1910

This poem was written by Mrs. Howe to accompany a well-established tune, that of the doggerel song, "John Brown's Body." Interestingly, this latter song had fitted its words to a Southern revival hymn, "Say, Brothers, Will

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21 **Carroll,** Charles Carroll, a citizen of Maryland, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence • 22 **Howard,** John Eager Howard, a military leader in the Revolution • 29 **Ringgold . . . Watson . . . Lowe . . . May,** Marylanders who fought with distinction in the Mexican War • 38 **Sic semper,** the opening words of the motto of Virginia, **Sic semper tyrannis** — Thus always to tyrants • 57 **Potomac . . . Chesapeake,** extreme boundaries of Maryland

You Meet Us?" popular throughout the United States in the 1850's. Soldiers of a Massachusetts regiment stationed in Boston worked out the words for "John Brown's Body" in 1861; when they sang them while marching through New York in July of the same year, the song began to have wide currency. The opening lines of the song were:

John Brown's body lies a-mold'ring in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mold'ring in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mold'ring in the grave,
His soul is marching on!

Chorus

Glory! Glory Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory Hallelujah!
His soul is marching on.

Mrs. Howe, a Bostonian and descendant of a distinguished colonial family, had won distinction before the war as a supporter of women's suffrage and other reforms, including abolition. She wrote her poem one night after she had been stirred by a visit to an army camp near Washington, D. C. Unlike Pike's "improvement" on the words of "Dixie," her words replaced the initial ones in popular memory. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" first was published in the **Atlantic Monthly**, February 1862

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

Chorus

Glory! glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! glory! Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on!

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-seat;
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.
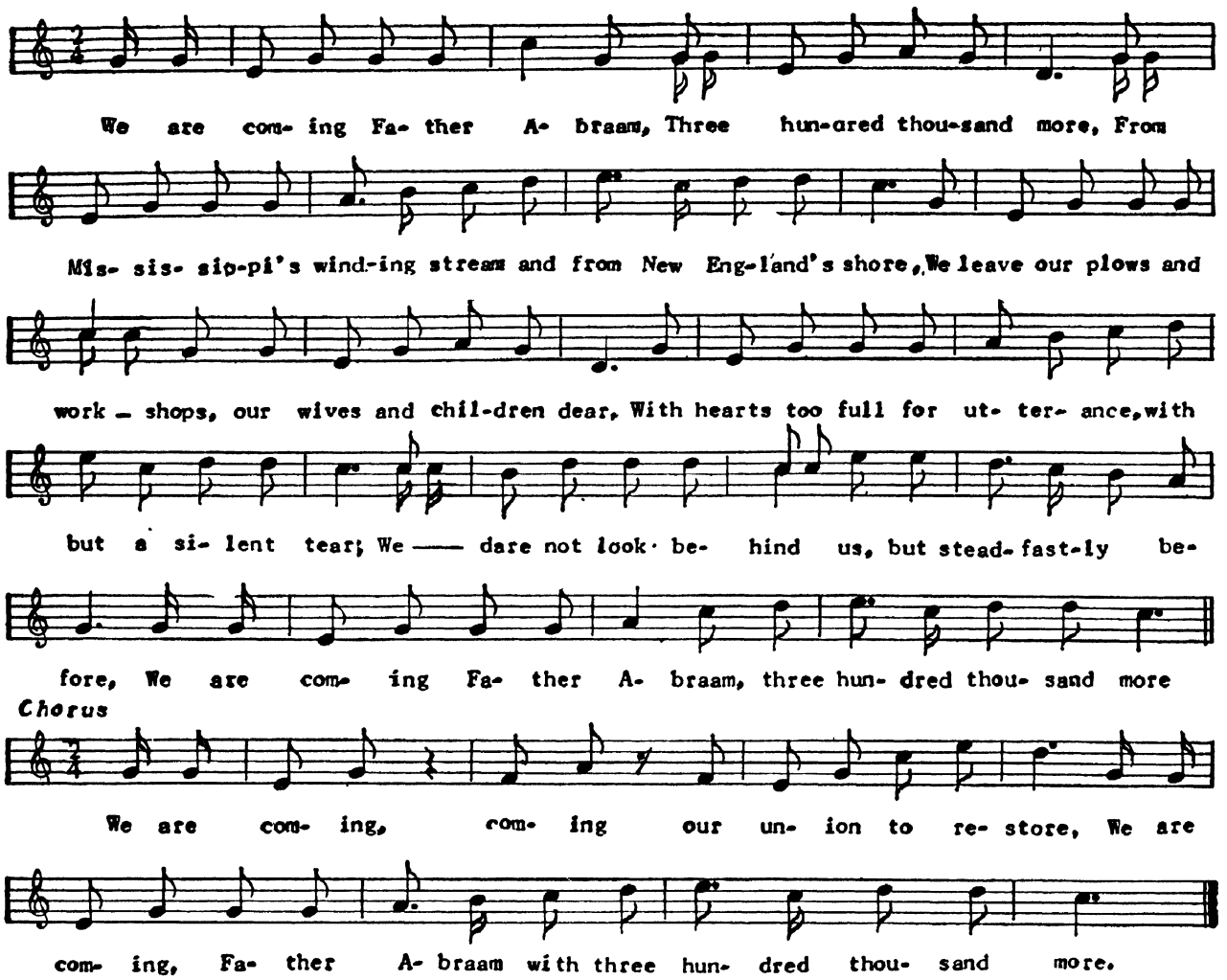
1861·1862

Three Hundred Thousand More

James Sloan Gibbons 1810 • 1892

On July 16, 1862, shortly after Lincoln had issued a call for three hundred thousand additional volunteers, this poem was published anonymously in the New York **Evening Post**. William Cullen Bryant was credited with its authorship, but eventually it was attributed to Gibbons, a Quaker editor and abolitionist. Stephen Collins Foster wrote a musical setting, the most successful of his war songs.

We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more,
From Mississippi's winding stream and from New England's shore;
We leave our plows and workshops, our wives and children dear,



With hearts too full for utterance, with but a silent tear;
We dare not look behind us, but steadfastly before:
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!

If you look across the hill-tops that meet the northern sky,
Long moving lines of rising dust your vision may descry;
And now the wind, an instant, tears the cloudy veil aside,
And floats aloft our spangled flag in glory and in pride,
And bayonets in the sunlight gleam, and bands brave music pour:
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!

If you look all up our valleys where the growing harvests shine,
You may see our sturdy farmer boys fast forming into line;
And children from their mother's knees are pulling at the weeds,
And learning how to reap and sow against their country's needs;
And a farewell group stands weeping at every cottage door:
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!

You have called us, and we're coming, by Richmond's bloody tide
To lay us down, for Freedom's sake, our brothers' bones beside,
Or from foul treason's savage grasp to wrench the murderous blade,
And in the face of foreign foes its fragments to parade.
Six hundred thousand loyal men and true have gone before:
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!

1862

Abraham Lincoln

1809 • 1865

An autobiography which Lincoln wrote in 1859 tells the main details of his early life in his characteristic style. It reads, in part:

"I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families. . . . My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks. . . . My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year . . . It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin',' to the rule of three. . . . There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age, I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

"I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two At twenty-one I came to Illinois, Macon County. Then I got to New Salem . . . where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came The Black Hawk War, and I was elected a captain of volunteers, a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elected, ran for the legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten—the only time I ever have been beaten by the people. The next and three succeeding biennial elections I was elected to the legislature. I was not a candidate afterward. During this legislative period I had studied law, and removed to Springfield to practice it In 1846 I was once elected to the lower House of Congress. Was not a candidate for reelection. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practised law more assiduously than ever before . . . I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again. What I have done since then is pretty well known.

"If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches,

nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected."

Lincoln's account breaks off at the time of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise (1854), a political move which caused him to return to public life when the Republican party was founded. In 1858 the Lincoln-Douglas debates, on the subject of popular sovereignty, attracted nation-wide attention and led to Lincoln's becoming a dark-horse candidate for the Presidential nomination. He was nominated in 1860, subsequently elected, and began to serve in 1861, as the Civil War was starting. His wartime leadership was rewarded by his reelection in 1864. He was shot to death by John Wilkes Booth, in a Washington theater, about a month after his second inaugural.

One reason for his countrymen's idolizing Lincoln as they have is suggested in his claim, in his autobiography, that he had little book learning. Americans loved to think of him as a typical practical citizen Joe Gillespie, an old friend, praised him in these words "He had passed through all the grades of society when he reached the Presidency, and he had found common sense a sure reliance and he put it into practice He acted all through his career upon just such principles as every man of good sense would approve. . . . Lincoln was a great common man." His ways of thinking were, indeed, much like those of ordinary Americans who distrust abstractions and rely upon experience and sound logic to help solve problems.

Yet Lincoln and many of his friends and worshipers probably underestimated the extent of his education. From boyhood, he was passionately fond of reading. He read the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress,* and such fine writers as Milton, Gibbon, Voltaire, Paine, Hawthorne, and others with great appreciation He knew much of Shakespeare and could recite long passages from the great plays. Finally, he had the urge to write well. As a young man, he wrote quite a number of poems. Of one poem which he read in 1846, he said, "I would give all I am worth and go in debt to be able to write so fine a piece. . . ." He took great pains with his writing Mentor Graham, his teacher, said, "I have known him . . . to study for hours the best way of three to express an idea." Such care is evident in his most famous utterances—most of them masterpieces of American oratory.

Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, ed. John Nicolay and John Hay, 2 vols, New York, 1894 • Carl Sandburg, **Abraham Lincoln: the Prairie Years**, New York, 1926 • Carl Sandburg, **Abraham Lincoln: the War Years**, New York, 1939 • Nathaniel Stephenson, "Lincoln," **Cambridge History of American Literature**, New York, 1931

Farewell Address at Springfield, Illinois

Lincoln had been elected President in November 1860. The following month, South Carolina had seceded. By February 8, 1861, five additional states had seceded, and the Confederate government had been formed. Because it had been rumored that Lincoln would never be allowed to reach Washington alive, precautions had been taken to ensure his safety on the journey.

Such was the situation when, on February 11, the Presidential party went to the railroad station in Springfield to depart for Washington. There were dense clouds overhead, and a chilly drizzle of rain fell through the gray mist. From the platform of a car on the train, Lincoln spoke to the thousand townspeople who stood in the rain.

My Friends· No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now

leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

1861

First Inaugural Address

"The 4th of March has come and gone," wrote a Washington clerk, "and we have a live, Republican President. And, what is perhaps more singular, during the whole day we saw no one who appeared to manifest the least dislike to his living." The account reflects the general fear in Washington on the day of the inauguration in 1861. During the parade and during the address, riflemen on rooftops along the Avenue and in windows of the Capitol Building watched the crowd for signs of violence. In addition to the fear for Lincoln's life, there was the tense feeling of a nation on the verge of war.

The speech, like most inaugurals, was addressed not only to the audience at Washington but also to a wider one For the North, which half feared that he might be a waverer like his predecessor, Lincoln clearly stated his belief that the Union could not be dissolved and firmly defined the duty of the government in the face of a threat of dissolution. For the South, he made his account of the controversy dispassionate and offered in the closing lines the appeal for a continuance of peace. The address was revised in accordance with suggestions made by his advisers Browning and Seward, who chiefly urged more temperance of tone. The most notable indication of Lincoln's artistry is his rephrasing of the final paragraph from the form originally written out by Secretary of State Seward. (See footnote, p. 672.)

Fellow Citizens of the United States: In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office."

I do not consider it necessary at present for me to discuss those matters of administration about which there is no special anxiety or excitement.

Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern states that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And, more than this, they placed in the platform for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

"*Resolved,* That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the states, and especially the right of each state to order and control its own domestic institutions ac-

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7 **I do not consider . . . .** This paragraph was written and inserted after the main part of the address had been composed • 10 **Apprehension seems . . . .** Marginal marks indicated that this paragraph was to receive special emphasis in reading

cording to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any state or territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes."

I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the states when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

"No person held to service or labor in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the lawgiver is the law. All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause "shall be delivered up," their oaths are unanimous. Now, if they would make the effort in good temper, could they not with nearly equal unanimity frame and pass a law by means of which to keep good that unanimous oath?

There is some difference of opinion whether this clause should be enforced by national or by state authority; but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him or to others by which authority it is done. And should anyone in any case be content that his oath shall go unkept on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a free man be not, in any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that "the citizen of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states"?

I take the official oath today with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules. And while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them, trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a president under our national Constitution During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens have, in succession, administered the executive branch of the government. They have conducted it through many perils, and generally with great success. Yet, with all this scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the union of these states is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our national Constitution, and the Union will endure forever—it being

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17 There is much controversy . . . . Marginal marks show that this was another paragraph to be given emphasis • 50 And might . . . states. This sentence was added after the first draft • 56 I take the official oath . . . . This paragraph was originally marked for emphatic delivery, but the mark was crossed out • 59 choose, originally, "think proper" • 66 It . . . years . . . . This was marked for oral emphasis, but the mark was deleted • 75 heretofore only menaced . . . and the rest of the sentence, replaced an earlier, longer phrasing

impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

Again, if the United States be not a government proper, but an association of states in the nature of contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak; but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it?

Descending from these general principles, we find the proposition that, in legal contemplation the Union is perpetual confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776 It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen states expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787 one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was "to form a more perfect Union."

But if the destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the states be lawfully possible, the Union is less perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

It follows from these views that no state upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union, that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence, within any state or states, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken and to the extent of my ability I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the states. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part, and I shall perform it so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself

In doing this there needs to be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and universal as to prevent competent resident citizens from holding the federal offices, there will be no attempt to force obnoxious strangers among the people for that object. While the strict legal right may exist in the government to enforce the exercise of these offices, the attempt to do so would be so irritating, and so nearly impracticable withal, that I deem it better to forego for the time the uses of such offices.

The mails, unless repelled, will continue to be furnished in all parts of the Union. So far as possible, the people everywhere shall have that sense of perfect security which is most favorable to calm thought and reflection. The course here indicated will be followed unless current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper, and in every case and exigency my best discretion will be exercised according to circumstances actually existing, and with a view and a hope of a peaceful solution of the national troubles and the restoration of fraternal sympathies and affections.

That there are persons in one section or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm nor deny, but if there be such, I need address no word to them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak?

Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you,

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31 I therefore consider . . . . This paragraph was added to the original draft • 45 The power confided . . . An earlier version read: "All the power at my disposal will be used to reclaim the public property and places which have fallen, to hold, occupy and possess these and all other properties and places belonging to the government" Browning suggested the use of the less threatening version. The sentence nevertheless was considered by contemporaries the most warlike utterance in the speech • 72 That there are persons . . . . Marginal marks indicated that Lincoln was to emphasize this paragraph

while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake?

All profess to be content in the Union if all constitutional rights can be maintained. Is it true, then, that any right, plainly written in the Constitution, has been denied? I think not. Happily the human mind is so constituted that no party can reach to the audacity of doing this. Think, if you can, of a single instance in which a plainly written provision of the Constitution has ever been denied. If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might, in a moral point of view, justify revolution—certainly would if such a right were a vital one. But such is not our case. All the vital rights of minorities and of individuals are so plainly assured to them by affirmations and negations, guarantees and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them. But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from labor be surrendered by national or by state authority? The Constitution does not expressly say. *May* Congress prohibit slavery in the territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. *Must* Congress protect slavery in the territories? The Constitution does not expressly say.

From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities. If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the government must cease. There is no other alternative; for continuing the government is acquiescence on one side or the other.

If a minority in such case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority. For instance, why may not any portion of a new confederacy a year or two hence arbitrarily secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this.

Is there such perfect identity of interests among the states to compose a new Union, as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

I do not forget the position, assumed by some, that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court; nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding, in any case, upon the parties to a suit, as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the government. And while it is obviously possible that such decisions may be erroneous in any given case, still the evil effect following it, being limited to that particular case, with the chance that it may be overruled and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the evils of a different practice. At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there in this view any assault upon the court or the judges. It is a duty from which they may not shrink to decide cases properly brought before them, and it is no fault of theirs if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave-trade, are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation

in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, cannot be perfectly cured; and it would be worse in both cases after the separation of the sections than before. The foreign slave-trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived, without restriction, in one section, while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the other.

Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the national Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the federal government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions



of the states, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objections to its being made express and irrevocable.

The chief magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the states. The people themselves can do this also if they choose; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take

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77 My countrymen . . . . The paragraph was marked for oral emphasis

deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

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.

1861

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21 I am loath . . . . This, at Seward's suggestion, replaced a more aggressive conclusion: "You can forbear the assault upon it [the Government], I cannot shrink from the defense of it. With you, and not with me, is the solemn question of 'shall it be peace, or a sword?' " Seward, wanting "some words of affection, some of calm and cheerful confidence," suggested "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 battle fields and so many patriot graves pass through all the hearts and all the 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"

Open Letter to Horace Greeley

Horace Greeley, famous and influential editor of the New York Tribune, in the issue of August 19, 1862, published an editorial—"The Prayer of 20,000,000 People." It urged complete emancipation of the slaves and indicated doubt concerning Lincoln's policies. Actually, the "Emancipation Proclamation" had already been written, and Lincoln was only waiting for a Union victory which would make politic its publication. The letter which Lincoln wrote in answer to Greeley's attack contains a clear and eloquent statement of the President's policy.

Executive Mansion, Washington,
August 22, 1862

Hon. Horace Greeley.

Dear Sir: I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the New York *Tribune.* If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same

time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the coloured race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. LINCOLN

1862

The Gettysburg Address

In September 1863, the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery was planned for the following October 23, but when Edward Everett, a renowned orator of the day, wrote that he could not prepare his oration in so short a time, the date was moved along to November 19. The request that Lincoln speak was an afterthought: the committee asked him, "as Chief Executive," to set apart the grounds "by a few appropriate remarks."

Busy with military and civil duties, the President found little time for composing his brief speech and actually did some work on it the night before its delivery. Lincoln, many of his friends, and most newsmen at the ceremonies thought it was not much of an address; but Everett wrote on November 20: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes." Later, Americans were to come to regard the address as one of the noblest utterances in American history.

The simplicity of the diction, the impressive rhythm, and the majesty of the thought of the address account for much of its appeal. Important, too, is an ordering of the material more complex than at first evident. The treatment of the past, then the present, and, finally, the future is strengthened throughout by a subtle analogy of birth, death, and rebirth. In mentioning the continent, then the nation, then the battlefield, then a portion of the battlefield, Lincoln parallels in a sense the movement which begins with the great accomplishment of the founding fathers, then narrows down to the futile ceremonies at Gettysburg. He thus prepares for a triumphant conclusion which from another view enlarges the true significance of the occasion by noting the vast accomplishment of the heroic dead for the nation and for all the earth.

Four score 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

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1 **Four score and seven years ago . . . .** Scholars have noted that Robert Toombs of Georgia in 1850 began a speech. "Sixty years ago our fathers joined together to form a more perfect Union and establish justice . . . . We have now met to put that government on trial . . . In my judgment the verdict is such as to give hope to the friends of liberty throughout the world." Lincoln, speaking to a crowd of serenaders, four and a half months before the dedication, had mentioned the founding of the republic "eighty odd years since" • 8 **We have come . . .** originally read, "We are met . . ."

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 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, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

1863

1 **It is altogether fitting . . . .** The sentence replaced an earlier phrasing, "This we may, in all propriety do" • 16 **under God.** The phrase was not in the copy from which Lincoln read; he apparently inserted it orally while reading • 17 **a new birth of freedom.** The **Chicago Times** criticized this phrase as a misrepresentation of "the motives of men who were slain at Gettysburg." "They gave their lives," said the paper, "to maintain the old government, and the only Constitution and Union." Thus some, at least, saw Lincoln voicing in this phrase his "odious abolition doctrines"

Letter to Mrs. Bixby

This letter was written to a woman who purportedly had heard news of the death of five of her sons on the battlefield. James Bryce, a great English scholar and an admirer of Lincoln, called it "perhaps the most impressive" of Lincoln's letters, and added, "It is short, and it deals with a theme on which hundreds of letters were written daily. But I do not know where the nobility of self-sacrifice for a great cause, and of the consolation which the thought of a sacrifice so made may bring, is set forth with such simple and pathetic beauty."

Executive Mansion
Washington, Nov. 21, 1864

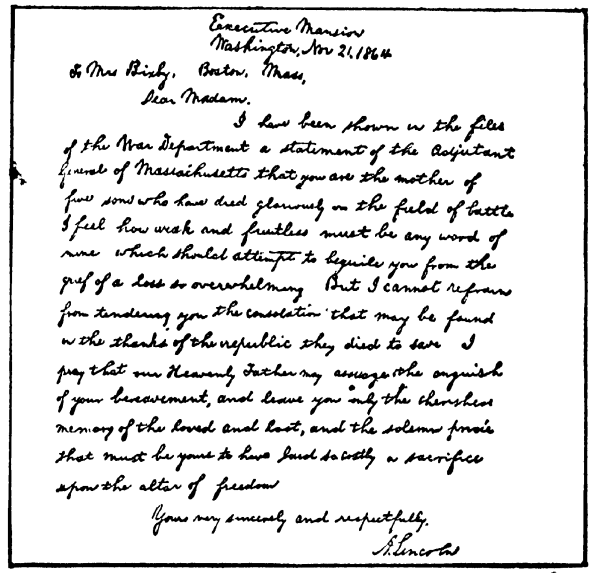
To Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass.

Dear Madam. I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

A. LINCOLN

1864


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A. Lincoln

Second Inaugural Address

"What think you of the inaugural?" wrote Charles Francis Adams, Jr., to his father, shortly after its delivery, March 4, 1865. "That rail-splitting lawyer is one of the wonders of the day. Once at Gettysburg and now again on a greater occasion he has shown a capacity for rising to the demands of the hour. . . . This inaugural strikes me in its grand simplicity and directness as being for all time the historical keynote of this war. . . ."

Mr. Carl Sandburg indicated the situation at the time the address was delivered when he said in his biography of Lincoln: "On Grant now menacing Lee before Richmond, on Sherman thrusting agony into the vitals of South Carolina—on these final struggles depended the length of the storm not yet spent. And on what the Chief Magistrate might have to say, on his words now, such had become his stature and place, depended much of the face of events and the character of what was to happen when the war was over. This no one understood more deeply and sensitively than Lincoln as he wrote his second inaugural address."

Fellow-Countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any man should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that

this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

1865

WHITMAN



Walt Whitman

1819 • 1892

Eighteen fifty-five was a year of epoch-making importance in the history of American literature, for in that year appeared the first edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass.* Emerson read the book, and wrote enthusiastically to its author: "I greet you at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere for such a start." Whitman was thirty-six when the *Leaves* first appeared; there had been a long foreground of preparation, the best record of which is found in his autobiographical prose work, *Specimen Days.*

The son of a carpenter, Whitman was born on Long Island (which he preferred to call by its Indian name,

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Panel (l. to r.): Brooklyn and the ferry in the 1850's • Walt Whitman at 36 • Jamaica Village, Long Island, where Whitman taught school

Paumanok), and spent his early life on Long Island and in Brooklyn and New York. "All along the island and its shores," he tells us in *Specimen Days,* "I spent intervals many years, all seasons, sometimes riding, sometimes boating, but generally afoot, absorbing fields, shores, marine incidents, characters, the bay-men, farmers, pilots. . . ." He went frequently to Coney Island, "at that time, a long, bare, unfrequented shore, which I had all to myself, and where I loved, after bathing, to race up and down the hard sand, and declaim Homer or Shakespeare to the surf and sea-gulls by the hour." He attended the public schools of Brooklyn, read omnivorously, listened to Elias Hicks, a Quaker preacher (the Quaker influence is important in Whitman; his mother's family were Quakers). Other early experiences included participating in a debating society, working in printing offices, and teaching country schools on Long Island and "boarding round." "This latter," he said, "I consider one of my best experiences and deepest lessons in human nature behind the scenes." He enjoyed the ferry boats and their pilots, the Broadway omnibuses and their drivers He had an enormous enthusiasm, moreover, for the theater; he lists in *Specimen Days* the names of plays and actors, of operas and singers, familiar to him in those formative years. In the 1840's he was connected with various newspapers, including the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle,* which he edited in 1846-1847. His knowledge of American life was further enlarged in 1848 by a leisurely journey down the Ohio and Mississippi to New Orleans, a stay of two or three months in that city, and the return journey by way of Chicago and the Great Lakes. (Some biographers have believed—the evidence is not convincing—that while in New Orleans, Whitman had a passionate and transforming love affair.) Upon his return to Brooklyn, he resumed journalistic work and assisted his father in the building of houses. All of these experiences, and many more, in Whitman's expressive phrase, "entered into the gestation of *Leaves of Grass.*" What the decisive influence was which made of Whitman the poet of the *Leaves*—if, indeed, any such influence can ever be posited—no one knows, though it seems reasonable to believe that his reading of Emerson (the essay "The Poet," for example) must have had a quickening effect.

Whitman was not a soldier in the Civil War, but he was none the less one of the war's real heroes. He served indefatigably as a volunteer nurse in the Washington hospitals, distributing knickknacks among the soldiers, writing letters home, radiating cheerfulness and the will to live. He records typical cases in *Specimen Days:* "J.G. lies in bed 52, Ward I; is of Company B, 7th Pennsylvania. I gave him a small sum of money, some tobacco and envelopes. . . . Bed 3, Ward E, Armory, has a great hankering for pickles, something pungent. After consulting the doctor, I gave him a small bottle of horse-radish; also some apples; also a book. . . . Marcus Small, Company K, 7th Maine, sick with dysentery and typhoid fever. . . . I write a letter for him home to East Livermore, Maine." He was supplied with funds, he tells us, "by good women and men in Boston, Salem, Providence, Brooklyn, and New York." He also visited the camp hospitals of the Army of the Potomac in Virginia. Some of his best poems (*Drum-Taps,* 1865) came out of these war experiences. His hitherto magnificent health, however, suffered under the strain and exposure. In the summer of 1864 he was ill with "hospital malaria," from the effects of which he never fully recovered. In 1873 he had a paralytic stroke, and he continued a partial invalid during the remaining nineteen years of his life.

Some ten editions of *Leaves of Grass* were published during Whitman's lifetime. In each succeeding edition, new poems were added and the old poems were considerably revised. His poems were strenuously objected to because of their "formlessness," and still more because of their frank treatment of sex. Emerson tried to persuade Whitman, before the publication of the third edition of the *Leaves* in 1860, to omit the more offensive passages, but Whitman was too well grounded in the Emersonian doctrine of "self-reliance" to heed Emerson's advice. In 1865 Whitman was dismissed by Secretary Harlan from a clerkship in the Department of the Interior on the charge that he was the author of an "indecent book," and W. D. O'Connor wrote his famous defense, *The Good Gray Poet.* The objections to Whitman's "formlessness" and "sensuality" have, no doubt, a measure of validity even today. It is to be noted, however, that his later work is less open to these objections. A study of Whitman's poetic development reveals an increasing mastery of form. Moreover, the later verses are less physical. "I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul," he proclaimed in the "Song of Myself" (1855), and he was always both. But the em-

phasis in the earlier work is upon the flesh, "the jolly bodily phase," and in the later, upon the spirit. In "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" (1865), this lover of the body wrote a lyrical hymn to Death, "the strong deliveress." In "Passage to India" (1871), the soul is mystically released from the prison house of the flesh.

Whitman was the poet of America and American democracy. He attempted to embrace the whole of America —an impossible task for a poet. But Whitman succeeded as well in that direction, perhaps, as it is poetically possible to do. He celebrated the westward course of empire. He found his subjects among all sorts and conditions: his catalogues symbolize the equalizing processes of democracy. He asserted "the majesty and reality of the American people *en masse.*" He envisaged, in "Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood" (1872), an artistic and moral growth:

> Thee in thy own musicians, singers, artists,
> unborn yet, but certain,
> Thee in thy moral wealth and civilization
> (until which thy proudest material civilization must remain in vain) . . .
> I prophesy.

Above all, he saw America as a nation of free individuals. Newton Arvin's view that Whitman desired a "socialist" state is difficult to accept. Despite his fondness for the phrase *en masse*, his poetry everywhere exalts the individual. To Whitman as to Emerson, the individual was supreme:

> All forces have been steadily employed to complete and delight me;
> Now on this spot I stand with my robust soul.

Whitman's poetry was original and revolutionary and indisputably American. He broke with the conventions and traditions of English verse. Of the composition of his poems he said, "I had great trouble in leaving out the stock 'poetical' touches, but succeeded at last." He employed free rhythms, which are comparable with those of the Old Testament. There have been, and are still, sharp differences of opinion as to the absolute merit of his work as poetry. Intellectual critics object to his emotionalism and vagueness; formal critics, to his lack of close structure; academic critics, to his apotheosis of the uncultivated. But there can be no question of his power and influence. (His influence has been particularly noticeable in the work of poets like Lindsay and Sandburg.) Even if one reads his poems with certain critical reservations, one responds, as did Thoreau, to Whitman's "alarum or trumpet-note ringing through the American camp" and feels the peculiar magnetic force of

> Camerado, this is no book;
> Who touches this, touches a man.

Leaves of Grass, ed. Emory Holloway, Inclusive Edition, Garden City, 1925 • **Complete Prose Works**, Philadelphia, 1892 • Bliss Perry, **Walt Whitman**, Boston, 1906 • Emory Holloway, **Whitman: An Interpretation in Narrative**, New York, 1926 • Norman Foerster, "Whitman," **American Criticism**, Boston, 1928 • Newton Arvin, **Whitman**, New York, 1938 • G. W. Allen, **Walt Whitman Handbook**, Chicago, 1946

Preface to 1855 Edition of "Leaves of Grass"

The following Preface epitomizes better than any other single selection Whitman's philosophy and his aims in literature. Parts of the Preface were later incorporated, with only minor changes, in the poem "By Blue Ontario's Shore."

America does not repel the past or what it has produced under its forms or amid other politics or the idea of castes or the old religions . . . accepts the lesson with calmness . . . is not so impatient as has been supposed that the slough still sticks to opinions and manners and literature while the life which served its requirements has passed into the new life of the new forms . . . perceives that the corpse is slowly borne from the eating and sleeping rooms of the house . . . perceives that it

3 religions. . . . The dots are Whitman's throughout and do not indicate omissions

vaits a little while in the door . . . that it was fittest for ts days . . . that its action has descended to the stalwart nd wellshaped heir who approaches . . . and that he hall be fittest for his days.

The Americans of all nations at any time upon the arth have probably the fullest poetical nature. The Jnited States themselves are essentially the greatest oem. In the history of the earth hitherto the largest and nost stirring appear tame and orderly to their ampler argeness and stir. Here at last is something in the doings f man that corresponds with the broadcast doings of he day and night. Here is not merely a nation but a eeming nation of nations. Here is action untied from trings necessarily blind to particulars and details magnificently moving in vast masses. Here is the hospitality vhich forever indicates heroes. . . . Here are the roughs nd beards and space and ruggedness and nonchalance hat the soul loves. Here the performance disdaining the rivial unapproached in the tremendous audacity of its rowds and groupings and the push of its perspective preads with crampless and flowing breadth and showers ts prolific and splendid extravagance. One sees it must ndeed own the riches of the summer and winter, and need never be bankrupt while corn grows from the ground or the orchards drop apples or the bays contain ish or men beget children upon women.

Other states indicate themselves in their deputies . . . but the genius of the United States is not best or most n its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in ts newspapers or inventors . . . but always most in the common people. Their manners speech dress friendships —the freshness and candor of their physiognomy—the picturesque looseness of their carriage . . . their deathess attachment to freedom—their aversion to anything ndecorous or soft or mean—the practical acknowledgnent of the citizens of one state by the citizens of all other states—the fierceness of their roused resentment—heir curiosity and welcome of novelty—their self-esteem nd wonderful sympathy—their susceptibility to a slight —the air they have of persons who never knew how it elt to stand in the presence of superiors—the fluency of heir speech—their delight in music, the sure symptom of manly tenderness and native elegance of soul . . . their good temper and open-handedness—the terrible significance of their elections—the President's taking off his hat to them not they to him—these too are unrhymed poetry. It awaits the gigantic and generous treatment worthy of it.

The largeness of nature or the nation were monstrous without a corresponding largeness and generosity of the spirit of the citizen. Not nature nor swarming states nor streets and steamships nor prosperous business nor farms nor capital nor learning may suffice for the ideal of man . . . nor suffice the poet. No reminiscences may suffice either. A live nation can always cut a deep mark and can have the best authority the cheapest . . . namely from its own soul. This is the sum of the profitable uses of individuals or states and of present action and grandeur and of the subjects of poets.—As if it were necessary to trot back generation after generation to the eastern records! As if the beauty and sacredness of the demonstrable must fall behind that of the mythical! As if men do not make their mark out of any times! As if the opening of the western continent by discovery and what has transpired since in North and South America were less than the small theatre of the antique or the aimless sleepwalking of the middle ages! The pride of the United States leaves the wealth and finesse of the cities and all returns of commerce and agriculture and all the magnitude of geography or shows of exterior victory to enjoy the breed of full sized men or one full sized man unconquerable and simple.

The American poets are to enclose old and new for America is the race of races. Of them a bard is to be commensurate with a people. To him the other continents arrive as contributions . . . he gives them reception for their sake and his own sake. His spirit responds to his country's spirit . . . he incarnates its geography and natural life and rivers and lakes. Mississippi with annual freshets and changing chutes, Missouri and Columbia and Ohio and Saint Lawrence with the falls and beautiful masculine Hudson, do not embouchure where they spend themselves more than they embouchure into him. The blue breadth over the inland sea of Virginia and Maryland and the sea off Massachusetts and Maine and over Manhattan bay and over Champlain and Erie and over Ontario and Huron and Michigan and Superior, and over

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83 embouchure, used here as a verb meaning to pour or empty. The word is properly a noun meaning "mouth"

the Texan and Mexican and Floridian and Cuban seas and over the seas off California and Oregon, is not tallied by the blue breadth of the waters below more than the breadth of above and below is tallied by him. When the long Atlantic coast stretches longer and the Pacific coast stretches longer he easily stretches with them north or south. He spans between them also from east to west and reflects what is between them. On him rise solid growths that offset the growths of pine and cedar and hemlock and liveoak and locust and chestnut and cypress and hickory and limetree and cottonwood and tuliptree and cactus and wildvine and tamarind and persimmon . . . and tangles as tangled as any canebreak or swamp . . . and forests coated with transparent ice and icicles hanging from the boughs and crackling in the wind . . . and sides and peaks of mountains . . . and pasturage sweet and free as savannah or upland or prairie . . . with flights and songs and screams that answer those of the wild-pigeon and highhold and orchard-oriole and coot and surf-duck and redshouldered-hawk and fish-hawk and white-ibis and indianhen and cat-owl and water-pheasant and qua-bird and pied-sheldrake and blackbird and mockingbird and buzzard and condor and night-heron and eagle. To him the hereditary countenance descends both mother's and father's. To him enter the essences of the real things and past and present events—of the enormous diversity of temperature and agriculture and mines—the tribes of red aborigines—the weather-beaten vessels entering new ports or making landings on rocky coasts—the first settlements north or south—the rapid stature and muscle—the haughty defiance of '76, and the war and peace and formation of the constitution . . . the union always surrounded by blatherers and always calm and impregnable—the perpetual coming of immigrants —the wharf-hem'd cities and superior marine—the unsurveyed interior—the loghouses and clearings and wild animals and hunters and trappers . . . the free commerce —the fisheries and whaling and gold-digging—the endless gestation of new states--the convening of Congress every December, the members duly coming up from all climates and the uttermost parts . . . the noble character of the young mechanics and of all free American workmen and workwomen . . . the general ardor and friendliness and enterprise—the perfect equality of the female with the male . . . the large amativeness—the fluid movement of the population—the factories and mercantile life and laborsaving machinery—the Yankee swap—the New-York firemen and the target excursion—the southern plantation life—the character of the northeast and of the northwest and southwest—slavery and the tremulous spreading of hands to protect it, and the stern opposition to it which shall never cease till it ceases or the speaking of tongues and the moving of lips cease. For such the expression of the American poet is to be transcendant and new. It is to be indirect and not direct or descriptive or epic. Its quality goes through these to much more. Let the age and wars of other nations be chanted and their eras and characters be illustrated and that finish the verse. Not so the great psalms of the republic. Here the theme is creative and has vista. Here comes one among the well-beloved stonecutters and plans with decision and science and sees the solid and beautiful forms of the future where there are now no solid forms.

Of all nations the United States with veins full of poetical stuff most need poets and will doubtless have the greatest and use them the greatest. Their Presidents shall not be their common referee so much as their poets shall. Of all mankind the great poet is the equable man. Not in him but off from him things are grotesque or eccentric or fail of their sanity. Nothing out of its place is good and nothing in its place is bad. He bestows on every object or quality its fit proportions neither more nor less. He is the arbiter of the diverse and he is the key. He is the equalizer of his age and land . . . he supplies what wants supplying and checks what wants checking. If peace is the routine out of him speaks the spirit of peace, large, rich, thrifty, building vast and populous cities, encouraging agriculture and the arts and commerce—lighting the study of man, the soul, immortality—federal, state or municipal government, marriage, health, free trade, inter-travel by land and sea . . . nothing too close, nothing too far off . . . the stars not too far off. In war he is the most deadly force of the war. Who recruits him recruits horse and foot . . . he fetches parks of

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19 highhold, woodpecker • 19 coot, a ducklike bird • 22 qua-bird, the heron • 45 amativeness, the capacity for physical love, a term from phrenology. For Whitman's interest in phrenology, see Edward Hungerford, "Walt Whitman and his Chart of Bumps," American Literature, January 1931

ecomes slothful and heavy he knows how to arouse it . . . he can make every word he speaks draw blood. Whatever stagnates in the flat of custom or obedience ir legislation he never stagnates. Obedience does not naster him, he masters it. High up out of reach he stands urning a concentrated light . . . he turns the pivot with iis finger . . . he baffles the swiftest runners as he stands nd easily overtakes and envelops them. The time traying toward infidelity and confections and persiflage ie withholds by his steady faith . . . he spreads out his lishes . . . he offers the sweet firmfibred meat that grows nen and women. His brain is the ultimate brain. He is io arguer . . . he is judgment. He judges not as the udge judges but as the sun falling around a helpless hing. As he sees the farthest he has the most faith. His houghts are the hymns of the praise of things. In the alk on the soul and eternity and God off of his equal plane he is silent. He sees eternity less like a play with prologue and denouement . . . he sees eternity in men nd women . . . he does not see men and women as lreams or dots. Faith is the antiseptic of the soul . . . it ervades the common people and preserves them . . . hey never give up believing and expecting and trusting. There is that indescribable freshness and unconciousness about an illiterate person that humbles and nocks the power of the noblest expressive genius. The poet sees for a certainty how one not a great artist may e just as sacred as the greatest artist. . . . The power to lestroy or remould is freely used by him but never the power of attack. What is past is past. If he does not expose superior models and prove himself by every step ie takes he is not what is wanted. The presence of the greatest poet conquers . . . not parleying or struggling or any prepared attempts. Now he has passed that way see after him! there is not left any vestige of despair or misanthropy or cunning or exclusiveness or the ignominy of a nativity or color or delusion of hell or the necessity of hell . . . and no man thenceforward shall be degraded for ignorance or weakness or sin.

The greatest poet hardly knows pettiness or triviality. If he breathes into any thing that was before thought small it dilates with the grandeur and life of the universe. He is a seer . . . he is individual . . . he is complete in himself . . . the others are as good as he, only he sees it and they do not. He is not one of the chorus . . . he or regulation. What the eyesight does to the rest he does to the rest. Who knows the curious mystery of the eyesight? The other senses corroborate themselves, but this is removed from any proof but its own and foreruns the identities of the spiritual world. A single glance of it mocks all the investigations of man and all the instruments and books of the earth and all reasoning. What is marvelous? what is unlikely? what is impossible or baseless or vague? after you have once just opened the space of a peachpit and given audience to far and near and to the sunset and had all things enter with electric swiftness softly and duly without confusion or jostling or jam.

The land and sea, the animals fishes and birds, the sky of heaven and the orbs, the forests mountains and rivers, are not small themes . . . but folks expect of the poet to indicate more than the beauty and dignity which always attach to dumb real objects . . . they expect him to indicate the path between reality and their souls. Men and women perceive the beauty well enough . . . probably as well as he. The passionate tenacity of hunters, woodmen, early risers, cultivators of gardens and orchards and fields, the love of healthy women for the manly form, seafaring persons, drivers of horses, the passion for light and the open air, all is an old varied sign of the unfailing perception of beauty and of a residence of the poetic in outdoor people. They can never be assisted by poets to perceive . . . some may but they never can. The poetic quality is not marshalled in rhyme or uniformity or abstract addresses to things nor in melancholy complaints or good precepts, but is the life of these and much else and is in the soul. The profit of rhyme is that it drops seeds of a sweeter and more luxuriant rhyme, and of uniformity that it conveys itself into its own roots in the ground out of sight. The rhyme and uniformity of perfect poems show the free growth of metrical laws and bud from them as unerringly and loosely as lilacs or roses on a bush, and take shapes as compact as the shapes of chestnuts and oranges and melons and pears, and shed the perfume impalpable to form. The fluency and ornaments of the finest poems or music or orations or recitations are not independent but dependent. All beauty comes from beautiful blood and a beautiful brain. If the greatnesses are in conjunction in a man or woman it is enough . . . the fact will prevail

through the universe . . . but the gaggery and gilt of a million years will not prevail. Who troubles himself about his ornaments or fluency is lost. This is what you shall do: Love the earth and sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to every one that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown or to any man or number of men, go freely with powerful uneducated persons and with the young and with the mothers of families, read these leaves in the open air every season of every year of your life, re-examine all you have been told at school or church or in any book, dismiss whatever insults your own soul, and your very flesh shall be a great poem and have the richest fluency not only in its words but in the silent lines of its lips and face and between the lashes of your eyes and in every motion and joint of your body. . . . The poet shall not spend his time in unneeded work. He shall know that the ground is always ready plowed and manured . . . others may not know it but he shall. He shall go directly to the creation. His trust shall master the trust of everything he touches . . . and shall master all attachment.

The known universe has one complete lover and that is the greatest poet. He consumes an eternal passion and is indifferent which chance happens and which possible contingency of fortune or misfortune and persuades daily and hourly his delicious pay. What balks or breaks others is fuel for his burning progress to contact and amorous joy. Other proportions of the reception of pleasure dwindle to nothing to his proportions. All expected from heaven or from the highest he is rapport with in the sight of the daybreak or a scene of the winterwoods or the presence of children playing or with his arm round the neck of a man or woman His love above all love has leisure and expanse . . . he leaves room ahead of himself. He is no irresolute or suspicious lover . . . he is sure . . . he scorns intervals. His experience and the showers and thrills are not for nothing. Nothing can jar him . . . suffering and darkness cannot—death and fear cannot. To him complaint and jealousy and envy are corpses buried and rotten in the earth . . . he saw them buried. The sea is not surer of the shore or the shore of the sea than he is of the fruition of his love and of all perfection and beauty.

The fruition of beauty is no chance of hit or miss . . . it is inevitable as life . . . it is exact and plumb as gravitation. From the eyesight proceeds another eyesight and from the hearing proceeds another hearing and from the voice proceeds another voice eternally curious of the harmony of things with man. To these respond perfections not only in the committees that were supposed to stand for the rest but in the rest themselves just the same. These understand the law of perfection in masses and floods . . . that its finish is to each for itself and onward from itself . . . that it is profuse and impartial . . . that there is not a minute of the light or dark nor an acre of the earth or sea without it—nor any direction of the sky nor any trade or employment nor any turn of events. This is the reason that about the proper expression of beauty there is precision and balance . . . one part does not need to be thrust above another. The best singer is not the one who has the most lithe and powerful organ . . . the pleasure of poems is not in them that take the handsomest measure and similes and sound.

Without effort and without exposing in the least how it is done the greatest poet brings the spirit of any or all events and passions and scenes and persons some more and some less to bear on your individual character as you hear or read. To do this well is to compete with the laws that pursue and follow time. What is the purpose must surely be there and the clue of it must be there . . . and the faintest indication is the indication of the best and then becomes the clearest indication. Past and present and future are not disjoined but joined. The greatest poet forms the consistence of what is to be from what has been and is. He drags the dead out of their coffins and stands them again on their feet . . . he says to the past, Rise and walk before me that I may realize you. He learns the lesson . . . he places himself where the future becomes present. The greatest poet does not only dazzle his rays over character and scenes and passions . . . he finally ascends and finishes all . . . he exhibits the pinnacles that no man can tell what they are for or what is beyond . . . he glows a moment on the extremest verge. He is most wonderful in his last half-hidden smile or frown . . . by that flash of the moment of parting the one that sees it shall be encouraged or terrified after-

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1 gaggery, joking ridicule

wards for many years. The greatest poet does not moralize or make applications of morals . . . he knows the soul. The soul has that measureless pride which consists in never acknowledging any lessons but its own. But it has sympathy as measureless as its pride and the one balances the other and neither can stretch too far while it stretches in company with the other. The inmost secrets of art sleep with the twain. The greatest poet has lain close betwixt both and they are vital in his style and thoughts.

The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters is simplicity. Nothing is better than simplicity . . . nothing can make up for excess or for the lack of definiteness. To carry on the heave of impulse and pierce intellectual depths and give all subjects their articulations are powers neither common nor very uncommon. But to speak in literature with the perfect rectitude and insouciance of the movements of animals and the unimpeachableness of the sentiment of trees in the woods and grass by the roadside is the flawless triumph of art. If you have looked on him who has achieved it you have looked on one of the masters of the artists of all nations and times. You shall not contemplate the flight of the graygull over the bay or the mettlesome action of the blood horse or the tall leaning of sunflowers on their stalk or the appearance of the sun journeying through heaven or the appearance of the moon afterward with any more satisfaction than you shall contemplate him. The greatest poet has less a marked style and is more the channel of thoughts and things without increase or diminution, and is the free channel of himself. He swears to his art, I will not be meddlesome, I will not have in my writing any elegance or effect or originality to hang in the way between me and the rest like curtains. I will have nothing hang in the way, not the richest curtains. What I tell I tell for precisely what it is. Let who may exalt or startle or fascinate or soothe I will have purposes as health or heat or snow has and be as regardless of observation. What I experience or portray shall go from my composition without a shred of my composition. You shall stand by my side and look in the mirror with me.

The old red blood and stainless gentility of great poets will be proved by their unconstraint. A heroic person walks at his ease through and out of that custom or precedent or authority that suits him not. Of the traits of the brotherhood of writers savans music inventors and artists nothing is finer than silent defia advancing from new free forms. In the need of po philosophy politics mechanism science behaviour, craft of art, an appropriate native grand-opera, sl craft, or any craft, he is greatest forever and forever contributes the greatest original practical example. cleanest expression is that which finds no sphere wo of itself and makes one.

The messages of great poets to each man and wo are, Come to us on equal terms, Only then can you derstand us, We are no better than you, What we enc you enclose, What we enjoy you may enjoy. Did suppose there could be only one Supreme? We afl there can be unnumbered Supremes, and that one c not countervail another any more than one eyes countervails another . . . and that men can be gooc grand only of the consciousness of their suprem within them. What do you think is the grandeu storms and dismemberments and the deadliest ba and wrecks and the wildest fury of the elements the power of the sea and the motion of nature anc the throes of human desires and dignity and hate love? It is that something in the soul which says, R on, Whirl on, I tread master here and everywhere, Ma of the spasms of the sky and of the shatter of the Master of nature and passion and death, And of all te and all pain.

The American bards shall be marked for gener and affection and for encouraging competitors. . . . T shall be kosmos . . . without monopoly or secrecy glad to pass any thing to any one . . . hungry for eq night and day. They shall not be careful of riches privilege they shall be riches and privilege . . . shall perceive who the most affluent man is. The affluent man is he that confronts all the shows he see equivalents out of the stronger wealth of himself. American bard shall delineate no class of persons one or two out of the strata of interests nor love nor truth most nor the soul most nor the body most and not be for the eastern states more than the wes or the northern states more than the southern

Exact science and its practical movements are checks on the greatest poet but always his encou ment and support. The outset and remembrance there . . . there are the arms that lifted him first

brace him best . . . there he returns after all his goings and comings. The sailor and traveler . . . the atomist chemist astronomer geologist phrenologist spiritualist mathematician historian and lexicographer are not poets, but they are the lawgivers of poets and their construction underlies the structure of every perfect poem. No matter what rises or is uttered they sent the seed of the conception of it . . . of them and by them stand the visible proofs of souls . . . always of their father-stuff must be begotten the sinewy races of bards. If there shall be love and content between the father and the son and if the greatness of the son is the exuding of the greatness of the father there shall be love between the poet and the man of demonstrable science. In the beauty of poems are the tuft and final applause of science.

Great is the faith of the flush of knowledge and of the investigation of the depths of qualities and things. Cleaving and circling here swells the soul of the poet yet is president of itself always. The depths are fathomless and therefore calm. The innocence and nakedness are resumed . . . they are neither modest not immodest. The whole theory of the special and supernatural and all that was twined with it or educed out of it departs as a dream. What has ever happened . . . what happens and whatever may or shall happen, the vital laws enclose all . . . they are sufficient for any case and for all cases . . . none to be hurried or retarded . . . any miracle of affairs or persons inadmissible in the vast clear scheme where every motion and every spear of grass and the frames and spirits of men and women and all that concerns them are unspeakably perfect miracles all referring to all and each distinct and in its place. It is also not consistent with the reality of the soul to admit that there is anything in the known universe more divine than men and women.

Men and women and the earth and all upon it are simply to be taken as they are, and the investigation of their past and present and future shall be unintermitted and shall be done with perfect candor. Upon this basis philosophy speculates ever looking toward the poet, ever regarding the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness never inconsistent with what is clear to the senses and to the soul. For the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness make the only point of sane philosophy. Whatever comprehends less than that . . . whatever is less than the laws of light and of astronomical motion . . . or less than the laws that follow the thief the liar the glutton and the drunkard through this life and doubtless afterward . . . or less than vast stretches of time or the slow formation of density or the patient upheaving of strata—is of no account. Whatever would put God in a poem or system of philosophy as contending against some being or influence, is also of no account. Sanity and ensemble characterise the great master . . . spoilt in one principle all is spoilt. The great master has nothing to do with miracles. He sees health for himself in being one of the mass . . . he sees the hiatus in singular eminence. To the perfect shape comes common ground. To be under the general law is great for that is to correspond with it. The master knows that he is unspeakably great and that all are unspeakably great . . . that nothing for instance is greater than to conceive children and bring them up well . . . that to be is just as great as to perceive or tell.

In the make of the great masters the idea of political liberty is indispensable. Liberty takes the adherence of heroes wherever men and women exist . . . but never takes any adherence or welcome from the rest more than from poets. They are the voice and exposition of liberty. They out of ages are worthy the grand idea . . . to them it is confided and they must sustain it. Nothing has precedence of it and nothing can warp or degrade it. The attitude of great poets is to cheer up slaves and horrify despots. The turn of their necks, the sound of their feet, the motions of their wrists, are full of hazard to the one and hope to the other. Come nigh them awhile and though they neither speak or advise you shall learn the faithful American lesson. Liberty is poorly served by men whose good intent is quelled from one failure or two failures or any number of failures, or from the casual indifference or ingratitude of the people, or from the sharp show of the tushes of power, or the bringing to bear soldiers and cannon or any penal statutes. Liberty relies upon itself, invites no one, promises nothing, sits in calmness and light, is positive and composed, and knows no discouragement. The battle rages with many a loud alarm and frequent advance and retreat . . . the enemy triumphs . . . the prison, the handcuffs, the iron necklace and anklet, the scaffold, garrote and leadballs do their work . . . the cause is asleep . . the strong throats are choked with their own blood . . . the young men drop their eyelashes toward the ground when they pass each other . . . and is liberty

gone out of that place? No never. When liberty goes it is not the first to go nor the second nor third to go . . . it waits for all the rest to go . . . it is the last . . . When the memories of the old martyrs are faded utterly away . . . when the large names of patriots are laughed at in the public halls from the lips of the orators . . . when the boys are no more christened after the same but christened after tyrants and traitors instead . . . when the laws of the free are grudgingly permitted and laws for informers and blood-money are sweet to the taste of the people . . . when I and you walk abroad upon the earth stung with compassion at the sight of numberless brothers answering our equal friendship and calling no man master—and when we are elated with noble joy at the sight of slaves . . . when the soul retires in the cool communion of the night and surveys its experience and has much extasy over the word and deed that put back a helpless innocent person into the gripe of the gripers or into any cruel inferiority . . . when those in all parts of these states who could easier realize the true American character but do not yet—when the swarms of cringers, suckers, doughfaces, lice of politics, planners of sly involutions for their own preferment to city offices or state legislatures or the judiciary or congress or the presidency, obtain a response of love and natural deference from the people whether they get the offices or no . . . when it is better to be a bound booby and rogue in office at a high salary than the poorest free mechanic or farmer with his hat unmoved from his head and firm eyes and a candid and generous heart . . . and when servility by town or state or the federal government or any oppression on a large scale or small scale can be tried on without its own punishment following duly after in exact proportion against the smallest chance of escape . . . or rather when all life and all the souls of men and women are discharged from any part of the earth—then only shall the instinct of liberty be discharged from that part of the earth.

As the attributes of the poets of the kosmos concentre in the real body and soul and in the pleasure of things they possess the superiority of genuineness over all fiction and romance. As they emit themselves facts are showered over with light . . . the daylight is lit with more volatile light . . . also the deep between the setting and rising sun goes deeper many fold. Each precise object or condition or combination or process exhibits a beauty . . . the multiplication table its—old age its—the carpenter's trade its—the grand-opera its . . . the hugehulled cleanshaped New-York clipper at sea under steam or full sail gleams with unmatched beauty . . . the American circles and large harmonies of government gleam with theirs . . . and the commonest definite intentions and actions with theirs. The poets of the kosmos advance through all interpositions and coverings and turmoils and stratagems to first principles. They are of use . . . they dissolve poverty from its need and riches from its conceit. You large proprietor they say shall not realize or perceive more than any one else. The owner of the library is not he who holds a legal title to it having bought and paid for it. Any one and every one is owner of the library who can read the same through all the varieties of tongues and subjects and styles, and in whom they enter with ease and take residence and force toward paternity and maternity, and make supple and powerful and rich and large. . . . These American states strong and healthy and accomplished shall receive no pleasure from violations of natural models and must not permit them. In paintings or mouldings or carvings in mineral or wood, or in the illustrations of books or newspapers, or in any comic or tragic prints, or in the patterns of woven stuffs or anything to beautify rooms or furniture or costumes, or to put upon cornices or monuments or on the prows or sterns of ships, or to put anywhere before the human eye indoors or out, that which distorts honest shapes or which creates unearthly beings or places or contingencies is a nuisance and revolt. Of the human form especially it is so great it must never be made ridiculous. Of ornaments to a work nothing outre can be allowed . . . but those ornaments can be allowed that conform to the perfect facts of the open air and that flow out of the nature of the work and come irrepressibly from it and are necessary to the completion of the work. Most works are most beautiful without ornament. . . . Exaggerations will be revenged in human physiology. Clean and vigorous children are jetted and conceived only in those communities where the models of natural forms are public every day. . . .

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22 suckers . . . doughfaces, an interesting example of Whitman's use of slang. Doughfaces were Northern Congressmen who did not oppose Negro slavery in the South, or its extension into the Southwest (see Dictionary of American English) • 47 its, exhibits its beauty • 79 outre, or outré, uncommon, bizarre

Great genius and the people of these states must never be demeaned to romances. As soon as histories are properly told there is no more need of romances.

The great poets are also to be known by the absence in them of tricks and by the justification of perfect personal candor. Then folks echo a new cheap joy and a divine voice leaping from their brains: How beautiful is candor! All faults may be forgiven of him who has perfect candor. Henceforth let no man of us lie, for we have seen that openness wins the inner and outer world and that there is no single exception, and that never since our earth gathered itself in a mass have deceit or subterfuge or prevarication attracted its smallest particle or the faintest tinge of a shade—and that through the enveloping wealth and rank of a state or the whole republic of states a sneak or sly person shall be discovered and despised . . . and that the soul has never been once fooled and never can be fooled . . . and thrift without the loving nod of the soul is only a fœtid puff . . . and there never grew up in any of the continents of the globe nor upon any planet or satellite or star, nor upon the asteroids, nor in any part of ethereal space, nor in the midst of density, nor under the fluid wet of the sea, nor in the condition which precedes the birth of babes, nor at any time during the changes of life, nor in that condition that follows what we term death, nor in any stretch of abeyance or action afterward of vitality, nor in any process of formation or reformation anywhere, a being whose instinct hated the truth.

Extreme caution or prudence, the soundest organic health, large hope and comparison and fondness for women and children, large alimentiveness and destructiveness and causality, with a perfect sense of the oneness of nature and the propriety of the same spirit applied to human affairs . . . these are called up of the float of the brain of the world to be parts of the greatest poet from his birth out of his mother's womb and from her birth out of her mother's. Caution seldom goes far enough. It has been thought that the prudent citizen was the citizen who applied himself to solid gains and did well for himself and his family and completed a lawful life without debt or crime. The greatest poet sees and admits these economies as he sees the economies of food and sleep, but has higher notions of prudence than to think he gives much when he gives a few slight attentions at the latch of the gate. The premises of the prudence of life are not the hospitality of it or the ripeness and harvest of it. Beyond the independence of a little sum laid aside for burial-money, and of a few clap-boards around and shingles overhead on a lot of American soil owned, and the easy dollars that supply the year's plain clothing and meals, the melancholy prudence of the abandonment of such a great being as a man is to the toss and pallor of years of moneymaking with all their scorching days and icy nights and all their stifling deceits and underhanded dodgings, or infinitesimals of parlors, or shameless stuffing while others starve . . . and all the loss of the bloom and odor of the earth and of the flowers and atmosphere and of the sea and of the true taste of the women and men you pass or have to do with in youth or middle age, and the issuing sickness and desperate revolt at the close of a life without elevation or naivete, and the ghastly chatter of a death without serenity or majesty, is the great fraud upon modern civilization and forethought, blotching the surface and system which civilization undeniably drafts, and moistening with tears the immense features it spreads and spreads with such velocity before the reached kisses of the soul . . . Still the right explanation remains to be made about prudence. The prudence of the mere wealth and respectability of the most esteemed life appears too faint for the eye to observe at all when little and large alike drop quietly aside at the thought of the prudence suitable for immortality. What is wisdom that fills the thinness of a year or seventy or eighty years to wisdom spaced out by ages and coming back at a certain time with strong reinforcements and rich presents and the clear faces of wedding-guests as far as you can look in every direction running gaily toward you? Only the soul is of itself . . . all else has reference to what ensues. All that a person does or thinks is of consequence. Not a move can a man or woman make that affects him or her in a day or a month or any part of the direct lifetime or the hour of death but the same affects him or her onward afterward

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2 **demeaned to romances**, debased to the standard of conduct set forth in romantic fiction • 32 **alimentiveness**, capacity for eating and drinking, a term from phrenology • 32 **destructiveness and causality**, also phrenological terms. Destructiveness means a capacity for excited interest in scenes of destructive violence such as storms, fires, and battles; causality, a sense of cause and effect

through the indirect lifetime. The indirect is always as great and real as the direct. The spirit receives from the body just as much as it gives to the body. Not one name of word or deed . . . not of venereal sores or discolorations . . . not the privacy of the onanist . . . not of the putrid veins of gluttons or rum drinkers . . . not peculation or cunning or betrayal or murder . . . no serpentine poison of those that seduce women . . . not the foolish yielding of women . . . not prostitution . . . not any depravity of young men . . . not of the attainment of gain by discreditable means . . . not any nastiness of appetite . . . not any harshness of officers to men or judges to prisoners or fathers to sons or sons to fathers or husbands to wives or bosses to their boys . . . not of greedy looks or malignant wishes . . . nor any of the wiles practised by people upon themselves . . . ever is or ever can be stamped on the programme but it is duly realized and returned, and that returned in further performances . . . and they returned again. Nor can the push of charity or personal force ever be any thing else than the profoundest reason, whether it brings arguments to hand or no. No specification is necessary . . . to add or subtract or divide is in vain. Little or big, learned or unlearned, white or black, legal or illegal, sick or well, from the first inspiration down the windpipe to the last expiration out of it, all that a male or female does that is vigorous and benevolent and clean is so much sure profit to him or her in the unshakable order of the universe and through the whole scope of it forever. If the savage or felon is wise it is well . . . if the greatest poet or savan is wise it is simply the same . . . if the President or chief justice is wise it is the same . . . if the young mechanic or farmer is wise it is no more or less . . . if the prostitute is wise it is no more nor less. The interest will come round . . . all will come round. All the best actions of war and peace . . . all help given to relatives and strangers and the poor and old and sorrowful and young children and widows and the sick, and to all shunned persons . . . all furtherance of fugitives and of the escape of slaves . . . all the self-denial that stood steady and aloof on wrecks and saw others take the seats of the boats . . . all offering of substance or life for the good old cause, or for a friend's sake or opinion's sake . . . all pains of enthusiasts scoffed at by their neighbors . . . all the vast sweet love and precious suffering of mothers . . . all honest men baffled in strifes recorded or unrecorded . . . all the grandeur and good of the few ancient nations whose fragments of annals we inherit . . . and all the good of the hundreds of far mightier and more ancient nations unknown to us by name or date or location . . . all that was ever manfully begun, whether it succeeded or not . . . all that has at any time been well suggested out of the divine heart of man or by the divinity of his mouth or by the shaping of his great hands . . . and all that is well thought or done this day on any part of the surface of the globe . . . or on any of the wandering stars or fixed stars by those there as we are here . . . or that is henceforth to be well thought or done by you whoever you are, or by any one—these singly and wholly inured at their time and inure now and will inure always to the identities from which they sprung or shall spring. . . . Did you guess any of them lived only its moment? The world does not so exist . . . no parts palpable or impalpable so exist . . . no result exists now without being from its long antecedent result, and that from its antecedent, and so backward without the farthest mentionable spot coming a bit nearer to the beginning than any other spot. . . . Whatever satisfies the soul is truth. The prudence of the greatest poet answers at last the craving and glut of the soul, is not contemptuous of less ways of prudence if they conform to its ways, puts off nothing, permits no let-up for its own case or any case, has no particular sabbath or judgment-day, divides not the living from the dead or the righteous from the unrighteous, is satisfied with the present, matches every thought or act by its correlative, knows no possible forgiveness or deputed atonement . . . knows that the young man who composedly periled his life and lost it has done exceeding well for himself, while the man who has not periled his life and retains it to old age in riches and ease has perhaps achieved nothing for himself worth mentioning . . . and that only that person has no great prudence to learn who has learnt to prefer real longlived things, and favors body and soul the same, and perceives the indirect assuredly following the direct, and what evil or good he does leaping onward and waiting to meet him again—and who in his spirit in any emergency whatever neither hurries or avoids death.

The direct trial of him who would be the greatest poet is to-day. If he does not flood himself with the

immediate age as with vast oceanic tides . . . and if he does not attract his own loud body and soul to himself and hang on its neck with incomparable love and plunge his semitic muscle into its merits and demerits . . . and if he be not himself the age transfigured . . . and if to him is not opened the eternity which gives similitude to all periods and locations and processes and animate and inanimate forms, and which is the bond of time, and rises up from its inconceivable vagueness and infiniteness in the swimming shape of to-day, and is held by the ductile anchors of life, and makes the present spot the passage from what was to what shall be, and commits itself to the representation of this wave of an hour and this one of the sixty beautiful children of the wave—let him merge in the general run and wait his developement. . . . Still the final test of poems or any character or work remains. The prescient poet projects himself centuries ahead and judges performer or performance after the changes of time. Does it live through them? Does it still hold on untired? Will the same style and the direction of genius to similar points be satisfactory now? Has no new discovery in science or arrival at superior planes of thought and judgment and behaviour fixed him or his so that either can be looked down upon? Have the marches of tens and hundreds and thousands of years made willing detours to the right hand and the left hand for his sake? Is he beloved long and long after he is buried? Does the young man think often of him? and the young woman think often of him? and do the middle-aged and the old think of him?

A great poem is for ages and ages in common and for all degrees and complexions and all departments and sects and for a woman as much as a man and a man as much as a woman. A great poem is no finish to a man or woman but rather a beginning. Has anyone fancied he could sit at last under some due authority and rest satisfied with explanations and realize and be content and full? To no such terminus does the greatest poet bring . . . he brings neither cessation or sheltered fatness and ease. The touch of him tells in action. Whom he takes he takes with firm sure grasp into live regions previously unattained . . . thenceforward is no rest . . . they see the space and ineffable sheen that turn the old spots and lights into dead vacuums. The companion of him beholds the birth and progress of stars and learns one of the meanings. Now there shall be a man cohered out of tumult and chaos . . . the elder encourages the younger and shows him how . . . they two shall launch off fearlessly together till the new world fits an orbit for itself and looks unabashed on the lesser orbits of the stars and sweeps through the ceaseless rings and shall never be quiet again.

There will soon be no more priests. Their work is done. They may wait awhile . . . perhaps a generation or two . . . dropping off by degrees. A superior breed shall take their place . . . the gangs of kosmos and prophets en masse shall take their place. A new order shall arise and they shall be the priests of man, and every man shall be his own priest. The churches built under their umbrage shall be the churches of men and women. Through the divinity of themselves shall the kosmos and the new breed of poets be interpreters of men and women and of all events and things. They shall find their inspiration in real objects to-day, symptoms of the past and future . . . They shall not deign to defend immortality or God or the perfection of things or liberty or the exquisite beauty and reality of the soul. They shall arise in America and be responded to from the remainder of the earth.

The English language befriends the grand American expression . . . it is brawny enough and limber and full enough. On the tough stock of a race who through all change of circumstances was never without the idea of political liberty, which is the animus of all liberty, it has attracted the terms of daintier and gayer and subtler and more elegant tongues. It is the powerful language of resistance . . . it is the dialect of common sense. It is the speech of the proud and melancholy races and of all who aspire. It is the chosen tongue to express growth faith self-esteem freedom justice equality friendliness amplitude prudence decision and courage. It is the medium that shall well nigh express the inexpressible.

No great literature nor any like style of behaviour or oratory or social intercourse or household arrangements or public institutions or the treatment by bosses of employed people, nor executive detail or detail of the army or navy, nor spirit of legislation or courts or police or tuition or architecture or songs or amuse-

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56 gangs, without the usual unfavorable connotation

ments or the costumes of young men, can long elude the jealous and passionate instinct of American standards. Whether or no the sign appears from the mouths of the people, it throbs a live interrogation in every freeman's and freewoman's heart after that which passes by or this built to remain. Is it uniform with my country? Are its disposals without ignominious distinctions? Is it for the evergrowing communes of brothers and lovers, large, well-united, proud beyond the old models, generous beyond all models? Is it something grown fresh out of the fields or drawn from the sea for use to me to-day here? I know that what answers for me an American must answer for any individual or nation that serves for a part of my materials. Does this answer? or is it without reference to universal needs? or sprung of the needs of the less developed society of special ranks? or old needs of pleasure overlaid by modern science and forms? Does this acknowledge liberty with audible and absolute acknowledgement, and set slavery at naught for life and death? Will it help breed one goodshaped and wellhung man, and a woman to be his perfect and independent mate? Does it improve manners? Is it for the nursing of the young of the republic? Does it solve readily with the sweet milk of the nipples of the breasts of the mother of many children? Has it too the old ever-fresh forbearance and impartiality? Does it look with the same love on the last born and those hardening toward stature, and on the errant, and on those who disdain all strength of assault outside of their own?

The poems distilled from other poems will probably pass away. The coward will surely pass away. The expectation of the vital and great can only be satisfied by the demeanor of the vital and great. The swarms of the polished deprecating and reflectors and the polite float off and leave no remembrance. America prepares with composure and goodwill for the visitors that have sent word. It is not intellect that is to be their warrant and welcome. The talented, the artist, the ingenious, the editor, the statesman, the erudite . . . they are not unappreciated . . . they fall in their place and do their work. The soul of the nation also does its work. No disguise can pass on it . . . no disguise can conceal from it. It rejects none, it permits all. Only toward as good as itself and toward the like of itself will it advance half-way. An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation. The soul of the largest and wealthiest and proudest nation may well go half-way to meet that of its poets. The signs are effectual. There is no fear of mistake. If the one is true the other is true. The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it.

1855

One's-Self I Sing

"One's-Self I Sing" strikes at once the keynote of much of Whitman's poetry: his democratic society is composed of "simple separate persons."

"One's-Self I Sing" is the first poem in the standard edition of Leaves of Grass issued in 1902 by Whitman's literary executors, Richard Maurice Bucke, Thomas B. Harned, and Horace L. Traubel, and the sequence of poems in the following selections follows the sequence of that edition. The first date appended to this and other poems by Whitman is that of earliest publication. The second date is that of the poem's first appearance in final form. It should be noted that Whitman constantly revised his work, that most of his poems exist in several intermediary stages, and that the versions presented here show the poems as they were finally revised by the poet.

One's-Self I sing, a simple separate person,
Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.

Of physiology from top to toe I sing,
Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the Muse,
I say the Form complete is worthier far,
The Female equally with the Male I sing.

Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,
Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine,
The Modern Man I sing.

1867-1871

Once I Pass'd Through a Populous City

It has been often supposed that the following poem refers to a love affair in New Orleans in 1848. Whitman's poems, however, can never be safely taken as literal autobiography, and the evidence in support of such a romance is far from conclusive. For the best account of the subject, see Emory Holloway's Whitman, pp. 39-71.

Once I pass'd through a populous city imprinting my brain for future use with its shows, architecture, customs, traditions,
Yet now of all that city I remember only a woman I casually met there who detain'd me for love of me,
Day by day and night by night we were together—all else has long been forgotten by me,
I remember I say only that woman who passionately clung to me,
Again she holds me by the hand, I must not go,
I see her close beside me with silent lips sad and tremulous.

1860•1867

For You O Democracy

Better than any other single phrase, perhaps, "the love of comrades" expresses Whitman's concept of the true basis of a democratic society.

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,
I will make divine magnetic lands,
With the love of comrades,
With the life-long love of comrades.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies,
I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks,
By the love of comrades,
By the manly love of comrades.

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme!
For you, for you I am trilling these songs.

1860•1881

Song of the Open Road

1

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,
Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,
Strong and content I travel the open road.

The earth, that is sufficient,
I do not want the constellations any nearer,
I know they are very well where they are,
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.
(Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
I carry them, men and women, I carry them with me wherever I go,
I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
I am fill'd with them; and I will fill them in return.)

2

You road I enter upon and look around, I believe you are not all that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here.

Once I Passed . . . City 2 a woman. In an early manuscript version of this poem, the lover was a man See Emory Holloway, **Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman, II, 102**

Here the profound lesson of reception, nor preference nor denial,
The black with his woolly head, the felon, the diseas'd, the illiterate person, are not denied;
The birth, the hasting after the physician, the beggar's tramp, the drunkard's stagger, the laughing party of mechanics,
The escaped youth, the rich person's carriage, the fop, the eloping couple,
The early market-man, the hearse, the moving of furniture into the town, the return back from the town,
They pass, I also pass, any thing passes, none can be interdicted,
None but are accepted, none but shall be dear to me.

3

You air that serves me with breath to speak!
You objects that call from diffusion my meanings and give them shape!
You light that wraps me and all things in delicate equable showers!
You paths worn in the irregular hollows by the roadsides!
I believe you are latent with unseen existences, you are so dear to me.

You flagg'd walks of the cities! You strong curbs at the edges!
You ferries! you planks and posts of wharves! you timberlined sides! you distant ships!
You rows of houses! you window-pierc'd façades! you roofs!
You porches and entrances! you copings and iron guards!
You windows whose transparent shells might expose so much!
You doors and ascending steps! you arches!
You gray stones of interminable pavements! you trodden crossings!
From all that has touch'd you I believe you have imparted to yourselves, and now would impart the same secretly to me,
From the living and the dead you have peopled your impassive surfaces, and the spirits thereof would be evident and amicable with me.

4

The earth expanding right hand and left hand,
The picture alive, every part in its best light,
The music falling in where it is wanted, and stopping where it is not wanted,
The cheerful voice of the public road, the gay fresh sentiment of the road.

O highway I travel, do you say to me *Do not leave me?*
Do you say *Venture not—if you leave me you are lost?*
Do you say *I am already prepared, I am well-beaten and undenied, adhere to me?*

O public road, I say back I am not afraid to leave you, yet I love you,
You express me better than I can express myself,
You shall be more to me than my poem.

I think heroic deeds were all conceiv'd in the open air, and all free poems also,
I think I could stop here myself and do miracles,
I think whatever I shall meet on the road I shall like, and whoever beholds me shall like me,
I think whoever I see must be happy.

5

From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of limits and imaginary lines,
Going where I list, my own master total and absolute,
Listening to others, considering well what they say,
Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,
Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the holds that would hold me.
I inhale great draughts of space,
The east and the west are mine, and the north and the south are mine.

I am larger, better than I thought,
I did not know I held so much goodness.

All seems beautiful to me,
I can repeat over to men and women You have done such good to me I would do the same to you,
I will recruit for myself and you as I go,
I will scatter myself among men and women as I go,
I will toss a new gladness and roughness among them,

Whoever denies me it shall not trouble me,
Whoever accepts me he or she shall be blessed and shall bless me.

6

Now if a thousand perfect men were to appear it would not amaze me,
Now if a thousand beautiful forms of women appear'd it would not astonish me.

Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

Here a great personal deed has room,
(Such a deed seizes upon the hearts of the whole race of men,
Its effusion of strength and will overwhelms law and mocks all authority and all argument against it.)

Here is the test of wisdom,
Wisdom is not finally tested in schools,
Wisdom cannot be pass'd from one having it to another not having it,
Wisdom is of the soul, is not susceptible of proof, is its own proof,
Applies to all stages and objects and qualities and is content,
Is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things, and the excellence of things;
Something there is in the float of the sight of things that provokes it out of the soul.
Now I re-examine philosophies and religions,
They may prove well in lecture-rooms, yet not prove at all under the spacious clouds and along the landscape and flowing currents.

Here is realization,
Here is a man tallied—he realizes here what he has in him,
The past, the future, majesty, love—if they are vacant of you, you are vacant of them.

Only the kernel of every object nourishes;
Where is he who tears off the husks for you and me?
Where is he that undoes stratagems and envelopes for you and me?

Here is adhesiveness, it is not previously fashion'd, it is apropos;
Do you know what it is as you pass to be loved by strangers?
Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls?

7

Here is the efflux of the soul,
The efflux of the soul comes from within through embower'd gates, ever provoking questions,
These yearnings why are they? these thoughts in the darkness why are they?
Why are there men and women that while they are nigh me the sunlight expands my blood?
Why when they leave me do my pennants of joy sink flat and lank?
Why are there trees I never walk under but large and melodious thoughts descend upon me?
(I think they hang there winter and summer on those trees and always drop fruit as I pass;)
What is it I interchange so suddenly with strangers?
What with some driver as I ride on the seat by his side?
What with some fisherman drawing his seine by the shore as I walk by and pause?
What gives me to be free to a woman's and man's good-will? what gives them to be free to mine?

8

The efflux of the soul is happiness, here is happiness,
I think it pervades the open air, waiting at all times,
Now it flows unto us, we are rightly charged.
Here rises the fluid and attaching character,
The fluid and attaching character is the freshness and sweetness of man and woman,
(The herbs of the morning sprout no fresher and sweeter every day out of the roots of themselves, than it sprouts fresh and sweet continually out of itself.)
Toward the fluid and attaching character exudes the sweat of the love of young and old,
From it falls distill'd the charm that mocks beauty and attainments,
Toward it heaves the shuddering longing ache of contact.

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91 adhesiveness, the capacity for friendship and social attraction, a term from phrenology. Specifically, in Whitman, the term ordinarily refers to what he calls in "For You O Democracy" "the manly love of comrades," and is to be distinguished from "amativeness," which is the love for the opposite sex

9

Allons! whoever you are come travel with me!
Traveling with me you find what never tires.

The earth never tires,
The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first, Nature is rude and incomprehensible at first,
Be not discouraged, keep on, there are divine things well envelop'd,
I swear to you there are divine things more beautiful than words can tell.

Allons! we must not stop here,
However sweet these laid-up stores, however convenient this dwelling we cannot remain here,
However shelter'd this port and however calm these waters we must not anchor here,
However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us we are permitted to receive it but a little while.

10

Allons! the inducements shall be greater,
We will sail pathless and wild seas,
We will go where winds blow, waves dash, and the Yankee clipper speeds by under full sail.
Allons! with power, liberty, the earth, the elements,
Health, defiance, gayety, self-esteem, curiosity;
Allons! from all formules!
From your formules, O bat-eyed and materialistic priests.

The stale cadaver blocks up the passage—the burial waits no longer.

Allons! yet take warning!
He traveling with me needs the best blood, thews, endurance,
None may come to the trial till he or she bring courage and health,
Come not here if you have already spent the best of yourself,
Only those may come who come in sweet and determin'd bodies,
No diseas'd person, no rum-drinker or venereal taint is permitted here.

(I and mine do not convince by arguments, similes, rhymes, We convince by our presence.)

11

Listen! I will be honest with you,
I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new prizes,
These are the days that must happen to you:
You shall not heap up what is call'd riches,
You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve,
You but arrive at the city to which you are destin'd, you hardly settle yourself to satisfaction before you are call'd by an irresistible call to depart,
You shall be treated to the ironical smiles and mockings of those who remain behind you,
What beckonings of love you receive you shall only answer with passionate kisses of parting,
You shall not allow the hold of those who spread their reach'd hands toward you.

12

Allons! after the great Companions, and to belong to them!
They too are on the road—they are the swift and majestic men—they are the greatest women,
Enjoyers of calms of seas and storms of seas,
Sailors of many a ship, walkers of many a mile of land,
Habitués of many distant countries, habitués of far-distant dwellings,
Trusters of men and women, observers of cities, solitary toilers,
Pausers and contemplators of tufts, blossoms, shells of the shore,
Dancers at wedding-dances, kissers of brides, tender helpers of children, bearers of children,
Soldiers of revolts, standers by gaping graves, lowerers-down of coffins,
Journeyers over consecutive seasons, over the years, the curious years each emerging from that which preceded it,
Journeyers as with companions namely their own diverse phases,
Forth-steppers from the latent unrealized baby-days,
Journeyers gayly with their own youth, journeyers with their bearded and well-grain'd manhood,
Journeyers with their womanhood, ample, unsurpass'd, content,
Journeyers with their own sublime old age of manhood or womanhood,

114 Allons! Let's go!

Old age, calm, expanded, broad with the haughty breadth of the universe,
Old age, flowing free with the delicious near-by freedom of death.

13

Allons! to that which is endless as it was beginningless,
To undergo much, tramps of days, rests of nights,
To merge all in the travel they tend to, and the days and nights they tend to,
Again to merge them in the start of superior journeys,
To see nothing anywhere but what you may reach it and pass it,
To conceive no time, however distant, but what you may reach it and pass it,
To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for you, however long but it stretches and waits for you,
To see no being, not God's or any, but you also go thither,
To see no possession but you may possess it, enjoying all without labor or purchase, abstracting the feast yet not abstracting one particle of it,
To take the best of the farmer's farm and the rich man's elegant villa, and the chaste blessings of the well-married couple, and the fruits of orchards and flowers of gardens,
To take to your use out of the compact cities as you pass through,
To carry buildings and streets with you afterward wherever you go,
To gather the minds of men out of their brains as you encounter them, to gather the love out of their hearts,
To take your lovers on the road with you, for all that you leave them behind you.
To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads, as roads for traveling souls.

All parts away for the progress of souls,
All religion, all solid things, arts, governments—all that was or is apparent upon this globe or any globe, falls into niches and corners before the procession of souls along the grand roads of the universe.
Of the progress of the souls of men and women along the grand roads of the universe, all other progress is the needed emblem and sustenance.

Forever alive, forever forward,
Stately, solemn, sad, withdrawn, baffled, mad, turbulent, feeble, dissatisfied,
Desperate, proud, fond, sick, accepted by men, rejected by men,
They go! they go! I know that they go, but I know not where they go,
But I know that they go toward the best—toward something great.

Whoever you are, come forth! or man or woman come forth!
You must not stay sleeping and dallying there in the house, though you built it, or though it has been built for you.

Out of the dark confinement! out from behind the screen!
It is useless to protest, I know all and expose it.

Behold through you as bad as the rest,
Through the laughter, dancing, dining, supping, of people,
Inside of dresses and ornaments, inside of those wash'd and trimm'd faces,
Behold a secret silent loathing and despair.

No husband, no wife, no friend, trusted to hear the confession,
Another self, a duplicate of every one, skulking and hiding it goes,
Formless and wordless through the streets of the cities, polite and bland in the parlors,
In the cars of railroads, in steamboats, in the public assembly,
Home to the houses of men and women, at the table, in the bedroom, everywhere,
Smartly attired, countenance smiling, form upright, death under the breast-bones, hell under the skull-bones,
Under the broadcloth and gloves, under the ribbons and artificial flowers,
Keeping fair with the customs, speaking not a syllable of itself,
Speaking of any thing else but never of itself.

14

Allons! through struggles and wars!
The goal that was named cannot be countermanded.

Have the past struggles succeeded?
What has succeeded? yourself? your nation? Nature?
Now understand me well—it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary.

My call is the call of battle, I nourish active rebellion,
He going with me must go well arm'd,
He going with me goes often with spare diet, poverty, angry enemies, desertions.

15

Allons! the road is before us!
It is safe—I have tried it—my own feet have tried it well—be not detain'd!
Let the paper remain on the desk unwritten, and the book on the shelf unopen'd!
Let the tools remain in the workshop! let the money remain unearn'd!
Let the school stand! mind not the cry of the teacher!
Let the preacher preach in his pulpit! let the lawyer plead in the court, and the judge expound the law.

Camerado, I give you my hand!
I give you my love more precious than money,
I give you myself before preaching or law;
Will you give me yourself? will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

1856-1881

Crossing Brooklyn Ferry

Whitman wrote in Specimen Days: "Living in Brooklyn or New York city . . . my life . . . was curiously identified with Fulton ferry, already becoming the greatest of its sort in the world for general importance, volume, variety, rapidity, and picturesqueness. Almost daily ('50 to '60) I cross'd on the boats, often up in the pilot-houses where I could get a full sweep, absorbing shows, accompaniments, surroundings. What oceanic currents, eddies, underneath—the great tides of humanity also, with ever-shifting movements! Indeed, I have always had a passion for ferries; to me they afford inimitable, streaming, never-failing, living poems. The river and bay scenery, all about New York island, any time of a fine day—the hurrying, splashing sea-tides—the changing panorama of steamers, all sizes, often a string of big ones outward bound to distant ports—the myriads of white sail'd schooners, sloops, skiffs, and the marvellously beautiful yachts—the majestic Sound boats as they rounded the Battery and came along towards 5, afternoon, eastward bound—the prospect off toward Staten Island, or down the Narrows, or the other way up the Hudson—what refreshment of spirit such sights and experiences gave me years ago (and many a time since)! My old pilot friends, the Balsirs, Johnny Cole, Ira Smith, William White, and my young ferry friend, Tom Gere—how well I remember them all!"

1

Flood-tide below me! I see you face to face!
Clouds of the west—sun there half an hour high—I see you also face to face.

Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes, how curious you are to me!
On the ferry-boats the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are more curious to me than you suppose,
And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence are more to me, and more in my meditations, than you might suppose.

2

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all hours of the day,
The simple, compact, well-join'd scheme, myself disintegrated, every one disintegrated yet part of the scheme,
The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings, on the walk in the street and the passage over the river,
The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me far away,

The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them,
The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing of others.
Others will enter the gates of the ferry and cross from shore to shore,
Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west, and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east,
Others will see the islands large and small;
Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half an hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide, the falling-back to the sea of the ebb-tide.

3

It avails not, time nor place—distance avails not,
I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence,
Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd,
Just as you are refresh'd by the gladness of the river and the bright flow, I was refresh'd,
Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current, I stood yet was hurried,
Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships and the thick-stemm'd pipes of steamboats, I look'd.

I too many and many a time cross'd the river of old,
Watched the Twelfth-month sea-gulls, saw them high in the air floating with motionless wings, oscillating their bodies,
Saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies and left the rest in strong shadow,
Saw the slow-wheeling circles and the gradual edging toward the south,
Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams,
Look'd at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the shape of my head in the sunlit water,
Look'd on the haze on the hills southward and southwestward,
Look'd on the vapor as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet,
Look'd toward the lower bay to notice the vessels arriving,
Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the ships at anchor,
The sailors at work in the rigging or out astride the spars,
The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the slender serpentine pennants,
The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in their pilot-houses,
The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous whirl of the wheels,
The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening,
The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the gray walls of the granite storehouses by the docks,
On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug closely flank'd on each side by the barges, the hay-boat, the belated lighter,
On the neighboring shore the fires from the foundry chimneys burning high and glaringly into the night,
Casting their flicker of black contrasted with wild red and yellow light over the tops of houses, and down into the clefts of streets.

4

These and all else were to me the same as they are to you,
I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and rapid river,
The men and women I saw were all near to me,
Others the same—others who look back on me because I look'd forward to them,
(The time will come, though I stop here to-day and to-night.)

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28 Twelfth-month. In the 1856 edition, Whitman wrote "December"; he substituted "Twelfth-month" in the edition of 1860 and retained it in subsequent editions. His preference for so naming the months is usually attributed to the Quaker influence • 46 hay-boat, boat for transporting hay (see Dictionary of American English)

5

What is it then between us?
What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?
Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place avails not,
I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine,
I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters around it,
I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me.
In the day among crowds of people sometimes they came upon me,
In my walks home late at night or as I lay in my bed they came upon me,
I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution,
I too had receiv'd identity by my body,
That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should be I knew I should be of my body.

6

It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
The dark threw its patches down upon me also,
The best I had done seem'd to me blank and suspicious,
My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not in reality meagre?
Nor is it you alone who know what it is to be evil,
I am he who knew what it was to be evil,
I too knitted the old knot of contrariety,
Blabb'd, blush'd, resented, lied, stole, grudg'd,
Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak,
Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly, malignant,
The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me,
The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish, not wanting,
Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none of these wanting,
Was one with the rest, the days and haps of the rest,
Was call'd by my nighest name by clear loud voices of young men as they saw me approaching or passing,
Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent leaning of their flesh against me as I sat,
Saw many I loved in the street or ferry-boat or public assembly, yet never told them a word,
Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing, gnawing, sleeping,
Play'd the part that still looks back on the actor or actress,
The same old role, the role that is what we make it, as great as we like,
Or as small as we like, or both great and small.

7

Closer yet I approach you,
What thought you have of me now, I had as much of you —I laid in my stores in advance,
I consider'd long and seriously of you before you were born.

Who was to know what should come home to me?
Who knows but I am enjoying this?
Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good as looking at you now, for all you cannot see me?

8

Ah, what can ever be more stately and admirable to me than mast-hemm'd Manhattan?
River and sunset and scallop-edg'd waves of flood-tide?
The sea-gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the twilight, and the belated lighter?

What gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand, and with voices I love call me promptly and loudly by my nighest name as I approach?

What is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman or man that looks in my face?
Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning into you?

We understand then do we not?
What I promis'd without mentioning it, have you not accepted?
What the study could not teach—what the preaching could not accomplish is accomplish'd, is it not?

9

Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide!
Frolic on, crested and scallop-edg'd waves!

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79 nighest, shortest

Gorgeous clouds of the sunset! drench with your splendor me, or the men and women generations after me!
Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers!
Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta! stand up, beautiful hills of Brooklyn!
Throb, baffled and curious brain! throw out questions and answers!
Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution!
Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house or street or public assembly!
Sound out, voices of young men! loudly and musically call me by my nighest name!
Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor or actress!
Play the old role, the role that is great or small according as one makes it!
Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in unknown ways be looking upon you;
Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly, yet haste with the hasting current;
Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles high in the air;
Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold it till all downcast eyes have time to take it from you!
Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or any one's head, in the sunlit water!
Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down, white-sail'd schooners, sloops, lighters!
Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lower'd at sunset!
Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black shadows at nightfall! cast red and yellow light over the tops of the houses!
Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are,
You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul,
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung our divinest aromas,
Thrive, cities—bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers,
Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual,
Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting.
You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful ministers,
We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate henceforward,
Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold yourselves from us,
We use you, and do not cast you aside—we plant you permanently within us,
We fathom you not—we love you—there is perfection in you also,
You furnish your parts toward eternity,
Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.
1856-1881

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

"Pioneers! O Pioneers!" is the chief celebration in American poetry of the Westward movement. From the standpoint of sober fact, the poem romanticizes its subject too much: those who remained in the older settlements were not necessarily more "gluttonous" (l. 93) than those who moved forward, the pioneers seem now to have felled too many of the "primeval forests" (l. 25), and mere "restlessness" (l. 37) is not always a virtue. But Whitman's purpose was to celebrate, not criticize, and he caught admirably, in "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" the spirit and momentum of a mass movement which embraced large sections of Europe as well as the entire American continent.

The student should read, in conjunction with Whitman's poem, Frederick Jackson Turner's "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893).

Come my tan-faced children,
Follow well in order, get your weapons ready,
Have you your pistols? have you your sharp-edged axes?
Pioneers! O pioneers!

For we cannot tarry here,
We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you youths, Western youths,
So impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and friendship,
Plain I see you Western youths, see you tramping with the foremost,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Have the elder races halted?
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We detachments steady throwing,
Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountains steep,
Conquering, holding, daring, venturing as we go the unknown ways,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We primeval forests felling,
We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the mines within,
We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheaving,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Colorado men are we,
From the peaks gigantic, from the great sierras and the high plateaus,
From the mine and from the gully, from the hunting trail we come,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

From Nebraska, from Arkansas,
Central inland race are we, from Missouri, with the continental blood intervein'd,
All the hands of comrades clasping, all the Southern, all the Northern,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O resistless restless race!
O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender love for all!
O I mourn and yet exult, I am rapt with love for all,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Raise the mighty mother mistress,
Waving high the delicate mistress, over all the starry mistress, (bend your heads all,)
Raise the fang'd and warlike mistress, stern, impassive, weapon'd mistress,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

See my children, resolute children,
By those swarms upon our rear we must never yield or falter,
Ages back in ghostly millions frowning there behind us urging,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

On and on the compact ranks,
With accessions ever waiting, with the places of the dead quickly fill'd,
Through the battle, through defeat, moving yet and never stopping,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O to die advancing on!
Are there some of us to droop and die? has the hour come?
Then upon the march we fittest die, soon and sure the gap is fill'd,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the pulses of the world,
Falling in they beat for us, with the Western movement beat,
Holding single or together, steady moving to the front, all for us,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Life's involv'd and varied pageants,
All the forms and shows, all the workmen at their work,

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26 stemming, damming up • 26 vexing, shaking, disturbing

All the seamen and the landsmen, all the masters with their slaves,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the hapless silent lovers,
All the prisoners in the prisons, all the righteous and the wicked,
All the joyous, all the sorrowing, all the living, all the dying,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

I too with my soul and body,
We, a curious trio, picking, wandering on our way,
Through these shores amid the shadows, with the apparitions pressing,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Lo, the darting bowling orb!
Lo, the brother orbs around, all the clustering suns and planets,
All the dazzling days, all the mystic nights with dreams,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

These are of us, they are with us,
All for primal needed work, while the followers there in embryo wait behind,
We to-day's procession heading, we the route for travel clearing,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you daughters of the West!
O you young and elder daughters! O you mothers and you wives!
Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move united,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Minstrels latent on the prairies!
(Shrouded bards of other lands, you may rest, you have done your work,)
Soon I hear you coming warbling, soon you rise and tramp amid us,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Not for delectations sweet,
Not the cushion and the slipper, not the peaceful and the studious,
Not the riches safe and palling, not for us the tame enjoyment,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Do the feasters gluttonous feast?
Do the corpulent sleepers sleep? have they lock'd and bolted doors?
Still be ours the diet hard, and the blanket on the ground,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Has the night descended?
Was the road of late so toilsome? did we stop discouraged nodding on our way?
Yet a passing hour I yield you in your tracks to pause oblivious,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Till with sound of trumpet,
Far, far off the daybreak call—hark! how loud and clear I hear it wind,
Swift! to the head of the army!—swift! spring to your places,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

1865-1881

Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking

" 'Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking' is certainly among the half-dozen finest of Whitman's longer poems, and one of the finest lyrics of the nineteenth century. The sea always moved Whitman, and more than any other physical fact lifted him above the world of assertions and opinions into that of imagination and vision" (John Bailey, Whitman, p. 165).

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the Ninth-month midnight,
Over the sterile sands and the fields beyond, where the child leaving his bed wander'd alone, bareheaded, barefoot,
Down from the shower'd halo,

Up from the mystic play of shadows twining and twisting as if they were alive,
Out from the patches of briers and blackberries,
From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
From your memories sad brother, from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
From under that yellow half-moon late-risen and swollen as if with tears,
From those beginning notes of yearning and love there in the mist,
From the thousand responses of my heart never to cease,
From the myriad thence-arous'd words,
From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
From such as now they start the scene revisiting,
As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
Borne hither, ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
A man, yet by these tears a little boy again,
Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter,
Taking all hints to use them, but swiftly leaping beyond them,
A reminiscence sing.
Once Paumanok,
When the lilac-scent was in the air and Fifth-month grass was growing,
Up this seashore in some briers,
Two feather'd guests from Alabama, two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted with brown,
And every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand,
And every day the she-bird crouch'd on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great sun!
While we bask, we two together.

Two together!
Winds blow south, or winds blow north,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
While we two keep together.

Till of a sudden,
May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,
Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appear'd again.

And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the sea,
And at night under the full of the moon in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

Blow! blow! blow!
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me.

Yes, when the stars glisten'd,
All night long on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,
Down almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer wonderful causing tears.
He call'd on his mate,
He pour'd forth the meanings which I of all men know.

Yes my brother I know,
The rest might not, but I have treasur'd every note,
For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
Listen'd long and long.

Listen'd to keep, to sing, now translating the notes,
Following you my brother.

Soothe! soothe! soothe!
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,

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23 Paumanok. Whitman preferred to call Long Island by its Indian name

And again another behind embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me, not me.

Low hangs the moon, it rose late,
It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.

O madly the sea pushes upon the land,
With love, with love.

O night! do I not see my love fluttering out among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?

Loud! loud! loud!
Loud I call to you, my love!
High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love.

Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon do not keep her from me any longer.

Land! land! O land!
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again if you only would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.

O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.

O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.

Shake out carols!
Solitary here, the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O under that moon where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless despairing carols.

But soft! sink low!
Soft! let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment you husky-nois'd sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.

Hither my love!
Here I am! here!
With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.

Do not be decoy'd elsewhere,
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.

O darkness! O in vain!
O I am very sick and sorrowful.
O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.

O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!
In the air, in the woods, over fields,
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!
But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more.

The aria sinking,
All else continuing, the stars shining,
The winds blowing, the notes of the bird continuous echoing.
With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly moaning,
On the sands of Paumanok's shore gray and rustling,
The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the sea almost touching,
The boy ecstatic, with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the atmosphere dallying,
The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously bursting,

The aria's meaning, the ears, the soul, swiftly depositing,
The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,
The colloquy there, the trio, each uttering,
The undertone, the savage old mother incessantly crying,
To the boy's soul's questions sullenly timing, some drown'd secret hissing,
To the outsetting bard.

Demon or bird! (said the boy's soul,)
Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it really to me?
For I, that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping, now I have heard you,
Now in a moment I know what I am for, I awake,
And already a thousand singers, a thousand songs, clearer, louder and more sorrowful than yours,
A thousand warbling echoes have started to life within me, never to die.

O you singer solitary, singing by yourself, projecting me,
O solitary me listening, never more shall I cease perpetuating you,
Never more shall I escape, never more the reverberations,
Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent from me,
Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was before what there in the night,
By the sea under the yellow and sagging moon,
The messenger there arous'd, the fire, the sweet hell within,
The unknown want, the destiny of me.

O give me the clew! (it lurks in the night here somewhere,)
O if I am to have so much, let me have more!

A word then, (for I will conquer it,)
The word final, superior to all,
Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;
Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea waves?
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

Whereto answering, the sea,
Delaying not, hurrying not,
Whisper'd me through the night, and very plainly before daybreak,
Lisp'd to me the low and delicious word death,
And again death, death, death, death,
Hissing melodious, neither like the bird nor like my arous'd child's heart,
But edging near as privately for me rustling at my feet,
Creeping thence steadily up to my ears and laving me softly all over,
Death, death, death, death, death.

Which I do not forget,
But fuse the song of my dusky demon and brother,
That he sang to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,
With the thousand responsive songs at random,
My own songs awakened from that hour,
And with them the key, the word up from the waves,
The word of the sweetest song and all songs,
That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet,
(Or like some old crone rocking the cradle, swathed in sweet garments, bending aside,)
The sea whisper'd me.

1859·1881

When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

1865·1867

First O Songs for a Prelude

This poem and seven poems which follow ("Beat! Beat! Drums!" "Cavalry Crossing a Ford," "Bivouac on a Mountain Side," "By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame," "Come Up from the Fields Father," "The Wound-Dresser," "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun") were among the poems which first appeared in Drum-Taps in 1865. The poems of Drum-Taps were later incorporated in the inclusive work Leaves of Grass.

First O songs for a prelude,
Lightly strike on the stretch'd tympanum pride and joy in my city,
How she led the rest to arms, how she gave the cue,
How at once with lithe limbs unwaiting a moment she sprang,
(O superb! O Manhattan, my own, my peerless!
O strongest you in the hour of danger, in crisis! O truer than steel!)
How you sprang—how you threw off the costumes of peace with indifferent hand,
How your soft opera-music changed, and the drum and fife were heard in their stead,
How you led to the war, (that shall serve for our prelude, songs of soldiers,)
How Manhattan drum-taps led.

Forty years had I in my city seen soldiers parading,
Forty years as a pageant, till unawares the lady of this teeming and turbulent city,
Sleepless amid her ships, her houses, her incalculable wealth,
With her million children around her, suddenly,
At dead of night, at news from the south,
Incens'd struck with clinch'd hand the pavement.

A shock electric, the night sustain'd it,
Till with ominous hum our hive at daybreak pour'd out its myriads.
From the houses then and the workshops, and through all the doorways,
Leapt they tumultuous, and lo! Manhattan arming.

To the drum-taps prompt,
The young men falling in and arming,
The mechanics arming, (the trowel, the jack-plane, the blacksmith's hammer, tost aside with precipitation,)
The lawyer leaving his office and arming, the judge leaving the court,
The driver deserting his wagon in the street, jumping down, throwing the reins abruptly down on the horses' backs,
The salesman leaving the store, the boss, book-keeper, porter, all leaving;
Squads gather everywhere by common consent and arm,
The new recruits, even boys, the old men show them how to wear their accoutrements, they buckle the straps carefully,
Outdoors arming, indoors arming, the flash of the musket-barrels,
The white tents cluster in camps, the arm'd sentries around, the sunrise cannon and again at sunset,
Arm'd regiments arrive every day, pass through the city, and embark from the wharves,
(How good they look as they tramp down to the river, sweaty, with their guns on their shoulders!
How I love them! how I could hug them, with their brown faces and their clothes and knapsacks cover'd with dust!)
The blood of the city up—arm'd! arm'd! the cry everywhere,
The flags flung out from the steeples of churches and from all the public buildings and stores,
The tearful parting, the mother kisses her son, the son kisses his mother,
(Loth is the mother to part, yet not a word does she speak to detain him,)
The tumultuous escort, the ranks of policemen preceding, clearing the way,
The unpent enthusiasm, the wild cheers of the crowd for their favorites,
The artillery, the silent cannons bright as gold, drawn along, rumble lightly over the stones,
(Silent cannons, soon to cease your silence,
Soon unlimber'd to begin the red business;)
All the mutter of preparation, all the determin'd arming,

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42 unlimber'd, detached from the limber or forepart of a gun carriage, and so made ready for firing

The hospital service, the lint, bandages and medicines,
The women volunteering for nurses, the work begun for in earnest, no mere parade now;
War! an arm'd race is advancing! the welcome for battle, no turning away;
War! be it weeks, months, or years, an arm'd race is advancing to welcome it.

Mannahatta a-march—and it's O to sing it well!
It's O for a manly life in the camp.

And the sturdy artillery,
The guns bright as gold, the work for giants, to serve well the guns,
Unlimber them! (no more as the past forty years for salute or courtesies merely,
Put in something now besides powder and wadding.)
And you lady of ships, you Mannahatta,
Old matron of this proud, friendly, turbulent city,
Often in peace and wealth you were pensive or covertly frown'd amid all your children,
But now you smile with joy exulting old Mannahatta.

1865·1867

Beat! Beat! Drums!

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless force,
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,
Into the school where the scholar is studying,
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have now with his bride,

Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field or gathering his grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound you drums—so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels in the streets;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? no sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—would they continue?
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the judge?
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums—you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation,
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer,
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting hearses,
So strong you thump O terrible drums—so loud you bugles blow.

1865·1867

Cavalry Crossing a Ford

A line in long array where they wind betwixt green islands,
They take a serpentine course, their arms flash in the sun—hark to the musical clank,
Behold the silvery river, in it the splashing horses loitering stop to drink,
Behold the brown-faced men, each group, each person a picture, the negligent rest on the saddles,
Some emerge on the opposite bank, others are just entering the ford—while,
Scarlet and blue and snowy white,
The guidon flags flutter gayly in the wind.

1865·1871

Bivouac on a Mountain Side

I see before me now a traveling army halting,
Below a fertile valley spread, with barns and the orchards of summer,

Behind, the terraced sides of a mountain, abrupt, in places rising high,
Broken, with rocks, with clinging cedars, with tall shapes dingily seen,
The numerous camp-fires scatter'd near and far, some away up on the mountain,
The shadowy forms of men and horses, looming, large-sized, flickering,
And over all the sky—the sky! far, far out of reach, studded, breaking out, the eternal stars.

1865·1871

By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame

By the bivouac's fitful flame,
A procession winding around me, solemn and sweet and slow—but first I note,
The tents of the sleeping army, the fields' and woods' dim outline,
The darkness lit by spots of kindled fire, the silence,
Like a phantom far or near an occasional figure moving,
The shrubs and trees, (as I lift my eyes they seem to be stealthily watching me,)
While wind in procession thoughts, O tender and wondrous thoughts,
Of life and death, of home and the past and loved, and of those that are far away;
A solemn and slow procession there as I sit on the ground,
By the bivouac's fitful flame.

1865·1867

Come Up from the Fields Father

Come up from the fields father, here's a letter from our Pete,
And come to the front door mother, here's a letter from thy dear son.

Lo, 'tis autumn,
Lo, where the trees, deeper green, yellower and redder,
Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages with leaves fluttering in the moderate wind,
Where apples ripe in the orchards hang and grapes on the trellis'd vines,
(Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
Smell you the buckwheat where the bees were lately buzzing?)

Above all, lo, the sky so calm, so transparent after the rain, and with wondrous clouds,
Below too, all calm, all vital and beautiful, and the farm prospers well.

Down in the fields all prospers well,
But now from the fields come father, come at the daughter's call,
And come to the entry mother, to the front door come right away.

Fast as she can she hurries, something ominous, her steps trembling,
She does not tarry to smooth her hair nor adjust her cap.
Open the envelope quickly,
O this is not our son's writing, yet his name is sign'd,
O a strange hand writes for our dear son, O stricken mother's soul!
All swims before her eyes, flashes with black, she catches the main words only,
Sentences broken, *gunshot wound in the breast, cavalry skirmish, taken to hospital,*
At present low, but will soon be better.

Ah now the single figure to me,
Amid all teeming and wealthy Ohio with all its cities and farms,
Sickly white in the face and dull in the head, very faint,
By the jamb of a door leans.

Grieve not so, dear mother, (the just-grown daughter speaks through her sobs,
The little sisters huddle around speechless and dismay'd,)
See, dearest mother, the letter says Pete will soon be better.

Alas poor boy, he will never be better, (nor may-be needs to be better, that brave and simple soul,)
While they stand at home at the door he is dead already,
The only son is dead.

But the mother needs to be better,
She with thin form presently drest in black,
By day her meals untouch'd, then at night fitfully sleeping, often waking,
In the midnight waking, weeping, longing with one deep longing,
O that she might withdraw unnoticed, silent from life escape and withdraw,
To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son.

1865-1867

The Wound-Dresser

1

An old man bending I come among new faces,
Years looking backward resuming in answer to children,
Come tell us old man, as from young men and maidens that love me,
(Arous'd and angry, I'd thought to beat the alarum, and urge relentless war,
But soon my fingers fail'd me, my face droop'd and I resign'd myself,
To sit by the wounded and soothe them, or silently watch the dead;)
Years hence of these scenes, of these furious passions, these chances,
Of unsurpass'd heroes, (was one side so brave? the other was equally brave;)
Now be witness again, paint the mightiest armies of earth,
Of those armies so rapid so wondrous what saw you to tell us?
What stays with you latest and deepest? of curious panics,
Of hard-fought engagements or sieges tremendous what deepest remains?

2

O maidens and young men I love and that love me,
What you ask of my days those the strangest and sudden your talking recalls,
Soldier alert I arrive after a long march cover'd with sweat and dust,
In the nick of time I come, plunge in the fight, loudly shout in the rush of successful charge,
Enter the captur'd works—yet lo, like a swift-running river they fade,
Pass and are gone they fade—I dwell not on soldiers' perils or soldiers' joys,
(Both I remember well—many of the hardships, few the joys, yet I was content.)
But in silence, in dreams' projections,
While the world of gain and appearance and mirth goes on,
So soon what is over forgotten, and waves wash the imprints off the sand,
With hinged knees returning I enter the doors, (while for you up there,
Whoever you are, follow without noise and be of strong heart.)

Bearing the bandages, water and sponge,
Straight and swift to my wounded I go,
Where they lie on the ground after the battle brought in.
Where their priceless blood reddens the grass the ground,
Or to the rows of the hospital tent, or under the roof'd hospital,
To the long rows of cots up and down each side I return,
To each and all one after another I draw near, not one do I miss,
An attendant follows holding a tray, he carries a refuse pail,
Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied, and fill'd again.

I onward go, I stop,
With hinged knees and steady hand to dress wounds,
I am firm with each, the pangs are sharp yet unavoidable,

One turns to me his appealing eyes—poor boy! I never knew you,
Yet I think I could not refuse this moment to die for you, if that would save you.

3

On, on I go, (open doors of time! open hospital doors!)
The crush'd head I dress, (poor crazed hand tear not the bandage away,)
The neck of the cavalry-man with the bullet through and through I examine,
Hard the breathing rattles, quite glazed already the eye, yet life struggles hard,
(Come sweet death! be persuaded O beautiful death!
In mercy come quickly.)
From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,
I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the matter and blood,
Back on his pillow the soldier bends with curv'd neck and side falling head,
His eyes are closed, his face is pale, he dares not look on the bloody stump,
And has not yet look'd on it.

I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep,
But a day or two more, for see the frame all wasted and sinking,
And the yellow-blue countenance see.

I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet-wound,
Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so sickening, so offensive,
While the attendant stands behind aside me holding the tray and pail.

I am faithful, I do not give out,
The fractur'd thigh, the knee, the wound in the abdomen,
These and more I dress with impassive hand, (yet deep in my breast a fire, a burning flame.)

4

Thus in silence in dreams' projections,
Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals,
The hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand,
I sit by the restless all the dark night, some are so young,
Some suffer so much, I recall the experience sweet and sad,
(Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have cross'd and rested,
Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips.)

1865-1881

Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun

1

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling,
Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the orchard,
Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,
Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape,
Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving animals teaching content,
Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west of the Mississippi, and I looking up at the stars,
Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can walk undisturb'd,
Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I should never tire,
Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from the noise of the world a rural domestic life,
Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself, for my own ears only,
Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again O Nature your primal sanities!

These demanding to have them, (tired with ceaseless excitement, and rack'd by the war-strife,)
These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries from my heart,
While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,
Day upon day and year upon year O city, walking your streets,
Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing to give me up,

Yet giving to make me glutted, enrich'd of soul, you give me forever faces;
(O I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing my cries,
I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for.)

2

Keep your splendid silent sun,
Keep your woods O Nature, and the quiet places by the woods,
Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your corn-fields and orchards,
Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the Ninth month bees hum;
Give me faces and streets—give me these phantoms incessant and endless along the trottoirs!
Give me interminable eyes—give me women—give me comrades and lovers by the thousand!
Let me see new ones every day—let me hold new ones by the hand every day!
Give me such shows—give me the streets of Manhattan!
Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching—give me the sound of the trumpets and drums!
(The soldiers in companies or regiments—some starting away, flush'd and reckless,
Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks, young, yet very old, worn, marching, noticing nothing;)
Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with black ships!
O such for me! O an intense life, full to repletion and varied!
The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!
The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion for me! the torchlight procession!
The dense brigade bound for the war, with high piled military wagons following;
People, endless, streaming, with strong voices, passions, pageants,
Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with beating drums as now,
The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of muskets, (even the sight of the wounded,)
Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus!
Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.

1865-1867

When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd

Though Lincoln is not mentioned by name in "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," his death in April 1865 was the occasion of its composition. It is, by common consent, the greatest of the many poems about Lincoln in American literature; and in the judgment of John Bailey, perhaps the most judicious of Whitman's critics, the lyric within the poem (beginning "Come lovely and soothing death") is "one of the great lyrics of the world." The poem was first printed in **Sequel to Drum-Taps** in 1865.

Whitman and Lincoln never met formally or talked together, though Whitman wrote in **Specimen Days** for August 12, 1863: "I see the President almost every day, as I happen to live where he passes to and from his lodgings out of town. . . . We have got so that we exchange bows, and very cordial ones." And the story is related (in Bucke's **Life of Whitman**) that Lincoln, seeing Whitman walk by the White House, asked who he was, and upon being told, said: "Well, he looks like a man."

"Of all the days of the war," Whitman recorded in **Specimen Days**, "there are two especially I can never forget. Those were the day following the news, in New York and Brooklyn, of that first Bull Run defeat, and the day of Abraham Lincoln's death. I was home in Brooklyn on both occasions. The day of the murder we heard the news very early in the morning. Mother prepared breakfast —and other meals afterward—as usual; but not a mouthful was eaten all day by either of us. We each drank half a cup of coffee; that was all. Little was said. We got every newspaper morning and evening, and the frequent extras of that period, and pass'd them silently to each other."

1

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,

---

24 **trottoirs**, a French word meaning sidewalks; one of many amusing examples of Whitman's fondness for foreign words, despite his assertion in the Preface of the grand sufficiency of the English language

I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

2

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappear'd—O the black murk that hides the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

3

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the whitewash'd palings,
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break.

4

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.
Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life, (for well dear brother I know,
If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die.)

5

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets peep'd from the ground, spotting the gray debris,
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown fields uprisen,
Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the orchards,
Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

6

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
Through day and night with the great cloud darkening the land,
With the pomp of the inloop'd flags with the cities draped in black,
With the show of the States themselves as of crape-veil'd women standing,
With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces and the unbared heads,
With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the sombre faces,
With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong and solemn,
With all the mournful voices of the dirges pour'd around the coffin,
The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where amid these you journey,
With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,
Here, coffin that slowly passes,
I give you my sprig of lilac.

7

(Nor for you, for one alone,
Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,
For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you O sane and sacred death.

All over bouquets of roses,
O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,
But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,

---

30 blows, blossoms • 32 journeys a coffin. The funeral train crossed the continent to Springfield, Illinois, where Lincoln was buried

With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
For you and the coffins all of you O death.)

8

O western orb sailing the heaven,
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walk'd,
As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side, (while the other stars all look'd on,)
As we wander'd together the solemn night, (for something I know not what kept me from sleep,)
As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how full you were of woe,
As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool transparent night,
As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the netherward black of the night,
As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you sad orb,
Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

9

Sing on there in the swamp,
O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your call,
I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detain'd me,
The star my departing comrade holds and detains me.

10

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?
And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone?
And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,
Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western sea, till there on the prairies meeting,
These and with these and the breath of my chant,
I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

11

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke lucid and bright,
With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning, expanding the air,
With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green leaves of the trees prolific,
In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here and there,
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows,
And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward returning.

12

Lo, body and soul—this land,
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the ships,
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light, Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,
And ever the far-spreading prairies cover'd with grass and corn.
Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,
The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
The gentle soft-born measureless light,
The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfill'd noon,
The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

13

Sing on, sing on you gray-brown bird,
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.

Sing on dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.

O liquid and free and tender!
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!
You only I hear—yet the star holds me, (but will soon depart,)
Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

14

Now while I sat in the day and look'd forth,
In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring, and the farmers preparing their crops,
In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests,
In the heavenly aerial beauty, (after the perturb'd winds and the storms,)
Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of children and women,
The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sail'd,
And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labor,
And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and minutia of daily usages,
And the streets how their throbbings throbb'd, and the cities pent—lo, then and there,
Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail,
And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands of companions,
I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the dimness,
To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.

And the singer so shy to the rest receiv'd me,
The gray-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three,
And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.
From deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

Come lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.

Approach strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide,

Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O death.

15

To the tally of my soul,
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
With pure deliberate notes spreading filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp-perfume,
And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions.

And I saw askant the armies,
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierc'd with missiles I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs, (and all in silence,)
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the debris and debris of all the slain soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought,
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffer'd not,
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffer'd,
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

16

Passing the visions, passing the night,
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song,
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and yet again bursting with joy,
Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,
Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul,
With the lustrous and drooping star with the countenance full of woe,
With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,
Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

1865·1881

There Was a Child Went Forth

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,
And grass and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the phœbe-bird,

And the Third-month lambs and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal and the cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the mire of the pond-side,
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there, and the beautiful curious liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads, all became part of him.

The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-month became part of him,
Winter-grain sprouts and those of the light-yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the garden,
And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms and the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and the commonest weeds by the road,
And the old drunkard staggering home from the out-house of the tavern whence he had lately risen,
And the schoolmistress that pass'd on her way to the school,
And the friendly boys that pass'd, and the quarrelsome boys,
And the tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls, and the barefoot Negro boy and girl,
And all the changes of city and country wherever he went.

His own parents, he that had father'd him and she that had conceiv'd him in her womb and birth'd him,
They gave this child more of themselves than that,
They gave him afterward every day, they became part of him.

The mother at home quietly placing the dishes on the supper-table,
The mother with mild words, clean her cap and gown, a wholesome odor falling off her person and clothes as she walks by,
The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, anger'd, unjust,
The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure,
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture, the yearning and swelling heart,
Affection that will not be gainsay'd, the sense of what is real, the thought if after all it should prove unreal,
The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-time, the curious whether and how,
Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and specks?
Men and women crowding fast in the streets, if they are not flashes and specks what are they?
The streets themselves and the façades of houses, and goods in the windows,
Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd wharves, the huge crossing at the ferries,
The village on the highland seen from afar at sunset, the river between,
Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on roofs and gables of white or brown two miles off,
The schooner near by sleepily dropping down the tide, the little boat slack-tow'd astern,
The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken crests, slapping,
The strata of color'd clouds, the long bar of maroon-tint away solitary by itself, the spread of purity it lies motionless in,
The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance of salt marsh and shore mud,
These became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will always go forth every day.

1855·1871

Miracles

"Romanticism" is many-sided, but one of its chief aspects in nineteenth-century poetry was described by Theodore Watts-Dunton, the friend of Swinburne, as "the renascence of wonder." Wordsworth's purpose, according to Coleridge, was to direct the attention to "the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand." Similarly, Emerson (in "Woodnotes") char-

7 Third-month. The 1855 version had "March-born"; "Third-month" was substituted in the version of 1860 • 19 he . . . father'd. The 1855 version read "he that had propelled the fatherstuff at night, and fathered him"; the present reading dates from the 1860 edition The student should consult Holloway's "Inclusive Edition" of Leaves of Grass for a complete list of Whitman's many revisions

acterized the poet as "Wonderer at all he meets." In "Miracles" and in countless other places in his writings Whitman expresses this distinctively romantic view of the world.

Why, who makes much of a miracle?
As to me I know of nothing else but miracles,
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the water,
Or stand under trees in the woods,
Or talk by day with any one I love, or sleep in the bed at night with any one I love,
Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,
Or animals feeding in the fields,
Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars shining so quiet and bright,
Or the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring;
These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,
Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle,
The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the ships with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?

1856-1881

Passage to India

"Passage to India" is the most transcendental of Whitman's poems, the most notable expression of mysticism in his writings. He begins by celebrating the physical explorations of man. Columbus, in discovering America, was seeking a water-route to India. The completion of the American transcontinental railroad, the Atlantic cable, and the Suez Canal had accomplished the "rondure" of the earth and brought India nearer to the Western world. But these physical voyages and explorations are mere symbols, in man's development, of spiritual voyages and explorations. Since Oriental religious thought, preëminently, has been concerned with the problem of spiritual reality, "Passage to India" suggests the soul's confronting of the "aged fierce enigmas." The solution of these enigmas becomes possible only in the mystic union of the soul with God:

. . . the Elder Brother found,
The Younger melts in fondness in his arms.

In the end the soul achieves "passage to more than India," perhaps in a double sense: to more than a physical India, and to a spiritual realization which transcends even the highest teachings of the Brahmins.

The poem recalls Emerson's and Thoreau's interest in the Oriental scriptures.

1

Singing my days,
Singing the great achievements of the present,
Singing the strong light works of engineers,
Our modern wonders, (the antique ponderous Seven outvied,)
In the Old World the east the Suez canal,
The New by its mighty railroad spann'd,
The seas inlaid with eloquent gentle wires;
Yet first to sound, and ever sound, the cry with thee O soul,
The Past! the Past! the Past!

The Past—the dark unfathom'd retrospect!
The teeming gulf—the sleepers and the shadows!

Passage to India • **4 Seven.** The Seven Wonders of the ancient world were: the pyramids of Egypt, the Pharos (lighthouse on the island of Pharos) of Alexandria, the walls and hanging gardens of Babylon, the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the statue of Jupiter by Phidias, the mausoleum erected by Artemisia at Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes • **5 Suez canal,** completed in 1867, formally opened in 1869 • **6 railroad.** The Union Pacific Railroad was completed in 1869 • **7 wires.** The laying of the first permanently successful Atlantic cable was completed in 1866

The past—the infinite greatness of the past!
For what is the present after all but a growth out of the past?
(As a projectile form'd, impell'd, passing a certain line, still keeps on,
So the present, utterly form'd, impell'd by the past.)

2

Passage O soul to India!
Eclaircise the myths Asiatic, the primitive fables

Not you alone proud truths of the world,
Nor you alone ye facts of modern science,
But myths and fables of eld, Asia's, Africa's fables,
The far-darting beams of the spirit, the unloos'd dreams,
The deep diving bibles and legends,
The daring plots of the poets, the elder religions;
O you temples fairer than lilies pour'd over by the rising sun!
O you fables spurning the known, eluding the hold of the known, mounting to heaven!
You lofty and dazzling towers, pinnacled, red as roses, burnish'd with gold!
Towers of fables immortal fashion'd from mortal dreams!
You too I welcome and fully the same as the rest!
You too with joy I sing.

Passage to India!
Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?
The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,
The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,
The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,
The lands to be welded together.

A worship new I sing,
You captains, voyagers, explorers, yours,
You engineers, you architects, machinists, yours,
You, not for trade or transportation only,
But in God's name, and for thy sake O soul.

3

Passage to India!
Lo soul for thee of tableaus twain.
I see in one the Suez canal initiated, open'd,
I see the procession of steamships, the Empress Eugenie's leading the van,
I mark from on deck the strange landscape, the pure sky, the level sand in the distance,
I pass swiftly the picturesque groups, the workmen gather'd,
The gigantic dredging machines.

In one again, different, (yet thine, all thine, O soul, the same,)
I see over my own continent the Pacific railroad surmounting every barrier,
I see continual trains of cars winding along the Platte carrying freight and passengers,
I hear the locomotives rushing and roaring, and the shrill steam-whistle,
I hear the echoes reverberate through the grandest scenery in the world,
I cross the Laramie plains, I note the rocks in grotesque shapes, the buttes,
I see the plentiful larkspur and wild onions, the barren, colorless, sage-deserts,
I see in glimpses afar or towering immediately above me the great mountains, I see the Wind river and the Wahsatch mountains,
I see the Monument mountain and the Eagle's Nest, I pass the Promontory, I ascend the Nevadas,
I scan the noble Elk mountain and wind around its base,
I see the Humboldt range, I thread the valley and cross the river,
I see the clear waters of lake Tahoe, I see forests of majestic pines,
Or crossing the great desert, the alkaline plains, I behold enchanting mirages of waters and meadows,
Marking through these and after all, in duplicate slender lines,
Bridging the three or four thousand miles of land travel,
Tying the Eastern to the Western sea,
The road between Europe and Asia.

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17 Eclaircise, explain, clarify • 44 Eugénie, wife of Napoleon III and the empress of the French, who was on board the ship at the head of a procession whose passage marked the formal opening of the canal in November 1869 • 50 Platte. The Platte River flows through Nebraska into the Missouri River • 53 Laramie plains, in Wyoming • 53 buttes, isolated small mountains or hills, with steep sides and turretlike formations • 55 Wind river, a mountain range in Wyoming • 55 Wahsatch mountains. The Wasatch Range is in Utah • 56 Eagle's Nest, in Colorado • 57 Elk mountain, in Wyoming • 58 Humboldt range, in Nevada • 59 lake Tahoe, in Nevada and California

(Ah Genoese thy dream! thy dream!
Centuries after thou art laid in thy grave,
The shore thou foundest verifies thy dream.)

4

Passage to India!
Struggles of many a captain, tales of many a sailor dead,
Over my mood stealing and spreading they come,
Like clouds and cloudlets in the unreach'd sky.

Along all history, down the slopes,
As a rivulet running, sinking now, and now again to the surface rising,
A ceaseless thought, a varied train—lo, soul, to thee, thy sight, they rise,
The plans, the voyages again, the expeditions;
Again Vasco de Gama sails forth,
Again the knowledge gain'd, the mariner's compass,
Lands found and nations born, thou born America.
For purpose vast, man's long probation fill'd,
Thou rondure of the world at last accomplish'd.

5

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,
Cover'd all over with visible power and beauty,
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,
Unspeakable high processions of sun and moon and countless stars above,
Below, the manifold grass and waters, animals, mountains, trees,
With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

Down from the gardens of Asia descending radiating,
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,
Wandering, yearning, curious, with restless explorations,
With questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-happy hearts,
With that sad incessant refrain, *Wherefore unsatisfied soul?* and *Whither O mocking life?*

Ah who shall soothe these feverish children?
Who justify these restless explorations?
Who speak the secret of impassive earth?
Who bind it to us? what is this separate Nature so unnatural?
What is this earth to our affections? (unloving earth, without a throb to answer ours,
Cold earth, the place of graves.)

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried out,
Perhaps even now the time has arrived.
After the seas are all cross'd, (as they seem already cross'd,)
After the great captains and engineers have accomplish'd their work,
After the noble inventors, after the scientists, the chemist, the geologist, ethnologist,
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

Then not your deeds only O voyagers, O scientists and inventors, shall be justified,
All these hearts as of fretted children shall be sooth'd,
All affection shall be fully responded to, the secret shall be told,
All these separations and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd and link'd together,
The whole earth, this cold, impassive, voiceless earth, shall be completely justified,
Trinitas divine shall be gloriously accomplish'd and compacted by the true son of God, the poet,
(He shall indeed pass the straits and conquer the mountains,
He shall double the cape of Good Hope to some purpose,)
Nature and Man shall be disjoin'd and diffused no more,
The true son of God shall absolutely fuse them.

6

Year at whose wide-flung door I sing!
Year of the purpose accomplish'd!
Year of the marriage of continents, climates and oceans!

---

65 Genoese, Columbus, who, when he discovered America, was seeking a "passage to India" • 76 Vasco de Gama, Vasco da Gama, in 1498 discovered the water route to India around the Cape of Good Hope • 80 rondure, roundness • 111 Trinitas, the Holy Trinity

(No mere doge of Venice now wedding the Adriatic,)
I see O year in you the vast terraqueous globe given and giving all,
Europe to Asia, Africa join'd, and they to the New World,
The lands, geographies, dancing before you, holding a festival garland,
As brides and bridegrooms hand in hand.

Passage to India!
Cooling airs from Caucasus, far, soothing cradle of man,
The river Euphrates flowing, the past lit up again.
Lo soul, the retrospect brought forward,
The old, most populous, wealthiest of earth's lands,
The streams of the Indus and the Ganges and their many affluents,
(I my shores of America walking to-day behold, resuming all,)
The tale of Alexander on his warlike marches suddenly dying,
On one side China and on the other side Persia and Arabia,
To the south the great seas and the bay of Bengal,
The flowing literatures, tremendous epics, religions, castes,
Old occult Brahma interminably far back, the tender and junior Buddha,
Central and southern empires and all their belongings, possessors,
The wars of Tamerlane, the reign of Aurungzebe,
The traders, rulers, explorers, Moslems, Venetians, Byzantium, the Arabs, Portuguese,
The first travelers famous yet, Marco Polo, Batouta the Moor,
Doubts to be solv'd, the map incognita, blanks to be fill'd,
The foot of man unstay'd, the hands never at rest,
Thyself O soul that will not brook a challenge.
The mediæval navigators rise before me,
The world of 1492, with its awaken'd enterprise,
Something swelling in humanity now like the sap of the earth in spring,
The sunset splendor of chivalry declining.

And who art thou sad shade?
Gigantic, visionary, thyself a visionary,
With majestic limbs and pious beaming eyes,
Spreading around with every look of thine a golden world,
Enhuing it with gorgeous hues.

As the chief histrion,
Down to the footlights walks in some great scena,
Dominating the rest I see the Admiral himself,
(History's type of courage, action, faith,)
Behold him sail from Palos leading his little fleet,
His voyage behold, his return, his great fame,
His misfortunes, calumniators, behold him a prisoner, chain'd,
Behold his dejection, poverty, death.
(Curious in time I stand, noting the efforts of heroes,
Is the deferment long? bitter the slander, poverty, death?
Lies the seed unreck'd for centuries in the ground? lo, to God's due occasion,
Uprising in the night, it sprouts, blooms,
And fills the earth with use and beauty.)

7

Passage indeed O soul to primal thought,
Not lands and seas alone, thy own clear freshness,
The young maturity of brood and bloom,
To realms of budding bibles.

O soul, repressless, I with thee and thou with me,
Thy circumnavigation of the world begin,
Of man, the voyage of his mind's return,
To reason's early paradise,
Back, back to wisdom's birth, to innocent intuitions,
Again with fair creation.

8

O we can wait no longer,
We too take ship O soul,

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119 **doge . . . Adriatic.** When Venice was a city-state, the doge or chief magistrate annually symbolized the "marriage" of Venice to the sea, and her dependence upon sea-borne commerce, by tossing a gold ring into the Adriatic • 126 **Euphrates,** river in southwest Asia • 129 **Indus . . . Ganges,** rivers in India • 130 **resuming,** making a résumé of • 137 **Tamerlane** (1333-1405), Mongol conqueror • 137 **Aurungzebe** (1619-1707), emperor of Hindustan • 139 **Marco Polo** (1254-1323), Venetian traveler in China • 139 **Batouta the Moor** (1303-1377), traveler in Asia and Africa • 140 **incognita,** unknown • 152 **histrion,** actor • 153 **scena,** a scene in opera (of which Whitman was very fond) • 154 **Admiral,** Columbus • 156 **Palos,** Spanish seaport • 162 **unreck'd,** unheeded, made no account of

Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,
Amid the wafting winds, (thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O soul,)
Caroling free, singing our song of God,
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

With laugh and many a kiss,
(Let others deprecate, let others weep for sin, remorse, humiliation,)
O soul thou pleasest me, I thee.

Ah more than any priest O soul we too believe in God,
But with the mystery of God we dare not dally.
O soul thou pleasest me, I thee,
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,
Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O Thou transcendent,
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them,
Thou mightier centre of the true, the good, the loving,
Thou moral, spiritual fountain—affection's source—thou reservoir,
(O pensive soul of me—O thirst unsatisfied—waitest not there?
Waitest not haply for us somewhere there the Comrade perfect?)
Thou pulse—thou motive of the stars, suns, systems,
That, circling, move in order, safe, harmonious,
Athwart the shapeless vastnesses of space,
How should I think, how breathe a single breath, how speak, if, out of myself,
I could not launch, to those, superior universes?

Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,
But that I, turning, call to thee O soul, thou actual Me,
And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,
And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.

Greater than stars or suns,
Bounding O soul thou journeyest forth;
What love than thine and ours could wider amplify?
What aspirations, wishes, outvie thine and ours O soul?
What dreams of the ideal? what plans of purity, perfection, strength,
What cheerful willingness for others' sake to give up all?
For others' sake to suffer all?

Reckoning ahead O soul, when thou, the time achiev'd,
The seas all cross'd, weather'd the capes, the voyage done,
Surrounded, copest, frontest God, yieldest, the aim attain'd,
As fill'd with friendship, love complete, the Elder Brother found,
The Younger melts in fondness in his arms.

9

Passage to more than India!
Are thy wings plumed indeed for such far flights?
O soul, voyagest thou indeed on voyages like those?
Disportest thou on waters such as those?
Soundest below the Sanscrit and the Vedas?
Then have thy bent unleash'd.

Passage to you, your shores, ye aged fierce enigmas!
Passage to you, to mastership of you, ye strangling problems!
You, strew'd with the wrecks of skeletons, that, living, never reach'd you.

Passage to more than India!
O secret of the earth and sky!
Of you O waters of the sea! O winding creeks and rivers!
Of you O woods and fields! of you strong mountains of my land!
Of you O prairies! of you gray rocks!
O morning red! O clouds! O rain and snows!
O day and night, passage to you!

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183 **deprecate**, pray to be delivered from • 221 **copest**, meets, encounters • 228 **Sanscrit . . . Vedas.** Sanskrit is the ancient language in which the Vedas, the sacred books of the Hindus, were written

O sun and moon and all you stars! Sirius and Jupiter!
Passage to you!

Passage, immediate passage! the blood burns in my veins!
Away O soul! hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers—haul out—shake out every sail!
Have we not stood here like trees in the ground long enough?
Have we not grovel'd here long enough, eating and drinking like mere brutes?
Have we not darken'd and dazed ourselves with books long enough?

Sail forth—steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

O my brave soul!
O farther farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!

1871

Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood

This poem was read by Whitman at the commencement of Dartmouth College, June 26, 1872. As read on that occasion, the poem began with what is now Section 2 and was known by the title "As a Strong Bird on Pinions Free." Section 1 was added in the 1881 edition.

In a Preface to the poem, Whitman wrote: "The Four Years' War is over—and in the peaceful, strong, exciting, fresh occasions of today, and of the future, that strange, sad war is hurrying even now to be forgotten. The camp, the drill, the lines of sentries, the prisons, the hospitals—(ah! the hospitals!)—all have passed away—all seem now like a dream. A new race, a young and lusty generation, already sweeps in with oceanic currents, obliterating the war, and all its scars, its mounded graves, and all its reminiscences of hatred, conflict, death. So let it be obliterated. I say the life of the present and the future makes undeniable demands upon us each and all, south, north, east, west. To help put the United States (even if only in imagination) hand in hand, in one unbroken circle in a chant—to rouse them to the unprecedented grandeur of the part they are to play, and are even now playing—to the thought of their great future, and the attitude conform'd to it—especially their great esthetic, moral, scientific future (of which their vulgar material and political present is but as the preparatory tuning of instruments by an orchestra), these, as hitherto, are still, for me, among my hopes, ambitions."

1

Thou Mother with thy equal brood,
Thou varied chain of different States, yet one identity only,
A special song before I go I'd sing o'er all the rest,
For thee, the future.

I'd sow a seed for thee of endless Nationality,
I'd fashion thy ensemble including body and soul,
I'd show away ahead thy real Union, and how it may be accomplish'd.

The paths to the house I seek to make,
But leave to those to come the house itself.

Belief I sing, and preparation;
As Life and Nature are not great with reference to the present only,
But greater still from what is yet to come,
Out of that formula for thee I sing.

2

As a strong bird on pinions free,
Joyous, the amplest spaces heavenward cleaving,
Such be the thought I'd think of thee America,
Such be the recitative I'd bring for thee.

The conceits of the poets of other lands I'd bring thee not,
Nor the compliments that have served their turn so long,

Passage to India • 240 Sirius, the brightest star • 240 Jupiter, the largest planet

Nor rhyme, nor the classics, nor perfume of foreign court or indoor library;
But an odor I'd bring as from forests of pine in Maine, or breath of an Illinois prairie,
With open airs of Virginia or Georgia or Tennessee, or from Texas uplands, or Florida's glades,
Or the Saguenay's black stream, or the wide blue spread of Huron,
With presentment of Yellowstone's scenes, or Yosemite,
And murmuring under, pervading all, I'd bring the rustling sea-sound,
That endlessly sounds from the two Great Seas of the world.

And for thy subtler sense subtler refrains dread Mother,
Preludes of intellect tallying these and thee, mind-formulas fitted for thee, real and sane and large as these and thee,
Thou! mounting higher, diving deeper than we knew, thou transcendental Union!
By thee fact to be justified, blended with thought,
Thought of man justified, blended with God,
Through thy idea, lo, the immortal reality!
Through thy reality, lo, the immortal idea!

3

Brain of the New World, what a task is thine,
To formulate the Modern—out of the peerless grandeur of the modern,
Out of thyself, comprising science, to recast poems, churches, art,
(Recast, maybe discard them, end them—maybe their work is done, who knows?)
By vision, hand, conception, on the background of the mighty past, the dead,
To limn with absolute faith the mighty living present.

And yet thou living present brain, heir of the dead, the Old World brain,
Thou that lay folded like an unborn babe within its folds so long,
Thou carefully prepared by it so long—haply thou but unfoldest it, only maturest it,
It to eventuate in thee—the essence of the by-gone time contain'd in thee,
Its poems, churches, arts, unwitting to themselves, destined with reference to thee;
Thou but the apples, long, long, long a-growing,
The fruit of all the Old ripening to-day in thee.

4

Sail, sail thy best, ship of Democracy,
Of value is thy freight, 'tis not the Present only,
The Past is also stored in thee,
Thou holdest not the venture of thyself alone, not of the Western continent alone,
Earth's *résumé* entire floats on thy keel O ship, is steadied by thy spars,
With thee Time voyages in trust, the antecedent nations sink or swim with thee,
With all their ancient struggles, martyrs, heroes, epics, wars, thou bear'st the other continents,
Theirs, theirs as much as thine, the destination-port triumphant;
Steer then with good strong hand and wary eye O helmsman, thou carriest great companions,
Venerable priestly Asia sails this day with thee,
And royal feudal Europe sails with thee.

5

Beautiful world of new superber birth that rises to my eyes,
Like a limitless golden cloud filling the western sky,
Emblem of general maternity lifted above all,
Sacred shape of the bearer of daughters and sons,
Out of thy teeming womb thy giant babes in ceaseless procession issuing,
Acceding from such gestation, taking and giving continual strength and life,
World of the real—world of the twain in one,
World of the soul, born by the world of the real alone, led to identity, body, by it alone,
Yet in beginning only, incalculable masses of composite precious materials,
By history's cycles forwarded, by every nation, language, hither sent,
Ready, collected here, a freer, vast, electric world, to be constructed here,

---

23 Saguenay, a river which flows through the province of Quebec into the St. Lawrence

(The true New World, the world of orbic science, morals, literatures to come,)
Thou wonder world yet undefined, unform'd, neither do I define thee,
How can I pierce the impenetrable blank of the future?
I feel thy ominous greatness evil as well as good,
I watch thee advancing, absorbing the present, transcending the past,
I see thy light lighting, and thy shadow shadowing, as if the entire globe,
But I do not undertake to define thee, hardly to comprehend thee,
I but thee name, thee prophesy, as now,
I merely thee ejaculate!

Thee in thy future,
Thee in thy only permanent life, career, thy own unloosen'd mind, thy soaring spirit,
Thee as another equally needed sun, radiant, ablaze, swift-moving, fructifying all,
Thee risen in potent cheerfulness and joy, in endless great hilarity,
Scattering for good the cloud that hung so long, that weigh'd so long upon the mind of man,
The doubt, suspicion, dread, of gradual, certain decadence of man;
Thee in thy larger, saner brood of female, male—thee in thy athletes, moral, spiritual, South, North, West, East,
(To thy immortal breasts, Mother of All, thy every daughter, son, endear'd alike, forever equal,)
Thee in thy own musicians, singers, artists, unborn yet, but certain,
Thee in thy moral wealth and civilization, (until which thy proudest material civilization must remain in vain,)
Thee in thy all-supplying, all-enclosing worship—thee in no single bible, saviour, merely,
Thy saviours countless, latent within thyself, thy bibles incessant within thyself, equal to any, divine as any,
(Thy soaring course thee formulating, not in thy two great wars, nor in thy century's visible growth,
But far more in these leaves and chants, thy chants, great Mother!)
Thee in an education grown of thee, in teachers, studies, students, born of thee,
Thee in thy democratic fêtes en-masse, thy high original festivals, operas, lecturers, preachers,
Thee in thy ultimata, (the preparations only now completed, the edifice on sure foundations tied,)
Thee in thy pinnacles, intellect, thought, thy topmost rational joys, thy love and godlike aspiration,
In thy resplendent coming literati, thy full-lung'd orators, thy sacerdotal bards, kosmic savans,
These! these in thee, (certain to come,) to-day I prophesy.

6

Land tolerating all, accepting all, not for the good alone, all good for thee,
Land in the realms of God to be a realm unto thyself,
Under the rule of God to be a rule unto thyself.
(Lo, where arise three peerless stars,
To be thy natal stars my country, Ensemble, Evolution, Freedom,
Set in the sky of Law.)

Land of unprecedented faith, God's faith,
Thy soil, thy very subsoil, all upheav'd,
The general inner earth so long so sedulously draped over, now hence for what it is boldly laid bare,
Open'd by thee to heaven's light for benefit or bale.
Not for success alone,
Not to fair-sail unintermitted always,
The storm shall dash thy face, the murk of war and worse than war shall cover thee all over,
(Wert capable of war, its tugs and trials? be capable of peace, its trials,

---

89 **thy bibles.** Whitman's prophecy recalls Emerson's in the concluding paragraph of **The Divinity School Address:** "I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty which ravished the souls of those Eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also" • 91 **these . . . chants.** Whitman was never modest about his poems • 96 **orators.** Whitman had an old-fashioned fondness for oratory For the influence of oratory and oratorical considerations upon his poetry, see "Three Analogies for a Poem," in F. O. Matthiessen's **American Renaissance** • 96 **sacerdotal bards** echoes Emerson's statement in his essay on Shakespeare (in **Representative Men**): "The world still wants its poet-priest . . ."

For the tug and mortal strain of nations come at last in prosperous peace, not war;)
In many a smiling mask death shall approach beguiling thee, thou in disease shalt swelter,
The livid cancer spread its hideous claws, clinging upon thy breasts, seeking to strike thee deep within,
Consumption of the worst, moral consumption, shall rouge thy face with hectic,
But thou shalt face thy fortunes, thy diseases, and surmount them all,
Whatever they are to-day and whatever through time they may be,
They each and all shall lift and pass away and cease from thee,
While thou, Time's spirals rounding, out of thyself, thyself still extricating, fusing,
Equable, natural, mystical Union thou, (the mortal with immortal blent,)
Shalt soar toward the fulfilment of the future, the spirit of the body and the mind,
The soul, its destinies.

The soul, its destinies, the real real,
(Purport of all these apparitions of the real;)
In thee America, the soul, its destinies,
Thou globe of globes! thou wonder nebulous!
By many a throe of heat and cold convuls'd, (by these thyself solidifying,)
Thou mental, moral orb—thou New, indeed new, Spiritual World!
The Present holds thee not—for such vast growth as thine,
For such unparallel'd flight as thine, such brood as thine,
The FUTURE only holds thee and can hold thee.

1872·1881

To a Locomotive in Winter

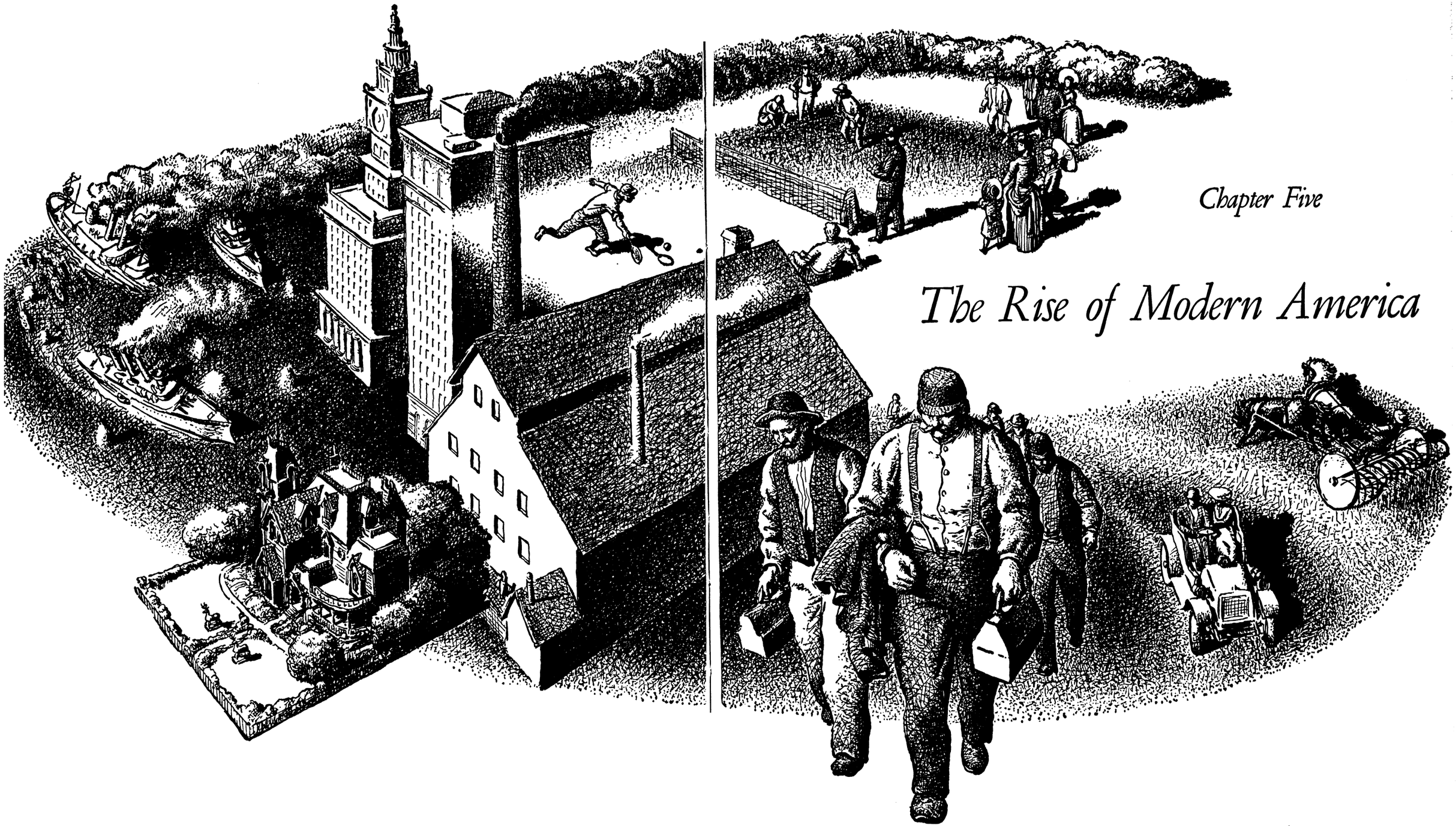
Whitman's treatment of the locomotive may be profitably contrasted with Emily Dickinson's in "I Like to See It Lap the Miles" and compared with Thomas Wolfe's in many passages in his novels.

Thee for my recitative,
Thee in the driving storm even as now, the snow, the winterday declining.
Thee in thy panoply, thy measur'd dual throbbing and thy beat convulsive,
Thy black cylinder body, golden brass and silvery steel,
Thy ponderous side-bars, parallel and connecting rods, gyrating, shuttling at thy sides,
Thy metrical, now swelling pant and roar, now tapering in the distance,
Thy great protruding head-light fix'd in front,
Thy long, pale, floating vapor-pennants, tinged with delicate purple,
The dense and murky clouds out-belching from thy smokestack,
Thy knitted frame, thy springs and valves, the tremulous twinkle of thy wheels,
Thy train of cars behind, obedient, merrily following,
Through gale or calm, now swift, now slack, yet steadily careering;
Type of the modern—emblem of motion and power—pulse of the continent,
For once come serve the Muse and merge in verse, even as here I see thee,
With storm and buffeting gusts of wind and falling snow,
By day thy warning ringing bell to sound its notes,
By night thy silent signal lamps to swing.

Fierce-throated beauty!
Roll through my chant with all thy lawless music, thy swinging lamps at night,
Thy madly-whistled laughter, echoing, rumbling like an earthquake, rousing all,
Law of thyself complete, thine own track firmly holding,
(No sweetness debonair of tearful harp or glib piano thine,)
Thy trills of shrieks by rocks and hills return'd,
Launch'd o'er the prairies wide, across the lakes,
To the free skies unpent and glad and strong.

1876·1881

Thou Mother . . . Brood • 124 apparitions, outward appearances
To a Locomotive . . . • 3 panoply, full suit of plane armor



Chapter Five

The Rise of Modern America

Chapter 5

The Rise of Modern America

1865 • 1914

"As a strong bird on pinions free,
Joyous, the amplest spaces heavenward cleaving . . . ."
—Whitman

"Are we the eagle nation Milton saw . . . ?" —Moody

I. Intellectual Currents

REUNION

The Civil War, which terminated when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox in April 1865, left the nation sadly disrupted. The restoration of unity—at best a long and difficult process—was made longer and more difficult by the Era of Reconstruction, which imposed the rule of ill-qualified Negroes and of carpetbaggers and scalawags upon the Southern states and maintained this rule by the presence of federal troops. When President Hayes withdrew the troops in 1877, reconstruction governments collapsed and the "tragic era" ended.

Much ill-feeling was engendered on both sides by sectional controversy, civil war, and tyrannical misrule. On the other hand, many forces were working inexorably for the restoration of national unity. The states were bound together by a common language, common traditions, and a close interdependence of economic interests. The establishment of schools and colleges in the South by Northern philanthropy contributed much to the growing unity of feeling; the abandonment by the national government after 1883 of the attempt to control race relations in the South contributed still more. Not the least of the unifying influences was our postwar literature. Some writers preached the gospel of union Others contributed less directly but none the less effectively to the same end by exemplifying in the local color story the admirable qualities to be found in the rank and file of people in various regions.

Among those who celebrated unity and reunion, three writers stand out above the others: Lowell in New England, Whitman in the Middle Atlantic States, and Lanier in the South. On July 3, 1875, Lowell read in Cambridge his poem "Under the Old Elm," which celebrated the hundredth anniversary of Washington's taking command of the American army. After paying eloquent tribute to the greatness of Washington, the poet held out the hand of reconciliation and friendship to his home state.

Virginia gave us this imperial man . . .
She gave us this unblemished gentleman:

What shall we give her back but love and praise
As in the dear old unestrangèd days
Before the inevitable wrong began?
Mother of states and undiminished men,
Thou gavest us a country, giving him,
And we owe alway what we owed thee then . . .
A great man's memory is the only thing
With influence to outlast the present whim
And bind us as when here he knit our golden ring.

A great man's memory. Lowell was right. The common memory of Washington helped to restore national unity after the schismatic years. Mount Vernon soon became a national shrine. So important to a nation's well-being is the principle enunciated by Lowell that in the years to follow, other great Americans, such as Jefferson, Lincoln, and Lee, irrespective of sectional differences, were to become national heroes.

Whitman's plea for reunion took the characteristic form of an inspiring prophecy of the future greatness of the United States. This greatness would be the achievement of states which are "varied" and "different" and at the same time united in "one identity." In the famous poem ("As a Strong Bird on Pinions Free," later changed to "Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood," p. 720) read at Dartmouth College in 1872, Whitman expressed unbounded confidence in the future progress of America—a progress which would be not only political and material, but scientific, aesthetic, and moral as well:

Thee in an education grown of thee, in teachers, studies, students, born of thee,
Thee in thy democratic fêtes en-masse, thy high original festivals, operas, lecturers, preachers . . .
Thee in thy pinnacles, intellect, thought, thy topmost rational joys, thy love and godlike aspiration,
In thy resplendent coming literati, thy full-lung'd orators, thy sacerdotal bards, kosmic savans,
These! these in thee, (certain to come,) to-day I prophesy.

It was a vision calculated to make men forget the quarrels of the past and unite in the achievement of a splendid civilization.

Although Sidney Lanier (p. 1008) fought through the Civil War, there was no bitterness in his soul. He saw clearly that the South could not attain well-being in isolation and estrangement from the North. In the centennial year of 1876, he attempted in two poems to draw the sections together in loving harmony: "The Psalm of the West" and "The Centennial Meditation of Columbia," the second of which was sung at the Philadelphia Exposition by a great chorus with orchestral accompaniment. Both poems employ the historical approach: a backward glance over the events which have brought us to this good hour should awaken a new sense of pride and responsibility. In "The Psalm of the West" Lanier surveyed the early voyages to the New World (the eight sonnets on Columbus are especially notable), the settling of New England, the progress of the Revolutionary War from Lexington to Yorktown, and the Civil War between "Heart-strong South" and "Head-strong North." The "Psalm" concluded with a prophecy of America's future glory as ardent as Whitman's. The "Centennial Meditation" suggested more briefly the same historical evolution and concluded likewise with a prophecy which was also a prayer for America's future:

Long as thine Art shall love true love,
Long as thy Science truth shall know,
Long as thine Eagle harms no Dove,
Long as thy Law by law shall grow,
Long as thy God is God above,
Thy brother every man below,
So long, dear Land of all my love,
Thy name shall shine, thy fame shall glow.

If the three writers just considered aided the process of reunion by emphasizing the solidarity of a new and glorious America, the fictionists of the local color school contributed to the same end with perhaps even greater effectiveness by drawing attention to the innate virtues of Americans everywhere. During the two or three decades following the Civil War, our most popular form of literature was the regional short story. Bret Harte (p. 810) and Hamlin Garland (p. 948) in the West, George Washington Cable (p. 817), Joel Chandler Harris (p. 826), and Mary Noailles Murfree in the South, Sarah Orne Jewett (p. 833) and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman in New England—all portrayed with tender sympathy the lives of the inhabitants of their respective

regions. One effect of this body of literature was to reassure Southern readers that there was much natural goodness in the North, and Northern readers that there was much natural goodness in the South. Only the most stubborn of hard feelings could persist under such an emollient.

Consider, for example, the reputedly flinty New England character as seen in the soft light of Miss Jewett's tales. Describing a family reunion on the Maine coast, Miss Jewett wrote in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*: "Each heart is warm and every face shines with the ancient light. Such a day as this has transfiguring powers, and easily makes friends of those who have been cold-hearted, and gives to those who are dumb their chance to speak, and lends some beauty to the plainest face." Beneath the plain, taciturn, and cold exterior of the New England character, Miss Jewett assured her readers, could be discovered, on propitious occasions, beauty, ampleness of speech, and warmth of heart. These were the points on which non-New Englanders were likely to entertain serious doubts. It is reasonable to suppose that Miss Jewett's stories substantially increased the amount of good feeling in America toward New England.

Or take the character of the Southern highlander—reputedly wild and lawless—as seen through the sympathetic eyes of Miss Murfree. She saw that friendliness, charity, the domestic virtues can be found in abundance in the hill and mountain country of the South. It is a natural goodness, produced not by schools and the higher civilization, but by Nature herself, and therefore the more worthy of recognition and admiration. "The grace of culture is, in its way, a fine thing," Miss Murfree said in one of the stories in *In the Tennessee Mountains,* "but the best that art can do—the polish of a gentleman—is hardly equal to the best that Nature can do in her higher moods."

Or look (to mention only one more example) at the Southern planter—by report brutal and tyrannical—as he is reflected in the genial pages of *Uncle Remus* (p. 827). More effectively than any other single writer, Joel Chandler Harris reassured the world of the essential kindliness which had existed between master and slave on the ante-bellum plantation and implied that not even emancipation and reconstruction could destroy the friendly relations of the two races. Harris' stories had an effect similar to that produced in one of his tales by Mr. Benjermun Ram's fiddling:

> W'en ole man Benjermun Ram sorter let up wid he fiddlin', he don't see no Brer Wolf, en he don't year no ole Miss Wolf. Den he look in de back room, no Wolf dar. Den he look in de back po'ch; no Wolf dar. Den he look in de closet en de cubbard; no Wolf ain't dar yit.

The infectious laughter of Uncle Remus and the pervasive good humor and kindliness expressed by Harris did much toward putting to flight (as Benjermun Ram put to flight Brer Wolf and Miss Wolf) the ill-will which persisted in partisans both North and South in the postwar years.

It is not too much to say that the writers of the period contributed greatly to the reëstablishment of national unity. The local color stories, in particular, were for many readers a fresh and exciting discovery of America, and the writers of this school might have taken for their motto the words spoken by Senator Lamar of Mississippi in his eulogy of Charles Sumner: "My countrymen, know one another and you will love one another."

The remarkable extent to which reunion had been achieved by the end of the century was dramatically demonstrated in the war with Spain, in which Northerners and Southerners fought side by side and ex-Confederate generals held positions of command. World War I and World War II were to afford even more impressive evidence of the growing solidarity of the American nation.

SOCIAL and ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Industry and Agriculture Expand

American social and economic life changed radically and rapidly during the years between 1865 and 1914. The railroad was a typical achievement of the age, and powerful in its influence on economic and social life. In 1865 there were only thirty-five thousand miles of track in the United States; by 1900 this mileage increased to nearly two hundred thousand. The Westinghouse air brake and other inventions improved the efficiency of railroad transportation. Enormous land grants by the

government financed the building of the transcontinental lines: the Union Pacific, the Northern Pacific, and the Santa Fe, all of which had reached the Pacific Coast by 1884. If the cost in land grants was high, the railroads made substantial returns by peopling and developing the region west of the Mississippi. The roads, however, often abused their power, and the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 marked the beginning of federal regulation.

The railroad was only one factor in the economic revolution which followed the Civil War. A great transportation system presupposed commodities to transport, and these were supplied by an expanding industry and an expanding agriculture.

Industrial expansion was stimulated by a variety of factors: the exploitation of our resources in iron, coal, and oil; the development of improved machinery; the procurement of cheap labor through immigration; and the government's policy of protecting infant industries by high tariffs and allowing a free hand to business. There were many marvels of scientific invention: Andrew Carnegie was using the improved Bessemer process in the manufacture of steel by 1875; Alexander Graham Bell demonstrated the telephone at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876; Thomas A. Edison and others made possible the dynamo, which was exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 and which, as Henry Adams declared, "gave to history a new phase." Expanding industry required an abundance of labor, and this was supplied by a growing stream of immigrants, who, at the turn of the century, came in larger proportions from the southern and eastern than (as they had done previously) from the northern and western European countries. They were motivated in part by hardships at home, but even more by inducements proffered by agents of American business. Immigration continued without drastic reduction until 1921.

Under these favorable conditions, our rapidly expanding industry soon got out of hand, and toward the end of the century it became increasingly apparent that some form of government regulation was necessary. Trusts and monopolies—the Standard Oil Company and the United States Steel Corporation, for example—exceeded reasonable bounds. The railroads of the entire country were controlled by only a half-dozen small groups of men. A disproportionate part of the wealth of the nation became concentrated in the pockets of a relatively few people. Big business had formed a corrupt alliance with politics. Abuses were rampant. Attempts at regulation and reform—at first ineffective—began with the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, and in response to growing social criticism became more effective after the turn of the century: among other things, the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission were increased, and in 1906 a Pure Food and Drugs Act heralded a new era in the responsibilities of business to society.

Agriculture also underwent a revolution during the post-Civil War years. Vast new lands in the West were opened to farming. New machines—reapers, binders, threshers—and new scientific devices—fertilizers, insecticides, improved strains—greatly increased the yield of the land. The methods of big business invaded the farm: the cash crop supplanted subsistence farming. But fewer people were needed to do the work, thanks to the improved machinery; the financial returns were precarious; and migration from the farms to the cities grew steadily.

Growth of Cities

Perhaps the most conspicuous change of all was the rapid growth of cities, fed by immigrants from abroad and by farm and village folk from the American countryside. In 1860 one sixth of our population was urban; in 1900, one third. Between 1880 and 1900 the population of Chicago grew from a half million to a million and a half, and the number of American cities with a population of one hundred thousand or more increased from nineteen to thirty-six. City life gained, while country life suffered, in prestige. It was supposed by thousands of young Americans that a better life, somehow, could be lived in the city than in the country, and the bigger the city, the better the life. Many novels of the time—especially those of Theodore Dreiser (p. 997)—show the error of this supposition. The sudden growth of great urban centers created new social and economic problems. Municipal government broke down under the strain. The evils of the slums appeared for the first time in American life

Labor Organizes

The new industry exploited labor, and it was inevitable that labor should organize to combat the exploitation.

A beginning was made by the Knights of Labor, founded in 1869; but the movement did not gain appreciable strength until 1886, when the American Federation of Labor was organized under the leadership of Samuel Gompers. The A. F. of L. continued to gain steadily until 1920, when it reached a peak of more than four million members. As organized labor grew in strength, industrial conflicts increased in number and intensity. The first of these was the railroad strike of 1877. Others worthy of note are the Pullman strike of 1894 and the strike in the Pennsylvania coal fields in 1902. Strikes have often been an effective weapon, and much has been accomplished to improve the lot of labor by social legislation. Since the Massachusetts "Ten Hour Act for Women and Children in Factories" in 1874, much progress has been made in the working conditions, hours, and wages of labor. Early reform legislation was often declared unconstitutional on the disingenuous principle that "a person has the right to sell his labor upon such terms as he deems proper." But after 1900, more liberal judges, like Louis D. Brandeis, were instrumental in reversing many of the decisions which had blocked social reform.

THE LITERATURE of SOCIAL CRITICISM

St. Paul said that "the love of money is the root of all evil," and the history of America after the Civil War exhibits the truth or near-truth of that statement. Perhaps never before was a nation so engrossed in the business of making money. Perhaps never before was materialism so rampant, or so much pride taken in material achievements.

The writers of the period pointed out forcefully the evils of this crass materialism. In *Democratic Vistas* Walt Whitman warned his readers that material wealth alone would not make a nation great:

> I hail with joy the oceanic, variegated, intense practical energy, the demand for facts, even the business materialism of the current age, our States. But wo to the age or land in which these things, movements, stopping at themselves, do not tend to ideas. As fuel to flame, and flame to the heavens, so must wealth, science, materialism—even this democracy of which we make so much—unerringly feed the highest mind, the soul.

Lanier in "The Symphony" (p. 1012) pleaded eloquently for a Christian and chivalric code in place of the unfeeling relations between employer and employed:

> 'Thou Trade! thou king of the modern days!
> Change thy ways,
> Change thy ways;
> Let the sweaty laborers file
> A little while,
> A little while,
> Where Art and Nature sing and smile.
> Trade! is thy heart all dead, all dead?
> And hast thou nothing but a head?
> I'm all for heart,' the flute-voice said.

In "these cold, merchantable days," the poet wrote, even the love of the sexes is tainted by mercenary motives:

> Now, comes a suitor with sharp prying eye—
> Says *Here, you Lady, if you'll sell, I'll buy*:
> *Come, heart for heart—a trade? What! weeping? why?*
> Shame on such wooers' dapper mercery!

While Whitman and Lanier were voicing their spiritual protests, Mark Twain (p. 846) was ridiculing mercilessly the get-rich-quick schemes of his money-mad countrymen In *The Gilded Age*—a book whose name has been given to the Grant era (1869-1877) and by extension to the twenty or thirty years following the Civil War—the author presented at once hilariously and devastatingly Colonel Sellers' designs for money-making. At one and the same time, Sellers was scheming to corner the corn and hog crops, buy up the wildcat banks, and market an "Optic Liniment" (his own concoction) throughout the world. He and his associates attempted to sell a large tract of worthless land ("the Tennessee land") to the government. Despite skillful lobbying in Washington, they failed, though by a narrow margin, and the book ends with the moral that sober industry and contentment with a modest income honestly earned are infinitely preferable to frantic schemes to get rich quick. It was a good moral, but one which the author himself never learned, and one which millions of Americans had not learned as late as 1929.

The Gilded Age also exposed political corruption in the national capital, where votes were bought and sold. Henry Adams (p. 1051) in his novel *Democracy* (1880) turned a censorious eye on similar political phenomena. He portrays a distinguished United States senator, the leader of his party, who accepted a bribe of $100,000. His reasons were good "political" ones, but they did not satisfy Adams' heroine, whose break with the senator parallels Adams' own withdrawal from the corrupt politics of the Gilded Age. But Adams remained a fascinated observer and refused to surrender his belief in democracy despite its current evil manifestations. "I grant it is an experiment," he said through one of the characters in the novel, "but it is the only direction society can take that is worth its taking. . . . Every other possible step is backward."

Our writers were not long content with a general censure of materialism and political corruption. Growing ills awakened the social conscience and called forth specific indictments which became increasingly prominent in the literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Prepared by his own experience on an Iowa farm and indoctrinated in the economic theories of Henry George, Hamlin Garland in *Main-Travelled Roads* (p. 948) exposed, with strong emotional appeal, the hardships and injustices suffered by the farmers in the Iowa-Wisconsin country. An angry and anger-rousing book, *Main-Travelled Roads* suggests the gathering strength of the Populist Movement and helps explain the spectacular rise of William Jennings Bryan in 1896. An important phase in the history of the railroad's exploitation of the farmer is presented in Frank Norris' *The Octopus* (p. 975), which powerfully portrays the struggle between the Southern Pacific Railroad (the "octopus") and the wheat farmers of California. The triumphant force is neither the railroad nor the farmers, but the wheat, which Norris represents in both *The Octopus* (1901) and *The Pit* (1903) as more powerful than any man or combination of men.

Criticisms of Industrialism

With the opening of the new century, the exposure of injustices and abuses in our national life became the most popular of literary subjects. In politics, the 1900's were the era of Theodore Roosevelt's progressivism and "trust-busting"; in literature, the era of the "muckrakers." Literature was dedicated to the exposé, and scores of books revealed all sorts of malpractices to an indignant public. Perhaps the greatest of the muckraking books was Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle,* which dealt graphically with the life of a Lithuanian immigrant employed in the Chicago stockyards. This sturdy young man is gradually broken, and his family completely ruined, by the inhuman cruelties of the stockyards. The book's exposure of unsanitary practices in the processing of meat undoubtedly hastened the enactment of the Pure Food and Drugs Act.

The leader among the muckrakers was Lincoln Steffens, whose *Shame of the Cities* brought to a focus the problems created by the sudden emergence of great urban communities and contributed to the movement for municipal reform. Steffens' book drew attention to the corruption in city government and attempted to fix the blame on certain prominent citizens. The growing problems of the Big City had been noticed before Steffens and were to be further exposed after his notable book. As early as 1890 William Dean Howells (p. 888) had exhibited, somewhat conservatively, the grime and squalor of New York City in *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (p. 890). Less conservatively, Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893) exposed the ugly life of New York's Bowery. In *Sister Carrie* (1900) and *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911) Theodore Dreiser told affectingly of the hard lot of the underpaid working girl in the big cities of the Middle West. Henry Blake Fuller in *The Cliff-Dwellers* (1893) and Robert Herrick in *The Common Lot* (1904) underscored the degrading effect on Chicago's social life of greed and cutthroat competition. Possibly the apogee of the literary attack on the Big City as a monster of corruption and vice was reached in David Graham Phillips' *Susan Lenox* (1917), whose heroine encounters (and miraculously survives) nearly all the evils of our modern Babylons.

The most prominent and commanding figure in the new industrial scene was the captain of industry. The years following the Civil War saw the amassing of unprecedented private fortunes. Financiers like Jay Cooke, the first great American banker; John D. Rockefeller, the Oil King; Andrew Carnegie, monopolist of iron and steel; and Jay Gould, Commodore Vanderbilt, and Collis P. Huntington, railroad magnates, became the real rulers

of America. The reputations of these great entrepreneurs are now tarnished; their money was often acquired unethically; they have been called, with a good deal of justice, the "robber barons."

The type early attracted the attention of our novelists, but the literary treatment was for a good many years comparatively gentle. In Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1884), Lapham, a wealthy Boston paint manufacturer, is crude but honest. At the great crisis of his career, he loses his business rather than accept a price for properties which is greater than he knows them to be worth. Howells would have defended his portrait of Lapham by saying that the great majority of American financiers were honest, that robber barons were the exception, not the rule. In *A Hazard of New Fortunes,* Dryfoos, the millionaire, is much less amiable in his domestic and social relations than Lapham, but Howells represents him as reasonably ethical. "He's hard," declares a character in the story whose testimony we can accept, "and he'd push an advantage, but I don't believe he would take an unfair one. He's speculated and made money every time, but I never heard of his wrecking a railroad or belonging to any swindling company or grinding monopoly. He does chance it in stocks, but he's always played on the square." Despite the "robber barons," Howells thought that the ethics of American business were fundamentally sound. Henry James' (p. 918) acquaintance with American financiers and their ways was less intimate than Howells'. Living abroad, James had the opportunity of knowing only those prosperous and emancipated Americans who took a vacation in Europe. His Christopher Newman (*The American,* 1877) and Adam Verver (*The Golden Bowl,* 1904) are men of integrity and charm. Although James does not enter at all into their business careers—a subject on which he is always vague—we see Newman and Verver behaving decently and even magnanimously. Newman is devoted to culture in a limited way; Verver has built in "American City" a museum of art which he has filled with priceless treasures. Both are men of honor as well as of cultural aspirations.

The balance has never been struck between the portraits drawn by Howells and James and the authentic careers of the "robber barons." Were all successful businessmen in the Gilded Age boors and scoundrels? Some social historians have implied as much. But the modern reader—unless he is a cynic—is still free to believe that the Gilded Age produced Laphams and Newmans as well as Cookes and Goulds.

The emphasis of the muckrakers on the exposé resulted in much less flattering portrayals of the American businessman after the turn of the century. The most elaborate study of the type was made by Dreiser in two voluminously documented novels, *The Financier* (1912) and *The Titan* (1914), in both of which the business career of Frank Cowperwood more closely approximates the unsavory records of the barons. The literary pendulum was to swing back to a more favorable picture of the American millionaire in *Dodsworth* (1929), where Sinclair Lewis' hero (recalling James' Newman in many ways) is a thoroughly admirable person despite his wealth.

The Reformers

While emphasizing the blight of materialism upon the soul, and the injustices and abuses of the new industrial order, the literature of social criticism was not entirely destructive; there were constructive elements as well. Specific utopias were proposed. The greatest and most influential of these was Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (p. 1038) "Not since *Uncle Tom's Cabin,*" declares V. L. Parrington, "had an American novel reached so many readers." Believing that economic inequality was the cause of all social ills, Bellamy described a Socialist utopia in which the wealth was distributed with exact equality among its members. A benevolent state controlled public and private economy in the minutest detail; it assigned members to tasks according to their aptitudes; it provided incentives through special recognition of public service. A planned and cooperative society produced sufficient wealth to permit the early retirement of its members and the free enjoyment of cultural pursuits. *Looking Backward* has made many converts to Socialism. Other writers of the period also proposed the Socialist solution: among them, Howells in *A Traveller from Altruria* (1893) and Upton Sinclair in *The Jungle*—after the incredible woes of the stockyards, Sinclair's hero embraces Socialism and becomes an active worker for the cause.

The great body of the literature dealing with social problems, however, proposes not a radical alteration of the American system of free enterprise, but reforms and

ameliorations. If men would be honest and fair, if they would be satisfied with a modest income, if they would spend their money unselfishly, if they would be Christians imbued with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount—then all would be well: this is the burden of many writers who have concerned themselves with the subject. Charles M. Sheldon's *In His Steps* (1896), which had an amazing sale of more than fifteen million copies, recommended that everyone when confronted by a problem should ask himself, "What would Jesus do?" Less popular and better writers also emphasized the importance of the Christian attitude. Robert Herrick advised in *The Common Lot* (1904) a quiet withdrawal from the market place into a Wordsworthian simplicity. William Vaughn Moody (p. 1031), the first of our poets to examine the new social problems with critical insight, urged in "Gloucester Moors" (1900) the necessity of a social conscience among the more fortunate members of society. The results of the Machine Age, he pointed out in "The Brute" (1900), had been disappointing: contrary to expectations, the Machine (the "brute") had not brought prosperity and leisure to all, but only to "the strong and cunning few." The solution lay, Moody thought, not in the rejection of the Machine (as some nineteenth-century Romantics had believed), but in a better control of the Machine and a fairer distribution of the wealth which it produces:

> For the Brute must bring the good time on . . .
> He must loose the curse of Adam from the worn neck of the race.
> He must give each man his portion, each his pride and worthy place.

Substantial progress was to be made in the new century toward the realization of these aims.

THE FRONTIER VERSUS EUROPE: A QUESTION of VALUES

The Freedom of the Frontier

"Westward the course of empire takes its way," wrote Bishop Berkeley in his "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America" published in 1752. The Westward movement in America was a fulfillment of the prophecy beyond anything which the good bishop could have foreseen. Before the end of the eighteenth century, pioneers had crossed the Alleghenies; by the middle of the nineteenth century, they had settled the Mississippi Valley as far as Texas and the upper reaches of the Missouri and had invaded California and Oregon; by the end of the century, only the Rocky Mountains and the arid tracts of Arizona and Nevada remained unsettled; and by the beginning of World War I, there was no more frontier. The "epic of America" before 1914 was in no small part the epic of the ever advancing frontier. The treatment of the frontier in literature has been of two kinds: romantic, and realistic and critical. In the nineteenth century the romantic treatment predominated; the realistic and critical treatment did not prevail until after World War I.

Whitman sounded the dominant nineteenth-century note in "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" (p. 698). Whitman's pioneers were heroes—"tan-faced children," "youthful and sinewy," armed with "pistols and sharp-edged axes."

> We primeval forests felling,
> We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the mines within,
> We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheaving,
> Pioneers! O Pioneers!

(A century later it was to appear that the pioneers had done too thorough a job in upheaving the soil and felling the forests.) They were "impatient" and "full of action"—a "resistless, restless race." Such was Whitman's glorification of the Westward movement. Other poets of the nineteenth century—Emerson and Lowell in New England, Lanier in the South, and Joaquin Miller in the West—echoed Whitman's praise and admiration of the pioneer.

The distinguished historian Frederick Jackson Turner was almost as romantic as the poets in his treatment of the subject in "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" written in 1893. "Stand at Cumberland Gap," he wrote, "and watch the procession of civilization, marching single file—the buffalo following the trail to the salt springs, the Indian, the fur trader and hunter, the cattle raiser, the pioneer farmer—and the frontier has passed by. Stand at South Pass in the Rockies a century later and see the same procession with wider intervals between." Turner defined the frontier

as "the line of most rapid and effective Americanization." The American character was largely formed by the frontier; frontier traits became the traits most distinctive of America:

> To the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy, that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom—these are the traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier.

Turner's sentences are almost a prose paraphrase of Whitman.

When we come to the literature written by frontiersmen, we find much that is sordid and unattractive in the life described, but the total effect is still romantic. Frontier life was vital, expansive, exuberant; it was in the full tide of growth; here was no Indian summer, no sere and yellow leaf.

The life portrayed in the books by Mark Twain's precursors—Davy Crockett's *Autobiography* (1834, p. 771), A. B. Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes* (1835), W. T. Thompson's *Major Jones's Courtship* (1843), Johnson H. Hooper's *Some Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs* (1845), J. G. Baldwin's *The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi* (1853), G. W. Harris' *Sut Lovingood* (1867, p. 775)—contains much that is vulgar, brutal, and unprincipled. The bloody athletic contests described by Longstreet, the low chicanery of Simon Suggs, the rough practical jokes of Sut Lovingood may repel the delicate reader. But there is no denying the vitality, the sturdy strength and individualism, and, above all, the high spirits and love of fun. Life on the frontier must have been good to produce so much solid enjoyment; perhaps no other early settlements in the world's history have been enlivened by such hilarity. The literary apex of the hilarity was *Sut Lovingood;* nowhere else, even in our own literature, will one find quite so much of that quality, or the qualities it connotes—good health and an inexhaustible enjoyment of physical living. Sut Lovingood and his fellows were a remarkably healthy and uninhibited race.

Lincoln liked to read the Southwestern Yarnspinners, for he was one of them; and from their writings runs a straight line of genealogical descent to the great works of Mark Twain: *Roughing It* (p. 854), in which he told with gusto the tall tales of his sojourn in the Far West, and *Life on the Mississippi* (p. 866), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (p. 873), in which he immortalized the Mississippi from Hannibal to New Orleans. Mark Twain did not omit the seamy side of the Mississippi River region in the 1850's—the squalor, the vulgarity, the lawlessness; but this aspect is almost forgotten by the reader because there was so much that was splendid and exhilarating. The splendor was symbolized for Mark Twain in the steamboat, and "the boat *was* rather a handsome sight!" The exhilaration was owing to the unrestricted freedom of the frontier world, an abandon symbolized by Huck and Jim on the raft—Huck free, Jim on the road to liberty. As our civilization grew older and more complex—as it matured, in short—Mark Twain felt that its members were more and more restricted. Writing in middle life, he remembered with nostalgia the unrestrained spirit of his early world:

> I never felt easy till the raft was two miles below there and out in the middle of the Mississippi. Then we hung up our signal lantern, and judged that we was free and safe once more. I hadn't had a bite to eat since yesterday, so Jim he got out some corn-dodgers and buttermilk, and pork and cabbage and greens—there ain't nothing in the world so good when it's cooked right—and whilst I eat my supper we talked and had a good time. I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft.

The frontier love of freedom found enduring expression in the statesmanship of Lincoln and the writings of Mark Twain.

The Westward movement was a powerful driving force which settled the American continent; but there has been another, a counter-force, less powerful but insistent, which has operated throughout our history. As Ferner Nuhn pointed out in *The Wind Blew from the East,* there has been in American life and literature from the beginning "the everpresent pullback toward modes of culture that lie in our past . . . the desire to retrace the racial steps . . . the nostalgic tradition." The Atlantic seaboard has felt drawn constantly to Europe; the Middle West and the Far West, to the Atlantic seaboard. In colonial times, Increase Mather and William Byrd—each in his own way—enjoyed London. In the nineteenth century, Irving and Longfellow and Lowell assimilated the culture of Europe, and Hawthorne felt acutely the ancestral ties to "our old home." Among our major writers, only Thoreau and Whitman—those staunch Americans—never traveled abroad. In the latter half of the century, the Eastward pull began to be felt in the newly settled West: Howells and Garland were drawn from their Western habitats to Boston by the lodestone of the East; Mark Twain settled in Hartford.

The counter-pull has produced two kinds of literary subjects: comparisons of the Eastern and the Western parts of the United States, and comparisons of Europe and America. Although the first subject may be found here and there in our literature (*A Hazard of New Fortunes* transplants several Midwesterners to the East and suggests some comparisons of the two sections, Moody's *The Great Divide* studies the contrasting moralities of New England and the West), it does not attain the importance of the second: Europe versus America is one of the more significant themes in American literature.

Mark Twain treated Europe with unorthodox scorn in *The Innocents Abroad* (p. 851). He had a frontiersman's hatred of tyranny, and Europe to him meant the twofold tyranny of church and state, of priests and kings. The best thing that had ever happened in Europe, he thought, was the French Revolution, and he regretted that it had not done its work more thoroughly. He could not enjoy the great art of Florence when he recalled the sycophantic attitude of the artists toward the Medicis. Not only in *Innocents Abroad* but in other works as well (*A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court, Life on the Mississippi, Huckleberry Finn*) he lashed out against feudalism and its survivals wherever he found them, whether in Europe or in Walter Scott's novels or in the ante-bellum South. It was primarily Mark Twain's love of freedom and his sense of the dignity of the common man which blinded him to the glories of Europe.

Two great contemporaries of Mark Twain were not so blinded: Henry James spent most of his life in England because he felt that "it takes an old civilization to set a novelist in motion"; Henry Adams, the historian, was drawn to medieval France as an example of "unity," against which he set the "multiplicity" of the modern world.

Though James admired the "items of high civilization" which he professed to find in Europe and failed to find in America, he wrote in large part about Americans—Americans in Europe. In novel after novel (*The American, The Portrait of a Lady, The Ambassadors, The Golden Bowl*) he shows us Americans, admirable though unsophisticated, in the process of exposure to European influences. These influences make for social and aesthetic enrichment; they are, at the same time, often questionable morally. James' innocent Americans —Christopher Newman, Isabel Archer, Lambert Strether, Maggie Verver, in, respectively, the four novels just named—are shocked by the evil which they discover in Europe. But they do not succumb to the evil; indeed, they are triumphant over it. Lesser Americans in James' stories may be corrupted by Europe or may remain impervious to its culture, but his American heroes and heroines, though not always happy or successful, emerge from their European experiences culturally enriched and strong of soul. Perhaps James meant to suggest that the ideal civilization would combine the freshness and moral strength of America with the rich culture of the Old World.

Henry Adams was not interested in the richness of contemporary Europe so much as in the richness of its medieval past. In his attempt to establish historical lines of force—his "dynamic theory of history"—by which he might explain the modern world and perhaps predict its future course, Adams centered his interest in twelfth-century France and in the Cathedral of Chartres as the epitome of that time and place. In Chartres he found the perfect symbol of unity. In that distant age, the Virgin, in whose worship Chartres was built, exerted a dominat-

ing influence over men of all degrees. She was the greatest force of the age—energizing, controlling, comforting, beatifying.

If the Virgin was the symbol of medieval unity, the dynamo, Adams thought, was the symbol of modern multiplicity. The Virgin was a unifying spiritual force; the dynamo was obviously a force, but neither spiritual nor unifying. As religion decayed, enormous, incalculable forces unleashed by science—steam power, electricity, radioactivity—threatened to destroy mankind. It was a serious question, Adams thought in the *Education,* whether there was enough intelligence and moral character in the world to control these new forces and use them for man's welfare. The release of atomic energy makes the question an even more serious one today. *The Education of Henry Adams* (p. 1053) is perhaps the best statement in our literature of the background of our present problems.

In *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1904) Adams, the disillusioned intellectual, surrendered to the spell of Chartres and the Virgin:

> One sees her personal presence on every side. Anyone can feel it who will only consent to feel like a child. Sitting here any Sunday afternoon, while the voices of the children are chanting in the choir—your mind held in the grasp of the strong lines and shadows of the architecture; your eyes flooded with the autumn tones of the glass; your ears drowned with the purity of the voices; one sense reacting upon another until sensation reaches the limit of its range—you, or any other lost soul, could, if you cared to look and listen, feel a sense beyond the human ready to reveal a sense divine that would make that world once more intelligible, and would bring the Virgin to life again, in all the depths of feeling which she shows here—in lines, vaults, chapels, colours, legends, chants—more eloquent than the prayerbook, more beautiful than the autumn sunlight.

Europe to Adams was a bright example of something eminently valuable—possibly essential to man's prosperity and happiness—which the modern world has lost.

Europe retained a good deal of prestige throughout the nineteenth century and after, despite *Innocents Abroad* and the frontier school; but European prestige lost ground steadily as the twentieth century advanced, despite a growing disposition of Americans to be critical of frontier values.

SCIENCE and RELIGION

The march of science in the nineteenth century profoundly affected religious thought. Geology established the antiquity of the earth, thus discrediting the chronology of Genesis. Evolution, as set forth in Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859, saw man as the result of a slow development from simpler forms of animal life, thus challenging the Christian belief in his special creation. Astronomical science seemed to point to an infinite universe, in the face of which man appeared insignificant. Before the end of the period 1865-1914, sociological, biological, and psychological investigations still further reduced man's importance and autonomy. William Graham Sumner argued that human behavior was largely determined by "folkways," the mores of one's environment. Biology emphasized the determining influence of physical inheritance, of glandular secretions; psychology, the determining influence of automatic responses to stimuli. So effective was the combined onslaught of the sciences that by the end of the period, man appeared to be—from the scientific point of view—little more than an ingenious mechanism. Modern science seemed to leave no room for the soul, or God, or the transcendental perception of truth—for those religious beliefs, in short, which had motivated most Americans for nearly three centuries and which had found eloquent expression in the writings of Edwards, Emerson, and Whitman. The inspired view of the psalmist—"What is man that thou are mindful of him? . . . For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor"—became little short of absurd to the scientific mind. All phenomena, we were to suppose, were naturalistic phenomena, and were explicable on purely naturalistic, as opposed to spiritual or transcendental, grounds.

Early Resistance to Science

The scientific movement did not capture our literature immediately, and, as one might expect, the poets offered a sturdier resistance than other writers. Although Whit-

man accepted the evolutionary idea, it was the Emersonian (which was in turn the Lamarckian) concept, rather than the concept of Darwin, which emphasized the struggle for survival. For Whitman, as for Emerson, the evolutionary idea exalted man by enlarging his future possibilities:

> My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs,
> On every step bunches of ages, and larger bunches between the steps,
> All below duly travel'd, and still I mount and mount.

As the scientific movement advanced in the post-Civil War years, Whitman became not less but more Transcendental. His Transcendentalism reached its highest points in the late poems, "Passage to India" (p. 715):

> O my brave soul!
> O farther farther sail!

and the "Prayer of Columbus" (1876):

> Shadowy vast shapes smile through the air and sky,
> And on the distant waves sail countless ships,
> And anthems in new tongues I hear saluting me.

Lanier was a spiritually minded person who had no intention of surrendering his Christian faith to the new science. But partly as a natural reaction against his strict Calvinistic upbringing in Macon, partly through the influence of his professor of science, James Woodrow, at Oglethorpe, and partly because of the liberal atmosphere at Johns Hopkins, he welcomed science with an open mind. His copy of Darwin, we are told, was copiously annotated. He made a special study of the physics of sound in connection with his investigation of prosody in *The Science of English Verse.* Science, then, was an unmixed good. An intelligent man, he thought, must be, above all else, "catholic" ("The Marshes of Glynn," p. 1019): he must eschew the narrowness of creed and cultivate breadth. The ideal soul is characterized by its "loves," its points of receptivity, and excludes neither science nor any other good thing ("My Springs"):

> And home-loves and high glory-loves,
> And science-love and story-loves.

He was aware (in "The Mocking Bird") that science might have its limitations:

> Sweet Science, this large riddle read me plain:
> How may the death of that dull insect be
> The life of yon trim Shakspere in the tree?

He admitted (in "Acknowledgement") that possibly his age was dazzled by the new science: "blinking at o'er bright science." These, however, were small reservations in Lanier's mind; no writer of the period was more hospitable to science. Lanier's eager search for truth was thoroughly admirable. But one cannot avoid a suspicion of indiscrimination and naïveté. Lanier did not recognize the contradictions involved; like more able thinkers than himself in the 1870's, he advocated the reconciliation of religion and science. Unlike some other reconcilers, he was apparently unaware that such a reconciliation would entail a diminution of Christian doctrine.

The breadth which Lanier extolled and exemplified seemed vicious to the greatest of the New England poets of the time, Emily Dickinson (p. 1021). In liberalism, she thought, lurked an insidious and fatal danger to religion. Religion was being watered down to the point of insipidity. Her satire of the liberal clergyman—and she must have had in mind the popular advocates of reconciliation between the old religion and the new science—is a telling indictment: "He preached upon 'breadth' till it argued him narrow. . . ." Miss Dickinson was scarcely touched by the scientific movement. Her religion was the older Puritanism, modified somewhat by Emersonian Transcendentalism. For her, the things of religion still lay beyond the realm of scientific demonstration; they were still the objects of faith:

> I never spoke with God,
> Nor visited in heaven;
> Yet certain am I of the spot
> As if the chart were given.

If religious faith transcends the world of science, so does

the individual life, on occasion, transcend the mechanisms with which science strives to hem it in:

> We never know how high we are
> Till we are called to rise;
> And then, if we are true to plan,
> Our statures touch the skies.

The "plan" Miss Dickinson refers to is not the scientist's, but God's.

The Spread of Mechanistic Philosophy

Lanier died in 1881; Emily Dickinson, in 1886; Whitman, in 1892; and with them died in American literature a religious faith untroubled by science. By the end of the century, our poets and prose writers were feeling the full impact of the scientific movement.

Stephen Crane (p. 960) inferred from the biological struggle for survival and the astronomical immensity of the universe that man is unimportant.

> A man said to the universe
> "Sir, I exist!"
> "However," replied the universe,
> "The fact has not created in me
> A sense of obligation."

"A high cold star on a winter's night" ("The Open Boat," p. 961) is the symbol of the indifference of Nature and Nature's God. It seemed ironical to Crane, who found intense irony everywhere in human experience, that the discoverer of the universe should be dwarfed by his discovery, that the chief spiritual result of man's scientific achievements should be the conviction of his own insignificance.

Mark Twain, late in life, became a convert to the mechanistic philosophy. Partly through the influence of the new agnosticism as expounded by Robert G. Ingersoll and others, and partly, perhaps, in the attempt to stifle the deep-seated feeling that his literary performance had not been in keeping with his creative powers, he declared and attempted to prove that "man is a machine." In *What Is Man?* (1906) he summarized his argument as follows:

> To me, Man is a machine, made up of many mechanisms, the moral and mental ones acting automatically in accordance with the impulses of an interior Master who is built out of born-temperament and an accumulation of multitudinous outside influences and trainings; a machine whose one function is to secure the spiritual contentment of the Master, be his desires good or be they evil; a machine whose will is absolute and must be obeyed; and always *is* obeyed.

What Is Man? was a strange and contradictory book to come from the author of *Huckleberry Finn.* Was that wonderful Western freedom—that of Tom and Huck and the steamboat pilot, the American freedom which showed no "embarrassment even in the presence of travelling foreign princes" and which Europe had almost perished for the lack of—was that freedom, scientifically considered, only an illusion? To believe so was to deny the thesis of his great books. It is small wonder that Mark Twain's last years were embittered.

If to Henry Adams man himself was something more than a machine, man at least seemed to be impelled along lines of force. "Modern politics," he said in the *Education,* "is a struggle not of men but of forces. The men become every year more and more creatures of force, massed about central power-houses." He began to "see lines of force all about him, where he had always seen lines of will," and thus "before knowing it," he confessed, "the mind stepped into the mechanical theory of the universe." The future which Adams envisioned for the race was not too hopeful. There was a fair possibility of man's being engulfed in the new forces: "In the earlier stages of progress, the forces to be assimilated were simple and easy to absorb, but, as the mind of man enlarged its range, it enlarged the field of complexity, and must continue to do so, even into chaos, until the reservoirs of sensuous or supersensuous energies are exhausted, or cease to affect him, or until he succumbs to their excess."

Like Adams, Theodore Dreiser believed that men were creatures of force. With the turn of the century, the mechanistic philosophy began to appear in the naturalistic novel, which soon became its chief literary vehicle. Many naturalistic novelists felt a profound sympathy with the unfortunate members of modern society, who appeared to be the helpless and blameless victims of forces beyond their control. The mechanistic philosophy

afforded a means of complete exoneration: if a person was dominated by chemical forces from within and social forces from without, he was not morally responsible for his acts or culpable for his misdeeds. In accordance with this view Dreiser wrote his great naturalistic novels: *Sister Carrie, Jennie Gerhardt, The Financier, The Titan,* and *An American Tragedy.* "All of us," declared Lester Kane in *Jennie Gerhardt,* "are more or less pawns. We're moved about like chessmen by circumstances over which we have no control." The world seemed utterly without purpose to Dreiser:

> In distant ages a queer thing had come to pass. There had started on its way in the form of evolution a minute cellular organism which had apparently reproduced itself by division, had early learned to combine itself with others, to organize itself into bodies, strange forms of fish, animals and birds, and had finally learned to organize itself into man. Man, on his part, composed as he was of self-organizing cells, was pushing himself forward into comfort and different aspects of existence by means of union and organization with other men. Why? Heaven only knew.

The obvious tendency through Crane, Mark Twain, Adams, and Dreiser was a growing pessimism.

Mechanistic materialism, so prominent in the literature of the 1900's, was not unchallenged after its apparent triumph. Josiah Royce expounded at Harvard an idealism reminiscent of Emerson's. William James, another Harvard professor, brother of the novelist and America's first great authority in the new science of psychology, emphasized in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) the energizing power of religious faith. This power could hardly be accounted for, he thought, in terms of a mechanistic universe. The creative individual need not succumb to Adams' lines of force or Dreiser's weight of circumstance. James set up the pragmatic test of truth: "The ultimate test for us of what a truth means is the conduct it dictates or inspires." And, finally, Herrick among the novelists and Moody among the poets in the first decade of the century presented the religious view. But despite these dissenting voices, it appeared likely that the determinism of mechanistic science would continue to gain in popular and literary acceptance.

THE NEW IMPERIALISM

Throughout the nineteenth century, expansionist doctrines had been urged sporadically. Certain prominent Americans had advocated in the name of "manifest destiny" the desirability of annexing the entire North American continent. Out of this agitation had come the war with Mexico and the acquisition of large territories in the Southwest in 1845-1853 and the purchase of Alaska in 1867. But this expansion could hardly be called flagrantly imperialistic since, Alaska excepted, the new territory seemed necessary to round out our natural boundaries.

The Cuban Revolution of 1895 afforded a plausible excuse for American intervention, and the quick victory over Spain in 1898 stimulated imperialistic sentiments. The spectacular and exciting events of the war—Dewey's victory in Manila Bay, the crushing defeat of Cevera's squadron as it attempted to escape from Santiago, the charge of Roosevelt's Rough Riders up San Juan Hill —evoked a dubious mixture of patriotism and jingoism. After the defeat of Spain, the Filipinos resisted our rule and General Miles' army put down the insurrection. Many thoughtful Americans were alarmed at the new imperialistic policy upon which our nation seemed to be embarking. The crisis called forth protests from persons as various as William Jennings Bryan, Jane Addams, Charles W. Eliot, Finley Peter Dunne, and William Vaughn Moody.

Through the inimitable "Observations of Mr. Dooley," Dunne (p. 1046) satirized the whole imperialistic policy:

> "An there ye ar-re, Hinnissy. I hope this here lucid story will quite the waggin tongues iv scandal an' that people will let th' Ph'lippeens stew in their own happiness."
>
> "But sure they might do something f'r thim," said Mr. Hennessy.
>
> "They will," said Mr. Dooley. "They'll give thim a measure iv freedom."
>
> "But whin?"
>
> "Whin they'll stand still long enough to be measured . . . ."

Moody lashed out against the conquest of the Philip-

pines in one of the most impassioned poems of our literature, "An Ode in Time of Hesitation" (p. 1032):

> Are we the eagle nation Milton saw
> Mewing its mighty youth,
> Soon to possess the mountain winds of truth,
> And be a swift familiar of the sun . . .
> Or have we but the talons and the maw,
> And for the abject likeness of our heart
> Shall some less lordly bird be set apart?—
> Some gross-billed wader where the swamps are fat?
> Some gorger in the sun? Some prowler with the bat?

But neither the humor of Dunne nor the Miltonic fervor of Moody could stem the tide—we took the Philippines. The immediate outcome notwithstanding, the protests need not be regarded as futile: they may very well have had the effect of making our rulers more careful, for our record in administering the Islands proved to be creditable.

Secretary of State Hay made partial amends to the anti-imperialists by his Chinese policy, and Moody's tone changed from condemnation in the "Ode" to pride in "The Quarry." Having declared the policy of the "Open Door," Hay backed it up by thwarting the obvious intention of the European powers to use the Boxer Rebellion as a favorable opportunity for the dismemberment of China. The American eagle—no longer a "gross-billed wader"—now appeared in a heroic rôle. When China—backward, helpless, unaware (the description of China in the poem is extraordinarily fine)—was about to be pounced upon by the "brutes of prey," the "grand circler," uttering a cry of warning, drove them away:

> . . . stiller-tongued, with eyes somewhat askance,
> They settled to the slot and disappeared.

A distinguished historian has recently declared that " 'The Quarry' is worth all of the literature of imperialism together."

The United States emerged from the war with Spain a world power. National pride centered to an unprecedented degree (except possibly during the War of 1812) in the Navy. Alfred T. Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power upon History,* whose doctrine was espoused by Theodore Roosevelt, helped to make us navy-minded; the victories over Spain raised naval patriotism to a high pitch; Theodore Roosevelt dramatized the rôle of the "big stick" by sending the fleet around the world in 1907. But the great majority of Americans were not imperialists at heart. By 1910 pacifism seemed to be gathering strength: Bryan, thrice Democratic candidate for the Presidency, advocated disarmament; David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford, argued that war was the reversal of evolution—the survival of the unfit; William James attempted to discover "a moral equivalent of war." Not deeply affected by the flare-up of 1898-1900, the national temperament preferred peace with isolation. As the period neared its close, little did Americans dream that events in Europe would soon draw them, whether willing or not, into a vigorous participation in world affairs.

R. S.

II. Literary Trends

"The eight years in America from 1860 to 1868," wrote Charles Dudley Warner and his collaborator, Mark Twain, in *The Gilded Age* (1873), "uprooted institutions that were centuries old, changed the politics of a people, transformed the social life of half the country, and wrought so profoundly upon the entire national character that the influence cannot be measured short of two or three generations." Although many writers continued to follow older patterns, these changes in American life brought changes in at least some forms of the literature. Some changes adapted forms to the tastes of the growing middle-class reading public. Others helped in the expression of the nostalgia, the puzzlement, or the distress of people living in a transitional period.

Authors continued to write old-fashioned essays, but this form began to date as it was crowded from magazines by journalistic articles. By the end of the period, muckraking reports by Lincoln Steffens and others had become much more typical. A great deal of poetry—some of it weak and imitative, some redeemed by individual qualities of its creators—was poured into prewar molds. But the period saw the rise to prominence of much popular

written by more literate poets who consciously tried to please the growing group of readers who enjoyed poetry in dialect. Preëminently, though, this was an age of fiction, and fiction changed more than any other type of literature.

OLDER PATTERNS of POETRY

Much poetry—"literary" poetry as contrasted with folk songs and folk poetry—showed remarkably few effects of the changing intellectual climate. Poetry in general somehow lost its vitality for many intelligent readers; it awaited a rebirth, portents of which began to appear in the final years of the period. This was partly because many poets—Bryant, Longfellow, Holmes, Lowell, Emerson, and Whittier—whose careers had begun in an earlier period, continued to satisfy and to determine tastes after the war. It was partly because these established artisans and their British contemporaries were imitated in innocuous, genteel poems by hosts of inferior poets—Richard Henry Stoddard (1825-1903), Bayard Taylor (1825-1878), Edmund Clarence Stedman (1833-1903), Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1836-1907), and Richard Watson Gilder (1849-1909), to name but a few. Even on a higher level, Moody, who had important things to say and who said them with real eloquence, was well satisfied with established verse forms. Crane was a minor, though arresting, exception in his use of free verse. With the exception of Whitman, who was generally ignored, even the leading poets of the period—Sidney Lanier and Emily Dickinson—usually shaped their poetry to conform with accepted schemes. Each, however, sang with a noteworthy difference.

Sidney Lanier: Musician and Poet

Sidney Lanier, in his conception of poetry, was much closer to prewar New England poets than he was to Walt Whitman. "Whitman," he charged, "is poetry's butcher. Huge raw collops slashed from the rump of poetry, and never mind gristle—is what Whitman feeds our souls with." In his lectures on *The English Novel* Lanier devoted a good deal of time, a bit irrelevantly, to attacks upon Whitman's heresies. And when Lanier himself wrote free verse, as he frequently did, he did not think of publishing it. Instead, he conceived of himself as writing not poems artistic clothing before they were fit to appear in public. Whitman, he held, had been at his best when writing "O Captain, My Captain" because in it he had "abandoned his theory of formlessness and written in form." Like the Brahmins, Lanier saw the poet achieving greatness when he used his supreme artistry to fuse beauty and truth. "Art, to be free," he wrote, "is not to be independent of form but to be master of many forms."

Lanier's departures from conventional versification came, therefore, less because he disagreed with the older poets than because he had individual tastes and talents. Because, even better than Emerson, he knew and loved the Elizabethans, he tended to use many images and conceits which were Elizabethan in their daring. Because he was a musician and a lover of the forms of music, in several poems, notably "The Symphony," he employed organizations analogous to those of musical compositions. And also because he was a musician, he tended, as he showed in his *Science of English Verse,* to think of poetic rhythms as essentially the same as musical rhythms. The result of this belief was that, though he kept within the limits which he had defined, he was a master of more complex modulations of meter, of more artful handlings of vowels and consonants for melody, than any of his predecessors, save Poe, had been.

Emily Dickinson: Meaning in Miniatures

Emily Dickinson, despite the fact that only a few of her poems were published before 1890, actually was almost contemporaneous, as a writer, with her idol, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882): she began to write poetry, it appears, in the mid-fifties and continued until her death in 1866. She was probably as innocent of theories about technique as any poet could possibly be, as her test for poetry shows—"If I read a book and it makes my body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry." In all probability when such an impressionistic critic conceived of what she was doing, she did not self-consciously consider herself a rebel against established forms. Like Lanier, therefore, when she diverged from conventional procedures, she did so less because she had new theories than because, even for a poet, she was an unusual personality.

One belief of Emerson which his admirer in Amherst did share and enunciate was that a task for the poet was, as Emerson put it, to "embrace the common, . . . explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low." "Give me," said Emerson, "insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds." Miss Dickinson saw the poet as one who distills attars "from the familiar species that perished by the door." So in stanzas ordinarily like those of Emerson and, incidentally, like those of church hymns, she tried to tell (again as Emerson phrased it) the "meaning" of "the meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; . . . the glance of the eye . . . every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law. . . ."

The common, for her, included a household group of men, women, and children; New England nature in the small range of nearby fields, and the rooms of a house as they were known to a housekeeper. She saw these with eyes focused to minute details—with intimate knowledge comparable to a nun's knowledge of each stone and lichen in her narrow cell. And when she announced what the details in her world of miniatures meant, the revelations were very personal ones—the discoveries of a mind which was both serious and playful, both mystical and whimsical. Novel imagery was the result, much of it predicted by nothing else in literature so well as by the poem "Huswifery" by seventeenth-century Edward Taylor, which had told of faith by employing conceits derived from household tasks.

"I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose" (p. 1029) is in some ways typical. Like a large share of poems by this introspective recluse, it begins with the first personal pronoun, and goes on to record highly individual insights into a common experience. In the second line she playfully interprets the sunrise in terms of feminine fineries—"A ribbon at a time"—a conceit paralleled, in the next stanza, by the image of ladylike hills "untying their bonnets." A comparison of the light with darting squirrels, two details of the commonplace scene—steeples "swimming" in "amethyst" and bobolinks bursting into song—then the soft soliloquy of the watcher, give the effect of the dawn. The end of the day is impressionistically represented, in the next two stanzas, by figures which involve children climbing a stile and a "dominie" putting up pasture bars and leading away his flock. All the details come from ordinary observations, and their very commonplaceness gives the interpretation a unique appeal.

Though this poem is less intense in thought and feeling than many by Miss Dickinson, its imagery is fairly representative. As Henry W. Wells remarks in *The American Way of Poetry,* "Children playing in the garret or asleep in their beds at dawn, New England customs at Thanksgiving, apples snug in the cellar through the winter, the loud ticking of the clock at night, signs on chimneys and doors, needle and thread, the little girl shut in the closet and told to be still—such images take on the most piquant and unexpected emotional meanings. . . . Her microscope requires only one clover and one bee to make a prairie; one flake of snow debating whether it will cross a rut suffices her to create at once a mood and a winter's day." The fusion of such homespun imagery with the thoughts and whimsies of a poet made Emily Dickinson's work a new thing.

Folk Songs and Folk Poetry

One of the glories of the period 1865-1914 was the discovery, by many, of one aspect in particular of our rich native folklore—the folk songs. The scholars active before and after 1914 did not, to be sure, create the songs. The ballads had been made by humble, uneducated folk, and the scholars merely collected them and made them known. Even before the war there had been some interest in such lore, indicated by sporadic studies. Notably, young Francis James Child (1825-1896), newly appointed to the Harvard faculty, had been inspired, by study in Germany in the 1840's, to carry on research in British balladry. His lifelong work, climaxed by his five-volume collection, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882-1898), made such work "respectable" and aroused the interest of many scholars in the subject. Postwar interest in sectional life and in national history stimulated new enthusiasm for research. By the end of the period, therefore, knowledge about folk songs had increased tremendously.

During the war and the years after it, the songs which had been chanted by soldiers were collected in such volumes as *Songs of Soldiers* (1864), *Poetry of the Civil War* (1866), and *Southern Poems of the War* (1867). At least some of the verses drawn together in such volumes were of folk origin. Concurrently, several writers

began to introduce the public to Negro spirituals in magazine articles such as "Negro Spirituals" (*Atlantic Monthly,* 1867) and in books such as *Slave Songs of the United States* (1867), *Jubilee Songs* (1872), and *Cabin and Plantation Songs* (1875). The last two volumes contained versions of folk songs as sung by the students of two newly founded institutions, Fisk and Hampton.

In the following decades, more songs of the people came slowly to light. In 1880, for example, when Joel Chandler Harris issued his first collection of Uncle Remus stories, themselves valuable as folklore, he included a number of plantation songs as he heard them sung in Georgia. In 1883 a fine study, *Games and Songs of American Children,* was published by W. W. Newell. The American Folk-Lore Society began in 1888 the regular publication of its *Journal,* which from time to time published, along with other lore, folk songs as they were sung by the Negroes, the folk of New England, or the Southern mountaineers. Other learned journals printed occasional articles. Stedman and Hutchinson included several sections of folk songs in their anthology, *A Library of American Literature* (1887-1890). In 1894, Alfred M. Williams included in his *Studies in Folk-Song and Popular Poetry* not only the ballads of other nations but also Civil War songs and American sea-chanteys. In 1908 a new vein was opened when N. Howard Thorp, Southwestern cowhand and himself a maker of ballads, published a little pamphlet, *Songs of the Cowboys,* a collection in which he stated, whenever possible, exactly where, when, and from whom he had picked up each. Two years later John Lomax, who had learned at Harvard to prize the ballads he had heard as a boy and a youth in Texas, published a better-known collection, *Cowboy Songs and Frontier Ballads.*

During the year between these two collections, a folk song very different from cowboy ballads swept the country, carried from coast to coast by vaudeville singers and gramophone records. This was "Casey Jones" (p. 763), a railroad song which had been composed years before by some anonymous lyricist to celebrate "a brave engineer," and which was published, in a somewhat refined version, by T. L. Siebert and E. Newton. During 1909, too, a writer in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore,* Louise Rand Bascom, published the opening lines of another railroad song, as heard in North Carolina: "Johnie Henry was a hard-workin' man,/He died with his hammer in his hand." These, she said, were all the words of the song she had heard. A few years later (1913) in "Songs and Rhymes from the South," an article in the same publication, E. C. Perrow printed fragments or complete versions of songs about this same John Henry which he had collected in east Tennessee, Indiana, Mississippi, and Kentucky. All these, as well as others to be recorded later, were apparently based upon the exploits of a giant Negro who had driven steel for the Chesapeake and Ohio Big Bend Tunnel in West Virginia in the early 1870's.

This record of a few milestones tells only the beginnings of the American study of folk songs which, in the modern period, was to engage the attention of both careful scholars and lovers of poetry and music. Two rather different reasons for the awakened interest in such lore may be suggested. The study of folklore, thanks largely to the efforts of Child and his students, had become both respectable and scientific, and collectors had been initiated into the mysteries of study. For another thing, in those days when life was beginning to show its present pace and complexity, there was an attraction in the arts and cultures of the primitive, unlearned folk who sang such songs. Their traditional creations, at least, were not marred by the harassing problems of a transitional period.

The makers of the songs, naturally, plied their art for reasons which had nothing to do with either the science of ballad collecting or the distress of city folk during a time of change. Their songs came directly from their own experiences, their way of living, their feelings. To express what they had to say, they fitted poetic words of the only kind they knew to music of the only sort with which they were familiar. Thus the Negroes amalgamated the old-time hymns which whites had taught them with African rhythms which had been passed along to them by their enslaved forebears; and the isolated whites of the mountains or the prairies fashioned their compositions after the example of current songs or of ballads which had been brought to America from England or Scotland by early settlers.

These folk songs probably had few appeals to a sizable group which thought that poetry had to be elegant, genteel, and ornamental. Appreciation of balladry was

from one another. One audience, like the makers of the songs, was, in some ways, naïve—shy on book knowledge, although probably learned in the emotions and behavior of real men and women. Such an audience appreciated the songs much as had their original audiences. The other audience was highly sophisticated—one which could perceive the historical value of balladry as a cultural expression, and one which could appreciate simplicity of style, suggestiveness of detail, and music which, though it differed from the music currently fashionable, had a beauty of its own.

Some poets who were not folk poets took hints about writing from the ballad makers and wrote what might be called not folk songs but "folk poetry." Some of these—Whittier, for instance—used ballad verse or metrical forms resembling it, and employed language with ballad-like simplicity. Others, in various parts of the country, wrote dialect verse.

In the South a number of poets continued the tradition which had been started before the war by Stephen Collins Foster, and wrote poetry echoing Negro melodies and employing Negro dialect. Irwin Russell (1853-1879) of Mississippi, in his *Christmas Night in the Quarters* (1878), produced a masterpiece of this genre, a sympathetic mingling of the Negroes' religion and humor in authentic dialect. Hayne and Lanier, as well as other less famous Southerners, also wrote poetry using Negro dialect. During the period, too, Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) in *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896) showed himself to be, as Howells held, the first writer of pure African descent "to feel the Negro life aesthetically and to express it lyrically."

The most popular dialect poetry, however, was written in the Far West and the Middle West. Outstanding were John Hay (1838-1905), author of *Pike County Ballads;* Bret Harte, whose most famous poem in this style was the popular "Plain Language from Truthful James" (p. 816), and James Whitcomb Riley (1849-1916), whose first book was *The Old Swimmin' Hole and 'Leven More Poems* (1883). At their best, such poems caught some of the flavor of rural life and some of the tang of American speech; they had wholesome humor and sentiment. At their worst, they were maudlin in their sentimental nostalgia for the "olden times." At both their reflections of the tastes and the expressions of the feelings of the period. The extraordinary success of such writings showed that a large class of readers had come into being who were happy to buy the writings of even "humbler poets" than those Longfellow had praised—poets whose "simple and heartfelt lays" were, indeed, extraordinarily simple.

HUMOR

The period 1865-1914 is noteworthy as one during which humor perceptibly contributed to the development of fiction and merged with that type of literature. Thus our most admired humorist to date, Mark Twain, whose works were written in this period, was praised not only for making people laugh but also for writing great fiction. His mingling, in some of his work, of the techniques of comedy with the techniques of the short story and the novel was typical: many authors found the procedures of some of the humorists useful in creating postwar fiction. Some humor, by contrast, moved further and further from fiction, in the end becoming almost divorced from it.

In the years before the Civil War, magazines and newspapers—"exchanges"—came from all over the country to the office of the little Hannibal, Missouri, newspaper run by Mark's brother, Orion Clemens. Young Samuel Clemens, in the days when he was learning the printer's trade, read humorous writings in these publications and set some of them up in type. Some of the humor was that of New England—sketches and stories of Yankee characters like Jack Downing. More often it was the fine brand of humor then being produced in the part of the country with which he was familiar, the old Southwest—Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Missouri.

Southwestern Yarnspinners

One important thing about much of this Southwestern humor was its relationship to a favorite frontier pastime, yarnspinning. Traveling across country, moving down river, resting at night by campfires, household firesides, or by glowing stoves, the people of the section (like rural folk elsewhere in the country) found that good stories helped pass time pleasantly. Able storytellers were greatly admired, and political figures like Davy Crockett and

Abe Lincoln who were masters of the art could win votes by spinning yarns for their constituents. So the art of oral narration flourished on the frontier.

The stories ranged all the way from wild fantasy to fairly straightforward accounts of everyday happenings. Some fireside yarns were playful lies comparable to their modern survivors, "fish stories" or Walt Disney animated cartoons. Their tellers, like Ovid Bolus, described in Baldwin's *The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi,* "lied with a relish . . . lied with a coming appetite, growing with what it fed on . . . lied from the delight of invention and the charm of fictitious narrative." They lied about the astonishing fertility of the soil, about encounters with huge beasts, as did Jim Doggett in "The Big Bear of Arkansas" (p. 781). Almost as often, in some parts of the country, they imaginatively exaggerated the poverty of the soil, telling of land so poor that birds flying across it had to carry rations, so poor that if a buyer couldn't read he was likely to learn to his sorrow that the seller had got rid of two sections instead of the one contracted for.

Such lies about land, climate, and beasts were inventive and fantastic, and so were those about certain mythical heroes—gigantic comic demigods capable, so the stories asserted, of superhuman deeds. Among these were Mike Fink, keelboat King on Western rivers; Davy Crockett, hunter, congressman, and warrior; John Henry, the Negro steeldriver; Pecos Bill, the rootin-tootin Texas cowboy; Paul Bunyan, mighty logger of the whole north country from Maine to Washington. Some of the tall tales which gifted truth-stretchers recounted about a few of these worthies began to get into print as early as the 1820's. Mike Fink, for instance, was introduced in a short story in the *Western Souvenir* in 1828, and between that date and 1914 stories about him were told in a hundred varied publications—books, magazines, almanacs, and newspapers. Davy Crockett, who became prominent about the same time, was yarned about in even more publications. As the period ended, Paul Bunyan stories began to appear, and after 1914 all three heroes were to be celebrated by a number of authors.

The printed yarns about these men and others of their ilk were definitely influenced by the forms of the oral tales. Many details were products of the soaring frontier imagination; some of them were indeed fantastic (see the almanac stories of Davy Crockett, p. 773). But the incongruity which made the tales comic was the incongruity between the actual and the impossible. Thus though whole sequences of events were completely impossible, happening was made to arise from happening in an elaborately logical fashion. An earthy dialect style rather than the majestic language of inspired poetry matter-of-factly recounted astonishing feats. Details painstakingly rendered—highly authentic details—gave added verisimilitude. Sometimes, even touches which were quite vulgar heightened contrasts between the earthy and the unearthly. A few lines after Jim Doggett had poetically evoked a giant bear of Arkansas which "loomed like a black mist," Jim was shamefacedly telling about losing his pants. And frequently, though the tale was impossible by any sane standards, the character of the teller, and his motives for inventing his lie, were most plausibly rendered. The playfulness of tall tales was underlined, in short, by the constant reminders of actuality.

Even more of actuality entered into stories of another sort told by Western firesides and eventually translated into print—comic tales about more commonplace frontier characters and happenings. Several reasons for authenticity in such narratives may be cited. There was a desire on the part of some sophisticated storytellers and writers to show that they, like eighteenth-century British humorists, could detachedly perceive and appreciate "originals" and "eccentrics." Again, there was a wish, on the part of many, to write history—as A. B. Longstreet put it, in his pioneer book, *Georgia Scenes,* ". . . to supply a chasm in history which has always been overlooked—the manners, customs, amusements, wit, dialect, as they appear in all grades of society to an eye and ear witness. . . ." Finally, of course, there was a desire to entertain one's fellows. Lawyers, for instance, riding the circuits, said Samuel A. Hammett, in 1853, "living as they do in the thinly inhabited portion of our land, and among a class of persons generally their inferiors in point of education . . . are apt to seek for amusement in listening to the droll stories and odd things always to be heard at the country store or bar-room."

Whatever their motivation, authors who wrote such tales managed among them to record in extraordinary detail many aspects of frontier life. Franklin J. Meine, in his excellent anthology, *Tall Tales of the Southwest,*

lists a group of subjects that is strikingly inclusive—local customs, games, courtships, weddings, law circuits, political life, hunting, travel, medicine, gambling, religion, fights, and oddities in character. As Bernard De Voto claims, in *Mark Twain's America,* "No aspect of the life in the simpler America is missing from this literature." The details about backgrounds, costumes, mores, and dialect are plentiful and vivid. Regardless of their crudities and exaggerations, such authors as Crockett, Thorpe, Thompson, and G. W. Harris represent the first American achievement of what later was called "realism."

Although some humorists, for instance Finley Peter Dunne, continued the older style, humor in general after the Civil War followed two channels. That which was generally classified as "humor" lost much of its prewar localized quality—tended in fact to become divorced from fiction. Professional humorists such as Josh Billings (p. 791) and Artemus Ward (p. 788) managed to appeal to larger audiences than ante-bellum humorists had by replacing much of the humor of regional scene and individualized characters with humor which depended almost exclusively upon expression; and background, character, and plot became unimportant. Characters became generalized so that it was practically impossible for readers to tell where they lived (except somewhere on the North American continent) and whether they were good or bad, wise or foolish. The source of laughter, rather, was a style—ludicrously assembled sentences, words badly spelled, malapropisms, puns, and the like. This, then, was the first type of humor that developed after the war. The second type merged with a kind of fiction which flourished between about 1868 and 1900—local color.

LOCAL COLOR

In the decade following the end of the Civil War, Whittier and Harriet Beecher Stowe of New England, Bret Harte of the Far West, Edward Eggleston and Mark Twain of the Middle West, and George Washington Cable of the Deep South all won enthusiastic praise for their depictions of life and character in their particular corners of the country. This was the beginning of a great movement in fiction in the United States. In 1894, critic Edward E. Hale, Jr., could write, in *The Dial,* "Everybody writes 'local' stories nowadays; it is as natural as whooping cough." There was a slight exaggeration in this statement, but certainly at least a vast number of authors were so engaged. Joel Chandler Harris of Georgia, Sarah Orne Jewett of Maine, and O. Henry of Texas and New York City are only a few of scores who wrote local color fiction.

Directly or indirectly, much of this writing was influenced by the prewar humor of New England or the old Southwest. It seems probable that Edward Eggleston learned much of his art from such dialect humorists as Jack Downing, Hosea Biglow, and various Southwestern practitioners. Joel Chandler Harris, too, and O. Henry (p. 842) knew American humor well, and actually wrote a good deal of it themselves, before they began to write fiction. And it is noteworthy that Bret Harte, who was so successful that many fictionists paid him the tribute of imitation, definitely believed that the humorous story of "bar-rooms, gatherings in the 'country store,' and . . . public meetings" was "the parent of the American 'short story.' "

Naturally, it was not so simple as that. Many influences which had shaped our fiction in the past continued to shape it. The genial essays of Irving, sentimental novels, the writings of Scott, Cooper, Dickens, and others left their imprint. Yet the prewar humorous story was influential in ways which Harte suggested when he described it: "It was concise and condensed, yet suggestive . . . delightfully extravagant—or a miracle of understatement. It voiced not only the dialect, but the habits of thought of a people or locality. . . . It went directly to the point." Many details in this formula applied to representative local color stories.

So far as the local colorists, in their narratives, lived up to this description, they tended to be recorders of actuality. Several thought of themselves as merely reflectors of life. Typical was Mrs. Stowe's claim that in her New England local color fiction she tried to "make her mind as still and passive as a looking-glass, or a mountain lake," in order that she might reflect "New England life and character." "My studies for this object," she said, "have been . . . taken from real characters, real scenes, and real incidents." But perhaps because of the example set by romantic fictionists, perhaps, also, because of the nostalgia which most writers felt for the past, local colorists tended to write not of the scene of

the day but of a day that was ended. So Mrs. Stowe wrote of the New England of her childhood, Harte of the California of the Gold Rush, and others of happy antebellum plantations. The mists of time blurred the mirrors somewhat, and the local colorists as a rule avoided the sordid and the tragic in favor of geniality, sentiment, and pathos.

MARK TWAIN: HUMORIST and LOCAL COLORIST

Reared on the frontier and instructed in writing by prewar Yankee and Southwestern humorists, Mark Twain came into national prominence in the years when postwar professional humorists and local colorists were flourishing. In his varied writings the student of humor may see evidence of the influences of all these schools. But since Samuel L. Clemens happened to be a genius, he frequently managed to surpass his teachers.

Most of Twain's ephemeral works and passages are the creations of a "Funny Man" who was working rather too hard to get laughs. At their worst such creations were typified by the "Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass Letters," which he wrote in the late fifties, newspaper screeds soon forgotten and not reprinted until they were dug up by scholars as specimens of his youthful efforts. The style was like that of Artemus Ward and his cohorts of the postwar period—a style notable for cacography and for outlandish expressions. Later, Clemens, like other humorists of the school, refined this style somewhat—dropping bad spelling, for instance—in various sketches and in parts of his travel books. Often, in using the later style, he was quite funny. At its best, nevertheless, this type of humor never marked his highest reaches. And now and then—as in some later chapters of *Huckleberry Finn*—burlesque and buffoonery struck discordant notes.

The artistry of the frontier oral story, by contrast, was one of Twain's most important assets. Having lived in the frontier town of Hannibal, traveled around the whole country, and worked on river boats and in mining camps, he had, by 1865, heard as well as read a great number of humorous stories told by master storytellers. He knew, as he said in "How to Tell a Story," that ". . . the humorous story is strictly a work of art, high and delicate art—and only an artist can tell it." He knew important aspects of the technique: "The humorous story is told gravely; the teller does his best to conceal the fact that there is anything funny about it. . . ." Again, "To string incongruities and absurdities together in a wandering and sometimes purposeless way, and seem innocently unaware that they are absurdities, is basis of the American art. . . ." Finally, he knew how the introductory framework of an enclosed narrative, as well as the language and thoughts of the yarnspinner, might be made to reveal the narrator as an appealing or amusing character. When, therefore, Clemens heard the "Jumping Frog" story unfolded by a mining-camp fireside in 1865, he was able to write it out in a masterly form (p. 848). And when later, in "Baker's Blue-Jay Yarn" (p. 863) and elsewhere, he created tall tales in the style of "The Big Bear of Arkansas," his were even better than the antebellum masterpiece.

Twain's travel books and to some extent his novels were combinations of similar brief narratives with longer chronological accounts. As Mr. De Voto remarks, in *Mark Twain's America,* "He took the humorous anecdote, combined it with autobiographical reminiscence, and so achieved the narrative form best adapted to his mind. . . . *The Innocents Abroad* is structurally an autobiographical narrative. Descriptive passages . . . interrupt the narrative from time to time but its steady progress is accomplished by means of stories. Some of them are brief, unelaborated anecdotes, in no way different from the type out of which they proceed, but others already show Mark's perception that this form can be utilized for more intricate effects. . . . The same framework produces *Roughing It, A Tramp Abroad, Life on the Mississippi,* and *Following the Equator.*" Similarly in novels such as *The Gilded Age* and *Huckleberry Finn* Twain constructed mosaics made up of anecdotal units.

Just as anyone familiar with humor sees these resemblances, so anyone familiar with local color writing notes resemblances to writings of that type. The material for all of Twain's best narratives was his boyhood home, Hannibal, or the great river which rolled before it. More accurately, the stuff of his best works was not the actuality but his memory of the scenes and of the life he had known in childhood and youth. Memory, somehow, had blurred away most sordid and unlovely details, leaving an idyll to be set forth in nostalgic fiction. The localized details and the longing for times past were completely typical of local color fiction.

Two skills in particular give Twain's best fiction, long or short, much of its distinction: ability to characterize and ability to use words in a masterly fashion. Other humorists in America before Twain had managed, at best, to create only a few memorable characters. Twain dotted his pages with them with a prodigality comparable to that of Chaucer or Dickens. And he had such descriptive skill, such a knack for portraying actions, such an accurate ear for speech that he could make both characters who appeared for a few lines and characters whose stories occupied many pages come alive for readers. As a stylist, also, he was outstanding. He took great pains with style; it is remarkable that a large share of his remarks about literature touch knowingly upon this aspect of writing. Some of his reasons for praising a sentence which he quotes are illuminating: "For compactness, simplicity, and vigor of expression, I will 'back' that sentence against any in literature." He praises a letter from his daughter Susan for "clearness of statement, directness, felicity of expression, photographic ability in setting forth an incident—style—good style—no barnacles on it in the way of unnecessary, retarding words." He came close to living up to the ideal implied by these comments. He wrote very much as he talked, transferring to the printed page the natural rhythms of unpretentious speech, both when he set down his own thoughts and when he quoted the words of characters. His words were simple; almost always they were distinctly American; and he used them economically. Perhaps even more important, without any appearance of being "literary," he was able to find words which gave full scope to his exuberant, poetic imagination. It makes some sense, therefore, to claim, as some critics do, that Mark Twain was the first great stylist who wrote purely in the American language.

VARIED TYPES of REALISM

Comic tall tales, by juxtaposing the workaday world with the world of fantasy, made fun of imaginative excesses, and even the most extravagant American humor was in some ways anti-romantic. Since funny character sketches drew many details directly from actuality, some of the humor led the way toward fiction which was concerned with ordinary characters and scenes. Local color writing, which had a similar concern, also departed to some extent from the romantic fiction of the ante-bellum period. Scholars, therefore, see in both humorous writing and local color writing a trend toward "realism" which culminated, toward the end of the century, in numerous realistic and naturalistic fictional works.

The term "realism," like its counterpart "romanticism," is a vague term which has been variously defined. The group pursuing it in this period differed in theory and practice. They generally agreed, probably, that realistic fiction truly presented "actuality"—"real life"—and that it was concerned with the near, rather than the distant, in time and place. Most realists, therefore, believed that the probability of happenings in novels might properly be tested, not by rules set up by the inventor of an imaginative world but by what was likely in the actions of living men and women. Alice might properly dwindle to a minute size in Wonderland, but not in a realistic novel, since there the laws of physics and of biology as well as the stern limitations of heredity and environment were constantly operative. So far there was agreement; but disagreement naturally arose when authors tried to define "actuality." Where was the "real" to be found—in the world itself, in the inductively discovered scientific truths about the nature of the world, in the impression which the world made upon the observer's mind, or in a combination of these? The methods of authors depended upon their answer to this question and upon their ability to portray what they considered to be reality.

Clemens clearly indicated how he thought art should portray actuality when, in a newspaper letter of 1867, he thus criticized a painting by Bierstadt: "Now, to sum up the picture's merits, those snow-peaks are correct—they look natural; the valley is correct and natural; the pine trees clinging to the bluff on the right, and the grove on the left, and the boulders, are all like nature. . . . But when I got around to the atmosphere, I was obliged to say 'This man has imported this atmosphere . . . from some foreign country, because nothing like it was ever seen in California.' " Steadfastly Twain believed that the artist in colors or in words did his work best when he was "true to nature," accurately and honestly recording what he saw. "There is nothing," he wrote in a personal letter of 1868, "that makes me prouder than to be regarded by intelligent people as 'authentic.' " So far as he could, therefore, he made his fiction an exact transcript of life. Only because his memory changed things, because his

notions of propriety changed things, and because he was something of a poet did he (to use his own terms) "import" the "atmosphere" in his best narratives.

William Dean Howells, Twain's close friend, had at the start of his career a similar conception of the task of the fictionist. Fiction, Howells also thought, should be lifelike. Moreover, it should concern itself only with the most ordinary facets of life. A passage in *Their Wedding Journey* (1872) concerning the people in a railway car suggests the attitude: "It was in all respects an ordinary carful of human beings, and it was perhaps the more worthy to be studied on that account. As in literature the true artist will shun the use even of real events if they are of an improbable character, so the sincere observer of man will not desire to look upon his heroic or occasional phases, but will seek him in his habitual moods of vacancy and tiresomeness. To me, at any rate, he is at such times very precious. . . ." Since he followed this formula, the literalness of Howells' transcripts in his early writings was significant. But he recognized certain limitations—limitations which kept his literalness from being complete. It is important to recall that he first glimpsed the possibilities of realism while reading the comedies of Carlo Goldoni and that he was extremely fond, all his life, of the witty novels of Jane Austen. Like these two writers, he tended to concern himself, at the start of his career, more with the comedies of human experience than with the tragedies. In addition, because he believed that American life, typically, was relatively pure, and because he held that, even if it were not, it was wrong for an American novelist "to deal with certain facts of life which are not usually talked of before young people, and especially young ladies," he rather prudishly limited his treatment of sex.

When Hamlin Garland met Howells in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1885, Garland had, so Howells said later, "convictions flatteringly like mine." As Garland made clear in *Crumbling Idols* (1894, p. 955), he believed in what a French critic had dubbed "veritism." The true artist, he held, "must consciously stand alone before nature and before life" and must sincerely set down "the drama of the average type of character." In two ways, however, he departed from the early Howells. In the first place, Garland was moderately frank in his consideration of sex. ("I am old-fashioned," wrote Howells of this tendency in 1912, "and I have moments when I could wish that the author had not been of such unsparing conscience.") In the second place, Garland, under the tutelage of a group of assorted nineteenth-century thinkers, acquired the belief that "to fiction is given the task of subtilely embodying the splendid creed" of improvement—social, moral, and philosophical. "It is safe to say," he prophesied in *Crumbling Idols,* "that the fiction of the future will grow more democratic in outlook and more individualistic in method. . . . The higher art would seem to be the art that perceives and states the relations of things, giving atmosphere and relative values as they appear to the sight." Hence, *Main-Travelled Roads* not only pictured some of the harsher aspects of Middlewestern farm life; it also crusaded against conditions and suggested remedies.

By the time this first collection of Garland's stories appeared, Howells, too, had come to believe that fiction should have an element—one of great importance—which had been lacking in his early fiction. His first encounter—at fifty—with Tolstoy's writings had, as Howells indicated in *My Literary Passions,* brought about a change in his thinking. "He," wrote Howells, "has been to me that final consciousness which he speaks of so easily in his essay on Life. I came in it to the knowledge of myself in ways that I had not dreamt before, and began at last to discern my relations to the race, without which we are nothing. The supreme art in literature had its highest effect in making me set art forever below humanity. . . ." What this meant was that Howells, in *Annie Kilburn* (1889), *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890), *The World of Chance* (1893), and his other mature novels became a novelist of social purpose—selecting characters not only because they were typical but also because their characteristics and their stories preached sermons about society and economics.

NATURALISM

Just as the line between some local color fiction and some realism is hard to draw, it is difficult to distinguish clearly and surely between realism and some "naturalism," another "ism" about which there was, in this period, a great deal of discussion. In general, the American naturalists—Crane, Norris, Dreiser, and others—took at least some of their cues from a group of authors, led by Emile

Zola (1840-1902), who were important in France after 1880. The characteristics of the French group have been admirably summarized by Professors Nitze and Dargan in their *History of French Literature*: "Naturalism . . . is an excessive form of Realism and is usually considered as possessing the following characteristics. First, it allows a still larger variety of subjects, emphasizing the lower and coarser forms of life; it presents this material in a form which is often revolting; it rejects ideality, it minimizes heart-interest and plot interest in favor of 'facts' and notations; it magnifies the study of the industries and seeks to apply to fiction the processes of the natural sciences; from these, taken in their application to heredity and environment, it draws its conception of life—deterministic, fatalistic, essentially pessimistic. The laws of brute Nature are viewed as grimly controlling the destinies of helpless and hopeless men." An interesting fact about this accurate description of a literary method is that it deals more with the philosophical views of novelists than with their fictional technique. The reason may well be that, for the naturalistic writers, "actuality" is located not merely in life itself but also in the philosophical interpretation of life. For Zola, art was nature, yes, but nature as it was interpreted by the artist. In a fashion comparable to that of the scientist, theoretically, the naturalist exposed his sensibility to life and then "scientifically" worked with characters and actions known through his experience. But the vast difference between the artist and the scientist whom he thought he was imitating was that the artist, unable really to prove his hypotheses in the laboratory, took them for granted and merely illustrated them from his experience.

American naturalists resembled their French prototypes in treating subjects barred even from realistic writings, in treating lower forms of life—thus differing from realists in their details. Also each American naturalist, on the basis of his own reading and his own thinking, created characters and plots illustrative of his own peculiar "scientific" convictions. Thus Dreiser, believing that men's actions were "chemical compulsions," pictured situations and happenings which made clear that characters had no control over their actions. Believing, further, that "the race was to the swift and the battle to the strong," he devised plots which showed weak characters conquered by ruthless and mighty opponents. Norris, excitedly perceiving both unconquerable forces of Nature and the relentless man-made power of the soulless railroad, devised in *The Octopus* a plot which showed Force at work: "Men were mere nothings, mere animalculae, mere ephemerides that fluttered and fell and were forgotten between dawn and dusk. . . . Men were nought, death was nought, life was nought. Force only existed—Force that brought men into the world—Force that crowded them out to make way for the succeeding generation—Force that made the wheat grow—Force that garnered it from the soil to give place to the succeeding crop." And Stephen Crane showed the hero of *The Red Badge of Courage* discovering naturalistic truths on the blood-drenched field of battle, or showed the correspondent in "The Open Boat" becoming aware of the complete indifference of Nature to puny men.

Dreiser, unlike some of the French naturalists, had a good deal of contempt for niceties of style. Not so Norris and Crane. Norris used a great deal of symbolism, some of it rather explicit—readers may feel a bit obvious. (The slaughter of the sheep, p. 975, is an example.) Crane, rather more subtle as a poet, was sometimes less labored in his handling of symbolism, but much of it came into his work—usually in the form of images seen through the eyes and interpreted by the minds of his characters. Such images both pictured and interpreted details. The correspondent in "The Open Boat," for instance, thus saw a wind-tower on the tantalizing beach: "This tower was a giant, standing with its back to the plight of the ants. It represented in a degree, to the correspondent, the serenity of nature amid the struggle of the individual—nature in the wind, and nature in the vision of men. She did not seem cruel to him then, nor beneficent, nor treacherous, nor wise. But she was indifferent, flatly indifferent." Touches similar to this were to give significance, later, to backgrounds and actions in the writing of such diverse authors as Willa Cather, Ernest Hemingway, and John Steinbeck.

HENRY JAMES

To Stephen Crane, probably the most intuitive artist of the period, thoughts and feelings of characters, then, were important. To Henry James, probably the most conscious artist, they were even more important. As his "The Art of Fiction" (p. 920) shows, James was a careful thinker

about the nature of reality, the nature of art, and the relationship between the two. His belief was that "reality," as a story presented it, was twice translated, once through the author's experiencing of it, again through the artistic representation of it. Both the initial impression and the execution were important.

For him a novel "in its broadest definition" was "a personal, a direct impression of life: that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression." For a person with the kind of sensitivity needed in writing great fiction, he went on, "Experience is never limited, and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue." Since "impressions were experience," James did not hesitate to advise the novice, "Try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost!"

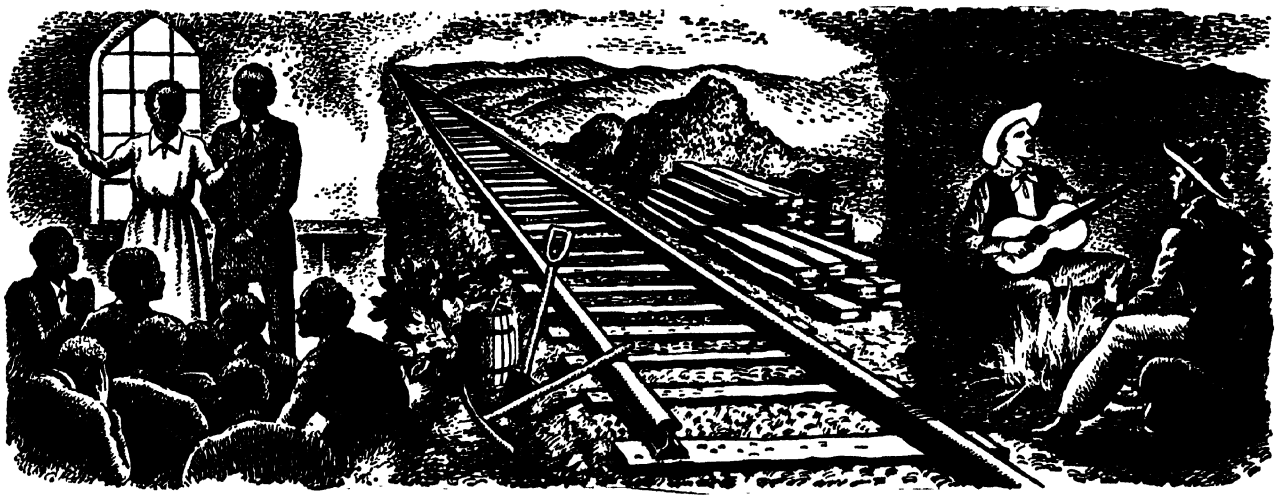
But having gained such a sensitive and complete impression of life, the artist, James contended, also had the problem of giving his fiction "that air of reality [solidity of specification]" which he felt was "the supreme virtue of the novel—the merit on which all its other merits . . . helplessly and submissively depend." James was aware throughout his career that to achieve this end through artistry was a highly complicated and delicate business. A brilliant series of Prefaces which he wrote, in his maturity, for the volumes of his collected works showed in detail how, during his artistic lifetime, he struggled with problems of form to give his writings exactly the intended "effects."

Such a conception of fiction clearly sets James off from those practitioners who believed that the best fiction was the exact reproduction of life as well as from those who believed that it was an embodiment of naturalistic generalizations about life. Since he saw reality—even generalizations about reality—as a series of impressions, and since he saw fiction as the artistic rendition of such impressions, his sort of realism was essentially a complicated psychological process. In his writings, more than in others, therefore, one sees the impact of the newer psychology in which Henry James' brother, William, was a leading authority. One sees, too, progress in the development of a technique which had been notably advanced even before James by George Eliot in England and Gustave Flaubert in France—the technique of making new psychological insights a vital part of fiction.

How James' notions led him to shape the form of a narrative is shown in some of their details in his 1907 Preface to *Roderick Hudson* (1876), wherein he told how that book had been written. After a "story idea" had come to him, the chief difficulty, he suggested, was to decide exactly how to limit "developments" so as to interrelate them. "Up to what point," he asked himself, "is such and such a development *indispensable* to interest? . . . When, for the complete expression of one's subject, does a particular relation stop—giving way to some other not concerned in that expression?" The complexity of experience made this problem difficult: "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so." Selection and arrangement therefore were absolutely necessary. He needed to hit upon exactly the right details of background he needed (though later he felt he had failed, in this particular book) to devise an adequate time scheme; he needed—and this was very important—to find a "centre, the point of command of all the rest." In this story, such a center was the impression of the whole action received by someone other than Hudson. "From this centre the subject has been treated, from this centre the interest has spread, and so, whatever else it may do or may not do, the thing has acknowledged a principle of composition and continues at least to hang together. . . . The centre of interest throughout. . . is Rowland Mallet's consciousness—which I had of course to make sufficiently acute to enable it, like a set and lighted scene, to hold the play." James believed that what Mallet saw, felt, or guessed could, if properly rendered, be made to give the story unity, movement, and meaning. Though James gave details about a number of additional procedures, this summary traces a main line of his typical thought about his artistry.

An author with such concerns obviously was bound to write narratives which differed greatly from those by most of James' contemporaries. James, naturally, was horrified by what he saw as the formlessness of many fictional works. He believed, as he said in "The Art of Fiction," that ". . . a novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism, and in proportion as

lives it will be found, I think, that in each of the parts is ɔmething of the other parts." And he learned that quite ften his most useful step in achieving the selectivity and ıe arrangement necessary for such an organic entity was ıe location of the story in the mind of some character—a ɔnsciousness, like Rowland's, say, "connected intimately ·ith the general human exposure, and thereby bedimmed ıd befooled and bewildered, anxious, restless, fallible," ı short "not *too* acute," but endowed, nevertheless, "with ıch intelligence that the appearances reflected in it, and ɔnstituting together there the situation and the 'story,' should become by that fact intelligible." Thus the sensitive author had, in the story, a sensitive counterpart whose limitations and perceptions both bounded and filled in the pattern. Working in such a fashion, James became a leader in calling attention to the importance of the "fictional point of view"—to the values to be derived from letting a narrative unfold as it was experienced by some character. Psychology thus became of central importance in his fiction, and its hitherto unexploited potentialities for writers were suggested to a great number of authors who followed James. W. B.



The many ways of living in America between the Civil War and 1914 influenced various makers of folk songs. Groups had their own individual favorites, and they kept these anonymous creations alive by singing them again and again. Since the forms of these works were not frozen in print, what typically happens to folk songs happened to them: words or even lines were changed, and sometimes whole stanzas disappeared. Early settlers had brought to America a number of Scotch and English ballads which were still being sung and admired by their descendants. The American songs had many qualities of these older ballads: intriguing uses of incremental repetitions and refrains, dramatic ways of unfolding happenings, ways of leaping over some details and of presenting others with minute care.

Whittier, among the famous literary men, and four or five scholars were about the only Americans who paid much heed to these American songs until the 1860's. But in the period following the war, and in the twentieth century the growing interest of Americans in our social and literary history caused many literary men and scholars to become active as students of the folklore.
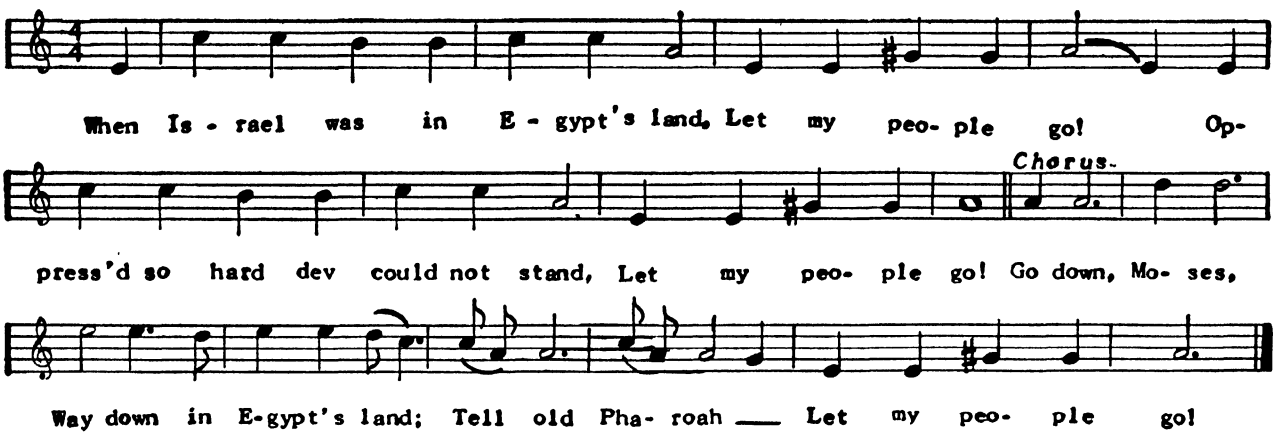
J. A. Lomax and Alan Lomax, **American Ballads and Folk Songs**, New York, 1934 • Louise Pound, **American Ballads and Songs**, New York, 1922 • Carl Sandburg, **The American Songbag**, New York, 1930 • F. H. Hubbard, **Railroad Avenue**, New York, 1945 • (In addition to these books, a number of recordings of folk songs will be of great value—those made by such singers as Burl Ives, Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson, Carl Sandburg, and John Jacob Niles, as well as the recordings of nonprofessional folk singers issued by the Archive of American Folk Song of the Library of Congress)

Spirituals

The Negroes were the makers of the spirituals—religious songs which, as a rule, translated Biblical tales or Christian sentiments into the idiom of the race. Details about the origins of the songs are not known, but two things seem likely: that the camp meetings of Southern whites in pre-Civil War days suggested both words and ways of singing, and that both the sense of rhythm and the racial experiences of the Negroes molded the songs. Unable to express their feelings directly, the Negroes often interpreted their own experiences in Biblical stories and lyrics.

"Go Down, Moses," for example—used as Harriet Tubman's signal of safety as she, a former slave, helped many other Negroes escape to freedom—translated the bondage of Israel into a parallel of their own enslavement. Hundreds of spirituals were composed, and most of them have noble themes simply and sincerely developed and fitted to moving tunes. Even more than other folk songs, these must be heard to be appreciated.

Go Down, Moses



When Israel was in Egypt's land,
Let my people go!
Oppress'd so hard dey could not stand,
Let my people go!

Chorus

Go down, Moses,
Way down in Egypt's land.
Tell ole Pha-roah,
Let my people go!

Thus say de Lawd, bold Moses said,
Let my people go!
If not I'll smite your first-born dead,
Let my people go!

No more shall dey in bondage toil,
Let my people go!
Let dem come out wid Egypt's spoil,
Let my people go!

Lay Dis Body Down

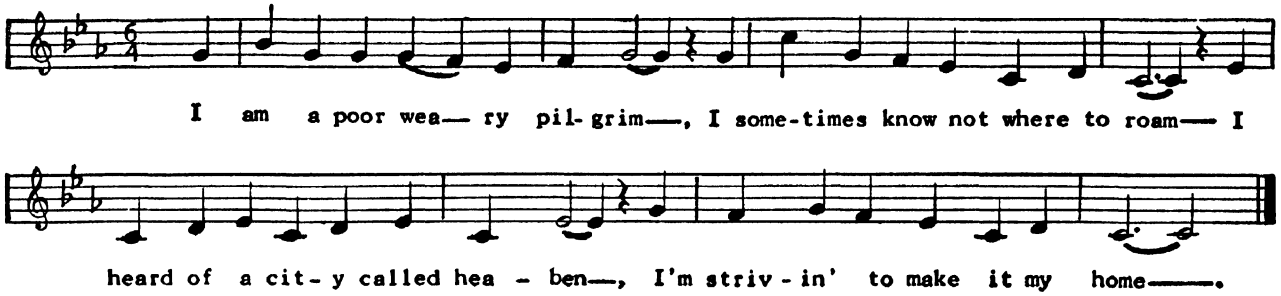
I know moon-rise, I know star-rise,
Lay dis body down;
I walk in de moonlight, I walk in de starlight,
To lay dis body down.

I walk in de graveyard, I walk troo de graveyard,
To lay dis body down.

I'll lie in de grass and stretch out my arms—
Lay dis body down.

I go to de judgment in de evenin' of de day,
When I lay dis body down;
And my soul and your soul will meet in de day
When I lay dis body down.

Poor Pilgrim



I am a poor weary pilgrim,
    I sometimes know not where to roam—
I heard of a city called heaben,
    I'm strivin' to make it my home.

Sometimes I'm both tossed and driven,
    I sometimes know not where to roam,
I heard of a city called heaben,
    I'm strivin' to make it my home.

My friends and relations forsake me,
    And troubles roll round me so high,
I thought ob de kind voice of Jesus
    Sayin' "Poor pilgrim, I'm always nigh."

Joshua Fit de Battle ob Jerico

Joshua fit de battle ob Jerico—Jerico—Jerico—
Joshua fit de battle ob Jerico,
And de walls came a-tumblin' down.

"Good mornin', Brudder Pilgrim,
Pray tell me where you boun';
O tell me where you travelin' to
'Cause dis enchanted groun'."

"My name it is Poor Pilgrim,
To Canaan I am boun';
Travelin' through dis wilderness
'Cause dis enchanted groun'."

You may talk about yo' King ob Gideon,
You may talk about yo' man ob Saul,
Dere's none like good ole Joshua,
At de battle ob Jerico.

Up to de walls ob Jerico
He marched wid spear in han',
"Go blow dem ram horns," Joshua cried,
"Kase de battle am in my han'."

Den de lam' ram sheep-horns begin to blow,
Trumpets begin to soun',
Joshua commanded de chillun to shout,
An' de walls came a-tumblin' down.

Dat mornin'—
Joshua fit de battle ob Jerico—Jerico—Jerico,
Joshua fit de battle ob Jerico,
An' de walls came a-tumblin' down.

Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen

Nobody knows de trouble I've seen;
Nobody knows but Jesus.
Nobody knows de trouble I've seen;
Oh yes, Lord.

Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down;
Oh yes, Lord.
Sometimes I'm almost to de groun';
Oh yes, Lord.

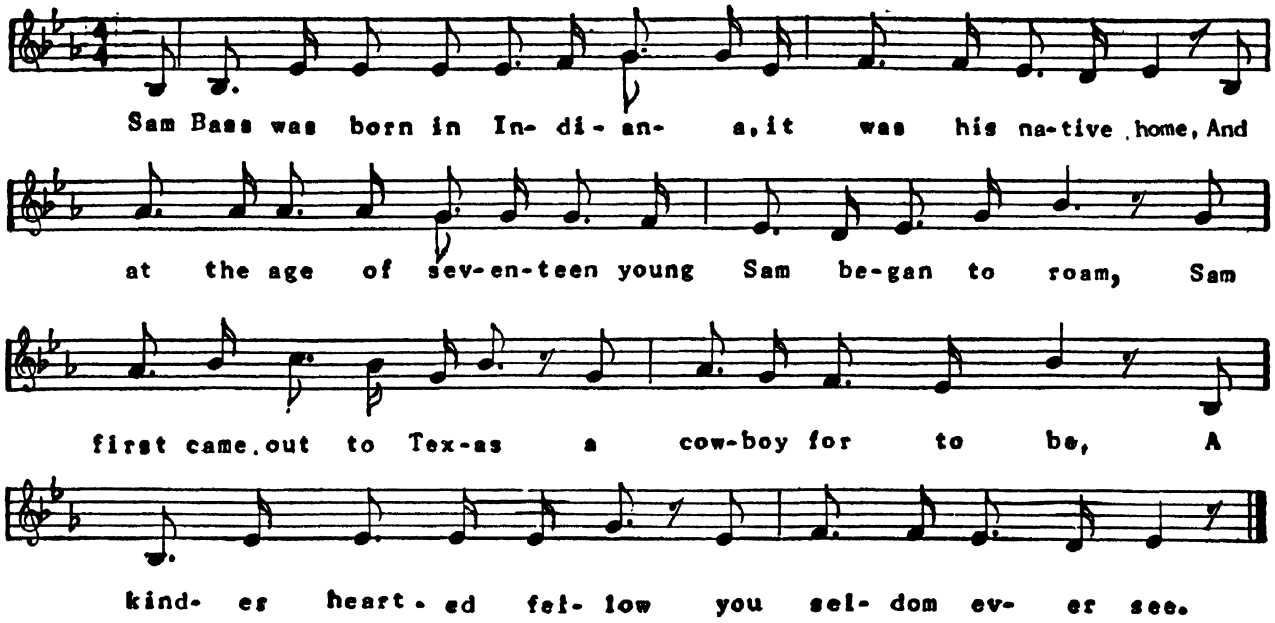
Although you see me gettin' 'long so,
Oh, yes, Lord.
I got my troubles here below—
Oh yes, Lord.

Nobody knows de trouble I've seen;
Nobody knows but Jesus.
Nobody knows de trouble I've seen;
Oh yes, Lord.

Cowboy Songs

Rich in ballad lore, the cowboys of the plains in some of their songs told of the work of the cowboy—caring for cattle in the wintertime, rounding them up in the spring, driving them up the trail to market. Many songs were used for practical purposes, to stir up the cattle or to quiet them when they were nervous at night. Others told stories of adventures or of love affairs, and the old stuff of balladry took on new coloring because of the way men lived in the cow country. Since many of the cowhands came from the Southern uplands, where old British ballads were preserved by singing, many cowboy tunes are reminiscent of the older ones. But since Americans had developed tunes of a different sort, several mutations—modifications of the older tunes—were frequent. "Oh Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie" offers an example of such a modified old melody, in this case a parody of a sentimental ballad entitled "The Ocean Burial." The simple guitar accompaniment to many of these songs accentuates the distinctive rhythm of cowboy ballads.

Of the songs that follow, "Whoopee Ti Yi Yo" tells of the spring roundup; "Good-by, Old Paint" is addressed to a good pony; "The Old Chisholm Trail" recounts the hardships of a drive up the trail; "Sam Bass" unfolds the history of a Western bad man; and "Blood on the Saddle" tells of the gory death of a cowboy killed when a bronco rolled on him in a rodeo.



Sam Bass was born in Indiana, it was his native home,
And at the age of seventeen young Sam began to roam,
Sam first came out to Texas a cowboy for to be,—
A kinder-hearted fellow you seldom ever see.

Sam used to deal in race stock, one called the Denton mare,
He matched her in scrub races, and took her to the fair.
Sam used to coin the money and spent it just as free,
He always drank good whiskey wherever he might be.

Sam left the Collins ranch in the merry month of May
With a herd of Texas cattle the Black Hills for to see,
Sold out in Custer City and then got on a spree,—
A harder set of cowboys you seldom ever see.

On their way back to Texas they robbed the U.P. train,
And then split up in couples and started out again.
Joe Collins and his partner were overtaken soon,
With all their hard-earned money they had to meet their doom.

Sam made it back to Texas all right side up with care;
Rode into the town of Denton with all his friends to share.
Sam's life was short in Texas; three robberies did he do,
He robbed all the passenger, mail, and express cars too.

Sam had four companions—four bold and daring lads—
They were Richardson, Jackson, Joe Collins, and Old Dad;
Four more bold and daring cowboys the rangers never knew,
They whipped the Texas rangers and ran the boys in blue.

Sam had another companion, called Arkansas for short,
Was shot by a Texas ranger by the name of Thomas Floyd;
Oh, Tom is a big six-footer and thinks he's mighty fly,
But I can tell you his racket,—he's a deadbeat on the sly.

Jim Murphy was arrested, and then released on bail;
He jumped his bond at Tyler and took the train for Terrell;
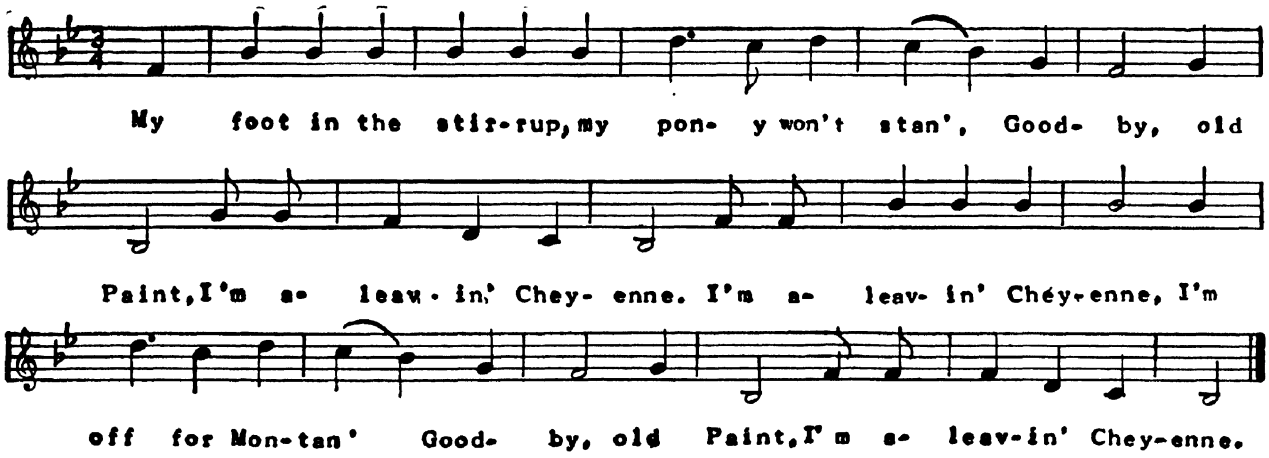
But Mayor Jones had posted Jim and that was all a stall,
'Twas only a plan to capture Sam before the coming fall.

Sam met his fate at Round Rock, July the twenty-first,
They pierced poor Sam with rifle balls and then emptied his purse.
Poor Sam he is a corpse and six foot under clay,
And Jackson's in the bushes trying to get away.

Jim had borrowed Sam's good gold and didn't want to pay,
The only shot he saw was to give poor Sam away.
He sold out Sam and Barnes and left their friends to mourn,—
Oh, what a scorching Jim will get when Gabriel blows his horn.

And so he sold out Sam and Barnes and left their friends to mourn,
Oh, what a scorching Jim will get when Gabriel blows his horn.
Perhaps he's got to heaven, there's none of us can say,
But if I'm right in my surmise he's gone the other way.

Good-by, Old Paint



My foot in the stirrup, my pony won't stan',
Good-by, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.
I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne, I'm off for Montan';
Good-by, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

I'm a-ridin' old Paint, I'm a-leadin' old Dan;
Good-by, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.
With my feet in the stirrups, my bridle in my hand;
Good-by, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

Old Paint's a good pony, he paces when he can;
Good-by, little Annie, I'm off for Cheyenne.
Oh, hitch up your horses and feed 'em some hay,
And seat yourself by me as long as you stay.

My hosses ain't hungry, they won't eat your hay;
My wagon is loaded and rollin' away.
I'm a-ridin', old Paint, I'm a-leadin' old Dan,
I'm a-goin' to Montan' to throw the hoolihan.

They feed in the coulees, they water in the draw,
Their tails are all matted, their backs are all raw.
Old Bill Jones had two daughters and a song;
One went to Denver, the other went wrong.
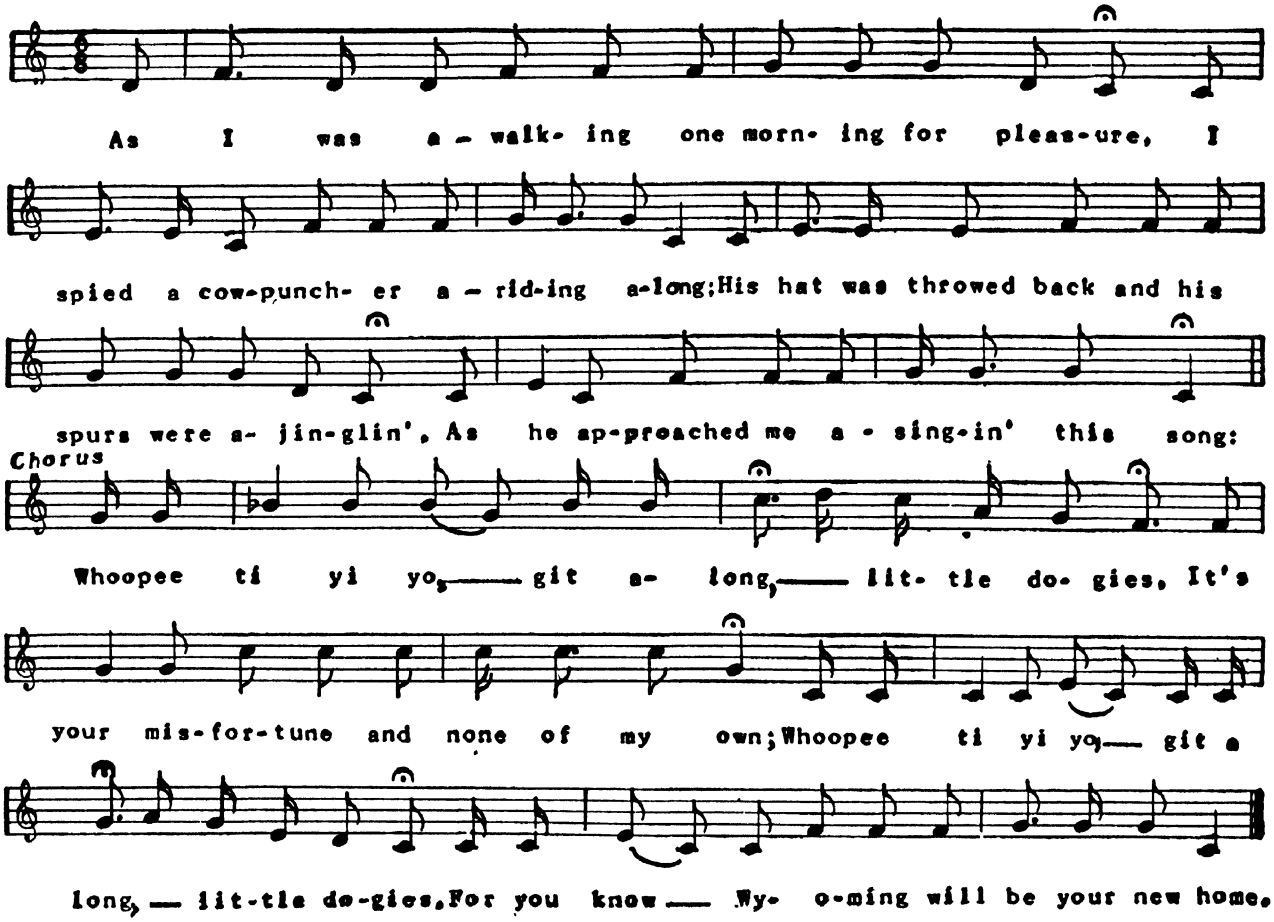
Good-by, Old Paint • 2 Paint is a corruption of pinto, meaning a piebald or mottled pony • 16 throw the hoolihan, to knock a steer down by leaping on his horns

His wife died in a pool-room fight,
And still he sings from morning till night.
I'm a rambler and a gambler and far from my home,
And those that don't like me can leave me alone.

Oh, whiskey and beer, they are nothing to me,
They killed my old Dad, now they can try me.
I'll tell you the truth, not lyin' or jokin',
I'd rather be in jail than to be heart-broken.

Oh, when I die take my saddle from the wall,
Put it on my pony, lead him from the stall,
Tie my bones to his back, turn our faces to the west,
And we'll ride the prairie that we love the best.

Whoopee Ti Yi Yo, Git Along, Little Dogies



As I was a-walking one morning for pleasure,
I spied a cow-puncher a-riding along;
His hat was throwed back and his spurs were a-jinglin',
As he approached me a-singin' this song:

Chorus

Whoopee ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,
It's your misfortune and none of my own;
Whoopee ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,
For you know Wyoming will be your new home.

Early in the springtime we'll round up the dogies,
Slap on their brands, and bob off their tails;
Round up our horses, load up the chuck wagon,
Then throw those dogies upon the trail.

It's whooping and yelling and driving the dogies,
Oh, how I wish you would go on;
It's whooping and punching and go on, little dogies,
For you know Wyoming will be your new home.

Some of the boys goes up the trail for pleasure,
But that's where they git it most awfully wrong;
For you haven't any idea the trouble they give us
When we go driving them dogies along.

When the night comes on and we hold them on the bed-ground,
These little dogies that roll on so slow;
Roll up the herd and cut out the strays,
And roll the little dogies that never rolled before.

Your mother she was raised way down in Texas,
Where the jimson weed and sand-burrs grow;
Now we'll fill you up on prickly pear and cholla
Till you are ready for the trail to Idaho.

Oh, you'll be soup for Uncle Sam's Injuns;
"It's beef, heap beef," I hear them cry.
Git along, git along, git along, little dogies,
You're going to be beef steers by and by.

The Old Chisholm Trail

Come along, boys, and listen to my tale,
I'll tell you of my troubles on the old Chisholm trail.

Chorus

Come ti yi youpy, youpy yea, youpy yea,
Coma ti yi youpy, youpy yea.

I started up the trail October twenty-third,
I started up the trail with the 2-U herd.

Oh, a ten-dollar hoss and a forty-dollar saddle,
And I'm goin' to punchin' Texas cattle.

I woke up one morning on the old Chisholm trail,
Rope in my hand and a cow by the tail.

I'm up in the mornin' afore daylight
And afore I sleep the moon shines bright.

My hoss throwed me off at the creek called Mud,
My hoss throwed me off round the 2-U herd.

Last time I saw him he was going 'cross the level
A-kicking up his heels and a-running like the devil.

It's cloudy in the west, a-looking like rain,
And my damned old slicker's in the wagon again.

No chaps, no slicker, and it's pouring down rain,
And I swear, by God, I'll never night-herd again.

Last night I was on guard and the leader broke the ranks,
I hit my horse down the shoulders and I spurred him in the flanks.

The wind commenced to blow, and the rain began to fall,
Hit looked, by grab, like we was goin' to lose 'em all.

My slicker's in the wagon and I'm gittin' mighty cold,
And these longhorn sons-o'-guns are gittin' hard to hold.

Saddle up, boys, and saddle up well,
For I think these cattle have scattered to hell.

With my blanket and my gun and my rawhide rope,
I'm a-slidin' down the trail in a long, keen lope.

I don't give a damn if they never do stop;
I'll ride as long as an eight-day clock.

We rounded 'em up and put 'em on the cars,
And that was the last of the old Two Bars.

Oh, it's bacon and beans most every day—
I'd as soon be a-eatin' prairie hay.

I went to the boss to draw my roll,
He had it figgered out I was nine dollars in the hole.

I'll sell my outfit just as soon as I can,
I won't punch cattle for no damned man.

With my knees in the saddle and my seat in the sky,
I'll quit punching cows in the sweet by-and-by.

Fare you well, old trail-boss, I don't wish you any harm,
I'm quittin' this business to go on the farm.

Blood on the Saddle

There was bul-lud on the saddle—
And bul-lud all araound,
An' a great big puddle
Of bul-lud on the graound.

Oh, a cowboy lay in it,
All covered with gore,
An' he never will ride on
Any broncos no more.

Oh, pity the cowboy,
All bul-luddy and red;
Oh, a bronco fell on him,
An' mashed in his head.

There was bul-lud on the saddle—
And bul-lud all araound,
An' a great big puddle
Of bul-lud on the graound.

1 **bul-lud,** the lingering pronunciation of "blood." The ballad mocks the distressing but widespread habit of savoring sanguinary details in an accident

On the Railroad

For city and country people alike, in the days before widespread automobile travel, the railroads were routes to adventure, lines of communication with the rest of the world. In a small town the most exciting daily event was the arrival of the limited. Among the people along the tracks there was much railroad lore, and naturally the hobos, the construction gangs, and the roundhouse workers had their own songs. In **American Ballads and**

Folk Songs, edited by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax, the section called "Working on the Railroad" included seventeen such songs. Some of these are "Steel Laying Holler," "Tie Tamping Chant," and "The Wreck of the C. & O." The first song given here celebrates a mythically strong Negro steel-driving man, and "Casey Jones" tells the story of an engineer who was brave but had a fickle helpmate.

John Henry

John Henry was a li'l baby, uh-huh,
Sittin' on his mama's knee, oh, yeah,
Said: "De Big Bend Tunnel on de C. & O. road
Gonna cause de death of me,
Lawd, Lawd, gonna cause de death of me."

John Henry, he had a woman,
Her name was Mary Magdalene,
She would go to de tunnel and sing for John,
Jes' to hear John Henry's hammer ring,
Lawd, Lawd, jes' to hear John Henry's hammer ring.

John Henry had a li'l woman,
Her name was Lucy Ann,
John Henry took sick an' had to go to bed,
Lucy Ann drove steel like a man,
Lawd, Lawd, Lucy Ann drove steel like a man.

Cap'n says to John Henry,
"Gonna bring me a steam drill 'round,
Gonna take dat steam drill out on de job,
Gonna whop dat steel on down,
Lawd, Lawd, gonna whop dat steel on down."

John Henry tol' his cap'n,
Lightnin' was in his eye:
"Cap'n, bet yo' las' red cent on me,
Fo' I'll beat it to de bottom or I'll die,
Lawd, Lawd, I'll beat it to de bottom or I'll die."

Sun shine hot an' burnin',
Wer'n't no breeze a-tall,
Sweat ran down like water down a hill,
Dat day John Henry let his hammer fall,
Lawd, Lawd, dat day John Henry let his hammer fall.

John Henry went to de tunnel,
An' dey put him in de lead to drive;
De rock so tall an' John Henry so small,
Dat he lied down his hammer an' he cried,
Lawd, Lawd, dat he lied down his hammer an' he cried.

John Henry started on de right hand,
De steam drill started on de lef'—
"Before I'd let dis steam drill beat me down,
I'd hammer my fool self to death,
Lawd, Lawd, I'd hammer my fool self to death."

White man tol' John Henry,
"Nigger, damn yo' soul,
You might beat dis steam an' drill of mine,
When de rocks in dis mountain turn to gol',
Lawd, Lawd, when de rocks in dis mountain turn to gol'."

John Henry said to his shaker,
"Nigger, why don' you sing?
I'm throwin' twelve poun's from my hips on down,
Jes' listen to de col' steel ring,
Lawd, Lawd, jes' listen to de col' steel ring."

Oh, de captain said to John Henry,
"I b'lieve this mountain's sinkin' in."
John Henry said to his captain, oh my!
"Ain' nothin' but my hammer suckin' win',
Lawd, Lawd, ain' nothin' but my hammer suckin' win'."

John Henry tol' his shaker,
"Shaker, you better pray,

3 **Big Bend Tunnel,** the largest tunnel on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, constructed in West Virginia, 1870-1873 • 46 **shaker,** drill holder

For, if I miss dis six-foot steel,
Tomorrow'll be yo' buryin' day,
Lawd, Lawd, tomorrow'll be yo' buryin' day."

John Henry tol' his captain,
"Looka yonder what I see—
Yo' drill's done broke an' yo' hole's done choke,
An' you cain' drive steel like me,
Lawd, Lawd, an' you cain' drive steel like me."

De man dat invented de steam drill,
Thought he was mighty fine.
John Henry drove his fifteen feet,
An' de steam drill only made nine,
Lawd, Lawd, an' de steam drill only made nine.

De hammer dat John Henry swung,
It weighed over nine pound;
He broke a rib in his lef'-han' side,
An' his intrels fell on de groun',
Lawd, Lawd, an' his intrels fell on de groun'.

John Henry was hammerin' on de mountain,
An' his hammer was strikin' fire,
He drove so hard till he broke his pore heart,
An' he lied down his hammer an' he died,
Lawd, Lawd, he lied down his hammer an' he died.

All de womens in de Wes',
When dey heared of John Henry's death,
Stood in de rain, flagged de eas'-boun' train,
Goin' where John Henry fell dead,
Lawd, Lawd, goin' where John Henry fell dead.

John Henry's lil mother,
She was all dressed in red,
She jumped in bed, covered up her head,
Said she didn' know her son was dead,
Lawd, Lawd, didn' know her son was dead.

John Henry had a pretty lil woman,
An' de dress she wo' was blue,
An' de las' words she said to him:
"John Henry, I've been true to you,
Lawd, Lawd, John Henry, I've been true to you."

"Oh, who's gonna shoe yo' lil feetses,
An' who's gonna glub yo' han's,
An' who's gonna kiss yo' rosy, rosy lips,
An' who's gonna be yo' man,
Lawd, Lawd, an' who's gonna be yo' man?"

"Oh, my mama's gonna shoe my lil feetses,
An' my papa's gonna glub my lil han's,
An' my sister's gonna kiss my rosy, rosy lips,
An' I don' need no man,
Lawd, Lawd, an' I don' need no man."

Dey took John Henry to de graveyard,
An' dey buried him in de san',
An' every locomotive come roarin' by,
Says, "Dere lays a steel-drivin' man,
Lawd, Lawd, dere lays a steel-drivin' man."

Casey Jones

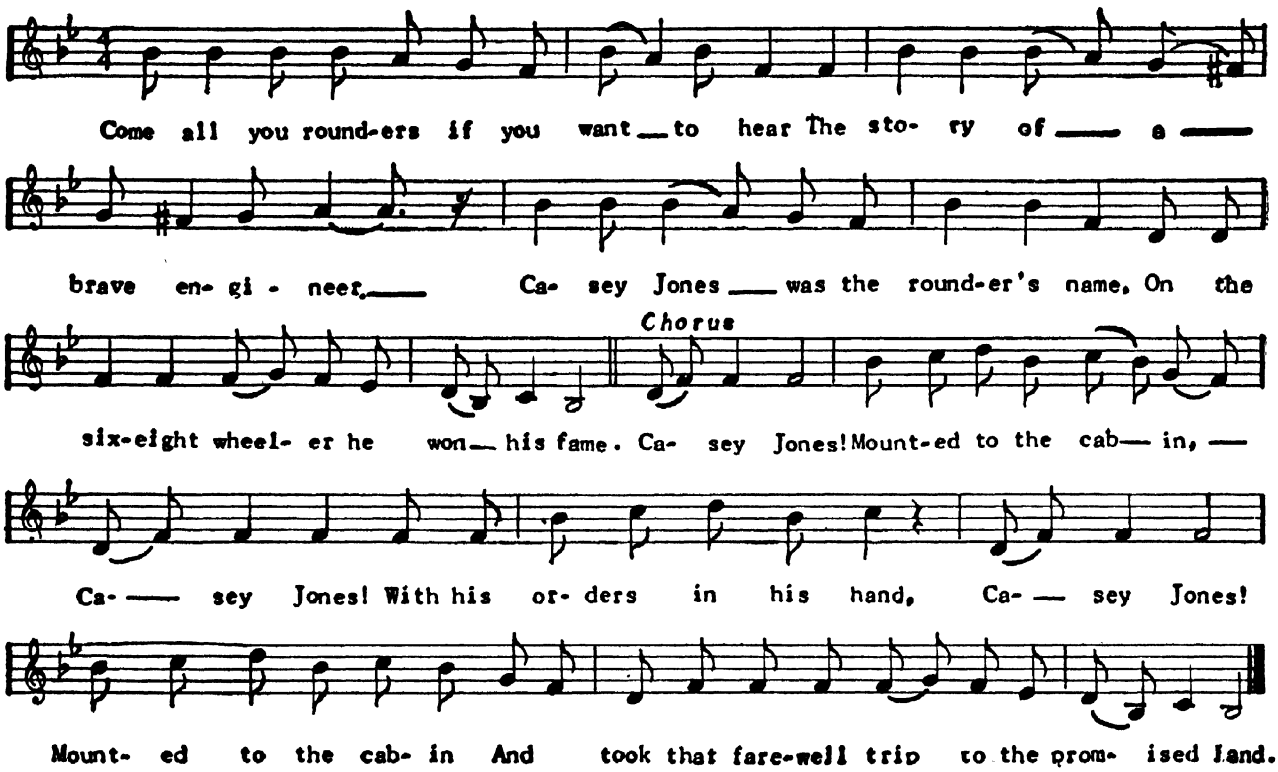
Come all you rounders if you want to hear
The story of a brave engineer.
Casey Jones was the rounder's name,
On the six-eight wheeler he won his fame.

The caller called Casey at half-past four;
He kissed his wife at the station door;
He mounted to the cabin with his orders in his hand,
And took a farewell trip to that promised land.

Chorus

Casey Jones! Mounted to the cabin,
Casey Jones! With his orders in his hand,
Casey Jones! Mounted to the cabin
And took that farewell trip to the promised land.

"Put in your water and shovel in your coal;
Put your head out the window, watch them drivers roll.
I'll run her till she leaves the rail,
'Cause I'm eight hours late with that western mail."



He looked at his watch and his watch was slow;
He looked at the water and the water was low;
He turned to the fireman and then he said,
"We're going to reach Frisco, if we'll all be dead."

Chorus

Casey Jones! Going to reach Frisco,
Casey Jones! If we'll all be dead.
Casey Jones! Going to reach Frisco,
We're going to reach Frisco, but we'll all be dead.

Casey pulled up that Reno hill,
He tooted for the crossing; it was awful shrill.
The switchman knew by the engine's moans
That the man at the throttle was Casey Jones.

He pulled up within two miles of the place;
Number Four stared him right in the face;
Turned to the fireman, said, "Boy, you'd better jump,
'Cause there's two locomotives that's going to bump."

Chorus

Casey Jones! Two locomotives!
Casey Jones! That's a-going to bump!
Casey Jones! Two locomotives!
There's two locomotives that's a-going to bump.

Casey mumbled just before he died,
"There's two more railroads that I'd like to ride."
Fireman said, "What can they be?"
"The Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe."

Mrs. Jones sat on her bed a-sighing,
Just received a message that poor Casey was dying,
Said, "Go to bed, children, and hush your crying,
'Cause you got another papa on the Salt Lake Line."

Chorus

Mrs. Casey Jones! Got another papa!
Mrs. Casey Jones! On the Salt Lake Line!
Mrs. Casey Jones! Got another papa!
You've got another papa on the Salt Lake Line.

Hallelujah, I'm a Hobo

The hobos of the United States have contributed to American folk music several fine songs, ranging from the carefree "Hallelujah, Bum Again" and "We Are Four Bums" to the rather wistful "Wanderin'." Some of these songs were set to modifications of popular tunes and ballads. Others were mockingly sung to the music of the revival hymns which the hobos heard in mission shelters. Among these were "Hallelujah, Bum Again," which employs the tune of "Hallelujah, Thine the Glory," and "Pie in the Sky," which is based on "In the Sweet Bye and Bye."

In "The Big Rock Candy Mountain," an imaginative singer describes his vision of a far-off land where fine weather, abundant food and drink, and an absence of policemen combine to make a hobo's paradise.

The Big Rock Candy Mountain

One ev'ning as the sun went down
And the jungle fire was burning,
Down the track came a hobo, humming,
And he said, "Boys, I'm not turning.
I'm headed for a land that's far away,
Beside the crystal fountain.
I'll see you all this coming fall
On the Big Rock Candy Mountain."

Chorus

In the Big Rock Candy Mountain,
There's a land that's fair and bright,
Where the handouts grow on bushes
And you sleep out ev'ry night,
Where the boxcars all are empty
And the sun shines ev'ry day—
Oh, the birds and the bees and the cigaret trees,
The rock-and-rye springs where the whangdoodle sings,
On the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

On the Big Rock Candy Mountain,
All the cops have wooden legs,
And the bulldogs all have rubber teeth,
And the hens lay softboiled eggs.
The farmers' trees are full of fruit,
And the barns are full of hay.
Oh, I'm bound to go where there ain't no snow,
Where the sleet don't fall and the wind don't blow,
On the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

On the Big Rock Candy Mountain,
You never change your socks,
And the little streams of alkyhol
Come trickling down the rocks.
The shacks all have to tip their hats
And the railroad bulls are blind,
There's a lake of stew and of whisky, too,
You can paddle all around in a big canoe,
On the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

On the Big Rock Candy Mountain,
The jails are made of tin,
And you can bust right out again
As soon as they put you in.
There ain't no shorthandled shovels,
No axes, saws or picks—
I'm a-going to stay where you sleep all day—
Oh, they boiled in oil the inventor of toil
On the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

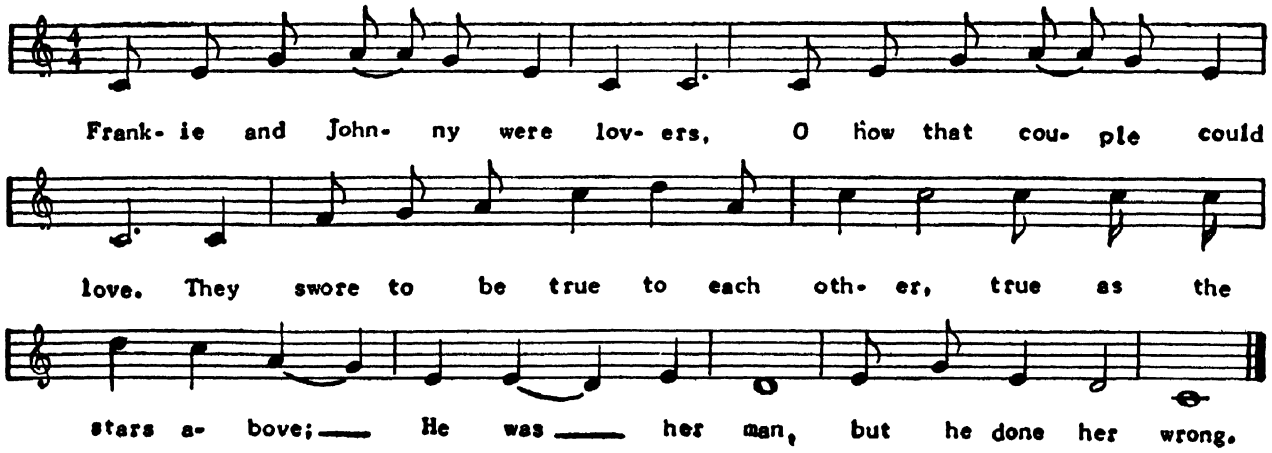
Oh, come with me, and we'll go see
The Big Rock Candy Mountain.

In the Slums

Like many such songs, this one is sung in many versions and has an origin about which there is much dispute. One authority claims that the song originated as early as 1840, and another places it in 1850. In 1942, however, a Mrs. Frankie Baker claimed during the course of a suit that she was the original Frankie and that the incident upon which the song was founded had taken place in 1900. In spite of her claim, Mrs. Baker lost the suit when various scholars testified that "Frankie and Johnny" certainly had been sung before the end of the nineteenth century.

Regardless of its origin, this ballad about a tragedy in the Negro slums of St. Louis, by what it takes for granted and by what it casually mentions, reveals a notion of etiquette, a concept of elegance, and a moral code which represent a way of life. Note, for instance, Frankie's pious grief for the man she has murdered. The variations in the refrain are admirable examples of an old artistic device of the folk song.

Frankie and Johnny



Frankie and Johnny were lovers, O, how that couple could love.
Swore to be true to each other, true as the stars above.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie she was his woman, everybody knows.
She spent one hundred dollars for a suit of Johnny's clothes.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie and Johnny went walking, Johnny in his bran' new suit,
"O good Lawd," says Frankie, "but don't my Johnny look cute?"
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie went down to Memphis; she went on the evening train.
She paid one hundred dollars for Johnny a watch and chain.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie went down to the corner, to buy a glass of beer;
She says to the fat bartender, "Has my loving man been here?
He was my man, but he done me wrong."

"Ain't going to tell you no story, ain't going to tell you no lie,
I seen your man 'bout an hour ago with a girl named Alice Fry.
If he's your man, he's doing you wrong."

Frankie went back to the hotel, she didn't go there for fun,
Under her long red kimono she toted a forty-four gun.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie went down to the hotel, looked in the window so high,
There was her lovin' Johnny a-lovin' up Alice Fry;
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie threw back her kimono; took out the old forty-four;
Roota-toot-toot, three times she shot, right through that hotel door.
She shot her man, 'cause he done her wrong.

Johnny grabbed off his Stetson. "O good Lawd, Frankie, don't shoot."
But Frankie put her finger on the trigger, and the gun went roota-toot-toot.
He was her man, but she shot him down.

"Roll me over easy, roll me over slow,
Roll me over easy, boys, 'cause my wounds are hurting me so,
I was her man, but I done her wrong."

With the first shot Johnny staggered; with the second shot he fell;
When the third bullet hit him, there was a new man's face in hell.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Frankie heard a rumbling away down under the ground.
Maybe it was Johnny where she had shot him down.
He was her man, and she done him wrong.

"Oh, bring on your rubber-tired hearses, bring on your rubber-tired hacks,
They're takin' my Johnny to the buryin' groun' but they'll never bring him back.
He was my man, but he done me wrong."

The judge he said to the jury, "It's plain as plain can be.
This woman shot her man, so it's murder in the second degree.
He was her man, though he done her wrong."

Now it wasn't murder in the second degree, it wasn't murder in the third.
Frankie simply dropped her man, like a hunter drops a bird.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

"Oh, put me in that dungeon. Oh, put me in that cell.
Put me where the northeast wind blows from the southeast corner of hell.
I shot my man 'cause he done me wrong."

Frankie walked up to the scaffold, as calm as a girl could be,
She turned her eyes to heaven and said, "Good Lord, I'm coming to thee.
He was my man, and I done him wrong."

Homesteadin'

According to a Nebraskan, the following song was an adaptation by Emery Miller of a popular song—"The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane"—written by one Will S. Hays. Miller was a Nebraska settler of the 1880's. "Early settlers," writes Carl Sandburg, "noticed log cabins were scarcer as timber land thinned out going further west. On the windy, open prairies of the Great Plains, the best house to be had on short order was of sod. A cellar was dug first; long slices of turf were piled around the cellar lines; wooden crosspoles held the sod roof." This song is typical of several which jocosely and lugubriously lament the hardships of pioneer life. It is still current.
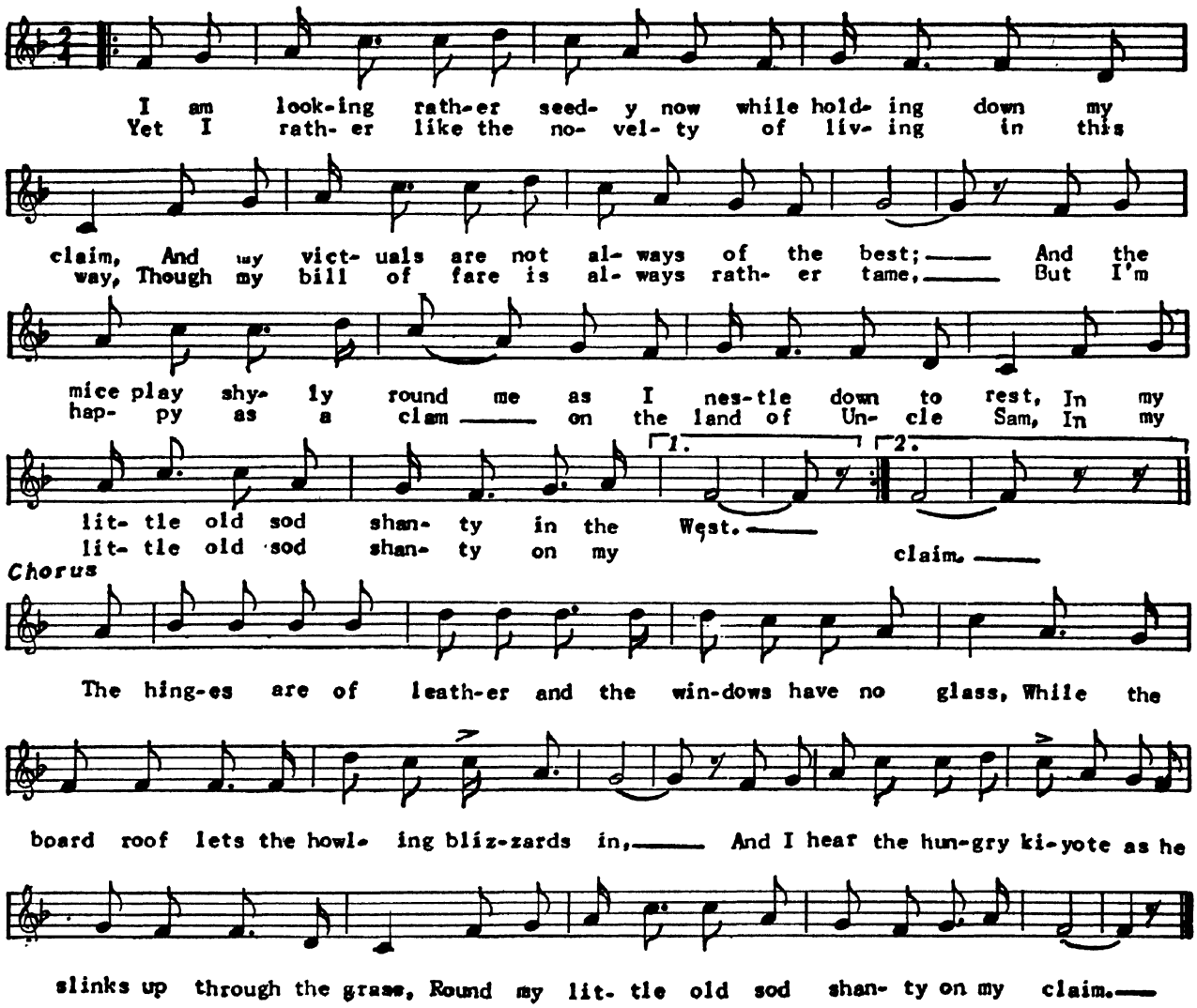
The Little Old Sod Shanty on the Claim

I am looking rather seedy now while holding down my claim,
And my victuals are not always of the best;
And the mice play shyly round me as I nestle down to rest,
In my little old sod shanty in the West.
Yet I rather like the novelty of living in this way,
Though my bill of fare is always rather tame,
But I'm happy as a clam on the land of Uncle Sam,
In my little old sod shanty on my claim.

Chorus

The hinges are of leather and the windows have no glass,
While the board roof lets the howling blizzards in,
And I hear the hungry kiyote as he slinks up through the grass,
Round my little old sod shanty on my claim.

O when I left my eastern home, a bachelor so gay,
To try and win my way to wealth and fame,
I little thought that I'd come down to burning twisted hay
In the little old sod shanty on my claim.
My clothes are plastered o'er with dough, I'm looking like a fright,
And everything is scattered round the room,
But I wouldn't give the freedom that I have out in the West
For the table of the Eastern man's old home.



Still I wish that some kind-hearted girl would pity on me take,
And relieve me from the mess that I am in;
The angel, how I'd bless her if this her home she'd make
In the little old sod shanty on my claim.
And we would make our fortunes on the prairies of the West,
Just as happy as two lovers we'd remain;
We'd forget the trials and troubles we endured at the first,
In the little old sod shanty on our claim.

And if kindly fate should bless us with now and then an heir,
To cheer our hearts with honest pride of fame,
O then we'd be contented for the toil that we had spent
In the little old sod shanty on our claim.
When time enough had lapsed and all of those little brats
To noble man- and womanhood had grown,
It wouldn't seem half so lonely as around us we should look,
And see the little old sod shanty on our claim.

David Crockett

1786 • 1836

In the days when Tennessee was still part of the Far West, David Crockett was born and reared in a Tennessee frontier log cabin. His schooling was meager, totaling altogether about one hundred days; but his lack of book learning did not keep him from becoming, in time, a United States congressman and a hero of the folk. Davy won followers in the period of coonskin democracy because, as a hunter, an Indian fighter, and a commoner who relied on good horse sense, he had abilities and ways particularly admired by his neighbors. His motto—"Be sure you're right, and then go ahead"—caught in a few words the spirit of the times.

Davy learned to farm and to hunt in boyhood. After fighting in the Creek War under Jackson (1813-1814), he was twice elected to the state legislature (1821-1823) and twice to Congress (1827-1831, 1833-1835). Newspapers of the day made much of his rough, homespun humor, and books about him—some by others, some by Davy himself—swelled his fame. When a Western critic read Crockett's autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of West Tennessee* (1834), he noticed that "the events are such . . . as we have seen acted over and over, and heard repeatedly recited by the firesides of our hardy backwoodsmen." The comment suggests Crockett's importance in literary history. His accounts did much to bring in the fireside yarn, with its authentic rendering of Western ways of living, thinking, talking, and narrating, as an eventual literary influence upon authors such as Harte (p. 810) and Clemens (p. 846).

Furthermore, during Crockett's lifetime, and particularly after his heroic death in the Alamo in 1836, tall tales about him circulated in yarnspinning sessions and in print. He was pictured in such tales as a comic demigod, doing superhuman deeds imagined by exuberant storytellers. These tales combined imagination of the sort one finds in poetry with enough robust humor to make them palatable to ordinary men. They are related to the earlier whoppers of the frontiersmen, the later yarns of Mark Twain, and the present-day fantastic moving pictures of Walt Disney.

An Autobiography of Davy Crockett (containing Crockett's Narrative, A Tour of the North and Down East, 1834, and most of Colonel Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas, 1836), ed. Hamlin Garland, New York, 1923 • Davy Crockett: American Comic Legend, ed. R. M. Dorson, New York, 1939 • Constance Rourke, Davy Crockett, New York, 1934



From • Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of West Tennessee

Bear Hunting

In the morning I left my son at the camp, and we started on towards the harricane; and when we had went about a mile, we started a very large bear, but we got along mighty slow on account of the cracks in the earth occasioned by the earthquakes. We, however, made out to keep in hearing of the dogs for about three miles, and then we come to the harricane. Here we had to quit our horses, as old Nick himself couldn't have got through it without sneaking it along in the form that he put on, to make a fool of our old grandmother Eve. By this time several of my dogs had got tired and come back; but we went ahead on foot for some little time in the harricane, when we met a bear coming straight to us, and not more than twenty or thirty yards off. I started my tired dogs after him, and McDaniel pursued them, and I went on to where my other dogs were. I had seen the track of the bear they were after, and I knowed he was a screamer. I followed on to about the middle of the harricane, but my dogs pursued him so close, that they made him climb an old stump about twenty feet high. I got in shooting distance of him and fired, but I was all over in such a flutter from fatigue and running, that I couldn't hold steady; but, however, I broke his shoulder, and he fell. I run up and loaded my gun as quick as possible, and shot him again and killed him. When I went to take out my knife to butcher him, I found I had lost it in coming through the harricane. The vines and briers was so thick that I would sometimes have to get down and crawl like a varment to get through at all; and a vine had, as I supposed, caught in the handle and pulled it out. While I was standing and studying what to do, my friend came to me. He had followed my trail through the harricane, and had found my knife, which was mighty good news to me; as a hunter hates the worst in the world to lose a good dog, or any part of his hunting-tools. I now left McDaniel to butcher the bear, and I went after our horses, and brought them as near as the nature of case would allow. I then took our bags, and went back to where he was; and when we had skin'd the bear, we fleeced off the fat and carried it to our horses at several loads. We then packed it up on our horses, and had a heavy pack of it on each one. We now started and went on till about sunset, when I concluded we must be near our camp; so I hollered and my son answered me, and we moved on in the direction to the camp. We had gone but a little way when I heard my dogs make a warm start again; and I jumped down from my horse and gave him up to my friend, and told him I would follow them. He went on to the camp, and I went ahead after my dogs with all my might for a considerable distance, till at last night came on. The woods were very rough and hilly, and all covered over with cane.

I now was compel'd to move on more slowly; and was frequently falling over logs, and into the cracks made by the earthquakes, so that I was very much afraid I would break my gun. However I went on about three miles, when I came to a good big creek, which I waded. It was very cold, and the creek was about knee-deep; but I felt no great inconvenience from it just then, as I was all over wet with sweat from running, and I felt hot enough. After I got over the creek and out of the cane, which was very thick on all our creeks, I listened for my dogs. I found they had either treed or brought the bear to a stop, as they continued barking in the same place. I pushed on as near in the direction to the noise as I could, till I found the hill was too steep for me to climb, and so I backed and went down the creek some distance till I came to a hollow, and then took up that, till I come to a place where I could climb up the hill. It was mighty dark, and was difficult to see my way or any thing else. When I got up the hill, I found I had passed the dogs; and so I turned and went to them. I found, when I got there, they had treed the bear in a large forked poplar, and it was setting in the fork.

I could see the lump, but not plain enough to shoot with any certainty, as there was no moonlight; and so I set in to hunting for some dry brush to make me a

light; but I could find none, though I could find that the ground was torn mightily to pieces by the cracks.

At last I thought I could shoot by guess, and kill him; so I pointed as near the lump as I could, and fired away. But the bear didn't come; he only clomb up higher and got out on a limb, which helped me to see him better. I now loaded up again and fired, but this time he didn't move at all. I commenced loading for a third fire, but the first thing I knowed, the bear was down among the dogs, and they were fighting all around me. I had my big butcher in my belt, and I had a pair of dressed buckskin breeches on. So I took out my knife, and stood, determined, if he should get hold of me, to defend myself in the best way I could. I stood there for some time, and could now and then see a white dog I had, but the rest of them, and the bear, which were dark coloured, I couldn't see at all, it was so miserable dark. They still fought around me, and sometimes within three feet of me; but, at last, the bear got down into one of the cracks, that the earthquakes had made in the ground, about four feet deep, and I could tell the biting end of him by the hollering of my dogs. So I took my gun and pushed the muzzle of it about, till I thought I had it against the main part of his body, and fired; but it happened to be only the fleshy part of his foreleg. With this, he jumped out of the crack, and he and the dogs had another hard fight around me, as before. At last, however, they forced him back into the crack again, as he was when I had shot.

I had laid down my gun in the dark, and I now began to hunt for it; and while hunting, I got hold of a pole, and I concluded I would punch him awhile with that. I did so, and when I would punch him, the dogs would jump in on him, when he would bite them badly, and they would jump out again. I concluded, as he would take punching so patiently, it might be that he would lie still enough for me to get down in the crack, and feel slowly along till I could find the right place to give him a dig with my butcher. So I got down, and my dogs got in before him and kept his head towards them, till I got along easily up to him; and placing my hand on his rump, felt for his shoulder, just behind which I intended to stick him. I made a lounge with my long knife, and fortunately stuck him right through the heart; at which he just sank down, and I crawled out in a hurry. In a little time my dogs all come out too, and seemed satisfied, which was the way they always had of telling me that they had finished him.

I suffered very much that night with cold, as my leather breeches, and every thing else I had on, was wet and frozen. But I managed to get my bear out of this crack after several hard trials, and so I butchered him, and laid down to try to sleep. But my fire was very bad, and I couldn't find any thing that would burn well to make it any better; and I concluded I should freeze, if I didn't warm myself in some way by exercise. So I got up, and hollered a while, and then I would just jump up and down with all my might, and throw myself into all sorts of motions. But all this wouldn't do; for my blood was now getting cold, and the chills coming all over me. I was so tired, too, that I could hardly walk; but I thought I would do the best I could to save my life, and then, if I died, nobody would be to blame. So I went to a tree about two feet through, and not a limb on it for thirty feet, and I would climb up it to the limbs, and then lock my arms together around it, and slide down to the bottom again. This would make the insides of my legs and arms feel mighty warm and good. I continued this till daylight in the morning, and how often I clomb up my tree and slid down I don't know, but I reckon at least a hundred times.

In the morning I got my bear hung up so as to be safe, and then set out to hunt for my camp. I found it after a while, and McDaniel and my son were very much rejoiced to see me get back, for they were about to give me up for lost. We got our breakfasts, and then secured our meat by building a high scaffold, and covering it over. We had no fear of its spoiling, for the weather was so cold that it couldn't.

We now started after my other bear, which had caused me so much trouble and suffering; and before we got him, we got a start after another, and took him also. We went on to the creek I had crossed the night before and camped, and then went to where my bear was, that I had killed in the crack. When we examined the place, McDaniel said he wouldn't have gone into it, as I did, for all the bears in the woods.

We took the meat down to our camp and salted it and also the last one we had killed; intending, in the morning, to make a hunt in the harricane again.

We prepared for resting that night, and I can assure the reader I was in need of it. We had laid down by our

fire, and about ten o'clock there came a most terrible earthquake, which shook the earth so, that we were rocked about like we had been in a cradle. We were very much alarmed; for though we were accustomed to feel earthquakes, we were now right in the region which had been torn to pieces by them in 1812, and we thought it might take a notion and swallow us up, like the big fish did Jonah.

In the morning we packed up and moved to the harricane, where we made another camp, and turned out that evening and killed a very large bear, which made *eight* we had now killed in this hunt.

The next morning we entered the harricane again, and in little or no time my dogs were in full cry. We pursued them, and soon came to a thick cane-brake, in which they had stop'd their bear. We got up close to him, as the cane was so thick that we couldn't see more than a few feet. Here I made my friend hold the cane a little open with his gun till I shot the bear, which was a mighty large one. I killed him dead in his tracks. We got him out and butchered him, and in a little time started another and killed him, which now made *ten* we had killed; and we know'd we couldn't pack any more home, as we had only five horses along; therefore we returned to the camp and salted up all our meat, to be ready for a start homeward next morning.

The morning came, and we packed our horses with the meat, and had as much as they could possibly carry, and sure enough cut out for home. It was about thirty miles, and we reached home the second day. I had now accommodated my neighbour with meat enough to do him, and had killed in all, up to that time, fifty-eight bears, during the fall and winter.

As soon as the time come for them to quit their houses and come out again in the spring, I took a notion to hunt a little more, and in about one month I killed forty-seven more, which made one hundred and five bears I had killed in less than one year from that time.

1834

From

The Crockett Almanacs

Between 1835 and 1856 there appeared in various cities—Nashville, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and others—almanacs put out by various publishers and called the **Crockett Almanacs.** Like others, these almanacs contained data about the calendar year; unlike most others, they contained many tall tales, usually written as if in the language of Crockett or his unlearned frontier neighbors.

Whether Crockett had anything to do with the earliest almanacs is not known, and certainly before long the tales were concocted by journalists, some of whom knew a good deal about frontier life and some of whom knew very little. The stories in the periodicals, however, all were purportedly told by the famous frontiersman. At their best these almanac humorists, whoever they were, caught the qualities of good yarnspinning sessions. The style was that of lively fireside talk, homely, relatively simple, but concrete, vigorous, full of conceits. The materials were typical combinations of earthy, even vulgar, reality with the unearthly inventions of soaring imaginations. The sort of literature in the almanacs, in other words, foreshadowed the widespread use of the American language of informal talk in print and the fantastic inventions of T. B. Thorpe, Joel Chandler Harris, Mark Twain, and Walt Disney. "A Sensible Varmint" and "Death of Crockett" are from Turner and Fisher almanacs, "Crockett's Morning Hunt" from a Cozans almanac; all appeared in New York.

A SENSIBLE VARMINT

Almost every body that knows the forest, understands parfectly well that Davy Crockett never loses powder and ball, havin' ben brought up to believe it a sin to throw away amminition, and that is the benefit of a vartuous eddikation. I war out in the forest one arternoon, and had jist got to a place called the Great Gap, when I seed a rackkoon setting all alone upon a tree.

I clapped the breech of Brown Betty to my shoulder, and war jist going to put a piece of lead between his shoulders, when he lifted one paw, and sez he, "Is your name Crockett?"

Sez I, "You are rite for wonst, my name is Davy Crockett."



Davy and the sensible varmint.

"Then," sez he, "you needn't take no further trouble, for I may as well come down without another word." And the cretur walked rite down from the tree, for he considered himself shot.

I stoops down and pats him on the head, and sez I, "I hope I may be shot myself before I hurt a hair of your head, for I never had sich a compliment in my life."

"Seeing as how you say that," sez he, "I'll jist walk off for the present, not doubting your word a bit, d'ye see, but lest you should kinder happen to change your mind."

1841

DEATH OF CROCKETT

Thar's a great rejoicin' among the bears of Kaintuck, and the alligators of the Massissippi rolls up thar shining ribs to the sun, and has grown so fat and lazy that they will hardly move out of the way for a steamboat. The rattlesnakes come up out of thar holes and frolic within ten foot of the clearings, and the foxes goes to sleep in the goose-pens. It is bekase the rifle of Crockett is silent forever, and the print of his moccasins is found no more in our woods. His old fox-skin cap hangs up in the cabin, and every hunter, whether he are a Puke, a Wolverine, or a Sucker, never looks at it without turnin' away his head and droppin' a salt tear.

Luke Wing entered the cabin the other day and took down old Killdevil to look at it. The muzzle was half stopped up with rust, and a great green spider run out of it and made his escape in the cracks of the wall. The varmints of the forest will fear it no more. His last act to defend it, war when the poor gallant Kurnill drew a bead on a pesky Mexican and brought him down. Crockett went to put "Big Butcher" into another, and the feller on the ground turned half over, and stuck a knife into him. Another come up behind and run his bayonet into Crockett's back, for the cretur would as soon have faced a hindred live mammoths as to have faced Crockett at any time.

Down fell the Kurnill like a lion struck by thunder and lightning. He never spoke again. It war a great loss to the country, and the world, and to ole Kaintuck in particklar. Thar were never known such a member of Congress as Crockett, and never will be agin. The painters and bears will miss him, for he never missed them.

He died like a member o' Congress ought to die. While he war about to do his country some sarvice, and raise her name as high as her mountains, he war cut down in the prime o' life, and at a time when he war most wanted. His screams and yells are heard no more, and the whole country are clouded with a darkness for the gallant Kurnill. He war an ornament to the forest, and war never known to refuse his whiskey to a stranger. When he war alive, it war most beautiful to hear his scream coming through the forest; it would turn and twist itself into some of the most splendifferous knots, and then untie itself and keep on till it got clar into nowhere.

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27 Puke, Wolverine, Sucker, natives, respectively, of Missouri, Michigan, and Illinois

But he are a dead man now, and if you want to see old Kaintuck's tears, go thar, and speak o' her gallant Kurnill, and thar's not a human but what will turn away and go behind some tree and dry up thar tears. He are dead now, and may he rest forever and a day arter.

1847

CROCKETT'S MORNING HUNT

One January morning it was so all-screwen-up cold that the forest trees war so stiff that they couldn't shake, and the very day-break froze fast as it war tryin' to dawn. The tinder-box in my cabin would no more ketch fire than a sunk raft at the bottom o' the sea. Seein' that daylight war so far behind time, I thought creation war in a fair way for freezin' fast.

"So," thinks I, "I must strike a leetle fire from my fingers, light my pipe, travel out a few leagues, and see about it."

Then I brought my knuckles together like two thunder clouds, but the sparks froze up afore I could begin to collect 'em—so out I walked, and endeavored to keep myself unfriz by goin' at a hop, step and jump gait, and whistlin' the tune of "fire in the mountains!" as I went along in three double quick time. Well, arter I had walked about twenty-five miles up the peak o' Daybreak Hill, I soon discovered what war the matter. The airth had actually friz fast in her axis, and couldn't turn round; the sun had got jammed between two cakes o' ice under the wheels, an' thar he had bin shinin' and workin' to get loose, till he friz fast in his cold sweat.

"C-r-e-a-t-i-o-n!" thought I, "this are the toughest sort o' suspension, and it mustn't be endured—somethin' must be done, or human creation is done for."

It war then so antedeluvian and premature cold that my upper and lower teeth an' tongue war all collapsed together as tight as a friz oyster. I took a fresh twenty pound bear off o' my back that I'd picked up on the road, an' beat the animal agin the ice till the hot ile began to walk out on him at all sides. I then took an' held him over the airth's axes, an' squeezed him till I thaw'd 'em loose, poured about a ton on it over the sun's face, give the airth's cog-wheel one kick backward, till I got the sun loose—whistled "Push along, keep movin'!" an' in about fifteen seconds the airth gin a grunt, and begun movin'—the sun walked up beautiful, salutin' me with sich a wind o' gratitude that it made me sneeze. I lit my pipe by the blaze o' his top-knot, shouldered my bear, an' walked home, introducin' the people to fresh daylight with a piece of sunrise in my pocket, with which I cooked my bear steaks, an' enjoyed one o' the best breakfasts I had tasted for some time. If I didn't, jist wake some mornin' and go with me to the office o' sunrise!

1853

George Washington Harris

1814 • 1869

At the age of five, George Washington Harris was taken from his birthplace in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, to Knoxville, Tennessee. For forty years he lived in this sleepy village, coming to know intimately the life of its peaceful valley. He left its "Knobs" and mountains only when the economic stirrings preceding the Civil War forced him away.

For a number of years Harris wrote humorous sketches for the New York *Spirit of the Times*. After 1854 his stories couched in the quaint language of his comic character, Sut Lovingood, obtained, according to one discerning critic of that period, "a circulation and popularity, throughout the country, which no similar productions, in modern times, have enjoyed." Sut, as a

self-confessed "nat'ral born durn'd fool," delivered blows at the foibles of mankind from the vantage point of this "unassailable position."

In a typical Lovingood story, the characters whom Sut disliked were comically portrayed and then, in all probability, physically maltreated. Sut's notion of the height of humor was a man whom he disliked surrounded by a knot of angry hornets and trying vainly to get away in a hurry. What Harris is admired for by modern enthusiasts about his yarns is his ability to put oral tales with all the art of their comic movement and all the poetry of their style onto the printed page.

Sut Lovingood Yarns, New York, 1867 • Walter Blair, **Native American Humor (1800-1900)**, Cincinnati, 1937 • F. J. Meine, **Tall Tales of the Southwest**, New York, 1938 • (Numerous tales published only in newspapers have been found recently by Donald Day and F. J. Meine, who plan to bring them all together in a book)

Mrs. Yardley's Quilting

Thar's one durn'd nasty muddy job, an' I is jis' glad enuf tu take a ho'n ur two, on the straingth ove hit."

"What have you been doing, Sut?"

"Helpin tu salt ole Missis Yardley down."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Fixin her fur rotten cumfurtably, kiverin her up wif sile, tu keep the buzzards frum cheatin the wurms."

"Oh, you have been helping to bury a woman."

"That's hit, by golly! Now why the devil can't I 'splain mysef like yu? I ladles out my words at randum, like a calf kickin at yaller-jackids; yu jis' rolls em out tu the pint, like a feller a-layin bricks—every one fits. How is it that bricks fits so clost enyhow? Rocks wont ni du hit."

"Becaze they'se all ove a size," ventured a man with a wen over his eye.

"The devil yu say, hon'ey-head! haint reapin-mersheens ove a size? I'd like to see two ove em fit clost. Yu wait ontil yu sprouts tuther ho'n, afore yu venters tu 'splain mix'd questions. George, did yu know ole Missis Yardley?"

"No."

"Well, she wer a curious 'oman in her way, an' she wore shiney specks. Now jis' listen: Whenever yu see a ole 'oman ahine a par ove *shiney* specks, yu keep yer eye skinn'd; they am dang'rus in the extreme. Thar is jis' no knowin what they ken du. I hed one a-stradil ove me onst, fur kissin her gal. She went fur my har, an' she went fur my skin, ontil I tho't she ment tu kill me, an' wud a-dun hit, ef my hollerin hadent fotch ole Dave Jordan, a *bacheler,* tu my aid. He, like a durn'd fool, cotch her by the laig, an' drug her back'ards ofen me. She jis' kivered him, an' I run, by golly! The nex time I seed him he wer bald headed, an' his face looked like he'd been a-fitin wildcats.

"Ole Missis Yardley wer a great noticer ove littil things, that nobody else ever seed. She'd say right in the middil ove sumbody's serious talk: 'Law sakes! thar goes that yaller slut ove a hen, a-flingin straws over her shoulder; she's arter settin now, an' haint laid but seven aigs. I'll disapint *her,* see ef I don't; I'll put a punkin in her ne's, an' a feather in her nose. An' bless my soul! jis' look at that cow wif the wilted ho'n, a-flingin up dirt an' a-smellin the place whar hit cum frum, wif the rale ginuine still-wurim twis' in her tail, too, what upon the face ove the yeath kin she be arter now, the ole fool? watch her, Sally. An' sakes alive! jis' look at that ole sow; she's a-gwine in a fas' trot, wif her empty bag a-floppin agin her sides. Thar, she hes stop't, an's a-listenin! massy on us! what a long yearnis grunt she gin; hit cum frum way back ove her kidneys. Thar she goes agin; she's arter no good, sich kerryin on means no good.'

"An' so she wud gabble, no odds who wer a-listenin. She looked like she mout been made at fust 'bout four foot long, an' the common thickness ove wimen when they's at tharsefs, an' then had her har tied tu a stump, a par ove steers hitched to her heels, an' then straiched out a-mos' two foot more—mos' ove the straichin cumin outen her laigs an' naik. Her stockins, a-hangin on the clothes-line tu dry, looked like a par ove sabre scabbards, an' her naik looked like a dry beef shank smoked, an' mout been ni ontu es tough. I never felt hit mysef, I didn't, I jis' jedges by looks. Her darter Sal wer bilt at fust 'bout the laingth ove her mam, but wer never straiched eny by a par ove steers an' she wer fat enuf tu

kill; she wer taller lyin down than she wer a-standin up. Hit wer her who gin me the 'hump shoulder.' Jis' look at me; haint I'se got a tech ove the dromedary back thar bad? haint I humpy? Well, a-stoopin tu kiss that squatty lardstan ove a gal is what dun hit tu me. She wer the fairest-lookin gal I ever seed. She allers wore thick woolin stockins 'bout six inches too long fur her laig; they rolled down over her garters, lookin like a par ove life-presarvers up thar. I tell yu she wer a tarin gal enyhow. Luved kissin, wrastlin, an' biled cabbige, an' hated tite clothes, hot weather, an' suckit-riders. B'leved strong in married folk's ways, cradles, an' the remishun ove sins, an' didn't b'leve in corsets, fleas, peaners, nur the fashun plates."

"What caused the death of Mrs. Yardley, Sut?"

"Nuffin, only her heart stop't beatin 'bout losin a nine dimunt quilt. True, she got a skeer'd hoss tu run over her, but she'd a-got over that ef a quilt hadn't been mix'd up in the catastrophy. Yu see quilts wer wun ove her speshul gifts; she run strong on the bed-kiver question. Irish chain, star ove Texas, sun-flower, nine dimunt, saw teeth, checker board, an' shell quilts; blue, an' white, an' yaller an' black coverlids, an' callickercumfurts reigned triumphan' 'bout her hous'. They wer packed in drawers, layin in shelfs full, wer hung four dubbil on lines in the lof, packed in chists, piled on cheers, an' wer everywhar, even ontu the beds, an' wer changed every bed-makin. She told everybody she cud git tu listen tu hit that she ment tu give every durn'd one ove them tu Sal when she got married. Oh, lordy! what es fat a gal es Sal Yardley cud ever du wif half ove em, an' sleepin wif a husbun at that, is more nor I ever cud see through. Jis' think ove her onder twenty layer ove quilts in July, an' yu in thar too. Gewhillikins! George, look how I is sweatin' now, an' this is December. I'd 'bout es lief be shet up in a steam biler wif a three hundred pound bag ove lard, es tu make a bisiness ove sleepin wif that gal—'twould kill a glass-blower.

"Well, tu cum tu the serious part ove this conversashun, that is how the old quilt-mersheen an' coverlid-loom cum tu stop operashuns on this yeath. She hed narrated hit thru the neighborhood that nex Saterday she'd gin a quiltin—three quilts an' one cumfurt tu tie. 'Goblers, fiddils, gals, an' whisky,' wer the words she sent tu the men-folk, an' more tetchin ur wakenin words never drap't ofen an 'oman's tongue. She sed tu the gals, 'Sweet toddy, huggin, dancin, an' huggers in 'bundunce.' Them words struck the gals rite in the pit ove the stumick, an' spread a ticklin sensashun bof ways, ontil they scratched thar heads wif one han, an' thar heels wif tuther.

"Everybody, he an' she, what wer baptized b'levers in the righteousnes ove quiltins wer thar, an' hit jis' so happen'd that everybody in them parts, frum fifteen summers tu fifty winters, wer unannamus b'levers. Strange, warn't hit? Hit wer the bigges' quiltin ever Missis Yardley hilt, an' she hed hilt hundreds; everybody wer thar, 'scept the constibil an' suckit-rider, two dam easily-spared pussons; the numbers ni ontu even too; jis' a few more boys nur gals; that made hit more exhitin, fur hit gin the gals a chance tu kick an' squeal a littil, wifout runnin eny risk ove not gittin kissed at all, an' hit gin reasonabil grouns fur a few scrimmages amung the he's. Now es kissin an' fitin am the pepper an' salt ove all soshul getherins, so hit wer more espishully wif this ove ours. Es I swung my eyes over the crowd, George, I thought quiltins, managed in a morril an' sensibil way, truly am good things—good fur free drinkin, good fur free eatin, good fur free huggin, good fur free dancin, good fur free fitin, an' goodest ove all fur poperlatin a country fas'.

"Thar am a fur-seein wisdum in quiltins, ef they hes proper trimmins: 'vittils, fiddils, an' sperrits in 'bundunce.' One holesum quiltin am wuf three old pray'r-meetins on the poperlashun pint, purtickerly ef hits hilt in the dark ove the moon, an' runs intu the night a few hours, an' April ur May am the time chosen. The moon don't suit quiltins whar everybody is well acquainted an' already fur along in courtin. She dus help pow'ful tu begin a courtin match onder, but when hit draws ni ontu a head, nobody wants a moon but the ole mammys.

"The mornin cum, still, saft, sunshiney; cocks crowin, hens singin, birds chirpin, tuckeys gobblin—jis' the day tu sun quilts, kick, kiss, squeal, an' make love.

"All the plow-lines an' clothes-lines wer straiched tu every post an' tree. Quilts purvailed. Durn my gizzard ef two acres roun that ar house warn't jis' one solid quilt, all out a-sunnin, an' tu be seed. They dazzled the eyes, skeered the hosses, gin wimen the heart-burn, an' perdominated.

"To'ards sundown the he's begun tu drap in. Yearnis' needil-drivin cummenced tu lose groun; threads broke ofen, thimbils got los', an' quilts needed anuther roll.

Gigglin, winkin, whisperin, smoofin ove har, an' gals a-ticklin one anuther, wer a-gainin every inch ove groun what the needils los'. Did yu ever notis, George, at all sushul getherins, when the he's begin tu gather, that the young she's begin tu tickil one anuther an' the ole maids swell thar tails, roach up thar backs, an' sharpen thar nails ontu the bed-posts an' door jams, an' spit an' groan sorter like cats a-courtin? Dus hit mean *rale* rath, ur is hit a dare tu the he's, sorter kivered up wif the outside signs ove danger? I honestly b'leve that the young shes' ticklin means, 'Cum an' take this job ofen our hans.' But that swellin I jis' don't onderstan; dus yu? Hit looks skeery, an' I never tetch one ove em when they am in the swellin way. I may be mistaken'd 'bout the ticklin bisiness too; hit may be dun like a feller chaws poplar bark when he haint got eny terbacker, a-sorter better nur nun make-shif. I dus know one thing tu a certainty: that is, when the he's take hold the ticklin quits, an' ef yu gits one ove the ole maids out tu hersef, then she subsides an' is the smoofes, sleekes, saft thing yu ever seed, an' dam ef yu can't hear her purr, jis' es plain!

"But then, George, gals an' ole maids haint the things tu fool time away on. Hits widders, by golly, what am the rale sensibil, steady-goin, never-skeerin, never-kickin, willin, sperrited, smoof pacers. They cum clost up tu the hoss-block, standin still wif thar purty silky years playin, an' the naik-veins a-throbbin, an' waits fur the word, which ove course yu gives, arter yu finds yer feet well in the stirrup, an' away they moves like a cradil on cushioned rockers, ur a spring buggy runnin in damp san'. A tetch ove the bridil, an' they knows yu wants em tu turn, an' they dus hit es willin es ef the idear wer thar own. I be dod rabbited ef a man can't 'propriate happiness by the skinful ef he is in contack wif sumbody's widder, an' is smart. Gin me a willin widder, the yeath over: what they don't know, haint worth larnin. They hes all been tu Jamakey an' larnt how sugar's made, an' knows how tu sweeten wif hit; an' by golly, they is always ready tu use hit. All yu hes tu du is tu find the spoon, an' then drink cumfort till yer blind. Nex tu good sperrits an' my laigs, I likes a twenty-five year ole widder, wif roun ankils, an' bright eyes, honestly an' squarly lookin intu yurn, an' sayin es plainly es a partrige sez 'Bob White,' 'Don't be afraid ove me; I hes been thar; yu know hit ef yu hes eny sense, an' thar's no use in eny humbug, ole feller—cum ahead!"

"Ef yu onderstans widder nater, they ken save yu a power ove troubil, onsartinty, an' time, an' ef yu is interprisin yu gits mons'rous well paid fur hit. The very soun ove thar littil shoe-heels speak full trainin, an' hes a knowin click as they tap the floor; an' the rustil ove thar dress sez, 'I dar yu tu ax me.'

"When yu hes made up yer mind tu court one, jis' go at hit like hit wer a job ove rail-maulin. Ware yer workin close, use yer common, every-day moshuns an' words, an' abuv all, fling away yer cinamint ile vial an' burn all yer love songs. No use in tryin tu fool em, fur they sees plum thru yu, a durn'd sight plainer than they dus thru thar veils. No use in a pasted shut; she's been thar. No use in borrowin a cavortin fat hoss; she's been thar. No use in har-dye; she's been thar. No use in cloves, tu kill whisky breff; she's been thar. No use in buyin clost curtains fur yer bed, fur she has been thar. Widders am a speshul means, George, fur ripenin green men, killin off weak ones, an makin 'ternally happy the soun ones.

"Well, es I sed afore, I flew the track an' got ontu the widders. The fellers begun tu ride up an' walk up, sorter slow, like they warn't in a hurry, the durn'd 'saitful raskils, hitchin thar critters tu enything they cud find. One red-comb'd, long-spurr'd, dominecker feller, frum town, in a red an' white gridiron jackid an' patent leather gaiters, hitched his hoss, a wild, skeery, wall-eyed devil, inside the yard palins, tu a cherry tree lim'. Thinks I, that hoss hes a skeer intu him big enuf tu run intu town, an' perhaps beyant hit, ef I kin only tetch hit off; so I sot intu thinkin.

"One aind ove a long clothes-line, wif nine dimunt quilts ontu hit, wer tied tu the same cherry tree that the hoss wer. I tuck my knife and socked hit thru every quilt, 'bout the middil, an' jis' below the rope, an' tied them thar wif bark, so they cudent slip. Then I went tu the back aind, an' ontied hit frum the pos', knottin in a hoe-handil, by the middil, tu keep the quilts frum slippin off ef my bark strings failed, an' laid hit on the groun. Then I went tu the tuther aind: thar wer 'bout ten foot tu spar, a-lyin on the groun arter tyin tu the tree. I tuck hit atwix Wall-eye's hine laigs, an' tied hit fas' tu bof stirrups, an' then cut the cherry tree lim'

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72 dominecker, an uncomplimentary allusion to the youth's resemblance to a rooster of the American breed called Dominickers

betwix his bridil an' the tree, almos' off. Now, mine yu thar wer two ur three uther ropes full ove quilts atween me an' the hous', so I wer purty well hid frum thar. I jis' tore off a palin frum the fence, an' tuck hit in bof hans, an' arter raisin hit 'way up yander, I fotch hit down, es hard es I cud, flatsided to'ards the groun, an' hit acksidentally happen'd tu hit Wall-eye, 'bout nine inches ahead ove the root ove his tail. Hit landed so hard that hit made my hans tingle, an' then busted intu splinters. The first thing I did, wer tu feel ove mysef, on the same spot whar hit hed hit the hoss. I cudent help duin hit tu save my life, an' I swar I felt sum ove Wall-eye's sensashun, jis' es plain. The fust thing he did, wer tu tare down the lim' wif a twenty foot jump, his head to'ards the hous'. Thinks I, now yu hev dun hit, yu durn'd wall-eyed fool! tarin down that lim' wer the beginin ove all the troubil, an' the hoss did hit hissef; my conshuns felt clar es a mountin spring, an' I wer in a frame ove mine tu obsarve things es they happen'd, an' they soon begun tu happen purty clost arter one anuther rite then, an' thar, an' tharabouts, clean ontu town, thru hit, an' still wer a-happenin, in the woods beyant thar ni ontu eleven mile frum ole man Yardley's gate, an' four beyant town.

"The fust line ove quilts he tried tu jump, but broke hit down; the nex one he ran onder; the rope cotch ontu the ho'n ove the saddil, broke at bof ainds, an' went along wif the hoss, the cherry tree lim' an' the fust line ove quilts, what I hed proverdensally tied fas' tu the rope. That's what I calls foresight, George. Right furnint the frunt door he cum in contack wif ole Missis Yardley hersef, an' anuther ole 'oman; they wer a-holdin a nine dimunt quilt spread out, a-'zaminin hit, an' a-praisin hits purfeckshuns. The durn'd onmanerly, wall-eyed fool run plum over Missis Yardley, frum ahine, stompt one hine foot through the quilt, takin hit along, a-kickin ontil he made hits corners snap like a whip. The gals screamed, the men hollered wo! an' the ole 'oman wer toted intu the hous' limber es a wet string, an' every word she sed wer, 'Oh, my preshus nine dimunt quilt!'

"Wall-eye busted thru the palins, an' Dominicker sed 'im, made a mortal rush fur his bitts, wer too late fur them, but in good time fur the strings ove flyin quilts, got tangled amung em, an' the gridiron jackid patren wer los' tu my sight amung star an' Irish chain quilts; he went frum that quiltin at the rate ove thuty miles tu the hour. Nuffin lef on the lot ove the hole consarn, but a nine biler hat, a par ove gloves, an' the jack ove hearts.

"What a onmanerly, suddin way ove leavin places sum folks hev got, enyhow.

"Thinks I, well, that fool hoss, tarin down that cherry tree lim', hes dun sum good, enyhow; hit hes put the ole 'oman outen the way fur the balance ove the quiltin, an' tuck Dominicker outen the way an' outen danger, fur that gridiron jackid wud a-bred a scab on his nose afore midnite; hit wer morrily boun tu du hit.

"Two months arterwards, I tracked the route that hoss tuck in his kalamatus skeer, by quilt rags, tufts ove cotton, bunches ove har, (human an' hoss,) an' scraps ove a gridiron jackid stickin ontu the bushes, an' plum at the aind ove hit, whar all sign gin out, I foun a piece ove watch chain an' a hosses head. The places what know'd Dominicker, know'd 'im no more.

"Well, arter they'd tuck the ole 'oman up stairs an' camfired her tu sleep, things begun tu work agin. The widders broke the ice, an' arter a littil gigilin, goblin, an' gabblin, the kissin begun. *Smack!*—'Thar, now,' a widder sed that. *Pop!*—'Oh, don't!' *Pfip!*—'Oh, yu quit!' *Plosh!*—'Go *way* yu awkerd critter, yu kissed me in the eye!' anuther widder sed that. *Bop!* 'Now yu ar satisfied, I recon, big mouf!' *Vip!*—'That haint fair!' *Spat!*—'Oh, lordy! May, cum pull Bill away; he's a-tanglin my har.' *Thut!*—'I jis' d-a-r-e yu tu du that agin!' a widder sed that, too. Hit sounded all 'roun that room like poppin co'n in a hot skillet, an' wer pow'ful sujestif.

"Hit kep on ontil I be durn'd ef *my* bristils didn't begin tu rise, an' sumthin like a cold buckshot wud run down the marrow in my back-bone 'bout every ten secons, an' then run up agin, tolerabil hot. I kep a swallerin wif nuthin tu swaller, an' my face felt swell'd; an' yet I wer fear'd tu make a bulge. Thinks I, I'll ketch one out tu hersef torreckly, an' then I guess we'll rastil. Purty soon Sal Yardley started fur the smoke-'ous, so I jis' gin my head a few short shakes, let down one ove my wings a-trailin, an' sirkiled roun her wif a side twis' in my naik, steppin sidewise, an' a-fetchin up my hinmos' foot wif a sorter jerkin slide at every step. Sez I, 'Too coo-took a-too.' She onderstood hit, an stopt, sorter spreadin her shoulders. An' jis' es I hed pouch'd out my mouf, an' wer a-reachin forrid wif hit, for the

article hitsef, sunthin interfared wif me, hit did. George, wer yu ever ontu yer hans an' knees, an' let a hell-tarin big, mad ram, wif a ten-yard run, but yu yearnis'ly, jis' onst, right squar ontu the pint ove yer back-bone?"

"No, you fool; why do you ask?"

"Kaze I wanted tu know ef yu cud hev a realizin' noshun ove my shock. Hits scarcely worth while tu try tu make yu onderstan the case by words only, onless yu hev been tetched in that way. Gr-eat golly! the fust thing I felt, I tuck hit tu be a back-ackshun yeathquake; an' the fust thing I seed wer my chaw'r terbacker a-flyin over Sal's head like a skeer'd bat. My mouf wer pouch'd out, ready fur the article hitsef, yu know, an' hit went outen the roun hole like the wad outen a pop-gun—thug! an' the fust thing I know'd, I wer a flyin over Sal's head too, an' a-gainin on the chaw'r terbacker fast. I wer straitened out strait, toes hinemos', middil finger-nails foremos', an' the fust thing I hearn wer, 'Yu dam Shanghi!' Great Jerus-a-lam! I lit ontu my all fours jis' in time tu but the yard gate ofen hits hinges, an' skeer loose sum more hosses—kep on in a four-footed gallop, clean acrost the lane afore I cud straiten up, an' yere I cotch up wif my chaw'r terbacker, stickin flat agin a fence-rail. I hed got so good a start that I thot hit a pity tu spile hit, so I jis' jump'd the fence an' tuck thru the orchurd. I tell yu I dusted these yere close, fur I tho't hit wer arter me.

"Arter runnin a spell, I ventered tu feel roun back thar, fur sum signs ove what hed happened tu me. George, arter two pow'ful hard tugs, I pull'd out the vamp an' sole ove one ove ole man Yardley's big brogans, what he hed los' amung my coat-tails. Dre'ful, dre'ful! Arter I got hit away frum thar, my flesh went fas' asleep, frum abuv my kidneys tu my knees; about now, fur the fust time, the idear struck me, what hit wer that hed interfar'd wif me, an' los' me the kiss. Hit wer ole Yardley hed kicked me. I walked fur a month like I wer straddlin a thorn hedge. Sich a shock, at sich a time, an' on sich a place—jis' think ove hit! hit am tremenjus, haint hit? The place feels num, right now."

"Well, Sut, how did the quilting come out?"

"How the hell du yu 'speck me tu know? I warn't thar eny more."

1867

Thomas Bangs Thorpe

1815 • 1878

Although he was the author of the most famous tall tale of the pre-Civil War Southwest, "The Big Bear of Arkansas," Thomas Bangs Thorpe was born in the East—in Westfield, Massachusetts, in 1815. He left Wesleyan University, in Middletown, Connecticut, in 1836, when ill health made it necessary for him to move to a milder climate, and settled down in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In Louisiana and other parts of what was then the Far West, Thorpe gathered material for both paintings and writings which won a fine reputation for him.

Thorpe had a varied career. He painted various frontier scenes and numerous portraits, among the most admired of which were one of Jenny Lind and one of his friend, Zachary Taylor. He edited several newspapers and wrote a number of sketches which were widely reprinted. He was in the army during the Mexican War. After the

war, he returned to the East—to New York, where he was an editor until his death in 1878.

The Mysteries of the Backwoods; or Sketches of the Southwest including Character, Scenery and Rural Sports (1846) and *The Hive of the Bee Hunter* (1854) were Thorpe's best books—both of them collections of sketches detailing life in the backwoods. "The Big Bear of Arkansas," this author's masterpiece, first appeared in a great publication of masculine humor of the day, *The Spirit of the Times*, in 1841. Like many other pieces published in that journal, this narrative shows how the art of the oral tale gave shape and substance to narrative in print.

F. J. Meine, "Thomas Bangs Thorpe," Dictionary of American Biography, New York, 1935 • Walter Blair, Native American Humor (1800-1900), Cincinnati, 1937

The Big Bear of Arkansas

In 1839 John Neal, an Eastern critic and fiction writer quite prominent at the time, published the article "Story-Telling" in the New York Mirror. "Of all the stories I meet with," he testified, "none are so delightful to me as those I over-hear on board a steam-boat or a stage-coach . . . live stories, brimful of energy and vivacity." Thorpe's "Big Bear," published a couple of years later, conveyed much of the life and the gusto of a good yarn spun in the social hall of a steamboat.

If, as many good critics agree, the essence of humor is incongruity, Thorpe's narrative contains that essence. One notes the disparity, for instance, between the various worlds in the story—worlds which are identified with various groups and various scenes. Contrasted are the heterogeneous world of the steamboat, realistically portrayed in the "literary" words of the author; the fashionable world of New Orleans, satirically described in the homely words of Jim Doggett; and the comic, wildly fantastic world of Shirt-tail Bend in Arkansas, imaginatively revealed by Jim's poetical invention. Each of these worlds has its own elements of amusement, and the juxtaposition underlines and contrasts these elements.

As Jim—a fascinating character in his own right—tells his tall tale, he becomes more and more imaginative. The "creation state" of Arkansas, as he pictures it, is astonishing compared with any other part of America, and Shirt-tail Bend is astonishing even for Arkansas. Ordinary bear hunts in Jim's section are truly extraordinary, but the great hunt here described is even more wonderful. And as the account of the Big Bear proceeds, even that monster takes on more and more of a supernatural aspect.

Just at the moment Jim's fancy soars into the empyrean, a homely detail—the loss of the valiant hunter's "inexpressibles"—contrasts his imaginative flight with mundane reality. But Jim, having started to soar, is carried along by his imaginings. At the end his yarn, which has started as a jest, has become so real to its creator that he is tremendously impressed by it.

A steamboat on the Mississippi frequently, in making her regular trips, carries between places varying from one to two thousand miles apart; and as these boats advertise to land passengers and freight at "all intermediate landings," the heterogeneous character of the passengers of one of these up-country boats can scarcely be imagined by one who has never seen it with his own eyes. Starting from New Orleans in one of these boats, you will find yourself associated with men from every state in the Union, and from every portion of the globe; and a man of observation need not lack for amusement or instruction in such a crowd, if he will take the trouble to read the great book of character so favourably opened before him. Here may be seen jostling together the wealthy Southern planter, and the pedlar of tin-ware from New England—the Northern merchant, and the Southern jockey—a venerable bishop, and a desperate gambler,—the land speculator, and the

honest farmer—professional men of all creeds and characters—Wolvereens, Suckers, Hoosiers, Buckeyes, and Corn-crackers, beside a "plentiful sprinkling" of the half-horse and half-alligator species of men, who are peculiar to "old Mississippi," and who appear to gain a livelihood simply by going up and down the river. In the pursuit of pleasure or business, I have frequently found myself in such a crowd.

On one occasion, when in New Orleans, I had occasion to take a trip of a few miles up the Mississippi, and I hurried on board the well-known "high-pressure-and-beat-everything" steamboat *Invincible,* just as the last note of the last bell was sounding; and when the confusion and bustle that is natural to a boat's getting under way had subsided, I discovered that I was associated in as heterogeneous a crowd as was ever got together. As my trip was to be of a few hours' duration only, I made no endeavours to become acquainted with my fellow passengers, most of whom would be together many days. Instead of this, I took out of my pocket the "latest paper," and more critically than usual examined its contents; my fellow passengers at the same time disposed themselves in little groups. While I was thus busily employed in reading, and my companions were more busily employed in discussing such subjects as suited their humours best, we were startled most unexpectedly by a loud Indian whoop, uttered in the "social hall," that part of the cabin fitted off for a bar; then was to be heard a loud crowing, which would not have continued to have interested us—such sounds being quite common in that place of spirits—had not the hero of these windy accomplishments stuck his head into the cabin and hallooed out, "Hurra for the Big Bar of Arkansaw!" and then might be heard a confused hum of voices, unintelligible, save in such broken sentences as 'horse," "screamer," "lightning is slow" etc. As might have been expected, this continued interruption attracted the attention of every one in the cabin; all conversation dropped, and in the midst of this surprise the "Big Bar" walked into the cabin, took a chair, put his feet on the stove, and looking back over his shoulder, passed the general and familiar salute of "Strangers, how are you?" He then expressed himself as much at home as if he had been at "the Forks of Cypress," and "perhaps a little more so." Some of the company at this familiarity looked a little angry, and some astonished; but in a moment every face was wreathed in a smile. There was something about the intruder that won the heart on sight. He appeared to be a man enjoying perfect health and contentment: his eyes were as sparkling as diamonds, and good-natured to simplicity. Then his perfect confidence in himself was irresistibly droll. "Perhaps," said he, "gentlemen," running on without a person speaking, "perhaps you have been to New Orleans often; I never made *the first visit before,* and I don't intend to make another in a crow's life. I am thrown away in that ar place, and useless, that ar a fact. Some of the gentlemen thar called me *green*—well, perhaps I am, said I, *but I arn't so at home;* and if I ain't off my trail much, the heads of them perlite chaps themselves wern't much the hardest; for according to my notion, they were real *know-nothings,* green as a pumpkin-vine—couldn't, in farming, I'll bet, raise a crop of turnips; and as for shooting, they'd miss a barn if the door was swinging, and that, too, with the best rifle in the country. And then they talked to me 'bout hunting, and laughed at my calling the principal game in Arkansaw poker, and high-low-jack. 'Perhaps,' said I, 'you prefer chickens and rolette'; at this they laughed harder than ever, and asked me if I lived in the woods, and didn't know what *game* was? At this I rather think I laughed. 'Yes,' I roared, and says, 'Strangers, if you'd asked me *how we got our meat* in Arkansaw, I'd a told you at once, and given you a list of varmints that would make a caravan, beginning with the bar, and ending off with the cat; that's *meat* though, not game.' Game, indeed, that's what city folks call it; and with them it means chippen-birds and shite-pokes; maybe such trash live in my diggens, but I arn't noticed them yet; a bird any way is too trifling. I never did shoot at but one, and I'd never forgiven myself for that, had it weighed less than forty pounds. I wouldn't draw a rifle on any thing less than that; and when I meet with another wild turkey of the same weight I will drap him."

"A wild turkey weighing forty pounds!" exclaimed twenty voices in the cabin at once.

"Yes, strangers, and wasn't it a whopper? You see,

2 **Wolvereens, Suckers.** See note, p. 774 • 2 **Hoosiers, Buckeyes, Corn-crackers,** natives, respectively, of Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky • 78 **chippen-birds and shite-pokes,** chipping sparrows and green herons

the thing was so fat that it couldn't fly far; and when he fell out of the tree, after I shot him, on striking the ground he bust open behind, and the way the pound gobs of tallow rolled out of the opening was perfectly beautiful."

"Where did all that happen?" asked a cynical-looking Hoosier.

"Happen! happened in Arkansaw: where else could it have happened, but in the creation state, the finishing-up country—a state where the *sile* runs down to the centre of the 'arth, and government gives you a title to every inch of it? Then its airs—just breathe them, and they will make you snort like a horse. It's a state without a fault, it is."

"Excepting mosquitoes," cried the Hoosier.

"Well, stranger, except them; for it ar a fact that they are rather *enormous,* and do push themselves in somewhat troublesome. But, stranger, they never stick twice in the same place; and give them a fair chance for a few months, and you will get as much above noticing them as an alligator. They can't hurt my feelings, for they lay under the skin; and I never knew but one case of injury resulting from them, and that was to a Yankee; and they take worse to foreigners, anyhow, than they do to natives. But the way they used that fellow up! first they punched him until he swelled up and busted; then he su-per-a-ted, as the doctor called it, until he was as raw as beef; then he took the ager, owing to the warm weather, and finally he took a steamboat and left the country. He was the only man that ever took mosquitoes to heart that I know of. But mosquitoes is natur, and I never find fault with her. If they ar large, Arkansaw is large, her varmints ar large, her trees ar large, her rivers ar large, and a small mosquito would be of no more use in Arkansaw than preaching in a canebrake."

This knock-down argument in favour of big mosquitoes used the Hoosier up, and the logician started on a new track, to explain how numerous bear were in his "diggins," where he represented them to be "about as plenty as blackberries, and a little plentifuler."

Upon the utterance of this assertion, a timid little man near me inquired if the bear in Arkansaw ever attacked the settlers in numbers.

"No," said our hero, warming with the subject, "no, stranger, for you see it ain't the natur of bar to go in droves; but the way they squander about in pairs and single ones is edifying. And then the way I hunt them the old black rascals know the crack of my gun as well as they know a pig's squealing. They grow thin in our parts, it frightens them so, and they do take the noise dreadfully, poor things. That gun of mine is perfect *epidemic among bar;* if not watched closely, it will go off as quick on a warm scent as my dog Bowie-knife will: and then that dog—whew! why the fellow thinks that the world is full of bar, he find them so easy. It's lucky he don't talk as well as think; for with his natural modesty, if he should suddenly learn how much he is acknowledged to be ahead of all other dogs in the universe, he would be astonished to death in two minutes. Strangers, the dog knows a bar's way as well as a horse-jockey knows a woman's; he always barks at the right time, bites at the exact place, and whips without getting a scratch. I never could tell whether he was made expressly to hunt bar, or whether bar was made expressly for him to hunt; any way, I believe they were ordained to go together as naturally as Squire Jones says a man and woman is, when he moralizes in marrying a couple. In fact, Jones once said, said he, 'Marriage according to law is a civil contract of divine origin; it's common to all countries as well as Arkansaw, and people take to it as naturally as Jim Doggett's Bowie-knife takes to bar.'"

"What season of the year do your hunts take place?" inquired a gentlemanly foreigner, who, from some peculiarities of his baggage, I suspected to be an Englishman, on some hunting expedition, probably at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

"The season for bar hunting, stranger," said the man of Arkansaw, "is generally all the year round, and the hunts take place about as regular. I read in history that varmints have their fat season, and their lean season. That is not the case in Arkansaw, feeding as they do upon the *spontenacious* productions of the sile, they have one continued fat season the year round; though in winter things in this way is rather more greasy than in summer, I must admit. For that reason bar with us run in warm weather, but in winter, they only waddle. Fat, fat! it's an enemy to speed; it tames everything that has plenty of it. I have seen wild turkeys, from its influence, as gentle as chickens. Run a bar in this fat condition, and the way it improves the critter for eating is amazing; it sort of mixes the ile up with the meat, until you can't tell t'other from which. I've done this often. I

recollect one perty morning in particular, of putting an old fellow on the stretch, and considering the weight he carried, he run well. But the dogs soon tired him down, and when I came up with him wasn't he in a beautiful sweat—I might say fever; and then to see his tongue sticking out of his mouth a feet, and his sides sinking and opening like bellows, and his cheeks so fat he couldn't look cross. In this fix I blazed at him, and pitch me naked into a briar path if the steam didn't come out of the bullet-hole ten foot in a straight line. The fellow, I reckon, was made on the high-pressure system, and the lead sort of bust his biler."

"That column of steam was rather curious, or else the bear must have been *warm,*" observed the foreigner, with a laugh.

"Stranger, as you observe, that bar was WARM, and the blowing off of the steam show'd it, and also how hard the varmint had been run. I have no doubt if he had kept on two miles farther his insides would have been stewed; and I expect to meet with a varmint yet of extra bottom, who will run himself into a skinful of bar's grease: it is possible, much onlikelier things have happened."

"Whereabouts are these bears so abundant?" inquired the foreigner, with increasing interest.

"Why, stranger, they inhabit the neighbourhood of my settlement, one of the prettiest places on old Mississippi—a perfect location, and no mistake; a place that had some defects until the river made the 'cut-off' at 'Shirt-tail bend,' and that remedied the evil, as it brought my cabin on the edge of the river—a great advantage in wet weather, I assure you, as you can now roll a barrel of whiskey into my yard in high water from a boat, as easy as falling off a log. It's a great improvement, as toting it by land in a jug, as I used to do, *evaporated* it too fast, and it became expensive. Just stop with me, stranger, a month or two, or a year if you like, and you will appreciate my place. I can give you plenty to eat; for beside hog and hominy, you can have bar-ham, and bar-sausages, and a mattrass of bar-skins to sleep on, and a wildcatskin, pulled off hull, stuffed with corn-shucks for a pillow. That bed would put you to sleep if you had the rheumatics in every joint in your body. I call that ar bed a *quietus.* Then look at my land—the government ain't got another such a piece to dispose of. Such timber, and such bottom land, why you can't preserve any thing natural you plant in it unless you pick it young, things thar will grow out of shape so quick. I once planted in those diggins a few potatoes and beets; they took a fine start, and after that an ox team couldn't have kept them from growing. About that time I went off to old Kentuck on bisiness, and did not hear from them things in three months, when I accidentally stumbled on a fellow who had stopped at my place, with an idea of buying me out. 'How did you like things?' said I. 'Pretty well,' said he; 'the cabin is convenient, and the timber land is good; but that bottom land ain't worth the first red cent.' 'Why?' said I. ' 'Cause,' said he. ' 'Cause what?' said I. ' 'Cause it's full of cedar stumps and Indian mounds,' said he, *'and it can't be cleared.'* 'Lord,' said I, 'Them ar "cedar stumps" is beets, and them ar "Indian mounds" ar tater hills.' As I expected, the crop was overgrown and useless; the sile is too rich, *and planting in Arkansaw is dangerous.* I had a good-sized sow killed in that same bottom land. The old thief stole an ear of corn, and took it down where she slept at night to eat. Well, she left a grain or two on the ground, and lay down on them; before morning the corn shot up, and the percussion killed her dead. I don't plant any more; natur intended Arkansaw for a hunting ground, and I go according to natur."

The questioner who thus elicited the description of our hero's settlement, seemed to be perfectly satisfied and said no more; but the "Big Bar of Arkansaw" rambled on from one thing to another with a volubility perfectly astonishing, occasionally disputing with those around him, particularly with a "live Sucker" from Illinois, who had the daring to say that our Arkansaw friend's stories "smelt rather tall."

In this manner the evening was spent; but conscious that my own association with so singular a personage would probably end before morning, I asked him if he would not give me a description of some particular bear hunt; adding that I took great interest in such things, though I was no sportsman. The desire seemed to please him, and he squared himself round towards me, saying, that he could give me an idea of a bar hunt that was never beat in this world, or in any other. His manner was so singular, that half of his story consisted in his excellent way of telling it, the great peculiarity of which was the happy manner he had of emphasizing the prominent parts of his conversation. As near as I can



"'. . . the dogs . . . got around him, and pulled him about. . . .'"

recollect, I have italicized them, and given the story in his own words.

"Stranger," said he, "in bar hunts *I am numerous,* and which particular one, as you say, I shall tell, puzzles me. There was the old she devil I shot at the Hurricane last fall—then there was the old hog thief I popped over at the Bloody Crossing, and then—Yes, I have it! I will give you an idea of a hunt, in which the greatest bar was killed that ever lived, *none excepted;* about an old fellow that I hunted more or less for two or three years; and if that ain't a particular bar hunt, I ain't got one to tell. But in the first place, stranger, let me say, I am pleased with you, because you ain't ashamed to gain information by asking, and listening, and that's what I say to Countess's pups every day when I'm home; and I have got great hopes of them ar pups, because they are continually *nosing* about; and though they stick it sometimes in the wrong place, they gain experience any how, and may learn something useful to boot. Well, as I was saying about this big bar, you see when I and some more first settled in our region, we were drivin to hunting naturally; we soon liked it, and after that we found it an easy matter to make the thing our business. One old chap who had pioneered 'afore us, gave us to understand that we had settled in the right place. He dwelt upon its merits until it was affecting, and showed us, to prove his assertions, more marks on the sassafras trees than I ever saw on a tavern door 'lection time. 'Who keeps that ar reckoning?' said I. 'The bar,' said he. 'What for?' said I. 'Can't tell,' said he; 'but so it is; the bar bite the bark and wood too, at the highest point from the ground they can reach, and you can tell, by the marks,' said he, 'the length of the bar to an inch.' 'Enough,' said I; 'I've learned something here a'ready, and I'll put it in practice.'

"Well, stranger, just one month from that time I killed a bar, and told its exact length before I measured it, by those very marks; and when I did that, I swelled up considerable—I've been a prouder man ever since. So I went on, larning something every day, until I was reckoned a buster, and allowed to be decidedly the best bar hunter in my district; and that is a reputation as much harder to earn than to be reckoned first man in Congress, as an iron ramrod is harder than a toadstool. Did the varmints grow over-cunning by being fooled with by green-horn hunters, and by this means get troublesome, they send for me as a matter of course; and thus I do my own hunting, and most of my neighbours'. I walk into the varmints though, and it has become about as much the same to me as drinking. It is told in two sentences—a bar is started, and he is killed. The thing is somewhat monotonous now—I know just how much they will run, where they will tire, how much they will growl, and what a thundering time I will have in getting them home. I could give you this history of the chase with all particulars at the commencement, I know the signs so well—*Stranger, I'm certain.* Once I met with a match though, and I will tell you about it; for a common hunt would not be worth relating.

"On a fine fall day, long time ago, I was trailing about for bar, and what should I see but fresh marks on the sassafras trees, about eight inches above any in the forests that I knew of. Says I, 'them marks is a hoax, or it indicates the d———t bar that was ever grown.' In fact, stranger, I couldn't believe it was real, and I went on. Again I saw the same marks, at the same height, and *I knew the thing lived.* That conviction came home to my soul like an earthquake. Says I, 'here

is something a-purpose for me: that bar is mine, or I give up the hunting business.' The very next morning what should I see but a number of buzzards hovering over my cornfield. 'The rascal has been there,' said I, 'for that sign is certain:' and, sure enough, on examining, I found the bones of what had been as beautiful a hog the day before, as was ever raised by a Buckeye. Then I tracked the critter out of the field to the woods, and all the marks he left behind, showed me that he was *the bar.*

"Well, stranger, the first fair chase I ever had with that big critter, I saw him no less than three distinct times at a distance. the dogs run him over eighteen miles and broke down, my horse gave out, and I was as nearly used up as a man can be, made on *my* principle, *which is patent.* Before this adventure, such things were unknown to me as possible; but, strange as it was, that bar got me used to it before I was done with him, for he got so at last, that he would leave me on a long chase *qutte easy.* How he did it, I never could understand. That a bar runs at all, is puzzling, but how this one could tire down and bust up a pack of hounds and a horse, that were used to overhauling everything they started after in no time, was past my understanding Well, stranger, that bar finally got so sassy, that he used to help himself to a hog off my premises whenever he wanted one; the buzzards followed after what he left, and so between *bar and buzzard,* I rather think I was *out of pork.*

"Well, missing that bar so often took hold of my vitals, and I wasted away. The thing had been carried too far, and it reduced me in flesh faster than an ager. I would see that bar in every thing I did, *he hunted me,* and that, too, like a devil, which I began to think he was. While in this fix, I made preparations to give him a last brush, and be done with it. Having completed every thing to my satisfaction, I started at sunrise, and to my great joy, I discovered from the way the dogs run, that they were near him; finding his trail was nothing, for that had become as plain to the pack as a turnpike road. On we went, and coming to an open country, what should I see but the bar very leisurely ascending a hill, and the dogs close at his heels, either a match for him in speed, or else he did not care to get out of their way—I don't know which. But wasn't he a beauty, though? I loved him like a brother.

"On he went, until he came to a tree, the limbs of which formed a crotch about six feet from the ground. Into this crotch he got and seated himself, the dogs yelling all around it; and there he sat eyeing them as quiet as a pond in low water. A green-horn friend of mine, in company, reached shooting distance before me, and blazed away, hitting the critter in the centre of his forehead. The bar shook his head as the ball struck it, and then walked down from that tree as gently as a lady would from a carriage. 'Twas a beautiful sight to see him do that—he was in such a rage that he seemed to be as little afraid of the dogs as if they had been sucking pigs; and the dogs warn't slow in making a ring around him at a respectful distance, I tell you; even Bowie-knife, himself, stood off. Then the way his eyes flashed—why the fire of them would have singed a cat's hair; in fact that bar was in a *wrath all over.* Only one pup came near him, and he was brushed out so totally with the bar's left paw, that he entirely disappeared; and that made the old dogs more cautious still. In the meantime, I came up, and taking deliberate aim as a man should do, at his side, just back of his foreleg, *if my gun did not snap,* call me a coward, and I won't take it personal. Yes, stranger, *it snapped,* and I could not find a cap about my person. While in this predicament, I turned round to my fool friend—says I, 'Bill,' says I, 'you're an ass—you're a fool—you might as well have tried to kill that bar by barking the tree under his belly, as to have done it by hitting him in the head. Your shot has made a tiger of him, and blast me, if a dog gets killed or wounded when they come to blows, I will stick my knife into your liver, I will—' my wrath was up. I had lost my caps, my gun had snapped, the fellow with me had fired at the bar's head, and I expected every moment to see him close in with the dogs, and kill a dozen of them at least. In this thing I was mistaken, for the bar leaped over the ring formed by the dogs, and giving a fierce growl, was off—the pack, of course, in full cry after him. The run this time was short, for coming to the edge of a lake the varmint jumped in, and swam to a little island in the lake, which it reached just a moment before the dogs. 'I'll have him now,' said I, for I had found my caps in the *lining of my coat*—so, rolling a log into the lake, I paddled myself across to the island, just as the dogs had cornered the bar in a thicket. I rushed up and fired—

at the same time the critter leaped over the dogs and came within three feet of me, running like mad; he jumped into the lake, and tried to mount the log I had just deserted, but every time he got half his body on it, it would roll over and send him under; the dogs, too, got around him, and pulled him about, and finally Bowie-knife clenched with him, and they sunk into the lake together. Stranger, about this time, I was excited, and I stripped off my coat, drew my knife, and intended to have taken a part with Bowie-knife myself, when the bar rose to the surface. But the varmint staid under—Bowie-knife came up alone, more dead than alive, and with the pack came ashore. 'Thank God,' said I, 'the old villain has got his deserts at last.' Determined to have the body, I cut a grape-vine for a rope, and dove down where I could see the bar in the water, fastened my queer rope to his leg, and fished him, with great difficulty, ashore. Stranger, may I be chawed to death by young alligators, if the thing I looked at wasn't a *she bar, and not the old critter after all.* The way matters got mixed on that island was onaccountably curious, and thinking of it made me more than ever convinced that I was hunting the devil himself. I went home that night and took to my bed—the thing was killing me. The entire team of Arkansaw in barhunting, acknowledged himself used up, and the fact sunk into my feelings like a snagged boat will in the Mississippi. I grew as cross as a bar with two cubs and a sore tail. The thing got out 'mong my neighbours, and I was asked how come on that individu-al that never lost a bar when once started? and if that same individ-u-al didn't wear telescopes when he turned a she bar, of ordinary size, into an old he one, a little larger than a horse? 'Perhaps,' said I, 'friends'—getting wrathy—'perhaps you want to call somebody a liar.' 'Oh, no,' said they, 'we only heard such things as being *rather common* of late, but we don't believe one word of it; oh, no,'—and then they would ride off and laugh like so many hyenas over a dead nigger. It was too much, and I determined to catch that bar, go to Texas, or die,—and I made my preparations accordin'. I had the pack shut up and rested. I took my rifle to pieces and iled it. I put caps in every pocket about my person, *for fear of the lining.* I then told my neighbours, that on Monday morning—naming the day—I would start THAT BAR, and bring him home with me, or they might divide my settlement among them, the owner having disappeared. Well, stranger, on the morning previous to the great day of my hunting expedition, I went into the woods near my house, taking my gun and Bowie-knife along, just *from habit,* and there sitting down also from habit, what should I see, getting over my fence, but *the bar!* Yes, the old varmint was within a hundred yards of me, and the way he walked *over that fence*—stranger, he loomed up like a *black mist,* he seemed so large, and he walked right towards me. I raised myself, took deliberate aim, and fired. Instantly the varmint wheeled, gave a yell, and *walked through the fence* like a falling tree would through a cobweb I started after, but was tripped up by my inexpressibles, which either from habit, or the excitement of the moment, were about my heels, and before I had really gathered myself up, I heard the old varmint groaning in a thicket near by, like a thousand sinners, and by the time I reached him he was a corpse. Stranger, it took five niggers and myself to put that carcase on a mule's back, and old long-ears waddled under the load, as if he was foundered in every leg of his body, and with a common whopper of a bar, he would have trotted off, and enjoyed himself. 'Twould astonish you to know how big he was: I made a *bedspread of his skin* and the way it used to cover my bar mattress, and leave several feet on each side to tuck up, would have delighted you. It was in fact a creation bar, and if it had lived in Samson's time, and had met him, in a fair fight, it would have licked him in the twinkling of a dice-box. But, strangers, I never like the way I hunted, and *missed him.* There is something curious about it, I could never understand,—and I never was satisfied at his giving in so easy at last. Perhaps, he had heard of my preparations to hunt him the next day, so he jist come in, like Capt. Scott's coon, to save his wind to grunt with in dying; but that ain't likely. My private opinion is, that that bar was an *unhuntable bar, and died when his time come."*

When the story was ended, our hero sat some minutes with his auditors in a grave silence; I saw there was a mystery to him connected with the bear whose death

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81 Capt. Scott's coon. Oral lore pictured Captain Scott as such a great hunter that when he approached a raccoon, the animal shouted down to him, "Don't shoot! I'm a-comin' down." The same tall story was told about Davy Crockett (see p. 773)

he had just related, that had evidently made a strong impression on his mind. It was also evident that there was some superstitious awe connected with the affair,—a feeling common with all "children of the wood," when they meet with any thing out of their everyday experience. He was the first one, however, to break the silence, and jumping up, he asked all present to "liquor" before going to bed,—a thing which he did, with a number of companions, evidently to his heart's content.

Long before day, I was put ashore at my place of destination, and I can only follow with the reader, in imagination, our Arkansas friend, in his adventures at the "Forks of Cypress" on the Mississippi.

1841

LITERARY COMEDIANS: Browne, Shaw

Charles Farrar Browne (Artemus Ward)

1834 • 1867

Beginning as a printer's devil, Charles Farrar Browne, like Samuel L. Clemens, drifted into humorous writing and lecturing and was, at the end of his life, fabulously well known. He was born in Waterford, Maine, in 1834. As a young man, he was apprenticed to a printer in Lancaster, New Hampshire. From there he went to other printing shops, first in New England, later in the Middle West. In time he moved from his printer's case to the editorial desks of various newspapers.

Browne was an editor of the Cleveland, Ohio, *Plain Dealer* in 1858 when some playful letters he composed started him on his way to fame. Artemus Ward, the purported author of the letters, introduced himself as the illiterate, humorless owner of an itinerant waxworks and menagerie. From various towns he wrote requests for publicity or accounts of his adventures while traveling. After these pieces had won a large following for him, Browne went to New York to work on the comic magazine *Vanity Fair*. In 1861 he embarked on a highly remunerative career as a comic lecturer, and during the next several years he attracted large audiences in lecture halls everywhere in this country and, eventually, in Egyptian Hall in London. He died in England in 1867.

Browne, in contrast with such earlier comic authors as Seba Smith and William Tappan Thompson, became a full-time humorist. To keep his readers and his lecture audiences laughing, he perfected all sorts of tricks which amused—bad spellings and queer sentences, phrases, and words. Since the emphasis on laughable diction was so great, Browne tried less and less to depict a clear-cut character, and in time Artemus Ward was hard to distinguish from his creator. They stood for the same things and got laughs by employing the same devices. Browne was typical of a majority of the humorists of his day—professional funnymen, literary comedians who exploited the humor of diction rather than the humor of character. Although these humorists have lost some of their appeal because the taste for poor grammar and distorted spelling in humor has largely abated, their writings are interesting as social documents and as works foreshadowing much of the "free association humor" of such twentieth-century authors as Benchley, Thurber, and Perelman.

Artemus Ward: His Book, New York, 1862 • Artemus Ward: His Travels, New York, 1865 • Artemus Ward in London, London, 1867 • D. C. Seitz, Artemus Ward, New York, 1919

From

Artemus Ward, His Book

ONE OF MR. WARD'S BUSINESS LETTERS

To the Editor of the———

Sir—I'm movin along—slowly along—down tords your place. I want you should rite me a letter, sayin how is the show bizniss in your place. My show at present consists of three moral Bares, a Kangaroo (a amoozin little Raskal—t' would make you larf yerself to deth to see the little cuss jump up and squeal) wax figgers of G. Washington Gen. Tayler John Bunyan Capt. Kidd and Dr. Webster in the act of killin Dr. Parkman, besides several miscellanyus moral wax statoots of celebrated piruts & murderers, &c., ekalled by few & exceld by none. Now Mr. Editor, scratch orf a few lines sayin how is the show bizniss down to your place. I shall hav my hanbills dun at your offiss. Depend upon it. I want you should git my hanbills up in flamin stile. Also git up a tremenjus excitemunt in yr. paper 'bowt my onparaleld Show. We must fetch the public sumhow. We must wurk on their feelins. Cum the moral on 'em strong. If it's a temprance community tell 'em I sined the pledge fifteen minits arter Ise born, but on the contery ef your peple take their tods, say Mister Ward is as Jenial a feller as we ever met, full of conwiviality, & the life an sole of the Soshul Bored. Take, don't you? If you say anythin abowt my show say my snaiks is as harmliss as the new born Babe. What a interestin study it is to see a zewological animil like a snaik under perfeck subjecshun! My kangaroo is the most larfable little cuss I ever saw. All for 15 cents. I am anxyus to skewer your infloounce. I repeet in regard to them hanbills that I shall git 'em struck orf up to your printin office. My perlitercal sentiments agree with yourn exactly. I know thay do, becawz I never saw a man whoos didn't.

Respectively yures,

A. Ward.

P.S.—You scratch my back & Ile scratch your back.

1858·1862

INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT LINCOLN

I hav no politics. Nary a one. I'm not in the bisiness. If I was I spose I should holler versiffrusly in the streets at nite and go home to Betsy Jane smellen of coal ile and gin, in the mornin. I should go to the Poles arly. I should stay there all day. I should see to it that my nabers was thar. I should git carriges to take the kripples, the infirm and the indignant thar. I should be on guard agin frauds and sich. I should be on the look out for the infamus lise of the enemy, got up jest be4 elecshun for perlitical effeck. When all was over and my candydate was elected, I should move heving & arth—so to speak—until I got orfice, which if I didn't git a orfice I should turn round and abooze the Administration with all my mite and maine. But I'm not in the bisness. I'm in a far more respectful bisniss nor what pollertics is. I wouldn't giv two cents to be a Congresser. The wuss insult I ever received was when sertin citizens of Baldinsville axed me to run fur the Legislater. Sez I, My frends, dostest think I'd stoop to that there?" They turned as white as a sheet. I spoke in my most orfullest tones, & they knowd I wasn't to be trifled with. They slunked out of site to onct.

There4, havin no politics, I made bold to visit Old Abe at his humstid in Springfield. I found the old feller in his parler, surrounded by a perfeck swarm of orfice seekers. Knowin he had been capting of a flat boat on the roarin Mississippy I thought I'd address him in sailor lingo, so sez I "Old Abe, ohoy! Let out yer mainsuls, reef hum the forecastle & throw yer jib-poop overboard! Shiver my timbers, my harty!" [N. B. This is ginuine mariner langwidge. I know, becawz I've seen sailor plays acted out by them New York theater fellers.] Old Abe lookt up quite cross & sez, "Send in yer petition by & by. I can't possibly look at it now. Indeed, I can't. It's onpossible sir."

"Mr. Linkin, who do you spect I air?" sed I.

"A orfice-seeker, to be sure?" sed he.

"Wall, sir," sed I, "yous never more mistaken in your life. You hain't gut a orfiss I'd take under no circumstances. I'm A. Ward. Wax figgers is my perfeshun. I'm the father of Twins, and they look like me—*both of them.* I cum to pay a frendly visit to the President eleck of the United States. If so be you wants to see me say so—if not, say so, & I'm orf like a jug handle."

"Mr. Ward, sit down. I am glad to see you, Sir."

"Repose in Abraham's Buzzum!" sed one of the orfice seekers, his idee bein to git orf a goak at my expense.

"Wall," sez I, "ef all you fellers repose in that there Buzzum thare'll be mity poor nussin for sum of you!" whereupon Old Abe buttoned his weskit clear up and blusht like a maidin of sweet 16. Jest at this pint of the conversation another swarm of the orfice-seekers arrove & cum pilin into the parler. Sum wanted post orfices, sum wanted collectorships sum wantid furrin missions, and all wanted sumthin. I thought Old Abe would go crazy. He hadn't more than had time to shake hands with 'em, before another tremenjis crowd cum porein onto his premises. His house and dooryard was now perfeckly overflowed with orfice seekers, all clameruss for a immejit interview with Old Abe. One man from Ohio, who had about seven inches of corn whisky into him, mistook me for Old Abe and addrest me as "The Prahayrie Flower of the West!" Thinks I *you* want a offiss putty bad. Another man with a gold heded cane and a red nose told Old Abe he was "a seckind Washington & the Pride of the Boundliss West."

Sez I, "Square, you wouldn't take a small postoffis if you could git it, would you?"

Sez he, "A patrit is abuv them things, sir!"

"There's a putty big crop of patrits this season, ain't there Squire?" sez I, when *another* crowd of offiss seekers pored in. The house, door-yard, barn & woodshed was now all full, and when another crowd cum I told 'em not to go away for wan't of room as the hog-pen was still empty. One patrit from a small town in Michygan went up on top the house, got into the chimney and slid down into the parler where Old Abe was endeverin to keep the hungry pack of orfice-seekers from chawin him up alive without benefit of clergy. The minit he reached the fire-place he jumpt up, brusht the soot out of his eyes, and yelled: "Don't make eny pintment at the Spunkville postoffiss till you've read my papers. All the respectful men in our town is signers to that there dockyment!"

"Good God!" cride Old Abe, "they cum upon me from the skize—down the chimneys, and from the bowels of the yearth!" He hadn't more'n got them words out of his delikit mouth before two fat offiss-seekers from Wisconsin, in endeverin to crawl atween his legs for the purpuss of applyin for the toll-gate-ship at Milwawky, upsot the President eleck & he would hev gone sprawlin into the fire-place if I hadn't caught him in these arms. But I hadn't more'n stood him up strate before another man cum crashin down the chimney, his head strikin me vilently agin the inards and prostratin my voluptoous form onto the floor.

"Mr. Linkin," shoutid the infatooated being, "my papers is signed by every clergyman in our town, and likewise the skoolmaster!"



Artemus Ward interviews President Lincoln.

Sez I, "you egrejis ass," gittin up & brushin the dust from my eyes, "I'll sign your papers with this bunch of bones, if you don't be a little more keerful how you make my bread basket a depot in the futer. How do you like that air perfumery?" sez I, shuving my fist under his nose. "Them's the kind of papers I'll giv you! Them's the paper's you want!"

"But I workt hard for the ticket; I toiled night and day! The patrit should be rewarded!"

"Virtoo," sed I, holdin' the infatooated man by the coat-collar, "Virtoo, sir, is its own reward. Look at me!" He did look at me, and qualed be4 my gase. "The fact is," I continued, lookin' round on the hungry crowd, "there is scacely a offiss for every ile lamp carrid round durin' this campane. I wish thare was. I wish thare was

furrin missions to be filled on varis lonely Islands where eppydemics rage incessantly, and if I was in Old Abe's place I'd send every mother's son of you to them. What air you here for?" I continnered, warmin up considerable, "can't you giv Abe a minit's peace? Don't you see he's worrid most to death! Go home, you miserable men, go home & till the sile! Go to peddlin tinware—go to choppin wood—go to bilin' sope—stuff sassengers—black boots—git a clerkship on sum respectable manure cart—go round as original Swiss Bell Ringers—becum 'origenal and only' Campbell Minstrels—go to lecturin at 50 dollars a nite—imbark in the peanut bizniss—*write for the Ledger*—saw off your legs and go round givin concerts, with techin appeals to a charitable public, printed on your handbills—anything for a honest living, but don't come round here drivin Old Abe crazy by your outrajis cuttings up! Go home. Stand not upon the order of your goin' but go to onct! If in five minits from this time," sez I pullin' out my new sixteen dollar huntin cased watch, and brandishin' it before their eyes, "Ef in five minits from this time a single sole of you remains on these here premises, I'll go out to my cage near by, and let my Boy Constructor loose! & ef he gits amung you, you'll think old Solferino has cum again and no mistake!" You ought to hev seen them scamper, Mr. Fair. They run orf as tho Satun his self was arter them with a red hot ten pronged pitchfork. In five minits the premises was clear.

"How kin I ever repay you, Mr. Ward, for your kindness?" sed Old Abe, advancin and shakin me warmly by the hand. "How kin I ever repay you, sir?"

"By givin the whole country a good, sound administration. By poerin' ile upon the troubled waturs, North and South. By pursooin' a patriotic, firm, and just course, and then if any State wants to secede, let 'em Sesesh!"

"How 'bout my Cabinit, Mister Ward?" sed Abe.

"Fill it up with Showmen sir! Showmen is devoid of politics. They hain't got any principles! They know how to cater for the public. They know what the public wants, North & South Showmen, sir, is honest men. Ef you doubt their literary ability, look at their posters, and see small bills! Ef you want a Cabinit as is a Cabinit fill it up with showmen, but don't call on me. The moral wax figger perfeshun musn't be permitted to go down while there's a drop of blood in these vains! A. Linkin, I wish you well! Ef Powers or Walcutt wus to pick out a model for a beautiful man, I scarcely think they'd sculp you; but ef you do the fair thing by your country you'll make as putty a angel as any of us! A. Linkin, use the talents which Nature has put into you judishusly and firmly, and all will be well. A. Linkin, adoo!"

He shook me cordyully by the hand—we exchanged picters, so we could gaze upon each others' liniments when far away from one another—he at the hellum of the ship of State, and I at the hellum of the show bizniss—admittance only 15 cents.

1861·1862

Henry Wheeler Shaw (Josh Billings)

1818 • 1885

"He was Aesop and Ben Franklin, condensed and abridged." So Bill Arp, a contemporary of Henry Wheeler Shaw, described Shaw's creation, Josh Billings. Believing that "you have got to be wise before you can be witty," Shaw adapted to the days of the literary comedian the materials and techniques of earlier aphorists and moralizers. Americans, long fond of horse sense spiced with humor, naturally found such a writer most appealing.

Shaw was born in Lanesboro, Massachusetts, April 21, 1818. He prepared for college at Lenox Academy, and then attended Hamilton College for about two years before he was expelled for a prank. At seventeen he migrated to the West, where he traveled widely, stopping off now and then to do odd jobs. He was, at various times, a farmer, a coal operator, and a proprietor of an Ohio River steamboat before he returned to the East and settled down to be a real estate operator and an auctioneer in Poughkeepsie, New York. In the late 1850's, when some of his comic writings for newspapers were widely reprinted, he got off to a start as a successful funnyman. He moved to New York City and remained there the rest of his life.

Lectures and the publication of his work in newspapers, magazines, and books—*Josh Billings, His Sayings* (1865), *Josh Billings on Ice and Other Things* (1868)—added to his fame. Beginning in 1869, he published an annual series titled *Josh Billings' Farmer's Allminax* which sold more than a hundred thousand copies almost every year for a decade.

Billings was famous not for stories but for essays or single sentences packed with amusingly phrased common sense. His kinship with Poor Richard was obvious, but his cacography showed that his writing was also related to that of such a contemporary as Artemus Ward. In his hayfield cogitations on beasts and men, in addition to a flair for comic and well-ordered sentences, he had, as Max Eastman has observed, a gift for setting down "a series of verbal pictures" expressing his ideas. This talent for concreteness is evident in such a sentence as "Pride lives on itself, it is like a raccoon in the winter, kept fat by sucking its claws." It is also evident in the selections which follow.

Josh Billings, His Works Complete, New York, 1888 • Cyril Clemens, Josh Billings, Yankee Humorist, Webster Groves, Missouri, 1932

Essa on the Muel

The muel iz haf hoss and haf Jackass, and then kums tu a full stop, natur diskovering her mistake.

Tha weigh more, akordin tu their heft, than enny other kreetur, except a crowbar.

Tha kant hear enny quicker, nor further than the hoss, yet their ears are big enuff for snow shoes.

You kan trust them with enny one whose life aint worth enny more than the muels. The only wa tu keep them in a paster, is tu turn them into a medder jineing, and let them jump out.

Tha are reddy for use, just as soon as they will du tu abuse.

Tha haint got enny friends, and will live on huckle berry brush, with an ockasional chanse at Kanada thistels.



Tha are a modern invenshun, i dont think the Bible deludes tu them at tall.

Tha sel for more money than enny other domestik animile. Yu kant tell their age by looking into their mouth, enny more than you kould a Mexican kannons. Tha never hav no dissease that a good club wont heal.

If tha ever die tha must kum rite tu life agin, for i never herd noboddy sa "ded muel."

Tha are like sum men, verry korrupt at harte; ive known them tu be good muels for 6 months, just tu git a good chanse to kick sumbody.

I never owned one, nor never mean to, unless thare is a United Staits law passed, requiring it.

The only reason why tha are pashunt, is bekause tha are ashamed ov themselfs.

I have seen eddikated muels in a sirkus.

Tha kould kick, and bite, tremenjis. I would not sa what I am forced tu sa again the muel, if his birth want an outrage, and man want tu blame for it.

Enny man who is willing tu drive a muel, ought to be exempt by law from running for the legislatur.

Tha are the strongest creeturs on earth, and heaviest ackording tu their sise; I herd tell ov one who fell oph from the tow path, on the Eri kanawl, and sunk as soon as he touched bottom, but he kept rite on towing the boat tu the nex stashun, breathing thru his ears, which stuck out ov the water about 2 feet 6 inches; i didn't see this did, but an auctioneer told me ov it, and i never knew an auctioneer tu lie unless it was absolutely convenient.

1860

Hoss Sense

There is nothing that has bin diskovered yet, that iz as skarse as good Hoss sense, about 28 hoss power.

I don't mean race hoss, nor trotting hoss sense, that kan run a mile in 1:28 and then brake down; nor trot in 2:13, and good for nothing afterwards, only to brag on; but I mean the all-day hoss sense, that iz good for 8 miles an hour, from rooster crowing in the morning, until the cows cum home at night, klean tew the end ov the road.

I hav seen fast sense, that was like sum hosses, who could git so far in one day that it would take them two days tew git back, on a litter. I don't mean this kind nuther.

Good hard-pan sense iz the thing that will wash well, wear well, iron out without wrinkling, and take starch without kracking.

Menny people are hunting after uncommon sense, but they never find it a good deal; uncommon sense iz ov the nature of genius, and all genius iz the gift of God, and kant be had, like hens eggs, for the hunting.

Good, old-fashioned common sense iz one ov the hardest things in the world to out-wit, out-argy, or beat in enny way, it iz az honest az a loaf ov good domestik bread, alwus in tune either hot from the oven or 8 days old.

Common sense kan be improved upon by edukashun —genius kan be too, sum, but not much.

Edukashun gauls genius like a bad setting harness.

Common sense iz like biled vittles, it is good right from the pot, and it is good nex day warmed up.

If every man waz a genius, mankind would be az bad oph az the heavens would be, with every star a comet, things would git hurt badly, and noboddy tew blame.

Common sense iz instinkt, and instinkt don't make enny blunders mutch, no more than a rat duz, in coming out, or going intew a hole, he hits the hole the fust time, and just fills it.

Genius iz always in advance ov the times, and makes sum magnificent hits, but the world owes most ov its tributes to good hoss sense.

1873?

John Greenleaf Whittier

1807 • 1892

Even during the years when he had been active as an abolitionist (see pp. 635-641), Whittier had written a good deal of verse and prose portraying the life and lore of his native district, Essex County in Massachusetts. "His mind," as Van Wyck Brooks has said, "was steeped in local associations, tales of witches, tales of the Indian wars, the gossip of wandering farm hands and gypsies." He had used such materials in *Legends of New England* (1831), *Mogg Megone* (1836), *Lays of My Home and Other Poems* (1843), *Margaret Smith's Journals* (1849), and *Home Ballads, Poems and Lyrics* (1860).

After the end of the Civil War, Whittier devoted more of his energies to writing regional poetry, publishing his most admired poem, *Snow-Bound* (1866), as well as *The Tent of the Beach and Other Poems* (1867), *Among the Hills and Other Poems* (1869), *Ballads of New England* (1870), and other less notable volumes of verse.

In his poetic local color writing, Whittier belonged to the tradition represented before his birth by the poet of Scottish rural life, Robert Burns, and carried on today by Robert Frost. His achievement was to record in simple verse the sort of life lived in New England before his day and during his lifetime. At times—particularly in his idyllic reminiscence, "The Barefoot Boy"—he was sentimental; but on many occasions he created authentic and detailed depictions of Yankee life. (For bibliographical note, see p. 636.)

The Barefoot Boy

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace,
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood,
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;

Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the groundnut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans!—
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy,—
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone,
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too,
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

O for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread,—
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frog's orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

1856

Skipper Ireson's Ride

This poem, Whittier said in a letter of 1880, twenty-three years after its publication, "was founded solely on a fragment of rhyme which I heard from one of my early schoolmasters, a native of Marblehead. I supposed the story to which it referred dated back at least a century. I knew nothing of the participators, and the narrative of the ballad was pure fancy." The letter was addressed to Samuel Roads, Jr., who, in his **History of Marblehead**, had stated that Ireson's crew, rather than the Captain, actually had been responsible for the abandonment of the vessel. Whittier was indebted to James Russell Lowell, then editor of the **Atlantic**, for the suggestion that the quoted refrain be phrased in Cape Ann dialect.

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,
Witch astride of a human back,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
  Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Maenads sang.
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—He sailed away
From a leaking ship, in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
  Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—
  Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain.
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting, far and near:
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin

---

3 Apuleius's Golden Ass, the ass into which a young man was transformed in Lucius Apuleius' Roman satire, **Metamorphoses** (155 A D ?) • **4 Calendar,** the story of "The Third Calendar" in **The Arabian Nights** • **6 Islam's . . . Al-Borák.** Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, was carried to the seventh heaven on a winged white animal called Al-Borák • **26 Bacchus,** god of wine, is frequently portrayed on antique vases • **30 Maenads,** also called Bacchantes, the feminine followers of the god • **35 Chaleur Bay,** inlet of the Gulf of St. Lawrence

To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
  Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him!—why should we?"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
  Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

1857

Telling the Bees

Samuel T. Pickard, Whittier's biographer, notes that the description at the beginning of this poem contains many details concerning the poet's own birthplace. The approach, the "gap in the old wall," "the stepping-stones," the garden and its daffodils, the red-barred gate, the poplars, the cattle-yard were all parts of the scene. But the story is wholly imaginative: Whittier's sister Mary was still living when the poem was written.

Here is the place; right over the hill
  Runs the path I took:
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
  And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
  And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
  And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
  And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed o'errun,
  Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
  Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
  And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze,
  And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
  Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
  From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
  And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
  To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
  On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
  Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
  The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
  The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
  Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
  Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
  Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
  Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
  Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
  For the dead to-day:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
  The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ear sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

1857

Snow-Bound

A Winter Idyl

Of this poem, Whittier wrote a friend, "It is a winter idyl —a picture of an old-fashioned farmer's fireside in winter— and if it were not mine I should call it pretty good." This memorial poem, written shortly after the death of two persons—his sister and his mother—whom the poet had loved very much, was a loving re-creation of the scenes and personalities of the poet's boyhood.

Despite his faith in the excellence of the poem, Whittier was astonished at the public reception. Because it was a poem which all could understand and because it expressed sentiments shared by many Americans, it sold widely. It is still generally considered the best poem of its kind ever written in America.

Whittier wrote this note on the poem: "The inmates of the family at the Whittier homestead who are referred to . . . were my father, mother, my brother and two sisters, and my uncle and aunt, both unmarried. In addition, there was the district school-master, who boarded with us. The 'not unfeared, half-welcome guest' was Harriet Livermore . . . a young woman of fine natural ability, enthusiastic, eccentric, with slight control over her violent temper, which sometimes made her religious profession doubtful. . . . She early embraced the doctrine of the Second Advent, and felt it her duty to proclaim the Lord's speedy coming."

To the Memory of the Household It Describes, This Poem Is Dedicated by the Author

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common VVood Fire: and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of VVood doth the same."—

COR AGRIPPA, Occult Philosophy, *Book I. ch. v.*

"Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm."—

EMERSON, The Snow-Storm.

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told.
The wind blew east; we heard the roar.
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows:
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows;

---

15 wind blew east, from the east. The home was about fifteen miles west of the ocean • 22 herd's-grass, timothy • 26 walnut bows were fastened around the necks of the cows and affixed to the stanchions

While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent.

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingéd snow:
And ere the early bedtime came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake, and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden-wall, or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy?)
Our buskins on our feet we drew;
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,
We cut the solid whiteness through.
And, where the drift was deepest, made
A tunnel walled and overlaid
With dazzling crystal: we had read
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,
And to our own his name we gave,
With many a wish the luck were ours
To test his lamp's supernal powers.
We reached the barn with merry din,
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,
And grave with wonder gazed about;
The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led;
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
And mild reproach of hunger looked;
The hornéd patriarch of the sheep,
Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;
Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.
No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicéd elements,
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the glass the unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.
We minded that the sharpest ear

65 Pisa's . . . miracle, the leaning tower of Pisa • 77 Aladdin's . . . cave refers to the story in The Arabian Nights of Aladdin and his magic lamp • 90 Amun, or Ammon, an Egyptian god who had the head of a ram

The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose liquid lip
Had been to us companionship,
And, in our lonely life, had grown
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled, with care, our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back,—
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,
The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
Whispered the old rhyme: *"Under the tree,*
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the sombre green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
Against the whiteness at their back.
For such a world and such a night
Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed,
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow
O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,

137 **The Turks' heads.** The ornamented tops of the uprights resembled Turkish fezzes • 160 **frost-line,** the cold point at which the radiation of heat from the fire ended • 183 **brother,** Matthew Franklin Whittier (1812-1883)

Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor!
Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust,
(Since He who knows our need is just,)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned in hours of faith
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
"The Chief of Gambia's golden shore."
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a trumpet called, I've heard
Dame Mercy Warren's rousing word:
"Does not the voice of reason cry,
Claim the first right which Nature gave
From the red scourge of bondage fly,
Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"
Our father rode again his ride
On Memphremagog's wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. François' hemlock-trees;
Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;
Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led
Where Salisbury's level marshes spread
Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,
And round the rocky Isles of Shoals
The hake-broil on the drift-wood coals;
The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay,
Adrift along the winding shores,
When favoring breezes deigned to blow
The square sail of the gundalow
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cocheco town,
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
So rich and picturesque and free,
(The common unrhymed poetry
Of simple life and country ways,)
The story of her early days,—
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
We stole with her a frightened look
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,

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215 **The Chief . . . shore.** This line and ll. 220-223 are from "The African Chief" by Sarah Wentworth Morton. Whittier incorrectly attributed them • 224 **father,** John Whittier (1760-1830). As a young man, he had made the trip which he recalls here • 225 **Memphremagog,** a lake in Canada and Vermont • 226 **samp,** corn-meal mush • 229 **St. François,** a river north of Lake Memphremagog • 237 **Salisbury,** a town in northern Massachusetts near the Whittier farm • 242 **Boar's Head,** a promontory on the New England coast between Salisbury and Portsmouth • 243 **Isles of Shoals,** a group of islands near the Boar's Head • 244 **hake,** a fish • 254 **gundalow,** a large, flat-bottomed scow • 256 **mother,** Abigail Hussey Whittier (1781-1857) • 259 **Cocheco,** or Cochecho, a town near Dover, New Hampshire • 270 **conjuring-book.** Whittier's mother, the poet said, "described strange people who lived on the Piscataqua and Cocheco, among whom was Bantam the sorcerer. I have in my possession the wizard's 'conjuring book,' which he solemnly opened when consulted. It is a copy of Cornelius Agrippa's **Magic** printed in 1651." A quotation from this tome precedes the poem

The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
The loon's weird laughter far away;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.

Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave
From painful Sewel's ancient tome,
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint,—
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!—
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
His portly presence mad for food,
With dark hints muttered under breath
Of casting lots for life or death,
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
To be himself the sacrifice.
Then, suddenly, as if to save
The good man from his living grave,
A ripple on the water grew,
A school of porpoise flashed in view.
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
These fishes in my stead are sent
By Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,
The ancient teachers never dumb
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,
By many an occult hint and sign,
Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
Like Apollonius of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
A simple, guileless, childlike man,
Content to live where life began;
Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
Whereof his fondly partial pride
The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White of Selborne's loving view,—
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,
Forgotten was the outside cold,
The bitter wind unheeded blew,
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river-brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay,
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;

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274 **Piscataqua**, a New England river which runs its course chiefly in Maine and New Hampshire • 286 **Sewel's . . . tome.** Willem Sewel (1650-1725) wrote the **History of the Christian People Called Quakers.** Whittier read an American edition published in Philadelphia in 1823 • 289 **Chalkley's Journal**, published in 1747, was by the Quaker preacher Thomas Chalkley (1675-1741) • 305 **the tangled ram.** See Genesis 22.13: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son" • 307 **uncle**, Moses Whittier • 320 **Apollonius**, Greek mystic of Tyana, first century A.D. • 322 **Hermes**, Hermes Trismegistus, an Egyptian god to whom were attributed third-century books on medicine, ritual, and mystic subjects • 332 **White**, Gilbert White (1720-1793), an English naturalist, author of the **Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne**

And from the shagbark overhead
  The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear,—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome wheresoe'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home,—
Called up her girlhood memories,
The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dried so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee,—rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
  How many a poor one's blessing went
  With thee beneath the low green tent
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
  Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
  Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.
Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
  Or from the shade of saintly palms,
  Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago:—
The chill weight of the winter snow
  For months upon her grave has lain;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
  And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
  Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
  What change can reach the wealth I hold?
  What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
  Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
  Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,

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350 **aunt**, Mercy Evans Hussey, who died in 1846 • 378 **elder sister**, Mary Whittier Caldwell (1806-1860) • 396 **Our youngest**, Elizabeth Whittier, who was the poet's closest companion until her death in 1864

Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
  Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
  The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school
Held at the fire his favored place,
Its warm glow lit a laughing face
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
The uncertain prophecy of beard.
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.
Born the wild Northern hills among,
From whence his yeoman father wrung
By patient toil subsistence scant,
Not competence and yet not want,
He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way;
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
To peddle wares from town to town;
Or through the long vacation's reach
In lonely lowland districts teach,
Where all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round,
The moonlit skater's keen delight,
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
The rustic party, with its rough
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,
His winter task a pastime made.
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame's winding yarn,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Araxes took
The guise of any grist-mill brook,
And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed;
  But at his desk he had the look
And air of one who wisely schemed,
  And hostage from the future took
  In trainèd thought and lore of book.
Large-brained, clear-eyed,—of such as he
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
Who, following in War's bloody trail,
Shall every lingering wrong assail;
All chains from limb and spirit strike,
Uplift the black and white alike;
Scatter before their swift advance
The darkness and the Ignorance,
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
Made murder pastime, and the hell
Of prison-torture possible;
The cruel lie of caste refute,
Old forms remould, and substitute
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
For blind routine, wise-handed skill;
A school-house plant on every hill,
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
The quick wires of intelligence;
Till North and South together brought
Shall own the same electric thought,
In peace a common flag salute,
And, side by side in labor's free
And unresentful rivalry,
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest that winter night
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
The honeyed music of her tongue
And words of meekness scarcely told
A nature passionate and bold,
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,
Its milder features dwarfed beside

439 master, George Haskell (1799-1876) • 445 cross-pins, a game in which the object was to cause pins lying in a hat to cross by tapping the hat • 476 Araxes, or Arakthos, a river in Greece which originates in the Pindus mountain range • 510 Another guest, Harriet Livermore

Her unbent will's majestic pride.
She sat among us, at the best,
A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,
Rebuking with her cultured phrase
Our homeliness of words and ways.
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace
  Swayed the lithe limbs and dropped the lash,
  Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;
  And under low brows, black with night,
  Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face
Presaging ill to him whom Fate
Condemned to share her love or hate.
A woman tropical, intense
In thought and act, in soul and sense,
She blended in a like degree
The vixen and the devotee,
Revealing with each freak or feint
  The temper of Petruchio's Kate,
The raptures of Siena's saint.
Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
Had facile power to form a fist;
The warm, dark languish of her eyes
Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
Brows saintly calm and lips devout
Knew every change of scowl and pout;
And the sweet voice had notes more high
And shrill for social battle-cry.

Since then what old cathedral town
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
What convent-gate has held its lock
Against the challenge of her knock!
Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thoroughfares,
Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,
Or startling on her desert throne
The crazy Queen of Lebanon
With claims fantastic as her own,
Her tireless feet have held their way;
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
She watches under Eastern skies,
  With hope each day renewed and fresh,
  The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!

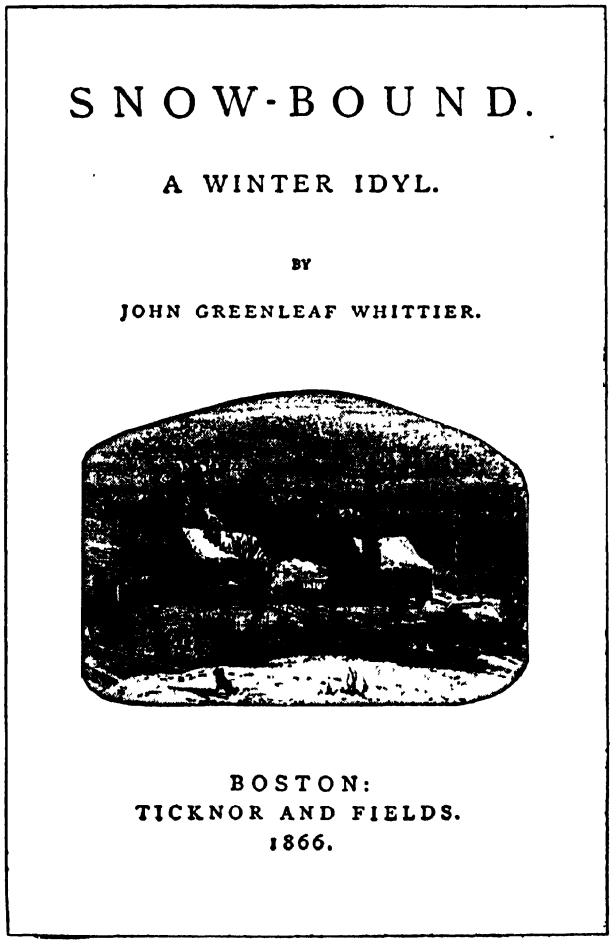
Where'er her troubled path may be,
  The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
The outward wayward life we see,
  The hidden springs we may not know.
Nor is it given us to discern
  What threads the fatal sisters spun,
  Through what ancestral years has run
The sorrow with the woman born,
What forged her cruel chain of moods,
What set her feet in solitudes,
  And held the love within her mute,
What mingled madness in the blood,
  A life-long discord and annoy,
  Water of tears with oil of joy,
And hid within the folded bud
  Perversities of flower and fruit.
It is not ours to separate
The tangled skein of will and fate,
To show what metes and bounds should stand
Upon the soul's debatable land,
And between choice and Providence
Divide the circle of events;
  But He who knows our frame is just,
Merciful and compassionate,
And full of sweet assurances
And hope for all the language is,
  That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,
And laid it tenderly away,
Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brands with ashes over.
And while, with care, our mother laid

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536 **Petruchio's Kate**, in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, the violent-tempered heroine, Kate, who was subdued by Petruchio • 568 **fatal sisters**, the three Fates of Greek mythology who spun the thread of life, measured it, and snapped it off

The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express
Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.



Title page of the first edition, 1866.

Within our beds awhile we heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us, through the unplastered wall,
Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall.
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new;
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
Till in the summer-land of dreams
They softened to the sound of streams,
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
Of merry voices high and clear;
And saw the teamsters drawing near
To break the drifted highways out.
Down the long hillside treading slow
We saw the half-buried oxen go,
Shaking the snow from heads uptost,
Their straining nostrils white with frost.
Before our door the straggling train
Drew up, an added team to gain.
The elders threshed their hands a-cold,
  Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes
  From lip to lip; the younger folks
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
Then toiled again the cavalcade
  O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
  And woodland paths that wound between
Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.
From every barn a team afoot,
At every house a new recruit,
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law
Haply the watchful young men saw
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
And curious eyes of merry girls,
Lifting their hands in mock defence
Against the snow-ball's compliments,
And reading in each missive tost
The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
  And, following where the teamsters led,
The wise old Doctor went his round,
Just pausing at our door to say,
In the brief autocratic way
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
Was free to urge her claim on all,

That some poor neighbor sick abed
At night our mother's aid would need.
For, one in generous thought and deed,
What mattered in the sufferer's sight
The Quaker matron's inward light,
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?
All hearts confess the saints elect
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,
And melt not in an acid sect
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed
Since the great world was heard from last.
The Almanac we studied o'er,
Read and reread our little store
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
One harmless novel, mostly hid
From younger eyes, a book forbid,
And poetry, (or good or bad,
A single book was all we had,)
Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews.
At last the floundering carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Lo! broadening outward as we read,
To warmer zones the horizon spread;
In panoramic length unrolled
We saw the marvels that it told.
Before us passed the painted Creeks,
And daft McGregor on his raids
In Costa Rica's everglades.
And up Taygetos winding slow
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
A Turk's head at each saddle-bow!
Welcome to us its week-old news,
Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding knell and dirge of death;
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
The latest culprit sent to jail;
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
And traffic calling loud for gain.
We felt the stir of hall and street,
The pulse of life that round us beat;
The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow;
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray
And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest old and vast,
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
I hear again the voice that bids
The dreamer leave his dream midway
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
Dreaming in throngful city ways

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683 **Ellwood,** Thomas Ellwood (1639-1714), who wrote *Davideis,* a pedestrian poem of King David's life • 693 **Creeks,** an Indian tribe. Probably the story told of their removal to an Indian reservation in 1821 • 694 **daft McGregor,** Sir Gregor McGregor, who in the 1820's tried to establish a colony in Costa Rica • 696 **Taygetos . . . Greeks.** Taygetos is a mountain in Greece near Maina, a district which was noted for its robbers and pirates. During the Greek struggle for independence from Turkey (1821-1833), the Greek General Ypsilanti sent a force of these mountaineers up Mount Taygetos against the Turks

Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
And dear and early friends—the few
Who yet remain—shall pause to view
These Flemish pictures of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

1866

From *Among the Hills*

In its first form, "Among the Hills," this poem appeared in the Atlantic, January 1868. Before the volume **Among the Hills and Other Poems** appeared in December of the same year, Whittier made numerous changes. Says Pickard: "The inspiration . . . came to him in the summer of 1867. It is a tender and romantic love-story in verse, idealizing New England farm life; with a prelude which furnishes the darker shades needed to make the picture a faithful reproduction of the rural scenes he intended to portray. . . . In its original form there were sixty-four lines in the Prelude, and it did not deal with the prosaic and disagreeable side of farm life, as does the Prelude in its present form, which consists of one hundred and fifty-six lines. . . . The whole tenor of the Prelude is changed, so as to make it a new poem . . . The ballad proper enlarges upon the sweet story originally told, making three hundred and forty-four lines instead of one hundred and sixty-eight, as at first."

Modern readers may find the poem itself, not included here, rather too sweet for their taste. The Prelude, however, is clearly a forerunner of modern poems and stories which emphasize the drabness and the flinty quality of life on New England farms.

PRELUDE

Along the roadside, like the flowers of gold
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,
And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers
Hang motionless upon their upright staves.
The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,
Wing-weary with its long flight from the south,
Unfelt; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf
With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,
Confesses it. The locust by the wall
Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.
A single hay-cart down the dusty road
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep
On the load's top. Against the neighboring hill,
Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,
The sheep show white, as if a snowdrift still
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door
A drowsy smell of flowers—gray heliotrope,
And white sweet clover, and shy mignonette—
Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends
To the pervading symphony of peace.

No time is this for hands long overworn
To task their strength: and (unto Him be praise
Who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain
Of years that did the work of centuries
Have ceased, and we can draw our breath once more
Freely and full. So, as yon harvesters
Make glad their nooning underneath the elms
With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn
The leaves of memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'er
Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,
And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,
Proud of field-lore and harvest craft, and feeling
All their fine possibilities, how rich
And restful even poverty and toil

Snow-Bound • 747 **Flemish pictures.** The Flemish School (the van Eycks, Rubens, Van Dyck, and others) was noted for its detailed depiction of domestic scenes

Among the Hills • 2 **tawny Incas,** a Peruvian tribe of Indians noted for their handiwork in gold

Become when beauty, harmony, and love
Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat
At evening in the patriarch's tent, when man
Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock
The symbol of a Christian chivalry
Tender and just and generous to her
Who clothes with grace all duty; still, I know
Too well the picture has another side,—
How wearily the grind of toil goes on
Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear
And heart are starved amidst the plenitude
Of nature, and how hard and colorless
Is life without an atmosphere. I look
Across the lapse of half a century,
And call to mind old homesteads, where no flower
Told that the spring had come, but evil weeds,
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock in the place
Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose
And honeysuckle, where the house walls seemed
Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves
Across the curtainless windows from whose panes
Fluttered the signal rags of shiftlessness;
Within, the cluttered kitchen-floor, unwashed
(Broom-clean I think they called it); the best room
Stifling with cellar damp, shut from the air
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless
Save the inevitable sampler hung
Over the fireplace, or a mourning piece,
A green-haired woman, peony-cheeked, beneath
Impossible willows; the wide-throated hearth
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half concealing
The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back;
And, in sad keeping with all things about them,
Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen men,
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,
With scarce a human interest save their own
Monotonous round of small economies,
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood;
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,
Treading the May-flowers with regardless feet;
For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink
Sang not, nor winds made music in the leaves;
For them in vain October's holocaust
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,
The sacramental mystery of the woods.
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,
But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls
And winter pork with the least possible outlay
Of salt and sanctity; in daily life
Showing as little actual comprehension
Of Christian charity and love and duty,
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been
Out dated like a last year's almanac:
Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled fields,
And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,
The veriest straggler limping on his rounds,
The sun and air his sole inheritance,
Laughed at a poverty that paid its taxes,
And hugged his rags in self-complacency!

Not such should be the homesteads of a land
Where whoso wisely wills and acts may dwell
As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,
With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to make
His hours of leisure richer than a life
Of fourscore to the barons of old time,
Our yeoman should be equal to his home
Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,
A man to match his mountains, not to creep
Dwarfed and abased below them. I would fain
In this light way (of which I needs must own
With the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings,
"Story, God bless you! I have none to tell you!")
Invite the eye to see and the heart to feel
The beauty and the joy within their reach,—
Home, and home loves, and the beatitudes
Of nature free to all. Haply in years
That wait to take the places of our own,
Heard where some breezy balcony looks down
On happy homes, or where the lake in the moon
Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as Ruth,
In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet
Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine
May seem the burden of a prophecy,
Finding its late fulfillment in a change
Slow as the oak's growth lifting manhood up
Through broader culture, finer manners, love,
And reverence, to the level of the hills.

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39 angels . . . tent, probably a reference to Genesis 18 • 110 knife-grinder . . . sings, in "The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder," a parody written by George Canning

O Golden Age, whose light is of the dawn,
And not of sunset, forward, not behind,
Flood the new heavens and earth, and with thee bring
All the old virtues, whatsoever things
Are pure and honest and of good repute,
But add thereto whatever bard has sung
Or seer has told of when in trance and dream
They saw the Happy Isles of prophecy!
Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide
Between the right and wrong; but give the heart
The freedom of its fair inheritance,
Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved so long,
At Nature's table feast his ear and eye
With joy and wonder; let all harmonies
Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon
The princely guest, whether in soft attire
Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil,
And, lending life to the dead form of faith,
Give human nature reverence for the sake
Of One who bore it, making it divine
With the ineffable tenderness of God;
Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,
The heirship of an unknown destiny,
The unsolved mystery round about us, make
A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.
Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things
Should minister, as outward types and signs
Of the eternal beauty which fulfils
The one great purpose of creation, Love,
The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!

1868

151 **Ophir,** a region mentioned in the Old Testament as a source of gold and jewels

Bret Harte

1836 • 1902

"The writer of the epic of the gold rush," Francis Bret Harte, lived in California only during the period from 1854 to 1871. The rest of his life he lived in the East or abroad. Yet his stay in California gave him his most important material for poetry and for fiction which won remarkable popularity for him.

Harte was born in Albany, New York, August 25, 1836. He had a rather sketchy education. After his widowed mother moved the family to San Francisco, he joined them—in 1854—on the Pacific Coast. There he taught school, worked in the mines for a short time, served as a Wells Fargo Express messenger, and eventually became a printer. Developing his skill as a writer, he in time worked into various editorial jobs on some of the California magazines.

In 1868 he published "The Luck of Roaring Camp" in the newly founded *Overland Monthly,* of which he was editor. When the issue containing the story reached the East, the story was an immediate sensational success. Other stories in the same vein augmented Harte's popularity, and a poem, "Plain Language from Truthful James," was another extraordinary hit, read and quoted by everyone. In 1871, with an impressive contract from the *Atlantic Monthly* in his pocket, Harte started East, leaving the Far West permanently. His journey across the continent was a triumphant progress, and he was hailed in the East as a new genius.

The part of his life which came after this journey was pretty much of an anticlimax. A few more stories—"The Outcasts of Poker Flat," and "Tennessee's Partner,"

and "How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar," for instance—and some of his many poems were up to the early standard, but his work became repetitious, and, in the end, not much more than the working out of a formula. In 1878 he went abroad on a consular appointment to Germany. From 1888 until his death in 1902 he lived in England.

Harte believed that his art derived from that of American humor, and much of the comedy he mingles with pathos is obviously related to the humorous writings of pre-Civil War humorists. From the same group he evidently learned much about the picturing in fiction of the teeming life of a frontier section. From Dickens, his favorite author, he also apparently learned a great deal—particularly a way of merging his background into a story and a way of making characters memorable by giving them grotesque or unexpected traits. From post-war humorists, he borrowed various tricks of phrasing. His fame derived in part from the skill with which he blended these elements in his stories, in part from the interest the public had in the picturesque life of the latest American frontier.

An element in Harte's writings which also helped their popularity was a novel twist which he used again and again in the time-worn plot of sacrifice. In earlier sentimental stories, sweet and gracious characters habitually had made touching sacrifices in behalf of weak or wicked characters. Harte reversed the rôle of the rougher characters, and showed prostitutes, gamblers, or other besmirched men and women of the mining camps bravely making sacrifices. In "The Luck of Roaring Camp" the old formula of "innocent character saves ignoble character" is reversed when the rough Kentuck sacrifices his life to rescue little Tom Luck. In "Tennessee's Partner" the person for whom the sacrifice is made is, of course, a typical rascal of the old-fashioned sort; but the partner who is the hero shows the tenderness which lurks beneath a tough exterior.

Harte's great success is important in American literary history because of the impetus it gave to local color writing, which in time was to acquaint the public with life in most of the other sections of the country. The unconventional morality—for the time—of his fiction prepared the way for characterizations and scenes in later fiction which increasingly departed from prudish standards.

The Writings of Bret Harte, Standard Library Edition, 20 vols , Boston, 1896-1903 • **Bret Harte, Representative Selections** (American Writers Series), ed J. B Harrison, Cincinnati, 1941 • G. R. Stewart, Jr., **Bret Harte, Argonaut and Exile**, New York, 1931

Tennessee's Partner

I do not think that we ever knew his real name. Our ignorance of it certainly never gave us any social inconvenience, for at Sandy Bar in 1854 most men were christened anew. Sometimes these appellatives were derived from some distinctiveness of dress, as in the case of "Dungaree Jack;" or from some peculiarity of habit, as shown in "Saleratus Bill," so called from an undue proportion of that chemical in his daily bread; or from some unlucky slip, as exhibited in "The Iron Pirate," a mild, inoffensive man, who earned that baleful title by his unfortunate mispronunciation of the term "iron pyrites." Perhaps this may have been the beginning of a rude heraldry; and I am constrained to think that it was because a man's real name in that day rested solely upon his own unsupported statement. "Call yourself Clifford, do you?" said Boston, addressing a timid newcomer with infinite scorn; "hell is full of such Cliffords!" He then introduced the unfortunate man, whose name happened to be really Clifford, as "Jaybird Charley,"—an unhallowed inspiration of the moment that clung to him ever after.

But to return to Tennessee's Partner, whom we never knew by any other than this relative title. That he had ever existed as a separate and distinct individuality we only learned later. It seems that in 1853 he left Poker Flat to go to San Francisco, ostensibly to procure a wife. He never got any farther than Stockton. At that place he was attracted by a young person who waited upon the table at the hotel where he took his meals. One morning he said something to her which caused her to smile not unkindly, to somewhat coquettishly break a plate of toast over his upturned, serious simple face, and to retreat to the kitchen. He followed her, and emerged a few moments later, covered with more toast and victory.

That day week they were married by a justice of the peace, and returned to Poker Flat. I am aware that something more might be made of this episode, but I prefer to tell it as it was current at Sandy Bar,—in the gulches and bar-rooms,—where all sentiment was modified by a strong sense of humor.

Of their married felicity but little is known, perhaps for the reason that Tennessee, then living with his partner, one day took occasion to say something to the bride on his own account, at which, it is said, she smiled not unkindly and chastely retreated,—this time as far as Marysville, where Tennessee followed her, and where they went to house-keeping without the aid of a justice of the peace. Tennessee's Partner took the loss of his wife simply and seriously, as was his fashion. But to everybody's surprise, when Tennessee one day returned from Marysville, without his partner's wife,—she having smiled and retreated with somebody else,—Tennessee's Partner was the first man to shake his hand and greet him with affection. The boys who had gathered in the canon to see the shooting were naturally indignant. Their indignation might have found vent in sarcasm but for a certain look in Tennessee's Partner's eyes that indicated a lack of humorous appreciation. In fact, he was a grave man, with a steady application to practical detail which was unpleasant in a difficulty.

Meanwhile a popular feeling against Tennessee had grown up on the Bar. He was known to be a gambler, he was suspected to be a thief. In these suspicions Tennessee's Partner was equally compromised; his continued intimacy with Tennessee after the affair above quoted could only be accounted for on the hypothesis of a copartnership of crime. At last Tennessee's guilt became flagrant. One day he overtook a stranger on his way to Red Dog. The stranger afterward related that Tennessee beguiled the time with interesting anecdote and reminiscence, but illogically concluded the interview in the following words: "And now, young man, I'll trouble you for your knife, your pistols, and your money. You see your weppings might get you into trouble at Red Dog, and your money's a temptation to the evilly disposed. I think you said your address was San Francisco. I shall endeavor to call." It may be stated here that Tennessee had a fine flow of humor, which no business preoccupation could wholly subdue.

This exploit was his last. Red Dog and Sandy Bar made common cause against the highwayman. Tennessee was hunted in very much the same fashion as his prototype, the grizzly. As the toils closed around him, he made a desperate dash through the Bar, emptying his revolver at the crowd before the Arcade Saloon, and so on up Grizzly Canon; but at its farther extremity he was stopped by a small man on a gray horse. The men looked at each other a moment in silence. Both were fearless, both self-possessed and independent, and both types of a civilization that in the seventeenth century would have been called heroic, but in the nineteenth simply "reckless."

"What have you got there?—I call," said Tennessee quietly.

"Two bowers and an ace," said the stranger as quietly, showing two revolvers and a bowie-knife.

"That takes me," returned Tennessee; and, with this gambler's epigram, he threw away his useless pistol and rode back with his captor.

It was a warm night. The cool breeze which usually sprang up with the going down of the sun behind the chaparral-crested mountain was that evening withheld from Sandy Bar. The little canon was stifling with heated resinous odors, and the decaying driftwood on the Bar sent forth faint sickening exhalations. The feverishness of day and its fierce passions still filled the camp. Lights moved restlessly along the bank of the river, striking no answering reflection from its tawny current. Against the blackness of the pines the windows of the old loft above the express-office stood out staringly bright; and through their curtainless panes the loungers below could see the forms of those who were even then deciding the fate of Tennessee. And above all this, etched on the dark firmament, rose the Sierra, remote and passionless, crowned with remoter passionless stars.

The trial of Tennessee was conducted as fairly as was consistent with a judge and jury who felt themselves to some extent obliged to justify, in their verdict, the previous irregularities of arrest and indictment. The law of Sandy Bar was implacable, but not vengeful. The excitement and personal feeling of the chase were over; with Tennessee safe in their hands, they were ready to listen patiently to any defense, which they were already satisfied was insufficient. There being no doubt in their

own minds, they were willing to give the prisoner the benefit of any that might exist. Secure in the hypothesis that he ought to be hanged on general principles, they indulged him with more latitude of defense than his reckless hardihood seemed to ask. The Judge appeared to be more anxious than the prisoner, who, otherwise unconcerned, evidently took a grim pleasure in the responsibility he had created. "I don't take any hand in this yer game," had been his invariable but good-humored reply to all questions. The Judge—who was also his captor—for a moment vaguely regretted that he had not shot him "on sight" that morning, but presently dismissed this human weakness as unworthy of the judicial mind. Nevertheless, when there was a tap at the door, and it was said that Tennessee's Partner was there on behalf of the prisoner, he was admitted at once without question. Perhaps the younger members of the jury, to whom the proceedings were becoming irksomely thoughtful, hailed him as a relief.

For he was not, certainly, an imposing figure. Short and stout, with a square face, sunburned into a preternatural redness, clad in a loose duck "jumper" and trousers streaked and splashed with red soil, his aspect under any circumstances would have been quaint, and was now even ridiculous. As he stooped to deposit at his feet a heavy carpetbag he was carrying, it became obvious, from partially developed legends and inscriptions, that the material with which his trousers had been patched had been originally intended for a less ambitious covering. Yet he advanced with great gravity, and after shaking the hand of each person in the room with labored cordiality, he wiped his serious perplexed face on a red bandana handkerchief, a shade lighter than his complexion, laid his powerful hand upon the table to steady himself, and thus addressed the Judge:—

"I was passin' by," he began, by way of apology, "and I thought I'd just step in and see how things was gettin' on with Tennessee thar,—my pardner. It's a hot night. I disremember any sich weather before on the Bar."

He paused a moment, but nobody volunteering any other meteorological recollection, he again had recourse to his pocket-handkerchief, and for some moments mopped his face diligently.

"Have you anything to say on behalf of the prisoner?" said the Judge finally.

"Thet's it," said Tennessee's Partner, in a tone of relief. "I come yar as Tennessee's pardner,—knowing him nigh on four year, off and on, wet and dry, in luck and out o' luck. His ways ain't aller my ways, but thar ain't any p'ints in that young man, thar ain't any liveliness as he's been up to, as I don't know. And you sez to me, sez you,—confidential-like, and between man and man, —sez you, 'Do you know anything in his behalf?' and I sez to you, sez I,—confidential-like, as between man and man,—'What should a man know of his pardner?' "

"Is this all you have to say?" asked the Judge impatiently, feeling, perhaps, that a dangerous sympathy of humor was beginning to humanize the court.

"Thet's so," continued Tennessee's Partner. "It ain't for me to say anything agin' him. And now, what's the case? Here's Tennessee wants money, wants it bad, and does n't like to ask it of his old pardner. Well, what does Tennessee do? He lays for a stranger, and he fetches that stranger; and you lays for *him*, and you fetches *him;* and the honors is easy. And I put it to you, bein' a fa'r-minded man, and to you, gentlemen all, as fa'r-minded men, ef this is n't so."

"Prisoner," said the Judge, interrupting, "have you any questions to ask this man?"

"No! no!" continued Tennessee's Partner hastily. "I play this yer hand alone. To come down to the bedrock, it's just this. Tennessee, thar, has played it pretty rough and expensive-like on a stranger, and on this yer camp. And now, what's the fair thing? Some would say more, some would say less. Here's seventeen hundred dollars in coarse gold and a watch,—it's about all my pile,—and call it square!" And before a hand could be raised to prevent him he had emptied the contents of the carpetbag upon the table.

For a moment his life was in jeopardy. One or two men sprang to their feet, several hands groped for hidden weapons, and a suggestion to "throw him from the window" was only overridden by a gesture from the Judge. Tennessee laughed. And apparently oblivious of the excitement, Tennessee's Partner improved the opportunity to mop his face again with his handkerchief.

When order was restored, and the man was made to understand, by the use of forcible figures and rhetoric, that Tennessee's offense could not be condoned by money, his face took a more serious and sanguinary hue, and

those who were nearest to him noticed that his rough hand trembled slightly on the table. He hesitated a moment as he slowly returned the gold to the carpetbag, as if he had not yet entirely caught the elevated sense of justice which swayed the tribunal, and was perplexed with the belief that he had not offered enough. Then he turned to the Judge, and saying, "This yer is a lone hand, played alone, and without my pardner," he bowed to the jury and was about to withdraw, when the Judge called him back:—

"If you have anything to say to Tennessee, you had better say it now."

For the first time that evening the eyes of the prisoner and his strange advocate met. Tennessee smiled, showed his white teeth, and saying, "Euchred, old man!" held out his hand. Tennessee's Partner took it in his own, and saying, "I just dropped in as I was passin' to see how things was gettin' on," let the hand passively fall, and adding that "it was a warm night," again mopped his face with his handkerchief, and without another word withdrew.

The two men never again met each other alive. For the unparalleled insult of a bribe offered to Judge Lynch —who, whether bigoted, weak, or narrow, was at least incorruptible—firmly fixed in the mind of that mythical personage any wavering determination of Tennessee's fate; and at the break of day he was marched, closely guarded, to meet it at the top of Marley's Hill.

How he met it, how cool he was, how he refused to say anything, how perfect were the arrangements of the committee, were all duly reported, with the addition of a warning moral and example to all future evil-doers, in the "Red Dog Clarion," by its editor, who was present, and to whose vigorous English I cheerfully refer the reader. But the beauty of that midsummer morning, the blessed amity of earth and air and sky, the awakened life of the free woods and hills, the joyous renewal and promise of Nature, and above all, the infinite serenity that thrilled through each, was not reported, as not being a part of the social lesson. And yet, when the weak and foolish deed was done, and a life, with its possibilities and responsibilities, had passed out of the misshapen thing that dangled between earth and sky, the birds sang, the flowers bloomed, the sun shone, as cheerily as before; and possibly the "Red Dog Clarion" was right.

Tennessee's Partner was not in the group that surrounded the ominous tree. But as they turned to disperse, attention was drawn to the singular appearance of a motionless donkey-cart halted at the side of the road. As they approached, they at once recognized the venerable "Jenny" and the two-wheeled cart as the property of Tennessee's Partner, used by him in carrying dirt from his claim; and a few paces distant the owner of the equipage himself, sitting under the buckeye-tree, wiping the perspiration from his glowing face. In answer to an inquiry, he said he had come for the body of the "diseased," "if it was all the same to the committee." He didn't wish to "hurry anything"; he could "wait." He was not working that day; and when the gentlemen were done with the "diseased," he would take him. "Ef thar is any present," he added, in his simple, serious way, "as would care to jine in the fun'l, they kin come." Perhaps it was from a sense of humor, which I have already intimated was a feature of Sandy Bar,—perhaps it was from something even better than that, but two thirds of the loungers accepted the invitation at once.

It was noon when the body of Tennessee was delivered into the hands of his partner. As the cart drew up to the fatal tree, we noticed that it contained a rough oblong box,—apparently made from a section of sluicing,—and half filled with bark and the tassels of pine. The cart was further decorated with slips of willow and made fragrant with buckeye-blossoms. When the body was deposited in the box, Tennessee's Partner drew over it a piece of tarred canvas, and gravely mounting the narrow seat in front, with his feet upon the shafts, urged the little donkey forward. The equipage moved slowly on, at that decorous pace which was habitual with Jenny even under less solemn circumstances. The men—half curiously, half jestingly, but all good-humoredly—strolled along beside the cart, some in advance, some a little in the rear of the homely catafalque. But whether from the narrowing of the road or some present sense of decorum, as the cart passed on, the company fell to the rear in couples, keeping step, and otherwise assuming the external show of a formal procession. Jack Folinsbee, who had at the outset played a funeral march in dumb show upon an imaginary trombone, desisted from a lack of sympathy and appreciation,—not having, perhaps, your true humorist's capacity to be content with the enjoyment of his own fun.

The way led through Grizzly Canon, by this time clothed in funereal drapery and shadows. The redwoods, burying their moccasined feet in the red soil, stood in Indian file along the track, trailing an uncouth benediction from their bending boughs upon the passing bier. A hare, surprised into helpless inactivity, sat upright and pulsating in the ferns by the roadside as the cortege went by. Squirrels hastened to gain a secure outlook from higher boughs; and the blue-jays, spreading their wings, fluttered before them like outriders, until the outskirts of Sandy Bar were reached, and the solitary cabin of Tennessee's Partner.

Viewed under more favorable circumstances, it would not have been a cheerful place. The unpicturesque site, the rude and unlovely outlines, the unsavory details, which distinguish the nest-building of the California miner were all here with the dreariness of decay superadded. A few paces from the cabin there was a rough inclosure, which, in the brief days of Tennessee's Partner's matrimonial felicity, had been used as a garden, but was now overgrown with fern. As we approached it, we were surprised to find that what we had taken for a recent attempt at cultivation was the broken soil about an open grave.

The cart was halted before the inclosure, and rejecting the offers of assistance with the same air of simple self-reliance he had displayed throughout, Tennessee's Partner lifted the rough coffin on his back, and deposited it unaided within the shallow grave. He then nailed down the board which served as a lid, and mounting the little mound of earth beside it, took off his hat and slowly mopped his face with his handkerchief. This the crowd felt was a preliminary to speech, and they disposed themselves variously on stumps and boulders, and sat expectant.

"When a man," began Tennessee's Partner slowly, "has been running free all day, what's the natural thing for him to do? Why, to come home. And if he ain't in a condition to go home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home. And here's Tennessee has been running free, and we brings him home from his wandering." He paused and picked up a fragment of quartz, rubbed it thoughtfully on his sleeve, and went on: "It ain't the first time that I've packed him on my back, as you see'd me now. It ain't the first time that I brought him to this yer cabin when he could n't help himself; it ain't the first time that I and Jinny have waited for him on yon hill, and picked him up and so fetched him home, when he could n't speak and did n't know me. And now that it's the last time, why"—he paused and rubbed the quartz gently on his sleeve—"you see it's sort of rough on his pardner. And now, gentlemen," he added abruptly, picking up his longhandled shovel, "the fun'l's over and my thanks, and Tennessee's thanks, to you for your trouble."

Resisting any proffers of assistance, he began to fill in the grave, turning his back upon the crowd, that after a few moments' hesitation gradually withdrew. As they crossed the little ridge that hid Sandy Bar from view, some, looking back, thought they could see Tennessee's Partner, his work done, sitting upon the grave, his shovel between his knees, and his face buried in his red bandana handkerchief. But it was argued by others that you couldn't tell his face from his handkerchief at that distance, and this point remained undecided

In the reaction that followed the feverish excitement of that day, Tennessee's Partner was not forgotten. A secret investigation had cleared him of any complicity in Tennessee's guilt, and left only a suspicion of his general sanity. Sandy Bar made a point of calling on him, and proffering various uncouth but well-meant kindnesses But from that day his rude health and great strength seemed visibly to decline; and when the rainy season fairly set in, and the tiny grass-blades were beginning to peep from the rocky mound above Tennessee's grave, he took to his bed.

One night, when the pines beside the cabin were swaying in the storm and trailing their slender fingers over the roof, and the roar and rush of the swollen river were heard below, Tennessee's Partner lifted his head from the pillow, saying, "It is time to go for Tennessee; I must put Jinny in the cart," and would have risen from his bed but for the restraint of his attendant. Struggling, he still pursued his singular fancy: "There, now, steady, Jinny,—steady, old girl. How dark it is! Look out for the ruts,—and look out for him, too, old gal. Sometimes, you know, when he's blind drunk, he drops down right in the trail. Keep on straight up to the pine on the top of the hill. Thar! I told you so!—thar he is,—coming this way, too, —all by himself, sober, and his face a-shining. Tennessee! Pardner!"

And so they met.

1869

Plain Language from Truthful James

Written in 1870 and published in September of the same year, this poem, known to many as "The Heathen Chinee," had a success comparable with that of "The Luck." Newspapers in every part of the country printed it; it was issued as a broadside; song versions were published; and several lithograph illustrations found ready buyers. According to George R. Stewart, "It was said that President Grant had intended to take up the Chinese problem in his message to Congress, but refrained after the poem had made the whole matter the occasion of hilarity."

Harte was rather distressed by the fame of the poem, partly because he felt that some people, failing to perceive its irony, used it to justify a prejudice against the Chinese; partly because he thought it was a bad poem. Today it seems a rather pleasant bit of nonsense, amusing because of the story it tells and because of the galloping meter. The metrics, Harte said, were influenced by Swinburne's **Atalanta in Calydon.**

Which I wish to remark,
  And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark
  And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar,
  Which the same I would rise to explain.

Ah Sin was his name;
  And I shall not deny,
In regard to the same,
  What the name might imply;
But his smile it was pensive and childlike,
  As I frequent remarked to Bill Nye.

It was August the third,
  And quite soft was the skies;
Which it might be inferred
  That Ah Sin was likewise;
Yet he played it that day upon William
  And me in a way I despise.

Which we had a small game,
  And Ah Sin took a hand;
It was Euchre. The same
  He did not understand;
But he smiled as he sat by the table,
  With the smile that was childlike and bland.

Yet the cards they were stocked
  In a way that I grieve,
And my feelings were shocked
  At the state of Nye's sleeve,
Which was stuffed full of aces and bowers,
  And the same with intent to deceive.

But the hands that were played
  By that heathen Chinee,
And the points that he made,
  Were quite frightful to see,—
Till at last he put down a right bower,
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.



". . . his smile it was pensive and childlike . . ."

Then I looked up at Nye,
And he gazed upon me;
And he rose with a sigh,
And said, "Can this be?
We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor,"—
And he went for that heathen Chinee.

In the scene that ensued
I did not take a hand,
But the floor it was strewed
Like the leaves on the strand
With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,
In the game "he did not understand."

In his sleeves which were long,
He had twenty-four jacks,—
Which was coming it strong,
Yet I state but the facts;
And we found on his nails, which were taper,
What is frequent in tapers,—that's wax.

Which is why I remark,
And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar,—
Which the same I am free to maintain.

1870

George Washington Cable

1844 • 1925

George Washington Cable's father came from an old slaveholding family in Virginia; his mother was a native of New England and a strict Puritan. There were thus conflicting strains in his inheritance, the influences of which can be traced in his life and writings.

Cable was born in New Orleans, where his father was a not too successful merchant. From the age of fourteen George helped, by miscellaneous jobs, to support the family left destitute by the death of his father. During the Civil War he served with a troop of Mississippi cavalry and was severely wounded. For more than ten years after the war, he was clerk and bookkeeper for a cotton firm in New Orleans. During the clerking and bookkeeping years, however, he read much, delved into the old French and Spanish records of New Orleans, and (because, as he said, it seemed a pity that such rich materials should go to waste) began to write. His first story, " 'Sieur George," appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* in 1873. Other stories of romantic New Orleans followed and were collected in *Old Creole Days* (1879). He worked the Creole vein further in *The Grandissimes* (1880) and in *Madame Delphine* (1881). Despite the success of these and other similar books, Cable—his Puritan inheritance asserting itself—turned reformer, and in *The Silent South* (1885) zealously advocated reforms in racial relations. The book made him so unpopular in the South that he moved to Northampton, Massachusetts. His later works are of interest chiefly to the social historian.

Cable deserves to be remembered as the literary discoverer of New Orleans and as the facile recorder of his discoveries there. Like many other writers of local color fiction, he was a romantic realist and was inclined to play up picturesqueness and the moral ending: the established standards of the *genre* seem to have required that a story be at once edifying and exotic. If Cable's edification is sometimes a little forced, his exoticism is at least based on fact. The New Orleans of the early nineteenth cen-

tury was a colorful *mélange* of races, and therefore of languages and of mores. With a sensitive, skillful talent, Cable caught, and preserved in several of his early pieces, this extraordinary life and color. At his best, he has, as Professor Pattee has said, a "Gallic brilliance" unique in American literature. The question of the complete accuracy of Cable's pictures may well be left to the historical specialist, for the pictures themselves have a verisimilitude quite sufficient for the purposes of good literature.

Lucy Cable Biklé, George W. Cable, His Life and Letters, New York, 1928 • F. L. Pattee, "The New Romance," A History of American Literature Since 1870, New York, 1915 • E. L. Tinker, "Cable and the Creoles," American Literature, January 1934

Belles Demoiselles Plantation

A Creole is a white person who is descended from the French or Spanish settlers of Louisiana and the Gulf States, and who preserves their characteristic speech and culture. "The title [of Creole]," to quote Cable's own definition, "... came early to include any native of French or Spanish descent whose non-alliance with the slave race entitled him to social rank."

"Belles Demoiselles Plantation" is discursive and almost plotless (the dénouement seems reminiscent of "The Fall of the House of Usher") and the conclusion is too sentimental for modern taste. But the story is excellent in its rendering of locale and manners. With many deft touches Cable conveys the hauteur, the grace, the French gaiety of his Creole characters.

First printed in Scribner's Monthly, April 1874, the story was reprinted in Old Creole Days, 1879.

The original grantee was Count——, assume the name to be De Charleu; the old Creoles never forgive a public mention. He was the French king's commissary. One day, called to France to explain the lucky accident of the commissariat having burned down with his account-books inside, he left his wife, a Choctaw Comptesse, behind.

Arrived at court, his excuses were accepted, and that tract granted him where afterwards stood Belles Demoiselles Plantation. A man cannot remember every thing! In a fit of forgetfulness he married a French gentlewoman, rich and beautiful, and 'brought her out.' However, 'All's well that ends well'; a famine had been in the colony, and the Choctaw Comptesse had starved, leaving nought but a half-caste orphan family lurking on the edge of the settlement, bearing our French gentlewoman's own new name, and being mentioned in Monsieur's will.

And the new Comptesse—she tarried but a twelvemonth, left Monsieur a lovely son, and departed, led out of this vain world by the swamp-fever.

From this son sprang the proud Creole family of De Charleu. It rose straight up, up, up, generation after generation, tall, branchless, slender, palm-like; and finally, in the time of which I am to tell, flowered with all the rare beauty of a century-plant, in Artemise, Innocente, Felicité, the twins Marie and Martha, Leontine and little Septima; the seven beautiful daughters for whom their home had been fitly named Belles Demoiselles.

The Count's grant had once been a long Pointe, round which the Mississippi used to whirl, and seethe, and foam, that it was horrid to behold. Big whirlpools would open and wheel about in the savage eddies under the low bank, and close up again, and others open, and spin, and disappear. Great circles of muddy surface would boil up from hundreds of feet below, and gloss over, and seem to float away,—sink, come back again under water, and with only a soft hiss surge up again, and again drift off,

Belles Demoiselles, beautiful young ladies • 12 brought . . . out, brought her from France to Louisiana • 14 starved, died of starvation (the etymological meaning of the word is "to die")

and vanish. Every few minutes the loamy bank would tip down a great load of earth upon its besieger, and fall back a foot,—sometimes a yard,—and the writhing river would press after, until at last the Pointe was quite swallowed up, and the great river glided by in a majestic curve, and asked no more; the bank stood fast, the 'caving' became a forgotten misfortune, and the diminished grant was a long, sweeping, willowy bend, rustling with miles of sugarcane.

Coming up the Mississippi in the sailing craft of those early days, about the time one first could descry the white spires of the old St. Louis Cathedral, you would be pretty sure to spy, just over to your right under the levee, Belles Demoiselles Mansion, with its broad veranda and red painted cypress roof, peering over the embankment, like a bird in the nest, half hid by the avenue of willows which one of the departed De Charleus,—he that married a Marot,—had planted on the levee's crown.

The house stood unusually near the river, facing eastward, and standing foursquare, with an immense veranda about its sides, and a flight of steps in front spreading broadly downward, as we open arms to a child. From the veranda nine miles of river were seen; and in their compass, near at hand, the shady garden full of rare and beautiful flowers; farther away broad fields of cane and rice, and the distant quarters of the slaves, and on the horizon everywhere a dark belt of cypress forest.

The master was old Colonel De Charleu,—Jean Albert Henri Joseph De Charleu-Marot, and 'Colonel' by the grace of the first American governor. Monsieur,—he would not speak to any one who called him 'Colonel,'—was a hoary-headed patriarch. His step was firm, his form erect, his intellect strong and clear, his countenance classic, serene, dignified, commanding, his manners courtly, his voice musical,—fascinating. He had had his vices,—all his life; but had borne them, as his race do, with a serenity of conscience and a cleanness of mouth that left no outward blemish on the surface of the gentleman. He had gambled in Royal Street, drunk hard in Orleans Street, run his adversary through in the dueling-ground at Slaughter-house Point, and danced and quarrelled at the St. Philippe Street Theatre quadroon balls. Even now, with all his courtesy and bounty, and a hospitality which seemed to be entertaining angels, he was bitter-proud and penurious, and deep down in his hard-finished heart loved nothing but himself, his name, and his motherless children. But these!—their ravishing beauty was all but excuse enough for the unbounded idolatry of their father. Against these seven goddesses he never rebelled. Had they even required him to defraud old De Carlos—

I can hardly say.

Old De Carlos was his extremely distant relative on the Choctaw side. With this single exception, the narrow thread-like line of descent from the Indian wife, diminished to a mere strand by injudicious alliances, and deaths in the gutters of old New Orleans, was extinct. The name, by Spanish contact, had become De Carlos; but this one surviving bearer of it was known to all, and known only, as Injin Charlie.

One thing I never knew a Creole to do. He will not utterly go back on the ties of blood, no matter what sort of knots those ties may be. For one reason, he is never ashamed of his or his father's sins; and for another,—he will tell you—he is 'all heart!'

So the different heirs of the De Charleu estate had always strictly regarded the rights and interests of the De Carloses, especially their ownership of a block of dilapidated buildings in a part of the city, which had once been very poor property, but was beginning to be valuable. This block had much more than maintained the last De Carlos through a long and lazy lifetime, and, as his household consisted only of himself, and an aged and crippled Negress, the inference was irresistible that he 'had money.' Old Charlie, though by *alias* an 'Injin,' was plainly a dark white man, about as old as Colonel De Charleu, sunk in the bliss of deep ignorance, shrewd, deaf, and, by repute at least, unmerciful.

The Colonel and he always conversed in English. This rare accomplishment, which the former had learned from his Scotch wife,—the latter from up-river traders,—they found an admirable medium of communication, answering, better than French could, a similar purpose to that of the stick which we fasten to the bit of one horse and breast-gear of another, whereby each keeps his distance. Once in a while, too, by way of jest, English found its way among the ladies of Belles Demoiselles, always signifying that their sire was about to have business with old Charlie.

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12 **St. Louis Cathedral** in New Orleans was completed in 1794 • 30 **first . . . governor.** Louisiana was acquired from France in 1803

Now a long-standing wish to buy out Charlie troubled the Colonel. He had no desire to oust him unfairly; he was proud of being always fair; yet he did long to engross the whole estate under one title. Out of his luxurious idleness he had conceived this desire, and thought little of so slight an obstacle as being already somewhat in debt to old Charlie for money borrowed, and for which Belles Demoiselles was, of course, good, ten times over. Lots, buildings, rents, all, might as well be his, he thought, to give, keep, or destroy. 'Had he but the old man's heritage. Ah! he might bring that into existence which his *belles demoiselles* had been begging for, "since many years;" a home,—and such a home,—in the gay city. Here he should tear down this row of cottages, and make his garden wall; there that long rope-walk should give place to vine-covered arbors; the bakery yonder should make way for a costly conservatory; that wine warehouse should come down, and the mansion go up. It should be the finest in the state. Men should never pass it, but they should say—"the palace of the De Charleus; a family of grand descent, a people of elegance and bounty, a line as old as France, a fine old man, and seven daughters as beautiful as happy; whoever dare attempt to marry there must leave his own name behind him!"

'The house should be of stones fitly set, brought down in ships from the land of "les Yankees," and it should have an airy belvedere, with a gilded image tip-toeing and shining on its peak, and from it you should see, far across the gleaming folds of the river, the red roof of Belles Demoiselles, the country-seat. At the big stone gate there should be a porter's lodge, and it should be a privilege even to see the ground.'

Truly they were a family fine enough, and fancy-free enough to have fine wishes, yet happy enough where they were, to have had no wish but to live there always.

To those, who, by whatever fortune, wandered into the garden of Belles Demoiselles some summer afternoon as the sky was reddening towards evening, it was lovely to see the family gathered out upon the tile pavement at the foot of the broad front steps, gayly chatting and jesting, with that ripple of laughter that comes so pleasingly from a bevy of girls. The father would be found seated in their midst, the centre of attention and compliment, witness, arbiter, umpire, critic, by his beautiful children's unanimous appointment, but the single vassal, too, of seven absolute sovereigns.

Now they would draw their chairs near together in eager discussion of some new step in the dance, or the adjustment of some rich adornment. Now they would start about him with excited comments to see the eldest fix a bunch of violets in his button-hole. Now the twins would move down a walk after some unusual flower, and be greeted on their return with the high pitched notes of delighted feminine surprise.

As evening came on they would draw more quietly about their paternal centre. Often their chairs were forsaken, and they grouped themselves on the lower steps, one above another, and surrendered themselves to the tender influences of the approaching night. At such an hour the passer on the river, already attracted by the dark figures of the broad-roofed mansion, and its woody garden standing against the glowing sunset, would hear the voices of the hidden group rise from the spot in the soft harmonies of an evening song; swelling clearer and clearer as the thrill of music warmed them into feeling, and presently joined by the deeper tones of the father's voice; then, as the daylight passed quite away, all would be still, and he would know that the beautiful home had gathered its nestlings under its wings.

And yet, for mere vagary, it pleased them not to be pleased.

'Arti!' called one sister to another in the broad hall, one morning,—mock amazement in her distended eyes,—'something is goin' to took place!'

'Comm-e-n-t?'—long-drawn perplexity.

'Papa is goin' to town!'

The news passed up stairs.

'Inno!'—one to another meeting in a doorway,—'something is goin' to took place!'

'Qu'est-ce-que c'est!'—vain attempt at gruffness.

'Papa is goin' to town!'

The unusual tidings were true. It was afternoon of the same day that the Colonel tossed his horse's bridle to his groom, and stepped up to old Charlie, who was sitting on his bench under a China-tree, his head, as was his fashion, bound in a Madras handkerchief. The 'old man'

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26 les Yankees, the Yankees • 27 belvedere, an open, roofed gallery or loggia on the top of a house for the purpose of commanding a view • 33 fancy-free, free from the power of love. See A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act II, sc. i, l. 64 • 75 Comm-e-n-t? Indeed? Why do you say that? • 80 Qu'est-ce-que c'est! What is it!

was plainly under the effect of spirits, and smiled a deferential salutation without trusting himself to his feet.

'Eh, well Charlie!'—the Colonel raised his voice to suit his kinsman's deafness,—'how is those times with my friend Charlie?'

'Eh?' said Charlie, distractedly.

'Is that goin' well with my friend Charlie?'

'In de house,—call her,'—making a pretence of rising.

'*Non, non!* I don't want,' the speaker paused to breathe—' 'ow is collection?'

'Oh!' said Charlie, 'every day he make me more poorer!'

'What do you hask for it?' asked the planter indifferently, designating the house by a wave of his whip.

'Ask for w'at?' said Injin Charlie.

'De *house!* What you ask for it?'

'I don't believe,' said Charlie.

'What you would *take* for it!' cried the planter.

'Wait for w'at?'

'What you would *take* for the whole block?'

'I don't want to sell him!'

'I'll give you *ten thousand dollah* for it.'

'Ten t'ousand dollah for dis house? Oh, no, dat is no price. He is blame good old house,—dat old house.' (Old Charlie and the Colonel never swore in presence of each other.) 'Forty years dat old house didn't had to be paint! I easy can get fifty t'ousand dollah for dat old house.'

'Fifty thousand picayunes; yes,' said the Colonel.

'She's a good house. Can make plenty money,' pursued the deaf man.

'That's what makes you so rich, eh, Charlie?'

'*Non,* I don't make nothing. Too blame clever, me, dat's de troub'. She's a good house,—make money fast like a steamboat,—make a barrel full in a week! Me, I lose money all de days. Too blame clever.'

'Charlie!'

'Eh?'

'Tell me what you'll take.'

'Make? I don't make *nothing.* Too blame clever.'

'What will you *take?*'

'Oh! I got enough already,—half drunk now.'

'What will you take for the 'ouse?'

'You want to buy her?'

'I don't know,'—(shrug),—'may*be,*—if you sell it cheap.'

'She's a bully old house.'

There was a long silence. By and by old Charlie commenced—

'Old Injin Charlie is a low-down dog.'

'*C'est vrai, oui!*' retorted the Colonel in an undertone.

'He's got Injin blood in him.'

The Colonel nodded assent.

'But he's got some blame good blood, too, ain't it?'

The Colonel nodded impatiently.

'*Bien!* Old Charlie's Injin blood says, "sell de house, Charlie, you blame old fool!" *Mais,* old Charlie's good blood says, "Charlie! if you sell dat old house, Charlie, you low-down old dog, Charlie, what de Compte De Charleu make for you grace-granmuzzer, de dev' can eat you, Charlie, I don't care." '

'But you'll sell it anyhow, won't you, old man?'

'No!' And the *no* rumbled off in muttered oaths like thunder out on the Gulf. The incensed old Colonel wheeled and started off.

'Curl!' (Colonel) said Charlie, standing up unsteadily.

The planter turned with an inquiring frown.

'I'll trade with you!' said Charlie.

The Colonel was tempted. ' 'Ow'l you trade?' he asked.

'My house for yours!'

The old Colonel turned pale with anger. He walked very quickly back, and came close up to his kinsman.

'Charlie!' he said.

'Injin Charlie,'—with a tipsy nod.

But by this time self-control was returning. 'Sell Belles Demoiselles to you?' he said in a high key, and then laughed 'Ho, ho, ho!' and rode away.

A cloud, but not a dark one, overshadowed the spirits of Belles Demoiselles' plantation. The old master, whose beaming presence had always made him a shining Saturn, spinning and sparkling within the bright circle of his daughters, fell into musing fits, started out of frowning reveries, walked often by himself, and heard business from his overseer fretfully.

No wonder. The daughters knew his closeness in trade, and attributed to it his failure to negotiate for

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29 picayune, small coin worth five or six cents • 33 clever, good-natured, obliging • 51 C'est vrai, oui! That is indeed true! • 56 Bien! Well! • 57 Mais, but • 60 you grace-granmuzzer, your great-grandmother • 60 dev', devil • 80 Saturn, a reference to the planet and its encircling rings

the Old Charlie buildings,—so to call them. They began to depreciate Belles Demoiselles. If a north wind blew, it was too cold to ride. If a shower had fallen, it was too muddy to drive. In the morning the garden was wet. In the evening the grasshopper was a burden. *Ennui* was turned into capital; every headache was interpreted a premonition of ague; and when the native exuberance of a flock of ladies without a want or a care burst out in laughter in the father's face, they spread their French eyes, rolled up their little hands, and with rigid wrists and mock vehemence vowed and vowed again that they only laughed at their misery, and should pine to death unless they could move to the sweet city. 'Oh! the theatre! Oh! Orleans Street! Oh! the masquerade! the Place d'Armes! the ball!' and they would call upon Heaven with French irreverence, and fall into each other's arms, and whirl down the hall singing a waltz, end with a grand collision and fall, and, their eyes streaming merriment, lay the blame on the slippery floor, that would some day be the death of the whole seven.

Three times more the fond father, thus goaded, managed, by accident,—business accident,—to see old Charlie and increase his offer, but in vain. He finally went to him formally.

'Eh?' said the deaf and distant relative. 'For what you want him, eh? Why you don't stay where you halways be 'appy? Dis is a blame old rat-hole,—good for old Injin Charlie,—da's all. Why you don't stay where you be halways 'appy? Why you don't buy somewheres else?'

'That's none of your business,' snapped the planter. Truth was, his reasons were unsatisfactory even to himself.

A sullen silence followed. Then Charlie spoke:

'Well, now, look here; I sell you old Charlie's house.'

'*Bien!* and the whole block,' said the Colonel.

'Hold on,' said Charlie. 'I sell you de 'ouse and de block. Den I go and git drunk, and go to sleep; de dev' comes along and says, "Charlie! old Charlie, you blame low-down old dog, wake up! What you doin' here? Where's de 'ouse what Monsieur le Compte give your grace-gran-muzzer? Don't you see dat fine gentyman, De Charleu, done gone and tore him down and make him over new, you blame old fool, Charlie, you low-down old Injin dog!"'

'I'll give you forty thousand dollars,' said the Colonel.

'For de 'ouse?'

'For all.'

The deaf man shook his head.

'Forty-five!' said the Colonel.

'What a lie? For what you tell me "What a lie?" I don't tell you no lie.'

'*Non, non!* I give you *forty-five!*' shouted the Colonel.

Charlie shook his head again.

'Fifty!'

He shook it again.

The figures rose and rose to—

'Seventy-five!'

The answer was an invitation to go away and let the owner alone, as he was, in certain specified respects, the vilest of living creatures, and no company for a fine gentyman.

The 'fine gentyman' longed to blaspheme,—but before old Charlie!—in the name of pride, how could he? He mounted and started away.

'Tell you what I'll make wid you,' said Charlie.

The other, guessing aright, turned back without dismounting, smiling.

'How much Belles Demoiselles hoes me now?' asked the deaf one.

'One hundred and eighty thousand dollars,' said the Colonel, firmly.

'Yass,' said Charlie. 'I don't want Belles Demoiselles.'

The old Colonel's quiet laugh intimated it made no difference either way.

'But me,' continued Charlie, 'me,—I'm got le Compte De Charleu's blood in me, any'ow,—a litt' bit, any'ow, ain't it?'

The Colonel nodded that it was.

'*Bien!* If I go out of dis place and don't go to Belles Demoiselles, de peoples will say,—dey will say, "Old Charlie he been all doze time tell a blame *lie!* He ain't no kin to his old grace-gran-muzzer, not a blame bit! He don't got nary drop of De Charleu blood to save his blame low-down old Injin soul!" No, sare! What I want wid money, den? No, sare! My place for yours!'

He turned to go into the house, just too soon to see the Colonel make an ugly whisk at him with his riding-whip. Then the Colonel, too, moved off.

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5 grasshopper . . . burden. Compare Ecclesiastes 12:5: ". . . and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail"

Two or three times over, as he ambled homeward, laughter broke through his annoyance, as he recalled old Charlie's family pride and the presumption of his offer. Yet each time he could but think better of—not the offer to swap, but the preposterous ancestral loyalty. It was so much better than he could have expected from his 'low-down' relative, and not unlike his own whim withal —the proposition which went with it was forgiven.

This last defeat bore so harshly on the master of Belles Demoiselles, that the daughters, reading chagrin in his face, began to repent. They loved their father as daughters can, and when they saw their pretended dejection harassing him seriously they restrained their complaints, displayed more than ordinary tenderness, and heroically and ostentatiously concluded there was no place like Belles Demoiselles. But the new mood touched him more than the old, and only refined his discontent. Here was a man, rich without the care of riches, free from any real trouble, happiness as native to his house as perfume to his garden, deliberately, as it were with premeditated malice, taking joy by the shoulder and bidding her be gone to town, whither he might easily have followed, only that the very same ancestral nonsense that kept Injin Charlie from selling the old place for twice its value prevented him from choosing any other spot for a city home.

But by and by the charm of nature and the merry hearts around him prevailed; the fit of exalted sulks passed off, and after a while the year flared up at Christmas, flickered, and went out.

New Year came and passed; the beautiful garden of Belles Demoiselles put on its spring attire; the seven fair sisters moved from rose to rose; the cloud of discontent had warmed into invisible vapor in the rich sunlight of family affection, and on the common memory the only scar of last year's wound was old Charlie's sheer impertinence in crossing the caprice of the De Charleus. The cup of gladness seemed to fill with the filling of the river.

How high that river was! Its tremendous current rolled and tumbled and spun along, hustling the long funeral flotillas of drift,—and how near shore it came! Men were out day and night, watching the levee. On windy nights even the old Colonel took part, and grew light-hearted with occupation and excitement, as every minute the river threw a white arm over the levee's top, as though it would vault over. But all held fast, and, as the summer drifted in, the water sunk down into its banks and looked quite incapable of harm.

On a summer afternoon of uncommon mildness, old Colonel Jean Albert Henri Joseph De Charleu-Marot, being in a mood for revery, slipped the custody of his feminine rulers and sought the crown of the levee, where it was his wont to promenade. Presently he sat upon a stone bench,—a favorite seat. Before him lay his broad-spread fields, near by, his lordly mansion; and being still, —perhaps by female contact,—somewhat sentimental, he fell to musing on his past. It was hardly worthy to be proud of. All its morning was reddened with mad frolic, and far toward the meridian it was marred with elegant rioting. Pride had kept him well-nigh useless, and despised the honors won by valor; gaming had dimmed prosperity; death had taken his heavenly wife, voluptuous ease had mortgaged his lands; and yet his house still stood, his sweet-smelling fields were still fruitful, his name was fame enough; and yonder and yonder, among the trees and flowers, like angels walking in Eden, were the seven goddesses of his only worship.

Just then a slight sound behind him brought him to his feet. He cast his eyes anxiously to the outer edge of the little strip of bank between the levee's base and the river. There was nothing visible. He paused, with his ear toward the water, his face full of frightened expectation. Ha! There came a single plashing sound, like some great beast slipping into the river, and little waves in a wide semi-circle came out from under the bank and spread over the water!

'My God!'

He plunged down the levee and bounded through the low weeds to the edge of the bank. It was sheer, and the water about four feet below. He did not stand quite on the edge, but fell upon his knees a couple of yards away, wringing his hands, moaning and weeping, and staring through his watery eyes at a fine, long crevice just discernible under the matted grass, and curving outward on either hand toward the river.

'My God!' he sobbed aloud; 'my God!' and even while he called, his God answered. the tough Bermuda grass stretched and snapped, the crevice slowly became a gape, and softly, gradually, with no sound but the closing of the water at last, a ton or more of earth settled into the boiling eddy and disappeared.

At the same instant a pulse of the breeze brought from the garden behind, the joyous, thoughtless laughter of the fair mistresses of Belles Demoiselles.

The old Colonel sprang up and clambered over the levee. Then forcing himself to a more composed movement, he hastened into the house and ordered his horse.

'Tell my children to make merry while I am gone,' he left word. 'I shall be back to-night,' and the horse's hoofs clattered down a by-road leading to the city.

'Charlie,' said the planter, riding up to a window, from which the old man's nightcap was thrust out, 'what you say, Charlie,—my house for yours, eh, Charlie—what you say?'

'Ello!' said Charlie; 'from where you come from dis time of to-night?'

'I come from the Exchange in St. Louis Street.' (A small fraction of the truth)

'What you want?' said matter-of-fact Charlie.

'I come to trade.'

The low-down relative drew the worsted off his ears. 'Oh! yass,' he said with an uncertain air.

'Well, old man Charlie, what you say: my house for yours,—like you said,—eh, Charlie?'

'I dunno,' said Charlie; 'it's nearly mine now. Why you don't stay dare youse'f?'

'*Because I don't want!*' said the Colonel savagely. 'Is dat reason enough for you? You better take me in de notion, old man, I tell you,—yes!'

Charlie never winced; but how his answer delighted the Colonel! Quoth Charlie:

'I don't care—I take him!—*mais*, possession give right off.'

'Not the whole plantation, Charlie; only'—

'I don't care,' said Charlie; 'we easy can fix dat. *Mais*, what for you don't want to keep him? I don't want him. You better keep him.'

'Don't you try to make no fool of me, old man,' cried the planter.

'Oh, no!' said the other. 'Oh, no! but you make a fool of yourself, ain't it?'

The dumbfounded Colonel stared; Charlie went on:

'Yass! Belles Demoiselles is more wort' dan tree block like dis one. I pass by dare since two weeks. Oh, pritty Belles Demoiselles! De cane was wave in de wind, de garden smell like a bouquet, de white-cap was jump up and down on de river; seven *belles demoiselles* was ridin' on horses. "Pritty, pritty, pritty!" says old Charlie. Ah! *Monsieur le père*, 'ow 'appy, 'appy, 'appy!

'Yass!' he continued—the Colonel still staring—'le Compte De Charleu have two familie. One was low-down Choctaw, one was high up *noblesse*. He gave the low-down Choctaw dis old rat-hole; he give Belles Demoiselles to you gran-fozzer; and now you don't be *satisfait*. What I'll do wid Belles Demoiselles? She'll break me in two years, yass. And what you'll do wid old Charlie's house, eh? You'll tear her down and make you'se'f a blame old fool. I rather wouldn't trade!'

The planter caught a big breathful of anger, but Charlie went straight on:

'I rather wouldn't, *mais* I will do it for you;—just the same, like Monsieur le Compte would say, "Charlie, you old fool, I want to shange houses wid you." '

So long as the Colonel suspected irony he was angry, but as Charlie seemed, after all, to be certainly in earnest, he began to feel conscience-stricken. He was by no means a tender man, but his lately-discovered misfortune had unhinged him, and this strange, undeserved, disinterested family fealty on the part of Charlie touched his heart. And should he still try to lead him into the pitfall he had dug? He hesitated,—no, he would show him the place by broad daylight, and if he chose to overlook the 'caving bank,' it would be his own fault;—a trade's a trade.

'Come,' said the planter, 'come at my house to-night; to-morrow we look at the place before breakfast, and finish the trade.'

'For what?' said Charlie.

'Oh, because I got to come in town in the morning.'

'I don't want,' said Charlie. 'How I'm goin' to come dere?'

'I git you a horse at the liberty stable.'

'Well—anyhow—I don't care—I'll go.' And they went.

When they had ridden a long time, and were on the road darkened by hedges of Cherokee rose, the Colonel called behind him to the 'low-down' scion:

'Keep the road, old man.'

'Eh?'

'Keep the road.'

'Oh, yes; all right; I keep my word; we don't goin' to play no tricks, eh?'

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49 Monsieur le père, the father • 54 satisfait, satisfied • 81 liberty stable, livery stable, where horses and vehicles are kept for hire

But the Colonel seemed not to hear. His ungenerous design was beginning to be hateful to him. Not only old Charlie's unprovoked goodness was prevailing; the eulogy on Belles Demoiselles had stirred the depths of an intense love for his beautiful home. True, if he held to it, the caving of the bank, at its present fearful speed, would let the house into the river within three months; but were it not better to lose it so, than sell his birthright? Again,—coming back to the first thought,—to betray his own blood! It was only Injin Charlie; but had not the De Charleu blood just spoken out in him? Unconsciously he groaned.

After a time they struck a path approaching the plantation in the rear, and a little after, passing from behind a clump of live-oaks, they came in sight of the villa. It looked so like a gem, shining through its dark grove, so like a great glow-worm in the dense foliage, so significant of luxury and gayety, that the poor master, from an over-flowing heart, groaned again.

'What?' asked Charlie.

The Colonel only drew his rein, and, dismounting mechanically, contemplated the sight before him. The high, arched doors and windows were thrown wide to the summer air; from every opening the bright light of numerous candelabra darted out upon the sparkling foliage of magnolia and bay, and here and there in the spacious verandas a colored lantern swayed in the gentle breeze. A sound of revel fell on the ear, the music of harps; and across one window, brighter than the rest, flitted, once or twice, the shadows of dancers. But oh! the shadows flitting across the heart of the fair mansion's master!

'Old Charlie,' said he, gazing fondly at his house, 'You and me is both old, eh?'

'Yaas,' said the stolid Charlie.

'And we has both been bad enough in our time, eh, Charlie?'

Charlie, surprised at the tender tone, repeated 'Yaas.'

'And you and me is mighty close?'

'Blame close, yaas.'

'But you never know me to cheat, old man!'

'No,'—impassively.

'And do you think I would cheat you now?'

'I dunno,' said Charlie. 'I don't believe.'

'Well, old man, old man,'—his voice began to quiver,—'I sha'n't cheat you now. My God!—old man, I tell you—you better not make the trade!'

'Because for what?' asked Charlie in plain anger; but both looked quickly toward the house! The Colonel tossed his hands wildly in the air, rushed forward a step or two, and giving one fearful scream of agony and fright, fell forward on his face in the path. Old Charlie stood transfixed with horror. Belles Demoiselles, the realm of maiden beauty, the home of merriment, the house of dancing, all in the tremor and glow of pleasure, suddenly sunk, with one short, wild wail of terror—sunk, sunk, down, down, down, into the merciless, unfathomable flood of the Mississippi.

Twelve long months were midnight to the mind of the childless father; when they were only half gone, he took his bed; and every day, and every night, old Charlie, the 'low-down,' the 'fool,' watched him tenderly, tended him lovingly, for the sake of his name, his misfortunes, and his broken heart. No woman's step crossed the floor of the sick-chamber, whose western dormer-windows overpeered the dingy architecture of old Charlie's block; Charlie and a skilled physician, the one all interest, the other all gentleness, hope, and patience—these only entered by the door; but by the window came in a sweet-scented evergreen vine, transplanted from the caving bank of Belles Demoiselles. It caught the rays of sunset in its flowery net and let them softly in upon the sick man's bed; gathered the glancing beams of the moon at midnight, and often wakened the sleeper to look, with his mindless eyes, upon their pretty silver fragments strewn upon the floor.

By and by there seemed—there was—a twinkling dawn of returning reason. Slowly, peacefully, with an increase unseen from day to day, the light of reason came into the eyes, and speech became coherent; but withal there came a failing of the wrecked body, and the doctor said that monsieur was both better and worse.

One evening, as Charlie sat by the vine-clad window with his fireless pipe in his hand, the old Colonel's eyes fell full upon his own, and rested there.

'Charl—,' he said with an effort, and his delighted nurse hastened to the bedside and bowed his best ear There was an unsuccessful effort or two, and then he whispered, smiling with sweet sadness,—

'We didn't trade.'

The truth, in this case, was a secondary matter to Charlie; the main point was to give a pleasing answer. So he nodded his head decidedly, as who should say—'Oh yes, we did, it was a bona-fide swap!' but when he

saw the smile vanish, he tried the other expedient and shook his head with still more vigor, to signify that they had not so much as approached a bargain, and the smile returned.

Charlie wanted to see the vine recognized He stepped backward to the window with a broad smile, shook the foliage, nodded and looked smart.

'I know,' said the Colonel, with beaming eyes, '—many weeks.'

The next day—

'Charl—'

The best ear went down.

'Send for a priest.'

The priest came, and was alone with him a whole afternoon. When he left, the patient was very haggard and exhausted, but smiled and would not suffer the crucifix to be removed from his breast.

One more morning came. Just before dawn Charlie, lying on a pallet in the room, thought he was called, and came to the bedside.

'Old man,' whispered the failing invalid, 'is it caving yet?'

Charlie nodded.

'It won't pay you out.'

'Oh, dat makes not'ing,' said Charlie. Two big tears rolled down his brown face. 'Dat makes not'in'.'

The Colonel whispered once more:

'Mes belles demoiselles! in paradise,—in the garden—I shall be with them at sunrise;' and so it was.

1874

Joel Chandler Harris

1848 • 1908

Writing in *Life on the Mississippi* in 1883, Mark Twain called Joel Chandler Harris "the only master" of the Negro dialect. Twain himself was something of a master in this kind; but Harris' supremacy, then and even now, may well pass unquestioned

Harris was born near Eatonton, Georgia. His mother, deserted by his father, took in sewing for a living. Between the ages of thirteen and seventeen (these were the Civil War years) Harris lived on the nearby plantation of Joseph Addison Turner and helped Turner print a weekly paper. At this time, he got an education by working on the paper and by reading in Turner's excellent library; he also became intimately acquainted with the life of the Southern plantation and especially with the speech and folklore of the Negroes After the war he worked for brief periods on newspapers in Macon, New Orleans, and Savannah In 1876 he joined the staff of the Atlanta *Constitution,* and for twenty-four years, through editorials, book reviews, feature articles, and the Uncle Remus stories (the last especially, of course), he helped mightily to make the *Constitution* the most influential newspaper ever published in the South. The stories of Uncle Remus were first collected in *Uncle Remus: His Song and Sayings* in 1880. Their popularity, both South and North, was so great that new volumes followed: *Nights with Uncle Remus* (1883), *Uncle Remus and His Friends* (1892), *Told by Uncle Remus* (1905), and still others.

Recent historical critics have stressed Harris' aim in the Uncle Remus stories of reconciling the North and the South "With Harris," says Professor Buck, "the desire to reconcile amounted almost to a passion." Harris "must have worked consciously," Professor Wade believes, "to make those stories propagandist in nature He must have realized that his propaganda, through Uncle Remus, had proved effective, and he could tell himself with all justice that much sectional rancour had evaporated before that old man's wit."

Julia C Harris, **The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris,** Boston, 1918 • J D Wade, "Joel Chandler Harris," **The American Review,** April 1933 • P. H Buck, "The South Begins to Write," **The Road to Reunion,** Boston, 1937

From

Uncle Remus: His Songs and Sayings

Uncle Remus is Harris' version of the ante-bellum Negro who remained loyal to his master during the Civil War and after, and Harris' writings assure the reader of the kindly relations between the races on a Southern plantation.

The tales themselves belong to the folklore of the Negro race, though analogues can be found in the beast fables once popular in the literatures of Europe. Abundant humor is provided by the incongruity in the fact that the behavior of the animals closely approximates that of human beings. Uncle Remus' hero, Brer Rabbit (as Harris pointed out), "is the weakest and most harmless of all animals," and yet "is victorious in contests with the bear, the wolf, and the fox. It is not virtue that triumphs, but helplessness; it is not malice, but mischievousness." Historical critics have seen in Uncle Remus and his stories an embodiment of the "primitive outlook" of the ante-bellum Southern Negro.

UNCLE REMUS INITIATES THE LITTLE BOY

One evening recently, the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally" missed her little seven-year-old. Making search for him through the house and through the yard, she heard the sound of voices in the old man's cabin, and, looking through the window, saw the child sitting by Uncle Remus. His head rested against the old man's arm, and he was gazing with an expression of the most intense interest into the rough, weather-beaten face, that beamed so kindly upon him. This is what "Miss Sally" heard:

"Bimeby, one day, arter Brer Fox bin doin' all dat he could fer ter ketch Brer Rabbit, en Brer Rabbit bin doin' all he could fer ter keep 'im fum it, Brer Fox say to hisse'f dat he'd put up a game on Brer Rabbit, en he ain't mo'n got de wuds out'n his mouf twel Brer Rabbit come a lopin' up de big road, lookin' des ez plump, en ez fat, en ez sassy ez a Moggin hoss in a barley-patch.

"'Hol' on dar, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'I ain't got time, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, sorter mendin' his licks.

"'I wanter have some confab wid you, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'All right, Brer Fox, but you better holler fum whar you stan'. I'm monstus full er fleas dis mawnin',' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"'I seed Brer B'ar yistiddy,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en he sorter rake me over de coals kaze you en me ain't make frens en live naberly, en I tole 'im dat I'd see you.'

"Den Brer Rabbit scratch one year wid his off hinefoot sorter jub'usly, en den he ups en sez, sezee:

"'All a settin', Brer Fox. Spose'n you drap roun' termorrer en take dinner wid me. We ain't got no great doin's at our house, but I speck de ole 'oman en de chilluns kin sorter scramble roun' en git up sump'n fer ter stay yo' stummuck.'

"'I'm 'gree'ble, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"'Den I'll 'pen' on you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Nex' day, Mr. Rabbit an' Miss Rabbit got up soon, 'fo' day, en raided on a gyarden like Miss Sally's out dar, en got some cabbiges, en some roas'n years, en some sparrer-grass, en dey fix up a smashin' dinner. Bimeby one er de little Rabbits, playin' out in de back-yard, come runnin' in hollerin', 'Oh, ma! oh, ma! I seed Mr. Fox a comin'!' En den Brer Rabbit he tuck de chilluns by der years en make um set down, en den him en Miss Rabbit sorter dally roun' waitin' for Brer Fox. En dey keep on waitin', but no Brer Fox ain't come. Atter'while Brer Rabbit goes to de do', easy like, en peep out, en dar, stickin' out fum behime de cornder, wuz de tip-een' er Brer Fox tail. Den Brer Rabbit shut de do' en sot down, en put his paws behime his years en begin fer ter sing:

"'De place wharbouts you spill de grease,
Right dar youer boun' ter slide,
An' whar you fine a bunch er ha'r,
You'll sholy fine de hide.'

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17 **Moggin hoss,** Morgan horse, a celebrated breed which originated in Vermont • 20 **mendin' . . . licks,** increasing his speed • 29 **off,** right • 30 **jub'usly,** dubiously • 31 **All a settin',** agreed • 40 **roas'n years,** green corn • 40 **sparrer-grass,** asparagus

"Nex' day, Brer Fox sont word by Mr. Mink, en skuze hisse'f kaze he wuz too sick fer ter come, en he ax Brer Rabbit fer ter come en take dinner wid him, en Brer Rabbit say he wuz 'gree'ble.

"Bimeby, w'en de shadders wuz at der shortes', Brer Rabbit he sorter brush up en santer down ter Brer Fox's house, en w'en he got dar, he yer somebody groanin', en he look in de do' en dar he see Brer Fox settin' up in a rockin' cheer all wrop up wid flannil, en he look mighty weak. Brer Rabbit look all 'roun', he did, but he ain't see no dinner. De dishpan wuz settin' on de table, en close by wuz a kyarvin' knife.

"'Look like you gwineter have chicken fer dinner, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"'Yes, Brer Rabbit, deyer nice, en fresh, en tender,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"Den Brer Rabbit sorter pull his mustarsh, en say: 'You ain't got no calamus root, is you, Brer Fox? I done got so now dat I can't eat no chicken 'ceppin she's seasoned up wid calamus root.' En wid dat Brer Rabbit lipt out er de do' and dodge 'mong de bushes, en sot dar watchin' fer Brer Fox; en he ain't watch long, nudder, kaze Brer Fox flung off de flannil en crope out er de house en got whar he could close in on Brer Rabbit, en bimeby Brer Rabbit holler out: 'Oh, Brer Fox! I'll des put yo' calamus root out yer on dish yer stump. Better come git it while hit's fresh,' and wid dat Brer Rabbit gallop off home. En Brer Fox ain't never kotch 'im yit, en w'at's mo', honey, he ain't gwineter."

HOW MR. RABBIT SAVED HIS MEAT

"One time," said Uncle Remus, whetting his knife slowly and thoughtfully on the palm of his hand, and gazing reflectively in the fire—"one time Brer Wolf—"

"Why, Uncle Remus!" the little boy broke in, "I thought you said the Rabbit scalded the Wolf to death a long time ago."

The old man was fairly caught and he knew it; but this made little difference to him. A frown gathered on his usually serene brow as he turned his gaze upon the child—a frown in which both scorn and indignation were visible. Then all at once he seemed to regain control of himself. The frown was chased away by a look of Christian resignation.

"Dar now! W'at I tell you?" he exclaimed as if addressing a witness concealed under the bed. "Ain't I done tole you so? Bless grashus! ef chilluns ain't gittin' so dey knows mo'n ole fokes, en dey'll spute longer you en spute longer you, ceppin der ma call um, w'ich I speck twon't be long 'fo' she will, en den I'll set yere by de chimbly-cornder en git some peace er mine. W'en ole Miss wuz livin'," continued the old man, still addressing some imaginary person, "hit 'uz mo'n enny her chilluns 'ud dast ter do ter come 'sputin' longer me, en Mars John'll tell you de same enny day you ax 'im."

"Well, Uncle Remus, you know you said the Rabbit poured hot water on the Wolf and killed him," said the little boy.

The old man pretended not to hear. He was engaged in searching among some scraps of leather under his chair, and kept on talking to the imaginary person. Finally, he found and drew forth a nicely plaited whip-thong with a red snapper all waxed and knotted.

"I wuz fixin' up a w'ip fer a little chap," he continued, with a sigh, "but, bless grashus! 'fo' I kin git 'er done, de little chap done grow'd up twel he know mo'n I duz."

The child's eyes filled with tears and his lips began to quiver, but he said nothing; whereupon Uncle Remus immediately melted.

"I 'clar' to goodness," he said, reaching out and taking the little boy tenderly by the hand, "ef you ain't de ve'y spit en image er ole Miss w'en I brung 'er de las' news er de war. Hit's des like skeerin' up a ghos' w'at you ain't fear'd un."

Then there was a pause, the old man patting the little child's hand caressingly.

"You ain't mad, is you, honey?" Uncle Remus asked finally, "kaze ef you is, I'm gwine out yere en butt my head 'gin de do' jam'."

But the little boy wasn't mad. Uncle Remus had conquered him and he had conquered Uncle Remus in pretty much the same way before. But it was some time before Uncle Remus would go on with the story. He had to be coaxed. At last, however, he settled himself back in the chair and began:

"Co'se, honey, hit mout er bin ole Brer Wolf, er hit mout er bin er n'er Brer Wolf; it mout er bin 'fo' he got

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46 spute longer, contradict • 72 fear'd un, afraid of • 85 er n'er, another



Uncle Remus.

kotch up wid, er it mout er bin atterwards. Ez de tale were gun to me des dat away I gin it unter you. One time Brer Wolf wuz comin' 'long home fum a fishin' frolic. He s'anter 'long de road, he did, wid his string er fish 'cross his shoulder, wen fus news you know ole Miss Pa'tridge, she hop outer de bushes en flutter 'long right at Brer Wolf nose. Brer Wolf he say ter hisse'f dat ole Miss Pa'tridge tryin' fer ter toll 'im 'way fum her nes', en wid dat he lay his fish down en put out inter de bushes whar ole Miss Pa'tridge come fum, en 'bout dat time Brer Rabbit, he happen 'long. Dar wuz de fishes, en dar wuz Brer Rabbit, en w'en dat de case w'at you speck a sorter innerpen'ent man like Brer Rabbit gwine do? I kin tell you dis, dat dem fishes ain't stay whar Brer Wolf put um at, en w'en Brer Wolf come back dey wuz gone.

"Brer Wolf, he sot down en scratch his head, he did, en study en study, en den hit sorter rush inter his mine dat Brer Rabbit bin 'long dar, en den Brer Wolf, he put out fer Brer Rabbit house, en w'en he git dar he hail 'im. Brer Rabbit, he dunno nuthin' tall 'bout no fishes. Brer Wolf he up'n say he bleedzd ter b'leeve Brer Rabbit got dem fishes. Brer Rabbit 'ny it up en down, but Brer Wolf stan' to it dat Brer Rabbit got dem fishes. Brer Rabbit, he say dat if Brer Wolf b'leeve he got de fishes, den he give Brer Wolf lief fer ter kill de bes' cow he got. Brer Wolf, he tuck Brer Rabbit at his word, en go off ter de pastur' en drive up de cattle en kill Brer Rabbit bes' cow.

"Brer Rabbit, he hate mighty bad fer ter lose his cow, but he lay his plans, en he tell his chilluns dat he gwineter have dat beef yit. Brer Wolf, he bin tuck up by de patter-rollers 'fo' now, en he mighty skeerd un um, en fus news you know, yer come Brer Rabbit hollerin' en tellin' Brer Wolf dat de patter-rollers comin'.

" 'You run en hide, Brer Wolf,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'en I'll stay yer en take keer er de cow twel you gits back,' sezee.

"Soon's Brer Wolf hear talk er de patter-rollers, he scramble off inter de underbresh like he bin shot out'n a gun. En he want mo'n gone 'fo' Brer Rabbit, he whirl in en skunt de cow en salt de hide down, en den he tuck'n cut up de kyarkiss en stow it 'way in de smoke-'house, en den he tuck'n stick de een' er de cow-tail in de groun'. Atter he gone en done all dis, den Brer Rabbit he squall out fer Brer Wolf:

" 'Run yer, Brer Wolf! Run yer! Yo' cow gwine in de groun'! Run yer!'

"W'en ole Brer Wolf got dar, w'ich he come er scootin', dar wuz Brer Rabbit hol'in' on ter de cow-tail, fer ter keep it fum gwine in de groun'. Brer Wolf, he kotch holt, en dey 'gin a pull er two en up come de tail. Den Brer Rabbit, he wink his off eye en say, sezee:

" 'Dar! de tail done pull out en de cow gone,' sezee.

"But Brer Wolf he wer'n't de man fer ter give it up dat away, en he got 'im a spade, en a pick-axe, en a shovel, en he dig en dig fer dat cow twel diggin' wuz pas' all endu'unce, en ole Brer Rabbit he sot up dar in his front po'ch en smoke his seegyar. Eve'y time ole Brer Wolf stuck de pick-axe in de clay, Brer Rabbit, he giggle ter his chilluns:

" 'He diggy, diggy, diggy, but no meat dar! He diggy, diggy, diggy, but no meat dar!'

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2 gun, given or told • 22 bleedzd, obliged • 32 patter-rollers, probably the night patrollers who determined whether Negro slaves were illegally at large • 40 want, wasn't • 41 skunt, skinned

"Kaze all de time de cow wuz layin' pile up in his smoke-'ouse, en him en his chilluns wuz eatin' fried beef en inguns eve'y time dey mouf water.

"Now den, honey, you take dis yer w'ip," continued the old man, twining the leather thong around the little boy's neck, "en scamper up ter de big 'ouse en tell Miss Sally fer ter gin you some un it de nex' time she fine yo' tracks in de sugar-bairl."

MR. RABBIT MEETS HIS MATCH AGAIN

"Dere wuz nudder man dat sorter play it sharp on Brer Rabbit," said Uncle Remus, as, by some mysterious process, he twisted a hog's bristle into the end of a piece of thread—an operation which the little boy watched with great interest. "In dem days," continued the old man, "de beastesses kyar'd on marters same ez fokes. Dey went inter fahmin', en I speck ef de troof wuz ter come out, dey kep' sto', en had der camp-meetin' times en der bobbycues w'en de wedder wuz 'greeble."

Uncle Remus evidently thought that the little boy wouldn't like to hear of any further discomfiture of Brer Rabbit, who had come to be a sort of hero, and he was not mistaken.

"I thought the Terrapin was the only one that fooled the Rabbit," said the little boy, dismally.

"Hit's des like I tell you, honey. Dey ain't no smart man, 'cep' w'at dey's a smarter. Ef ole Brer Rabbit hadn't er got kotch up wid, de nabers 'ud er tuck 'im for a h'ant, en in dem times dey bu'nt witches 'fo' you could squinch yo' eyeballs Dey did dat."

"Who fooled the Rabbit this time?" the little boy asked.

When Uncle Remus had the bristle "sot" in the thread, he proceeded with the story:

"One time Brer Rabbit en ole Brer Buzzard 'cluded dey'd sorter go snacks, en crap tergedder. Hit wuz a mighty good year, en de truck tu'n out monstus well, but bimeby, w'en de time come fer dividjun, hit come ter light dat ole Brer Buzzard ain't got nuthin'. De crap wuz all gone, en dey want nuthin' dar fer ter show fer it. Brer Rabbit, he make like he in a wuss fix'n Brer Buzzard, en he mope 'roun', he did, like he fear'd dey gwineter sell 'im out.

"Brer Buzzard, he ain't sayin' nuthin', but he keep up a monstus thinkin', en one day he come 'long en holler en tell Brer Rabbit dat he done fine rich gole-mine des 'cross de river.

"'You come en go 'longer me, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Tukky Buzzard, sezee. 'I'll scratch en you kin grabble, en 'tween de two un us we'll make short wuk er dat gole-mine,' sezee.

"Brer Rabbit, he wuz high up fer de job, but he study en study, he did, how he gwineter git 'cross de water, kaze ev'y time he git his foot wet all de fambly kotch cole. Den he up'n ax Brer Buzzard how he gwine do, en Brer Buzzard he up'n say dat he kyar Brer Rabbit 'cross, en wid dat ole Brer Buzzard, he squot down, he did, en spread his wings, en Brer Rabbit, he mounted, en up dey riz." There was a pause.

"What did the Buzzard do then?" asked the little boy.

"Dey riz," continued Uncle Remus, "en w'en dey lit, dey lit in de top er de highest sorter pine, en de pine w'at dey lit in wuz growin' on er ilun, en de ilun wuz in de middle er de river, wid de deep water runnin' all 'roun'. Dey ain't mo'n lit 'fo' Brer Rabbit, he know w'ich way de win' 'uz blowin', en by de time ole Brer Buzzard got hisse'f ballunce on a lim', Brer Rabbit, he up'n say, sezee:

"'W'iles we er res'n here, Brer Buzzard, en bein's you bin so good, I got sump'n fer ter tell you,' sezee. 'I got a gole-mine er my own, one w'at I make myse'f, en I speck we better go back ter mine 'fo' we bodder 'longer yone,' sezee.

"Den ole Brer Buzzard, he laff, he did, twel he shake, en Brer Rabbit, he sing out:

"'Hole on, Brer Buzzard! Don't flop yo' wings w'en you laff, kaze den ef you duz, sump'n 'ill drap fum up yer, en my gole-mine won't do you no good, en needer will yone do me no good.'

"But 'fo' dey got down fum dar, Brer Rabbit done tole all 'bout de crap, en he hatter promus fer ter 'vide fa'r en squar. So Brer Buzzard, he kyar 'im back, en Brer Rabbit he walk weak in de knees a mont' atter-wuds."

1880

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3 inguns, onions • 14 kyar'd on marters, carried on matters • 15 fahmin', farming • 33 go snacks, share • 69 bodder . . . yone, bother with yours

From

Nights with Uncle Remus

MR. BENJAMIN RAM AND HIS WONDERFUL FIDDLE

I 'speck you done year tell er ole man Benjermun Ram," said Uncle Remus, with a great affectation of indifference, after a pause.

"Old man who?" asked the little boy.

"Old man Benjermun Ram. I 'speck you done year tell er him too long 'go ter talk 'bout."

"Why, no, I haven't, Uncle Remus!" exclaimed the little boy, protesting and laughing. "He must have been a mighty funny old man."

"Dat's ez may be," responded Uncle Remus, sententiously. "Fun deze days wouldn't er counted fer fun in dem days; en many's de time w'at I see folks laughin'," continued the old man, with such withering sarcasm that the little boy immediately became serious,—"many's de time w'at I sees um laughin' en laughin', w'en I lay dey ain't kin tell w'at deyer laughin' at deyse'f. En 'tain't der laughin' w'at pesters me, nudder,"—relenting a little,—"hit's dish yer ev'lastin' snickle en giggle, giggle en snickle."

Having thus mapped out, in a dim and uncertain way, what older people than the little boy might have been excused for accepting as a sort of moral basis, Uncle Remus proceeded:

"Dish yer Mr. Benjermun Ram, w'ich he done come up inter my min', was one er deze yer ole-timers. Dey tells me dat he 'uz a fiddler fum away back yander—one er dem ar kinder fiddlers w'at can't git de chune down fine 'less dey pats der foot. He stay all by he own-alone se'f 'way out in de middle un a big new-groun', en he sech a handy man fer ter have at a frolic dat de yuther creeturs like 'im mighty well, en w'en dey tuck a notion fer ter shake der foot, w'ich de notion tuck'n' struck um eve'y once in a w'ile, nuthin' 'ud do but dey mus' sen' fer ole man Benjermun Ram en he fiddle; en dey do say," continued Uncle Remus, closing his eyes in a sort of ecstasy, "dat w'en he squar' hisse'f back in a cheer, en git in a weavin' way, he kin des snatch dem old-time chunes fum who lay de rail. En den, w'en de frolic wuz done, dey'd all fling in, dem yuther creeturs would, en fill up a bag er peas fer ole Mr. Benjermun Ram fer ter kyar home wid 'im.

"One time, des 'bout Christmas, Miss Meadows en Miss Motts en de gals, dey up 'n' say dat dey'd sorter gin a blow-out, en dey got wud ter ole man Benjermun Ram w'ich dey 'speckted 'im fer ter be on han'. W'en de time come fer Mr. Benjermun Ram fer ter start, de win' blow cole en de cloud 'gun ter spread out 'cross de elements—but no marter fer dat; ole man Benjermun Ram tuck down he walkin'-cane, he did, en tie up de fiddle in a bag, en sot out fer Miss Meadows. He thunk he know de way, but hit keep on gittin' col'er, en col'er, en mo' cloudy, twel bimeby, fus' news you know, ole Mr. Benjermun Ram done lose de way. Ef he'd er kep' on down de big road fum de start, it moughter bin diffunt, but he tuck a nigh-cut, en he ain't git fur 'fo' he done los' sho' 'nuff. He go dis away, en he go dat away, en he go de yuther way, yit all de same he wus done los'. Some folks would er sot right flat down whar dey wus en study out de way, but ole man Benjermun Ram ain't got wrinkle on he hawn fer nothin', kaze he done got de name er ole Billy Hardhead long 'fo' dat. Den ag'in, some folks would er stop right still in der tracks en holler en bawl fer ter see ef dey can't roust up some er de neighbors, but ole Mr. Benjermun Ram, he des stick he jowl in de win', he did, en he march right on des 'zackly like he know he ain't gwine de wrong way. He keep on, but 'twan't long 'fo' he 'gun ter feel right lonesome, mo' speshually w'en hit come up in he min' how Miss Meadows en de galls en all de comp'ny be bleedz ter do de bes' dey kin bidout any fiddlin'; en hit kinder make he marrer git cole w'en he study 'bout how he gotter sleep out dar in de woods by hisse'f.

"Yit, all de same, he keep on twel de dark 'gun ter drap down, en den he keep on still, en bimeby he come ter a little rise whar dey wuz a clay-gall. W'en he git dar he stop en look 'roun', he did, en 'way off down in de holler, dar he see a light shinin', en w'en he see dis, ole

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29 new-groun', newly cleared ground • 38 fum . . . rail, from the foundation or beginning • 44 wud, word • 60 hawn, horn • 75 clay-gall, a bare patch that has resisted erosion

man Benjermun Ram tuck he foot in he han', en make he way todes it des lak it de ve'y place w'at he bin huntin'. 'Twan't long 'fo' he come ter de house whar de light is, en, bless you soul, he don't make no bones er knockin'. Den somebody holler out:

"'Who dat?'

"'I'm Mr. Benjermun Ram, en I done lose de way, en I come fer ter ax you ef you can't take me in fer de night,' sezee.

"In common," continued Uncle Remus, "ole Mr. Benjermun Ram wuz a mighty rough-en-spoken somebody, but you better b'leeve he talk monst'us perlite dis time.

"Den some un on t'er side er de do' ax Mr. Benjermun Ram fer ter walk right in, en wid dat he open de do' en walk in, en make a bow like fiddlin' folks does w'en dey goes in comp'ny; but he ain't no sooner made he bow en look 'roun' twel he 'gun ter shake en shiver lak he done bin stricken wid de swamp ager, kaze, settin' right dar 'fo' de fier wuz ole Brer Wolf, wid his toofies showin' up all w'ite en shiny like dey wuz bran new. Ef ole Mr. Benjermun Ram ain't bin so ole en stiff I boun' you he'd er broke en run, but 'mos' 'fo' he had time fer ter study 'bout gittin' 'way, ole Brer Wolf done bin jump up en shet de do' en fassen' 'er wid a great big chain. Ole Mr. Benjermun Ram he know he in fer't, en he tuck'n put on a bol' face ez he kin, but he des nat'ally hone fer ter be los' in de woods some mo'. Den he make 'n'er low bow, en he hope Brer Wolf and all his folks is well, en den he say, sezee, dat he des drap in fer ter wom hisse'f, en 'quire uv de way ter Miss Meadows', en ef Brer Wolf be so good ez ter set 'im in de road ag'in, he be off putty soon en be much 'blige in de bargains.

"'Tooby sho', Mr. Ram,' sez Brer Wolf, sezee, w'iles he lick he chops en grin; 'des put yo' walkin'-cane in de cornder over dar, en set yo' bag down on de flo', en make yo'se'f at home,' sezee. 'We ain't got much,' sezee, 'but w'at we is got is yone w'iles you stays, en I boun' we'll take good keer un you,' sezee; en wid dat Brer Wolf laugh en show his toofies so bad dat ole man Benjermun Ram come mighty nigh havin' 'n'er ager

"Den Brer Wolf tuck'n' flung 'n'er lighter'd-knot on de fier, en den he slip inter de back room, en present'y, w'iles ole Mr. Benjermun Ram wuz settin' dar shakin' in he shoes, he year Brer Wolf whispun' ter he ole 'oman:

"'Ole 'oman! ole 'oman! Fling 'way yo' smoke meat—fresh meat fer supper! Fling 'way yo' smoke meat—fresh meat fer supper!'

"Den ole Miss Wolf, she talk out loud, so Mr. Benjermun Ram kin year:

"'Tooby sho' I'll fix 'im some supper. We er 'way off yer in de woods, so fur fum comp'ny dat goodness knows I'm mighty glad ter see Mr. Benjermun Ram.'

"Den Mr. Benjermun Ram year ole Miss Wolf whettin' 'er knife on a rock—*shirrah! shirrah! shirrah!*—en ev'y time he year de knife say *shirrah!* he know he dat much nigher de dinner-pot. He know he can't git 'way, en w'iles he settin' dar studyin', hit 'come 'cross he min' dat he des mought ez well play one mo' chune on he fiddle 'fo' de wuss come ter de wuss. Wid dat he ontie de bag en take out de fiddle, en 'gun ter chune 'er up—*plink, plank, plunk, plink! plunk, plank, plink, plunk!*"

Uncle Remus's imitation of the tuning of a fiddle was marvellous enough to produce a startling effect upon a much less enthusiastic listener than the little boy. It was given in perfect good faith, but the serious expression on the old man's face was so irresistibly comic that the child laughed until the tears ran down his face. Uncle Remus very properly accepted this as a tribute to his wonderful resources as a story-teller, and continued, in great good-humor:

"W'en ole Miss Wolf year dat kinder fuss, co'se she dunner w'at is it, en she drap 'er knife en lissen. Ole Mr. Benjermun Ram ain't know dis, en he keep on chunin' up—*plank, plink, plunk, plank!* Den ole Miss Wolf, she tuck'n' hunch Brer Wolf wid'er elbow, en she say, sez she:

"'Hey, ole man! w'at dat?'

"'Den bofe un um cock up der years en lissen, en des 'bout dat time, ole Mr. Benjermun Ram he sling de butt er de fiddle up und' he chin, en struck up one er dem ole-time chunes."

"Well, what tune was it, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked, with some display of impatience.

"Ef I ain't done gone en fergit dat chune off'n my min'," continued Uncle Remus; "hit sorter went like dat ar song 'bout 'Sheep shell co'n wid de rattle er his ho'n;' en yit hit mout er been dat ar yuther one 'bout 'Roll de key, ladies, roll dem keys.' Brer Wolf

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2 todes, toward • 13 t'er, the other • 18 ager, ague • 27 'n'er, another • 41 lighter'd-knot, pine knot

en ole Miss Wolf, dey lissen en lissen, en de mo' w'at dey lissen de skeerder dey git, twel bimeby dey tuck ter der heels en make a break fer de swamp at de back er de house des lak de patter-rollers wuz atter um.

"W'en ole man Benjermun Ram sorter let up wid he fiddlin', he don't see no Brer Wolf, en he don't year no ole Miss Wolf. Den he look in de back room; no Wolf dar. Den he look in de back po'ch; no Wolf dar. Den he look in de closet en de cubberd; no Wolf aint dar yit. Den ole Mr. Benjermun Ram, he tuck 'n' shot all de do's en lock um, en he s'arch 'roun' en he fine some peas en fodder in de lof', w'ich he et um fer he supper, en den he lie down front er de fier en sleep soun' ez a log.

"Nex' mawnin' he 'uz up en stirrin' monst'us soon, en he put out fum dar, en he fine de way ter Miss Meadows' time 'nuff fer ter play at de frolic. W'en he git dar, Miss Meadows en de gals, dey run ter de gate fer ter meet 'im, en dis un tuck he hat, en dat un tuck he cane, en t'er 'n tuck he fiddle, en den dey up 'n' say:

"'Law, Mr. Ram! whar de name er goodness is you bin? We so glad you come. Stir 'roun' yer, folks, en git Mr. Ram a cup er hot coffee.'

"Dey make a mighty big ter-do 'bout Mr. Benjermun Ram, Miss Meadows en Miss Motts en de gals did, but 'twix' you en me en de bedpos', honey, dey'd er had der frolic wh'er de ole chap 'uz dar er not, kaze de gals done made 'rangements wid Brer Rabbit fer ter pat fer um, en in dem days Brer Rabbit wuz a patter, mon. He mos' sho'ly wuz."

1883

Sarah Orne Jewett

1849 • 1909

"If I were asked to name three American books," wrote Willa Cather in 1925, "which have the possibility of a long, long life, I would say at once, *The Scarlet Letter, Huckleberry Finn,* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs.* I can think of no others that confront time and change so serenely."

Sarah Orne Jewett, the author of *The Country of the Pointed Firs,* was born in the village of South Berwick, in the southwest corner of Maine, just ten miles from the seacoast. Although she became a cosmopolitan person, traveling in Europe and spending a good deal of time with friends in Boston (Annie Fields, Howells, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and others), South Berwick was her lifelong home and she always returned there to write. Like all good regionalists, she believed with Whittier that

> . . . he who wanders widest lifts
> No more of beauty's jealous veils
> Than he who from his doorway sees
> The miracle of flowers and trees.

Her formal schooling was irregular and fragmentary. Her real education for writing came from riding and talking with her father, a country doctor, as he visited his many patients in the fishing villages and on the upland farms, and from reading in her father's library.

Although she read widely in the modern English and Continental novel (in Jane Austen, Thackeray, Flaubert, Tolstoy), she was influenced especially by Mrs. Stowe's account of life along the Maine coast and by Howells, who had emphasized, in *A Chance Acquaintance,* the "pleasure in finding out the small graces and beauties of the poverty-stricken subjects." Her first story appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1869, when she was only twenty. In 1877 was published *Deephaven,* a collection of stories and sketches about a Maine village, nominally Deephaven but really South Berwick. Miss Jewett wrote many such sketches and stories, which appeared at frequent intervals in the *Atlantic* and were collected from time to time in book form: *Country By-Ways* (1881), *A White Heron and Other Stories* (1886), *A Native of Winby and Other Tales* (1893), *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896) are a partial list.

"The thing that teases the mind over and over for years," Miss Jewett once said, "and at last gets itself put down rightly on paper—whether little or great, it belongs to Literature." Her work shows the knowledge that comes only with long saturation, and the fine selective process of the artist. Her stories of New England are the best that have been written since Hawthorne. They are not as great as Hawthorne's (Miss Cather's praise, quoted earlier, is a little extravagant), because Miss Jewett lacks Hawthorne's grasp, his tragic power. She deals with the gentle, the amiable, the picturesque, and, at times, the trivial, and she sometimes fails to make their significance convincing But her work is authentic literary art: she adds a delicate grace to the New England spareness. Her best writing has been justly called "a miracle in pastel shades."

The Best Stories of Sarah Orne Jewett (selected and arranged with a preface by Willa Cather), 2 vols , Boston, 1925 • F. O. Matthiessen, **Sarah Orne Jewett,** Boston, 1929

The Courting of Sister Wisby

Discursive and plotless, "The Courting of Sister Wisby" finds ample literary justification in its portrayal of New England life and manners. The author herself is present in the story, and the characters are seen from her point of view. Although the critical reader may detect the faintest suggestion of condescension toward "dear old Mrs. Goodsoe" and the others and an air of exhibiting them as interesting "specimens," Miss Jewett's treatment is firmly based upon an intimate knowledge and a genuine sympathy.

The story was printed in The King of Folly Island and Other People, 1888.

All the morning there had been an increasing temptation to take an out-door holiday, and early in the afternoon the temptation outgrew my power of resistance. A far-away pasture on the long southwestern slope of a high hill was persistently present to my mind, yet there seemed to be no particular reason why I should think of it. I was not sure that I wanted anything from the pasture, and there was no sign, except the temptation, that the pasture wanted anything of me But I was on the farther side of as many as three fences before I stopped to think again where I was going, and why.

There is no use in trying to tell another person about that afternoon unless he distinctly remembers weather exactly like it. No number of details concerning an Arctic ice-blockade will give a single shiver to a child of the tropics. This was one of those perfect New England days in late summer, when the spirit of autumn takes a first stealthy flight, like a spy, through the ripening country-side, and, with feigned sympathy for those who droop with August heat, puts her cool cloak of bracing air about leaf and flower and human shoulders. Every living thing grows suddenly cheerful and strong; it is only when you catch sight of a horror-stricken little maple in swamp soil—a little maple that has second sight

and fore-knowledge of coming disaster to her race—only then does a distrust of autumn's friendliness dim your joyful satisfaction.

In midwinter there is always a day when one has the first foretaste of spring; in late August there is a morning when the air is for the first time autumn-like. Perhaps it is a hint to the squirrels to get in their first supplies for the winter hoards, or a reminder that summer will soon end, and everybody had better make the most of it. We are always looking forward to the passing and ending of winter, but when summer is here it seems as if summer must always last. As I went across the fields that day, I found myself half lamenting that the world must fade again, even that the best of her budding and bloom was only a preparation for another springtime, for an awakening beyond the coming winter's sleep.

The sun was slightly veiled; there was a chattering group of birds, which had gathered for a conference about their early migration. Yet, oddly enough, I heard the voice of a belated bobolink, and presently saw him rise from the grass and hover leisurely, while he sang a brief tune. He was much behind time if he were still a housekeeper; but as for the other birds who listened, they cared only for their own notes. An old crow went sagging by, and gave a croak at his despised neighbor, just as a black reviewer croaked at Keats—so hard it is to be just to one's contemporaries. The bobolink was indeed singing out of season, and it was impossible to say whether he really belonged most to this summer or to the next. He might have been delayed on his northward journey; at any rate, he had a light heart now, to judge from his song, and I wished that I could ask him a few questions—how he liked being the last man among the bobolinks, and where he had taken singing lessons in the South.

Presently I left the lower fields, and took a path that led higher, where I could look beyond the village to the northern country mountainward. Here the sweet fern grew thick and fragrant, and I also found myself heedlessly treading on pennyroyal. Nearby, in a field corner, I long ago made a most comfortable seat by putting a stray piece of board and bit of rail across the angle of the fences. I have spent many a delightful hour there, in the shade and shelter of a young pitch-pine and a wild-cherry tree, with a lovely outlook toward the village, just far enough away beyond the green slopes and tall elms of the lower meadows. But that day I still had the feeling of being outward bound, and did not turn aside nor linger. The high pasture land grew more and more enticing.

I stopped to pick some blackberries that twinkled at me like beads among their dry vines, and two or three yellow-birds fluttered up from the leaves of a thistle and then came back again, as if they had complacently discovered that I was only an overgrown yellow-bird, in strange disguise but perfectly harmless. They made me feel as if I were an intruder, though they did not offer to peck at me, and we parted company very soon. It was good to stand at last on the great shoulder of the hill. The wind was coming in from the sea, there was a fine fragrance from the pines, and the air grew sweeter every moment. I took new pleasure in the thought that in a piece of wild pasture land like this one may get closest to Nature, and subsist upon what she gives of her own free will. There have been no drudging, heavy-shod ploughmen to overturn the soil, and vex it into yielding artificial crops. Here one has to take just what Nature is pleased to give, whether one is a yellow-bird or a human being. It is very good entertainment for a summer wayfarer, and I am asking my reader now to share the winter provision which I harvested that day. Let us hope that the small birds are also faring well after their fashion, but I give them an anxious thought while the snow goes hurrying in long waves across the buried fields, this windy winter night.

I next went farther down the hill, and got a drink of fresh cool water from the brook, and pulled a tender sheaf of sweet flag beside it. The mossy old fence just beyond was the last barrier between me and the pasture which had sent an invisible messenger earlier in the day, but I saw that somebody else had come first to the rendezvous: there was a brown gingham cape-bonnet and a sprigged shoulder-shawl bobbing up and down, a little way off among the junipers. I had taken such uncommon pleasure in being alone that I instantly felt a sense of disappointment; then a warm glow of pleasant satisfaction rebuked my selfishness. This could be no one but dear old Mrs. Goodsoe, the friend of my childhood

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26 black . . . Keats, an allusion to the contemptuous review of Keats' "Endymion" by John Wilson Croker in the *Quarterly Review* for April 1818

and fond dependence of my maturer years. I had not seen her for many weeks, but here she was, out on one of her famous campaigns for herbs, or perhaps just returning from a blueberrying expedition. I approached with care, so as not to startle the gingham bonnet; but she heard the rustle of the bushes against my dress, and looked up quickly, as she knelt, bending over the turf. In that position she was hardly taller than the luxuriant junipers themselves.

"I'm a-gittin' in my mulleins," she said briskly, "an' I've been thinking o' you these twenty times since I come out o' the house. I begun to believe you must ha' forgot me at last."

"I have been away from home," I explained. "Why don't you get in your pennyroyal too? There's a great plantation of it beyond the next fence but one."

"Pennyr'yal!" repeated the dear old woman, with an air of compassion for inferior knowledge; "'tain't the right time, darlin'. Pennyr'yal's too rank now. But for mulleins this day is prime. I've got a dreadful graspin' fit for 'em this year; seems if I must be goin' to need 'em extry. I feel like the squirrels must when they know a hard winter's comin'." And Mrs. Goodsoe bent over her work again, while I stood by and watched her carefully cut the best fullgrown leaves with a clumsy pair of scissors, which might have served through at least half a century for herb-gathering. They were fastened to her apron-strings by a long piece of list.

"I'm going to take my jack-knife and help you," I suggested, with some fear of refusal. "I just passed a flourishing family of six or seven heads that must have been growing on purpose for you."

"Now be keerful, dear heart," was the anxious response; "choose 'em well. There's odds in mulleins same's there is in angels. Take a plant that's all run up to stalk, and there ain't but little goodness in the leaves. This one I'm at now must ha' been stepped on by some creatur and blighted of its bloom, and the leaves is han'some! When I was small I used to have a notion that Adam an' Eve must a took mulleins for their winter wear. Ain't they just like flannel, for all the world? I've had experience, and I know there's plenty of sickness might be saved to folks if they'd quit horse-radish and such fiery, exasperating things, and use mullein drarves in proper season. Now I shall spread these an' dry 'em nice on my spare floor in the garrit, an' come to steam 'em for use along in the winter there'll be the vally of the whole summer's goodness in 'em, sartin." And she snipped away with the dull scissors while I listened respectfully, and took great pains to have my part of the harvest present a good appearance.

"This is most too dry a head," she added presently, a little out of breath. "There! I can tell you there's win'rows o' young doctors, bilin' over with book-larnin', that is truly ignorant of what to do for the sick, or how to p'int out those paths that well people foller toward sickness. Book-fools I call 'em, them young men, an' some on 'em never'll live to know much better, if they git to be Methuselahs. In my time every middle-aged woman who had brought up a family had some proper ideas of dealin' with complaints. I won't say but there was some fools amongst *them,* but I'd rather take my chances, unless they'd forsook herbs and gone to dealin' with patent stuff. Now my mother really did sense the use of herbs and roots. I never see anybody that come up to her. She was a meek-looking woman, but very understandin' mother was."

"Then that's where you learned so much yourself, Mrs. Goodsoe," I ventured to say.

"Bless your heart, I don't hold a candle to her; 'tis but little I can recall of what she used to say. No, her l'arnin' died with her," said my friend, in a self-deprecating tone. "Why, there was as many as twenty kinds of roots alone that she used to keep by her, that I forgot the use of; an' I'm sure I shouldn't know where to find most of 'em, any. There was an herb"—*airb* she called it—"an herb called masterwort, that she used to get way from Pennsylvany; and she used to think everything of noble-liverwort, but I never could seem to get the right effects from it as she could. Though I don't know as she ever really did use masterwort where somethin' else wouldn't a served. She had a cousin married out in Pennsylvany that used to take pains to get it to her every year or two, and so she felt 't was important to have it. Some set more by such things as come from a distance, but I

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28 list, a strip of cloth • 34 odds, difference, inequality • 35 angels. There are nine ranks of angels in the generally accepted hierarchy: in descending order, Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions or Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels • 44 drarves, draws, young shoots or sprouts • 47 vally, value • 53 win'rows, windrows, rows of hay raked up to dry • 59 Methuselah, according to Genesis 5:27, lived to be 969 years old

rec'lect mother always used to maintain that folks was meant to be doctored with the stuff that grew right about 'em; 'twas sufficient, an' so ordered. That was before the whole population took to livin' on wheels, the way they do now. 'Twas never my idee that we was meant to know what's goin' on all over the world to once. There's goin' to be some sort of a set-back one o' these days, with these telegraphs an' things, an' letters comin' every hand's turn, and folks leavin' their proper work to answer 'em. I may not live to see it. 'Twas allowed to be difficult for folks to get about in old times, or to git word across the country, and they stood in their lot an' place, and weren't all just alike, either, same as pine-spills."

We were kneeling side by side now, as if in penitence for the march of progress, but we laughed as we turned to look at each other.

"Do you think it did much good when everybody brewed a cracked quart mug of herb-tea?" I asked, walking away on my knees to a new mullein.

"I've always lifted my voice against the practice, far's I could," declared Mrs. Goodsoe; "an' I won't deal out none o' the herbs I save for no such nonsense. There was three houses along our road—I call no names—where you couldn't go into the livin' room without findin' a mess o' herb-tea drorin' on the stove or side o' the fireplace, winter or summer, sick or well. One was thoroughwut, one would be camomile, and the other, like as not, yellow dock; but they all used to put in a little new rum to git out the goodness, or keep it from spilin'." (Mrs. Goodsoe favored me with a knowing smile.) "Land, how mother used to laugh! But poor creatures, they had to work hard, and I guess it never done 'em a mite o' harm; they was all good herbs. I wish you could hear the quawkin' there used to be when they was indulged with a real case o' sickness. Everybody would collect from far an' near; you'd see 'em coming along the road and across the pastures then; everybody clamorin' that nothin' would do no kind o' good but her choice o' teas or drarves to the feet. I wonder there was a babe lived to grow up in the whole lower part o' the town; an' if nothin' else 'peared to ail 'em, word was passed about that 'twas likely Mis' So-and-So's last young one was goin' to be foolish. Land, how they'd gather! I know one day the doctor come to Widder Peck's and the house was crammed so't he could scercely git inside the door; and he says, just as polite, 'Do send for some of the neighbors!' as if there wa'n't a soul to turn to, right or left. You'd ought to seen 'em begin to scatter."

"But don't you think the cars and telegraphs have given people more to interest them, Mrs. Goodsoe? Don't you believe people's lives were narrower then, and more taken up with little things?" I asked, unwisely, being a product of modern times.

"Not one mite, dear," said my companion stoutly. "There was as big thoughts then as there is now; these times was born o' them. The difference is in folks themselves; but now, instead o' doin' their own housekeepin' and watchin' their own neighbors—though that was carried to excess—they git word that a niece's child is ailin' the other side o' Massachusetts, and they drop everything and git on their best clothes, and off they jiggit in the cars. 'Tis a bad sign when folks wear out their best clothes faster 'n they do their everyday ones. The other side o' Massachusetts has got to look after itself by rights. An' besides that, Sunday-keepin's all gone out o' fashion. Some lays it to one thing an' some another, but some o' them old ministers that folks are all a-sighin' for did preach a lot o' stuff that wa'n't nothin' but chaff; 'twa'n't the word o' God out o' either Old Testament or New. But everybody went to meetin' and heard it, and come home, and was set to fightin' with their next door neighbor over it. Now I'm a believer, and I try to live a Christian life, but I'd as soon hear a surveyor's book read out, figgers an' all, as try to get any simple truth out o' most sermons. It's them as is most to blame."

"What was the matter that day at Widow Peck's?" I hastened to ask, for I knew by experience that the good, clear-minded soul beside me was apt to grow unduly vexed and distressed when she contemplated the state of religious teaching.

"Why, there wa'n't nothin' the matter, only a gal o' Miss Peck's had met with a dis'pintment and had gone into screechin' fits. 'Twas a rovin' creatur' that had come along hayin' time, and he'd gone off an' forsook her betwixt two days; nobody ever knew what become of him. Them Pecks was 'Good Lord, anybody!' kind o' gals, and took up with whoever they could get. One of 'em married Heron, the Irishman; they lived in that little house that was burnt this summer, over on the edge o' the plains.

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13 pine-spills, pine needles • 25 drorin', drawing

He was a good-hearted creatur', with a laughin' eye and a clever word for everybody. He was the first Irishman that ever came this way, and we was all for gettin' a look at him, when he first used to go by. Mother's folks was what they call Scotch-Irish, though; there was an old race of 'em settled about here. They could foretell events, some on 'em, and had second sight. I know folks used to say mother's grandmother had them gifts, but mother was never free to speak about it to us. She remembered her well, too."

"I suppose that you mean old Jim Heron, who was such a famous fiddler?" I asked with great interest, for I am always delighted to know more about that rustic hero, parochial Orpheus that he must have been!

"Now, dear heart, I suppose you don't remember him, do you?" replied Mrs. Goodsoe, earnestly. "Fiddle! He'd about break your heart with them tunes of his, or else set your heels flying up the floor in a jig, though you was minister o' the First Parish and all wound up for a funeral prayer. I tell ye there ain't no tunes sounds like them used to. It used to seem to me summer nights when I was comin' along the plains road, and he set by the window playin', as if there was a bewitched human creatur' in that old red fiddle o' his. He could make it sound just like a woman's voice tellin' somethin' over and over, as if folks could help her out o' her sorrows if she could only make 'em understand. I've set by the stone-wall and cried as if my heart was broke, and dear knows it wa'n't in them days. How he would twirl off them jigs and dance tunes! He used to make somethin' han'some out of 'em in fall an' winter, playin' at huskins and dancin' parties; but he was unstiddy by spells, as he got along in years, and never knew what it was to be forehanded. Everybody felt bad when he died; you couldn't help likin' the creatur'. He'd got the gift—that's all you could say about it.

"There was a Mis' Jerry Foss, that lived over by the brook bridge, on the plains road, that had lost her husband early, and was left with three child'n. She set the world by 'em, and was a real pleasant, ambitious little woman, and was workin' on as best she could with that little farm, when there come a rage o' scarlet fever, and her boy and two girls was swept off and laid dead within the same week. Every one o' the neighbors did what they could, but she'd had no sleep since they was taken sick, and after the funeral she set there just like a piece o' marble, and would only shake her head when you spoke to her. They all thought her reason would go; and 'twould certain, if she couldn't have shed tears. An' one o' the neighbors—'twas like mother's sense, but it might have been somebody else—spoke o' Jim Heron. Mother an' one or two o' the women that knew her best was in the house with her. 'T was right in the edge o' the woods and some of us younger ones was over by the wall on the other side of the road where there was a couple of old willows—I remember just how the brook damp felt—and we kept quiet's we could, and some other folks come along down the road, and stood waitin' on the little bridge, hopin' somebody'd come out, I suppose, and they'd git news. Everybody was wrought up, and felt a good deal for her, you know. By an' by Jim Heron come stealin' right out o' the shadows an' set down on the doorstep, an' 'twas a good while before we heard a sound; then, oh, dear me! 'twas what the whole neighborhood felt for that mother all spoke in the notes, an' they told me afterwards that Mis' Foss's face changed in a minute, and she come right over an' got into my mother's lap—she was a little woman—an' laid her head down, and there she cried herself into a blessed sleep. After a while one o' the other women stole out an' told the folks, and we all went home. He only played that one tune.

"But there!" resumed Mrs. Goodsoe, after a silence, during which my eyes were filled with tears. "His wife always complained that the fiddle made her nervous. She never 'peared to think nothin' o' poor Heron after she'd once got him."

"That's often the way," said I, with harsh cynicism, though I had no guilty person in my mind at the moment; and we went straying off, not very far apart, up through the pasture. Mrs. Goodsoe cautioned me that we must not get so far off that we could not get back the same day. The sunshine began to feel very hot on our backs, and we both turned toward the shade. We had already collected a large bundle of mullein leaves, which were carefully laid into a clean, calico apron, held together by the four corners, and proudly carried by me, though my companion regarded them with anxious eyes. We sat down together at the edge of the pine woods, and Mrs.

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14 parochial Orpheus. The lyre of Orpheus, in Greek mythology, could charm beasts and make trees and rocks move. "Parochial" means restricted to a parish, provincial

Goodsoe proceeded to fan herself with her limp cape-bonnet.

"I declare, how hot it is! The east wind's all gone again," she said. "It felt so cool this forenoon that I overburdened myself with as thick a petticoat as any I've got. I'm despri't afeared of having a chill, now that I ain't so young as once. I hate to be housed up."

"It's only August, after all," I assured her unnecessarily, confirming my statement by taking two peaches out of my pocket, and laying them side by side on the brown pine needles between us.

"Dear sakes alive!" exclaimed the old lady, with evident pleasure. "Where did you get them, now? Doesn't anything taste twice better out-o'-doors? I ain't had such a peach for years. Do le's keep the stones, an' I'll plant 'em; it only takes four years for a peach pit to come to bearing, an' I guess I'm good for four years, 'thout I meet with some accident."

I could not help agreeing, or taking a fond look at the thin little figure, and her wrinkled brown face and kind, twinkling eyes. She looked as if she had properly dried herself, by mistake, with some of her mullein leaves, and was likely to keep her goodness, and to last the longer in consequence. There never was a truer, simple-hearted soul made out of the old-fashioned country dust than Mrs. Goodsoe. I thought, as I looked away from her across the wide country, that nobody was left in any of the farmhouses so original, so full of rural wisdom and reminiscence, so really able and dependable, as she. And nobody had made better use of her time in a world foolish enough to sometimes under-value medicinal herbs.

When we had eaten our peaches we still sat under the pines, and I was not without pride when I had poked about in the ground with a little twig, and displayed to my crony a long fine root, bright yellow to the eye, and a wholesome bitter to the taste.

"Yis, dear, goldthread," she assented indulgently. "Seems to me there's more of it than anything except grass an' hardhack. Good for canker, but no better than two or three other things I can call to mind; but I always lay in a good wisp of it, for old times' sake. Now, I want to know why you should a bit it, and took away all the taste o' your nice peach? I was just thinkin' what a han'some entertainment we've had. I've got so I 'sociate certain things with certain folks, and goldthread was somethin' Lizy Wisby couldn't keep house without, no ways whatever. I believe she took so much it kind o' puckered her disposition."

"Lizy Wisby?" I repeated inquiringly.

"You knew her, if ever, by the name of Mis' Deacon Brimblecom," answered my friend, as if this were only a brief preface to further information, so I waited with respectful expectation. Mrs. Goodsoe had grown tired out in the sun, and a good story would be an excuse for sufficient rest. It was a most lovely place where we sat, half-way up the long hillside; for my part, I was perfectly contented and happy. "You've often heard of Deacon Brimblecom?" she asked, as if a great deal depended upon his being properly introduced.

"I remember him," said I. "They called him Deacon Brimfull, you know, and he used to go about with a witchhazel branch to show people where to dig wells."

"That's the one," said Mrs. Goodsoe, laughing. "I didn't know's you could go so far back. I'm always divided between whether you can remember everything I can, or are only a babe in arms."

"I have a dim recollection of there being something strange about their marriage," I suggested, after a pause, which began to appear dangerous. I was so much afraid the subject would be changed.

"I can tell you all about it," I was quickly answered. "Deacon Brimblecom was very pious accordin' to his lights in his early years. He lived way back in the country then, and there come a rovin' preacher along, and set everybody up that way all by the ears. I've heard the old folks talk it over, but I forget most of his doctrine, except some of his followers was persuaded they could dwell among the angels while yet on airth, and this Deacon Brimfull, as you call him, felt sure he was called by the voice of a spirit bride. So he left a good, deservin' wife he had, an' four children, and built him a new house over to the other side of the land he'd had from his father. They didn't take much pains with the buildin', because they expected to be translated before long, and then the spirit brides and them folks was goin' to appear and divide up the airth amongst 'em, and the world's folks and onbelievers was goin' to serve 'em or be sent to torments. They had meetin's about in the school-

84 translated, removed to heaven without a natural death • 87 onbelievers, unbelievers • 88 torments, hell See Luke 16·28 "For I have five brethren that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment"

houses, an' all sorts o' goin's on; some on 'em went crazy, but the deacon held on to what wits he had, an' by an' by the spirit bride didn't turn out to be much of a housekeeper an' he had always been used to good livin' so he sneaked home ag'in. One o' mother's sisters married up to Ash Hill, where it all took place; that's how I come to have the particulars."

"Then how did he come to find his Eliza Wisby?" I inquired. "Do tell me the whole story; you've got mullein leaves enough."

"There's all yisterday's at home, if I haven't," replied Mrs. Goodsoe. "The way he come a-courtin' o' Sister Wisby was this: she went a-courtin' o' him.

"There was a spell he lived to home, and then his poor wife died, and he had a spirit bride in good earnest, an' the child'n was placed about with his folks and hers, for they was both out o' good families; and I don't know what come over him, but he had another pious fit that looked for all the world like the real thing. He hadn't no family cares, and he lived with his brother's folks, and turned his land in with theirs. He used to travel to every meetin' an' conference that was within reach of his old sorrel hoss's feeble legs; he j'ined the Christian Baptists that was just in their early prime, and he was a great exhorter, and got to be called deacon, though I guess he wa'n't deacon, 'less it was for a spare hand when deacon timber was scercer'n usual. An' one time there was a four-days' protracted meetin' to the church in the lower part of the town. 'Twas a real solemn time; somethin' more'n usual was goin' forward, an' they collected from the whole country round. Women folks liked it, an' the men too; it give 'em a change, an' they was quartered round free, same as conference folks now. Some on 'em, for a joke, sent Silas Brimblecom up to Lizy Wisby's, though she'd give out she couldn't accommodate nobody, because of expectin' her cousin's folks. Everybody knew 'twas a lie; she was amazin' close considerin' she had plenty to do with. There was a streak that wa'n't just right somewheres in Lizy's wits, I always thought. She was very kind in case o' sickness, I'll say that for her.

"You know where the house is, over there on what they call Windy Hill? There the deacon went, all unsuspectin', and 'stead o' Lizy's resentin' of him she put in her own hoss, and they come back together to evenin' meetin'. She was prominent among the sect herself, an' he bawled and talked, and she bawled and talked, an' took up more'n the time allotted in the exercises, just as if they was showin' off to each other what they was able to do at expoundin'. Everybody was laughin' at 'em after the meetin' broke up, and that next day an' the next, an' all through, they was constant, and seemed to be havin' a beautiful occasion. Lizy had always give out she scorned the men, but when she got a chance at a particular one 'twas altogether different, and the deacon seemed to please her somehow or 'nother, and—There! you don't want to listen to this old stuff that's past an' gone?"

"Oh, yes, I do," said I.

"I run on like a clock that's onset her striking hand," said Mrs. Goodsoe mildly. "Sometimes my kitchen timepiece goes on half the forenoon, and I says to myself the day before yisterday I would let it be a warnin', and keep it in mind for a check on my own speech. The next news that was heard was that the deacon an' Lizy—well, opinions differed which of 'em had spoke first, but them fools settled it before the protracted meetin' was over, and give away their hearts before he started for home. They considered 'twould be wise, though, considerin' their short acquaintance, to take one another on trial a spell; 'twas Lizy's notion, and she asked him why he wouldn't come over and stop with her till spring, and then, if they both continued to like, they could git married any time 'twas convenient. Lizy, she come and talked it over with mother, and mother disliked to offend her, but she spoke pretty plain; and Lizy felt hurt, an' thought they was showin' excellent judgment, so much harm come from hasty unions and folks comin' to a realizin' sense of each other's failin's when 'twas too late.

"So one day our folks saw Deacon Brimfull a-ridin' by with a gre't coopful of hens in the back o' his wagon, and bundles o' stuff tied on top and hitched to the exes underneath; and he riz a hymn just as he passed the house, and was speedin' the old sorrel with a willer switch. 'Twas most Thanksgivin' time, an' sooner'n she expected him. New Year's was the time she set; but he thought he'd come while the roads was fit for wheels. They was out to meetin' together Thanksgivin' Day, an' that used to be a gre't season for marryin'; so the young folks nudged each other, and some on 'em ventured to speak to the couple as they come down the aisle. Lizy carried

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80 exes, axles

it off real well; she wa'n't afraid o' what nobody said or thought, and so home they went. They'd got out her yaller sleigh and her hoss; she never would ride after the deacon's poor old creatur', and I believe it died long o' the winter from stiffenin' up.

"Yes," said Mrs. Goodsoe, emphatically, after we had silently considered the situation for a short space of time, "yes, there was consider'ble talk, now I tell you! The raskil boys pestered 'em just about to death for a while. They used to collect up there an' rap on the winders, and they'd turn out all the deacon's hens 'long at nine o'clock o' night, and chase 'em all over the dingle; an' one night they even lugged the pig right out o' the sty, and shoved it into the back entry, an' run for their lives. They'd stuffed its mouth full o' somethin', so it couldn't squeal till it got there. There wa'n't a sign o' nobody to be seen when Lizy hasted out with the light, and she an' the deacon had to persuade the creatur' back as best they could; 'twas a cold night, and they said it took 'em till towards mornin'. You see the deacon was just the kind of a man that a hog wouldn't budge for; it takes a masterful man to deal with a hog. Well, there was no end to the works nor the talk, but Lizy left 'em pretty much alone. She did 'pear kind of dignified about it, I must say!"

"And then, were they married in the spring?"

"I was tryin' to remember whether it was just before Fast Day or just after," responded my friend, with a careful look at the sun, which was nearer the west than either of us had noticed. "I think likely 'twas along in the last o' April, any way some of us looked out o' the window one Monday mornin' early, and says, 'For goodness' sake! Lizy's sent the deacon home again!' His old sorrel havin' passed away, he was ridin' in Ezry Welsh's hoss-cart, with his hen-coop and more bundles than he had when he come, and looked as meechin' as ever you see. Ezry was drivin', and he let a glance fly swiftly round to see if any of us was lookin' out; an' then I declare if he didn't have the malice to turn right in towards the barn, where he see my oldest brother, Joshuay, an' says he real natural, 'Joshuay, just step out with your wrench. I believe I hear my kingbolt rattlin' kind o' loose.' Brother, he went out an' took in the sitooation, an' the deacon bowed kind of stiff. Joshuay was so full o' laugh, and Ezry Welsh, that they couldn't look one another in the face. There wa'n't nothing ailed the kingbolt, you know, an' when Josh riz up he says, 'Goin' up country for a spell, Mr. Brimblecom?'

"'I be,' says the deacon, lookin' dreadful mortified and cast down.

"'Ain't things turned out well with you an' Sister Wisby?' says Joshuay. 'You had ought to remember that the woman is the weaker vessel.'

"'Hang her, let her carry less sail, then!' the deacon bu'st out, and he stood right up an' shook his fist there by the hen-coop, he was so mad; an' Ezry's hoss was a young creatur' an' started up and set the deacon right over backwards into the chips. We didn't know but he'd broke his neck; but when he see the women folks runnin' out he jumped up quick as a cat, an' clim' into the cart, an' off they went. Ezry said he told him that he couldn't git along with Lizy, she was so fractious in thundery weather; if there was a rumble in the daytime she must go right to bed an' screech, and if 'twas night she must git right up an' go an' call him out of a sound sleep. But everybody knew he'd never a gone home unless she'd sent him.

"Somehow they made it up ag'in, him an' Lizy, and she had him back. She'd been countin' all along on not havin' to hire nobody to work about the gardin an' so on, an' she said she wa'n't goin' to let him have a whole winter's board for nothin'. So the old hens was moved back, and they was married right off fair an' square, an' I don't know but they got along well as most folks. He brought his youngest girl down to live with 'em after a while, an' she was a real treasure to Lizy; everybody spoke well o' Phœbe Brimblecom. The deacon got over his pious fit, and there was consider'ble work in him if you kept right after him. He was an amazin' cider-drinker, and he airnt the name you know him by in his latter days. Lizy never trusted him with nothin', but she kep' him well. She left everything she owned to Phœbe, when she died, 'cept somethin' to satisfy the law. There, they're all gone now; seems to me sometimes, when I get thinkin', as if I'd lived a thousand years!"

I laughed, but I found Mrs. Goodsoe's thoughts had taken a serious turn.

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12 dingle, small ravine or valley • 36 meechin', miching, lying hidden, skulking • 53 woman . . . vessel, an allusion to I Peter 3:7: "Likewise, ye husbands . . . giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel . . ." • 80 airnt, earned

"There, I come by some old graves down here in the lower edge of the pasture," she said as we rose to go. "I couldn't help thinking how I should like to be laid right out in the pasture ground, when my time comes; it looked sort o' comfortable, and I have ranged these slopes so many summers. Seems as if I could see right up through the turf and tell when the weather was pleasant, and get the goodness o' the sweet fern. Now, dear, just hand me my apernful o' mulleins out o' the shade. I hope you won't come to need none this winter, but I'll dry some special for you."

"I'm going by the road," said I, "or else by the path across the meadows, so I will walk as far as the house with you. Aren't you pleased with my company?" for she demurred at my going the least bit out of the way.

So we strolled toward the little gray house, with our plunder of mullein leaves slung on a stick which we carried between us. Of course I went in to make a call, as if I had not seen my hostess before; she is the last maker of muster-gingerbread, and before I came away I was kindly measured for a pair of mittens.

"You'll be sure to come an' see them two peach-trees after I get 'em well growin'?" Mrs. Goodsoe called after me when I had said good-by, and was almost out of hearing down the road.

1888

William Sydney Porter (O. Henry)

1862 • 1910

William Sydney Porter—at one time somewhat extravagantly called "the American De Maupassant"—was born in Greensboro, North Carolina. After clerking in a drug store, he went to Texas, where he lived on a ranch and later was a bank teller in Austin. Accused of embezzlement, he fled to Central America only to return because of his wife's illness and (after trial and conviction) to serve a term of three years (1897-1900) in the federal penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio. While in the penitentiary, he began to write short stories for the magazines under the pen name of "O. Henry." The last ten years of his life were spent in New York producing many stories which proved to be enormously popular all over the United States.

O. Henry's stories are not great literature. They rely for their interest chiefly upon ingenuity of plot—the "surprise ending"—the achievement of which depends too much upon accident and coincidence The style is marked by a journalistic smartness. His work, however, has a social significance. In *The Four Million,* he described aspects of life in New York which previous writers had missed. "In spite of his preposterous absurdities," says Ludwig Lewisohn, "he caught the tang of, let us say, Herald Square in 1907. A perished, amusing moment is somehow captured and held fast."

C. A Smith, O. Henry (biography), Garden City, 1916 • Ludwig Lewisohn, Expression in America, New York, 1932

From • The Four Million

The Furnished Room

"The Furnished Room" is taken from O. Henry's famous collection of stories about New York City, **The Four Million**, published in 1909.

The story is thoroughly characteristic in its use of coincidence and surprise, its picturesque detail, its facile, journalistic style. As Lewisohn has observed, "O. Henry discovered the hall bedroom."

Restless, shifting, fugacious as time itself is a certain vast bulk of the population of the red brick district of the lower West Side. Homeless, they have a hundred homes. They flit from furnished room to furnished room, transients forever—transients in abode, transients in heart and mind. They sing "Home, Sweet Home" in ragtime; they carry their *lares et penates* in a bandbox; their vine is entwined about a picture hat; a rubber plant is their fig tree.

Hence the houses of this district, having had a thousand dwellers, should have a thousand tales to tell, mostly dull ones no doubt, but it would be strange if there could not be found a ghost or two in the wake of all these vagrant guests.

One evening after dark a young man prowled among these crumbling red mansions, ringing their bells. At the twelfth he rested his lean hand-baggage upon the step and wiped the dust from his hat-band and forehead. The bell sounded faint and far away in some remote, hollow depths.

To the door of this, the twelfth house whose bell he had rung, came a housekeeper who made him think of an unwholesome surfeited worm that had eaten its nut to a hollow shell and now sought to fill the vacancy with edible lodgers.

He asked if there was a room to let.

"Come in," said the housekeeper. Her voice came from her throat; her throat seemed lined with fur. "I have the third floor back, vacant since a week back. Should you wish to look at it?"

The young man followed her up the stairs. A faint light from no particular source mitigated the shadows of the halls. They trod noiselessly upon a stair carpet that its own loom would have forsworn. It seemed to have become vegetable, to have degenerated in that rank, sunless air to lush lichen or spreading moss that grew in patches to the staircase and was viscid under the foot like organic matter. At each turn of the stairs were vacant niches in the wall. Perhaps plants had once been set within them. If so they had died in that foul and tainted air. It may be that statues of the saints had stood there, but it was not difficult to conceive that imps and devils had dragged them forth in the darkness and down to the unholy depths of some furnished pit below.

"This is the room," said the housekeeper, from her furry throat. "It's a nice room. It ain't often vacant. I had some most elegant people in it last summer—no trouble at all, and paid in advance to the minute. The water's at the end of the hall. Sprowls and Mooney kept it three months. They done a vaudeville sketch. Miss B'retta Sprowls—you may have heard of her—Oh, that was just the stage names—right there over the dresser is where the marriage certificate hung, framed. The gas is here, and you see there is plenty of closet room. It's a room everybody likes It never stays idle long"

"Do you have many theatrical people rooming here?" asked the young man.

"They comes and goes. A good proportion of my lodgers is connected with the theatres. Yes, sir, this is the theatrical district. Actor people never stays long anywhere. I get my share. Yes, they comes and they goes."

He engaged the room, paying for a week in advance. He was tired, he said, and would take possession at once. He counted out the money. The room had been made ready, she said, even to towels and water. As the housekeeper moved away he put, for the thousandth time, the question that he carried at the end of his tongue.

"A young girl—Miss Vashner—Miss Eloise Vashner—do you remember such a one among your lodgers? She would be singing on the stage, most likely. A fair girl, of medium height and slender, with reddish, gold hair and a dark mole near her left eyebrow."

"No, I don't remember the name. Them stage people has names they changes as often as their rooms. They

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7 **lares et penates**, Roman household gods • 8 **vine . . . fig tree**, symbols of the householder in the Old Testament. Compare I Kings 4:25: ". . . every man under his vine and under his fig tree . . ."

comes and they goes. No, I don't call that one to mind."

No. Always no. Five months of ceaseless interrogation and the inevitable negative. So much time spent by day in questioning managers, agents, schools and choruses; by night among the audiences of theatres from all-star casts down to music halls so low that he dreaded to find what he most hoped for. He who had loved her best had tried to find her. He was sure that since her disappearance from home this great, water-girt city held her somewhere, but it was like a monstrous quicksand, shifting its particles constantly, with no foundation, its upper granules of to-day buried to-morrow in ooze and slime.

The furnished room received its latest guest with a first glow of pseudo-hospitality, a hectic, haggard, perfunctory welcome like the specious smile of a demirep. The sophistical comfort came in reflected gleams from the decayed furniture, the ragged brocade upholstery of a couch and two chairs, a foot-wide cheap pier glass between two windows, from one or two gilt picture frames and a brass bedstead in a corner.

The guest reclined, inert, upon a chair, while the room, confused in speech as though it were an apartment in Babel, tried to discourse to him of its diverse tenantry.

A polychromatic rug like some brilliant-flowered rectangular, tropical islet lay surrounded by a billowy sea of soiled matting. Upon the gray-papered wall were those pictures that pursue the homeless one from house to house—The Huguenot Lovers, The First Quarrel, The Wedding Breakfast, Psyche at the Fountain. The mantel's chastely severe outline was ingloriously veiled behind some pert drapery drawn rakishly askew like the sashes of the Amazonian ballet. Upon it were some desolate flotsam cast aside by the room's marooned when a lucky sail had borne them to a fresh port—a trifling vase or two, pictures of actresses, a medicine bottle, some stray cards out of a deck.

One by one, as the characters of a cryptograph become explicit, the little signs left by the furnished room's procession of guests developed a significance. The threadbare space in the rug in front of the dresser told that lovely woman had marched in the throng. Tiny finger prints on the wall spoke of little prisoners trying to feel their way to sun and air. A splattered stain, raying like the shadow of a bursting bomb, witnessed where a hurled glass or bottle had splintered with its contents against the wall. Across the pier glass had been scrawled with a diamond in staggering letters the name "Marie."

It seemed that the succession of dwellers in the furnished room had turned in fury—perhaps tempted beyond forbearance by its garish coldness—and wreaked upon it their passions. The furniture was chipped and bruised; the couch, distorted by bursting springs, seemed a horrible monster that had been slain during the stress of some grotesque convulsion. Some more potent upheaval had cloven a great slice from the marble mantel. Each plank in the floor owned its particular cant and shriek as from a separate and individual agony. It seemed incredible that all this malice and injury had been wrought upon the room by those who had called it for a time their home; and yet it may have been the cheated home instinct surviving blindly, the resentful rage at false household gods that had kindled their wrath. A hut that is our own we can sweep and adorn and cherish.

The young tenant in the chair allowed these thoughts to file, softshod, through his mind, while there drifted into the room furnished sounds and furnished scents. He heard in one room a tittering and incontinent, slack laughter; in others the monologue of a scold, the rattling of dice, a lullaby, and one crying dully; above him a banjo tinkled with spirit. Doors banged somewhere; the elevated trains roared intermittently; a cat yowled miserably upon a back fence. And he breathed the breath of the house—a dank savour rather than a smell —a cold, musty effluvium as from underground vaults mingled with the reeking exhalations of linoleum and mildewed and rotten woodwork.

Then suddenly, as he rested there, the room was filled with the strong, sweet odour of mignonette. It came as upon a single buffet of wind with such sureness and fragrance and emphasis that it almost seemed a living visitant. And the man cried aloud: "What, dear?" as if he had been called, and sprang up and faced about. The rich odour clung to him and wrapped him around. He reached out his arms for it, all his senses for the time confused and commingled. How could one be peremptorily called by an odour? Surely it must have been a sound. But, was it not the odour that had touched, that had caressed him?

"She has been in this room," he cried, and he sprang to wrest from it a token, for he knew he would recognize the smallest thing that had belonged to her or that she had touched. This enveloping scent of mignonette, the odour that she had loved and made her own—whence came it?

The room had been but carelessly set in order. Scattered upon the flimsy dresser scarf were half a dozen hairpins—those discreet, indistinguishable friends of womankind, feminine of gender, infinite of mood, and uncommunicative of tense. These he ignored, conscious of their triumphant lack of identity. Ransacking the drawers of the dresser he came upon a discarded, tiny, ragged handkerchief. He pressed it to his face. It was racy and insolent with heliotrope; he hurled it to the floor. In another drawer he found odd buttons, a theatre programme, a pawnbroker's card, two lost marshmallows, a book on the divination of dreams. In the last was a woman's black satin hair-bow, which halted him, poised between ice and fire. But the black satin hair-bow also is femininity's demure, impersonal, common ornament, and tells no tales.

And then he traversed the room like a hound on the scent, skimming the walls, considering the corners of the bulging matting on his hands and knees, rummaging mantel and tables, the curtains and hangings, the drunken cabinet in the corner, for a visible sign, unable to perceive that she was there beside, around, against, within, above him, clinging to him, wooing him, calling him so poignantly through the finer senses that even his grosser ones became cognisant of the call. Once again he answered loudly: "Yes, dear!" and turned, wild-eyed, to gaze on vacancy, for he could not yet discern form and colour and love and outstretched arms in the odour of mignonette. Oh, God! whence that odour, and since when have odours had a voice to call? Thus he groped.

He burrowed in crevices and corners, and found corks and cigarettes. These he passed in passive contempt. But once he found in a fold of the matting a half-smoked cigar, and this he ground beneath his heel with a green and trenchant oath. He sifted the room from end to end. He found dreary and ignoble small records of many a peripatetic tenant; but of her whom he sought, and who may have lodged there, and whose spirit seemed to hover there, he found no trace.

And then he thought of the housekeeper.

He ran from the haunted room downstairs and to a door that showed a crack of light. She came out to his knock. He smothered his excitement as best he could.

"Will you tell me, madam," he besought her, "who occupied the room I have before I came?"

"Yes, sir. I can tell you again. 'Twas Sprowls and Mooney, as I said. Miss B'retta Sprowls it was in the theatres, but Missis Mooney she was. My house is well known for respectability. The marriage certificate hung, framed, on a nail over——"

"What kind of a lady was Miss Sprowls—in looks, I mean?"

"Why, black-haired, sir, short, and stout, with a comical face. They left a week ago Tuesday."

"And before they occupied it?"

"Why, there was a single gentleman connected with the draying business. He left owing me a week. Before him was Missis Crowder and her two children, that stayed four months; and back of them was old Mr. Doyle, whose sons paid for him. He kept the room six months. That goes back a year, sir, and further I do not remember."

He thanked her and crept back to his room. The room was dead. The essence that had vivified it was gone. The perfume of mignonette had departed. In its place was the old, stale odour of mouldy house furniture, of atmosphere in storage.

The ebbing of his hope drained his faith. He sat staring at the yellow, singing gaslight. Soon he walked to the bed and began to tear the sheets into strips. With the blade of his knife he drove them tightly into every crevice around windows and door. When all was snug and taut he turned out the light, turned the gas full on again, and laid himself gratefully upon the bed.

. . . . .

It was Mrs. McCool's night to go with the can for beer. So she fetched it and sat with Mrs. Purdy in one of those subterranean retreats where housekeepers foregather and the worm dieth seldom.

"I rented out my third floor, back, this evening," said Mrs. Purdy across a fine circle of foam. "A young man took it. He went up to bed two hours ago."

"Now, did ye, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am?" said Mrs. McCool, with intense admiration. "You do be a wonder for rentin' rooms of that kind. And did ye tell him, then?" she concluded in a husky whisper, laden with mystery.

"Rooms," said Mrs. Purdy, in her furriest tones, "are furnished for to rent. I did not tell him, Mrs McCool."

" 'Tis right ye are, ma'am; 'tis by renting rooms we kape alive. Ye have the rale sense for business, ma'am. There be many people will rayjict the rentin' of a room

37 peripatetic, walking about, itinerant • 77 worm dieth seldom, a humorous adaptation of Mark 9:44: "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The Biblical worm of remorse becomes a symbol of thirst which is seldom "quenched."

if they be tould a suicide has been after dyin' in the bed of it."

"As you say, we has our living to be making," remarked Mrs. Purdy.

"Yis, ma'am; 'tis true. 'Tis just one wake ago this day I helped ye lay out the third floor, back A pretty slip of a colleen she was to be killin' herself wid the gas—a swate little face she had, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am."

"She'd a-been called handsome, as you say," said Mrs. Purdy, assenting but critical, "but for that mole she had a-growin' by her left eyebrow. Do fill up your glass again, Mrs. McCool."

1909

CLEMENS



Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain)

1835 • 1910

Perhaps the happiest circumstance in Samuel Langhorne Clemens' life, as far as rich material for literature was concerned, was that he spent his boyhood years in Hannibal, Missouri. Just about in the center of the United States, this little town had the mile-wide Mississippi rolling before it, and on the other sides were countryside, prairie, and forest. The river, the farm, and the out-of-doors of his boyhood were part and parcel not only of Clemens' life but also of his great books.

A life full of wide experience preceded and included his career as an author. In turn a printer's devil, journeyman printer, steamboat pilot, soldier, miner, newspaper reporter, traveling correspondent, lecturer, author, editor, and publisher, he had enough "careers" to give several authors materials for books

Panel (l. to r.) Clemens' boyhood home, Hannibal, Missouri—"and the mile-wide Mississippi rolling before it" • Samuel Clemens at 50 • His study at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York

Clemens became a printer's apprentice during his boyhood in Hannibal. Having learned to set type, he wandered eastward as far as New York, picking up printing jobs in one city after another. Then, back in the Middle West in the fifties, he learned the pilot's trade and spent some of his happiest years steering boats up and down the Mississippi. (When, later, he adopted a pseudonym, it was an expression used by steamboatmen when testing the depth of the channel.) The job of piloting lasted through the boom days of river trade which were cut off by the Civil War. In 1861, after brief service in the Confederate army, he went out to the Far West. There, he took some fliers in mining stock, did some prospecting, and finally got into journalism of the masculine humorous sort which flourished in the Far West.

The journalistic work, in Nevada and California, launched him on his career as a humorist. Pieces he had written in the Far West were printed in the East, and one of his tales, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," first heard in a mining camp, won national acclaim in 1865. Travel letters about a trip to Europe and the Holy Land, published in newspapers in 1867 and put into book form as *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), established him as an outstandingly popular humorist. *Roughing It* (1872), *The Gilded Age* (in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner, 1873), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *A Tramp Abroad* (1880), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) were all widely purchased. The success of various books made work other than writing unnecessary, but Clemens, a son of the boomtime frontier who had a love for speculation and a childlike reverence for wealth, tried to swell a generous income by making investments. Having invested some of his royalties from his first popular book in a Buffalo newspaper, Clemens was an editor for a time. He financed many inventions and get-rich schemes, and eventually set up as a large-scale publisher of books —his own as well as those by other authors.

In Buffalo and Hartford, abroad and in New York, he lived lavishly on his excellent income. His Hartford mansion, for instance, was a massive, showy structure incorporating a number of costly features, and his monthly expenditures for living and entertaining were huge. In 1893, when the author-businessman was fifty-eight, some important financial investments proved unwise, his publishing house failed, and he faced financial ruin. Refusing to accept bankruptcy, he paid off his debts dollar for dollar, earning enough to do so by making a lecture trip around the world and by publishing *Tom Sawyer Abroad* and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894), *Joan of Arc* (1896), and *Following the Equator* (1897). His last great books, published posthumously, were *The Mysterious Stranger* (1916), and his *Autobiography* (1924, 1940).

In all of Twain's writings, his personality was an important element. Those who knew the humorist best emphasize the fact that his character had extraordinarily varied facets. Olivia Langdon, whom he married in 1870, loved him not only for his chivalry and his tenderness, but also for his tendency, freely indulged, to tease her and the children unmercifully. Close associates saw him, on alternate visits, as an outrageous prankster and a gloomy pessimist. Surprisingly, his intimate friend, Howells, thought that a certain delicacy was an intrinsic trait. "Among the half-dozen . . . personalities that each of us becomes," Howells wrote, "I should say that Clemens's central and final personality was something exquisite. His casual acquaintances might know him, perhaps, from his fierce intensity, his wild pleasure in shocking people . . . as anything but exquisite, and yet that was what in the last analysis he was. . . . One could not know him well without realizing him the most serious, the most humane, the most conscientious of men."

The first works by Twain to attract national attention—"The Jumping Frog" and *Innocents Abroad*—represented two aspects of his work. The former was a tall tale much like those Sam Clemens, as a boyish printer's devil, had seen in newspapers or had heard told in yarnspinning sessions. Its affiliations with "The Big Bear" or other Southwestern tall tales are obvious. A large share of *Innocents Abroad* was popular humor similar, in important ways, to the kind of humor which had been flourishing when Clemens had set up as a humorist—the humor of such professional "Funny Men" as Artemus Ward and Josh Billings. After he had hit upon his mature technique, the two methods—that of the old Southwestern humorists and that of the funny men—were intermingled in most of his writings. The

travel books, for example, increasingly gained in variety and interest by alternating literary-comedian material with anecdotes.

When, in his fiction, the training Twain had had as a professional humorist caused him to mingle buffoonery and burlesque with materials inhospitable to the broadest comedy, his writings tended to suffer from unevenness of tone. His masterpiece, *Huckleberry Finn,* for instance, particularly in the chapters concerning the rescue of Jim, contained passages of broad humor and parody which frequently clashed in tone with the style of the long oral tale used throughout the volume. But this book, like others which showed him at his best, triumphed over such faults. It triumphed, for one thing, because, taking a hint from local colorists of the day, and recalling his varied past, Clemens freighted his pages with vivid regional details which were instinct with life. Moreover, although he was as contemptuous of poetry as Shakespeare's rough soldier Hotspur, like Hotspur, Clemens was an interesting combination of masculinity and poetic sensibility, and his style revealed both qualities. More than any other classic fictionist he wrote the American language, but he also manifested a knack —comparable to the skill of the best poets—for finding the best words to represent scenes, actions, and emotions. In addition, he had genius for creating memorable characters like Colonel Sellers, Tom Sawyer, Huck, and Huck's Pappy, and for breathing the breath of life into them.

Clemens thought that another thing that helped him survive other humorists was the philosophy he expressed in his writings. "Philosophy" is too highfalutin a word, perhaps, for the notions, hunches, and prejudices which this emotional and often cantankerous individual expressed in his books. Yet the attitudes of this highly American author give his writings an element of interest over and above that supplied by their artistry and the peculiar quirks of his own personality. He reveals the nostalgia for the old America, the distrust of religion, the zeal for political and social reform, and the pessimism which were being voiced by other authors, particularly in the period from 1865 to 1900.

All these qualities have helped Twain overcome the handicap any American author must overcome if he starts writing what his countrymen are likely to call "mere humor." Although critics still now and then reach up to pat him condescendingly on the head, it now seems reasonably certain that Mark Twain will grow in stature with the passage of time. Increasingly, Clemens' countrymen appreciate the charm of his personality, the breadth and depth of his richly native experiences, the unostentatious artistry revealed by his best writings. More and more, Americans are agreeing with Howells' estimate of him as "sole and incomparable, the Lincoln of our literature."

Writings of Mark Twain, 25 vols., New York, 1904-1907 • A. B. Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography, 3 vols., New York, 1912 • W. D. Howells, My Mark Twain, New York, 1910 • Bernard De Voto, Mark Twain's America, Boston, 1932

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

On December 4, 1864, Clemens arrived for a visit at Jim Gillis' cabin on Jackass Hill, in the Tuolumne district. On pleasant days, Clemens worked at pocket mining. On rainy days the author, Gillis, and neighboring miners sat around the stove in the dilapidated tavern at Angel's Camp and told stories. One afternoon Ben Coon, a former Illinois river pilot, spun a yarn which had been going the rounds of the camps and the newspapers—the one about the jumping frog.

In time the humorist told the story to his friend, Artemus Ward. Ward, liking it, asked him to write it out for use in a forthcoming book, **Artemus Ward's Travels.** Arriving too late for inclusion in the volume, it was printed, instead, in the **Saturday Press,** November 18, 1865. The piece, an immediate hit, was reprinted in newspapers throughout the country.

The teller of the tale at Angel's Camp, Clemens said later, "was entirely serious, for he was dealing with what for him were austere facts; . . . he saw no humor in the tale, neither did his listeners; neither he nor they ever smiled or laughed; in my time I have not attended a more solemn conference." In writing his own version,

Clemens perhaps tried to reproduce the ludicrous elements in this scene by having humorless Simon Wheeler tell his comic narrative to an equally humorless, painfully bored listener. Based on an oral narrative, the tale in many ways —especially in its "humanization" of animals—shows its relationship to the frontier humor which the humorist had enjoyed as a boy.

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend's friend, *Leonidas W.* Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append the result. I have a lurking suspicion that *Leonidas W.* Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous *Jim* Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some exasperating reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless to me. If that was the design, it succeeded.

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the dilapidated tavern in the decayed mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance. He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about a cherished companion of his boyhood named *Leonidas W.* Smiley—*Rev. Leonidas W.* Smiley—a young minister of the Gospel, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel's Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me anything about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was anything ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in *finesse.* I let him go on in his own way, and never interrupted him once:

"Rev. Leonidas W. H'm, Reverend Le—well, there was a feller here once by the name of *Jim* Smiley, in the winter of '49—or may be it was the spring of '50—I don't recollect exactly, somehow, though what makes me think it was one or the other is because I remember the big flume wasn't finished when he first came to the camp; but any way, he was the curiosest man about always betting on any thing that turned up you ever see, if he could get any body to bet on the other side; and if he couldn't, he'd change sides. Any way that suited the other man would suit him—any way just so's he got a bet, *he* was satisfied. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner. He was always ready and laying for a chance; there couldn't be no solit'ry thing mentioned but that feller'd offer to bet on it, and take any side you please, as I was just telling you. If there was a horse-race, you'd find him flush, or you'd find him busted at the end of it; if there was a dog-fight, he'd bet on it, if there was a cat-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a chicken-fight, he'd bet on it; why, if there was two birds setting on a fence, he would bet you which one would fly first; or if there was a camp-meeting, he would be there reg'lar, to bet on Parson Walker, which he judged to be the best exhorter about there, and so he was, too, and a good man. If he even seen a straddle-bug start to go anywheres, he would bet you how long it would take him to get wherever he was going to, and if you took him up, he would foller that straddle-bug to Mexico but what he would find out where he was bound for and how long he was on the road. Lots of the boys here has seen that Smiley, and can tell you about him. Why, it never made no difference to *him*—he would bet on *any* thing—the dangdest feller. Parson Walker's wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they warn't going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley asked how she was, and he said she was considerable better—thank the Lord for his inf'nite mercy—and coming on so smart that, with the blessing of Prov'dence, she'd get well yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, "Well, I'll resk two-and-a-half that she don't, anyway."

Thish-yer Smiley had a mare—the boys called her the fifteen-minute nag, but that was only in fun, you

know, because, of course, she was faster than that—and he used to win money on that horse, for all she was so slow and always had the asthma, or the distemper, or the consumption, or something of that kind. They used to give her two or three hundred yards start, and then pass her under way, but always at the fag-end of the race she'd get excited and desperate-like, and come cavorting and straddling up, and scattering her legs around limber, sometimes in the air, and sometimes out to one side amongst the fences, and kicking up m-o-r-e dust, and raising m-o-r-e racket with her coughing and sneezing and blowing her nose—and always fetch up at the stand just about a neck ahead, as near as you could cipher it down.

And he had a little small bull pup, that to look at him you'd think he wa'nt worth a cent, but to set around and look ornery, and lay for a chance to steal something. But as soon as money was up on him, he was a different dog; his under-jaw'd begin to stick out like the fo'castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover, and shine savage like the furnaces And a dog might tackle him, and bully-rag him, and bite him, and throw him over his shoulder two or three times, and Andrew Jackson—which was the name of the pup—Andrew Jackson would never let on but what *he* was satisfied, and hadn't expected nothing else—and the bets being doubled and doubled on the other side all the time, till the money was all up, and then all of a sudden he would grab that other dog jest by the j'int of his hind leg and freeze to it—not chaw, you understand, but only jest grip and hang on till they throwed up the sponge, if it was a year. Smiley always come out winner on that pup, till he harnessed a dog once that didn't have no hind legs, because they'd been sawed off by a circular saw, and when the thing had gone along far enough, and the money was all up, and he come to make a snatch for his pet holt, he saw in a minute how he'd been imposed on, and how the other dog had him in the door, so to speak, and he 'peared surprised, and then he looked sorter discouraged-like, and didn't try no more to win the fight, and so he got shucked out bad. He give Smiley a look, as much as to say his heart was broke, and it was *his* fault, for putting up a dog that hadn't no hind legs for him to take holt of, which was his main dependence in a fight, and then he limped off a piece and laid down and died. It was a good pup, was that Andrew Jackson, and would have made a name for hisself if he'd lived, for the stuff was in him, and he had genius—I know it, because he hadn't had no opportunities to speak of, and it don't stand to reason that a dog could make such a fight as he could under them circumstances, if he hadn't no talent. It always makes me feel sorry when I think of that last fight of his'n, and the way it turned out.

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, and chicken cocks, and tom-cats, and all them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he calk'lated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet he *did* learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut—see him turn one summerset, or may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most anything—and I believe him. Why, I've seen him set Dan'l Webster down here on this floor—Dan'l Webster was the name of the frog—and sing out, "Flies, Dan'l, flies!" and quicker'n you could wink, he'd spring straight up, and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor again as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn't no idea he'd been doin' any more'n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightfor'ard as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it come to that, Smiley would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywheres, all said he laid over any frog that ever *they* see.

Well, Smiley kept the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was —come across him with his box, and says:

"What might it be that you've got in the box?"

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent like, "It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, may be, but it ain't—it's only just a frog."

And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, "H'm—so 'tis. Well, what's *he* good for?"

"Well," Smiley says, easy and careless, "he's good enough for *one* thing, I should judge—he can outjump ary frog in Calaveras county."

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, "Well, I don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

"May be you don't," Smiley says. "May be you understand frogs, and maybe you don't understand 'em; may be you've had experience, and may be you ain't only a amature, as it were. Anyways I've got *my* opinion, and I'll risk forty dollars he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, "Well, I'm only a stranger here, and I ain't got no frog; but if I had a frog, I'd bet you."

And then Smiley says, "That's all right—that's all right—if you'll hold my box a minute, I'll go and get you a frog." And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley's, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a teaspoon and filled him full of quail shot—filled him pretty near up to his chin—and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketched a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

"Now, if you're ready, set him alongside of Dan'l, with his fore-paws just even with Dan'l, and I'll give the word." Then he says, "One—two—three—jump!" and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off, but Dan'l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders—so—like a Frenchman, but it wan't no use—he couldn't budge; he was planted as solid as an anvil, and he couldn't no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted too, but he didn't have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb



"'—he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow!'"

over his shoulders—this way—at Dan'l, and says again, very deliberate, "Well, *I* don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan'l a long time, and at last he says, "I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw'd off for—I wonder if there ain't something the matter with him—he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow." And he ketched Dan'l by the nap of the neck, and lifted him up and says, "Why, blame my cats, if he don't weigh five pound!" and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man—he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketched him. And—

(Here Simon Wheeler heard his name called from the front yard, and got up to see what was wanted.) And turning to me as he moved away, he said: "Just set where you are, stranger, and rest easy—I ain't going to be gone a second."

But, by your leave, I did not think that a continuation of the history of the enterprising vagabond *Jim* Smiley would be likely to afford me much information concerning the *Rev. Leonidas W.* Smiley, and so I started away.

At the door I met the sociable Wheeler returning, and he buttonholed me and recommenced:

"Well, thish-yer Smiley had a yaller one-eyed cow that didn't have no tail, only jest a short stump like a bannanner, and—"

"Oh! hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!" I muttered, good-naturedly, and bidding the old gentleman good-day, I departed.

1865

From

The Innocents Abroad

With a band of nineteenth-century pilgrims, Clemens made a trip abroad between June 8 and November 19, 1867. During the journey he sent accounts from various stopping places to some American newspapers. These accounts, which had been well liked by readers, were revised and published in the book The Innocents Abroad in 1869. Within a year, some sixty-seven thousand copies were sold. The humorist's fame was established.

The book, as its Preface proclaimed, had as its purpose "to suggest to the reader how he would be likely to see Europe and the East if he looked at them with his own eyes instead of the eyes of those who traveled in those countries before him." Previous travelers, guidebooks in hand, had been overawed by the antiquity and the romance of the Old World; this author was determined to judge for himself. The passage which follows was among the most admired in the book. In it, the naive tourists were satirized. "The Old Masters," perhaps the most famous chapter in the volume, shows Clemens writing as a sensible man, sickened by the ecstasies and idiocies of tourists who depend upon guidebooks to suggest how they shall react to works of art. The way Clemens built up his devastating attack on "The Last Supper," after an ingratiating start, offers an interesting study in rhetorical method. Elsewhere in the book, he wrote as if he himself were a sentimental, credulous traveler, believing everything he was told—no matter how preposterous—and trying to pump up appropriate emotions for the occasion. (The title has been inserted by the editors.)

Chapter XIX
THE OLD MASTERS

Here, in Milan, in an ancient tumble-down ruin of a church, is the mournful wreck of the most celebrated painting in the world—"The Last Supper," by Leonardo da Vinci. We are not infallible judges of pictures, but of course we went there to see this wonderful painting, once so beautiful, always so worshipped by masters in art, and forever to be famous in song and story. And the first thing that occurred was the infliction on us of a placard fairly reeking with wretched English. Take a morsel of it:

> "Bartholomew (that is the first figure on the left hand side at the spectator), uncertain and doubtful about what he thinks to have heard, and upon which he wants to be assured by himself at Christ and by no others."

Good, isn't it? And then Peter is described as "argumenting in a threatening and angrily condition at Judas Iscariot."

This paragraph recalls the picture. "The Last Supper" is painted on the dilapidated wall of what was a little chapel attached to the main church in ancient times, I suppose. It is battered and scarred in every direction, and stained and discolored by time, and Napoleon's horses kicked the legs off most the disciples when they (the horses, not the disciples,) were stabled there more than a half century ago.

I recognized the old picture in a moment—the Saviour with bowed head seated at the centre of a long, rough table with scattering fruits and dishes upon it, and six disciples on either side in their long robes, talking to each other—the picture from which all engravings and all copies have been made for three centuries. Perhaps no living man has ever known an attempt to paint the Lord's Supper differently. The world seems to have become settled in the belief, long ago, that it is not possible for human genius to outdo this creation of Da Vinci's. I suppose painters will go on copying it as long as any of the original is left visible to the eye. There were a dozen easels in the room, and as many artists transferring the great picture to their canvases. Fifty proofs of steel engravings and lithographs were scattered around, too. And as usual, I could not help noticing how superior the copies were to the original, that is, to my inexperienced eye Wherever you find a Raphael, a Rubens, a Michael Angelo, a Caracci, or a Da Vinci (and we see them every day,) you find artists copying them, and the copies are always the handsomest. Maybe the originals were handsome when they were new, but they are not now

This picture is about thirty feet long, and ten or twelve high, I should think, and the figures are at least life size. It is one of the largest paintings in Europe.

The colors are dimmed with age, the countenances are scaled and marred, and nearly all expression is gone from them; the hair is a dead blur upon the wall, and

there is no life in the eyes. Only the attitudes are certain.

People come here from all parts of the world, and glorify this masterpiece. They stand entranced before it with bated breath and parted lips, and when they speak, it is only in the catchy ejaculations of rapture:

"O, wonderful!"

"Such expression!"

"Such grace of attitude!"

"Such dignity!"

"Such faultless drawing!"

"Such matchless coloring!"

"Such feeling!"

"What delicacy of touch!"

"What sublimity of conception!"

"A vision! A vision!"

I only envy those people; I envy them their honest admiration, if it be honest—their delight, if they feel delight. I harbor no animosity toward any of them. But at the same time the thought *will* intrude itself upon me, how can they see what is not visible? What would you think of a man who looked at some decayed, blind, toothless, pock-marked Cleopatra, and said: "What matchless beauty! What soul! What expression!" What would you think of a man who gazed upon a dingy, foggy sunset, and said: "What sublimity! What feeling! What richness of coloring!" What would you think of a man who stared in ecstasy upon a desert of stumps and said: "Oh, my soul, my beating heart, what a noble forest is here!"

You would think that those men had an astonishing talent for seeing things that had already passed away. It was what I thought when I stood before the "Last Supper" and heard men apostrophizing wonders, and beauties and perfections which had faded out of the picture and gone, a hundred years before they were born. We can imagine the beauty that was once in an aged face; we can imagine the forest if we see the stumps; but we can not absolutely *see* these things when they are not there. I am willing to believe that the eye of the practiced artist can rest upon the "Last Supper" and renew a lustre where only a hint of it is left, supply a tint that has faded away, restore an expression that is gone; patch, and color, and add, to the dull canvas until at last its figures shall stand before him aglow with the life, the feelings, the freshness, yea, with all the noble beauty that was theirs when first they came from the hand of the master. But *I* can not work this miracle. Can those other uninspired visitors do it, or do they only happily imagine they do?

After reading so much about it, I am satisfied that the "Last Supper" was a very miracle of art once. But it was three hundred years ago.

It vexes me to hear people talk so glibly of "feeling," "expression," "tone," and those other easily acquired and inexpensive technicalities of art that make such a fine show in conversations concerning pictures. There is not one man in seventy-five hundred that can tell what a pictured face is intended to express. There is not one man in five hundred that can go into a court-room and be sure that he will not mistake some harmless innocent of a juryman for the black-hearted assassin on trial. Yet such people talk of "character" and presume to interpret "expression" in pictures. There is an old story that Matthews, the actor, was once lauding the ability of the human face to express the passions and emotions hidden in the breast. He said the countenance could disclose what was passing in the heart plainer than the tongue could.

"Now," he said, "observe my face—what does it express?"

"Despair!"

"Bah, it expresses peaceful resignation! What does *this* express?"

"Rage!"

"Stuff! it means terror! This!"

"Imbecility!"

"Fool! It is smothered ferocity! Now *this!*"

"Joy!"

"Oh, perdition! *Any* ass can see it means insanity!"

Expression! People coolly pretend to read it who would think themselves presumptuous if they pretended to interpret the hieroglyphics on the obelisks of Luxor—yet they are fully as competent to do the one thing as the other. I have heard two very intelligent critics speak of Murillo's Immaculate Conception (now in the museum at Seville) within the past few days. One said

"Oh, the Virgin's face is full of the ecstasy of a joy that is complete—that leaves nothing more to be desired on earth!"

The other said:

"Ah, that wonderful face is so humble, so pleading— it says as plainly as words could say it 'I fear; I tremble; I am unworthy. But Thy will be done; sustain Thou Thy servant!' "

The reader can see the picture in any drawing-room;

it can be easily recognized; the Virgin (the only young and really beautiful Virgin that was ever painted by one of the old masters, some of us think,) stands in the crescent of the new moon, with a multitude of cherubs hovering about her, and more coming, her hands are crossed upon her breast, and upon her uplifted countenance falls a glory out of the heavens. The reader may amuse himself, if he chooses, in trying to determine which of these gentlemen read the Virgin's "expression" aright, or if either of them did it.

Any one who is acquainted with the old masters will comprehend how much the Last Supper is damaged when I say that the spectator can not really tell, now, whether the disciples are Hebrews or Italians. These ancient painters never succeeded in denationalizing themselves. The Italian artists painted Italian Virgins, the Dutch painted Dutch Virgins, the Virgins of the French painters were Frenchwomen—none of them ever put into the face of the Madonna that indescribable something which proclaims the Jewess, whether you find her in New York, in Constantinople, in Paris, Jerusalem, or in the Empire or Morocco. I saw in the Sandwich Islands, once, a picture, copied by a talented German artist from an engraving in one of the American illustrated papers. It was an allegory, representing Mr. Davis in the act of signing a secession act or some such document. Over him hovered the ghost of Washington in warning attitude, and in the background a troop of shadowy soldiers in Continental uniform were limping with shoeless, bandaged feet through a driving snow-storm. Valley Forge was suggested, of course. The copy seemed accurate, and yet there was a discrepancy somewhere. After a long examination I discovered what it was—the shadowy soldiers were all Germans! Jeff Davis was a German! Even the hovering ghost was a German ghost! The artist had unconsciously worked his nationality into the picture. To tell the truth, I am getting a little perplexed about John the Baptist and his portraits. In France I finally grew reconciled to him as a Frenchman; here he is unquestionably an Italian. What next? Can it be possible that the painters make John the Baptist a Spaniard in Madrid and an Irishman in Dublin?

1869

25 Mr. Davis, Jefferson Davis (1808-1889), president of the Confederate States of America

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From

Roughing It

Published in 1871, Roughing It, for its subject matter, went back a few years in Clemens' life to the period when he had gone to the Far West. Informatively and amusingly, he recounted his journey across country and his Western adventures. The following chapter shows how the author, by alternating exposition and description with humorous anecdotes, secured variety.

Chapter III

JACKASS RABBITS AND SAGEBRUSH

About an hour and a half before daylight we were bowling along smoothly over the road—so smoothly that our cradle only rocked in a gentle, lulling way, that was gradually soothing us to sleep, and dulling our consciousness—when something gave away under us! We were dimly aware of it, but indifferent to it. The coach stopped We heard the driver and conductor talking together outside, and rummaging for a lantern, and swearing because they could not find it—but we had no interest in whatever had happened, and it only added to our comfort to think of those people out there at work in the murky night, and we snug in our nest with the curtains drawn. But presently, by the sounds, there seemed to be an examination going on, and then the driver's voice said:

"By George, the thoroughbrace is broke!"

This startled me broad awake—as an undefined sense of calamity is always apt to do. I said to myself: "Now, a thoroughbrace is probably part of a horse; and doubtless a vital part, too, from the dismay in the driver's voice. Leg, maybe—and yet how could he break his leg waltzing along such a road as this? No, it can't be his leg That is impossible, unless he was reaching for the driver. Now, what can be the thoroughbrace of a horse, I wonder? Well, whatever comes, I shall not air my ignorance in this crowd, anyway."

Just then the conductor's face appeared at a lifted curtain, and his lantern glared in on us and our wall of

mail matter. He said:

"Gents, you'll have to turn out a spell. Thoroughbrace is broke."

We climbed out into a chill drizzle, and felt ever so homeless and dreary. When I found that the thing they called a "Thoroughbrace" was the massive combination of bolts and springs which the coach rocks itself in, I said to the driver:

"I never saw a thoroughbrace used up like that, before, that I can remember How did it happen?"

"Why, it happened by trying to make one coach carry three days' mail—that's how it happened," said he. "And right here is the very direction which is wrote on all the newspaper-bags which was to be put out for the Injuns for to keep 'em quiet. It's most uncommon lucky, becuz it's so nation dark I should 'a' gone by unbeknowns if that air thoroughbrace hadn't broke."

I knew that he was in labor with another of those winks of his, though I could not see his face, because he was bent down at work; and wishing him a safe delivery, I turned to and helped the rest get out the mail-sacks. It made a great pyramid by the roadside when it was all out. When they had mended the thoroughbrace we filled the two boots again, but put no mail on top, and only half as much inside as there was before. The conductor bent all the seats back down, and then filled the coach just half full of mail-bags from end to end. We objected loudly to this, for it left us no seats. But the conductor was wiser than we, and said a bed was better than seats, and, moreover, this plan would protect his thoroughbraces. We never wanted any seats after that. The lazy bed was infinitely preferable. I had many an exciting day, subsequently, lying on it reading the statutes and the dictionary, and wondering how the characters would turn out.

The conductor said he would send back a guard from the next station to take charge of the abandoned mail-bags, and we drove on.

It was now just dawn, and as we stretched our cramped legs full length on the mail sacks, and gazed out through the windows across the wide wastes of greensward clad in cool, powdery mist, to where there was an expectant look in the eastern horizon, our perfect enjoyment took the form of a tranquil and contented ecstasy. The stage whirled along at a spanking gait, the breeze flapping curtains and suspended coats in a most exhilarating way; the cradle swayed and swung luxuriously, the pattering of the horses' hoofs, the cracking of the driver's whip, and his "Hi-yi! g'lang!" were music; the spinning ground and the waltzing trees appeared to give us a mute hurrah as we went by, and then slack up and look after us with interest, or envy, or something; and as we lay and smoked the pipe of peace and compared all this luxury with the years of tiresome city life that had gone before it, we felt that there was only one complete and satisfying happiness in the world, and we had found it.

After breakfast, at some station whose name I have forgotten, we three climbed up on the seat behind the driver, and let the conductor have our bed for a nap. And by and by, when the sun made me drowsy, I lay down on my face on top of the coach, grasping the slender iron railing, and slept for an hour more. That will give one an appreciable idea of those matchless roads Instinct will make a sleeping man grip a fast hold of the railing when the stage jolts, but when it only swings and sways, no grip is necessary. Overland drivers and conductors used to sit in their places and sleep thirty or forty minutes at a time, on good roads, while spinning along at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour. I saw them do it, often. There was no danger about it; a sleeping man *will* seize the irons in time when the coach jolts. These men were hard worked, and it was not possible for them to stay awake all the time.

By and by we passed through Marysville, and over the Big Blue and Little Sandy thence about a mile, and entered Nebraska. About a mile further on, we came to the Big Sandy—one hundred and eighty miles from St. Joseph.

As the sun was going down, we saw the first specimen of an animal known familiarly over two thousand miles of mountain and desert—from Kansas clear to the Pacific Ocean—as the "jackass rabbit." He is well named. He is just like any other rabbit, except that he is from one-third to twice as large, has longer legs in proportion to his size, and has the most preposterous ears that ever were mounted on any creature *but* a jackass. When he is sitting quiet, thinking about his sins, or is absent-minded or unapprehensive of danger, his majestic ears project above him conspicuously; but the breaking of a twig will scare him nearly to death, and then he tilts his ears back gently and starts for home. All you can see, then, for the next minute, is his long gray form stretched out straight and "streaking it" through the low sage-brush, head erect, eyes right, and ears just canted a little to the rear, but

showing you where the animal is, all the time, the same as if he carried a jib. Now and then he makes a marvelous spring with his long legs, high over the stunted sage-brush, and scores a leap that would make a horse envious. Presently, he comes down to a long, graceful "lope," and shortly he mysteriously disappears. He has crouched behind a sage-brush, and will sit there and listen and tremble until you get within six feet of him, when he will get under way again. But one must shoot at this creature once, if he wishes to see him throw his heart into his heels, and do the best he knows how. He is frightened clear through, now, and he lays his long ears down on his back, straightens himself out like a yard-stick every spring he makes, and scatters miles behind him with an easy indifference that is enchanting.

Our party made this specimen "hump himself," as the conductor said. The Secretary started him with a shot from the Colt; I commenced spitting at him with my weapon; and all in the same instant the old "Allen's" whole broadside let go with a rattling crash, and it is not putting it too strong to say that the rabbit was frantic! He dropped his ears, set up his tail, and left for San Francisco at a speed which can only be described as a flash and a vanish! Long after he was out of sight we could hear him whiz.

I do not remember where we first came across "sage-brush," but as I have been speaking of it I may as well describe it. This is easily done, for if the reader can imagine a gnarled and venerable live oak tree reduced to a little shrub two feet high, with its rough bark, its foliage, its twisted boughs, all complete, he can picture the "sage-brush" exactly. Often, on lazy afternoons in the mountains I have lain on the ground with my face under a sage-brush, and entertained myself with fancying that the gnats among its foliage were lilliputian birds, and that the ants marching and countermarching about its base were lilliputian flocks and herds, and myself some vast loafer from Brobdingnag waiting to catch a little citizen and eat him.

It is an imposing monarch of the forest in exquisite miniature, is the "sage-brush." Its foliage is a grayish green, and gives that tint to desert and mountain. It smells like our domestic sage, and "sage-tea" made from it tastes like the sage-tea which all boys are so well acquainted with. The sage-brush is a singularly hardy plant, and grows right in the midst of deep sand, and among barren rocks, where nothing else in the vegetable world would try to grow, except "bunch-grass." The sage-bushes grow from three to six or seven feet apart, all over the mountains and deserts of the Far West, clear to the borders of California. There is not a tree of any kind in the deserts, for hundreds of miles—there is no vegetation at all in a regular desert, except the sage-brush and its cousin the "greasewood," which is so much like the sage-brush that the difference amounts to little. Camp-fires and hot suppers in the deserts would be impossible but for the friendly sage-brush. Its trunk is as large as a boy's wrist (and from that up to a man's arm), and its crooked branches are half as large as its trunk—all good, sound, hard wood, very like oak.

When a party camps, the first thing to be done is to cut sage-brush; and in a few minutes there is an opulent pile of it ready for use. A hole a foot wide, two feet deep, and two feet long, is dug, and sage-brush chopped up and burned in it till it is full to the brim with glowing coals, then the cooking begins, and there is no smoke, and consequently no swearing. Such a fire will keep all night, with very little replenishing, and it makes a very sociable camp-fire, and one around which the most impossible reminiscences sound plausible, instructive, and profoundly entertaining.

Sage-brush is very fair fuel, but as a vegetable it is a distinguished failure. Nothing can abide the taste of it but the jackass and his illegitimate child, the mule. But their testimony to its nutritiousness is worth nothing, for they will eat pine knots, or anthracite coal, or brass filings, or lead pipe, or old bottles, or anything that comes handy, and then go off looking as grateful as if they had had oysters for dinner Mules and donkeys and camels have appetites that anything will relieve temporarily, but nothing satisfy. In Syria, once, at the headwaters of the Jordan, a camel took charge of my overcoat while the tents were being pitched, and examined it with a critical eye, all over, with as much interest as if he had an idea of getting one made like it; and then, after he was done figuring on it as an article of apparel, he began to contemplate it as an article of diet He put his foot on it, and lifted one of the sleeves out with his teeth, and chewed and chewed at it, gradually taking it in, and all the while opening and closing his eyes in a kind of religious ecstasy, as if he had never tasted anything as good as an overcoat before in his life. Then he smacked his lips once or twice, and reached after the other sleeve. Next he tried the velvet collar, and smiled

a smile of such contentment that it was plain to see that he regarded that as the daintiest thing about an overcoat. The tails went next, along with some percussion caps and cough candy, and some fig-paste from Constantinople. And then my newspaper correspondence dropped out, and he took a chance in that—manuscript letters written for the home papers. But he was treading on dangerous ground, now. He began to come across solid wisdom in those documents that was rather weighty on his stomach; and occasionally he would take a joke that would shake him up till it loosened his teeth; it was getting to be perilous times with him, but he held his grip with good courage and hopefully, till at last he began to stumble on statements that not even a camel could swallow with impunity. He began to gag and gasp, and his eyes to stand out, and his forelegs to spread, and in about a quarter of a minute he fell over as stiff as a carpenter's workbench, and died a death of indescribable agony. I went and pulled the manuscript out of his mouth, and found that the sensitive creature had choked to death on one of the mildest and gentlest statements of fact that I ever laid before a trusting public.

I was about to say, when diverted from my subject, that occasionally one finds sage-bushes five or six feet high, and with a spread of branch and foliage in proportion, but two or two and a half feet is the usual height.

1872

From

Old Times on the Mississippi

Out for a long walk in the woods with his friend the Rev. Joseph Twichell in 1874, Clemens got to reminiscing about "old Mississippi days of steamboating glory and grandeur as I saw them . . . from the pilot-house." "What a virgin subject to hurl into a magazine!" said Twichell. When Clemens wrote about the experience to his friend William Dean Howells, editor of the Atlantic, Howells urged him to write a series of reminiscences. "Old Times on the Mississippi" appeared in seven installments between January and July 1875. In 1883 the articles, augmented with new material, were published as Life on the Mississippi, in which "A Daring Deed" became Chapter VII and "Continued Perplexities" became Chapter IX.

The following passages are part of Clemens' account of his apprenticeship as a pilot. The first paragraph—a transitional paragraph—is omitted from "A Daring Deed."

A DARING DEED

The pilot-house was full of pilots, going down to "look at the river." What is called the "upper river" (the two hundred miles between St. Louis and Cairo, where the Ohio comes in) was low; and the Mississippi changes its channel so constantly that the pilots used to always find it necessary to run down to Cairo to take a fresh look, when their boats were to lie in port a week; that is, when the water was at a low stage. A deal of this "looking at the river" was done by poor fellows who seldom had a berth, and whose only hope of getting one lay in their being always freshly posted and therefore ready to drop into the shoes of some reputable pilot, for a single trip, on account of such pilot's sudden illness, or some other necessity. And a good many of them constantly ran up and down inspecting the river, not because they ever really hoped to get a berth, but because (they being guests of the boat) it was cheaper to "look at the river" than stay ashore and pay board. In time these fellows grew dainty in their tastes, and only infested boats that had an established reputation for setting good tables. All visiting pilots were useful, for they were always ready and willing, winter or summer, night or day, to go out in the yawl and help buoy the channel or assist the boat's pilots in any way they could. They were likewise welcomed because all pilots are tireless talkers, when gathered together, and as they talk only about the river they are always understood and are always interesting. Your true pilot cares nothing about anything on earth but the river, and his pride in his occupation surpasses the pride of kings.

We had a fine company of these river inspectors along this trip. There were eight or ten, and there was abundance of room for them in our great pilot-house. Two or three of them wore polished silk hats, elaborate shirtfronts, diamond breastpins, kid gloves, and patent-leather boots. They were choice in their English, and bore themselves with a dignity proper to men of solid

means and prodigious reputation as pilots. The others were more or less loosely clad, and wore upon their heads tall felt cones that were suggestive of the days of the Commonwealth.

I was a cipher in this august company, and felt subdued, not to say torpid. I was not even of sufficient consequence to assist at the wheel when it was necessary to put the tiller hard down in a hurry; the guest that stood nearest did that when occasion required—and this was pretty much all the time, because of the crookedness of the channel and the scant water. I stood in a corner; and the talk I listened to took the hope all out of me. One visitor said to another.

"Jim, how did you run Plum Point, coming up?"

"It was in the night, there, and I ran it the way one of the boys on the *Diana* told me; started out about fifty yards above the wood-pile on the false point, and held on the cabin under Plum Point till I raised the reef—quarter less twain—then straightened up for the middle bar till I got well abreast the old one-limbed cottonwood in the bend, then got my stern on the cottonwood, and head on the low place above the point, and came through a-booming—nine and a half."

"Pretty square crossing, an't it?"

"Yes, but the upper bar's working down fast."

Another pilot spoke up and said

"I had better water than that, and ran it lower down; started out from the false point—mark twain—raised the second reef abreast the big snag in the bend, and had quarter less twain."

One of the gorgeous ones remarked:

"I don't want to find fault with your leadsmen, but that's a good deal of water for Plum Point, it seems to me."

There was an approving nod all around as this quiet snub dropped on the boaster and "settled" him. And so they went on talk-talk-talking Meantime, the thing that was running in my mind was, "Now, if my ears hear aright, I have not only to get the names of all the towns and islands and bends, and so on, by heart, but I must even get up a warm personal acquaintanceship with every old snag and one-limbed cottonwood and obscure wood-pile that ornaments the banks of this river for twelve hundred miles; and more than that, I must actually know where these things are in the dark, unless these guests are gifted with eyes that can pierce through two miles of solid blackness. I wish the piloting business was in Jericho and I had never thought of it."

At dusk Mr. Bixby tapped the big bell three times (the signal to land), and the captain emerged from his drawing-room in the forward end of the "texas," and looked up inquiringly. Mr. Bixby said.

"We will lay up here all night, captain."

"Very well, sir."

That was all. The boat came to shore and was tied up for the night. It seemed to me a fine thing that the pilot could do as he pleased, without asking so grand a captain's permission. I took my supper and went immediately to bed, discouraged by my day's observations and experiences. My late voyage's note-booking was but a confusion of meaningless names It had tangled me all up in a knot every time I had looked at it in the daytime. I now hoped for respite in sleep, but no, it reveled all through my head till sunrise again, a frantic and tireless nightmare

Next morning I felt pretty rusty and low-spirited. We went booming along, taking a good many chances, for we were anxious to "get out of the river" (as getting out to Cairo was called) before night should overtake us But Mr. Bixby's partner, the other pilot, presently grounded the boat, and we lost so much time getting her off that it was plain the darkness would overtake us a good long way above the mouth. This was a great misfortune, especially to certain of our visiting pilots, whose boats would have to wait for their return, no matter how long that might be It sobered the pilot-house talk a good deal. Coming up-stream, pilots did not mind low water or any kind of darkness, nothing stopped them but fog. But down-stream work was different; a boat was too nearly helpless, with a stiff current pushing behind her; so it was not customary to run down-stream at night in low water.

There seemed to be one small hope, however: if we could get through the intricate and dangerous Hat Island crossing before night, we could venture the rest, for we would have plainer sailing and better water. But it would be insanity to attempt Hat Island at night. So there was a deal of looking at watches all the rest of the day, and a constant ciphering upon the speed we were making; Hat Island was the eternal subject, sometimes hope was high and sometimes we were delayed in a bad crossing, and down it went again. For hours all

hands lay under the burden of this suppressed excitement; it was even communicated to me, and I got to feeling so solicitous about Hat Island, and under such an awful pressure of responsibility, that I wished I might have five minutes on shore to draw a good, full, relieving breath, and start over again. We were standing no regular watches. Each of our pilots ran such portions of the river as he had run when coming upstream, because of his greater familiarity with it; but both remained in the pilot-house constantly.

An hour before sunset Mr. Bixby took the wheel, and Mr. W. stepped aside. For the next thirty minutes every man held his watch in his hand and was restless, silent, and uneasy. At last somebody said, with a doomful sigh:

"Well, yonder's Hat Island—and we can't make it."

All the watches closed with a snap, everybody sighed and muttered something about its being "too bad, too bad—ah, if we could *only* have got here half an hour sooner!" and the place was thick with the atmosphere of disappointment. Some started to go out, but loitered, hearing no bell-tap to land. The sun dipped behind the horizon, the boat went on. Inquiring looks passed from one guest to another; and one who had his hand on the door-knob and had turned it, waited, then presently took away his hand and let the knob turn back again. We bore steadily down the bend. More looks were exchanged, and nods of surprised admiration —but no words. Insensibly the men drew together behind Mr. Bixby, as the sky darkened and one or two dim stars came out. The dead silence and sense of waiting became oppressive. Mr Bixby pulled the cord, and two deep, mellow notes from the big bell floated off on the night. Then a pause, and one more note was struck. The watchman's voice followed, from the hurricane-deck:

"Labboard lead, there! Stabboard lead!"

The cries of the leadsmen began to rise out of the distance, and were gruffly repeated by the word-passers on the hurricane-deck.

"M-a-r-k three! M-a-r-k three! Quarter-less-three! Half twain! Quarter twain! M-a-r-k twain! Quarter-less—"

Mr. Bixby pulled two bell-ropes, and was answered by faint jinglings far below in the engine-room, and our speed slackened. The steam began to whistle through the gauge-cocks. The cries of the leadsmen went on—and it is a weird sound, always, in the night. Every pilot in the lot was watching now, with fixed eyes, and talking under his breath. Nobody was calm and easy but Mr. Bixby. He would put his wheel down and stand on a spoke, and as the steamer swung into her (to me) utterly invisible marks—for we seemed to be in the midst of a wide and gloomy sea—he would meet and fasten her there. Out of the murmur of half-audible talk, one caught a coherent sentence now and then—such as:

"There; she's over the first reef all right!"

After a pause, another subdued voice:

"Her stern's coming down just *exactly* right, by *George!*"

"Now she's in the marks; over she goes!"

Somebody else muttered:

"Oh, it was done beautiful—*beautiful!*"

Now the engines were stopped altogether, and we drifted with the current. Not that I could see the boat drift, for I could not, the stars being all gone by this time. This drifting was the dismalest work; it held one's heart still. Presently I discovered a blacker gloom than that which surrounded us. It was the head of the island. We were closing right down upon it. We entered its deeper shadow, and so imminent seemed the peril that I was likely to suffocate; and I had the strongest impulse to do *something,* anything, to save the vessel. But still Mr. Bixby stood by his wheel, silent, intent as a cat, and all the pilots stood shoulder to shoulder at his back.

"She'll not make it!" somebody whispered.

The water grew shoaler and shoaler, by the leadsman's cries, till it was down to:

"Eight-and-a-half! E-i-g-h-t feet! E-i-g-h-t feet! Seven-and—"

Mr. Bixby said warningly through his speaking-tube to the engineer:

"Stand by, now!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Seven-and-a-half! Seven feet! *Six*-and—"

We touched bottom! Instantly Mr. Bixby set a lot of bells ringing, shouted through the tube, *"Now,* let her have it—every ounce you've got!" then to his partner, "Put her hard down! snatch her! snatch her!" The boat rasped and ground her way through the sand, hung upon the apex of disaster a single tremendous instant,

and then over she went! And such a shout as went up at Mr. Bixby's back never loosened the roof of a pilot-house before!

There was no more trouble after that. Mr. Bixby was a hero that night; and it was some little time, too, before his exploit ceased to be talked about by river-men.

Fully to realize the marvelous precision required in laying the great steamer in her marks in that murky waste of water, one should know that not only must she pick her intricate way through snags and blind reefs, and then shave the head of the island so closely as to brush the overhanging foliage with her stern, but at one place she must pass almost within arm's reach of a sunken and invisible wreck that would snatch the hull timbers from under her if she should strike it, and destroy a quarter of a million dollars' worth of steamboat and cargo in five minutes, and maybe a hundred and fifty human lives into the bargain.

The last remark I heard that night was a compliment to Mr. Bixby, uttered in soliloquy and with unction by one of our guests. He said:

"By the Shadow of Death, but he's a lightning pilot!"

CONTINUED PERPLEXITIES

I promptly put such a strain on my memory that by and by even the shoal water and the countless crossing-marks began to stay with me. But the result was just the same. I never could more than get one knotty thing learned before another presented itself. Now I had often seen pilots gazing at the water and pretending to read it as if it were a book; but it was a book that told me nothing. A time came at last, however, when Mr. Bixby seemed to think me far enough advanced to bear a lesson on water-reading So he began:

"Do you see that long, slanting line on the face of the water? Now, that's a reef. Moreover, it's a bluff reef. There is a solid sand-bar under it that is nearly as straight up and down as the side of a house. There is plenty of water close up to it, but mighty little on top of it. If you were to hit it you would knock the boat's brains out. Do you see where the line fringes out at the upper end and begins to fade away?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, that is a low place; that is the head of the reef. You can climb over there, and not hurt anything. Cross over, now, and follow along close under the reef—easy water there—not much current."

I followed the reef along till I approached the fringed end. Then Mr. Bixby said:

"Now get ready. Wait till I give the word. She won't want to mount the reef; a boat hates shoal water. Stand by—wait—*wait*—keep her well in hand *Now* cramp her down! Snatch her! snatch her!"

He seized the other side of the wheel and helped to spin it around until it was hard down, and then we held it so. The boat resisted, and refused to answer for a while, and next she came surging to starboard, mounted the reef, and sent a long, angry ridge of water foaming away from her bows.

"Now watch her; watch her like a cat, or she'll get away from you. When she fights strong and the tiller slips a little, in a jerky, greasy sort of way, let up on her a trifle; it is the way she tells you at night that the water is too shoal; but keep edging her up, on the bar now; there is a bar under every point, because the water that comes down around it forms an eddy and allows the sediment to sink. Do you see those fine lines on the face of the water that branch out like the ribs of a fan? Well, those are little reefs; you want to just miss the ends of them, but run them pretty close. Now look out—look out! Don't you crowd that slick, greasy-looking place; there ain't nine feet there; she won't stand it. She begins to smell it; look sharp, I tell you! Oh, blazes, there you go! Stop the starboard wheel! Quick! Ship up to back! Set her back!"

The engine bells jingled and the engines answered promptly, shooting white columns of steam far aloft out of the 'scape-pipes, but it was too late The boat had "smelt" the bar in good earnest; the foamy ridges that radiated from her bows suddenly disappeared, a great dead swell came rolling forward, and swept ahead of her, she careened far over to larboard, and went tearing away toward the shore as if she were about scared to death. We were a good mile from where we ought to have been when we finally got the upper hand of her again.

During the afternoon watch the next day, Mr. Bixby asked me if I knew how to run the next few miles. I said:

"Go inside the first snag above the point, outside the next one, start out from the lower end of Higgins's woodyard, make a square crossing, and—"

"That's all right. I'll be back before you close up on the next point."

But he wasn't. He was still below when I rounded it and entered upon a piece of the river which I had some misgivings about. I did not know that he was hiding behind a chimney to see how I would perform. I went gaily along, getting prouder and prouder, for he had never left the boat in my sole charge such a length of time before. I even got to "setting" her and letting the wheel go entirely, while I vaingloriously turned my back and inspected the stern marks and hummed a tune, a sort of easy indifference which I had prodigiously admired in Bixby and other great pilots. Once I inspected rather long, and when I faced to the front again my heart flew into my mouth so suddenly that if I hadn't clapped my teeth together I should have lost it. One of those frightful bluff reefs was stretching its deadly length right across our bows! My head was gone in a moment; I did not know which end I stood on; I gasped and could not get my breath; I spun the wheel down with such rapidity that it wove itself together like a spider's web; the boat answered and turned square away from the reef, but the reef followed her! I fled, but still it followed, still it kept—right across my bows! I never looked to see where I was going, I only fled The awful crash was imminent. Why didn't that villain come? If I committed the crime of ringing a bell I might get thrown overboard. But better that than kill the boat. So in blind desperation, I started such a rattling "shivaree" down below as never had astounded an engineer in this world before, I fancy. Amidst the frenzy of the bells the engines began to back and fill in a curious way, and my reason forsook its throne—we were about to crash into the woods on the other side of the river. Just then Mr. Bixby stepped calmly into view on the hurricane-deck. My soul went out to him in gratitude. My distress vanished; I would have felt safe on the brink of Niagara with Mr. Bixby on the hurricane-deck. He blandly and sweetly took his toothpick out of his mouth between his fingers, as if it were a cigar—we were just in the act of climbing an overhanging big tree, and the passengers were scudding astern like rats—and lifted up these commands to me ever so gently:

"Stop the starboard! Stop the larboard! Set her back on both!"

The boat hesitated, halted, pressed her nose among the boughs a critical instant, then reluctantly began to back away.

"Stop the larboard! Come ahead on it! Stop the starboard! Come ahead on it! Point her for the bar!"

I sailed away as serenely as a summer's morning. Mr. Bixby came in and said, with mock simplicity:

"When you have a hail, my boy, you ought to tap the big bell three times before you land, so that the engineers can get ready."

I blushed under the sarcasm, and said I hadn't had any hail.

"Ah! Then it was for wood, I suppose The officer of the watch will tell you when he wants to wood up."

I went on consuming, and said I wasn't after wood

"Indeed? Why, what could you want over here in the bend, then? Did you ever know of a boat following a bend up-stream at this stage of the river?"

"No, sir—and I wasn't trying to follow it. I was getting away from a bluff reef."

"No, it wasn't a bluff reef; there isn't one within three miles of where you were."

"But I saw it It was as bluff as that one yonder."

"Just about. Run over it!"

"Do you give it as an order?"

"Yes. Run over it!"

"If I don't, I wish I may die."

"All right; I am taking the responsibility."

I was just as anxious to kill the boat, now, as I had been to save it before. I impressed my orders upon my memory, to be used at the inquest, and made a straight break for the reef. As it disappeared under our bows I held my breath, but we slid over it like oil.

"Now, don't you see the difference? It wasn't anything but a *wind* reef. The wind does that."

"So I see. But it is exactly like a bluff reef How am I ever going to tell them apart?"

"I can't tell you. It is an instinct. By and by you will just naturally *know* one from the other, but you never will be able to explain why or how you know them apart."

It turned out to be true. The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book—a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger, but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown

aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the long twelve hundred miles there was never a page that was void of interest, never one that you could leave unread without loss, never one that you would want to skip, thinking you could find higher enjoyment in some other thing. There never was so wonderful a book written by man; never one whose interest was so absorbing, so unflagging, so sparklingly renewed with every reperusal. The passenger who could not read it was charmed with a peculiar sort of faint dimple on its surface (on the rare occasions when he did not overlook it altogether); but to the pilot that was an *italicized* passage; indeed, it was more than that, it was a legend of the largest capitals, with a string of shouting exclamation-points at the end of it, for it meant that a wreck or a rock was buried there that could tear the life out of the strongest vessel that ever floated. It is the faintest and simplest expression the water ever makes, and the most hideous to a pilot's eye. In truth, the passenger who could not read this book saw nothing but all manner of pretty pictures in it, painted by the sun and shaded by the clouds, whereas to the trained eye these were not pictures at all, but the grimmest and most dead-earnest of reading-matter.

Now when I had mastered the language of this water, and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry, had gone out of the majestic river! I still kept in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous; in one place a long, slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy flush was faintest, was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced, the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the somber shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like silver, and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendor that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances, and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it every passing moment with new marvels of coloring.

I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I should have looked upon it without rapture, and should have commented upon it, inwardly, after this fashion: "This sun means that we are going to have wind to-morrow; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of these nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling 'boils' show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that troublesome place is shoaling up dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the 'break' from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?"

No, the romance and beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to a doctor but a "break" that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn't he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade?

1875·1883

From

A Tramp Abroad

Baker's Blue-Jay Yarn

This selection is part of Chapter II and all of Chapter III of A Tramp Abroad (1880). The storyteller is modeled after Jim Gillis, the old character at whose hut Clemens was a delighted visitor for a time in the sixties.

Notable in the handling is the transition from the actual world of the Neckar hills to the fantastic world where blue-jays talk. Notable, too, as Mr. De Voto remarks, are the origin and the artistry of this mock oral tale: "Its material comes from the Negro's bestiary, interstitial with the life of his [Clemens'] boyhood in Hannibal; and in this way the humor rises from fantasy, from the imaginative myth-making of the slaves and the frontier. But also, Jim Baker, the narrator, exists; he is a creation from the world of reality. He lives, and no fantasy has gone into his creation, but only the sharp perception of an individual. His patient, explanatory mind actually works before our eyes and no one can doubt him. His speech has been caught so cunningly that its rhythms produce complete conviction. Fantasy is thus an instrument of realism and the humor of Mark Twain merges into the fiction that is his highest reach."

If any particular piece of humor is typical of the American brand, this is the one. Here, in admirable proportions, are combined the satirical philosophy of the horse-sense school, the realistic portrayal of earthy characters, and the fantasy blended of poetry and vulgarity which runs through much of our humor.

One never tires of poking about in the dense woods that clothe all these lofty Neckar hills to their tops. The great deeps of a boundless forest have a beguiling and impressive charm in any country; but German legends and fairy tales have given these an added charm. They have peopled all that region with gnomes, and dwarfs, and all sorts of mysterious and uncanny creatures. At the time I am writing of, I had been reading so much of this literature that sometimes I was not sure but I was beginning to believe in the gnomes and fairies as realities.

One afternoon I got lost in the woods about a mile from the hotel, and presently fell into a train of dreamy thought about animals which talk, and kobolds, and enchanted folk, and the rest of the pleasant legendary stuff; and so, by stimulating my fancy, I finally got to imagining I glimpsed small flitting shapes here and there down the columned aisles of the forest. It was a place which was peculiarly meet for the occasion. It was a pine wood, with so thick and soft a carpet of brown needles that one's footfall made no more sound than if he were treading on wool; the tree-trunks were as round and straight and smooth as pillars, and stood close together; they were bare of branches to a point about twenty-five feet above ground, and from there upward so thick with boughs that not a ray of sunlight could pierce through. The world was bright with sunshine outside, but a deep and mellow twilight reigned in there, and also a silence so profound that I seemed to hear my own breathings.

When I had stood ten minutes, thinking and imagining, and getting my spirit in tune with the place, and in the right mood to enjoy the supernatural, a raven suddenly uttered a hoarse croak over my head. It made me start; and then I was angry because I started. I looked up, and the creature was sitting on a limb right over me, looking down at me. I felt something of the same sense of humiliation and injury which one feels when he finds that a human stranger has been clandestinely inspecting him in his privacy and mentally commenting upon him. I eyed the raven, and the raven eyed me. Nothing was said during some seconds. Then the bird stepped a little way along his limb to get a better point of observation, lifted his wings, stuck his head far down below his shoulders toward me, and croaked again —a croak with a distinctly insulting expression about it. If he had spoken in English he could not have said any more plainly than he did say in raven, "Well, what do *you* want here?" I felt as foolish as if I had been caught in some mean act by a responsible being, and reproved for it. However, I made no reply; I would not bandy

words with a raven. The adversary waited a while, with his shoulders still lifted, his head thrust down between them, and his keen bright eye fixed on me; then he threw out two or three more insults, which I could not understand, further than that I knew a portion of them consisted of language not used in church.

I still made no reply. Now the adversary raised his head and called. There was an answering croak from a little distance in the wood,—evidently a croak of inquiry. The adversary explained with enthusiasm, and the other raven dropped everything and came. The two sat side by side on the limb and discussed me as freely and offensively as two great naturalists might discuss a new kind of bug. The thing became more and more embarrassing. They called in another friend. This was too much. I saw that they had the advantage of me, and so I concluded to get out of the scrape by walking out of it. They enjoyed my defeat as much as any low white people could have done. They craned their necks and laughed at me (for a raven *can* laugh, just like a man), they squalled insulting remarks after me as long as they could see me. They were nothing but ravens—I knew that,—what they thought about me could be a matter of no consequence,—and yet when even a raven shouts after you, "What a hat!" "Oh, pull down your vest!" and that sort of thing, it hurts you and humiliates you and there is no getting around it with fine reasoning and pretty arguments.

Animals talk to each other, of course. There can be no question about that; but I suppose there are very few people who can understand them I never knew but one man who could. I knew he could, however, because he told me so himself. He was a middle-aged, simple-hearted miner who had lived in a lonely corner of California, among the woods and mountains, a good many years, and had studied the ways of his only neighbors, the beasts and the birds, until he believed he could accurately translate any remark which they made. This was Jim Baker. According to Jim Baker, some animals have only a limited education, and use only very simple words, and scarcely ever a comparison or a flowery figure; whereas, certain other animals have a large vocabulary, a fine command of language and a ready and fluent delivery; consequently these latter talk a great deal; they like it; they are conscious of their talent, and they enjoy "showing off." Baker said, that after long and careful observation, he had come to the conclusion that the bluejays were the best talkers he had found among birds and beasts. Said he:

"There's more *to* a bluejay than any other creature. He has got more moods, and more different kinds of feelings than other creatures; and, mind you, whatever a bluejay feels, he can put into language. And no mere commonplace language, either, but rattling, out-and-out book-talk—and bristling with metaphor, too—just bristling! And as for command of language—why *you* never see a bluejay get stuck for a word. No man ever did. They just boil out of him! And another thing: I've noticed a good deal, and there's no bird, or cow, or anything that uses as good grammar as a bluejay. You may say a cat uses good grammar. Well, a cat does—but you let a cat get excited once; you let a cat get to pulling fur with another cat on a shed, nights, and you'll hear grammar that will give you the lockjaw. Ignorant people think it's the *noise* which fighting cats make that is so aggravating, but it ain't so; it's the sickening grammar they use. Now I've never heard a jay use bad grammar but very seldom; and when they do, they are as ashamed as a human; they shut right down and leave.

"You may call a jay a bird. Well, so he is, in a measure—because he's got feathers on him, and don't belong to no church, perhaps; but otherwise he is just as much a human as you be. And I'll tell you for why. A jay's gifts, and instincts, and feelings, and interests, cover the whole ground. A jay hasn't got any more principle than a Congressman. A jay will lie, a jay will steal, a jay will deceive, a jay will betray; and four times out of five, a jay will go back on his solemnest promise. The sacredness of an obligation is a thing which you can't cram into no bluejay's head. Now, on top of all this, there's another thing; a jay can out-swear any gentleman in the mines. You think a cat can swear. Well, a cat can; but you give a bluejay a subject that calls for his reserve-powers, and where is your cat? Don't talk to *me*—I know too much about this thing. And there's yet another thing; in the one little particular of scolding—just good, clean, out-and-out scolding—a bluejay can lay over anything, human or divine. Yes, sir, a jay is everything that a man is. A jay can cry, a jay can laugh, a jay can feel shame, a jay can reason and plan and discuss, a jay likes gossip and scandal, a jay has got a sense of humor, a jay knows when he is an ass just as well as you do—maybe better. If a jay ain't human, he

better take in his sign, that's all. Now I'm going to tell you a perfectly true fact about some bluejays.

"When I first begun to understand jay language correctly, there was a little incident happened here. Seven years ago, the last man in this region but me moved away. There stands his house,—been empty ever since; a log house, with a plank roof—just one big room, and no more; no ceiling—nothing between the rafters and the floor. Well, one Sunday morning I was sitting out here in front of my cabin, with my cat, taking the sun, and looking at the blue hills, and listening to the leaves rustling so lonely in the trees, and thinking of the home away yonder in the states, that I hadn't heard from in thirteen years, when a bluejay lit on that house, with an acorn in his mouth, and says, 'Hello, I reckon I've struck something.' When he spoke, the acorn dropped out of his mouth and rolled down the roof, of course, but he didn't care; his mind was all on the thing he had struck. It was a knot-hole in the roof. He cocked his head to one side, shut one eye and put the other one to the hole, like a 'possum looking down a jug; then he glanced up with his bright eyes, gave a wink or two with his wings—which signifies gratification, you understand,—and says, 'It looks like a hole, it's located like a hole,—blamed if I don't believe it *is* a hole!'

"Then he cocked his head down and took another look; he glances up perfectly joyful, this time; winks his wings and his tail both, and says, 'Oh, no, this ain't no fat thing, I reckon! If I ain't in luck!—why it's a perfectly elegant hole!' So he flew down and got that acorn, and fetched it up and dropped it in, and was just tilting his head back, with the heavenliest smile on his face, when all of a sudden he was paralyzed into a listening attitude and that smile faded gradually out of his countenance like breath off'n a razor, and the queerest look of surprise took its place. Then he says, 'Why, I didn't hear it fall!' He cocked his eye at the hole again, and took a long look; raised up and shook his head; stepped around to the other side of the hole and took another look from that side; shook his head again. He studied a while, then he just went into the *de*tails—walked round and round the hole and spied into it from every point of the compass. No use. Now he took a thinking attitude on the comb of the roof and scratched the back of his head with his right foot a minute, and finally says, 'Well, it's too many for *me*, that's certain; must be a mighty long hole; however, I ain't got no time to fool around here, I got to 'tend to business; I reckon it's all right—chance it, anyway.'

"So he flew off and fetched another acorn and dropped it in, and tried to flirt his eye to the hole quick enough to see what become of it, but he was too late. He held his eye there as much as a minute; then he raised up and sighed, and says, 'Confound it, I don't seem to understand this thing, no way; however, I'll tackle her again.' He fetched another acorn, and done his level best to see what become of it, but he couldn't. He says, 'Well, *I* never struck no such a hole as this before; I'm of the opinion it's a totally new kind of a hole.' Then he begun to get mad. He held in for a spell, walking up and down the comb of the roof and shaking his head and muttering to himself; but his feelings got the upper hand of him, presently, and he broke loose and cussed himself black in the face. I never see a bird take on so about a little thing. When he got through he walks to the hole and looks in again for half a minute; then he says, 'Well, you're a long hole, and a deep hole, and a mighty singular hole altogether—but I've started in to fill you, and I'm d—d if I *don't* fill you, if it takes a hundred years!'

"And with that, away he went. You never see a bird work so since you was born. He laid into his work like a nigger, and the way he hove acorns into that hole for about two hours and a half was one of the most exciting and astonishing spectacles I ever struck. He never stopped to take a look any more—he just hove 'em in and went for more. Well, at last he could hardly flop his wings, he was so tuckered out. He comes a-drooping down, once more, sweating like an ice-pitcher, drops his acorn in and says, '*Now* I guess I've got the bulge on you by this time!' So he bent down for a look. If you'll believe me, when his head come up again he was just pale with rage. He says, 'I've shoveled acorns enough in there to keep the family thirty years, and if I can see a sign of one of 'em I wish I may land in a museum with a belly full of sawdust in two minutes!'

"He just had strength enough to crawl up on to the comb and lean his back agin the chimbly, and then he collected his impressions and begun to free his mind. I see in a second that what I had mistook for profanity in the mines was only just the rudiments, as you may say.

"Another jay was going by, and heard him doing his devotions, and stops to inquire what was up. The

sufferer told him the whole circumstance, and says, 'Now yonder's the hole, and if you don't believe me, go and look for yourself' So this fellow went and looked, and comes back and says, 'How many did you say you put in there?' 'Not any less than two tons,' says the sufferer. The other jay went and looked again. He couldn't seem to make it out, so he raised a yell, and three more jays come. They all examined the hole, they all made the sufferer tell it over again, then they all discussed it, and got off as many leather-headed opinions about it as an average crowd of humans could have done.

"They called in more jays; then more and more, till pretty soon this whole region 'peared to have a blue flush about it. There must have been five thousand of them, and such another jawing and disputing and flipping and cussing, you never heard. Every jay in the whole lot put his eye to the hole and delivered a more chuckle-headed opinion about the mystery than the jay that went there before him. They examined the house all over, too The door was standing half open, and at last one old jay happened to go and light on it and look in. Of course, that knocked the mystery galley-west in a second. There lay the acorns, scattered all over the floor. He flopped his wings and raised a whoop 'Come here!' he says, 'Come here, everybody; hang'd if this fool hasn't been trying to fill up a house with acorns!' They all came a-swooping down like a blue cloud, and as each fellow lit on the door and took a glance, the whole absurdity of the contract that that first jay had tackled hit him home and he fell over backwards suffocating with laughter, and the next jay took his place and done the same

"Well, sir, they roosted around here on the housetop and the trees for an hour, and guffawed over that thing like human beings It ain't any use to tell me a bluejay hasn't got a sense of humor, because I know better. And memory, too. They brought jays here from all over the United States to look down that hole, every summer for three years Other birds, too. And they could all see the point, except an owl that come from Nova Scotia to visit the Yo Semite, and he took this thing in on his way back He said he couldn't see anything funny in it. But then he was a good deal disappointed about Yo Semite, too."

1880

From

Life on the Mississippi

Chapter III

FRESCOES FROM THE PAST

A chapter written for **Huckleberry Finn**, but never included in it, is the one which follows. Clemens placed it in Chapter III of **Life on the Mississippi**, with introductory remarks which throw some light on his conception of the nature of **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**. The "tall talk" and the fanciful yarning in the passage are among Clemens' happiest achievements in this vein The boasts of Bob and the Pet Child of Calamity represent a convention in the prewar humor of the frontier—the convention whereby authors pictured contestants preceding all fights with similar proclamations about their prowess. The author evidently remembered and recorded some of the favorite phrases of the Hannibal town drunkard whom he had known when he was a boy. Just why Clemens left this passage out of **Huckleberry Finn** has puzzled his critics, since it is rich in invention and humor.

By way of illustrating keelboat talk and manners, and that now departed and hardly-remembered raft-life, I will throw in, in this place, a chapter from a book which I have been working at, by fits and starts, during the past five or six years, and may possibly finish in the course of five or six more. The book is a story which details some passages in the life of an ignorant village boy, Huck Finn, son of the town drunkard of my time out West, there. He has run away from his persecuting father, and from a persecuting good widow who wishes to make a nice, truth-telling, respectable boy of him; and with him a slave of the widow's has also escaped They have found a fragment of a lumber-raft (it is high

water and dead summer-time), and are floating down the river by night, and hiding in the willows by day—bound for Cairo, whence the Negro will seek freedom in the heart of the free states. But, in a fog, they pass Cairo without knowing it. By and by they begin to suspect the truth, and Huck Finn is persuaded to end the dismal suspense by swimming down to a huge raft which they have seen in the distance ahead of them, creeping aboard under cover of the darkness, and gathering the needed information by eavesdropping:

But you know [writes Huck] a young person can't wait very well when he is impatient to find a thing out. We talked it over, and by and by Jim said it was such a black night, now, that it wouldn't be no risk to swim down to the big raft and crawl aboard and listen—they would talk about Cairo, because they would be calculating to go ashore there for a spree, maybe; or anyway they would send boats ashore to buy whisky or fresh meat or something. Jim had a wonderful level head, for a nigger: he could most always start a good plan when you wanted one.

I stood up and shook my rags off and jumped into the river, and struck out for the raft's light. By and by, when I got down nearly to her, I eased up and went slow and cautious. But everything was all right—nobody at the sweeps. So I swum down along the raft till I was most abreast the camp-fire in the middle, then I crawled aboard and inched along and got in among some bundles of shingles on the weather side of the fire. There was thirteen men there—they was the watch on deck of course. And a mighty rough-looking lot, too. They had a jug, and tin cups, and they kept the jug moving. One man was singing—roaring, you may say; and it wasn't a nice song—for a parlor, anyway. He roared through his nose, and strung out the last word of every line very long. When he was done they all fetched a kind of Injun warwhoop, and then another was sung. It begun:

"There was a woman in our towdn,
In our towdn did dwed'l [dwell],
She loved her husband dear-i-lee,
But another man twyste as wed'l.

"Singing too, riloo, riloo, riloo,
Ri-too, riloo, rilay - - - e,
She loved her husband dear-i-lee,
But another man twyste as wed'l."

And so on—fourteen verses. It was kind of poor, and when he was going to start on the next verse one of them said it was the tune the old cow died on; and another one said: "Oh, give us a rest!" And another one told him to take a walk. They made fun of him till he got mad and jumped up and begun to cuss the crowd, and said he could lam any thief in the lot.

They was all about to make a break for him, but the biggest man there jumped up and says:

"Set whar you are, gentlemen. Leave him to me; he's my meat."

Then he jumped up in the air three times, and cracked his heels together every time. He flung off a buckskin coat that was all hung with fringes, and says, "You lay thar tell the chawin-up's done"; and flung his hat down, which was all over ribbons, and says, "You lay thar tell his sufferin's is over."

Then he jumped up in the air and cracked his heels together again, and shouted out:

"Whoo-oop! I'm the old original iron-hawed, brass-mounted, copper-bellied corpse-maker from the wilds of Arkansaw! Look at me! I'm the man they call Sudden Death and General Desolation! Sired by a hurricane, dam'd by an earthquake, half-brother to the cholera, nearly related to the smallpox on the mother's side! Look at me! I take nineteen alligators and a bar'l of whisky for breakfast when I'm in robust health, and a bushel of rattlesnakes and a dead body when I'm ailing I split the everlasting rocks with my glance, and I squench the thunder when I speak! Whoo-oop! Stand back and give me room according to my strength! Blood's my natural drink, and the wails of the dying is music to my ear. Cast your eye on me, gentlemen! and lay low and hold your breath, for I'm 'bout to turn myself loose!"

All the time he was getting this off, he was shaking his head and looking fierce, and kind of swelling around in a little circle, tucking up his wristbands, and now and then straightening up and beating his breast with his fist, saying, "Look at me, gentlemen!" When he got through, he jumped up and cracked his heels together three times, and let off a roaring "Whoo-oop! I'm the bloodiest son of a wildcat that lives!"

Then the man that had started the row tilted his old slouch hat down over his right eye; then he bent stooping forward, with his back sagged and his south end sticking out far, and his fists a-shoving out and drawing in in front of him, and so went around in a little circle about

three times, swelling himself up and breathing hard. Then he straightened, and jumped up and cracked his heels together three times before he lit again (that made them cheer), and he began to shout like this:

"Whoo-oop! bow your neck and spread, for the kingdom of sorrow's a-coming! Hold me down to the earth, for I feel my powers a-working! whoo-oop! I'm a child of sin, *don't* let me get a start! Smoked glass, here, for all! Don't attempt to look at me with the naked eye, gentlemen! When I'm playful I use the meridians of longitude and parallels of latitude for a seine, and drag the Atlantic Ocean for whales! I scratch my head with the lightning and purr myself to sleep with the thunder! When I'm cold, I bile the Gulf of Mexico and bathe in it; when I'm hot I fan myself with an equinoctial storm; when I'm thirsty I reach up and suck a cloud dry like a sponge; when I range the earth hungry, famine follows in my tracks! Whoo-oop! Bow your neck and spread! I put my hand on the sun's face and make it night in the earth; I bite a piece out of the moon and hurry the seasons; I shake myself and crumble the mountains! Contemplate me through leather—*don't* use the naked eye! The massacre of isolated communities is the pastime of my idle moments, the destruction of nationalities the serious business of my life! The boundless vastness of the great American desert is my enclosed property, and I bury my dead on my own premises!" He jumped up and cracked his heels together three times before he lit (they cheered him again), and as he come down he shouted out: "Whoo-oop! bow your neck and spread, for the Pet Child of Calamity's a-coming!"

Then the other one went to swelling around and blowing again—the first one—the one they called Bob; next, the Child of Calamity chipped in again, swelling round and round each other and punching their fists most into each other's faces, and whooping and jawing like Injuns; then Bob called the Child names, and the Child called him names back again; next, Bob called him a heap rougher names; and the Child come back at him with the very worst kind of language; next, Bob knocked the Child's hat off, and the Child picked it up and kicked Bob's ribbony hat about six foot; Bob went and got it and said never mind, this warn't going to be the last of this thing, because he was a man that never forgot and never forgive, and so the Child better look out, for there was a time a-coming, just as sure as he was a living man, that he would have to answer to him with the best blood in his body. The Child said no man was willinger than he for that time to come, and he would give Bob fair warning, *now,* never to cross his path again, for he could never rest till he had waded in his blood, for such was his nature, though he was sparing him now on account of his family, if he had one.

Both of them was edging away in different directions, growling and shaking their heads and going on about what they was going to do; but a little black-whiskered chap skipped up and says:

"Come back here, you couple of chicken-livered cowards, and I'll thrash the two of ye!"

And he done it, too. He snatched them, he jerked them this way and that, he booted them around, he knocked them sprawling faster than they could get up. Why, it warn't two minutes till they begged like dogs—and how the other lot did yell and laugh and clap their hands all the way through, and shout, "Sail in, Corpse-Maker!" "Hi! at him again, Child of Calamity!" "Bully for you, little Davy!" Well, it was a perfect pow-wow for a while, Bob and the Child had red noses and black eyes when they got through. Little Davy made them own up that they was sneaks and cowards and not fit to eat with a dog or drink with a nigger; then Bob and the Child shook hands with each other, very solemn, and said they had always respected each other and was willing to let bygones be bygones. So then they washed their faces in the river; and just then there was a loud order to stand by for a crossing, and some of them went forward to man the sweeps there, and the rest went aft to handle the after sweeps.

I lay still and waited for fifteen minutes, and had a smoke out of a pipe that one of them left in reach; then the crossing was finished, and they stumped back and had a drink around and went to talking and singing again. Next they got out an old fiddle, and one played, and another patted juba, and the rest turned themselves loose on a regular old-fashioned keelboat breakdown. They couldn't keep that up very long without getting winded, so by and by they settled around the jug again.

They sung "Jolly, Jolly Raftsman's the Life for Me," with a rousing chorus, and then they got to talking about differences betwixt hogs, and their different kind of habits; and next about women and their different kind

of ways; and next about the best ways to put out houses that was afire; and next about what ought to be done with the Injuns; and next what a king had to do, and how much he got; and next about how to make cats fight; and next what to do when a man has fits; and next about the differences betwixt clear-water rivers and muddy-water ones. The man they called Ed said the muddy Mississippi water was wholesomer to drink than the clear water of the Ohio; he said if you let a pint of yaller Mississippi water settle, you would have about a half to three-quarters of an inch of mud in the bottom, according to the stage of the river, and then it warn't no better than Ohio water—what you wanted to do was to keep it stirred up—and when the river was low, keep mud on hand to put in and thicken the water up the way it ought to be.

The Child of Calamity said that was so; he said there was nutritiousness in the mud, and a man that drunk Mississippi water could grow corn in his stomach if he wanted to. He says:

"You look at the graveyards; that tells the tale. Trees won't grow worth shucks in a Cincinnati graveyard, but in a Sent Louis graveyard they grow upwards of eight hundred foot high. It's all on account of the water the people drunk before they laid up. A Cincinnati corpse don't richen a soil any."

And they talked about how Ohio water didn't like to mix with Mississippi water. Ed said if you take the Mississippi on a rise when the Ohio is low, you'll find a wide band of clear water all the way down the east side of the Mississippi for a hundred mile or more, and the minute you get out a quarter of a mile from shore and pass the line, it is all thick and yaller the rest of the way across. They talked about how to keep tobacco from getting mouldy, and from that they went to ghosts and told about a lot that other folks had seen; but Ed says:

"Why don't you tell something that you've seen yourselves? Now let me have a say. Five years ago I was on a raft as big as this, and right along here it was a bright moonshiny night, and I was on watch and boss of the stabboard oar forrard, and one of my pards was a man named Dick Allbright, and he come along to where I was sitting, forrard—gaping and stretching, he was—and stooped down on the edge of the raft and washed his face in the river, and come and set down by me and got out his pipe, and had just got it filled, when he looks up and says:

"'Why looky-here,' he says, 'ain't that Buck Miller's place, over yander in the bend?'

"'Yes,' says I, 'it is—why?' He laid his pipe down and leaned his head on his hand, and says:

"'I thought we'd be furder down.' I says:

"'I thought it, too, when I went off watch'—we was standing six hours on and six off—'but the boys told me,' I says, 'that the raft didn't seem to hardly move, for the last hour,' says I, 'though she's a-slipping along all right now,' says I. He give a kind of a groan, and says:

"'I seed a raft act so before, along here,' he says, 'pears to me the current has most quit above the head of this bend durin' the last two years,' he says.

"Well, he raised up two or three times, and looked away off and around on the water. That started me at it, too. A body is always doing what he sees somebody else doing, though there mayn't be no sense in it. Pretty soon I see a black something floating on the water away



Huckleberry Finn

off to stabboard and quartering behind us. I see he was looking at it, too, I says:

"'What's that?' He says, sort of pettish:

"'Tain't nothing but an old empty bar'l.'

"'An empty bar'l!' says I, 'why,' says I, 'a spy-glass is a fool to *your* eyes. How can you tell it's an empty bar'l?' He says:

"'I don't know; I reckon it ain't a bar'l, but I thought it might be,' says he.

"'Yes,' I says, 'so it might be, and it might be anything else, too; a body can't tell nothing about it, such a distance as that,' I says:

"We hadn't nothing else to do, so we kept on watching it. By and by I says,

"'Why, looky-here, Dick Allbright, that thing's a-gaining on us, I believe.'

"He never said nothing. The thing gained and gained, and I judged it must be a dog that was about tired out. Well, we swung down into the crossing, and the thing floated across the bright streak of the moonshine, and by George, it *was* a bar'l. Says I:

"'Dick Allbright, what made you think that thing was a bar'l, when it was half a mile off?' says I. Says he:

"'I don't know.' Says I:

"'You tell me, Dick Allbright.' Says he:

"'Well, I knowed it was a bar'l; I've seen it before; lots has seen it; they says it's a ha'nted bar'l.'

"I called the rest of the watch, and they come and stood there, and I told them what Dick said. It floated right along abreast, now, and didn't gain any more. It was about twenty foot off. Some was for having it aboard, but the rest didn't want to. Dick Allbright said rafts that had fooled with it had got bad luck by it. The captain of the watch said he didn't believe in it. He said he reckoned the bar'l gained on us because it was in a little better current than what we was. He said it would leave by and by.

"So then we went to talking about other things, and we had a song, and then a breakdown; and after that the captain of the watch called for another song, but it was clouding up now, and the bar'l stuck right thar in the same place, and the song didn't seem to have much warm-up to it, somehow, and so they didn't finish it, and there warn't any cheers, but it sort of dropped flat, and nobody said anything for a minute. Then everybody tried to talk at once, and one chap got off a joke, but it warn't no use, they didn't laugh, and even the chap that made the joke didn't laugh at it, which ain't usual. We all just settled down glum, and watched the bar'l, and was oneasy and oncomfortable. Well, sir, it shut down black and still, and then the wind began to moan around, and next the lightning began to play and the thunder to grumble. And pretty soon there was a regular storm, and in the middle of it a man that was running aft stumbled and fell and sprained his ankle so that he had to lay up. This made the boys shake their heads. And every time the lightning come, there was that bar'l, with the blue lights winking around it. We was always on the lookout for it. But by and by, toward dawn, she was gone. When the day come we couldn't see her anywhere, and we warn't sorry, either.

"But next night about half past nine, when there was songs and high jinks going on, here she comes again, and took her old roost on the stabboard side. There warn't no more high jinks. Everybody got solemn; nobody talked; you couldn't get anybody to do anything but set around moody and look at the bar'l. It begun to cloud up again. When the watch changed, the off watch stayed up, 'stead of turning in. The storm ripped and roared around all night, and in the middle of it another man tripped and sprained his ankle, and had to knock off. The bar'l left toward day, and nobody see it go.

"Everybody was sober and down in the mouth all day. I don't mean the kind of sober that comes of leaving liquor alone—not that. They was quiet, but they all drunk more than usual—not together, but each man sidled off and took it private, by himself.

"After dark the off watch didn't turn in; nobody sung, nobody talked; the boys didn't scatter around, neither; they sort of huddled together, forrard; and for two hours they set there, perfectly still, looking steady in the one direction, and heaving a sigh once in a while. And then, here comes the bar'l again. She took up her old place. She stayed there all night; nobody turned in. The storm come on again, after midnight. It got awful dark; and the rain poured down; hail, too; the thunder boomed and roared and bellowed; the wind blowed a hurricane; and the lightning spread over everything in big sheets of glare, and showed the whole raft as plain as day; and the river lashed up white as milk as far as you could see for miles, and there was that

bar'l jiggering along, same as ever. The captain ordered the watch to man the after sweeps for a crossing, and nobody would go—no more sprained ankles for them, they said. They wouldn't even *walk* aft. Well, then, just then the sky split wide open, with a crash, and the lightning killed two men of the after watch, and crippled two more. Crippled them how, say you? Why, *sprained their ankles!*

"The bar'l left in the dark betwixt lightnings, toward dawn. Well, not a body eat a bite at breakfast that morning. After that the men loafed around in twos and threes, and talked low together. But none of them herded with Dick Allbright. They all give him the cold shake. If he come around where any of the men was, they split up and sidled away. They wouldn't man the sweeps with him. The captain had all the skiffs hauled up on the raft, alongside of his wigwam, and wouldn't let the dead men be took ashore to be planted; he didn't believe a man that got ashore would come back, and he was right.

"After night come, you could see pretty plain that there was going to be trouble if that bar'l come again; there was such a muttering going on. A good many wanted to kill Dick Allbright, because he'd seen the bar'l on other trips, and that had an ugly look. Some wanted to put him ashore. Some said: 'Let's all go ashore in a pile, if the bar'l comes again.'

"This kind of whispers was still going on, the men being bunched together forrard watching for the bar'l, when lo and behold you here she comes again. Down she comes, slow and steady, and settles into her old tracks. You could 'a' heard a pin drop. Then up comes the captain, and says:

" 'Boys, don't be a pack of children and fools; I don't want this bar'l to be dogging us all the way to Orleans, and *you* don't: Well, then, how's the best way to stop it? Burn it up—that's the way. I'm going to fetch it aboard,' he says. And before anybody could say a word, in he went.

"He swum to it, and as he come pushing it to the raft, the men spread to one side. But the old man got it aboard and busted in the head, and there was a baby in it! Yes, sir; a stark-naked baby. It was Dick Allbright's baby, he owned up and said so.

" 'Yes,' he says, a-leaning over it, 'yes, it is my own lamented darling, my poor lost Charles William Allbright deceased,' says he—for he could curl his tongue around the bulliest words in the language when he was of a mind to, and lay them before you without a jint started anywheres. Yes, he said, he used to live up at the head of this bend, and one night he choked his child, which was crying, not intending to kill it—which was prob'ly a lie—and then he was scared, and buried it in a bar'l, before his wife got home, and off he went, and struck the northern trail and went to rafting; and this was the third year that the bar'l had chased him. He said the bad luck always begun light, and lasted till four men was killed, and then the bar'l didn't come any more after that. He said if the men would stand it one more night—and was a-going on like that—but the men had got enough. They started to get out a boat to take him ashore and lynch him, but he grabbed the little child all of a sudden and jumped overboard with it, hugged up to his breast and shedding tears, and we never see him again, poor old suffering soul, nor Charles William neither."

"*Who* was shedding tears?" says Bob; "was it Allbright or the baby?"

"Why, Allbright, of course; didn't I tell you the baby was dead? Been dead three years—how could it cry?"

"Well, never mind how it could cry—how could it *keep* all that time?" says Davy. "You answer me that."

"I don't know how it done it," says Ed. "It done it, though—that's all I know about it."

"Say—what did they do with the bar'l?" says the Child of Calamity.

"Why, they hove it overboard, and it sunk like a chunk of lead."

"Edward, did the child look like it was choked?" says one.

"Did it have its hair parted?" says another.

"What was the brand on that bar'l, Eddy?" says a fellow they called Bill.

"Have you got the papers for them statistics, Edmund?" says Jimmy.

"Say, Edwin, was you one of the men that was killed by the lightning?" says Davy.

"Him? Oh, no! he was both of 'em," says Bob. Then they all haw-hawed.

"Say, Edward, don't you reckon you'd better take a pill? You look bad—don't you feel pale?" says the Child of Calamity.

"Oh, come, now, Eddy," says Jimmy, "show up; you must 'a' kept part of that bar'l to prove the thing by. Show us the bung-hole—*do*—and we'll all believe you."

"Say, boys," says Bill, "less divide it up. Thar's thirteen of us. I can swaller a thirteenth of the yarn, if you can worry down the rest."

Ed got up mad and said they could all go to some place which he ripped out pretty savage, and then walked off aft, cussing to himself, and they yelling and jeering at him, and roaring and laughing so you could hear them a mile.

"Boys, we'll split a watermelon on that," says the Child of Calamity; and he came rummaging around in the dark amongst the shingle bundles where I was, and put his hand on me. I was warm and soft and naked; so he says "Ouch!" and jumped back.

"Fetch a lantern or a chunk of fire here, boys—there's a snake here as big as a cow!"

So they run there with a lantern, and crowded up and looked in on me.

"Come out of that, you beggar!" says one.

"Who are you?" says another.

"What are you after here? Speak up prompt, or overboard you go."

"Snake him out, boys. Snatch him out by the heels."

I began to beg, and crept out amongst them trembling. They looked me over, wondering, and the Child of Calamity says:

"A cussed thief! Lend me a hand and less heave him overboard!"

"No," says Big Bob, "less get out the paint-pot and paint him a sky-blue all over from head to heel, and *then* heave him over."

"Good! that's it. Go for the paint, Jimmy."

When the paint come, and Bob took the brush and was just going to begin, the others laughing and rubbing their hands, I begun to cry, and that sort of worked on Davy, and he says:

"'Vast there. He's nothing but a cub. I'll paint the man that teches him!"

So I looked around on them, and some of them grumbled and growled, and Bob put down the paint, and the others didn't take it up.

"Come here to the fire, and less see what you're up to here," says Davy. "Now set down there and give an account of yourself. How long have you been aboard here?"

"Not over a quarter of a minute, sir," says I.

"How did you get dry so quick?"

"I don't know, sir. I'm always that way, mostly."

"Oh, you are, are you? What's your name?"

I warn't going to tell my name. I didn't know what to say, so I just says:

"Charles William Allbright, sir."

Then they roared—the whole crowd; and I was mighty glad I said that, because, maybe, laughing would get them in a better humor.

When they got done laughing, Davy says·

"It won't hardly do, Charles William. You couldn't have growed this much in five year, and you was a baby, when you come out of the bar'l, you know, and dead at that. Come now, tell a straight story, and nobody'll hurt you, if you ain't up to anything wrong. What *is* your name?"

"Aleck Hopkins, sir. Aleck James Hopkins."

"Well, Aleck, where did you come from here?"

"From a trading-scow. She lays up the bend yonder. I was born on her. Pap has traded up and down here all his life; and he told me to swim off here, because when you went by he said he would like to get some of you to speak to a Mr. Jonas Turner, in Cairo, and tell him—"

"Oh, come!"

"Yes, sir, it's as true as the world. Pap he says—"

"Oh, your grandmother!"

They all laughed, and I tried again to talk, but they broke in on me and stopped me.

"Now, looky-here," says Davy; "you're scared, and so you talk wild. Honest, now do you live in a scow, or is it a lie?"

"Yes, sir, in a trading-scow. She lays up at the head of the bend But I warn't born in her. It's our first trip."

"Now you're talking! What did you come aboard here for? To steal?"

"No, sir, I didn't. It was only to get a ride on the raft. All boys does that."

"Well, I know that. But what did you hide for?"

"Sometimes they drive the boys off."

"So they do. They might steal. Looky-here; if we let you off this time, will you keep out of these kind of scrapes hereafter?"

"'Deed I will, boss. You try me."

"All right, then. You ain't but little ways from shore.

Overboard with you, and don't you make a fool of yourself another time this way. Blast it, boy, some raftsmen would rawhide you till you were black and blue!"

I didn't wait to kiss good-by, but went overboard and broke for shore. When Jim come along by and by, the big raft was far away out of sight around the point. I swum out and got aboard, and was mighty glad to see home again.

The boy did not get the information he was after, but his adventure has furnished the glimpse of the departed raftsman and keelboatman which I desire to offer in this place.

1876?-1883

From

Huckleberry Finn

When Twain himself published this episode as a unit in the Century for December 1884, he explained its context in the book for the magazine readers as follows: "The Negro Jim is escaping from slavery in Missouri, and Huck Finn is running away from a drunken father, who maltreats him. The two fugitives are floating down the Mississippi on a fragment of a lumber-raft, doing their voyaging by night and hiding themselves and the raft in the day-time. When this chapter opens they have already floated four hundred miles—a trip which has occupied ten or twelve adventurous nights."

The following passage (part of Chapter XVI and all of Chapters XVII and XVIII) typifies much that made the book memorable. Here, in rich detail, is a segment of life along the river in the 1840's. Here is Huck's character, revealed by what he does and says. And here is an employment of the American language for varying purposes —for humor ranging from broad, low comedy to something much higher, for description, for the portrayal of action, and for Huck's restrained account of how he felt after the death of his friend, Buck Grangerford.

THE GRANGERFORDS TAKE ME IN

Well, the night got gray and rather thick, which is the next meanest thing to fog. You can't tell the shape of the river, and you can't see no distance. It got to be very late and still, and then along comes a steamboat up the river. We lit the lantern, and judged she would see it. Up-stream boats didn't generly come close to us; they go out and follow the bars and hunt for easy water under the reefs; but nights like this they bull right up the channel against the whole river.

We could hear her pounding along, but we didn't see her good till she was close. She aimed right for us. Often they do that and try to see how close they can come without touching; sometimes the wheel bites off a sweep, and then the pilot sticks his head out and laughs, and thinks he's mighty smart. Well, here she comes, and we said she was going to try and shave us, but she didn't seem to be sheering off a bit. She was a big one, and she was coming in a hurry, too, looking like a black cloud with rows of glow-worms around it, but all of a sudden she bulged out, big and scary, with a long row of wide-open furnace doors shining like red-hot teeth, and her monstrous bows and guards hanging right over us There was a yell at us, and a jingling of bells to stop the engines, a powwow of cussing, and whistling of steam—and as Jim went overboard on one side and I on the other, she come smashing straight through the raft.

I dived—and I aimed to find the bottom, too, for a thirty-foot wheel had got to go over me, and I wanted it to have plenty of room. I could always stay under water a minute, this time I reckon I stayed under a minute and a half. Then I bounced for the top in a hurry, for I was nearly busting. I popped out to my armpits and blowed the water out of my nose, and puffed a bit Of course there was a booming current, and of course that boat started her engines again ten seconds after she stopped them, for they never cared much for raftsmen, so now she was churning along up the river, out of sight in the thick weather, though I could hear her

I sung out for Jim about a dozen times, but I didn't get any answer, so I grabbed a plank that touched me while I was "treading water," and struck out for shore, shoving it ahead of me. But I made out to see that the drift of the current was towards the left-hand shore, which meant that I was in a crossing; so I changed off and went that way.

It was one of these long, slanting, two-mile crossings; so I was a good long time in getting over. I made a safe landing, and clumb up the bank. I couldn't see but a little ways, but I went poking along over rough ground for a quarter of a mile or more, and then I run across a big old-fashioned double log house before I noticed it I was going to rush by and get away, but a lot of dogs jumped out and went to howling and barking at me, and I knowed better than to move another peg.

In about a minute somebody spoke out of a window without putting his head out, and says:

"Be done, boys! Who's there?"

I says:

"It's me."

"Who's me?"

"George Jackson, sir."

"What do you want?"

"I don't want nothing, sir. I only want to go along by, but the dogs won't let me."

"What are you prowling around here this time of night for—hey?"

"I warn't prowling around, sir, I fell overboard off of the steamboat."

"Oh, you did, did you? Strike a light there, somebody. What did you say your name was?"

"George Jackson, sir. I'm only a boy."

"Look here, if you're telling the truth you needn't be afraid—nobody 'll hurt you. But don't try to budge, stand right where you are. Rouse out Bob and Tom, some of you, and fetch the guns. George Jackson, is there anybody with you?"

"No, sir, nobody."

I heard the people stirring around in the house now, and see a light. The man sung out·

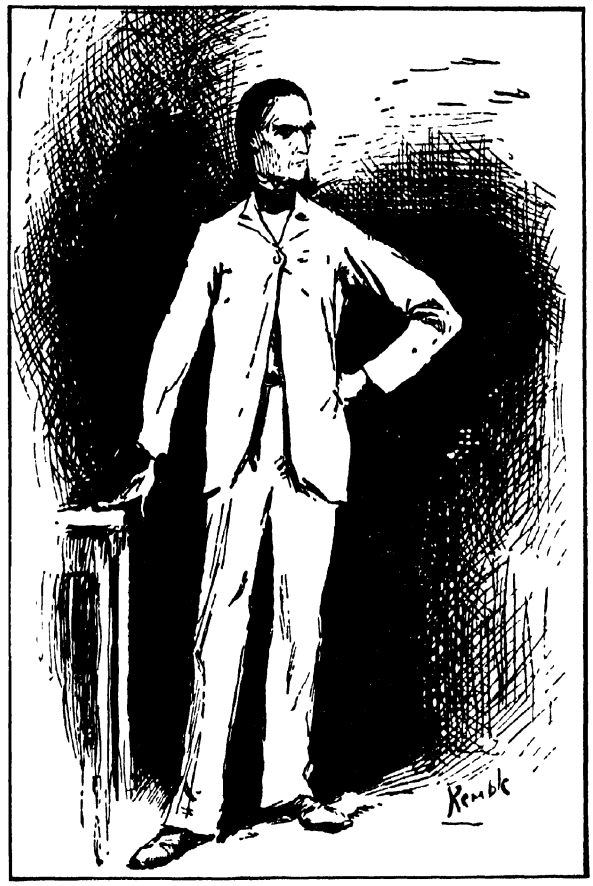
"Snatch that light away, Betsy, you old fool—ain't you got any sense? Put it on the floor behind the front door. Bob, if you and Tom are ready, take your places."

"All ready."

"Now, George Jackson, do you know the Shepherdsons?"

"No, sir; I never heard of them."

"Well, that may be so, and it mayn't. Now, all ready. Step forward, George Jackson. And mind, don't you hurry —come mighty slow. If there's anybody with you, let him keep back—if he shows himself he'll be shot. Come along now. Come slow; push the door open yourself—just enough to squeeze in, d'you hear?"



Colonel Grangerford.

I didn't hurry, I couldn't if I'd a-wanted to. I took one slow step at a time and there warn't a sound, only I thought I could hear my heart The dogs were as still as the humans, but they followed a little behind me. When I got to the three log doorsteps I heard them unlocking and unbarring and unbolting I put my hand on the door and pushed it a little and a little more till somebody said, "There, that's enough—put your head in." I done it, but I judged they would take it off.

The candle was on the floor, and there they all was, looking at me, and me at them, for about a quarter of a minute. Three big men with guns pointed at me, which made me wince, I tell you; the oldest, gray and about sixty, the other two thirty or more—all of them fine and handsome—and the sweetest old gray-headed lady, and back of her two young women which I couldn't see right well. The old gentleman says:

"There; I reckon it's all right. Come in."

As soon as I was in the old gentleman he locked the door and barred it and bolted it, and told the young men to come in with their guns, and they all went in a big parlor that had a new rag carpet on the floor, and got together in a corner that was out of the range of the front windows—there warn't none on the side. They held the candle, and took a good look at me, and all said, "Why, *he* ain't a Shepherdson—no, there ain't any Shepherdson about him." Then the old man said he hoped I wouldn't mind being searched for arms, because he didn't mean no harm by it—it was only to make sure So he didn't pry into my pockets, but only felt outside with his hands, and said it was all right. He told me to make myself easy and at home, and tell all about myself, but the old lady says:

"Why, bless you, Saul, the poor thing's as wet as he can be, and don't you reckon it may be he's hungry?"

"True for you, Rachel—I forgot."

So the old lady says:

"Betsy" (this was a nigger woman), "you fly around and get him something to eat as quick as you can, poor thing; and one of you girls go and wake up Buck and tell him—oh, here he is himself. Buck, take this little stranger and get the wet clothes off from him and dress him up in some of yours that's dry."

Buck looked about as old as me—thirteen or fourteen or along there, though he was a little bigger than me. He hadn't on anything but a shirt, and he was very frowzy-headed He came in gaping and digging one fist into his eyes, and he was dragging a gun along with the other one. He says:

"Ain't they no Shepherdsons around?"

They said, no, 'twas a false alarm.

"Well," he says, "if they'd 'a' ben some, I reckon I'd 'a' got one."

They all laughed, and Bob says:

"Why, Buck, they might have scalped us all, you've been so slow in coming."

"Well, nobody come after me, and it ain't right. I'm always kept down; I don't get no show."

"Never mind, Buck, my boy," says the old man, "you'll have show enough, all in good time, don't you fret about that Go 'long with you now, and do as your mother told you."

When we got up-stairs to his room he got me a coarse shirt and a roundabout and pants of his, and I put them on. While I was at it he asked me what my name was, but before I could tell him he started to tell me about a bluejay and a young rabbit he had catched in the woods day before yesterday, and he asked me where Moses was when the candle went out. I said I didn't know, I hadn't heard about it before, no way.

"Well, guess," he says.

"How'm I going to guess," says I, "when I never heard tell of it before?"

"But you can guess, can't you? It's just as easy."

"*Which* candle?" I says.

"Why, any candle," he says.

"I don't know where he was," says I; "where was he?"

"Why, he was in the *dark!* That's where he was!"

"Well, if you knowed where he was, what did you ask me for?"

"Why, blame it, it's a riddle, don't you see? Say, how long are you going to stay here? You got to stay always. We can just have booming times—they don't have no school now. Do you own a dog? I've got a dog—and he'll go in the river and bring out chips that you throw in. Do you like to comb up Sundays, and all that kind of foolishness? You bet I don't, but ma she makes me. Confound these ole britches! I reckon I'd better put 'em on, but I'd ruther not, it's so warm. Are you all ready? All right. Come along, old hoss."

Cold corn-pone, cold corn-beef, butter and buttermilk—that is what they had for me down there, and there ain't nothing better that ever I've come across yet. Buck and his ma and all of them smoked cob pipes, except the nigger woman, which was gone, and the two young women. They all smoked and talked, and I eat and talked. The young women had quilts around them, and their hair down their backs. They all asked me questions, and I told them how pap and me and all the family was living on a little farm down at the bottom of Arkansaw, and my sister Mary Ann run off and got married and never was heard of no more, and Bill went to hunt them and he warn't heard of no more, and Tom and Mort died, and then there warn't nobody but just me and pap left, and he was just trimmed down to nothing, on account of his troubles; so when he died I took what there was left, because the farm didn't belong to us, and started up the river, deck passage, and fell overboard; and that was how I come to be here. So they said I could have a home there as long as I wanted it. Then it was most

daylight and everybody went to bed, and I went to bed with Buck, and when I waked up in the morning, drat it all, I had forgot what my name was. So I laid there about an hour trying to think, and when Buck waked up I says:

"Can you spell, Buck?"

"Yes," he says.

"I bet you can't spell my name," says I.

"I bet you what you dare I can," says he

"All right," says I, "go ahead."

"G-e-o-r-g-e J-a-x-o-n—there now," he says.

"Well," says I, "you done it, but I didn't think you could. It ain't no slouch of a name to spell—right off without studying"

I set it down, private, because somebody might want *me* to spell it next, and so I wanted to be handy with it and rattle it off like I was used to it.

It was a mighty nice family, and a mighty nice house, too. I hadn't seen no house out in the country before that was so nice and had so much style It didn't have an iron latch on the front door, nor a wooden one with a buckskin string, but a brass knob to turn, the same as houses in town. There warn't no bed in the parlor, nor a sign of a bed, but heaps of parlors in towns has beds in them There was a big fireplace that was bricked on the bottom, and the bricks was kept clean and red by pouring water on them and scrubbing them with another brick, sometimes they wash them over with red water-paint that they call Spanish-brown, same as they do in town. They had big brass dog-irons that could hold up a saw-log. There was a clock on the middle of the mantelpiece, with a picture of a town painted on the bottom half of the glass front, and a round place in the middle of it for the sun, and you could see the pendulum swinging behind it It was beautiful to hear that clock tick; and sometimes when one of these peddlers had been along and scoured her up and got her in good shape, she would start in and strike a hundred and fifty before she got tuckered out They wouldn't took any money for her.

Well, there was a big outlandish parrot on each side of the clock, made out of something like chalk, and painted up gaudy. By one of the parrots was a cat made of crockery, and a crockery dog by the other, and when you pressed down on them they squeaked, but didn't open their mouths nor look different nor interested. They squeaked through underneath. There was a couple of big wild-turkey-wing fans spread out behind those things. On the table in the middle of the room was a kind of a lovely crockery basket that had apples and oranges and peaches and grapes piled up in it, which was much redder and yellower and prettier than real ones is, but they warn't real because you could see where pieces had got chipped off and showed the white chalk, or whatever it was, underneath.

This table had a cover made out of beautiful oil-cloth, with a red and blue spread-eagle painted on it, and a painted border all around. It come all the way from Philadephia, they said. There was some books, too, piled up perfectly exact, on each corner of the table. One was a big family Bible full of pictures. One was *Pilgrim's Progress,* about a man that left his family, it didn't say why. I read considerable in it now and then. The statements was interesting, but tough. Another was *Friendship's Offering,* full of beautiful stuff and poetry, but I didn't read the poetry. Another was Henry Clay's Speeches, and another was Dr. Gunn's *Family Medicine,* which told you all about what to do if a body was sick or dead. There was a hymn-book, and a lot of other books. And there was nice split-bottom chairs, and perfectly sound, too—not bagged down in the middle and busted, like an old basket.

They had pictures hung on the walls—mainly Washingtons and Lafayettes, and battles, and Highland Marys, and one called "Signing the Declaration." There was some that they called crayons, which one of the daughters which was dead made her own self when she was only fifteen years old They was different from any pictures I ever see before—blacker, mostly, than is common. One was a woman in a slim black dress, belted small under the armpits, with bulges like a cabbage in the middle of the sleeves, and a large black scoop-shovel bonnet with a black veil, and white slim ankles crossed about with black tape, and very wee black slippers, like a chisel, and she was leaning pensive on a tombstone on her right elbow, under a weeping willow, and her other hand hanging down her side holding a white handkerchief and a reticule, and underneath the picture it said "Shall I Never See Thee More Alas." Another one was a young lady with her hair all combed up straight to the top of her head, and knotted there in front of a comb like a chair-back, and she was crying into a handkerchief and had a dead bird laying on its back in her other hand with its heels up, and underneath the picture it

said "I Shall Never Hear Thy Sweet Chirrup More Alas." There was one where a young lady was at a window looking up at the moon, and tears running down her cheeks; and she had an open letter in one hand with black sealing-wax showing on one edge of it, and she was mashing a locket with a chain to it against her mouth, and underneath the picture it said "And Art Thou Gone Yes Thou Art Gone Alas." These was all nice pictures, I reckon, but I didn't somehow seem to take to them, because if ever I was down a little they always give me the fan-tods. Everybody was sorry she died, because she had laid out a lot more of these pictures to do, and a body could see by what she had done what they had lost. But I reckoned that with her disposition she was having a better time in the graveyard. She was at work on what they said was her greatest picture when she took sick, and every day and every night it was her prayer to be allowed to live till she got it done, but she never got the chance. It was a picture of a young woman in a long white gown, standing on the rail of a bridge all ready to jump off, with her hair all down her back, and looking up to the moon, with the tears running down her face, and she had two arms folded across her breast, and two arms stretched out in front, and two more reaching up toward the moon—and the idea was to see which pair would look best, and then scratch out all the other arms, but, as I was saying, she died before she got her mind made up, and now they kept this picture over the head of the bed in her room, and every time her birthday come they hung flowers on it. Other times it was hid with a little curtain The young woman in the picture had a kind of a nice sweet face, but there was so many arms it made her look too spidery, seemed to me.

This young girl kept a scrap-book when she was alive, and used to paste obituaries and accidents and cases of patient suffering in it out of the *Presbyterian Observer,* and write poetry after them out of her own head. It was very good poetry. This is what she wrote about a boy by the name of Stephen Dowling Bots that fell down a well and was drowned:

ODE TO STEPHEN DOWLING BOTS, DEC'D

And did young Stephen sicken,
  And did young Stephen die?
And did the sad hearts thicken,
  And did the mourners cry?

No; such was not the fate of
  Young Stephen Dowling Bots;
Though sad hearts round him thickened,
  'Twas not from sickness' shots.

No whooping-cough did rack his frame,
  Nor measles drear with spots,
Not these impaired the sacred name
  Of Stephen Dowling Bots.

Despised love struck not with woe
  That head of curly knots,
Nor stomach troubles laid him low,
  Young Stephen Dowling Bots.

O no. Then list with tearful eye,
  Whilst I his fate do tell.
His soul did from this cold world fly
  By falling down a well.

They got him out and emptied him;
  Alas it was too late;
His spirit was gone for to sport aloft
  In the realms of the good and great.

If Emmeline Grangerford could make poetry like that before she was fourteen, there ain't no telling what she could 'a' done by and by. Buck said she could rattle off poetry like nothing She didn't ever have to stop to think. He said she would slap down a line, and if she couldn't find anything to rhyme with it would just scratch it out and slap down another one, and go ahead. She warn't particular; she could write about anything you choose to give her to write about just so it was sadful. Every time a man died, or a woman died, or a child died, she would be on hand with her "tribute" before he was cold. She called them tributes. The neighbors said it was the doctor first, then Emmeline, then the undertaker—the undertaker never got in ahead of Emmeline but once, and then she hung fire on a rhyme for the dead person's name, which was Whistler She warn't ever the same after that, she never complained, but she kinder pined away and did not live long. Poor thing, many's the time I made myself go up to the little room that used to be hers and get out her poor old scrap-book and read in it when her pictures had been



" . . . so many arms it made her look too spidery. . . . "

aggravating me and I had soured on her a little. I liked all that family, dead ones and all, and warn't going to let anything come between us. Poor Emmeline made poetry about all the dead people when she was alive, and it didn't seem right that there warn't nobody to make some about her now she was gone; so I tried to sweat out a verse or two myself, but I couldn't seem to make it go somehow. They kept Emmeline's room trim and nice, and all the things fixed in it just the way she liked to have them when she was alive, and nobody ever slept there. The old lady took care of the room herself, though there were plenty of niggers, and she sewed there a good deal and read her Bible there mostly.

Well, as I was saying about the parlor, there was beautiful curtains on the windows: white, with pictures painted on them of castles with vines all down the walls, and cattle coming down to drink. There was a little old piano, too, that had tin pans in it, I reckon, and nothing was ever so lovely as to hear the young ladies sing "The Last Link is Broken" and play "The Battle of Prague" on it. The walls of all the rooms was plastered, and most had carpets on the floors, and the whole house was whitewashed on the outside.

It was a double house, and the big open place betwixt them was roofed and floored, and sometimes the table was set there in the middle of the day, and it was a cool, comfortable place. Nothing couldn't be better. And warn't the cooking good, and just bushels of it too!

Col. Grangerford was a gentleman, you see. He was a gentleman all over; and so was his family. He was well born, as the saying is, and that's worth as much in a man as it is in a horse, so the Widow Douglas said, and nobody ever denied that she was of the first aristocracy in our town; and pap he always said it, too, though he warn't no more quality than a mudcat himself. Col. Grangerford was very tall and very slim, and had a darkish-paly complexion, not a sign of red in it anywheres; he was clean-shaved every morning all over his thin face, and he had the thinnest kind of lips, and the thinnest kind of nostrils, and a high nose, and heavy eyebrows, and the blackest kind of eyes, sunk so deep back that they seemed like they was looking out of caverns at you, as you may say. His forehead was high, and his hair was gray and straight and hung to his shoulders. His hands was long and thin, and every day of his life he put on a clean shirt and a full suit from head to foot made out of linen so white it hurt your eyes to look at it; and on Sundays he wore a blue tail-coat with brass buttons on it. He carried a mahogany cane with a silver head to it. There warn't no frivolishness about him, not a bit, and he warn't ever loud. He was as kind as he could be—you could feel that, you know, and so you had confidence. Sometimes he smiled, and it was good to see; but when he straightened himself up like a liberty-pole, and the lightning begun to flicker out from under his eyebrows, you wanted to climb a tree first, and find out what the matter was afterwards. He didn't ever have to tell anybody to mind their manners—everybody was always good-mannered where he was. Everybody loved to have him around, too; he was sunshine most always—I mean he made it seem like good weather. When he turned into a cloud-bank it was awful dark for half a minute, and that was enough; there wouldn't nothing go wrong again for a week.

When him and the old lady come down in the morning all the family got up out of their chairs and give them good day, and didn't set down again till they had set down. Then Tom and Bob went to the sideboard where the decanter was, and mixed a glass of bitters and handed it to him, and he held it in his hand and waited till Tom's and Bob's was mixed, and then they bowed and said, "Our duty to you, sir, and madam", and *they* bowed the least bit in the world and said thank you, and so they drank, all three, and Bob and Tom poured a spoonful of water on the sugar and the mite of whisky or apple-brandy in the bottom of their tumblers, and give it to me and Buck, and we drank to the old people too.

Bob was the oldest and Tom next—tall, beautiful men with very broad shoulders and brown faces, and long black hair and black eyes. They dressed in white linen from head to foot, like the old gentleman, and wore broad Panama hats.

Then there was Miss Charlotte; she was twenty-five, and tall and proud and grand, but as good as she could be when she warn't stirred up; but when she was she had a look that would make you wilt in your tracks, like her father. She was beautiful.

So was her sister, Miss Sophia, but it was a different kind. She was gentle and sweet like a dove, and she was only twenty.

Each person had their own nigger to wait on them—Buck too. My nigger had a monstrous easy time, because I warn't used to having anybody do anything for me, but Buck's was on the jump most of the time.

This was all there was of the family now, but there used to be more—three sons, they got killed; and Emmeline that died.

The old gentleman owned a lot of farms and over a hundred niggers. Sometimes a stack of people would come there, horseback, from ten or fifteen mile around, and stay five or six days, and have such junketings round about and on the river, and dances and picnics in the woods daytimes, and balls at the house nights. These people was mostly kinfolks of the family The men brought their guns with them. It was a handsome lot of quality, I tell you.

There was another clan of aristocracy around there—five or six families—mostly of the name of Shepherdson. They was as high-toned and well born and rich and grand as the tribe of Grangerfords. The Shepherdsons and Grangerfords used the same steamboat-landing, which was about two mile above our house; so sometimes when I went up there with a lot of our folks I used to see a lot of the Shepherdsons there on their fine horses.

One day Buck and me was away out in the woods hunting, and heard a horse coming. We was crossing the road. Buck says:

"Quick! Jump for the woods!"

We done it, and then peeped down the woods through the leaves Pretty soon a splendid young man came galloping down the road, setting his horse easy and looking like a soldier He had his gun across his pommel. I had seen him before. It was young Harney Shepherdson. I heard Buck's gun go off at my ear, and Harney's hat tumbled off from his head. He grabbed his gun and rode straight to the place where we was hid. But we didn't wait. We started through the woods on a run. The woods warn't thick, so I looked over my shoulder to dodge the bullet, and twice I seen Harney cover Buck with his gun, and then he rode away the way he come—to get his hat, I reckon, but I couldn't see. We never stopped running till we got home. The old gentleman's eyes blazed a minute—'twas pleasure, mainly, I judged—then his face sort of smoothed down, and he says, kind of gentle:

"I don't like that shooting from behind a bush. Why didn't you step into the road, my boy?"

"The Shepherdsons don't, father. They always take advantage"

Miss Charlotte she held her head up like a queen while Buck was telling his tale, and her nostrils spread and her eyes snapped The two young men looked dark, but never said nothing Miss Sophia she turned pale, but the color come back when she found the man warn't hurt.

Soon as I could get Buck down by the corn-cribs under the trees by ourselves, I says.

"Did you want to kill him, Buck?"

"Well, I bet I did."

"What did he do to you?"

"Him? He never done nothing to me."

"Well, then, what did you want to kill him for?"

"Why, nothing—only it's on account of the feud."

"What's a feud?"

"Why, where was you raised? Don't you know what a feud is?"

"Never heard of it before—tell me about it."

"Well," says Buck, "a feud is this way. A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him, then that other man's brother kills *him;* then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the *cousins* chip in—and by and by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time."

"Has this one been going on long, Buck?"

"Well, I should *reckon!* It started thirty year ago, or som'ers along there. There was trouble 'bout something, and then a lawsuit to settle it; and the suit went agin one of the men, and so he up and shot the man that won the suit—which he would naturally do, of course. Anybody would."

"What was the trouble about, Buck?—land?"

"I reckon maybe—I don't know."

"Well, who done the shooting? Was it a Grangerford or a Shepherdson?"

"Laws, how do *I* know? It was so long ago."

"Don't anybody know?"

"Oh, yes, pa knows, I reckon, and some of the other old people, but they don't know now what the row was about in the first place."

"Has there been many killed, Buck?"

"Yes; right smart chance of funerals. But they don't always kill. Pa's got a few buckshot in him; but he don't mind it 'cuz he don't weigh much, anyway. Bob's been carved up some with a bowie, and Tom's been hurt once or twice."

"Has anybody been killed this year, Buck?"

"Yes; we got one and they got one. 'Bout three months ago my cousin Bud, fourteen year old, was riding through the woods on t'other side of the river, and didn't have no weapon with him, which was blame' foolishness, and in a lonesome place he hears a horse a-coming behind him, and sees old Baldy Shepherdson a-linkin' after him with his gun in his hand and his white hair a-flying in the wind; and 'stead of jumping off and taking to the brush, Bud 'lowed he could outrun him; so they had it, nip and tuck, for five mile or more, the old man a-gaining all the time; so at last Bud seen it warn't any use, so he stopped and faced around so as to have the bullet-holes in front, you know, and the old man he rode up and shot him down. But he didn't git much chance to enjoy his luck, for inside of a week our folks laid *him* out."

"I reckon that old man was a coward, Buck."

"I reckon he *warn't* a coward. Not by a blame' sight. There ain't a coward amongst them Shepherdsons—not a one. And there ain't no cowards amongst the Grangerfords either. Why, that old man kep' up his end in a fight one day for half an hour against three Grangerfords, and come out winner. They was all a-horseback; he lit off of his horse and got behind a little woodpile, and kep' his horse before him to stop the bullets; but the Grangerfords stayed on their horses and capered around the old man, and peppered away at him, and he peppered away at them. Him and his horse both went home pretty leaky and crippled, but the Grangerfords had to be *fetched* home—and one of 'em was dead, and another died the next day. No, sir; if a body's out hunting for cowards he don't want to fool away any time amongst them Shepherdsons, becuz they don't breed any of that *kind.*"

Next Sunday we all went to church, about three mile, everybody a-horseback. The men took their guns along, so did Buck, and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall. The Shepherdsons done the same. It was pretty ornery preaching—all about brotherly love, and such-like tiresomeness; but everybody said it was a good sermon, and they all talked it over going home, and had such a powerful lot to say about faith and good works and free grace and predestination, and I don't know what all, that it did seem to me to be one of the roughest Sundays I had run across yet.

About an hour after dinner everybody was dozing around, some in their chairs and some in their rooms, and it got to be pretty dull. Buck and a dog was stretched out on the grass in the sun sound asleep. I went up to our room, and judged I would take a nap myself. I found that sweet Miss Sophia standing in her door, which was next to ours, and she took me in her room and shut the door very soft, and asked me if I liked her, and I said I did; and she asked me if I would do something for her and not tell anybody, and I said I would. Then she said she'd forgot her Testament, and left it in the seat at church between two other books, and would I slip out quiet and go there and fetch it to her, and

not say nothing to nobody. I said I would. So I slid out and slipped off up the road, and there warn't anybody at the church, except maybe a hog or two, for there warn't any lock on the door, and hogs likes a puncheon floor in summer-time because it's cool. If you notice, most folks don't go to church only when they've got to; but a hog is different.

Says I to myself, something's up; it ain't natural for a girl to be in such a sweat about a Testament. So I give it a shake, and out drops a little piece of paper with *"Half past two"* wrote on it with a pencil. I ransacked it, but couldn't find anything else. I couldn't make anything out of that, so I put the paper in the book again, and when I got home and upstairs there was Miss Sophia in her door waiting for me. She pulled me in and shut the door; then she looked in the Testament till she found the paper, and as soon as she read it she looked glad; and before a body could think she grabbed me and give me a squeeze, and said I was the best boy in the world, and not to tell anybody. She was mighty red in the face for a minute, and her eyes lighted up, and it made her powerful pretty. I was a good deal astonished, but when I got my breath I asked her what the paper was about, and she asked me if I had read it, and I said no, and she asked me if I could read writing, and I told her "no, only coarse-hand," and then she said the paper warn't anything but a book-mark to keep her place, and I might go and play now.

I went off down to the river, studying over this thing, and pretty soon I noticed that my nigger was following along behind. When we was out of sight of the house he looked back and around a second, and then comes a-running, and says:

"Mars Jawge, if you'll come down into de swamp I'll show you a whole stack o' water-moccasins."

Thinks I, that's mighty curious; he said that yesterday. He oughter know a body don't love water-moccasins enough to go around hunting for them. What is he up to, anyway? So I says:

"All right; trot ahead."

I followed a half a mile; then he struck out over the swamp, and waded ankle-deep as much as another half-mile. We come to a little flat piece of land which was dry and very thick with trees and bushes and vines, and he says:

"You shove right in dah jist a few steps, Mars Jawge; dah's whah dey is. I's seed 'm befo'; I don't k'yer to see 'em no mo'."

Then he slopped right along and went away, and pretty soon the trees hid him. I poked into the place a ways and come to a little open patch as big as a bedroom all hung around with vines, and found a man laying there asleep—and, by jings, it was my old Jim!

I waked him up, and I reckoned it was going to be a grand surprise to him to see me again, but it warn't. He nearly cried he was so glad, but he warn't surprised. Said he swum along behind me that night, and heard me yell every time, but dasn't answer, because he didn't want nobody to pick *him* up and take him into slavery again. Says he:

"I got hurt a little, en couldn't swim fas', so I wuz a considerable ways behine you towards de las', when you landed I reck'ned I could ketch up wid you on de lan' 'dout havin' to shout at you, but when I see dat house I begin to go slow. I 'uz off too fur to hear what dey say to you—I wuz 'fraid o' de dogs; but when it 'uz all quiet ag'in I knowed you's in de house, so I struck out for de woods to wait for day. Early in de mawnin' some er de niggers come along, gwyne to de fields, en dey tuk me en showed me dis place, whah de dogs can't track me on accounts o' de water, en dey brings me truck to eat every night, en tells me how you's a-gittin' along."

"Why didn't you tell my Jack to fetch me here sooner, Jim?"

"Well, 'twarn't no use to 'sturb you, Huck, tell we could do sumfn—but we's all right now. I ben a-buyin' pots en pans en vittles, as I got a chanst, en a-patchin' up de raf' nights when—"

"*What* raft, Jim?"

"Our ole raf'."

"You mean to say our old raft warn't smashed all to flinders?"

"No, she warn't. She was tore up a good deal—one en' of her was; but dey warn't no great harm done, on'y our traps was mos' all los'. Ef we hadn' dive' so deep en swum so fur under water, en de night hadn't ben so dark, en we warn't so sk'yerd, en ben sick punkin-heads, as de sayin' is, we'd a seed de raf'. But it's jis' as well we didn't, 'kase now she's all fixed up ag'in mos' as good as new, en we's got a new lot o' stuff, in de place o' what 'uz los'."

"Why, how did you get hold of the raft again, Jim—did you catch her?"

"How I gwyne to ketch her en I out in de woods? No; some er de niggers foun' her ketched on a snag along heah in de ben', en dey hid her in a crick 'mongst de willows, en dey wuz so much jawin' 'bout which un 'um she b'long to de mos' dat I come to heah 'bout it pooty soon, so I ups en settles de trouble by tellin' 'um she don't b'long to none uv 'um, but to you en me; en I ast 'm if dey gwyne to grab a young white genlman's propaty, en git a hid'n for it? Den I gin 'm ten cents apiece, en dey 'uz mighty well satisfied, en wisht some mo' raf's 'ud come along en make 'm rich ag'in. Dey's mighty good to me, dese niggers is, en whatever I wants 'm to do fur me I doan' have to ast 'm twice, honey. Dat Jack's a good nigger, en pooty smart."

"Yes, he is. He ain't ever told me you was here; told me to come, and he'd show me a lot of water-moccasins. If anything happens *he* ain't mixed up in it. He can say he never seen us together, and it'll be the truth."

I don't want to talk much about the next day. I reckon I'll cut it pretty short. I waked up about dawn, and was a-going to turn over and go to sleep again when I noticed how still it was—didn't seem to be anybody stirring. That warn't usual. Next I noticed that Buck was up and gone. Well, I gets up, a-wondering, and goes down-stairs—nobody around; everything as still as a mouse. Just the same outside. Thinks I, what does it mean? Down by the woodpile I comes across my Jack, and says:

"What's it all about?"

Says he:

"Don't you know, Mars Jawge?"

"No," says I, "I don't."

"Well, den, Miss Sophia's run off! 'deed she has. She run off in de night some time—nobody don't know jis' when; run off to get married to dat young Harney Shepherdson, you know—leastways, so dey 'spec. De fambly foun' it out 'bout half an hour ago—maybe a little mo'—en' I *tell* you dey warn't no time los'. Sich another hurryin' up guns en hosses *you* never see! De women folks has gone for to stir up de relations, en ole Mars Saul en de boys tuck dey guns en rode up de river road for to try to ketch dat young man en kill him 'fo' he kin git acrost de river wid Miss Sophia. I reck'n dey's gwyne to be mighty rough times."

"Buck went off 'thout waking me up."

"Well, I reck'n he *did!* Dey warn't gwyne to mix you



" . . . trying to get at a couple of young chaps that was behind the wood-rank. . . ."

up in it. Mars Buck he loaded up his gun en 'lowed he's gwyne to fetch home a Shepherdson or bust. Well, dey'll be plenty un 'm dah, I reck'n, en you bet you he'll fetch one ef he gits a chanst."

I took up the river road as hard as I could put. By and by I begin to hear guns a good ways off. When I came in sight of the log store and the woodpile where the steamboats lands I worked along under the trees and brush till I got to a good place, and then I clumb up into the forks of a cottonwood that was out of reach, and watched. There was a wood-rank four foot high a little ways in front of the tree, and first I was going to hide behind that; but maybe it was luckier I didn't.

There was four or five men cavorting around on their horses in the open place before the log store, cussing and yelling, and trying to get at a couple of young chaps that was behind the wood-rank alongside of the steamboat-landing; but they couldn't come it. Every time one of them showed himself on the river side of the woodpile he got shot at. The two boys was squatting back to back behind the pile, so they could watch both ways.

By and by the men stopped cavorting around and yelling. They started riding towards the store; then up gets one of the boys, draws a steady bead over the wood-rank, and drops one of them out of his saddle. All the men jumped off of their horses and grabbed the hurt one and started to carry him to the store; and that minute the two boys started on the run. They got half-way to the tree I was in before the men noticed. Then the men see them, and jumped on their horses and took out

after them. They gained on the boys, but it didn't do no good, the boys had too good a start; they got to the woodpile that was in front of my tree, and slipped in behind it, and so they had the bulge on the men again. One of the boys was Buck, and the other was a slim young chap about nineteen years old.

The men ripped around awhile, and then rode away. As soon as they was out of sight I sung out to Buck and told him. He didn't know what to make of my voice coming out of the tree at first. He was awful surprised. He told me to watch out sharp and let him know when the men come in sight again; said they was up to some devilment or other—wouldn't be gone long. I wished I was out of that tree, but I dasn't come down. Buck begun to cry and rip, and 'lowed that him and his cousin Joe (that was the other young chap) would make up for this day yet. He said his father and his two brothers was killed, and two or three of the enemy. Said the Shepherdsons laid for them in ambush. Buck said his father and brothers ought to waited for their relations—the Shepherdsons was too strong for them. I asked him what was become of young Harney and Miss Sophia. He said they'd got across the river and was safe. I was glad of that; but the way Buck did take on because he didn't manage to kill Harney that day he shot at him—I hain't ever heard anything like it.

All of a sudden, bang! bang! bang! goes three or four guns—the men had slipped around through the woods and come in from behind without their horses! The boys jumped for the river—both of them hurt—and as they swum down the current the men run along the bank shooting at them and singing out, "Kill them, kill them!" It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't a-going to tell *all* that happened—it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them—lots of times I dream about them.

I stayed in the tree till it begun to get dark, afraid to come down. Sometimes I heard guns away off in the woods; and twice I seen little gangs of men gallop past the log store with guns; so I reckoned the trouble was still a-going on. I was mighty down-hearted; so I made up my mind I wouldn't ever go anear that house again, because I reckoned I was to blame, somehow. I judged that that piece of paper meant that Miss Sophia was to meet Harney somewheres at half past two and run off; and I judged I ought to told her father about that paper and the curious way she acted, and then maybe he would 'a' locked her up, and this awful mess wouldn't ever happened.

When I got down out of the tree I crept along down the river-bank a piece, and found the two bodies laying in the edge of the water, and tugged at them till I got them ashore, then I covered up their faces, and got away as quick as I could. I cried a little when I was covering up Buck's face, for he was mighty good to me.

It was just dark now. I never went near the house, but struck through the woods and made for the swamp. Jim warn't on his island, so I tramped off in a hurry for the crick, and crowded through the willows, red-hot to jump aboard and get out of that awful country. The raft was gone! My souls, but I was scared! I couldn't get my breath for most a minute. Then I raised a yell. A voice not twenty-five foot from me says:

"Good lan'! is dat you, honey? Doan' make no noise."

It was Jim's voice—nothing ever sounded so good before. I run along the bank a piece and got aboard, and Jim he grabbed me and hugged me, he was so glad to see me. He says:

"Laws bless you, chile, I 'uz right down sho' you's dead ag'in Jack's been heah; he say he rek'n you's ben shot, kase you didn' come home no mo'; so I's jes' dis minute a-startin' de raf' down towards de mouf er de crick, so's to be all ready for to shove out en leave soon as Jack comes ag'in en tells me for certain you *is* dead. Lawsy, I's mighty glad to git you back ag'in, honey."

I says:

"All right—that's mighty good; they won't find me, and they'll think I've been killed, and floated down the river—there's something up there that'll help them think so—so don't you lose no time, Jim, but just shove off for the big water as fast as ever you can."

I never felt easy till the raft was two mile below there and out in the middle of the Mississippi. Then we hung up our signal lantern, and judged that we was free and safe once more. I hadn't had a bite to eat since yesterday, so Jim he got out some corn-dodgers and buttermilk, and pork and cabbage and greens—there ain't nothing in the world so good when it's cooked right—and whilst I eat my supper we talked and had a good time. I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was

Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft.

1883·1884

AN ARKANSAW DIFFICULTY

Down the river below the Grangerford plantation, Huck and Jim, against their will, were joined by two rascals who called themselves the king and the duke. These two, who were glad to collect any dishonest pennies available, brought the raft ashore in Bricksville, Arkansas, to give a performance of a Shakespearean play, and Huck saw the incidents here described. The passage, part of Chapter XXI, starts just after the duke has hired the courthouse and has posted bills advertising the play.

When Clemens printed a long selection about Huck, Jim, the king, and the duke in the February 1885 issue of the Century, most of this passage was omitted for fear that it might offend the sensibilities of subscribers. (See Bernard DeVoto, Mark Twain's America, pp. 212-216, for a detailed study of the excisions.) Sherburn's speech to the mob, with its commentaries on what Clemens called "The damned human race," is an articulation of some of the pessimistic attitudes which were to become more and more important to Clemens as the years passed. In What Is Man? and The Mysterious Stranger, he was to give them their most detailed expression.

Then we went loafing around town. The stores and houses was most all old, shackly, dried-up frame concerns that hadn't ever been painted; they was set up three or four foot above ground on stilts, so as to be out of reach of the water when the river was overflowed. The houses had little gardens around them, but they didn't seem to raise hardly anything in them but jimpson-weeds, and sunflowers, and ashpiles, and old curled-up boots and shoes, and pieces of bottles, and rags, and played-out tinware. The fences was made of different kinds of boards, nailed on at different times; and they leaned every which way, and had gates that didn't generly have but one hinge—a leather one. Some of the fences had been whitewashed some time or another, but the duke said it was in Columbus's time, like enough. There was generly hogs in the garden, and people driving them out.

All the stores was along one street. They had white domestic awnings in front, and the country-people hitched their horses to the awning-posts. There was empty dry-goods boxes under the awnings, and loafers roosting on them all day long, whittling them with their Barlow knives; and chawing tobacco, and gaping and yawning and stretching—a mighty ornery lot. They generly had on yellow straw hats most as wide as an umbrella, but didn't wear no coats nor waistcoats; they called one another Bill, and Buck, and Hank, and Joe, and Andy, and talked lazy and drawly, and used considerable many cuss-words. There was as many as one loafer leaning up against every awning-post, and he most always had his hands in his britches pockets, except when he fetched them out to lend a chaw of tobacco or scratch. What a body was hearing amongst them all the time was:

"Gimme a chaw 'v tobacker, Hank."

"Cain't; I hain't got but one chaw left. Ask Bill."

Maybe Bill he gives him a chaw; maybe he lies and says he ain't got none. Some of them kinds of loafers never has a cent in the world, nor a chaw of tobacco of their own. They get all their chawing by borrowing; they say to a fellow, "I wisht you'd len' me a chaw, Jack, I jist this minute give Ben Thompson the last chaw I had"—which is a lie pretty much every time; it don't fool nobody but a stranger; but Jack ain't no stranger, so he says:

"*You* give him a chaw, did you? So did your sister's cat's grandmother. You pay me back the chaws you've awready borry'd off'n me, Lafe Buckner, then I'll loan you one or two ton of it, and won't charge you no back intrust, nuther."

"Well, I *did* pay you back some of it wunst."

"Yes, you did—'bout six chaws. You borry'd store tobacker and paid back nigger-head."

Store tobacco is flat black plug, but these fellows mostly chaws the natural leaf twisted. When they borrow a chaw they don't generly cut it off with a knife, but set the plug in between their teeth, and gnaw with their teeth and tug at the plug with their hands till they get it in two; then sometimes the one that owns the tobacco looks mournful at it when it's handed back, and says, sarcastic:



"I'm on the waw-path, and the price uv coffins is a-gwyne to raise."

"Here, gimme the *chaw,* and you take the *plug.*"

All the streets and lanes was just mud; they warn't nothing else *but* mud—mud as black as tar and nigh about a foot deep in some places, and two or three inches deep in *all* the places. The hogs loafed and grunted around everywheres. You'd see a muddy sow and a litter of pigs come lazying along the street and whollop herself right down in the way, where folks had to walk around her, and she'd stretch out and shut her eyes and wave her ears whilst the pigs was milking her, and look as happy as if she was on salary. And pretty soon you'd hear a loafer sing out, "Hi! *so* boy! sick him, Tige!" and away the sow would go, squealing most horrible, with a dog or two swinging to each ear, and three or four dozen more a-coming; and then you would see all the loafers get up and watch the thing out of sight, and laugh at the fun and look grateful for the noise. Then they'd settle back again till there was a dog-fight. There couldn't anything wake them up all over, and make them happy all over, like a dog-fight—unless it might be putting turpentine on a stray dog and setting fire to him, or tying a tin pan to his tail and see him run himself to death.

On the river-front some of the houses was sticking out over the bank, and they was bowed and bent, and about ready to tumble in. The people had moved out of them. The bank was caved away under one corner of some others, and that corner was hanging over. People lived in them yet, but it was dangersome, because sometimes a strip of land as wide as a house caves in at a time. Sometimes a belt of land a quarter of a mile deep will start in and cave along and cave along till it all caves into the river in one summer. Such a town as that has to be always moving back, and back, and back, because the river's always gnawing at it.

The nearer it got to noon that day the thicker and thicker was the wagons and horses in the streets, and more coming all the time. Families fetched their dinners with them from the country, and eat them in the wagons. There was considerable whisky-drinking going on, and I seen three fights. By and by somebody sings out:

"Here comes old Boggs!—in from the country for his little old monthly drunk; here he comes, boys!"

All the loafers looked glad; I reckoned they was used to having fun out of Boggs. One of them says:

"Wonder who he's a-gwyne to chaw up this time. If he'd a-chawed up all the men he's ben a-gwyne to chaw up in the last twenty year he'd have considerable ruputation now."

Another one says, "I wisht old Boggs 'd threaten me, 'cuz then I'd know I warn't gwyne to die for a thousan' year."

Boggs comes a-tearing along on his horse, whooping and yelling like an Injun, and singing out:

"Cler the track, thar. I'm on the waw-path, and the price uv coffins is a-gwyne to raise."

He was drunk, and weaving about in his saddle; he was over fifty year old, and had a very red face. Everybody yelled at him and laughed at him and sassed him, and he sassed back, and said he'd attend to them and lay them out in their regular turns, but he couldn't wait now because he'd come to town to kill old Colonel Sherburn, and his motto was, "Meat first, and spoon vittles to top off on."

He see me, and rode up and says:

"Whar'd you come f'm, boy? You prepared to die?"

Then he rode on. I was scared, but a man says:

"He don't mean nothing; he's always a-carryin' on like that when he's drunk. He's the best-naturedest old fool in Arkansaw—never hurt nobody, drunk nor sober."

Boggs rode up before the biggest store in town, and bent his head down so he could see under the curtain of the awning and yells:

"Come out here, Sherburn! Come out and meet the man you've swindled. You're the houn' I'm after, and I'm a-gwyne to have you, too!"

And so he went on, calling Sherburn everything he

could lay his tongue to, and the whole street packed with people listening and laughing and going on. By and by a proud-looking man about fifty-five—and he was a heap the best-dressed man in that town, too—steps out of the store, and the crowd drops back on each side to let him come. He says to Boggs, mighty ca'm and slow—he says:

"I'm tired of this, but I'll endure it till one o'clock. Till one o'clock, mind—no longer. If you open your mouth against me only once after that time you can't travel so far but I will find you."

Then he turns and goes in. The crowd looked mighty sober; nobody stirred, and there warn't no more laughing. Boggs rode off blackguarding Sherburn as loud as he could yell, all down the street; and pretty soon back he comes and stops before the store, still keeping it up. Some men crowded around him and tried to get him to shut up, but he wouldn't; they told him it would be one o'clock in about fifteen minutes, and so he *must* go home —he must go right away But it didn't do no good. He cussed away with all his might, and throwed his hat down in the mud and rode over it, and pretty soon away he went a-raging down the street again, with his gray hair a-flying Everybody that could get a chance at him tried their best to coax him off of his horse so they could lock him up and get him sober; but it warn't no use—up the street he would tear again, and give Sherburn another cussing. By and by somebody says:

"Go for his daughter!—quick, go for his daughter; sometimes he'll listen to her. If anybody can persuade him, she can."

So somebody started on a run. I walked down street a ways and stopped. In about five or ten minutes here comes Boggs again, but not on his horse He was a-reeling across the street towards me, bareheaded, with a friend on both sides of him a-holt of his arms and hurrying him along. He was quiet, and looked uneasy; and he warn't hanging back any, but was doing some of the hurrying himself. Somebody sings out:

"Boggs!"

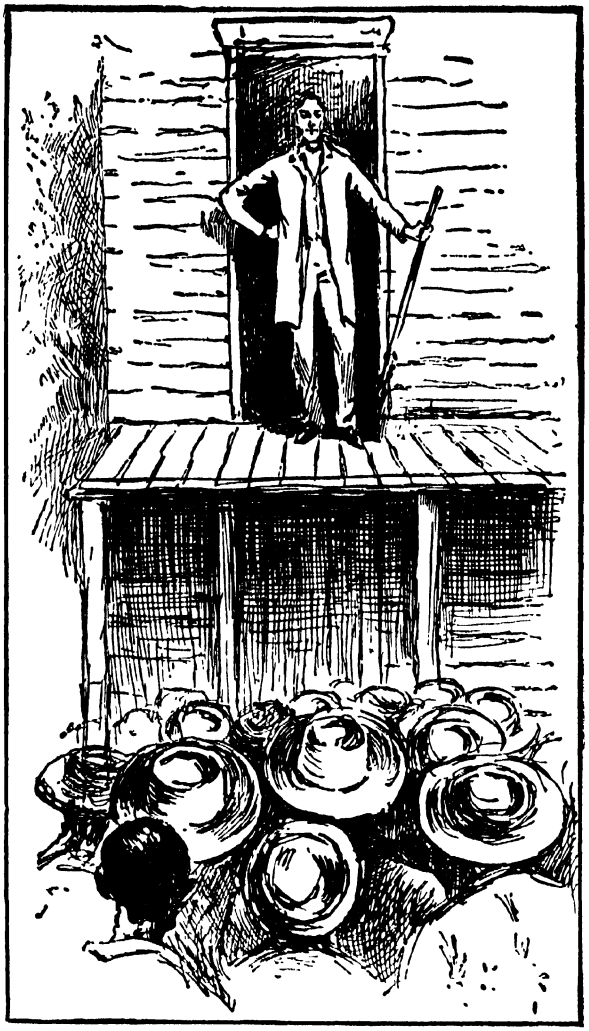
I looked over there to see who said it, and it was that Colonel Sherburn. He was standing perfectly still in the street, and had a pistol raised in his right hand—not aiming it, but holding it out with the barrel tilted up towards the sky. The same second I see a young girl coming on the run, and two men with her. Boggs and the men turned round to see who called him, and when they see the pistol the men jumped to one side, and the pistol-barrel come down slow and steady to a level—both barrels cocked. Boggs throws up both of his hands and says, "O Lord, don't shoot!" Bang! goes the first shot, and he staggers back, clawing at the air—bang! goes the second one, and he tumbles backwards onto the ground, heavy and solid, with his arms spread out. That young girl screamed out and comes rushing, and down she throws herself on her father, crying, and saying, "Oh, he's killed him, he's killed him!" The crowd closed up around them, and shouldered and jammed one another, with their necks stretched, trying to see, and people on the inside trying to shove them back and shouting, "Back, back! give him air, give him air!"

Colonel Sherburn he tossed his pistol onto the ground, and turned around on his heels and walked off.

They took Boggs to a little drug store, the crowd pressing around just the same, and the whole town following, and I rushed and got a good place at the window, where I was close to him and could see in. They laid him on the floor and put one large Bible under his head, and opened another one and spread it on his breast, but they tore open his shirt first, and I seen where one of the bullets went in He made about a dozen long gasps, his breast lifting the Bible up when he drawed in his breath, and letting it down again when he breathed it out—and after that he laid still; he was dead. Then they pulled his daughter away from him, screaming and crying, and took her off She was about sixteen, and very sweet and gentle looking, but awful pale and scared.

Well, pretty soon the whole town was there, squirming and scrouging and pushing and shoving to get at the window and have a look, but people that had the places wouldn't give them up, and folks behind them was saying all the time, "Say, now, you've looked enough, you fellows; 'tain't right and 'tain't fair for you to stay thar all the time, and never give nobody a chance; other folks has their rights as well as you."

There was considerable jawing back, so I slid out, thinking maybe there was going to be trouble. The streets was full, and everybody was excited. Everybody that seen the shooting was telling how it happened, and there was a big crowd packed around each one of these fellows, stretching their necks and listening. One long, lanky man, with long hair and a big white fur stovepipe



"Just then Sherburn steps out onto the roof. . . ."

hat on the back of his head, and a crooked-handled cane, marked out the places on the ground where Boggs stood and where Sherburn stood, and the people following him around from one place to t'other and watching everything he done, and bobbing their heads to show they understood, and stooping a little and resting their hands on their thighs to watch him mark the places on the ground with his cane; and then he stood up straight and stiff where Sherburn had stood, frowning and having his hat-brim down over his eyes, and sung out, "Boggs!" and then fetched his cane down slow to a level, and says "Bang!" staggered backwards, says "Bang!" again, and fell down flat on his back. The people that had seen the thing said he done it perfect; said it was just exactly the way it all happened. Then as much as a dozen people got out their bottles and treated him.

Well, by and by somebody said Sherburn ought to be lynched. In about a minute everybody was saying it; so away they went, mad and yelling, and snatching down every clothes-line they come to to do the hanging with.

They swarmed up towards Sherburn's house, a-whooping and raging like Injuns, and everything had to clear the way or get run over and tromped to mush, and it was awful to see. Children was heeling it ahead of the mob, screaming and trying to get out of the way; and every window along the road was full of women's heads, and there was nigger boys in every tree, and bucks and wenches looking over every fence; and as soon as the mob would get nearly to them they would break and skaddle back out of reach. Lots of the women and girls was crying and taking on, scared most to death.

They swarmed up in front of Sherburn's palings as thick as they could jam together, and you couldn't hear yourself think for the noise. It was a little twenty-foot yard. Some sung out "Tear down the fence! tear down the fence!" Then there was a racket of ripping and tearing and smashing, and down she goes, and the front wall of the crowd begins to roll in like a wave.

Just then Sherburn steps out onto the roof of his little front porch, with a double-barrel gun in his hand, and takes his stand, perfectly ca'm and deliberate, not saying a word. The racket stopped, and the wave sucked back.

Sherburn never said a word—just stood there, looking down. The stillness was awful creepy and uncomfortable. Sherburn run his eye slow along the crowd; and wherever it struck the people tried a little to outgaze him, but they couldn't; they dropped their eyes and looked sneaky. Then pretty soon Sherburn sort of laughed; not the pleasant kind, but the kind that makes you feel like when you are eating bread that's got sand in it.

Then he says, slow and scornful:

"The idea of *you* lynching anybody! It's amusing. The idea of you thinking you had pluck enough to lynch a *man!* Because you're brave enough to tar and feather poor friendless cast-out women that come along here, did that make you think you had grit enough to lay your

hands on a *man?* Why, a *man's* safe in the hands of ten thousand of your kind—as long as it's daytime and you're not behind him.

"Do I know you? I know you clear through. I was born and raised in the South, and I've lived in the North; so I know the average all around. The average man's a coward. In the North he lets anybody walk over him that wants to, and goes home and prays for a humble spirit to bear it. In the South one man, all by himself, has stopped a stage full of men in the daytime, and robbed the lot. Your newspapers call you a brave people so much that you think you *are* braver than any other people—whereas you're just *as* brave, and no braver. Why don't your juries hang murderers? Because they're afraid the man's friends will shoot them in the back, in the dark—and it's just what they *would* do.

"So they always acquit; and then a *man* goes in the night, with a hundred masked cowards at his back, and lynches the rascal Your mistake is, that you didn't bring a man with you; that's one mistake, and the other is that you didn't come in the dark and fetch your masks. You brought *part* of a man—Buck Harkness, there—and if you hadn't had him to start you, you'd 'a' taken it out in blowing.

"You didn't want to come. The average man don't like trouble and danger. *You* don't like trouble and danger. But if only *half* a man—like Buck Harkness, there—shouts 'Lynch him! lynch him!' you're afraid to back down—afraid you'll be found out to be what you are—*cowards*—and so you raise a yell, and hang yourselves onto that half-a-man's coat-tail, and come raging up here, swearing what big things you're going to do. The pitifulest thing out is a mob; that's what an army is—a mob; they don't fight with courage that's born in them, but with courage that's borrowed from their mass, and from their officers. But a mob without any *man* at the head of it is *beneath* pitifulness. Now the thing for *you* to do is to droop your tails and go home and crawl in a hole. If any real lynching's going to be done it will be done in the dark, Southern fashion; and when they come they'll bring their masks, and fetch a *man* along. Now *leave*—and take your half-a-man with you"—tossing his gun up across his left arm and cocking it when he says this.

The crowd washed back sudden, and then broke all apart, and went tearing off every which way, and Buck Harkness he heeled it after them, looking tolerable cheap. I could 'a' stayed if I wanted to, but I didn't want to.

1884

William Dean Howells

1837 • 1920

William Dean Howells was born at Martin's Ferry, Ohio, in 1837. His father was a printer and journalist in several Ohio towns, and the boy learned early to help. He received little formal education, but he had a passion for languages, especially German, and for literature, especially the poems of Heine. From 1856 to 1861 Howells was reporter and editorial writer on the *Ohio State Journal* of Columbus. He wrote in 1860 a campaign biography of Lincoln and was rewarded by an appointment in 1861 as consul at Venice. In the meantime, he had been trying his hand at poetry. "Ah! if I only could write something worthy of the *Atlantic!*" he said to a friend; the ambition was realized in 1860 when three of his poems appeared in that magazine. In the same year occurred his first visit to New England, which is charmingly remembered in *Literary Friends and Acquaintance*

(1900). To the young Howells the journey was a pilgrimage to the Holy Land of American literature. James T. Fields, editor of the *Atlantic,* Lowell, and Holmes received him most cordially. Hawthorne, after talking with Howells on the hilltop back of "The Wayside," wrote on his card as an introduction to Emerson, "I find this young man worthy."

Howells was in Venice from 1861 to 1865. In 1862 he married Eleanor Mead, of Brattleboro, Vermont. The literary fruits of Howells' Italian experience were to appear later in *Venetian Life* (1866), *Modern Italian Poets* (1887), and elsewhere. In 1866 he returned to America, was made assistant editor of the *Atlantic,* and settled in Cambridge. In 1872 he became editor-in-chief and continued in that high office until 1881. During these years, Howells seems to have been especially under the somewhat awe-inspiring mentorship of Lowell, of whom he wrote to Charles Eliot Norton, "His strength is felt throughout the whole puny body of our literature."

Howells moved in 1888 to New York, where he lived —allowing for excursions back to New England and to Europe—the rest of his life. After two months there, he wrote: "I have been trying to catch on to the bigger life of the place. It's immensely interesting . . . and the place is lordly free, with foreign touches of all kinds all through its abounding Americanism: Boston seems of another planet." In 1889 he attended a Socialist meeting. "It was as quiet and orderly as a Sunday School, and people whom the reporters represent as violent conspirators were poorly-dressed, well-behaved listeners to a lecture which dealt patiently with hard facts." It is clear that Howells' residence in New York extended his social horizon. As early as 1886 he had established a connection with Harper and Brothers. From 1900 on he wrote the "Easy Chair" department of *Harper's Monthly,* which brought him increasing influence and prestige. He received honorary degrees from Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Oxford, and for many years was president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

In addition to many volumes of travel, autobiography, literary criticism, and plays, Howells wrote thirty-eight novels. Three of these have generally been regarded as decidedly better than the rest: *A Modern Instance* (1881), *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885), and *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890). The setting of the first and second is New England, chiefly Boston; of the third, New York. *A Modern Instance* is an intense story —intense, that is, for the mild Howells—of the failure of the marriage of a young journalist of weak moral principle and an inexperienced, temperamental girl from a Maine village. The characters and scenes are drawn with knowledge and skill. *The Rise of Silas Lapham* is the story of the career of a "self-made" Boston businessman who is awkward in society but honorable in business; the author is especially expert in depicting contrasts between the Brahmins and the parvenus of the Boston social world. In *A Hazard of New Fortunes* Howells essayed a larger canvas. A half-dozen or more individuals living in New York, each representing a different social background and attitude, are brought together, somewhat artificially, by means of their connection with a magazine. The climactic event is a streetcar strike, which is treated sympathetically. "No other American novel of the nineteenth century, except possibly *The Gilded Age,*" says Granville Hicks, "can be compared in its scope with *A Hazard of New Fortunes.*" A fourth book of considerable interest— *A Traveler from Altruria* (1894)—may be added, though it is more nearly a tract than a novel. Altruria is Howells' Utopia, and his "traveler," after having been sufficiently pained by what he has seen at a summer hotel in the White Mountains, describes the ideal society in a lecture which shows, still further, Howells' increasing interest in social problems and the influence of his reading of Edward Bellamy and Tolstoy.

Howells has been sharply criticized since his death. The naturalists have objected to his reticence and decency, his suppression of sex and crime. The Freudians (see Ludwig Lewisohn, *Expression in America*) have discovered in his prudishness the "violent sex-consciousness" of the Victorian mind. The Socialist critics (see Granville Hicks, *The Great Tradition*) have condemned him for his failure to come to grips with the problems of capital and labor; Hicks cannot forgive him, particularly, for presenting in Silas Lapham an honorable capitalist. In defense, it may be urged that Howells dealt with the life he knew, and that he should be judged by what he wrote, rather than by what he didn't write. He thought, a little naively perhaps, that "the more smiling aspects of life are the more American." The new realism in fiction, he maintained, should portray the typical, the representative, rather than the exceptional; and he persisted in his belief that the typical, the representative phenomena of American life were compara-

tively decent. From this point of view, his books give a valuable picture. He had a facile pen; he had skill in dialogue and dramatic situation; he was marvelously adept in depicting the domestic commonplaces and the foibles of "society." During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, he was our chief recorder in prose fiction of the domestic life of middle-class America.

O W. Firkins, William Dean Howells. A Study, Cambridge, 1924 • Life in Letters of William Dean Howells, ed. Mildred Howells, 2 vols, New York, 1928 • W. F. Taylor, The Economic Novel in America, Chapel Hill, 1942

A Hazard of New Fortunes

A Hazard of New Fortunes begins with the difficult decision of the Marches (especially difficult for Mrs. March, who is a native Bostonian) to move from Boston to New York, where Mr. March, who in many ways resembles Howells himself, is to edit the magazine **Every Other Week**. Howells' delicate realism is exhibited at its best in the scene in which Mr. and Mrs. March face this turning point in their lives. The later scenes, in which the Marches look for living quarters in New York, show both the niceties of Howells' realism and his expanding social consciousness.

PART FIRST

Chapter I

Now, you think this thing over, March, and let me know the last of next week," said Fulkerson. He got up from the chair which he had been sitting astride, with his face to its back, and tilting toward March on its hind-legs, and came and rapped upon his table with his thin bamboo stick "What you want to do is to get out of the insurance business, anyway. You acknowledge that yourself. You never liked it, and now it makes you sick, in other words, it's killing you. You ain't an insurance man by nature. You're a natural-born literary man; and you've been going against the grain. Now, I offer you a chance to go *with* the grain, I don't say you're going to make your everlasting fortune, but I'll give you a living salary, and if the thing succeeds you'll share in its success We'll all share in its success That's the beauty of it I tell you, March, this is the greatest idea that has been struck since——" Fulkerson stopped and searched his mind for a fit image—"since the creation of man."

He put his leg up over the corner of March's table and gave himself a sharp cut on the thigh, and leaned forward to get the full effect of his words upon his listener

March had his hands clasped together behind his head, and he took one of them down long enough to put his inkstand and mucilage-bottle out of Fulkerson's way. After many years' experiment of a moustache and whiskers, he now wore his grizzled beard full, but cropped close, it gave him a certain grimness, corrected by the gentleness of his eyes.

"Some people don't think much of the creation of man, nowadays Why stop at that? Why not say since the morning stars sang together?"

"No, sir, no, sir! I don't want to claim too much, and I draw the line at the creation of man I'm satisfied with that. But if you want to ring the morning stars into the prospectus, all right, I won't go back on you"

"But I don't understand why you've set your mind on *me*," March said "I haven't had any magazine experience, you know that, and I haven't seriously attempted to do anything in literature since I was married. I gave up smoking and the Muse together. I suppose I could still manage a cigar, but I don't believe I could——"

"Muse worth a cent" Fulkerson took the thought out of his mouth and put it into his own words. "I know. Well, I don't want you to I don't care if you never

33 **morning . . . together** See Job 38 7 'When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

write a line for the thing, though you needn't reject anything of yours, if it happens to be good, on that account. And I don't want much experience in my editor; rather not have it. You told me, didn't you, that you used to do some newspaper work before you settled down?"

"Yes; I thought my lines were permanently cast in those places once. It was more an accident than anything else that I got into the insurance business. I suppose I secretly hoped that if I made my living by something utterly different, I could come more freshly to literature proper in my leisure."

"I see; and you found the insurance business too many for you. Well, anyway, you've always had a hankering for the inkpots; and the fact that you first gave me the idea of this thing shows that you've done more or less thinking about magazines."

"Yes—less."

"Well, all right. Now don't you be troubled. I know what I want, generally speaking, and in this particular instance I want *you.* I might get a man of more experience, but I should probably get a man of more prejudice and self-conceit along with him, and a man with a following of the literary hangers-on that are sure to get round an editor sooner or later. I want to start fair; and I've found out in the syndicate business all the men that are worth having. But they know me, and they don't know you, and that's where we shall have the pull on them. They won't be able to work the thing. Don't you be anxious about the experience. I've got experience enough of my own to run a dozen editors. What I want is an editor who has taste, and you've got it; and conscience, and you've got it; and horse-sense, and you've got that. And I like you because you're a Western man, and I'm another. I do cotton to a Western man when I find him off East here, holding his own with the best of 'em, and showing 'em that he's just as much civilised as they are. We both know what it is to have our bright home in the setting sun; heigh?"

"I think we Western men who've come East are apt to take ourselves a little too objectively, and to feel ourselves rather more representative than we need," March remarked.

Fulkerson was delighted. "You've hit it! We do! We are!"

"And as for holding my own, I'm not very proud of what I've done in that way; it's been very little to hold. But I know what you mean, Fulkerson, and I've felt the same thing myself; it warmed me toward you when we first met. I can't help suffusing a little to any man when I hear that he was born on the other side of the Alleghanies. It's perfectly stupid. I despise the same thing when I see it in Boston people."

Fulkerson pulled first one of his blond whiskers and then the other, and twisted the end of each into a point, which he left to untwine itself. He fixed March with his little eyes, which had a curious innocence in their cunning, and tapped the desk immediately in front of him. "What I like about you is that you're broad in your sympathies. The first time I saw you, that night on the Quebec boat, I said to myself, 'There's a man I want to know. There's a human being.' I was a little afraid of Mrs. March and the children, but I felt at home with you—thoroughly domesticated—before I passed a word with you; and when you spoke first, and opened up with a joke over that fellow's tableful of light literature and Indian moccasins and birch-bark toy canoes and stereoscopic views, I knew that we were brothers—spiritual twins. I recognised the Western style of fun, and I thought, when you said you were from Boston, that it was some of the same. But I see now that it's being a cold fact, as far as the last fifteen or twenty years count, is just so much gain. You know both sections, and you can make this thing go, from ocean to ocean."

"We might ring that into the prospectus, too," March suggested, with a smile. "You might call the thing *From Sea to Sea.* By the way, what are you going to call it?"

"I haven't decided yet; that's one of the things I wanted to talk with you about. I *had* thought of *The Syndicate;* but it sounds kind of dry, and it don't seem to cover the ground exactly. I should like something that would express the co-operative character of the thing; but I don't know as I can get it."

"Might call it *The Mutual.*"

"They'd think it was an insurance paper. No, that won't do. But Mutual comes pretty near the idea. If we could get something like that, it would pique curiosity;

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7 lines . . . places. Compare Psalms 16:6: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage" • 35 cotton to, readily make friends with

and then if we could get paragraphs afloat explaining that the contributors were to be paid according to the sales, it would be a first rate ad."

He bent a wide, anxious, inquiring smile upon March, who suggested lazily, "You might call it *The Round-Robin.* That would express the central idea of irresponsibility. As I understand, everybody is to share the profits and be exempt from the losses. Or, if I'm wrong, and the reverse is true, you might call it *The Army of Martyrs.* Come, that sounds attractive, Fulkerson! Or what do you think of *The Fifth Wheel?* That would forestall the criticism that there are too many literary periodicals already. Or, if you want to put forward the idea of complete independence, you could call it *The Free Lance;* or——"

"Or *The Hog on Ice*—either stand up or fall down, you know," Fulkerson broke in coarsely. "But we'll leave the name of the magazine till we get the editor. I see the poison's beginning to work in you, March; and if I had time, I'd leave the result to time. But I haven't. I've got to know inside of the next week. To come down to business with you, March, I shan't start this thing unless I can get you to take hold of it."

He seemed to expect some acknowledgment, and March said, "Well, that's very nice of you, Fulkerson."

"No, sir; no, sir! I've always liked you, and wanted you, ever since we met that first night. I had this thing inchoately in my mind then, when I was telling you about the newspaper syndicate business—beautiful vision of a lot of literary fellows breaking loose from the bondage of publishers, and playing it alone—"

"You might call it *The Lone Hand;* that would be attractive," March interrupted. "The whole West would know what you meant."

Fulkerson was talking seriously, and March was listening seriously; but they both broke off and laughed. Fulkerson got down off the table, and made some turns about the room. It was growing late; the October sun had left the top of the tall windows; it was still clear day, but it would soon be twilight; they had been talking a long time. Fulkerson came and stood with his little feet wide apart, and bent his little lean, square face on March: "See here! How much do you get out of this thing here, anyway?"

"The insurance business?" March hesitated a moment, and then said, with a certain effort of reserve, "At present about three thousand." He looked up at Fulkerson with a glance, as if he had a mind to enlarge upon the fact, and then dropped his eyes without saying more.

Whether Fulkerson had not thought it so much or not, he said, "Well, I'll give you thirty-five hundred. Come! And your chances in the success."

"We won't count the chances in the success. And I don't believe thirty-five hundred would go any further in New York than three thousand in Boston."

"But you don't live on three thousand here?"

"No; my wife has a little property."

"Well, she won't lose the income if you go to New York. I suppose you pay six or seven hundred a year for your house here. You can get plenty of flats in New York for the same money; and I understand you can get all sorts of provisions for less than you pay now—three or four cents on the pound. Come!"

This was by no means the first talk they had had about the matter; every three or four months during the past two years the syndicate man had dropped in upon March to air the scheme and to get his impressions of it. This had happened so often that it had come to be a sort of joke between them. But now Fulkerson clearly meant business, and March had a struggle to maintain himself in a firm poise of refusal.

"I dare say it wouldn't—or it needn't—cost so very much more, but I don't want to go to New York; or my wife doesn't. It's the same thing."

"A good deal samer," Fulkerson admitted.

March did not quite like his candour, and he went on with dignity. "It's very natural she shouldn't. She has always lived in Boston; she's attached to the place. Now, if you were going to start *The Fifth Wheel* in Boston—"

Fulkerson slowly and sadly shook his head, but decidedly. "Wouldn't do. You might as well say St. Louis or Cincinnati. There's only one city that belongs to the whole country, and that's New York."

"Yes, I know," sighed March; "and Boston belongs to the Bostonians; but they like you to make yourself at home while you're visiting."

"If you'll agree to make phrases like that, right along, and get them into *The Round-Robin* somehow, I'll say four thousand," said Fulkerson. "You think it over now, March. You *talk* it over with Mrs. March; I know you will, anyway; and I might as well make a virtue of ad-

vising you to do it. Tell her I advised you to do it, and you let me know before next Saturday what you've decided."

March shut down the rolling top of his desk in the corner of the room, and walked Fulkerson out before him. It was so late that the last of the chore-women who washed down the marble halls and stairs of the great building had wrung out her floor-cloth and departed, leaving spotless stone and a clean damp smell in the darkening corridors behind her.

"Couldn't offer you such swell quarters in New York, March," Fulkerson said as he went tack-tacking down the steps with his small boot-heels. "But I've got my eye on a little house round in West Eleventh Street, that I'm going to fit up for my bachelor's hall in the third story, and adapt for *The Lone Hand* in the first and second, if this thing goes through; and I guess we'll be pretty comfortable. It's right on the Sand Strip—no malaria of *any* kind."

"I don't know that I'm going to share its salubrity with you yet," March sighed in an obvious travail which gave Fulkerson hopes.

"Oh yes, you are," he coaxed. "Now, you talk it over with your wife. You give her a fair, unprejudiced chance at the thing on its merits, and I'm very much mistaken in Mrs. March if she doesn't tell you to go in and win. We're bound to win!"

They stood on the outside steps of the vast edifice beetling like a granite crag above them, with the stone groups of an allegory of life-insurance fore-shortened in the bas-relief overhead. March absently lifted his eyes to it. It was suddenly strange after so many years' familiarity, and so was the well-known street in its Saturday-evening solitude. He asked himself, with prophetic homesickness, if it were an omen of what was to be. But he only said musingly, "A fortnightly. You know that didn't work in England. *The Fortnightly* is published once a month now."

"It works in France," Fulkerson retorted. "The *Revue des Deux Mondes* is still published twice a month. I guess we can make it work in America—with illustrations."

"Going to have illustrations?"

"My dear boy! What are you giving me? Do I look like the sort of lunatic who would start a thing in the twilight of the nineteenth century *without* illustrations? *Come* off!"

"Ah, that complicates it! I don't know anything about art." March's look of discouragement confessed the hold the scheme had taken upon him.

"I don't want you to!" Fulkerson retorted. "Don't you suppose I shall have an art man?"

"And will they—the artists—work at a reduced rate too, like the writers, with the hopes of a share in the success?"

"Of course they will! And if I want any particular man, for a card, I'll pay him big money besides. But I can get plenty of first-rate sketches on my own terms. You'll see! They'll *pour* in!"

"Look here, Fulkerson," said March, "you'd better call this fortnightly of yours *The Madness of the Half-Moon;* or *Bedlam Broke Loose* wouldn't be bad! Why do you throw away all your hard earnings on such a crazy venture? Don't do it!" The kindness which March had always felt, in spite of his wife's first misgivings and reservations, for the merry, hopeful, slangy, energetic little creature trembled in his voice. They had both formed a friendship for Fulkerson during the week they were together in Quebec. When he was not working the newspapers there, he went about with them over the familiar ground they were showing their children, and was simply grateful for the chance, as well as very entertaining about it all. The children liked him, too; when they got the clew to his intention, and found that he was not quite serious in many of the things he said, they thought he was great fun. They were always glad when their father brought him home on the occasion of Fulkerson's visits to Boston; and Mrs. March, though of a charier hospitality, welcomed Fulkerson with a grateful sense of his admiration for her husband. He had a way of treating March with deference, as an older and abler man, and of qualifying the freedom he used toward every one with an implication that March tolerated it voluntarily, which she thought very sweet, and even refined.

"Ah, *now* you're talking like a man and a brother," said Fulkerson. "Why, March, old man, do you suppose I'd come on here and try to talk you into this thing if I wasn't morally, if I wasn't perfectly, *sure* of success? There isn't any if or and about it. I know my ground, every inch; and I don't stand alone on it," he added,

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57 **for a card,** that is, to play a winning card

with a significance which did not escape March. "When you've made up your mind, I can give you the proof; but I'm not at liberty now to say anything more. I tell you it's going to be a triumphal march from the word go, with coffee and lemonade for the procession along the whole line. All you've got to do is to fall in." He stretched out his hand to March. "You let me know as soon as you can."

March deferred taking his hand till he could ask, "Where are you going?"

"Parker House. Take the half-past ten for New York to-night."

"I thought I might walk your way." March looked at his watch. "But I shouldn't have time. Good-bye!"

He now let Fulkerson have his hand, and they exchanged a cordial pressure. Fulkerson started off at a quick, light pace. Half a block away he stopped, turned round, and seeing March still standing where he had left him, he called back joyously, "I've got the name!"

"What?"

"Every Other Week."

"It isn't bad."

"Ta-ta!"

Chapter II

All the way up to the South End March prolonged his talk with Fulkerson, and at his door in Nankeen Square he closed the parley with a plump refusal to go to New York on any terms. His daughter Bella was lying in wait for him in the hall, and she threw her arms round his neck with the exuberance of her fourteen years, and with something of the histrionic intention of her sex. He pressed on, with her clinging about him, to the library, and, in the glow of his decision against Fulkerson, kissed his wife, where she sat by the study lamp reading the *Transcript* through her first pair of eyeglasses: it was agreed in the family that she looked distinguished in them, or at any rate cultivated. She took them off to give him a glance of question, and their son Tom looked up from his book for a moment; he was in his last year at the high-school, and was preparing for Harvard.

"I didn't get away from the office till half-past five," March explained to his wife's glance, "and then I walked. I suppose dinner's waiting. I'm sorry, but I won't do it any more."

At table he tried to be gay with Bella, who babbled at him with a voluble pertness, which her brother had often advised her parents to check in her, unless they wanted her to be universally despised.

"Papa," she shouted, at last, "you're not listening!"

As soon as possible his wife told the children they might be excused. Then she asked, "What *is* it, Basil?"

"What is what?" he retorted, with a specious brightness that did not avail.

"What is on your mind?"

"How do you know there's anything?"

"Your kissing me so when you came in, for one thing."

"Don't I always kiss you when I come in?"

"Not now. I suppose it isn't necessary any more. *Cela va sans baiser.*"

"Yes, I guess it's so; we get along without the symbolism now." He stopped, but she knew that he had not finished.

"Is it about your business? Have they done anything more?"

"No; I'm still in the dark. I don't know whether they mean to supplant me, or whether they ever did. But I wasn't thinking about that. Fulkerson has been to see me again."

"Fulkerson?" She brightened at the name, and March smiled too. "Why didn't you bring him to dinner?"

"I wanted to talk with you. Then you *do* like him?"

"What has that got to do with it, Basil?"

"Nothing! nothing! That is, he was boring away about that scheme of his again. He's got it into definite shape at last."

"What shape?"

March outlined it for her, and his wife seized its main features with the intuitive sense of affairs which makes women such good business-men, when they will let it.

"It *sounds* perfectly crazy," she said finally. "But it mayn't be. The only thing I didn't like about Mr. Fulkerson was his always wanting to chance things. But what have you got to do with it?"

"What have I got to do with it?" March toyed with the delay the question gave him; then he said, with a

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34 **Transcript.** The Boston Evening Transcript, discontinued in 1941, was for many years the favorite newspaper of the more cultivated in Boston • 59 **Cela . . . baiser,** it goes without kissing (on the analogy of "cela va sans dire," it goes without saying)

sort of deprecatory laugh, "It seems that Fulkerson has had his eye on me ever since we met that night on the Quebec boat. I opened up pretty freely to him, as you do to a man you never expect to see again, and when I found he was in that newspaper syndicate business, I told him about my early literary ambitions——"

"You can't say that *I* ever discouraged them, Basil," his wife put in. "I should have been willing, any time, to give up everything for them."

"Well, he says that I first suggested this brilliant idea to him. Perhaps I did; I don't remember. When he told me about his supplying literature to newspapers for simultaneous publication, he says I asked, 'Why not apply the principle of co-operation to a magazine, and run it in the interest of the contributors?' and that set him to thinking, and he thought out his plan of a periodical, which should pay authors and artists a low price outright for their work, and give them a chance of the profits in the way of a percentage. After all, it isn't so very different from the chances an author takes when he publishes a book. And Fulkerson thinks that the novelty of the thing would pique public curiosity, if it didn't arouse public sympathy. And the long and short of it is, Isabel, that he wants me to help edit it."

"To edit it?" His wife caught her breath, and she took a little time to realise the fact, while she stared hard at her husband to make sure he was not joking.

"Yes. He says he owes it all to me; that I invented the idea—the germ—the microbe."

His wife had now realised the fact, at least in a degree that excluded trifling with it. "That is very honourable of Mr. Fulkerson; and if he owes it to you, it was the least he could do." Having recognised her husband's claim to the honour done him, she began to kindle with a sense of the honour itself, and the value of the opportunity. "It's a very high compliment to *you,* Basil; a *very* high compliment. And you could give up this wretched insurance business that you've always hated so, and that's making you so unhappy now that you think they're going to take it from you. Give it up, and take Mr. Fulkerson's offer! It's a perfect interposition, coming just at this time! Why, do it! Mercy!" she suddenly arrested herself, "he wouldn't expect *you* to get along on the possible profits?" Her face expressed the awfulness of the notion.

March smiled reassuringly, and waited to give himself the pleasure of the sensation he meant to give her. "If I'll make striking phrases for it and edit it too, he'll give me four thousand dollars."

He leaned back in his chair, and stuck his hands deep into his pockets, and watched his wife's face, luminous with the emotions that flashed through her mind—doubt, joy, anxiety.

"Basil! You don't mean it! Why, *take* it! Take it *instantly! Oh,* what a thing to happen! *Oh,* what luck! But you deserve it, if you first suggested it. What an escape, what a triumph over all those hateful insurance people! O Basil, I'm afraid he'll change his mind! You ought to have accepted on the spot. You might have *known* I would approve, and you could *so* easily have taken it back if I didn't. Telegraph him now! Run right out with the despatch! Or we can send Tom!"

In these imperatives of Mrs. March's there was always much of the conditional. She meant that he should do what she said, if it were entirely right; and she never meant to be considered as having urged him.

"And suppose his enterprise went wrong?" her husband suggested.

"It won't *go* wrong. Hasn't he made a success of his syndicate?"

"He says so—yes."

"Very well, then, it stands to reason that he'll succeed in this, too. He wouldn't undertake it if he didn't know it would succeed; he must have capital."

"It will take a great deal to get such a thing going; and even if he's got an Angel behind him——"

She caught at the word: "An Angel?"

"It's what the theatrical people call a financial backer. He dropped a hint of something of that kind."

"Of course, he's got an Angel," said his wife, promptly adopting the word. "And even if he hadn't, still, Basil, I should be willing to have you risk it. The risk isn't so great, is it? We shouldn't be ruined if it failed altogether. With our stocks we have two thousand a year, anyway, and we could pinch through on that till you got into some other business afterward, especially if we'd saved something out of your salary while it lasted. Basil, I want you to try it! I know it will give you a new lease of life to have a congenial occupation." March laughed, but his wife persisted. "I'm all for your trying it, Basil; indeed I am. If it's an experiment, you can give it up."

"It can give me up, too."

"Oh, nonsense! I guess there's not much fear of that. Now, I want you to telegraph Mr. Fulkerson, so that he'll find the despatch waiting for him when he gets to New York. I'll take the whole responsibility, Basil, and I'll risk all the consequences."

Chapter III

March's face had sobered more and more as she followed one hopeful burst with another, and now it expressed a positive pain. But he forced a smile, and said: "There's a little condition attached. Where did you suppose it was to be published?"

"Why, in Boston, of course. Where else should it be published?"

She looked at him for the intention of his question so searchingly that he quite gave up the attempt to be gay about it. "No," he said gravely, "it's to be published in New York."

She fell back in her chair. "In New York?" She leaned forward over the table toward him, as if to make sure that she heard aright, and said, with all the keen reproach that he could have expected, "*In New York,* Basil! Oh, how *could* you have let me go on?"

He had a sufficiently rueful face in owning, "I oughtn't to have done it, but I got started wrong. I couldn't help putting the best foot forward at first—or as long as the whole thing was in the air. I didn't know that you would take so much to the general enterprise, or else I should have mentioned the New York condition at once; but of course that puts an end to it."

"Oh, of course," she assented sadly. "We *couldn't* go to New York."

"No, I know that," he said; and with this a perverse desire to tempt her to the impossibility awoke in him, though he was really quite cold about the affair himself now. "Fulkerson thought we could get a nice flat in New York for about what the interest and taxes came to here, and provisions are cheaper. But I should rather not experiment at my time of life. If I could have been caught younger, I might have been inured to New York, but I don't believe I could stand it now."

"How I hate to have you talk that way, Basil! You are young enough to try anything—anywhere; but you know I don't like New York. I don't approve of it. It's so *big,* and *so* hideous! Of course I shouldn't mind that; but I've always lived in Boston, and the children were born and have all their friendships and associations here." She added, with helplessness that discredited her good-sense and did her injustice, "I have just got them both into the Friday afternoon class at Papanti's, and you know how difficult that is."

March could not fail to take advantage of an occasion like this. "Well, that alone ought to settle it. Under the circumstances it would be flying in the face of Providence to leave Boston. The mere fact of a brilliant opening like that offered me on *The Microbe,* and the halcyon future which Fulkerson promises if we'll come to New York, is as dust in the balance against the advantages of the Friday afternoon class."

"Basil," she appealed solemnly, "have I ever interfered with your career?"

"I never had any for you to interfere with, my dear."

"Basil! Haven't I always had faith in you? And don't you suppose that if I thought it would really be for your advancement, I would go to New York or anywhere with you?"

"No, my dear, I don't," he teased. "If it would be for my salvation, yes, perhaps; but not short of that; and I should have to prove by a cloud of witnesses that it would. I don't blame you. I wasn't born in Boston, but I understand how you feel. And really, my dear," he added, without irony, "I never seriously thought of asking you to go to New York. I *was* dazzled by Fulkerson's offer, I'll own that; but his choice of me as editor sapped my confidence in him."

"I don't like to hear you say that, Basil," she entreated.

"Well, of course there were mitigating circumstances. I could see that Fulkerson meant to keep the whip-hand himself, and that was reassuring. And besides, if the Reciprocity Life should happen not to want my services any longer, it wouldn't be quite like giving up a certainty; though, as a matter of business, I let Fulkerson get that impression; I felt rather sneaking to do it. But, if the worst comes to the worst, I can look about for something to do in Boston; and, anyhow, people don't starve on two thousand a year, though it's convenient to

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49 class at Papanti's, dancing class of select young people • 68 cloud of witnesses. See Hebrews 12:1: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses . . ."

have five. The fact is, I'm too old to change so radically. If you don't like my saying that, then *you* are, Isabel, and so are the children. I've no right to take them from the home we've made, and to change the whole course of their lives, unless I can assure them of something, and I can't assure them of anything. Boston is big enough for us, and it's certainly prettier than New York. I always feel a little proud of hailing from Boston; my pleasure in the place mounts the further I get away from it. But I do appreciate it, my dear, I've no more desire to leave it than you have. You may be sure that if you don't want to take the children out of the Friday afternoon class, I don't want to leave my library here, and all the ways I've got set in. We'll keep on. Very likely the company won't supplant me, and if it does, and Watkins gets the place, he'll give me a subordinate position of some sort. Cheer up, Isabel! I have put Satan and his angel, Fulkerson, behind me, and it's all right. Let's go in to the children."

He came round the table to Isabel, where she sat in a growing distraction, and lifted her by the waist from her chair.

She sighed deeply. "Shall we tell the children about it?"

"No. What's the use, now?"

"There wouldn't be any," she assented. When they entered the family room, where the boy and girl sat on either side of the lamp working out the lessons for Monday which they had left over from the day before, she asked, "Children, how would you like to live in New York?"

Bella made haste to get in her word first. "And give up the Friday afternoon class?" she wailed.

Tom growled from his book, without lifting his eyes, "I shouldn't want to go to Columbia. They haven't got any dormitories, and you have to board round anywhere. Are you going to New York?" He now deigned to look up at his father.

"No, Tom. You and Bella have decided me against it. Your perspective shows the affair in its true proportions. I had an offer to go to New York, but I've refused it...."

[After a prolonged consideration, the Marches decide to accept Fulkerson's offer and move to New York. Renouncing her initial objection, Mrs. March insists that she has always wanted her husband to try his hand at literature. The final decision is hastened by the almost certain prospect of March's being transferred to a less desirable position in the insurance company. When the following chapter opens, the Marches have for some time been looking for a house or apartment in New York without much success.]

Chapter IX

Their house-hunting no longer had novelty, but it still had interest; and they varied their day by taking a coupé, by renouncing advertisements, and by reverting to agents. Some of these induced them to consider the idea of furnished houses; and Mrs. March learned tolerance for Fulkerson by accepting permits to visit flats and houses which had none of the qualifications she desired in either, and were as far beyond her means as they were out of the region to which she had geographically restricted herself. They looked at three-thousand and four-thousand dollar apartments, and rejected them for one reason or another which had nothing to do with the rent; the higher the rent was, the more critical they were of the slippery inlaid floors and the arrangement of the richly decorated rooms. They never knew whether they had deceived the janitor or not; as they came in a coupé, they hoped they had.

They drove accidentally through one street that seemed gayer in the perspective than an L road. The fire-escapes, with their light iron balconies and ladders of iron, decorated the lofty house fronts; the roadway and sidewalks and door-steps swarmed with children; women's heads seemed to show at every window. In the basements, over which flights of high stone steps led to the tenements, were green-grocers' shops abounding in cabbages, and provision stores running chiefly to bacon and sausages, and cobblers' and tinners' shops, and the like, in proportion to the small needs of a poor neighbourhood. Ash barrels lined the sidewalks, and garbage heaps filled the gutters; teams of all trades stood idly about; a peddler of cheap fruit urged his cart through the street, and mixed his cry with the joyous screams and shouts of the children and the scolding and gossiping voices of the

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1 radically suggests the idea of uprooting • 17 put . . . me. Compare Luke 4 8 from the account of the temptation of Jesus: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan . . ." • 43 coupé, a four-wheeled closed carriage for two persons inside, with an outside seat for the driver • 60 L road, the elevated railroad, then new in New York and only recently (1941) dismantled

women; the burly blue bulk of a policeman defined itself at the corner; a drunkard zigzagged down the sidewalk toward him. It was not the abode of the extremest poverty, but of a poverty as hopeless as any in the world, transmitting itself from generation to generation, and establishing conditions of permanency to which human life adjusts itself as it does to those of some incurable disease, like leprosy.

The time had been when the Marches would have taken a purely æsthetic view of the facts as they glimpsed them in this street of tenement-houses; when they would have contented themselves with saying that it was as picturesque as a street in Naples or Florence, and with wondering why nobody came to paint it; they would have thought they were sufficiently serious about it in blaming the artists for their failure to appreciate it, and going abroad for the picturesque when they had it here under their noses. It was to the nose that the street made one of its strongest appeals, and Mrs. March pulled up her window of the coupé. "Why does he take us through such a disgusting street?" she demanded, with an exasperation of which her husband divined the origin.

"This driver may be a philanthropist in disguise," he answered, with dreamy irony, "and may want us to think about the people who are not merely carried through this street in a coupé, but have to spend their whole lives in it, winter and summer, with no hopes of driving out of it, except in a hearse. I must say they don't seem to mind it. I haven't seen a jollier crowd anywhere in New York. They seem to have forgotten death a little more completely than any of their fellow-citizens, Isabel. And I wonder what they think of us, making this gorgeous progress through their midst. I suppose they think we're rich, and hate us—if they hate rich people; they don't look as if they hated anybody. Should we be as patient as they are with their discomfort? I don't believe there's steam-heat or an elevator in the whole block. Seven rooms and a bath would be more than the largest and genteelest family would know what to do with. They wouldn't know what to do with the bath anyway."

His monologue seemed to interest his wife apart from the satirical point it had for themselves. "You ought to get Mr. Fulkerson to let you work some of these New York sights up for *Every Other Week,* Basil; you could do them very nicely."

"Yes; I've thought of that. But don't let's leave the personal ground. Doesn't it make you feel rather small and otherwise unworthy when you see the kind of street these fellow-beings of yours live in, and then think how particular you are about locality and the number of bell-pulls? I don't see even ratchets and speaking-tubes at these doors." He craned his neck out of the window for a better look, and the children of discomfort cheered him, out of sheer good feeling and high spirits. "I didn't know I was so popular. Perhaps it's a recognition of my humane sentiments."

"Oh, it's very easy to have humane sentiments, and to satirise ourselves for wanting eight rooms and a bath in a good neighbourhood, when we see how these wretched creatures live," said his wife. "But if we shared all we have with them, and then settled down among them, what good would it do?"

"Not the least in the world. It might help us for the moment, but it wouldn't keep the wolf from their doors for a week; and then they would go on just as before, only they wouldn't be on such good terms with the wolf. The only way for them is to keep up an unbroken intimacy with the wolf; then they can manage him somehow. I don't know how, and I'm afraid I don't want to. Wouldn't you like to have this fellow drive us round among the halls of pride somewhere for a little while? Fifth Avenue or Madison, up-town?"

"No; we've no time to waste. I've got a place near Third Avenue, on a nice cross street, and I want him to take us there." It proved that she had several addresses near together, and it seemed best to dismiss their coupé and do the rest of their afternoon's work on foot. It came to nothing; she was not humbled in the least by what she had seen in the tenement-house street; she yielded no point in her ideal of a flat, and the flats persistently refused to lend themselves to it. She lost all patience with them.

"Oh, I don't say the flats are in the right of it," said her husband, when she denounced their stupid inadequacy to the purposes of a Christian home. "But I'm not so sure that we are either. I've been thinking about that home business ever since my sensibilities were dragged —in a coupé—through that tenement-house street. Of course no child born and brought up in such a place as that could have any conception of home. But that's because those poor people can't give character to their habi-

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50 number of bell-pulls, one for each flight up

tations. They have to take what they can get. But people like us—that is, of our means—do give character to the average flat. It's made to meet their tastes, or their supposed tastes; and so it's made for social show, not for family life at all. Think of a baby in a flat! It's a contradiction in terms; the flat is the negation of motherhood. The flat means society life; that is, the pretence of social life. It's made to give artificial people a society basis on a little money—too much money, of course, for what they get. So the cost of the building is put into marble halls and idiotic decoration of all kinds. I don't object to the conveniences, but none of these flats have a living-room. They have drawing-rooms to foster social pretence, and they have dining-rooms and bedrooms; but they have no room where the family can all come together and feel the sweetness of being a family. The bedrooms are black-holes mostly, with a sinful waste of space in each. If it were not for the marble halls, and the decorations, and the foolishly expensive finish, the houses could be built round a court, and the flats could be shaped something like a Pompeiian house, with small sleeping closets—only lit from the outside—and the rest of the floor thrown into two or three large cheerful halls, where all the family life could go on, and society could be transacted unpretentiously. Why, those tenements are better and humaner than those flats! There the whole family lives in the kitchen, and has its consciousness of being; but the flat abolishes the family consciousness. It's confinement without coziness; it's cluttered without being snug. You couldn't keep a self-respecting cat in a flat; you couldn't go down cellar to get cider. No: the Anglo-Saxon home, as we know it in the Anglo-Saxon house, is simply impossible in the Franco-American flat, not because it's humble, but because it's false."

"Well, then," said Mrs. March, "let's look at houses."

He had been denouncing the flat in the abstract, and he had not expected this concrete result. But he said, "We will look at houses, then."

Chapter X

Nothing mystifies a man more than a woman's aberrations from some point at which he supposes her fixed as a star. In these unfurnished houses, without steam or elevator, March followed his wife about with patient wonder. She rather liked the worst of them best; but she made him go down into the cellars and look at the furnaces; she exacted from him a rigid inquest of the plumbing. She followed him into one of the cellars by the fitful glare of successively lighted matches, and they enjoyed a moment in which the anomaly of their presence there on that errand, so remote from all the facts of their long-established life in Boston, realised itself for them.

"Think how easily we might have been murdered and nobody been any the wiser!" she said when they were comfortably out-doors again.

"Yes, or made way with ourselves in an access of emotional insanity, supposed to have been induced by unavailing flat-hunting," he suggested.

She fell in with the notion. "I'm beginning to *feel* crazy. But I don't want *you* to lose your head, Basil. And I don't want you to sentimentalise any of the things you see in New York. I think you were disposed to do it in that street we drove through. I don't believe there's any *real* suffering—not real *suffering*—among those people; that is, it would be suffering from our point of view, but they've been used to it all their lives, and they don't feel their discomfort so much."

"Of course I understand that, and I don't propose to sentimentalise them. I think when people get used to a bad state of things they had better stick to it; in fact they don't usually like a better state so well, and I shall keep that firmly in mind."

She laughed with him, and they walked along the L-bestridden avenue, exhilarated by their escape from murder and suicide in that cellar, toward the nearest cross-town track, which they meant to take home to their hotel. "Now to-night we will go to the theatre," she said, "and get this whole house business out of our minds, and be perfectly fresh for a new start in the morning." Suddenly she clutched his arm. "Why, did you *see* that man?" and she signed with her head toward a decently dressed person who walked beside them, next to the gutter, stooping over as if to examine it, and half halting at times.

"No. What?"

"Why, I saw him pick up a dirty bit of cracker from the pavement and cram it into his mouth and eat it down as if he were famished. And look! he's actually hunting for more in those garbage heaps!"

This was what the decent-looking man with the hard hands and broken nails of a workman was doing—like a hungry dog. They kept up with him, in the fascination

of the sight, to the next corner, where he turned down the side street still searching the gutter.

They walked on a few paces. Then March said, "I must go after him," and he left his wife standing.

"Are you in want—hungry?" he asked the man.

The man said he could not speak English, monsieur. March asked his question in French.

The man shrugged a pitiful, desperate shrug, "Mais, monsieur——"

March put a coin in his hand, and then suddenly the man's face twisted up; he caught the hand of this almsgiver in both of his, and clung to it. "Monsieur! monsieur!" he gasped, and the tears rained down his face.

His benefactor pulled himself away, shocked and ashamed, as one is by such a chance, and got back to his wife, and the man lapsed back into the mystery of misery out of which he had emerged.

March felt it laid upon him to console his wife for what had happened. "Of course we might live here for years and not see another case like that; and of course there are twenty places where he could have gone for help if he had known where to find them."

"Ah, but it's the possibility of his needing the help so badly as that!" she answered. "That's what I can't bear, and I shall not come to a place where such things are possible, and we may as well stop our house-hunting here at once."

"Yes? And what part of Christendom will you live in? Such things are possible everywhere in our conditions."

"Then we must change the conditions——"

"Oh no; we must go to the theatre and forget them. We can stop at Brentano's for our tickets as we pass through Union Square."

"I am not going to the theatre, Basil. I am going home to Boston to-night. You can stay and find a flat."

He convinced her of the absurdity of her position and even of its selfishness; but she said that her mind was quite made up irrespective of what had happened; that she had been away from the children long enough; that she ought to be at home to finish up the work of leaving it. The word brought a sigh. "Ah, I don't know why we should see nothing but sad and ugly things now. When we were young——"

"Younger," he put in. "We're still young."

"That's what we pretend, but we know better. But I was thinking how pretty and pleasant things used to be turning up all the time on our travels in the old days. Why, when we were in New York here on our wedding journey the place didn't seem half so dirty as it does now, and none of these dismal things happened."

"It was a good deal dirtier," he answered; "and I fancy worse in every way—hungrier, raggeder, more wretchedly housed. But that wasn't the period of life for us to notice it. Don't you remember, when we started to Niagara the last time, how everybody seemed middle-aged and commonplace; and when we got there there were no evident brides; nothing but elderly married people?"

"At least they weren't starving," she rebelled.

"No, you don't starve in parlour cars and first-class hotels; but if you step out of them you run your chance of seeing those who do, if you're getting on pretty well in the forties. If it's the unhappy who see unhappiness, think what misery must be revealed to people who pass their lives in the really squalid tenement-house streets—I don't mean picturesque avenues like that we passed through."

"But we are *not* unhappy," she protested, bringing the talk back to the personal base again, as women must to get any good out of talk. "We're really no unhappier than we were when we were young."

"We're more serious."

"Well, I hate it; and I wish you *wouldn't* be so serious, if that's what it brings us to."

"I will be trivial from this on," said March. "Shall we go to the *Hole in the Ground* to-night?"

"I am going to Boston."

"It's much the same thing. How do you like that for triviality? It's a little blasphemous, I'll allow."

"It's very silly," she said.

At the hotel they found a letter from the agent who had sent them the permit to see Mrs. Grosvenor Green's apartment. He wrote that she had heard they were pleased with her apartment, and that she thought she could make the terms to suit. She had taken her passage to Europe, and was very anxious to let the flat before she sailed. She would call that evening at seven.

"Mrs. Grosvenor Green!" said Mrs. March. "Which of the ten thousand flats is it, Basil?"

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8 Mais, monsieur, Why, sir • 34 Brentano's, a bookstore and ticket agency • 50 our wedding journey. Howells began the story of the Marches in Their Wedding Journey

"The gimcrackery," he answered. "In the Xenophon, you know."

"Well, she may save herself the trouble. I shall not see her. Or yes—I must. I *couldn't* go away without seeing what sort of creature could have planned that fly-away flat. She must be a perfect—"

"Parachute," March suggested.

"No: anybody so light as that couldn't come down."

"Well, toy balloon."

"Toy balloon will do for the present," Mrs. March admitted. "But I feel that naught but herself can be her parallel for volatility."

When Mrs. Grosvenor Green's card came up they both descended to the hotel parlour, which March said looked like the saloon of a Moorish day-boat; not that he knew of any such craft, but the decorations were so Saracenic and the architecture so Hudson Riverish. They found there on the grand central divan a large lady whose vast smoothness, placidity, and plumpness set at defiance all their preconceptions of Mrs. Grosvenor Green, so that Mrs. March distinctly paused with her card in her hand before venturing even tentatively to address her. Then she was astonished at the low calm voice in which Mrs. Green acknowledged herself, and slowly proceeded to apologise for calling. It was not quite true that she had taken her passage for Europe, but she hoped soon to do so, and she confessed that in the meantime she was anxious to let her flat. She was a little worn out with the care of house-keeping—Mrs. March breathed, "Oh yes!" in the sigh with which ladies recognise one another's martyrdom—and Mr. Green had business abroad, and she was going to pursue her art studies in Paris; she drew in Mr. Ilcomb's class now, but the instruction was so much better in Paris; and as the Superintendent seemed to think the price was the only objection, she had ventured to call.

"Then we didn't deceive him in the least," thought Mrs. March, while she answered sweetly: "No; we were only afraid that it would be too small for our family. We require a good many rooms." She could not forego the opportunity of saying, "My husband is coming to New York to take charge of a literary periodical, and he will have to have a room to write in," which made Mrs. Green bow to March, and made March look sheepish. "But we did think the apartment very charming (It *was* architecturally charming," she protested to her conscience), "and we should have been so glad if we could have got into it." She followed this with some account of their house-hunting, amid soft murmurs of sympathy from Mrs. Green, who said that she had been through all that, and that if she could have shown her apartment to them she felt sure that she could have explained it so that they would have seen its capabilities better. Mrs. March assented to this, and Mrs. Green added that if they found nothing exactly suitable she would be glad to have them look at it again; and then Mrs. March said that she was going back to Boston herself, but she was leaving Mr. March to continue the search, and she had no doubt he would be only *too* glad to see the apartment by daylight. "But if you take it, Basil," she warned him, when they were alone, "I shall simply renounce you. I wouldn't live in that junk shop if you gave it to me. But who would have thought she was that kind of looking person? Though of course I might have known if I had stopped to think once. It's because the place doesn't express her at all that it's so unlike her. It couldn't be like anybody, or anything that flies in the air, or creeps upon the earth, or swims in the waters under the earth. I wonder where in the world she's from; she's no New-Yorker; even we can see that; and she's not quite a country person either; she seems like a person from some large town, where she's been an æsthetic authority. And she can't find good enough art instruction in New York, and has to go to Paris for it! Well, it's pathetic, after all, Basil. I can't help feeling sorry for a person who mistakes herself to that extent."

"I can't help feeling sorry for the husband of a person who mistakes herself to that extent. What is Mr. Grosvenor Green going to do in Paris while she's working her way into the Salon?"

"Well, you keep away from her apartment, Basil; that's all I've got to say to *you*. And yet I do like some things about her."

"I like everything about her but her apartment," said March.

"I like her going to be out of the country," said his wife. "We shouldn't be overlooked. And the place was

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6 fly-away, flighty, eccentric • 16 Saracenic, pertaining to the Moslems • 67 flies . . . earth. Mrs. March's language is reminiscent of Genesis 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image . . . and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing . . ."

prettily shaped, you can't deny it. And there was an elevator and steam-heat. And the location *is* very convenient. And there was a hall-boy to bring up cards. The halls and stairs were kept very clean and nice. But it wouldn't do. I could put you a folding bed in the room where you wrote, and we could even have one in the parlour—"

"Behind a portière? I couldn't stand any more portières!"

"And we could squeeze the two girls into one room, or perhaps only bring Margaret, and put out the whole of the wash. Basil!" she almost shrieked, "it isn't to be thought of!"

He retorted, "I'm not thinking of it, my dear."

Fulkerson came in just before they started for Mrs. March's train, to find out what had become of them, he said, and to see whether they had got anything to live in yet.

"Not a thing," she said. "And I'm just going back to Boston, and leaving Mr. March here to do anything he pleases about it. He has *carte blanche*."

"But freedom brings responsibility, you know, Fulkerson, and it's the same as if I'd no choice. I'm staying behind because I'm left, not because I expect to do anything."

"Is that so?" asked Fulkerson. "Well, we must see what can be done. I supposed you would be all settled by this time, or I should have humped myself to find you something. None of those places I gave you amount to anything?"

"As much as forty thousand others we've looked at," said Mrs. March. "Yes, one of them, *does* amount to something. It comes so near being what we want that I've given Mr. March particular instructions not to go near it."

She told him about Mrs. Grosvenor Green and her flat, and at the end he said—

"Well, well, we must look out for that. I'll keep an eye on him, Mrs. March, and see that he doesn't do anything rash, and I won't leave him till he's found just the right thing. It exists, of course; it must in a city of eighteen hundred thousand people, and the only question is where to find it. You leave him to me, Mrs. March; I'll watch out for him."

Fulkerson showed some signs of going to the station when he found they were not driving, but she bade him a peremptory good-bye at the hotel door.

"He's very nice, Basil, and his way with you is perfectly charming. It's very sweet to see how really fond of you he is. But I didn't want him stringing along up to Forty-second Street with us, and spoiling our last moments together."

At Third Avenue they took the Elevated, for which she confessed an infatuation. She declared it the most ideal way of getting about in the world, and was not ashamed when he reminded her of how she used to say that nothing under the sun could induce her to travel on it. She now said that the night transit was even more interesting than the day, and that the fleeting intimacy you formed with people in second and third floor interiors, while all the usual street life went on underneath, had a domestic intensity mixed with a perfect repose that was the last effect of good society with all its security and exclusiveness. He said it was better than the theatre, of which it reminded him, to see those people through their windows: a family party of work-folk at a late tea, some of the men in their shirt sleeves; a woman sewing by a lamp; a mother laying her child in its cradle; a man with his head fallen on his hands upon a table; a girl and her lover leaning over the window-sill together. What suggestion! what drama! what infinite interest! At the Forty-second Street station they stopped a minute on the bridge that crosses the track to the branch road for the Central Depôt, and looked up and down the long stretch of the elevated to north and south. The track that found and lost itself a thousand times in the flare and tremor of the innumerable lights; the moony sheen of the electrics mixing with the reddish points and blots of gas far and near; the architectural shapes of houses and churches and towers, rescued by the obscurity from all that was ignoble in them, and the coming and going of the trains marking the stations with vivider or fainter plumes of flame-shot steam—formed an incomparable perspective. They often talked afterward of the superb spectacle, which in a city full of painters nightly works its unrecorded miracles; and they were just to the Arachne roof spun in iron over the cross street on which they ran to the depôt; but for the present they were mostly inarticulate before it. They had another moment of rich silence when they paused

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10 two girls, servants • 87 Arachne, according to Ovid's Metamorphoses, a maiden turned into a spider by Minerva for competing with her in the arts of weaving and embroidery

in the gallery that leads from the elevated station to the waiting-rooms in the Central Depôt and looked down upon the great night trains lying on the tracks dim under the rain of gas-lights that starred without dispersing the vast darkness of the place. What forces, what fates, slept in these bulks which would soon be hurling themselves north and east and west through the night! Now they waited there like fabled monsters of Arab story ready for the magician's touch, tractable, reckless, will-less—organised lifelessness full of a strange semblance of life.

The Marches admired the impressive sight with a thrill of patriotic pride in the fact that the whole world perhaps could not afford just the like. Then they hurried down to the ticket offices, and he got her a lower berth in the Boston sleeper, and went with her to the car. They made the most of the fact that her berth was in the very middle of the car; and she promised to write as soon as she reached home. She promised also that having seen the limitations of New York in respect to flats, she would not be hard on him if he took something not quite ideal. Only he must remember that it was not to be above Twentieth Street nor below Washington Square; it must not be higher than the third floor; it must have an elevator, steam-heat, hall-boys, and a pleasant janitor. These were essentials; if he could not get them, then they must do without. But he must get them. . . .

[The Marches soon find themselves, strangely enough, established in Mrs. Grosvenor Green's apartment, which Mrs. March takes a real pleasure in adapting to the needs of her family; and March embarks upon his new career as editor of Every Other Week. The magazine is the device by which Howells brings together in New York an interesting assortment of people. Fulkerson, a "go-getter" from the West, is the promoter and business manager of the magazine. Dryfoos, recently made rich by the discovery of natural gas on his Indiana farm, is the "angel" or financial backer; he is presented as a crude and unscrupulous capitalist. The Dryfoos household includes the infirm and ineffectual Mrs. Dryfoos, who has been unhappy ever since she left the old homestead in the West; a son, Conrad, who is bookkeeper for the magazine but who is more interested (much to his father's disgust) in religious and social work; two daughters, Mela and Christine; and a chaperone, Mrs. Mandel, who has been employed to educate the young ladies in the social graces. Others connected more or less directly with the magazine are: Lindau, an immigrant Socialist from Germany, who lost an arm in the American Civil War; Colonel Woodburn, a "professional" Southerner, and his daughter; Kendricks, a dilettante writer; Beaton, a dilettante painter who has shown Christine Dryfoos an equivocal attention; and Margaret Vance, of aristocratic family, who shares Conrad Dryfoos' interest in social reform.

The selection which follows is an account of a stag dinner at the Dryfoos house, the affair having been engineered by the genial Fulkerson to bring together in friendly fashion the people connected with the magazine. The intrusion of the question of capital and labor, however, mars the harmony of the occasion.]

PART FOURTH

Chapter VI

So far as the Dryfoos family was concerned, the dinner might as well have been given at Frescobaldi's rooms. None of the ladies appeared. Mrs. Dryfoos was glad to escape to her own chamber, where she sat before an autumnal fire, shaking her head and talking to herself at times, with the foreboding of evil which old women like her make part of their religion. The girls stood just out of sight at the head of the stairs, and disputed which guest it was at each arrival; Mrs. Mandel had gone to her room to write letters, after beseeching them not to stand there. When Kendricks came, Christine gave Mela a little pinch, equivalent to a little mocking shriek; for, on the ground of his long talk with Mela at Mrs. Horn's, in the absence of any other admirer, they based a superstition of his interest in her; when Beaton came, Mela returned the pinch, but awkwardly, so that it hurt, and then Christine involuntarily struck her.

Frescobaldi's men were in possession everywhere: they had turned the cook out of her kitchen and the waitress out of her pantry; the reluctant Irishman at the door was supplemented by a vivid Italian, who spoke French with the guests, and said, "*Bien, Monsieur,*" and "*Toute suite,*" and "*Merci!*" to all, as he took their hats and coats, and effused a hospitality that needed no language but the gleam of his eyes and teeth and the play of his eloquent hands. From his professional dress-coat,

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28 **Frescobaldi**, a caterer employed for the occasion

lustrous with the grease spotted on it at former dinners and parties, they passed to the frocks of the elder and younger Dryfoos in the drawing-room, which assumed informality for the affair, but did not put their wearers wholly at their ease. The father's coat was of black broadcloth, and he wore it unbuttoned; the skirts were long, and the sleeves came down to his knuckles; he shook hands with his guests, and the same dryness seemed to be in his palm and throat, as he huskily asked each to take a chair. Conrad's coat was of modern texture and cut, and was buttoned about him as if it concealed a bad conscience within its lapels; he met March with his entreating smile, and he seemed no more capable of coping with the situation than his father. They both waited for Fulkerson, who went about and did his best to keep life in the party during the half-hour that passed before they sat down at dinner. Beaton stood gloomily aloof, as if waiting to be approached on the right basis before yielding an inch of his ground; Colonel Woodburn, awaiting the moment when he could sally out on his hobby, kept himself intrenched within the dignity of a gentleman, and examined askance the figure of old Lindau as he stared about the room, with his fine head up, and his empty sleeve dangling over his wrist. March felt obliged to him for wearing a new coat in the midst of that hostile luxury, and he was glad to see Dryfoos make up to him and begin to talk with him, as if he wished to show him particular respect, though it might have been because he was less afraid of him than of the others. He heard Lindau saying, "Boat, the name is Choarman?" and Dryfoos beginning to explain his Pennsylvania Dutch origin, and he suffered himself, with a sigh of relief, to fall into talk with Kendricks, who was always pleasant; he was willing to talk about something besides himself, and had no opinions that he was not ready to hold in abeyance for the time being out of kindness to others. In that group of impassioned individualities, March felt him a refuge and comfort—with his harmless dilettante intention of some day writing a novel, and his belief that he was meantime collecting material for it.

Fulkerson, while breaking the ice for the whole company, was mainly engaged in keeping Colonel Woodburn thawed out. He took Kendricks away from March and presented him to the Colonel as a person who, like himself, was looking into social conditions; he put one hand on Kendricks' shoulder, and one on the colonel's, and made some flattering joke, apparently at the expense of the young fellow, and then left them. March heard Kendricks protest in vain, and the colonel say gravely: "I do not wonder, sir, that these things interest you. They constitute a problem which society must solve or which will dissolve society," and he knew from that formula, which the colonel had once used with him, that he was laying out a road for the exhibition of the hobby's paces later.

Fulkerson came back to March, who had turned toward Conrad Dryfoos, and said, "If we don't get this thing going pretty soon, it'll be the death of me," and just then Frescobaldi's butler came in and announced to Dryfoos that dinner was served. The old man looked toward Fulkerson with a troubled glance, as if he did not know what to do; he made a gesture to touch Lindau's elbow. Fulkerson called out, "*Here's* Colonel Woodburn, Mr. Dryfoos," as if Dryfoos were looking for him; and he set the example of what he was to do by taking Lindau's arm himself. "Mr. Lindau is going to sit at my end of the table, alongside of March. Stand not upon the order of your going, gentlemen, but fall in at once." He contrived to get Dryfoos and the colonel before him, and he let March follow with Kendricks. Conrad came last with Beaton, who had been turning over the music at the piano, and chafing inwardly at the whole affair. At the table Colonel Woodburn was placed on Dryfoos's right, and March on his left. March sat on Fulkerson's right, with Lindau next him; and the young men occupied the other seats.

"Put you next to March, Mr. Lindau," said Fulkerson, "so you can begin to put Apollinaris in his champagne-glass at the right moment; you know his little weakness of old; sorry to say it's grown on him."

March laughed with kindly acquiescence in Fulkerson's wish to start the gaiety, and Lindau patted him on the shoulder. "I know hiss veakness. If he liges a class of vine, it iss begause his loaf ingludes efen hiss enemy, as Shakespeare galled it."

"Ah, but Shakespeare couldn't have been thinking of champagne," said Kendricks.

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30 **Boat . . . Choarman,** but . . . German • 68 **Stand . . . once.** Compare Macbeth, Act III, sc. iv, ll. 118-119 • 79 **Apollinaris,** an effervescing alkaline mineral water • 85 **loaf . . . it,** a double allusion to the Bible ("Love your enemies," Matthew 5:44) and to Shakespeare ("Oh God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!" Othello, Act II, sc. iii, l. 291)

"I suppose, sir," Colonel Woodburn interposed with lofty courtesy, "champagne could hardly have been known in his day."

"I suppose not, colonel," returned the younger man deferentially. "He seemed to think that sack and sugar might be a fault; but he didn't mention champagne."

"Perhaps he felt there was no question about that," suggested Beaton, who then felt that he had not done himself justice in the sally.

"I wonder just when champagne did come in," said March.

"I know when it ought to come in," said Fulkerson. "Before the soup!"

They all laughed, and gave themselves the air of drinking champagne out of tumblers every day, as men like to do. Dryfoos listened uneasily; he did not quite understand the allusions, though he knew what Shakespeare was, well enough; Conrad's face expressed a gentle deprecation of joking on such a subject, but he said nothing.

The talk ran on briskly through the dinner. The young men tossed the ball back and forth; they made some wild shots, but they kept it going, and they laughed when they were hit. The wine loosed Colonel Woodburn's tongue; he became very companionable with the young fellows; with the feeling that a literary dinner ought to have a didactic scope, he praised Scott and Addison as the only authors fit to form the minds of gentlemen.

Kendricks agreed with him, but wished to add the name of Flaubert as a master of style. "Style, you know," he added, "is the man."

"Very true, sir; you are quite right, sir," the colonel assented; he wondered who Flaubert was.

Beaton praised Baudelaire and Maupassant; he said these were the masters. He recited some lurid verses from Baudelaire; Lindau pronounced them a disgrace to human nature, and gave a passage from Victor Hugo on Louis Napoleon, with his heavy German accent, and then he quoted Schiller. "Ach, boat that iss peaudifool! Not zo?" he demanded of March.

"Yes, beautiful; but, of course, you know I think there's nobody like Heine!"

Lindau threw back his great old head and laughed, showing a want of teeth under his moustache. He put his hand on March's back. "This poy—he wass a poy den—wass so gracy to pekin reading Heine that he gommence with the tictionary bevore he knows any crammar, and ve bick it out vort by vort togeder."

"He was a pretty cay poy in those days, heigh, Lindau?" asked Fulkerson, burlesquing the old man's accent, with an impudent wink that made Lindau himself laugh. "Back in the dark ages, I mean, there in Indianapolis. Just how long ago did you old codgers meet there, anyway?" Fulkerson saw the restiveness in Dryfoos's eye at the purely literary course the talk had taken; he had intended it to lead up that way to business, to *Every Other Week;* but he saw that it was leaving Dryfoos too far out, and he wished to get it on the personal ground, where everybody is at home.

"Ledt me zee," mused Lindau. "Wass it in fifty-nine or zixty, Passil? Idt wass a year or dwo pefore the war proke oudt, anyway."

"Those were exciting times," said Dryfoos, making his first entry into the general talk. "I went down to Indianapolis with the first company from our place, and I saw the red-shirts pouring in everywhere. They had a song—

> "Oh, never mind the weather, but git over
> double trouble,
> For we're bound for the land of Canaan."

The fellows locked arms and went singin' it up and down four or five abreast in the moonlight; crowded everybody else off the sidewalk."

"I rememper, I rememper," said Lindau, nodding his head slowly up and down. "A coodt many off them nefer gome pack from that landt of Ganaan, Mr. Dryfoos?"

"You're right, Mr. Lindau. But I reckon it was worth it—the country we've got now. Here, young man!" He caught the arm of the waiter who was going round with the champagne bottle. "Fill up Mr. Lindau's glass, there. I want to drink the health of those old times with him. Here's to your empty sleeve, Mr. Lindau. God bless it! No offence to *you,* Colonel Woodburn," said Dryfoos, turning to him before he drank.

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5 **sack . . . fault,** from Falstaff's speech to Hal, I Henry IV, Act II, sc. iv, l. 517: "If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked" • 31 **Style . . . man.** "The style is the man himself" ("Le style est l'homme même") occurs in a Discourse by the Comte de Buffon written in 1750 • 43 **nobody like Heine.** Howells gives to March one of his own early preferences

"Not at all, sir, not at all," said the colonel. "I will drink with you, if you will permit me."

"We'll all drink—standing," cried Fulkerson. "Help March to get up, somebody! Fill high the bowl with Samian Apollinaris for Coonrod! Now, then, hurrah for Lindau!"

They cheered, and hammered on the table with the butts of their knife-handles. Lindau remained seated. The tears came into his eyes; he said, "I thank you, chendlemen," and hiccoughed.

"I'd 'a' went into the war myself," said Dryfoos, "but I was raisin' a family of young children, and I didn't see how I could leave my farm. But I helped to fill up the quota at every call, and when the volunteering stopped I went round with the subscription paper myself; and we offered as good bounties as any in the State. My substitute was killed in one of the last skirmishes—in fact, after Lee's surrender—and I've took care of his family, more or less, ever since."

"By the way, March," said Fulkerson, "what sort of an idea would it be to have a good war-story—might be a serial—in the magazine? The war has never fully panned out in fiction yet. It was used a good deal just after it was over, and then it was dropped. I think it's time to take it up again. I believe it would be a card."

It was running in March's mind that Dryfoos had an old rankling shame in his heart for not having gone into the war, and that he had often made that explanation of his course without having ever been satisfied with it. He felt sorry for him; the fact seemed pathetic; it suggested a dormant nobleness in the man.

Beaton was saying to Fulkerson, "You might get a series of sketches by substitutes; the substitutes haven't been much heard from in the war literature. How would 'The Autobiography of a Substitute' do? You might follow him up to the moment he was killed in the other man's place, and inquire whether he had any right to the feelings of a hero when he was only hired in the place of one. Might call it 'The Career of a Deputy Hero.'"

"I fancy," said March, "that there was a great deal of mixed motive in the men who went into the war as well as in those who kept out of it. We canonised all that died or suffered in it, but some of them must have been self-seeking and low-minded, like men in other vocations." He found himself saying this in Dryfoos's behalf; the old man looked at him gratefully at first, he thought, and then suspiciously.

Lindau turned his head toward him and said: "You are righdt, Passil; you are righdt. I haf zeen on the fieldt of pattle the voarst eggsipitions of human paseness —chelousy, fanity, ecodistic bridte. I haf zeen men in the face off death itself gofferened by motifes as low as— as pusiness motifes."

"Well," said Fulkerson, "it would be a grand thing for *Every Other Week* if we could get some of those ideas worked up into a series. It would make a lot of talk."

Colonel Woodburn ignored him in saying, "I think, Major Lindau——"

"High brifate; prefet gorporal," the old man interrupted, in rejection of the title.

Kendricks laughed and said, with a glance of appreciation at Lindau, "Brevet corporal is good."

Colonel Woodburn frowned a little, and passed over the joke. "I think Mr. Lindau is right. Such exhibitions were common to both sides, though if you gentlemen will pardon me for saying so, I think they were less frequent on ours. We were fighting more immediately for existence; we were fewer than you were, and we knew it; we felt more intensely that if each were not for all, then none was for any."

The colonel's words made their impression. Dryfoos said with authority, "That is so."

"Colonel Woodburn," Fulkerson called out, "if you'll work up those ideas into a short paper—say three thousand words—I'll engage to make March take it."

The colonel went on without replying: "But Mr. Lindau is right in characterising some of the motives that led men to the cannon's mouth as no higher than business motives, and his comparison is the most forcible that he could have used. I was very much struck by it."

The hobby was out, the colonel was in the saddle with so firm a seat that no effort sufficed to dislodge him. The dinner went on from course to course with barbaric profusion, and from time to time Fulkerson tried to bring the talk back to *Every Other Week*. But perhaps because that was only the ostensible and not the real object of

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4 **Fill . . . Samian.** Compare "The Isles of Greece" in Byron's **Don Juan**, Canto III, I 61 "Fill high the bowl with Samian wine" • 64 **Brevet,** by honorary promotion

the dinner, which was to bring a number of men together under Dryfoos's roof, and make them the witnesses of his splendour, make them feel the power of his wealth, Fulkerson's attempts failed. The colonel showed how commercialism was the poison at the heart of our national life; how we began as a simple, agricultural people, who had fled to these shores with the instinct, divinely implanted, of building a State such as the sun never shone upon before; how we had conquered the wilderness and the savage; how we had flung off, in our struggle with the mother-country, the trammels of tradition and precedent, and had settled down, a free nation, to the practice of the arts of peace; how the spirit of commercialism had stolen insidiously upon us, and the infernal impulse of competition had embroiled us in a perpetual warfare of interests, developing the worst passions of our nature, and teaching us to trick and betray and destroy one another in the strife for money, till now that impulse had exhausted itself, and we found competition gone and the whole economic problem in the hands of monopolies—the Standard Oil Company, the Sugar Trust, the Rubber Trust, and what not. And now what was the next thing? Affairs could not remain as they were; it was impossible; and what was the next thing?

The company listened for the main part silently. Dryfoos tried to grasp the idea of commercialism as the colonel seemed to hold it; he conceived of it as something like the dry-goods business on a vast scale, and he knew he had never been in that. He did not like to hear competition called infernal; he had always supposed it was something sacred; but he approved of what Colonel Woodburn said of the Standard Oil Company; it was all true; the Standard Oil Company had squeezed Dryfoos once, and made him sell it a lot of oil-wells by putting down the price of oil so low in that region that he lost money on every barrel he pumped.

All the rest listened silently, except Lindau; at every point the colonel made against the present condition of things he said more and more fiercely, "You are righdt, you are righdt." His eyes glowed, his hand played with his knife-hilt. When the colonel demanded, "And what is the next thing?" he threw himself forward, and repeated, "Yes, sir! What is the next thing?"

"Natural gas, by thunder!" shouted Fulkerson.

One of the waiters had profited by Lindau's posture to lean over him and put down in the middle of the table a structure in white sugar. It expressed Frescobaldi's conception of a derrick, and a touch of nature had been added in the flame of brandy, which burned luridly up from a small pit in the centre of the base, and represented the gas in combustion as it issued from the ground. Fulkerson burst into a roar of laughter with the words that recognised Frescobaldi's personal tribute to Dryfoos. Everybody rose and peered over at the thing, while he explained the work of sinking a gas-well, as he had already explained it to Frescobaldi. In the midst of his lecture he caught sight of the caterer himself, where he stood in the pantry doorway, smiling with an artist's anxiety for the effect of his masterpiece.

"Come in, come in, Frescobaldi! We want to congratulate you," Fulkerson called to him. "Here, gentlemen! Here's Frescobaldi's health."

They all drank; and Frescobaldi, smiling brilliantly and rubbing his hands as he bowed right and left, permitted himself to say to Dryfoos, "You are please; no? You like?"

"First-rate, first-rate!" said the old man; but when the Italian had bowed himself out and his guests had sunk into their seats again, he said dryly to Fulkerson, "I reckon they didn't have to torpedo that well, or the derrick wouldn't look quite so nice and clean."

"Yes," Fulkerson answered, "and that ain't quite the style—that little wiggly-waggly blue flame—that the gas acts when you touch off a good vein of it. This might do for weak-gas;" and he went on to explain: "They call it weak-gas when they tap it two or three hundred feet down; and anybody can sink a well in his backyard and get enough gas to light and heat his house. I remember one fellow that had it blazing up from a pipe through a flower-bed, just like a jet of water from a fountain. My, my, my! You fel—you gentlemen—ought to go out and see that country, all of you. Wish we *could* torpedo this well, Mr. Dryfoos, and let 'em see how it works! Mind that one you torpedoed for me? You know, when they sink a well," he went on to the company, "they can't always most generally sometimes tell whether they're goin' to get gas or oil or salt-water. Why, when they first began to bore for salt-water out on the Kanawha, back about the beginning of the century, they used to get gas now and then, and then they considered it a

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89 Kanawha, a river which flows through West Virginia into the Ohio River

failure; they called a gas-well a blower, and give it up in disgust; the time wasn't ripe for gas yet. Now they bore away sometimes till they get half-way to China, and don't seem to strike anything worth speaking of. Then they put a dynamite torpedo down in the well and explode it. They have a little bar of iron that they call a Go-devil, and they just drop it down on the business end of the torpedo, and then stand from under, if *you* please! You hear a noise, and in about a half a minute you begin to *see* one, and it begins to rain oil and mud and salt-water and rocks and pitchforks and adoptive citizens; and when it clears up the derrick's painted—got a coat on that'll wear in any climate. That's what our honoured host meant. Generally get some visiting lady, when there's one round, to drop the Go-devil. But that day we had to put up with Conrad here. They offered to let me drop it, but I declined. I told 'em I hadn't much practice with Go-devils in the newspaper syndicate business, and I wasn't very well myself, anyway. Astonishing," Fulkerson continued, with the air of relieving his explanation by an anecdote, "how reckless they get using dynamite when they're torpedoing wells. We stopped at one place where a fellow was handling the cartridges pretty freely, and Mr. Dryfoos happened to caution him a little, and that ass came up with one of 'em in his hand, and began to pound it on the buggy-wheel to show us how safe it was. I turned green, I was so scared; but Mr. Dryfoos kept his colour, and kind of coaxed the fellow till he quit. You could see he was the fool kind, that if you tried to stop him he'd keep on hammering that cartridge, just to show that it wouldn't explode, till he blew you into Kingdom Come. When we got him to go away, Mr. Dryfoos drove up to his foreman. 'Pay Sheney off, and discharge him on the spot,' says he. 'He's too safe a man to have round; he knows too much about dynamite.' I never saw anybody so cool."

Dryfoos modestly dropped his head under Fulkerson's flattery and, without lifting it, turned his eyes toward Colonel Woodburn. "I had all sorts of men to deal with in developing my property out there, but I had very little trouble with them, generally speaking."

"Ah, ah! you foundt the labouring-man reasonable—dractable—tocile?" Lindau put in.

"Yes, generally speaking," Dryfoos answered. "They mostly knew which side of their bread was buttered. I did have one little difficulty at one time. It happened to be when Mr. Fulkerson was out there. Some of the men tried to form a union——"

"No, no!" cried Fulkerson. "Let *me* tell that! I know you wouldn't do yourself justice, Mr. Dryfoos, and I want 'em to know how a strike can be managed, if you take it in time. You see, some of those fellows got a notion that there ought to be a union among the working-men to keep up wages, and dictate to the employers, and Mr. Dryfoos's foreman was the ringleader in the business. They understood pretty well that as soon as he found it out that foreman would walk the plank, and so they watched out till they thought they had Mr. Dryfoos just where they wanted him—everything on the keen jump, and every man worth his weight in diamonds—and then they come to him, and told him to sign a promise to keep that foreman to the end of the season, or till he was through with the work on the Dryfoos and Hendry Addition, under penalty of having them all knock off. Mr. Dryfoos smelt a mice, but he couldn't tell where the mice was; he saw that they did have him, and he signed, of course. There wasn't anything really against the fellow, anyway; he was a first-rate man, and he did his duty every time; only he'd got some of those ideas into his head, and they turned it. Mr. Dryfoos signed, and then he laid low."

March saw Lindau listening with a mounting intensity, and heard him murmur in German, "Shameful! shameful!"

Fulkerson went on: "Well, it wasn't long before they began to show their hand, but Mr. Dryfoos kept dark. He agreed to everything; there never was such an obliging capitalist before; there wasn't a thing they asked of him that he didn't do, with the greatest of pleasure, and all went merry as a marriage-bell till one morning a whole gang of fresh men marched into the Dryfoos and Hendry Addition, under the escort of a dozen Pinkertons with repeating rifles at half-cock, and about fifty fellows found themselves out of a job. You never saw such a mad set."

"Pretty neat," said Kendricks, who looked at the affair purely from an æsthetic point of view. "Such a *coup* as that would tell tremendously in a play."

"That was vile treason," said Lindau in German to

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81 **merry . . . marriage-bell,** from Byron's **Childe Harold,** Canto III, l. 188: "And all went merry as a marriage bell" • 83 **Pinkertons,** detectives employed by an agency founded by Allan Pinkerton in Chicago in 1850

March. "He's an infamous traitor! I cannot stay here. I must go."

He struggled to rise, while March held him by the coat, and implored him under his voice, "For Heaven's sake, don't, Lindau! You owe it to yourself not to make a scene, if you come here." Something in it all affected him comically; he could not help laughing.

The others were discussing the matter, and seemed not to have noticed Lindau, who controlled himself and sighed: "You are right. I must have patience."

Beaton was saying to Dryfoos, "Pity your Pinkertons couldn't have given them a few shots before they left."

"No, that wasn't necessary," said Dryfoos. "I succeeded in breaking up the union. I entered into an agreement with other parties not to employ any man who would not swear that he was non-union. If they had attempted violence, of course they could have been shot. But there was no fear of that. Those fellows can always be depended upon to cut each other's throats in the long-run."

"But sometimes," said Colonel Woodburn, who had been watching throughout for a chance to mount his hobby again, "they make a good deal of trouble first. How was it in the great railroad strike of '77?"

"Well, I guess there was a little trouble that time, colonel," said Fulkerson. "But the men that undertake to override the laws and paralyse the industries of a country like this generally get left in the end."

"Yes, sir, generally; and up to a certain point, always. But it's the exceptional that is apt to happen, as well as the unexpected. And a little reflection will convince any gentleman here that there is always a danger of the exceptional in your system. The fact is, those fellows have the game in their own hands already. A strike of the whole body of the Brotherhood of Engineers alone would starve out the entire Atlantic seaboard in a week; labour insurrection could make head at a dozen given points, and your government couldn't move a man over the roads without the help of the engineers."

"That is so," said Kendricks, struck by the dramatic character of the conjecture. He imagined a fiction dealing with the situation as something already accomplished.

"Why don't some fellow do the *Battle of Dorking* act with that thing?" said Fulkerson. "It would be a card."

"Exactly what I was thinking, Mr. Fulkerson," said Kendricks.

Fulkerson laughed. "Telepathy—clear case of mind-transference. Better see March, here, about it. *I'd* like to have it in *Every Other Week*. It would make talk."

"Perhaps it might set your people to thinking as well as talking," said the colonel.

"Well, sir," said Dryfoos, setting his lips so tightly together that his imperial stuck straight outward, "if I had my way, there wouldn't *be* any Brotherhood of Engineers, nor any other kind of labour union in the whole country."

"What!" shouted Lindau. "You would sobbress the unionss of the voarking-men?"

"Yes, I would."

"And what would you do with the unionss of the gabidalists—the drosts—and gompines, and boolss? Would you dake the righdt from one and gif it to the odder?"

"Yes, sir, I would," said Dryfoos, with a wicked look at him.

Lindau was about to roar back at him with some furious protest, but March put his hand on his shoulder imploringly, and Lindau turned to him to say in German, "But it is infamous—infamous! What kind of man is this? Who is he? He has the heart of a tyrant."

Colonel Woodburn cut in. "You couldn't do that, Mr. Dryfoos, under your system. And if you attempted it, with your conspiracy laws, and that kind of thing, it might bring the climax sooner than you expected. Your commercialised society has built its house on the sands. It will have to go. But I should be sorry if it went before its time."

"You are righdt, sir," said Lindau. "It would be a bity. I hobe it will last till it feelss its rottenness, like Herodt. Boat, when its hour gomes, when it trops to bieces with the veight off its own gorrubtion—what then?"

"It's not to be supposed that a system of things like this can drop to pieces of its own accord, like the old Republic of Venice," said the colonel. "But when the last vestige of commercial society is gone, then we can

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24 **strike of '77.** Railroad riots in 1877 throughout the East, and especially in Pennsylvania, resulted from the reduction of wages • 43 **Battle of Dorking,** by Sir G. T. Chesney (1833-1895), appeared in Blackwood's Magazine in 1871. Designed to point up a lack of military preparation, the book gave an imaginary account of the invasion and ultimate conquest of England by a foreign power • 53 **Imperial,** a pointed beard on a man's chin and lower lip

begin to build anew; and we shall build upon the central idea, not of the false liberty you now worship, but of responsibility—responsibility. The enlightened, the moneyed, the cultivated class shall be responsible to the central authority—emperor, duke, president; the name does not matter—for the national expense and the national defence, and it shall be responsible to the working-classes of all kinds for homes and lands and implements, and the opportunity to labour at all times. The working-classes shall be responsible to the leisure class for the support of its dignity in peace, and shall be subject to its command in war. The rich shall warrant the poor against planless production and the ruin that now follows, against danger from without and famine from within, and the poor——"

"No, no, no!" shouted Lindau. "The *State* shall do that—the whole beople. The men who voark shall have and shall eat; and the men that will not voark, they shall sdarfe. But no man need sdarfe. He will go to the State, and the State will see that he haf voark, and that he haf foodt. All the roadts and mills and mines and landts shall be the beople's and be ron *by* the beople *for* the beople. There shall be no rich and no boor, and there shall not be war any more, for what bower wouldt dare to addack a beople bound togeder in a broderhood like that?"

"Lion and lamb act," said Fulkerson, not well knowing, after so much champagne, what words he was using.

No one noticed him, and Colonel Woodburn said coldly to Lindau, "You are talking paternalism, sir."

"And *you* are dalking *feutalism*!" retorted the old man.

The Colonel did not reply. A silence ensued, which no one broke till Fulkerson said: "Well, now, look here. If either one of these millenniums was brought about, by force of arms, or otherwise, what would become of *Every Other Week?* Who would want March for an editor? How would Beaton sell his pictures? Who would print Mr. Kendricks' little society verses and short stories? What would become of Conrad and his good works?" Those named grinned in support of Fulkerson's diversion, but Lindau and the colonel did not speak; Dryfoos looked down at his plate, frowning. A waiter came round with cigars, and Fulkerson took one. "Ah," he said, as he bit off the end, and leaned over to the emblematic masterpiece, where the brandy was still feebly flickering, "I wonder if there's enough natural gas left to light my cigar." His effort put the flame out and knocked the derrick over; it broke in fragments on the table. Fulkerson cackled over the ruin: "I wonder if all Moffitt will look that way after labour and capital have fought it out together. I hope this ain't ominous of anything personal, Dryfoos?"

"I'll take the risk of it," said the old man harshly.

He rose mechanically, and Fulkerson said to Frescobaldi's man, "You can bring us the coffee in the library."

The talk did not recover itself there. Lindau would not sit down; he refused coffee, and dismissed himself with a haughty bow to the company; Colonel Woodburn shook hands elaborately all round, when he had smoked his cigar; the others followed him. It seemed to March that his own good-night from Dryfoos was dry and cold. . . .

[A streetcar strike furnishes the dramatic climax of Howells' story; such a strike had occurred in New York a few months before the publication of the book. In the chapters that follow, the strike is presented in such a way as to show the reactions of various characters to it: the hostility of the elder Dryfoos; the sympathy of Lindau, young Dryfoos, and Margaret Vance; the indifference of Fulkerson; the detachment of March. Whatever Howells' own attitude may have been, the emphasis given to the subject shows the author's growing awareness of the problem.]

PART FIFTH

Chapter III

The strike made a good deal of talk in the office of *Every Other Week*—that is, it made Fulkerson talk a good deal. He congratulated himself that he was not personally incommoded by it, like some of the fellows who lived up-town, and had not everything under one roof, as it were. He enjoyed the excitement of it, and he kept the office-boy running out to buy the extras which the newsmen came crying through the street almost every hour with a lamentable, unintelligible noise. He read not only the latest intelligence of the strike, but the editorial comments on it, which praised the firm at-

titude of both parties, and the admirable measures taken by the police to preserve order. Fulkerson enjoyed the interviews with the police captains and the leaders of the strike; he equally enjoyed the attempts of the reporters to interview the road managers, which were so graphically detailed, and with such a fine feeling for the right use of scareheads as to have almost the value of direct expressions from them, though it seemed that they had resolutely refused to speak. He said, at second-hand from the papers, that if the men behaved themselves and respected the rights of property, they would have public sympathy with them every time; but just as soon as they began to interfere with the roads' right to manage their own affairs in their own way, they must be put down with an iron hand; the phrase "iron hand" did Fulkerson almost as much good as if it had never been used before. News began to come of fighting between the police and the strikers when the roads tried to move their cars with men imported from Philadelphia, and then Fulkerson rejoiced at the splendid courage of the police. At the same time he believed what the strikers said, and that the trouble was not made by them, but by gangs of roughs acting without their approval. In this juncture he was relieved by the arrival of the State Board of Arbitration, which took up its quarters, with a great many scareheads, at one of the principal hotels, and invited the roads and the strikers to lay the matter in dispute before them; he said that now we should see the working of the greatest piece of social machinery in modern times. But it appeared to work only in the alacrity of the strikers to submit their grievance. The roads were as one road in declaring that there was nothing to arbitrate, and that they were merely asserting their right to manage their own affairs in their own way. One of the presidents was reported to have told a member of the Board, who personally summoned him, to get out and to go about his business. Then, to Fulkerson's extreme disappointment, the august tribunal, acting on behalf of the sovereign people in the interest of peace, declared itself powerless and got out, and would, no doubt, have gone about its business if it had had any. Fulkerson did not know what to say, perhaps because the extras did not; but March laughed at this result.

"It's a good deal like the military manœuvre of the King of France and his forty thousand men. I suppose somebody told him at the top of the hill that there was nothing to arbitrate, and to get out and go about his business, and that was the reason he marched down after he had marched up with all that ceremony. What amuses me is to find that in an affair of this kind the roads have rights and the strikers have rights, but the public has no rights at all. The roads and the strikers are allowed to fight out a private war in our midst—as thoroughly and precisely a private war as any we despise the Middle Ages for having tolerated—as any street war in Florence or Verona—and to fight it out at our pains and expense, and we stand by like sheep, and wait till we get tired. It's a funny attitude for a city of fifteen hundred thousand inhabitants."

"What would you do?" asked Fulkerson, a good deal daunted by this view of the case.

"Do? Nothing. Hasn't the State Board of Arbitration declared itself powerless? We have no hold upon the strikers; and we're so used to being snubbed and disobliged by common carriers that we have forgotten our hold on the roads, and always allow them to manage their own affairs in their own way, quite as if we had nothing to do with them, and they owed us no services in return for their privileges."

"That's a good deal so," said Fulkerson, disordering his hair. "Well, it's nuts for the colonel nowadays. He says if he was boss of this town he would seize the roads on behalf of the people, and man 'em with policemen, and run 'em till the managers had come to terms with the strikers; and he'd do that every time there was a strike."

"Doesn't that rather savour of the paternalism he condemned in Lindau?" asked March.

"I don't know. It savours of horse-sense."

"You are pretty far gone, Fulkerson. I thought you were the most engaged man I ever saw; but I guess you're more father-in-lawed. And before you're married too."

"Well, the colonel's a glorious old fellow, March. I wish he had the power to do that thing, just for the fun of looking on while he waltzed in. He's on the

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7 scareheads, sensational headlines • 45 military . . . men, an allusion to the nursery rhyme: "The King of France with forty thousand men/ Marched up the hill and then marched down again" • 82 engaged man. Fulkerson has become engaged to marry Colonel Woodburn's daughter

keen jump from morning till night, and he's up late and early to see the row. I'm afraid he'll get shot at some of the fights; he sees them all; *I* can't get any show at them: haven't seen a brickbat shied or a club swung yet. Have you?"

"No, I find I can philosophise the situation about as well from the papers, and that's what I really want to do, I suppose. Besides I'm solemnly pledged by Mrs. March not to go near any sort of crowd, under penalty of having her bring the children and go with me. Her theory is that we must all die together; the children haven't been at school since the strike began. There's no precaution that Mrs. March hasn't used. She watches me whenever I go out, and sees that I start straight for this office."

Fulkerson laughed and said: "Well, it's probably the only thing that's saved your life. Have you seen anything of Beaton lately?"

"No. You don't mean to say *he's* killed!"

"Not if he knows it. But I don't know——. What do you say, March? What's the reason you couldn't get us up a paper on the strike?"

"I knew it would fetch round to *Every Other Week,* somehow."

"No, but seriously. There'll be plenty of newspaper accounts. But you could treat it in the historical spirit —like something that happened several centuries ago; De Foe's Plague of London style. Heigh? What made me think of it was Beaton. If I could get hold of him, you two could go round together and take down its æsthetic aspects. It's a big thing, March, this strike is. I tell you it's imposing to have a private war, as you say, fought out this way, in the heart of New York, and New York not minding it a bit. See? Might take that view of it. With your descriptions and Beaton's sketches—well, it would just be the greatest card! Come! What do you say?"

"Will you undertake to make it right with Mrs. March if I'm killed and she and the children are not killed with me?"

"Well, it would be difficult. I wonder how it would do to get Kendricks to do the literary part?"

"I've no doubt he'd jump at the chance. I've yet to see the form of literature that Kendricks wouldn't lay down his life for."

"Say!" March perceived that Fulkerson was about to vent another inspiration, and smiled patiently. "Look here! What's the reason we couldn't get one of the strikers to write it up for us?"

"Might have a symposium of strikers and presidents," March suggested.

"No; I'm in earnest. They say some of those fellows —especially the foreigners—are educated men. I know one fellow—a Bohemian—that used to edit a Bohemian newspaper here. He could write it out in his kind of Dutch, and we could get Lindau to translate it."

"I guess not," said March dryly.

"Why not? He'd do it for the cause, wouldn't he? Suppose you put it up on him, the next time you see him."

"I don't see Lindau any more," said March. He added, "I guess he's renounced me along with Mr. Dryfoos's money."

"Pshaw! You don't mean he hasn't been round since?"

"He came for a while, but he's left off coming now. I don't feel particularly gay about it," March said, with some resentment of Fulkerson's grin. "He's left me in debt to him for lessons to the children."

Fulkerson laughed out. "Well, he *is* the greatest old fool! Who'd 'a' thought he'd 'a' been in earnest with those 'brincibles' of his? But I suppose there have to be just such cranks; it takes all kinds to make a world."

"There has to be *one* such crank, it seems," March partially assented. "One's enough for me."

"I reckon this thing is nuts for Lindau, too," said Fulkerson. "Why, it must act like a schooner of beer on him all the while, to see 'gabidal' embarrassed like it is by this strike. It must make old Lindau feel like he was back behind those barricades at Berlin. Well, he's a splendid old fellow; pity he drinks, as I remarked once before."

When March left the office he did not go home so directly as he came, perhaps because Mrs. March's eye was not on him. He was very curious about some aspects of the strike, whose importance, as a great social convulsion, he felt people did not recognise; and with his temperance in everything, he found its negative ex-

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28 **De Foe's . . . London.** Defoe's Journal of the Plague Year (1722) was a fictitious narrative which seemed so authentic that it was later quoted as authoritative • 79 **barricades at Berlin,** a reference to the Revolution of 1848 in Prussia

pressions as significant as its more violent phases. He had promised his wife solemnly that he would keep away from these, and he had a natural inclination to keep his promise; he had no wish to be that peaceful spectator who always gets shot when there is any firing on a mob. He interested himself in the apparent indifference of the mighty city, which kept on about its business as tranquilly as if the private war being fought out in its midst were a vague rumour of Indian troubles on the frontier; and he realised how there might once have been a street feud of forty years in Florence without interfering materially with the industry and prosperity of the city. On Broadway there was a silence where a jangle and clatter of horse-car bells and hoofs had been, but it was not very noticeable; and on the avenues, roofed by the elevated roads, this silence of the surface tracks was not noticeable at all in the roar of the trains overhead. Some of the cross-town cars were beginning to run again; with a policeman on the rear of each; on the Third Avenue line, operated by non-union men, who had not struck, there were two policemen beside the driver of every car, and two beside the conductor, to protect them from the strikers. But there were no strikers in sight, and on Second Avenue they stood quietly about in groups on the corners. While March watched them at a safe distance, a car laden with policemen came down the track, but none of the strikers offered to molest it. In their simple Sunday best, March thought them very quiet, decent-looking people, and he could well believe that they had nothing to do with the riotous outbreaks in other parts of the city. He could hardly believe that there were any such outbreaks; he began more and more to think them mere newspaper exaggerations in the absence of any disturbance, or the disposition to it, that he could see. He walked on to the East River: Avenues A, B, and C presented the same quiet aspect as Second Avenue; groups of men stood on the corners, and now and then a police-laden car was brought unmolested down the tracks before them; they looked at it and talked together, and some laughed, but there was no trouble.

March got a cross-town car, and came back to the West side. A policeman, looking very sleepy and tired, lounged on the platform.

"I suppose you'll be glad when this cruel war is over," March suggested, as he got in.

The officer gave him a surly glance and made him no answer.

His behaviour, from a man born to the joking give and take of our life, impressed March. It gave him a fine sense of the ferocity which he had read of the French troops putting on toward the populace just before the *coup d'état;* he began to feel like populace; but he struggled with himself and regained his character of philosophical observer. In this character he remained in the car and let it carry him by the corner where he ought to have got out and gone home, and let it keep on with him to one of the furthermost tracks westward, where so much of the fighting was reported to have taken place. But everything on the way was as quiet as on the East side.

Suddenly the car stopped with so quick a turn of the brake that he was half thrown from his seat, and the policeman jumped down from the platform and ran forward.

Chapter IV

Dryfoos sat at breakfast that morning with Mrs. Mandel as usual to pour out his coffee. Conrad had already gone down-town; the two girls lay abed much later than their father breakfasted, and their mother had gradually grown too feeble to come down till lunch. Suddenly Christine appeared at the door. Her face was white to the edges of her lips, and her eyes were blazing.

"Look here, father! Have you been saying anything to Mr. Beaton?"

The old man looked up at her across his coffee-cup through his frowning brows. "No."

Mrs. Mandel dropped her eyes, and the spoon shook in her hand.

"Then what's the reason he don't come here any more?" demanded the girl; and her glance darted from her father to Mrs. Mandel. "Oh, it's *you,* is it? I'd like to know who told *you* to meddle in other people's business?"

"*I* did," said Dryfoos savagely. "*I* told her to ask him what he wanted here, and he said he didn't want

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53 coup d'état, the sudden stroke of policy by which Louis Napoleon became emperor of France (1851-1852)

anything, and he stopped coming. That's all. I did it myself."

"Oh, you *did,* did you?" said the girl, scarcely less insolently than she had spoken to Mrs. Mandel. "I should like to know what you did it for? I'd like to know what made you think I wasn't able to take care of myself. I just knew somebody had been meddling, but I didn't suppose it was *you.* I can manage my own affairs in my own way, if you please, and I'll thank you after this to leave me to myself in what don't concern you."

"Don't concern me? You impudent jade!" her father began.

Christine advanced from the doorway toward the table; she had her hands closed upon what seemed trinkets, some of which glittered and dangled from them. She said, "Will you go to him and tell him that this meddlesome minx here had no business to say anything about me to him, and you take it all back?"

"No!" shouted the old man. "And if——"

"That's all I want of *you!*" the girl shouted in her turn. "Here are your presents." With both hands she flung the jewels—pins and rings and earrings and bracelets—among the breakfast dishes, from which some of them sprang to the floor. She stood a moment to pull the intaglio ring from the finger where Beaton put it a year ago, and dashed that at her father's plate. Then she whirled out of the room, and they heard her running upstairs.

The old man made a start toward her, but he fell back in his chair before she was gone, and with a fierce, grinding movement of his jaws, controlled himself. "Take—take those things up," he gasped to Mrs. Mandel. He seemed unable to rise again from his chair, but when she asked him if he were unwell, he said no, with an air of offence, and got quickly to his feet. He mechanically picked up the intaglio ring from the table while he stood there, and put it on his little finger; his hand was not much bigger than Christine's.

"How do you suppose she found it out?" he asked, after a moment.

"She seems to have merely suspected it," said Mrs. Mandel, in a tremor, and with the fright in her eyes which Christine's violence had brought there.

"Well, it don't make any difference. She had to know, somehow, and now she knows." He started toward the door of the library, as if to go into the hall, where his hat and coat always hung.

"Mr. Dryfoos," palpitated Mrs. Mandel, "I can't remain here, after the language your daughter has used to me— I can't let you leave me—I—I'm afraid of her——"

"Lock yourself up, then," said the old man rudely. He added, from the hall before he went out, "I reckon she'll quiet down now."

He took the elevated road. The strike seemed a very far-off thing, though the paper he bought to look up the stock market was full of noisy typography about yesterday's troubles on the surface lines. Among the millions in Wall Street there was some joking and some swearing, but not much thinking about the six thousand men who had taken such chances in their attempt to better their condition. Dryfoos heard nothing of the strike in the lobby of the Stock Exchange, where he spent two or three hours watching a favourite stock of his go up and go down under the betting. By the time the Exchange closed it had risen eight points, and on this and some other investments he was five thousand dollars richer than he had been in the morning. But he had expected to be richer still, and he was by no means satisfied with his luck. All through the excitement of his winning and losing had played the dull, murderous rage he felt toward the child who had defied him, and when the game was over and he started home, his rage mounted into a sort of frenzy; he would teach her, he would break her. He walked a long way without thinking, and then waited for a car. None came, and he hailed a passing coupé.

"What has got all the cars?" he demanded of the driver, who jumped down from his box to open the door for him and get his direction.

"Been away?" asked the driver. "Hasn't been any car along for a week. Strike."

"Oh yes," said Dryfoos. He felt suddenly giddy, and he remained staring at the driver after he had taken his seat.

The man asked, "Where to?"

Dryfoos could not think of his street or number, and he said with uncontrollable fury, "I told you once! Go up to West Eleventh, and drive along slow on the south side; I'll show you the place."

He could not remember the number of *Every Other Week* office, where he suddenly decided to stop before

he went home. He wished to see Fulkerson, and ask him something about Beaton: whether he had been about lately, and whether he had dropped any hint of what had happened concerning Christine; Dryfoos believed that Fulkerson was in the fellow's confidence.

There was nobody but Conrad in the counting-room, whither Dryfoos returned after glancing into Fulkerson's empty office. "Where's Fulkerson?" he asked, sitting down with his hat on.

"He went out a few moments ago," said Conrad, glancing at the clock. "I'm afraid he isn't coming back again to-day, if you wanted to see him."

Dryfoos twisted his head sidewise and upward to indicate March's room. "That other fellow out, too?"

"He went just before Mr. Fulkerson," answered Conrad.

"Do you generally knock off here in the middle of the afternoon?" asked the old man.

"No," said Conrad, as patiently as if his father had not been there a score of times, and found the whole staff of *Every Other Week* at work between four and five. "Mr. March, you know, always takes a good deal of his work home with him, and I suppose Mr. Fulkerson went out so early because there isn't much doing to-day. Perhaps it's the strike that makes it dull."

"The strike—yes! It's a pretty piece of business to have everything thrown out because a parcel of lazy hounds want a chance to lay off and get drunk." Dryfoos seemed to think Conrad would make some answer to this, but the young man's mild face merely saddened, and he said nothing. "I've got a coupé out there now that I had to take because I couldn't get a car. If I had my way I'd have a lot of those vagabonds hung. They're waiting to get the city into a snarl, and then rob the houses—pack of dirty, worthless whelps. They ought to call out the militia, and fire into 'em. Clubbing is too good for them." Conrad was still silent, and his father sneered, "But I reckon *you* don't think so."

"I think the strike is useless," said Conrad.

"Oh, you *do,* do you? Comin' to your senses a little. Gettin' tired walkin' so much. I should like to know what your gentlemen over there on the East side think about the strike, anyway."

The young fellow dropped his eyes. "I am not authorised to speak for them."

"Oh, indeed! And perhaps you're not authorised to speak for yourself?"

"Father, you know we don't agree about these things. I'd rather not talk——"

"But I'm goin' to *make* you talk this time!" cried Dryfoos, striking the arm of the chair he sat in with the side of his fist. A maddening thought of Christine came over him. "As long as you eat my bread, you have got to do as I say. I won't have my children telling me what I shall do and sha'n't do, or take on airs of being holier than me. Now, you just speak up! Do you think those loafers are right, or don't you? Come!"

Conrad apparently judged it best to speak. "I think they were very foolish to strike—at this time, when the elevated roads can do the work."

"Oh, at this time, heigh! And I suppose they think over there on the East side that it'd been wise to strike before we got the elevated." Conrad again refused to answer, and his father roared, "What do you think?"

"I think a strike is always bad business. It's war; but sometimes there don't seem any other way for the working men to get justice. They say that sometimes strikes do raise the wages, after a while."

"Those lazy devils were paid enough already," shrieked the old man. "They got two dollars a day. How much do you think they ought to 'a' got? Twenty?"

Conrad hesitated with a beseeching look at his father. But he decided to answer. "The men say that with partial work, and fines, and other things they get sometimes a dollar, and sometimes ninety cents a day."

"They lie, and you *know* they lie," said his father, rising and coming toward him. "And what do you think the upshot of it all will be, after they've ruined business for another week, and made people hire hacks, and stolen the money of honest men? How is it going to end?"

"They will have to give in."

"Oh, give in, heigh! And what will you say *then,* I should like to know? How will you feel about it then? Speak!"

"I shall feel as I do now. I know you don't think that way, and I don't blame you—or anybody. But if I have got to say how I shall feel, why, I shall feel sorry they didn't succeed, for I believe they have a righteous cause, though they go the wrong way to help themselves."

His father came close to him, his eyes blazing, his teeth set. "Do you *dare* to say that to me?"

"Yes. I can't help it. I pity them; my whole heart is with those poor men."

"You impudent puppy!" shouted the old man. He lifted his hand and struck his son in the face. Conrad caught his hand with his own left, and while the blood began to trickle from a wound that Christine's intaglio ring had made in his temple, he looked at him with a kind of grieving wonder, and said, "Father!"

The old man wrenched his fist away, and ran out of the house. He remembered his address now, and he gave it as he plunged into the coupé. He trembled with his evil passion, and glared out of the windows at the passers as he drove home; he only saw Conrad's mild grieving, wondering eyes, and the blood slowly trickling from the wound in his temple.

Conrad went to the neat set-bowl in Fulkerson's comfortable room, and washed the blood away, and kept bathing the wound with the cold water till it stopped bleeding. The cut was not deep, and he thought he would not put anything on it. After a while he locked up the office, and started out, he hardly knew where. But he walked on, in the direction he had taken, till he found himself in Union Square, on the pavement in front of Brentano's. It seemed to him that he heard some one calling gently to him, "Mr. Dryfoos!"

Chapter V

Conrad looked confusedly around, and the same voice said again, "Mr. Dryfoos!" and he saw that it was a lady speaking to him from a coupé beside the curbing, and then he saw that it was Miss Vance.

She smiled when he gave signs of having discovered her, and came up to the door of her carriage. "I am so glad to meet you. I have been longing to talk to somebody; nobody seems to feel about it as I do. Oh, isn't it horrible? *Must* they fail? I saw cars running on all the lines as I came across; it made me sick at heart. *Must* those brave fellows give in? And everybody seems to hate them so—I can't bear it." Her face was estranged with excitement, and there were traces of tears on it. "You must think me almost crazy to stop you in the street this way; but when I caught sight of you I had to speak. I knew you would sympathise—I knew you would feel as I do. Oh, how can anybody help honouring those poor men for standing by one another as they do? They are risking all they have in the world for the sake of justice! Oh, they are true heroes! They are staking the bread of their wives and children on the dreadful chance they've taken! But no one seems to understand it. No one seems to see that they are willing to suffer more now that other poor men may suffer less hereafter. And those wretched creatures that are coming in to take their places—those traitors——"

"We can't blame them for wanting to earn a living, Miss Vance," said Conrad.

"No, no! I don't blame them. Who am I, to do such a thing? It's *we*—people like me, of my class—who make the poor betray one another. But this dreadful fighting—this hideous paper is full of it." She held up an extra, crumpled with her nervous reading. "Can't something be done to stop it? Don't you think that if some one went among them, and tried to make them see how perfectly hopeless it was to resist the companies, and drive off the new men, he might do some good? I have wanted to go and try; but I am a woman, and I mustn't! I shouldn't be afraid of the strikers, but I'm afraid of what people would say!" Conrad kept pressing his handkerchief to the cut in his temple, which he thought might be bleeding, and now she noticed this. "Are you hurt, Mr. Dryfoos? You look so pale."

"No, it's nothing—a little scratch I've got."

"Indeed you look pale. Have you a carriage? How will you get home? Will you get in here with me, and let me drive you?"

"No, no," said Conrad, smiling at her excitement. "I'm perfectly well——"

"And you don't think I'm foolish and wicked for stopping you here, and talking in this way? But I know you feel as I do!"

"Yes, I feel as you do. You are right—right in every way—I mustn't keep you—Good-bye." He stepped back to bow, but she put her beautiful hand out of the window, and when he took it she wrung his hand hard.

"Thank you, thank you! You are good and you are just! But no one can do anything. It's useless!"

The type of irreproachable coachman on the box whose respectability had suffered through the strange

behaviour of his mistress in this interview, drove quickly off at her signal, and Conrad stood a moment looking after the carriage. His heart was full of joy; it leaped; he thought it would burst. As he turned to walk away it seemed to him as if he mounted upon the air. The trust she had shown him, the praise she had given him; that crush of the hand: he hoped nothing, he formed no idea from it, but it all filled him with love that cast out the pain and shame he had been suffering. He believed that he could never be unhappy any more; the hardness that was in his mind toward his father went out of it; he saw how sorely he had tried him; he grieved that he had done it, but the means, the difference of his feelings about the cause of their quarrel, he was solemnly glad of that since she shared it. He was only sorry for his father. "Poor father!" he said under his breath as he went along. He explained to her about his father in his reverie, and she pitied his father too.

He was walking over toward the West side, aimlessly at first, and then at times with the longing to do something to save those mistaken men from themselves forming itself into a purpose. Was not that what she meant, when she bewailed her woman's helplessness? She must have wished him to try, if he, being a man, could not do something; or if she did not, still he would try, and if she heard of it, she would recall what she had said, and would be glad he had understood her so. Thinking of her pleasure in what he was going to do, he forgot almost what it was; but when he came to a street-car track he remembered it, and looked up and down to see if there were any turbulent gathering of men, whom he might mingle with and help to keep from violence. He saw none anywhere; and then suddenly, as if at the same moment, for in his exalted mood all events had a dream-like simultaneity, he stood at the corner of an avenue, and in the middle of it, a little way off, was a street-car, and around the car a tumult of shouting, cursing, struggling men. The driver was lashing his horses forward, and a policeman was at their heads, with the conductor, pulling them; stones, clubs, brick-bats hailed upon the car, the horses, the men trying to move them. The mob closed upon them in a body, and then a patrol-wagon whirled up from the other side, and a squad of policemen leaped out, and began to club the rioters. Conrad could see how they struck them under the rims of their hats; the blows on their skulls sounded as if they had fallen on stone; the rioters ran in all directions.

One of the officers rushed up toward the corner where Conrad stood, and then he saw at his side a tall old man with a long white beard. He was calling out at the policeman: "Ah yes! Glup the strikerss—gif it to them! Why don't you co and glup the bresidents that insoalt your lawss, and gick your Boart of Arpidration out-of-toors? Glup the strikerss—they cot no friendts! They cot no money to pribe you, to dreat you!"

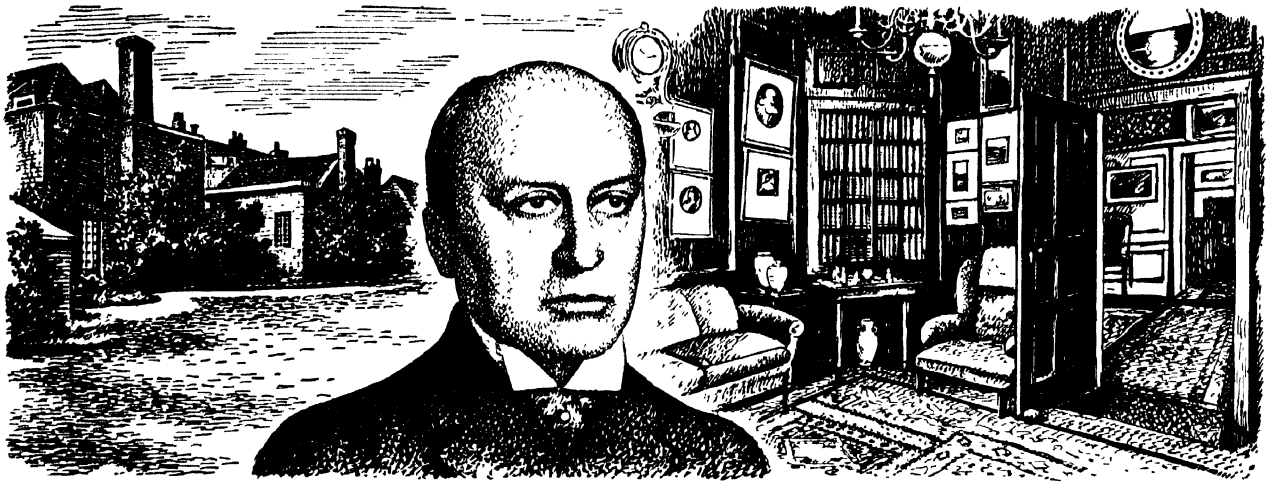
The officer lifted his club, and the old man threw his left arm up to shield his head. Conrad recognised Lindau, and now he saw the empty sleeve dangle in the air, over the stump of his wrist. He heard a shot in that turmoil beside the car, and something seemed to strike him in the breast. He was going to say to the policeman, "Don't strike him! He's an old soldier! You see he has no hand!" but he could not speak, he could not move his tongue. The policeman stood there; he saw his face: it was not bad, not cruel; it was like the face of a statue, fixed, perdurable; a mere image of irresponsible and involuntary authority. Then Conrad fell forward, pierced through the heart by that shot fired from the car.

March heard the shot as he scrambled out of his car, and at the same moment he saw Lindau drop under the club of the policeman, who left him where he fell, and joined the rest of the squad in pursuing the rioters. The fighting round the car in the avenue ceased; the driver whipped his horses into a gallop, and the place was left empty.

March would have liked to run; he thought how his wife had implored him to keep away from the rioting; but he could not have left Lindau lying there if he would. Something stronger than his will drew him to the spot, and there he saw Conrad dead beside the old man. . . .

[The concluding chapters tell briefly of the death of Lindau, the remorse of Dryfoos for his treatment of his son, the transfer of the ownership of Every Other Week from Dryfoos to Fulkerson and March, the Dryfooses' departure for Europe, the marriage of Fulkerson and Miss Woodburn, and the entrance of Margaret Vance into an order of nuns. Thus Howells concludes his rich and varied study of the New York of the 1880's.]

1890



Henry James

1843 • 1916

Although he was born in New York and lived for a number of years in Boston, Cambridge, and Newport, Henry James was an expatriate. In his early life, the frequent removals of his family from place to place prevented him from taking root anywhere. There were long and repeated visits to Europe and intermittent sojourns in America. By the time he had reached maturity, periodic migrations had become a habit—especially migrations to Europe.

James wanted to be a writer of fiction, but he had difficulty in finding his proper milieu. He was aware of the importance of roots to the creative artist, for in an early essay on the Russian novelist Turgenev, he said, "His works savor strongly of his native soil, like those of all great novelists." But Europe attracted James more compellingly than his native land; he had been more exposed to European influences and he felt acutely the inferiority of America in the arts.

Europe, then, it would have to be; perhaps he could take root there. After an important year in Paris (1875-1876), where he came under the influence, in varying degrees, of Turgenev, Maupassant, Flaubert, Daudet, and Zola, he began in England a residence which proved to be permanent.

James' output was prodigiously large, consisting chiefly of literary criticism, short stories, and novels. The literary criticism is acute: consider, as examples, his *Hawthorne* (1879), the essays on Emerson and George Eliot in *Partial Portraits* (1888), the essay on Zola in *Notes on Novelists* (1914), and the Prefaces to the novels (added in 1907). His short stories often show him at his best. But despite the excellence of the criticism and the short fiction, James is important chiefly for his novels,

Panel (l to r) James' home, "Lamb House," at Rye, Sussex • Henry James at 57 • The library of "Lamb House"

of which the following titles are a partial list: *Roderick Hudson* (1876), *The American* (1877), *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Bostonians* (1886), *The Tragic Muse* (1890), *The Spoils of Poynton* (1897), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), *The Golden Bowl* (1904).

James began as a writer of the "international novel." Roderick Hudson is a young American painter who goes to Italy to study his art; Christopher Newman, in *The American,* is a retired American manufacturer who goes to Paris to acquire culture—and a wife; Isabel Archer, in *The Portrait of a Lady,* is an intelligent, spirited American girl who, after various experiences in England and on the Continent, marries, and lives in Rome. In this early work "the 'international' light," James said, "lay, to my sense, thick and rich upon the scene." These writings, and many others, are comparative studies of the European and American cultures. Europe, of course, is the home of the arts and of "high civilization." America is culturally raw. But this is only half of the picture which James presents. The other half has to do with character and morals, and in this department, James' Americans carry off the honors Against the background of a tarnished European society, Christopher Newman, Isabel Archer, Lambert Strether (in *The Ambassadors*) are seen as shining examples of moral rectitude and fineness of feeling.

James continued to employ international characters and comparisons. But in his later work, the international theme is less emphasized (except in *The Ambassadors,* where it is again prominent), and he becomes increasingly interested in psychological processes and in "method." The books which show the full maturity of his art are *The Wings of the Dove, The Ambassadors,* and *The Golden Bowl,* and it is probably upon these works that his fame will ultimately rest. The "method" in this mature fiction consists in placing a character in a difficult and complex social situation, and then showing his growing awareness, step by step, of the situation in all of its subtleties and refinements. The author manages the "point of view" in such a way as to exploit the limited insights of certain characters. In *The Golden Bowl,* for example, the first half of the story is told (in the third person) from the point of view of the Prince; the second half is told from the point of view of the Princess. In *The Ambassadors,* the most perfect embodiment of his method, the entire story is told (in the third person) from the point of view of Lambert Strether.

Many American readers have found James not at all to their liking. Their objections are sufficiently embodied in the following severe judgments by Parrington: "James' romanticization of European culture worked to his undoing, for it constrained the artist to a lifelong pursuit of intangible realities that existed only in his imagination. . . . Even in his subtle psychological inquiries he remained shut up within his own skull-pan. His characters are only projections of his brooding fancy, externalizations of hypothetical subtleties." It is true that James was alienated from America and that he became increasingly obsessed with psychological subtleties which he described in an increasingly difficult style. Quite possibly, however, Parrington, and those who agree with the judgments just quoted, do James less than justice. It may be urged that there is more of America in James' books than appears at first glance. His books contain scores of Americans; his most admirable characters are, repeatedly, Americans; and, paradoxically enough in view of his high regard for the "culture" of Europe, his Europeans and his Europeanized Americans are likely to betray a moral decadence—a moral decadence which the author unmistakably condemns. America does not come off nearly so badly in James' books as some suppose, nor Europe nearly so well. It is arguable, moreover, that the psychological subtleties of the later works have valid basis in fact. Civilized human relations are almost infinitely complex and subtle. Most novelists greatly simplify, or pass superficially over, these relations, James was, one may say, a specialist in them. He was perhaps the first novelist to recognize to the fullest the complexities which may grow out of the relationship of one sensitive personality to another, and to record them with fine discrimination and microscopic detail.

The Novels and Tales of Henry James, New York edition, 26 vols., New York, 1907-1917 • **The Letters of Henry James,** ed Percy Lubbock, 2 vols., New York, 1920 • J. W. Beach, **The Method of Henry James,** New Haven, 1918 • Van Wyck Brooks, **The Pilgrimage of Henry James,** New York, 1925 • Pelham Edgar, **Henry James: Man and Author,** London, 1927 • **The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces by Henry James,** ed. R P Blackmur, New York, 1934 • F. O. Matthiessen, **Henry James: The Major Phase,** New York, 1944 • **The Question of Henry James,** ed F. W. Dupee, New York, 1945

The Art of Fiction

James was at odds with two schools of fiction popular in this period: the school of romantic adventure, best represented by Robert Louis Stevenson, and the school of detailed social documentation—the naturalistic school—best represented by Émile Zola. James' own work was neither "adventurous" nor "sociological." With a minimum of plot, in the usual sense of the term, and of external details, James' stories tended more and more to concentrate upon the fascinating problem of the expanding consciousness of a character. The result was much less popular than the work of the other schools, and James felt the challenge.

To those of the naturalistic school, who insisted that the novelist should write from a large and varied experience of life, James replied that experience is properly "an immense sensibility" and that insight is more important than "experience" as ordinarily construed. The English woman novelist (in James' illustration) who succeeded so admirably in giving a convincing picture of French Protestant youth had had, as a matter of "experience," only a momentary glimpse of such a group; but she had had the all-important faculty of "insight." To those who insisted upon exciting incident, James answered that excitement does not necessarily consist of physical action, does not absolutely require moving accidents by flood and field. "It is an incident," he remarked characteristically, "for a woman to stand up with her hand resting on a table and look out at you in a certain way"—an exciting incident, too, he meant to imply, particularly if the young woman happened to be Miss Isabel Archer in **The Portrait of a Lady**. The "psychological" subjects, he argued, have an interest and validity of their own. For example, the "moral consciousness of a child," which Edmond de Goncourt and George Eliot had employed with varying success, and which James himself was to employ, rather abstrusely, in **What Maisie Knew**, may be more exciting to a subtle intelligence than Stevenson's adventures on the Spanish Main. From James' standpoint, the first is the more valid subject because it comes within the range of every reader's experience, while the second subject is known to most readers "only in supposition."

Both in motivation, therefore, and in its essential argument, James' essay was a criticism of popular current schools of fiction and a spirited defense of his own fictional practice.

"The Art of Fiction" was first published in **Longman's Magazine** in 1884; it was collected with other essays in **Partial Portraits** in 1888.

I should not have affixed so comprehensive a title to these few remarks, necessarily wanting in any completeness upon a subject the full consideration of which would carry us far, did I not seem to discover a pretext for my temerity in the interesting pamphlet lately published under this name by Mr. Walter Besant. Mr. Besant's lecture at the Royal Institution—the original form of his pamphlet—appears to indicate that many persons are interested in the art of fiction, and are not indifferent to such remarks, as those who practise it may attempt to make about it. I am therefore anxious not to lose the benefit of this favourable association, and to edge in a few words under cover of the attention which Mr. Besant is sure to have excited. There is something very encouraging in his having put into form certain of his ideas on the mystery of story-telling.

It is a proof of life and curiosity—curiosity on the part of the brotherhood of novelists as well as on the part of their readers. Only a short time ago it might have been supposed that the English novel was not what the French call *discutable*. It had no air of having a theory, a conviction, a consciousness of itself behind it—of being the expression of an artistic faith, the result of choice and comparison. I do not say it was necessarily the worse for that; it would take much more courage than I possess to intimate that the form of the novel as Dickens and Thackeray (for instance) saw it had any taint of incompleteness. It was, however, *naïf* (if I may help myself out with another French word); and evi-

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6 Besant, Sir Walter Besant (1836-1901), English novelist and critic • **21 discutable**, debatable

dently if it be destined to suffer in any way for having lost its *naïveté* it has now an idea of making sure of the corresponding advantages. During the period I have alluded to there was a comfortable good-humoured feeling abroad that a novel is a novel, as a pudding is a pudding, and that our only business with it could be to swallow it. But within a year or two, for some reason or other, there have been signs of returning animation—the era of discussion would appear to have been to a certain extent opened. Art lives upon discussion, upon experiment, upon curiosity, upon variety of attempt, upon the exchange of views and the comparison of standpoints; and there is a presumption that those times when no one has anything particular to say about it, and has no reason to give for practice or preference, though they may be times of honour, are not times of development—are times, possibly, even a little of dulness. The successful application of any art is a delightful spectacle, but the theory too is interesting; and though there is a great deal of the latter without the former I suspect there has never been a genuine success that has not had a latent core of conviction. Discussion, suggestion, formulation, these things are fertilizing when they are frank and sincere. Mr. Besant has set an excellent example in saying what he thinks, for his part, about the way in which fiction should be written, as well as about the way in which it should be published; for his view of the "art," carried on into an appendix, covers that too. Other labourers in the same field will doubtless take up the argument, they will give it the light of their experience, and the effect will surely be to make our interest in the novel a little more what it had for some time threatened to fail to be—a serious, active, inquiring interest, under protection of which this delightful study may, in moments of confidence, venture to say a little more what it thinks of itself.

It must take itself seriously for the public to take it so. The old superstition about fiction being "wicked" has doubtless died out in England; but the spirit of it lingers in a certain oblique regard directed toward any story which does not more or less admit that it is only a joke. Even the most jocular novel feels in some degree the weight of the proscription that was formerly directed against literary levity: the jocularity does not always succeed in passing for orthodoxy. It is still expected, though perhaps people are ashamed to say it, that a production which is after all only a "make-believe" (for what else is a "story"?) shall be in some degree apologetic—shall renounce the pretension of attempting really to represent life. This, of course, any sensible, wide-awake story declines to do, for it quickly perceives that the tolerance granted to it on such a condition is only an attempt to stifle it disguised in the form of generosity. The old evangelical hostility to the novel, which was as explicit as it was narrow, and which regarded it as little less favourable to our immortal part than a stage-play, was in reality far less insulting. The only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life. When it relinquishes this attempt, the same attempt that we see on the canvas of the painter, it will have arrived at a very strange pass. It is not expected of the picture that it will make itself humble in order to be forgiven; and the analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist is, so far as I am able to see, complete. Their inspiration is the same, their process (allowing for the different quality of the vehicle) is the same, their success is the same. They may learn from each other, they may explain and sustain each other. Their cause is the same, and the honour of one is the honour of another. The Mahometans think a picture an unholy thing, but it is a long time since any Christian did, and it is therefore the more odd that in the Christian mind the traces (dissimulated though they may be) of a suspicion of the sister art should linger to this day. The only effectual way to lay it to rest is to emphasize the analogy to which I just alluded—to insist on the fact that as the picture is reality, so the novel is history. That is the only general description (which does it justice) that we may give of the novel. But history also is allowed to represent life; it is not, any more than painting, expected to apologize. The subject-matter of fiction is stored up likewise in documents and records, and if it will not give itself away, as they say in California, it must speak with assurance, with the tone of the historian. Certain accomplished novelists have a habit of giving themselves away which must often bring tears to the eyes of people who take their fiction seriously. I was lately struck, in reading over many pages of Anthony Trollope, with his want of discretion in this particular. In a digression, a parenthesis or an aside, he concedes to the reader that he and this trusting friend are only "making believe." He admits that the events he narrates have not really hap-

pened, and that he can give his narrative any turn the reader may like best. Such a betrayal of a sacred office seems to me, I confess, a terrible crime; it is what I mean by the attitude of apology, and it shocks me every whit as much in Trollope as it would have shocked me in Gibbon or Macaulay. It implies that the novelist is less occupied in looking for the truth (the truth, of course I mean, that he assumes, the premises that we must grant him, whatever they may be) than the historian, and in doing so it deprives him at a stroke of all his standing-room. To represent and illustrate the past, the actions of men, is the task of either writer, and the only difference that I can see is, in proportion as he succeeds, to the honour of the novelist, consisting as it does in his having more difficulty in collecting his evidence, which is so far from being purely literary. It seems to me to give him a great character, the fact that he has at once so much in common with the philosopher and the painter; this double analogy is a magnificent heritage.

It is of all this evidently that Mr. Besant is full when he insists upon the fact that fiction is one of the *fine* arts, deserving in its turn of all the honours and emoluments that have hitherto been reserved for the successful profession of music, poetry, painting, architecture. It is impossible to insist too much on so important a truth, and the place that Mr. Besant demands for the work of the novelist may be represented, a trifle less abstractly, by saying that he demands not only that it shall be reputed artistic, but that it shall be reputed very artistic indeed. It is excellent that he should have struck this note, for his doing so indicates that there was need of it, that his proposition may be to many people a novelty. One rubs one's eyes at the thought; but the rest of Mr. Besant's essay confirms the revelation. I suspect in truth that it would be possible to confirm it still further, and that one would not be far wrong in saying that in addition to the people to whom it has never occurred that a novel ought to be artistic, there are a great many others who, if this principle were urged upon them, would be filled with an indefinable mistrust. They would find it difficult to explain their repugnance, but it would operate strongly to put them on their guard. "Art," in our Protestant communities, where so many things have got so strangely twisted about, is supposed in certain circles to have some vague injurious effect upon those who make it an important consideration, who let it weigh in the balance. It is assumed to be opposed in some mysterious manner to morality, to amusement, to instruction. When it is embodied in the work of the painter (the sculptor is another affair!) you know what it is: it stands there before you, in the honesty of pink and green and a gilt frame; you can see the worst of it at a glance, and you can be on your guard. But when it is introduced into literature it becomes more insidious—there is danger of its hurting you before you know it. Literature should be either instructive or amusing, and there is in many minds an impression that these artistic preoccupations, the search for form, contribute to neither end, interfere indeed with both. They are too frivolous to be edifying, and too serious to be diverting; and they are moreover priggish and paradoxical and superfluous. That, I think, represents the manner in which the latent thought of many people who read novels as an exercise in skipping would explain itself if it were to become articulate. They would argue, of course, that a novel ought to be "good," but they would interpret this term in a fashion of their own, which indeed would vary considerably from one critic to another. One would say that being good means representing virtuous and aspiring characters placed in prominent positions; another would say that it depends on a "happy ending," on a distribution at the last of prizes, pensions, husbands, wives, babies, millions, appended paragraphs, and cheerful remarks. Another still would say that it means being full of incident and movement, so that we shall wish to jump ahead, to see who was the mysterious stranger, and if the stolen will was ever found, and shall not be distracted from this pleasure by any tiresome analysis or "description." But they would all agree that the "artistic" idea would spoil some of their fun. One would hold it accountable for all the description, another would see it revealed in the absence of sympathy. Its hostility to a happy ending would be evident, and it might even in some cases render any ending at all impossible. The "ending" of a novel is, for many persons, like that of a good dinner, a course of dessert and ices, and the artist in fiction is regarded as a sort of meddlesome doctor who forbids agreeable aftertastes. It is therefore true that this conception of Mr. Besant's of the novel as a superior form encounters not only a negative but a positive indifference. It matters little that as a work of art it should really be as little or as much of its essence to supply

happy endings, sympathetic characters, and an objective tone, as if it were a work of mechanics: the association of ideas, however incongruous, might easily be too much for it if an eloquent voice were not sometimes raised to call attention to the fact that it is at once as free and as serious a branch of literature as any other.

Certainly this might sometimes be doubted in presence of the enormous number of works of fiction that appeal to the credulity of our generation, for it might easily seem that there could be no great character in a commodity so quickly and easily produced. It must be admitted that good novels are much compromised by bad ones, and that the field at large suffers discredit from overcrowding. I think, however, that this injury is only superficial, and that the superabundance of written fiction proves nothing against the principle itself. It has been vulgarised, like all other kinds of literature, like everything else to-day, and it has proved more than some kinds accessible to vulgarisation. But there is as much difference as there ever was between a good novel and a bad one: the bad is swept with all the daubed canvases and spoiled marble into some unvisited limbo, or infinite rubbish-yard beneath the back-windows of the world, and the good subsists and emits its light and stimulates our desire for perfection. As I shall take the liberty of making but a single criticism of Mr. Besant, whose tone is so full of love of his art, I may as well have done with it at once. He seems to me to mistake, in attempting to say so definitely beforehand, what sort of an affair the good novel will be. To indicate the danger of such an error as that has been the purpose of these few pages; to suggest that certain traditions on the subject, applied *a priori,* have already had much to answer for, and that the good health of an art which undertakes so immediately to reproduce life must demand that it be perfectly free. It lives upon exercise, and the very meaning of exercise is freedom. The only obligation to which in advance we may hold a novel, without incurring the accusation of being arbitrary, is that it be interesting. That general responsibility rests upon it, but it is the only one I can think of. The ways in which it is at liberty to accomplish this result (of interesting us) strike me as innumerable, and such as can only suffer from being marked out or fenced in by prescription. They are as various as the temperament of man, and they are successful in proportion as they reveal a particular mind, different from others. A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life: that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression. But there will be no intensity at all, and therefore no value, unless there is freedom to feel and say. The tracing of a line to be followed, of a tone to be taken, of a form to be filled out, is a limitation of that freedom and a suppression of the very thing that we are most curious about. The form, it seems to me, is to be appreciated after the fact: then the author's choice has been made, his standard has been indicated; then we can follow lines and directions and compare tones and resemblances. Then in a word we can enjoy one of the most charming of pleasures, we can estimate quality, we can apply the test of execution. The execution belongs to the author alone; it is what is most personal to him, and we measure him by that. The advantage, the luxury, as well as the torment and responsibility of the novelist, is that there is no limit to what he may attempt as an executant—no limit to his possible experiments, efforts, discoveries, successes. Here it is especially that he works, step by step, like his brother of the brush, of whom we may always say that he has painted his picture in a manner best known to himself. His manner is his secret, not necessarily a jealous one. He cannot disclose it as a general thing if he would; he would be at a loss to teach it to others. I say this with a due recollection of having insisted on the community of method of the artist who paints a picture and the artist who writes a novel. The painter *is* able to teach the rudiments of his practice, and it is possible, from the study of good work (granted the aptitude), both to learn how to paint and to learn how to write. Yet it remains true, without injury to the *rapprochement,* that the literary artist would be obliged to say to his pupil much more than the other, "Ah, well, you must do it as you can!" It is a question of degree, a matter of delicacy. If there are exact sciences, there are also exact arts, and the grammar of painting is so much more definite that it makes the difference.

I ought to add, however, that if Mr. Besant says at the beginning of his essay that the "laws of fiction may be laid down and taught with as much precision and exact-

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79 rapprochement, comparison or analogy (between the art of painting and the art of fiction)

ness as the laws of harmony, perspective, and proportion," he mitigates what might appear to be an extravagance by applying his remark to "general" laws, and by expressing most of these rules in a manner with which it would certainly be unaccommodating to disagree. That the novelist must write from his experience, that his "characters must be real and such as might be met with in actual life;" that "a young lady brought up in a quiet country village should avoid descriptions of garrison life," and "a writer whose friends and personal experiences belong to the lower middle-class should carefully avoid introducing his characters into society;" that one should enter one's notes in a common-place book; that one's figures should be clear in outline; that making them clear by some trick of speech or of carriage is a bad method, and "describing them at length" is a worse one; that English Fiction should have a "conscious moral purpose;" that "it is almost impossible to estimate too highly the value of careful workmanship—that is, of style;" that "the most important point of all is the story," that "the story is everything:" these are principles with most of which it is surely impossible not to sympathise. That remark about the lower middle-class writer and his knowing his place is perhaps rather chilling; but for the rest I should find it difficult to dissent from any one of these recommendations. At the same time, I should find it difficult positively to assent to them, with the exception, perhaps, of the injunction as to entering one's notes in a common-place book. They scarcely seem to me to have the quality that Mr. Besant attributes to the rules of the novelist—the "precision and exactness" of "the laws of harmony, perspective, and proportion." They are suggestive, they are even inspiring, but they are not exact, though they are doubtless as much so as the case admits of: which is a proof of that liberty of interpretation for which I just contended. For the value of these different injunctions—so beautiful and so vague—is wholly in the meaning one attaches to them. The characters, the situation, which strike one as real will be those that touch and interest one most, but the measure of reality is very difficult to fix. The reality of Don Quixote or of Mr. Micawber is a very delicate shade; it is a reality so coloured by the author's vision that, vivid as it may be, one would hesitate to propose it as a model: one would expose one's self to some very embarrassing questions on the part of a pupil. It goes without saying that you will not write a good novel unless you possess the sense of reality; but it will be difficult to give you a recipe for calling that sense into being. Humanity is immense, and reality has a myriad forms; the most one can affirm is that some of the flowers of fiction have the odour of it, and others have not; as for telling you in advance how your nosegay should be composed, that is another affair. It is equally excellent and inconclusive to say that one must write from experience; to our supposititious aspirant such a declaration might savour of mockery. What kind of experience is intended, and where does it begin and end? Experience is never limited, and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spiderweb of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue. It is the very atmosphere of the mind; and when the mind is imaginative—much more when it happens to be that of a man of genius—it takes to itself the faintest hints of life, it converts the very pulses of the air into revelations. The young lady living in a village has only to be a damsel upon whom nothing is lost to make it quite unfair (as it seems to me) to declare to her that she shall have nothing to say about the military. Greater miracles have been seen than that, imagination assisting, she should speak the truth about some of these gentlemen. I remember an English novelist, a woman of genius, telling me that she was much commended for the impression she had managed to give in one of her tales of the nature and way of life of the French Protestant youth. She had been asked where she learned so much about this recondite being, she had been congratulated on her peculiar opportunities. These opportunities consisted in her having once, in Paris, as she ascended a staircase, passed an open door where, in the household of a *pasteur*, some of the young Protestants were seated at table round a finished meal. The glimpse made a picture; it lasted only a moment, but that moment was experience. She had got her direct personal impression, and she turned out her type. She knew what youth was, and what Protestantism; she also had the advantage of having seen what it was to be French, so that she converted these ideas into a concrete image and produced a reality. Above all, however, she was blessed with

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42 Micawber, in Dickens' David Copperfield • 81 pasteur, pastor

the faculty which when you give it an inch takes an ell, and which for the artist is a much greater source of strength than any accident of residence or of place in the social scale. The power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life in general so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it—this cluster of gifts may almost be said to constitute experience, and they occur in country and in town, and in the most differing stages of education. If experience consists of impressions, it may be said that impressions *are* experience, just as (have we not seen it?) they are the very air we breathe. Therefore, if I should certainly say to a novice, "Write from experience and experience only," I should feel that this was rather a tantalising monition if I were not careful immediately to add, "Try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost!"

I am far from intending by this to minimise the importance of exactness—of truth of detail. One can speak best from one's own taste, and I may therefore venture to say that the air of reality (solidity of specification) seems to me to be the supreme virtue of a novel—the merit on which all its other merits (including that conscious moral purpose of which Mr. Besant speaks) helplessly and submissively depend. If it be not there they are all as nothing, and if these be there, they owe their effect to the success with which the author has produced the illusion of life. The cultivation of this success, the study of this exquisite process, form, to my taste, the beginning and the end of the art of the novelist. They are his inspiration, his despair, his reward, his torment, his delight. It is here in very truth that he competes with life; it is here that he competes with his brother the painter in *his* attempt to render the look of things, the look that conveys their meaning, to catch the colour, the relief, the expression, the surface, the substance of the human spectacle. It is in regard to this that Mr. Besant is well inspired when he bids him take notes. He cannot possibly take too many, he cannot possibly take enough. All life solicits him, and to "render" the simplest surface, to produce the most momentary illusion, is a very complicated business. His case would be easier, and the rule would be more exact, if Mr. Besant had been able to tell him what notes to take. But this, I fear, he can never learn in any manual; it is the business of his life. He has to take a great many in order to select a few, he has to work them up as he can, and even the guides and philosophers who might have most to say to him must leave him alone when it comes to the application of precepts, as we leave the painter in communion with his palette. That his characters "must be clear in outline," as Mr. Besant says—he feels that down to his boots; but how he shall make them so is a secret between his good angel and himself. It would be absurdly simple if he could be taught that a great deal of "description" would make them so, or that on the contrary the absence of description and the cultivation of dialogue, or the absence of dialogue and the multiplication of "incident," would rescue him from his difficulties. Nothing, for instance, is more possible than that he be of a turn of mind for which this odd, literal opposition of description and dialogue, incident and description, has little meaning and light. People often talk of these things as if they had a kind of internecine distinctness, instead of melting into each other at every breath, and being intimately associated parts of one general effort of expression. I cannot imagine composition existing in a series of blocks, nor conceive, in any novel worth discussing at all, of a passage of description that is not in its intention narrative, a passage of dialogue that is not in its intention descriptive, a touch of truth of any sort that does not partake of the nature of incident, or an incident that derives its interest from any other source than the general and only source of the success of a work of art—that of being illustrative. A novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism, and in proportion as it lives will it be found, I think, that in each of the parts there is something of each of the other parts. The critic who over the close texture of a finished work shall pretend to trace a geography of items will mark some frontiers as artificial, I fear, as any that have been known to history. There is an old-fashioned distinction between the novel of character and the novel of incident which must have cost many a smile to the intending fabulist who was keen about his work. It appears to me as little to the point as the equally celebrated distinction between the novel and the romance—to answer as little to any

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1 ell. A measure whose length varies in different countries; the English ell is 45 inches

reality. There are bad novels and good novels, as there are bad pictures and good pictures; but that is the only distinction in which I see any meaning, and I can as little imagine speaking of a novel of character as I can imagine speaking of a picture of character. When one says picture one says of character, when one says novel one says of incident, and the terms may be transposed at will. What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character? What is either a picture or a novel that is *not* of character? What else do we seek in it and find in it? It is an incident for a woman to stand up with her hand resting on a table and look at you in a certain way; or if it be not an incident I think it will be hard to say what it is. At the same time it is an expression of character. If you say you don't see it (character in *that—allons donc!*), this is exactly what the artist who has reasons of his own for thinking he *does* see it undertakes to show you. When a young man makes up his mind that he has not faith enough after all to enter the church as he intended, that is an incident, though you may not hurry to the end of the chapter to see whether perhaps he doesn't change once more. I do not say that these are extraordinary or startling incidents. I do not pretend to estimate the degree of interest proceeding from them, for this will depend upon the skill of the painter. It sounds almost puerile to say that some incidents are intrinsically much more important than others, and I need not take this precaution after having professed my sympathy for the major ones in remarking that the only classification of the novel that I can understand is into that which has life and that which has it not.

The novel and the romance, the novel of incident and that of character—these clumsy separations appear to me to have been made by critics and readers for their own convenience, and to help them out of some of their occasional predicaments, but to have little reality or interest for the producer, from whose point of view it is of course that we are attempting to consider the art of fiction. The case is the same with another shadowy category which Mr. Besant apparently is disposed to set up—that of the "modern English novel;" unless indeed it be that in this matter he has fallen into an accidental confusion of standpoints. It is not quite clear whether he intends the remarks in which he alludes to it to be didactic or historical. It is as difficult to suppose a person intending to write a modern English as to suppose him writing an ancient English novel: that is a label which begs the question. One writes the novel, one paints the picture, of one's language and of one's time, and calling it modern English will not, alas! make the difficult task any easier. No more, unfortunately, will calling this or that work of one's fellow-artist a romance —unless it be, of course, simply for the pleasantness of the thing, as for instance when Hawthorne gave this heading to his story of *Blithedale.* The French, who have brought the theory of fiction to remarkable completeness, have but one name for the novel, and have not attempted smaller things in it, that I can see, for that. I can think of no obligation to which the "romancer" would not be held equally with the novelist; the standard of execution is equally high for each. Of course it is of execution that we are talking—that being the only point of a novel that is open to contention. This is perhaps too often lost sight of, only to produce interminable confusions and cross-purposes. We must grant the artist his subject, his idea, his *donnée:* our criticism is applied only to what he makes of it. Naturally I do not mean that we are bound to like it or find it interesting: in case we do not our course is perfectly simple—to let it alone. We may believe that of a certain idea even the most sincere novelist can make nothing at all, and the event may perfectly justify our belief; but the failure will have been a failure to execute, and it is in the execution that the fatal weakness is recorded. If we pretend to respect the artist at all, we must allow him his freedom of choice, in the face, in particular cases, of innumerable presumptions that the choice will not fructify. Art derives a considerable part of its beneficial exercise from flying in the face of presumptions, and some of the most interesting experiments of which it is capable are hidden in the bosom of common things. Gustave Flaubert has written a story about the devotion of a servant-girl to a parrot, and the production, highly finished as it is, cannot on the whole be called a success. We are perfectly free to find it flat, but I think it might have been interesting; and I, for my part, am extremely glad he should have written it; it is a contribution to our knowledge of what

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16 allons donc! come now! nonsense • 32 novel . . . romance. Hawthorne distinguished between the two in the Preface to The House of the Seven Gables • 55 Blithedale, Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance • 66 donnée, theme, subject

can be done—or what cannot. Ivan Turgénieff has written a tale about a deaf and dumb serf and a lap-dog, and the thing is touching, loving, a little masterpiece. He struck the note of life where Gustave Flaubert missed it—he flew in the face of a presumption and achieved a victory.

Nothing, of course, will ever take the place of the good old fashion of "liking" a work of art or not liking it: the most improved criticism will not abolish that primitive, that ultimate test. I mention this to guard myself from the accusation of intimating that the idea, the subject, of a novel or a picture, does not matter. It matters, to my sense, in the highest degree, and if I might put up a prayer it would be that artists should select none but the richest. Some, as I have already hastened to admit, are much more remunerative than others, and it would be a world happily arranged in which persons intending to treat them should be exempt from confusions and mistakes. This fortunate condition will arrive only, I fear, on the same day that critics become purged from error. Meanwhile, I repeat, we do not judge the artist with fairness unless we say to him, "Oh, I grant you your starting-point, because if I did not I should seem to prescribe to you, and heaven forbid I should take that responsibility. If I pretend to tell you what you must not take, you will call upon me to tell you then what you must take; in which case I shall be prettily caught. Moreover, it isn't till I have accepted your data that I can begin to measure you. I have the standard, the pitch; I have no right to tamper with your flute and then criticise your music. Of course I may not care for your idea at all; I may think it silly, or stale, or unclean; in which case I wash my hands of you altogether. I may content myself with believing that you will not have succeeded in being interesting, but I shall, of course, not attempt to demonstrate it, and you will be as indifferent to me as I am to you. I needn't remind you that there are all sorts of tastes: who can know it better? Some people, for excellent reasons, don't like to read about carpenters; others, for reasons even better, don't like to read about courtesans. Many object to Americans. Others (I believe they are mainly editors and publishers) won't look at Italians. Some readers don't like quiet subjects; others don't like bustling ones. Some enjoy a complete illusion, others the consciousness of large concessions. They choose their novels accordingly, and if they don't care about your idea they won't, *a fortiori,* care about your treatment."

So that it comes back very quickly, as I have said, to the liking: in spite of M. Zola, who reasons less powerfully than he represents, and who will not reconcile himself to this absoluteness of taste, thinking that there are certain things that people ought to like, and that they can be made to like. I am quite at a loss to imagine anything (at any rate in this matter of fiction) that people *ought* to like or to dislike. Selection will be sure to take care of itself, for it has a constant motive behind it. That motive is simply experience. As people feel life, so they will feel the art that is most closely related to it. This closeness of relation is what we should never forget in talking of the effort of the novel. Many people speak of it as a factitious, artificial form, a product of ingenuity, the business of which it is to alter and arrange the things that surround us, to translate them into conventional, traditional moulds. This, however, is a view of the matter which carries us but a very short way, condemns the art to an eternal repetition of a few familiar *clichés,* cuts short its development, and leads us straight up to a dead wall. Catching the very note and trick, the strange irregular rhythm of life, that is the attempt whose strenuous force keeps Fiction upon her feet. In proportion as in what she offers us we see life *without* rearrangement do we feel that we are touching the truth; in proportion as we see it *with* rearrangement do we feel that we are being put off with a substitute, a compromise and convention. It is not uncommon to hear an extraordinary assurance of remark in regard to this matter of rearranging, which is often spoken of as if it were the last word of art. Mr. Besant seems to me in danger of falling into the great error with his rather unguarded talk about "selection." Art is essentially selection, but it is a selection whose main care is to be typical, to be inclusive. For many people art means rose-coloured window-panes, and selection means picking a bouquet for Mrs. Grundy. They will tell you glibly that artistic considerations have nothing to do with the disagreeable, with the ugly; they will rattle off shallow commonplaces about the province of art and the limits of art till you are

48 *a fortiori,* by the stronger reason • 51 **represents,** portrays in his fiction • 85 **Mrs. Grundy,** a person referred to in Thomas Morton's comedy **Speed the Plough** (1798), has become the stock symbol of narrow conventionalism and prudery

moved to some wonder in return as to the province and the limits of ignorance. It appears to me that no one can ever have made a seriously artistic attempt without becoming conscious of an immense increase—a kind of revelation—of freedom. One perceives in that case—by the light of a heavenly ray—that the province of art is all life, all feeling, all observation, all vision. As Mr. Besant so justly intimates, it is all experience. That is a sufficient answer to those who maintain that it must not touch the sad things of life, who stick into its divine unconscious bosom little prohibitory inscriptions on the end of sticks, such as we see in public gardens—"It is forbidden to walk on the grass; it is forbidden to touch the flowers; it is not allowed to introduce dogs or to remain after dark; it is requested to keep to the right." The young aspirant in the line of fiction whom we continue to imagine will do nothing without taste, for in that case his freedom would be of little use to him; but the first advantage of his taste will be to reveal to him the absurdity of the little sticks and tickets. If he have taste, I must add, of course, he will have ingenuity, and my disrespectful reference to that quality just now was not meant to imply that it is useless in fiction. But it is only a secondary aid; the first is a capacity for receiving straight impressions.

Mr. Besant has some remarks on the question of "the story" which I shall not attempt to criticise, though they seem to me to contain a singular ambiguity, because I do not think I understand them. I cannot see what is meant by talking as if there were a part of a novel which is the story and part of it which for mystical reasons is not—unless indeed the distinction be made in a sense in which it is difficult to suppose that any one should attempt to convey anything. "The story," if it represents anything, represents the subject, the idea, the *donnée* of the novel; and there is surely no "school"—Mr. Besant speaks of a school—which urges that a novel should be all treatment and no subject. There must assuredly be something to treat; every school is intimately conscious of that. This sense of the story being the idea, the starting-point, of the novel, is the only one that I see in which it can be spoken of as something different from its organic whole; and since in proportion as the work is successful the idea permeates and penetrates it, informs and animates it, so that every word and every punctuation-point contribute directly to the expression, in that proportion do we lose our sense of the story being a blade which may be drawn more or less out of its sheath. The story and the novel, the idea and the form, are the needle and thread, and I never heard of a guild of tailors who recommended the use of the thread without the needle, or the needle without the thread. Mr. Besant is not the only critic who may be observed to have spoken as if there were certain things in life which constitute stories, and certain others which do not. I find the same odd implication in an entertaining article in the *Pall Mall Gazette,* devoted, as it happens, to Mr. Besant's lecture. "The story is the thing!" says this graceful writer, as if with a tone of opposition to some other idea. I should think it was, as every painter who, as the time for "sending in" his picture looms in the distance, finds himself still in quest of a subject—as every belated artist not fixed about his theme will heartily agree. There are some subjects which speak to us and others which do not, but he would be a clever man who should undertake to give a rule—an index expurgatorius—by which the story and the no-story should be known apart. It is impossible (to me at least) to imagine any such rule which shall not be altogether arbitrary. The writer in the *Pall Mall* opposes the delightful (as I suppose) novel of *Margot la Balafrée* to certain tales in which "Bostonian nymphs" appear to have "rejected English dukes for psychological reasons." I am not acquainted with the romance just designated, and can scarcely forgive the *Pall Mall* critic for not mentioning the name of the author, but the title appears to refer to a lady who may have received a scar in some heroic adventure. I am inconsolable at not being acquainted with this episode, but am utterly at a loss to see why it is a story when the rejection (or acceptance) of a duke is not, and why a reason, psychological or other, is not a subject when a cicatrix is. They are all particles of the multitudinous life with which the novel deals, and surely no dogma which pretends to make it lawful to touch the one and unlawful to touch the other will stand for a moment on its feet. It is the special picture that must stand or fall, according as it seems to possess truth or to lack it. Mr.

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71 **Bostonian . . . reasons,** presumably a reference to James' Portrait of a Lady, in which Isabel Archer, an American girl, rejects a proposal of marriage from an English lord • 82 **cicatrix,** scar; **la Balafrée** means "the scarred woman"

Besant does not, to my sense, light up the subject by intimating that a story must, under penalty of not being a story, consist of "adventures." Why of adventures more than of green spectacles? He mentions a category of impossible things, and among them he places "fiction without adventure." Why without adventure, more than without matrimony, or celibacy, or parturition, or cholera, or hydropathy, or Jansenism? This seems to me to bring the novel back to the hapless little *rôle* of being an artificial, ingenious thing—bring it down from its large, free character of an immense and exquisite correspondence with life. And what *is* adventure when it comes to that, and by what sign is the listening pupil to recognize it? It is an adventure—an immense one—for me to write this little article; and for a Bostonian nymph to reject an English duke is an adventure only less stirring, I should say, than for an English duke to be rejected by a Bostonian nymph. I see dramas within dramas in that, and innumerable points of view. A psychological reason is, to my imagination, an object adorably pictorial; to catch the tint of its complexion—I feel as if that idea might inspire one to Titianesque efforts. There are few things more exciting to me, in short, than a psychological reason, and yet, I protest, the novel seems to me the most magnificent form of art. I have just been reading, at the same time, the delightful story of *Treasure Island,* by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson and, in a manner less consecutive, the last tale from M. Edmond de Goncourt, which is entitled *Chérie.* One of these works treats of murders, mysteries, islands of dreadful renown, hairbreadth escapes, miraculous coincidences, and buried doubloons. The other treats of a little French girl who lived in a fine house in Paris, and died of wounded sensibility because no one would marry her. I call *Treasure Island* delightful, because it appears to me to have succeeded wonderfully in what it attempts; and I venture to bestow no epithet upon *Chérie,* which strikes me as having failed deplorably in what it attempts—that is, in tracing the development of the moral consciousness of a child. But one of these productions strikes me as exactly as much of a novel as the other, and as having a "story" quite as much. The moral consciousness of a child is as much a part of life as the islands of the Spanish Main, and the one sort of geography seems to me to have those "surprises" of which Mr. Besant speaks quite as much as the other. For myself (since it comes back in the last resort, as I say, to the preference of the individual), the picture of the child's experience has the advantage that I can at successive steps (an immense luxury, near to the "sensual pleasure" of which Mr. Besant's critic in the *Pall Mall* speaks) say Yes or No, as it may be, to what the artist puts before me. I have been a child in fact, but I have been on a quest for a buried treasure only in supposition, and it is a simple accident that with M. de Goncourt I should have for the most part to say No. With George Eliot, when she painted that country with a far other intelligence, I always said Yes.

The most interesting part of Mr. Besant's lecture is unfortunately the briefest passage—his very cursory allusion to the "conscious moral purpose" of the novel. Here again it is not very clear whether he be recording a fact or laying down a principle; it is a great pity that in the latter case he should not have developed his idea. This branch of the subject is of immense importance, and Mr. Besant's few words point to considerations of the widest reach, not to be lightly disposed of. He will have treated the art of fiction but superficially who is not prepared to go every inch of the way that these considerations will carry him. It is for this reason that at the beginning of these remarks I was careful to notify the reader that my reflections on so large a theme have no pretension to be exhaustive. Like Mr. Besant, I have left the question of the morality of the novel till the last, and at the last I find I have used up my space. It is a question surrounded with difficulties, as witness the very first that meets us, in the form of a definite question, on the threshold. Vagueness, in such a discussion, is fatal, and what is the meaning of your morality and your conscious moral purpose? Will you not define your terms and explain how (a novel being a picture) a picture can be either moral or immoral? You wish to paint a moral picture or carve a moral statue: will you not tell us how you would set about it? We are discussing the Art of Fiction; questions of art are questions (in the widest sense) of execution; questions of morality are quite another affair, and will you not let us see how it is that you

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8 **Jansenism.** The doctrines propounded by Cornelis Jansen (1585-1638), bishop of Ypres, and pronounced heretical by the Catholic Church • 22 **Titianesque,** referring to Titian (1477-1576), Venetian painter • 56 **George Eliot.** The reference is to George Eliot's **Silas Marner**

find it so easy to mix them up? These things are so clear to Mr. Besant that he has deduced from them a law which he sees embodied in English Fiction, and which is "a truly admirable thing and a great cause for congratulation." It is a great cause for congratulation indeed when such thorny problems become as smooth as silk. I may add that in so far as Mr. Besant perceives that in point of fact English Fiction has addressed itself preponderantly to these delicate questions he will appear to many people to have made a vain discovery. They will have been positively struck, on the contrary, with the moral timidity of the usual English novelist; with his (or with her) aversion to face the difficulties with which on every side the treatment of reality bristles. He is apt to be extremely shy (whereas the picture that Mr. Besant draws is a picture of boldness), and the sign of his work, for the most part, is a cautious silence on certain subjects. In the English novel (by which of course I mean the American as well), more than in any other, there is a traditional difference between that which people know and that which they agree to admit that they know, that which they see and that which they speak of, that which they feel to be a part of life and that which they allow to enter into literature. There is the great difference, in short, between what they talk of in conversation and what they talk of in print. The essence of moral energy is to survey the whole field, and I should directly reverse Mr. Besant's remark and say not that the English novel has a purpose, but that it has a diffidence. To what degree a purpose in a work of art is a source of corruption I shall not attempt to inquire; the one that seems to me least dangerous is the purpose of making a perfect work. As for our novel, I may say lastly on this score that as we find it in England to-day it strikes me as addressed in a large degree to "young people," and that this in itself constitutes a presumption that it will be rather shy. There are certain things which it is generally agreed not to discuss, not even to mention, before young people. That is very well, but the absence of discussion is not a symptom of the moral passion. The purpose of the English novel—"a truly admirable thing, and a great cause for congratulation"—strikes me therefore as rather negative.

There is one point at which the moral sense and the artistic sense lie very near together; that is in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer. In the proportion as that intelligence is fine will the novel, the picture, the statue partake of the substance of beauty and truth. To be constituted of such elements is, to my vision, to have purpose enough. No good novel will ever proceed from a superficial mind; that seems to me an axiom which, for the artist in fiction, will cover all needful moral ground: if the youthful aspirant take it to heart it will illuminate for him many of the mysteries of "purpose." There are many other useful things that might be said to him, but I have come to the end of my article, and can only touch them as I pass. The critic in the *Pall Mall Gazette,* whom I have already quoted, draws attention to the danger, in speaking of the art of fiction, of generalising. The danger that he has in mind is rather, I imagine, that of particularising, for there are some comprehensive remarks which, in addition to those embodied in Mr. Besant's suggestive lecture, might without fear of misleading him be addressed to the ingenuous student. I should remind him first of the magnificence of the form that is open to him, which offers to sight so few restrictions and such innumerable opportunities. The other arts, in comparison, appear confined and hampered; the various conditions under which they are exercised are so rigid and definite. But the only condition that I can think of attaching to the composition of the novel is, as I have already said, that it be sincere. This freedom is a splendid privilege, and the first lesson of the young novelist is to learn to be worthy of it. "Enjoy it as it deserves," I should say to him; "take possession of it, explore it to its utmost extent, publish it, rejoice in it. All life belongs to you, and do not listen either to those who would shut you up into corners of it and tell you that it is only here and there that art inhabits, or to those who would persuade you that this heavenly messenger wings her way outside of life altogether, breathing a superfine air, and turning away her head from the truth of things. There is no impression of life, no manner of seeing it and feeling it, to which the plan of the novelist may not offer a place; you have only to remember that talents so dissimilar as those of Alexandre Dumas and Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and Gustave Flaubert have worked in this field with equal glory. Do not think too much about optimism and pessimism; try and catch the colour of life itself. In France to-day we see a prodigious effort (that of

of the capacity of the novel can allude without respect), we see an extraordinary effort, vitiated by a spirit of pessimism on a narrow basis. M. Zola is magnificent, but he strikes an English reader as ignorant; he has an air of working in the dark; if he had as much light as energy, his results would be of the highest value. As for the lish fiction especially) is strewn with their brittle particles as with broken glass. If you must indulge in conclusions, let them have the taste of a wide knowledge. Remember that your first duty is to be as complete as possible—to make as perfect a work. Be generous and delicate and pursue the prize."

1884

The Middle Years

"The Middle Years" first appeared in **Scribner's Magazine** in 1893; it was collected with other stories in **Terminations** in 1895.

Technically, the story is an interesting example of James' mature mastery of "point of view." Although told in the third person, the narrative is managed, carefully and consistently, from the point of view of a single character. Placing himself at the center of Dencombe's consciousness, the author surveys the scene through Dencombe's—never another's—eyes. The rich potentialities of the restricted point of view were to be more fully realized in the late novels, notably in **The Wings of the Dove, The Ambassadors,** and **The Golden Bowl.**

Like several of James' best stories, "The Middle Years" has for its subject the life of the creative artist in literature. Two points are stressed in the following story: the artist's desire for perfection and the artist's desire for intelligent appreciation.

Dencombe's life has been one of complete devotion to his art. The mastery of his art has been achieved slowly and with great difficulty. He is a perfectionist. Although he reads his latest book with a good deal of pride, it does not completely satisfy him. Moreover, he looks forward to even better work in the future: "a certain splendid 'last manner,' the very citadel, as it would prove, of his reputation." This characterization of Dencombe is applicable to James himself.

A second point of emphasis is Dencombe's feeling that his work is not rightly understood or appreciated by the reading public. Possibly we are to infer that "poor Dencombe" dies of the sheer lack of appreciation. The autobiographical parallel here, of course, is much less close. Although the story probably reflects the author's disappointment at the failure of his works to win a large audience, James has never been without discerning readers. Moreover, James did not die of frustration; he lived actually to accomplish what Dencombe could only grandly envisage: "the jewels rare, strings of pearls, he would hang between the columns of his temple."

The April day was soft and bright, and poor Dencombe, happy in the conceit of reasserted strength, stood in the garden of the hotel, comparing, with a deliberation in which, however, there was still something of languor, the attractions of easy strolls He liked the feeling of the south, so far as you could have it in the north, he liked the sandy cliffs and the clustered pines, he liked even the colorless sea. "Bournemouth as a health resort" had sounded like a mere advertisement, but now he was reconciled to the prosaic The sociable country postman, passing through the garden, had just given him a small parcel, which he took out with him, leaving the hotel to the right and creeping to a convenient bench that he knew of, a safe recess in the cliff. It looked to the south, to the tinted walls of the Island, and was protected behind by the sloping shoulder of the down. He was tired enough when he reached it, and for a moment he was disappointed, he was better, of course, but better, after all, than what? He should never again, as at one or two great moments of the past, be better than himself. The infinite of life had gone, and what was left of the dose was a small glass engraved like a thermometer by the apothecary. He sat and stared at the sea, which appeared

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8 **Bournemouth,** on the southern coast of England

all surface and twinkle, far shallower than the spirit of man. It was the abyss of human illusion that was the real, the tideless deep. He held his packet, which had come by book post, unopened on his knee, liking, in the lapse of so many joys (his illness had made him feel his age), to know that it was there, but taking for granted there could be no complete renewal of the pleasure, dear to young experience, of seeing oneself "just out." Dencombe, who had a reputation, had come out too often and knew too well in advance how he should look.

His postponement associated itself vaguely, after a little, with a group of three persons, two ladies and a young man, whom, beneath him, straggling and seemingly silent, he could see move slowly together along the sands. The gentleman had his head bent over a book, and was occasionally brought to a stop by the charm of this volume, which, as Dencombe could perceive even at a distance, had a cover alluringly red. Then his companions, going a little further, waited for him to come up, poking their parasols into the beach, looking around them at the sea and sky, and clearly sensible of the beauty of the day. To these things the young man with the book was still more clearly indifferent; lingering, credulous, absorbed, he was an object of envy to an observer from whose connection with literature all such artlessness had faded. One of the ladies was large and mature; the other had the spareness of comparative youth and of a social situation possibly inferior. The large lady carried back Dencombe's imagination to the age of crinoline; she wore a hat of the shape of a mushroom, decorated with a blue veil, and had the air, in her aggressive amplitude, of clinging to a vanished fashion or even a lost cause. Presently her companion produced from under the folds of a mantle a limp, portable chair which she stiffened out and of which the large lady took possession. This act, and something in the movement of either party, instantly characterized the performers—they performed for Dencombe's recreation—as opulent matron and humble dependent. What, moreover, was the use of being an approved novelist if one couldn't establish a relation between such figures; the clever theory, for instance, that the young man was the son of the opulent matron, and that the humble dependent, the daughter of a clergyman or an officer, nourished a secret passion for him? Was that not visible from the way she stole behind her protectress to look back at him? back to where he had let himself come to a full stop when his mother sat down to rest. His book was a novel; it had the catch-penny cover, and while the romance of life stood neglected at his side he lost himself in that of the circulating library. He moved mechanically to where the sand was softer, and ended by plumping down in it to finish his chapter at his ease. The humble dependent, discouraged by his remoteness, wandered, with a martyred droop of the head, in another direction, and the exorbitant lady, watching the waves, offered a confused resemblance to a flying machine that had broken down.

When his drama began to fail Dencombe remembered that he had, after all, another pastime. Though such promptitude on the part of the publisher was rare, he was already able to draw from its wrapper his "latest," perhaps his last. The cover of *The Middle Years* was duly meretricious, the smell of the fresh pages the very odor of sanctity; but for the moment he went no further —he had become conscious of a strange alienation. He had forgotten what his book was about. Had the assault of his old ailment, which he had so fallaciously come to Bournemouth to ward off, interposed utter blankness as to what had preceded it? He had finished the revision of proof before quitting London, but his subsequent fortnight in bed had passed the sponge over color. He couldn't have chanted to himself a single sentence, couldn't have turned with curiosity or confidence to any particular page. His subject had already gone from him, leaving scarcely a superstition behind. He uttered a low moan as he breathed the chill of this dark void, so desperately it seemed to represent the completion of a sinister process. The tears filled his mild eyes; something precious had passed away. This was the pang that had been sharpest during the last few years—the sense of ebbing time, of shrinking opportunity; and now he felt not so much that his last chance was going as that it was gone indeed. He had done all that he should ever do, and yet he had not done what he wanted. This was the laceration—that practically his career was over; it was as violent as a rough hand at his throat. He rose from his seat nervously, like a creature hunted by a

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8 oneself "just out," that is, one's book just published

dread; then he fell back in his weakness and nervously opened his book. It was a single volume; he preferred single volumes and aimed at a rare compression. He began to read, and little by little, in this occupation, he was pacified and reassured. Everything came back to him, but came back with a wonder, came back, above all, with a high and magnificent beauty. He read his own prose, he turned his own leaves, and had, as he sat there with the spring sunshine on the page, an emotion peculiar and intense. His career was over, no doubt, but it was over, after all, with *that.*

He had forgotten during his illness the work of the previous year; but what he had chiefly forgotten was that it was extraordinarily good. He lived once more into his story and was drawn down, as by a siren's hand, to where, in the dim underworld of fiction, the great glazed tank of art, strange, silent subjects float. He recognized his motive and surrendered to his talent. Never, probably, had that talent, such as it was, been so fine. His difficulties were still there, but what was also there, to his perception, though probably, alas! to nobody's else, was the art that in most cases had surmounted them. In his surprised enjoyment of this ability he had a glimpse of a possible reprieve. Surely its force was not spent—there were life and service in it yet. It had not come to him easily, it had been backward and roundabout. It was the child of time, the nursling of delay; he had struggled and suffered for it, making sacrifices not to be counted, and now that it was really mature was it to cease to yield, to confess itself brutally beaten? There was an infinite charm for Dencombe in feeling as he had never felt before that diligence *vincit omnia.* The result produced in his little book was somehow a result beyond his conscious intention: it was as if he had planted his genius, had trusted his method, and they had grown up and flowered with this sweetness. If the achievement had been real, however, the process had been manful enough. What he saw so intensely today, what he felt as a nail driven in, was that only now, at the very last, had he come into possession. His development had been abnormally slow, almost grotesquely gradual. He had been hindered and retarded by experience, and for long periods had only groped his way. It had taken too much of his life to produce too little of his art. The art had come, but it had come after everything else. At such a rate a first existence was too short—long enough only to collect material; so that to fructify, to use the material, one must have a second age, an extension. This extension was what poor Dencombe sighed for. As he turned the last leaves of his volume he murmured: "Ah, for another go! ah, for a better chance!"

The three persons he had observed on the sands had vanished and then reappeared; they had now wandered up a path, an artificial and easy ascent, which led to the top of the cliff. Dencombe's bench was halfway down, on a sheltered ledge, and the large lady, a massive, heterogeneous person, with bold black eyes and kind red cheeks, now took a few moments to rest. She wore dirty gauntlets and immense diamond earrings; at first she looked vulgar, but she contradicted this announcement in an agreeable offhand tone. While her companions stood waiting for her she spread her skirts on the end of Dencombe's seat. The young man had gold spectacles, through which, with his finger still in his red-covered book, he glanced at the volume, bound in the same shade of the same color, lying on the lap of the original occupant of the bench. After an instant Dencombe understood that he was struck with a resemblance, had recognized the gilt stamp on the crimson cloth, was reading *The Middle Years,* and now perceived that somebody else had kept pace with him. The stranger was startled, possibly even a little ruffled, to find that he was not the only person who had been favored with an early copy. The eyes of the two proprietors met for a moment, and Dencombe borrowed amusement from the expression of those of his competitor, those, it might even be inferred, of his admirer. They confessed to some resentment—they seemed to say: "Hang it, has he got it *already?* Of course he's a brute of a reviewer!" Dencombe shuffled his copy out of sight while the opulent matron, rising from her repose, broke out: "I feel already the good of this air!"

"I can't say I do," said the angular lady. "I find myself quite let down."

"I find myself horribly hungry. At what time did you order lunch?" her protectress pursued.

The young person put the question by. "Dr. Hugh always orders it."

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32 vincit omnia, conquers all things

"I ordered nothing today—I'm going to make you diet," said their comrade.

"Then I shall go home and sleep. *Qui dort, dine!*"

"Can I trust you to Miss Vernham?" asked Dr. Hugh of his elder companion.

"Don't I trust *you?*" she archly inquired.

"Not too much!" Miss Vernham, with her eyes on the ground, permitted herself to declare. "You must come with us at least to the house," she went on, while the personage on whom they appeared to be in attendance began to mount higher. She had got a little out of earshot; nevertheless Miss Vernham became, as far as Dencombe was concerned, less distinctly audible to murmur to the young man: "I don't think you realize all you owe the countess!"

Absently, a moment, Dr. Hugh caused his gold-rimmed spectacles to shine at her.

"Is that the way I strike you? I see—I see!"

"She's awfully good to us," continued Miss Vernham, compelled by her interlocutor's immovability to stand there in spite of his discussion of private matters. Of what use would it have been that Dencombe should be sensitive to shades had he not detected in that immovability a strange influence from the quiet old convalescent in the great tweed cape? Miss Vernham appeared suddenly to become aware of some such connection, for she added in a moment: "If you want to sun yourself here you can come back after you've seen us home."

Dr. Hugh, at this, hesitated, and Dencombe, in spite of a desire to pass for unconscious, risked a covert glance at him. What his eyes met this time, as it happened, was on the part of the young lady a queer stare, naturally vitreous, which made her aspect remind him of some figure (he couldn't name it) in a play or a novel, some sinister governess or tragic old maid. She seemed to scrutinize him, to challenge him, to say, from general spite· "What have you got to do with us?" At the same instant the rich humor of the countess reached them from above: "Come, come, my little lambs, you should follow your old *bergère!*" Miss Vernham turned away at this, pursuing the ascent, and Dr. Hugh, after another mute appeal to Dencombe and a moment's evident demur, deposited his book on the bench, as if to keep his place or even as a sign that he would return, and bounded without difficulty up the rougher part of the cliff.

Equally innocent and infinite are the pleasures of observation and the resources engendered by the habit of analyzing life. It amused poor Dencombe, as he dawdled in his tepid air bath, to think that he was waiting for a revelation of something at the back of a fine young mind. He looked hard at the book on the end of the bench, but he wouldn't have touched it for the world. It served his purpose to have a theory which should not be exposed to refutation. He already felt better of his melancholy; he had, according to his old formula, put his head at the window. A passing countess could draw off the fancy when, like the elder of the ladies who had just retreated, she was as obvious as the giantess of a caravan. It was indeed general views that were terrible; short ones, contrary to an opinion sometimes expressed, were the refuge, were the remedy. Dr. Hugh couldn't possibly be anything but a reviewer who had understandings for early copies with publishers or with newspapers. He reappeared in a quarter of an hour, with visible relief at finding Dencombe on the spot, and the gleam of white teeth in an embarrassed but generous smile. He was perceptibly disappointed at the eclipse of the other copy of the book; it was a pretext the less for speaking to the stranger. But he spoke notwithstanding; he held up his own copy and broke out pleadingly:

"*Do* say, if you have occasion to speak of it, that it's the best thing he has done yet!"

Dencombe responded with a laugh: "Done yet" was so amusing to him, made such a grand avenue of the future. Better still, the young man took *him* for a reviewer. He pulled out *The Middle Years* from under his cape, but instinctively concealed any telltale look of fatherhood. This was partly because a person was always a fool for calling attention to his work. "Is that what you're going to say yourself?" he inquired of his visitor.

"I'm not quite sure I shall write anything. I don't as a regular thing—I enjoy in peace. But it's awfully fine."

Dencombe debated a moment. If his interlocutor had begun to abuse him he would have confessed on the spot to his identity, but there was no harm in drawing him on a little to praise. He drew him on with such success that in a few moments his new acquaintance, seated by

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3 Qui dort, dîne! Sleeping is as good as eating • 41 bergère, shepherdess

his side, was confessing candidly that Dencombe's novels were the only ones he could read a second time. He had come the day before from London, where a friend of his, a journalist, had lent him his copy of the last—the copy sent to the office of the journal and already the subject of a "notice" which, as was pretended there (but one had to allow for "swagger"), it had taken a full quarter of an hour to prepare. He intimated that he was ashamed for his friend, and in the case of a work demanding and repaying study, of such inferior manners; and, with his fresh appreciation and inexplicable wish to express it, he speedily became for poor Dencombe a remarkable, a delightful apparition. Chance had brought the weary man of letters face to face with the greatest admirer in the new generation whom it was supposable he possessed. The admirer, in truth, was mystifying, so rare a case was it to find a bristling young doctor—he looked like a German physiologist—enamored of literary form. It was an accident, but happier than most accidents, so that Dencombe, exhilarated as well as confounded, spent half an hour in making his visitor talk while he kept himself quiet. He explained his premature possession of *The Middle Years* by an allusion to the friendship of the publisher, who, knowing he was at Bournemouth for his health, had paid him this graceful attention. He admitted that he had been ill, for Dr. Hugh would infallibly have guessed it; he even went so far as to wonder whether he mightn't look for some hygienic "tip" from a personage combining so bright an enthusiasm with a presumable knowledge of the remedies now in vogue. It would shake his faith a little perhaps to have to take a doctor seriously who could take *him* so seriously, but he enjoyed this gushing modern youth, and he felt with an acute pang that there would still be work to do in a world in which such odd combinations were presented. It was not true, what he had tried for renunciation's sake to believe, that all the combinations were exhausted. They were not, they were not—they were infinite; the exhaustion was in the miserable artist.

Dr. Hugh was an ardent physiologist, saturated with the spirit of the age—in other words he had just taken his degree; but he was independent and various, he talked like a man who would have preferred to love literature best. He would fain have made fine phrases, but nature had denied him the trick. Some of the finest in *The Middle Years* had struck him inordinately, and he took the liberty of reading them to Dencombe in support of his plea. He grew vivid, in the balmy air, to his companion, for whose deep refreshment he seemed to have been sent; and was particularly ingenuous in describing how recently he had become acquainted, and how instantly infatuated, with the only man who had put flesh between the ribs of an art that was starving on superstitions. He had not yet written to him—he was deterred by a sentiment of respect. Dencombe at this moment felicitated himself more than ever on having never answered the photographers. His visitor's attitude promised him a luxury of intercourse, but he surmised that a certain security in it, for Dr. Hugh, would depend not a little on the countess. He learned without delay with what variety of countess they were concerned, as well as the nature of the tie that united the curious trio. The large lady, an Englishwoman by birth and the daughter of a celebrated baritone, whose taste, without his talent, she had inherited, was the widow of a French nobleman and mistress of all that remained of the handsome fortune, the fruit of her father's earnings, that had constituted her dower. Miss Vernham, an odd creature but an accomplished pianist, was attached to her person at a salary. The countess was generous, independent, eccentric; she traveled with her minstrel and her medical man. Ignorant and passionate, she had nevertheless moments in which she was almost irresistible. Dencombe saw her sit for her portait in Dr. Hugh's free sketch, and felt the picture of his young friend's relation to her frame itself in his mind. This young friend, for a representative of the new psychology, was himself easily hypnotized, and if he became abnormally communicative it was only a sign of his real subjection. Dencombe did accordingly what he wanted with him, even without being known as Dencombe.

Taken ill on a journey in Switzerland the countess had picked him up at an hotel, and the accident of his happening to please her had made her offer him, with her imperious liberality, terms that couldn't fail to dazzle a practitioner without patients and whose resources had been drained dry by his studies. It was not the way he would have elected to spend his time, but it was time that would pass quickly, and meanwhile she was wonderfully kind. She exacted perpetual attention, but it was impossible not to like her. He gave details about his

queer patient, a "type" if there ever was one, who had in connection with her flushed obesity and in addition to the morbid strain of a violent and aimless will a grave organic disorder; but he came back to his loved novelist, whom he was so good as to pronounce more essentially a poet than many of those who went in for verse, with a zeal excited, as all his indiscretion had been excited, by the happy chance of Dencombe's sympathy and the coincidence of their occupation. Dencombe had confessed to a slight personal acquaintance with the author of *The Middle Years,* but had not felt himself as ready as he could have wished when his companion, who had never yet encountered a being so privileged, began to be eager for particulars. He even thought that Dr. Hugh's eye at that moment emitted a glimmer of suspicion. But the young man was too inflamed to be shrewd, and repeatedly caught up the book to exclaim: "Did you notice this?" or "Weren't you immensely struck with that?" "There's a beautiful passage toward the end," he broke out; and again he laid his hand upon the volume. As he turned the pages he came upon something else, while Dencombe saw him suddenly change color. He had taken up, as it lay on the bench, Dencombe's copy instead of his own, and his neighbor immediately guessed the reason of his start. Dr. Hugh looked grave an instant; then he said: "I see you've been altering the text!" Dencombe was a passionate corrector, a fingerer of style; the last thing he ever arrived at was a form final for himself. His ideal would have been to publish secretly, and then, on the published text, treat himself to the terrified revise, sacrificing always a first edition and beginning for posterity and even for the collectors, poor dears, with a second. This morning, in *The Middle Years,* his pencil had pricked a dozen lights. He was amused at the effect of the young man's reproach; for an instant it made him change color. He stammered, at any rate, ambiguously; then, through a blur of ebbing consciousness, saw Dr. Hugh's mystified eyes. He only had time to feel he was about to be ill again—that emotion, excitement, fatigue, the heat of the sun, the solicitation of the air, had combined to play him a trick, before, stretching out a hand to his visitor with a plaintive cry, he lost his senses altogether.

Later he knew that he had fainted and that Dr. Hugh had got him home in a bath chair, the conductor of which, prowling within hail for custom, had happened to remember seeing him in the garden of the hotel. He had recovered his perception in the transit, and had, in bed, that afternoon, a vague recollection of Dr. Hugh's young face, as they went together, bent over him in a comforting laugh and expressive of something more than a suspicion of his identity. That identity was ineffaceable now, and all the more that he was disappointed, disgusted. He had been rash, been stupid, had gone out too soon, stayed out too long. He oughtn't to have exposed himself to strangers, he ought to have taken his servant. He felt as if he had fallen into a hole too deep to descry any little patch of heaven. He was confused about the time that had elapsed—he pieced the fragments together. He had seen his doctor, the real one, the one who had treated him from the first and who had again been very kind. His servant was in and out on tiptoe, looking very wise after the fact. He said more than once something about the sharp young gentleman. The rest was vagueness, in so far as it wasn't despair. The vagueness, however, justified itself by dreams, dozing anxieties from which he finally emerged to the consciousness of a dark room and a shaded candle.

"You'll be all right again—I know all about you now," said a voice near him that he knew to be young. Then his meeting with Dr. Hugh came back. He was too discouraged to joke about it yet, but he was able to perceive, after a little, that the interest of it was intense for his visitor. "Of course I can't attend you professionally—you've got your own man, with whom I've talked and who's excellent," Dr. Hugh went on. "But you must let me come to see you as a good friend. I've just looked in before going to bed. You're doing beautifully, but it's a good job I was with you on the cliff. I shall come in early tomorrow. I want to do something for you. I want to do everything. You've done a tremendous lot for me." The young man held his hand, hanging over him, and poor Dencombe, weakly aware of this living pressure, simply lay there and accepted his devotion. He couldn't do anything less—he needed help too much.

The idea of the help he needed was very present to him that night, which he spent in a lucid stillness, an intensity of thought that constituted a reaction from his hours of stupor. He was lost, he was lost—he was lost if he couldn't be saved. He was not afraid of suffering,

of death; he was not even in love with life; but he had had a deep demonstration of desire. It came over him in the long, quiet hours that only with *The Middle Years* had he taken his flight; only on that day, visited by soundless processions, had he recognized his kingdom. He had had a revelation of his range. What he dreaded was the idea that his reputation should stand on the unfinished. It was not with his past but with his future that it should properly be concerned. Illness and age rose before him like specters with pitiless eyes: how was he to bribe such fates to give him the second chance? He had had the one chance that all men have—he had had the chance of life. He went to sleep again very late, and when he awoke Dr. Hugh was sitting by his head. There was already, by this time, something beautifully familiar in him.

"Don't think I've turned out your physician," he said; "I'm acting with his consent. He has been here and seen you. Somehow he seems to trust me. I told him how we happened to come together yesterday, and he recognizes that I've a peculiar right."

Dencombe looked at him with a calculating earnestness. "How have you squared the countess?"

The young man blushed a little, but he laughed. "Oh, never mind the countess!"

"You told me she was very exacting."

Dr. Hugh was silent a moment. "So she is."

"And Miss Vernham's an *intrigante.*"

"How do you know that?"

"I know everything. One *has* to, to write decently!"

"I think she's mad," said limpid Dr. Hugh.

"Well, don't quarrel with the countess—she's a present help to you."

"I don't quarrel," Dr. Hugh replied. "But I don't get on with silly women." Presently he added: "You seem very much alone."

"That often happens at my age. I've outlived, I've lost by the way."

Dr. Hugh hesitated; then surmounting a soft scruple: "Whom have you lost?"

"Everyone."

"Ah, no!" the young man murmured, laying a hand on his arm.

"I once had a wife—I once had a son. My wife died when my child was born, and my boy, at school, was carried off by typhoid."

"I wish I'd been there!" said Dr. Hugh simply.

"Well—if you're here!" Dencombe answered, with a smile that, in spite of dimness, showed how much he liked to be sure of his companion's whereabouts.

"You talk strangely of your age. You're not old."

"Hypocrite—so early!"

"I speak physiologically."

"That's the way I've been speaking for the last five years, and it's exactly what I've been saying to myself. It isn't till we *are* old that we begin to tell ourselves we're not!"

"Yet I know I myself am young," Dr. Hugh declared.

"Not so well as I!" laughed his patient, whose visitor indeed would have established the truth in question by the honesty with which he changed the point of view, remarking that it must be one of the charms of age—at any rate in the case of high distinction—to feel that one has labored and achieved. Dr. Hugh employed the common phrase about earning one's rest, and it made poor Dencombe, for an instant, almost angry. He recovered himself, however, to explain, lucidly enough, that if he, ungraciously, knew nothing of such a balm, it was doubtless because he had wasted inestimable years. He had followed Literature from the first, but he had taken a lifetime to get alongside of her. Only today, at last, had he begun to *see,* so that what he had hitherto done was a movement without a direction. He had ripened too late, and was so clumsily constituted that he had had to teach himself by mistakes.

"I prefer your flowers, then, to other people's fruit, and your mistakes to other people's successes," said gallant Dr. Hugh. "It's for your mistakes I admire you."

"You're happy—you don't know," Dencombe answered.

Looking at his watch the young man had got up; he named the hour of the afternoon at which he would return. Dencombe warned him against committing himself too deeply, and expressed again all his dread of making him neglect the countess—perhaps incur her displeasure.

"I want to be like you—I want to learn by mistakes!" Dr. Hugh laughed.

"Take care you don't make too grave a one! But do come back," Dencombe added, with the glimmer of a new idea.

"You should have had more vanity!" Dr. Hugh spoke

as if he knew the exact amount required to make a man of letters normal.

"No, no—I only should have had more time. I want another go."

"Another go?"

"I want an extension."

"An extension?" Again Dr. Hugh repeated Dencombe's words, with which he seemed to have been struck.

"Don't you know?—I want to what they call 'live.'"

The young man, for good-by, had taken his hand, which closed with a certain force. They looked at each other hard a moment. "You *will* live," said Dr. Hugh.

"Don't be superficial. It's too serious!"

"You *shall* live!" Dencombe's visitor declared, turning pale.

"Ah, that's better!" And as he retired the invalid, with a troubled laugh, sank gratefully back.

All that day and all the following night he wondered if it mightn't be arranged. His doctor came again, his servant was attentive, but it was to his confident young friend that he found himself mentally appealing. His collapse on the cliff was plausibly explained, and his liberation, on a better basis, promised for the morrow; meanwhile, however, the intensity of his meditations kept him tranquil and made him indifferent. The idea that occupied him was none the less absorbing because it was a morbid fancy. Here was a clever son of the age, ingenious and ardent, who happened to have set him up for connoisseurs to worship. This servant of his altar had all the new learning in science and all the old reverence in faith; wouldn't he therefore put his knowledge at the disposal of his sympathy, his craft at the disposal of his love? Couldn't he be trusted to invent a remedy for a poor artist to whose art he had paid a tribute? If he couldn't, the alternative was hard: Dencombe would have to surrender to silence, unvindicated and undivined. The rest of the day and all the next he toyed in secret with this sweet futility. Who would work the miracle for him but the young man who could combine such lucidity with such passion? He thought of the fairy tales of science, and charmed himself into forgetting that he looked for a magic that was not of this world. Dr. Hugh was an apparition, and that placed him above the law. He came and went while his patient, who sat up, followed him with supplicating eyes. The interest of knowing the great author had made the young man begin *The Middle Years* afresh, and would help him to find a deeper meaning in its pages. Dencombe had told him what he "tried for"; with all his intelligence, on a first perusal, Dr. Hugh had failed to guess it. The baffled celebrity wondered then who in the world *would* guess it; he was amused once more at the fine, full way with which an intention could be missed. Yet he wouldn't rail at the general mind today—consoling as that ever had been: the revelation of his own slowness had seemed to make all stupidity sacred.

Dr. Hugh, after a little, was visibly worried, confessing, on inquiry, to a source of embarrassment at home. "Stick to the countess—don't mind me," Dencombe said repeatedly; for his companion was frank enough about the large lady's attitude. She was so jealous that she had fallen ill—she resented such a breach of allegiance. She paid so much for his fidelity that she must have it all; she refused him the right to other sympathies, charged him with scheming to make her die alone, for it was needless to point out how little Miss Vernham was a resource in trouble. When Dr. Hugh mentioned that the countess would already have left Bournemouth if he hadn't kept her in bed, poor Dencombe held his arm tighter and said with decision: "Take her straight away." They had gone out together, walking back to the sheltered nook in which, the other day, they had met. The young man, who had given his companion a personal support, declared with emphasis that his conscience was clear—he could ride two horses at once. Didn't he dream, for his future, of a time when he should have to ride five hundred? Longing equally for virtue, Dencombe replied that in that golden age no patient would pretend to have contracted with him for his whole attention. On the part of the countess was not such an avidity lawful? Dr. Hugh denied it, said there was no contract, but only a free understanding, and that a sordid servitude was impossible to a generous spirit; he liked moreover to talk about art, and that was the subject on which, this time, as they sat together on the sunny bench, he tried most to engage the author of *The Middle Years*. Dencombe, soaring again a little on the weak wings of convalescence and still haunted by that happy notion of an organized rescue, found another strain of eloquence to plead the cause of a certain splendid "last manner," the very citadel, as it would prove, of his reputation, the

ered. While his listener gave up the morning and the great, still sea appeared to wait, he had a wonderful explanatory hour. Even for himself he was inspired as he told of what his treasure would consist—the precious metals he would dig from the mine, the jewels rare, strings of pearls, he would hang between the columns of his temple. He was wonderful for himself, so thick his convictions crowded; but he was still more wonderful for Dr. Hugh, who assured him, none the less, that the very pages he had just published were already encrusted with gems. The young man, however, panted for the combinations to come, and, before the face of the beautiful day renewed to Dencombe his guarantee that his profession would hold itself responsible for such a life. Then he suddenly clapped his hand upon his watch pocket and asked leave to absent himself for half an hour. Dencombe waited there for his return, but was at last recalled to the actual by the fall of a shadow across the ground. The shadow darkened into that of Miss Vernham, the young lady in attendance on the countess; whom Dencombe, recognizing her, perceived so clearly to have come to speak to him that he rose from his bench to acknowledge the civility. Miss Vernham indeed proved not particularly civil; she looked strangely agitated, and her type was now unmistakable.

"Excuse me if I inquire," she said, "whether it's too much to hope that you may be induced to leave Dr. Hugh alone." Then, before Dencombe, greatly disconcerted, could protest: "You ought to be informed that you stand in his light, that you may do him a terrible injury."

"Do you mean by causing the countess to dispense with his services?"

"By causing her to disinherit him." Dencombe stared at this, and Miss Vernham pursued, in the gratification of seeing she could produce an impression: "It has depended on himself to come into something very handsome. He has had a magnificent prospect, but I think you've succeeded in spoiling it."

"Not intentionally, I assure you. Is there no hope that the accident may be repaired?" Dencombe asked.

"She was ready to do anything for him. She takes great fancies, she lets herself go—it's her way. She has no relations, she's free to dispose of her money, and she's very ill."

"I'm very sorry to hear it," Dencombe stammered. mouth? That's what I've come to ask of you."

Poor Dencombe sank down on his bench. "I'm very ill myself, but I'll try!"

Miss Vernham still stood there with her colorless eyes and the brutality of her good conscience. "Before it's too late, please!" she said; and with this she turned her back, in order, quickly, as if it had been a business to which she could spare but a precious moment, to pass out of his sight.

Oh, yes! after this Dencombe was certainly very ill. Miss Vernham had upset him with her rough, fierce news; it was the sharpest shock to him to discover what was at stake for a penniless young man of fine parts. He sat trembling on his bench, staring at the waste of waters, feeling sick with the directness of the blow. He was indeed too weak, too unsteady, too alarmed; but he would make the effort to get away, for he couldn't accept the guilt of interference, and his honor was really involved. He would hobble home, at any rate, and then he would think what was to be done. He made his way back to the hotel and, as he went, had a characteristic vision of Miss Vernham's great motive. The countess hated women, of course; Dencombe was lucid about that; so the hungry pianist had no personal hopes and could only console herself with the bold conception of helping Dr. Hugh in order either to marry him after he should get his money or to induce him to recognize her title to compensation and buy her off. If she had befriended him at a fruitful crisis he would really, as a man of delicacy, and she knew what to think of that point, have to reckon with her.

At the hotel Dencombe's servant insisted on his going back to bed. The invalid had talked about catching a train and had begun with orders to pack; after which his humming nerves had yielded to a sense of sickness. He consented to see his physician, who immediately was sent for, but he wished it to be understood that his door was irrevocably closed to Dr. Hugh. He had his plan, which was so fine that he rejoiced in it after getting back to bed. Dr. Hugh, suddenly finding himself snubbed without mercy, would, in natural disgust and to the joy of Miss Vernham, renew his allegiance to the countess. When his physician arrived Dencombe learned that he was feverish and that this was very wrong; he was to cultivate calmness and try, if possible, not to think. For

the rest of the day he wooed stupidity; but there was an ache that kept him sentient, the probable sacrifice of his "extension," the limit of his course. His medical adviser was anything but pleased; his successive relapses were ominous. He charged this personage to put out a strong hand and take Dr. Hugh off his mind—it would contribute so much to his being quiet. The agitating name, in his room, was not mentioned again, but his security was a smothered fear, and it was not confirmed by the receipt, at ten o'clock that evening, of a telegram which his servant opened and read for him and to which, with an address in London, the signature of Miss Vernham was attached. "Beseech you to use all influence to make our friend join us here in the morning. Countess much the worse for dreadful journey, but everything may still be saved." The two ladies had gathered themselves up and had been capable in the afternoon of a spiteful revolution. They had started for the capital, and if the elder one, as Miss Vernham had announced, was very ill, she had wished to make it clear that she was proportionately reckless. Poor Dencombe, who was not reckless, and who only desired that everything should indeed be "saved," sent this missive straight off to the young man's lodging and had on the morrow the pleasure of knowing that he had quitted Bournemouth by an early train.

Two days later he pressed in with a copy of a literary journal in his hand. He had returned because he was anxious and for the pleasure of flourishing the great review of *The Middle Years*. Here at least was something adequate—it rose to the occasion; it was an acclamation, a reparation, a critical attempt to place the author in the niche he had fairly won. Dencombe accepted and submitted; he made neither objection nor inquiry, for old complications had returned and he had had two atrocious days. He was convinced not only that he should never again leave his bed, so that his young friend might pardonably remain, but that the demand he should make on the patience of beholders would be very moderate indeed. Dr. Hugh had been to town, and he tried to find in his eyes some confession that the countess was pacified and his legacy clinched; but all he could see there was the light of his juvenile joy in two or three of the phrases of the newspaper. Dencombe couldn't read them, but when his visitor had insisted on repeating them more than once he was able to shake an unintoxicated head. "Ah, no! but they would have been true of what I *could* have done!"

"What people 'could have done' is mainly what they've in fact done," Dr. Hugh contended.

"Mainly, yes; but I've been an idiot!" said Dencombe.

Dr. Hugh did remain; the end was coming fast. Two days later Dencombe observed to him, by way of the feeblest of jokes, that there would now be no question whatever of a second chance. At this the young man stared; then he exclaimed: "Why, it has come to pass—it has come to pass! The second chance has been the public's—the chance to find the point of view, to pick up the pearl!"

"Oh, the pearl!" poor Dencombe uneasily sighed. A smile as cold as a winter sunset flickered on his drawn lips as he added: "The pearl is the unwritten—the pearl is the unalloyed, the *rest*, the lost!"

From that moment he was less and less present, heedless to all appearance of what went on around him. His disease was definitely mortal, of an action as relentless, after the short arrest that had enabled him to fall in with Dr. Hugh, as a leak in a great ship. Sinking steadily, though this visitor, a man of rare resources, now cordially approved by his physician, showed endless art in guarding him from pain, poor Dencombe kept no reckoning of favor or neglect, betrayed no symptom of regret or speculation. Yet toward the last he gave a sign of having noticed that for two days Dr. Hugh had not been in his room, a sign that consisted of his suddenly opening his eyes to ask of him if he had spent the interval with the countess.

"The countess is dead," said Dr. Hugh. "I knew that in a particular contingency she wouldn't resist. I went to her grave."

Dencombe's eyes opened wider. "She left you 'something handsome'?"

The young man gave a laugh almost too light for a chamber of woe. "Never a penny! She roundly cursed me."

"Cursed you?" Dencombe murmured.

"For giving her up. I gave her up for *you*. I had to choose," his companion explained.

"You chose to let a fortune go?"

"I chose to accept, whatever they might be, the consequences of my infatuation," smiled Dr. Hugh. Then, as

a larger pleasantry: "A fortune be hanged! It's your own fault if I can't get your things out of my head."

The immediate tribute to his humor was a long, bewildered moan; after which, for many hours, many days Dencombe lay motionless and absent. A response so absolute, such a glimpse of a definite result, and such a sense of credit worked together in his mind and producing a strange commotion, slowly altered and transfigured his despair. The sense of cold submersion left him—he seemed to float without an effort. The incident was extraordinary as evidence, and it shed an intenser light. At the last he signed to Dr. Hugh to listen, and, when he was down on his knees by the pillow, brought him very near.

"You've made me think it all a delusion."

"Not your glory, my dear friend," stammered the young man.

"Not my glory—what there is of it! It *is* glory—to have been tested, to have had our little quality, and cast our little spell. The thing is to have made somebody care. You happen to be crazy, of course, but that doesn't affect the law."

"You're a great success!" said Dr. Hugh, putting into his young voice the ring of a marriage bell.

Dencombe lay taking this in; then he gathered strength to speak once more. "A second chance—*that's* the delusion. There never was to be but one. We work in the dark—we do what we can—we give what we have. Our doubt is our passion, and our passion is our task. The rest is the madness of art."

"If you've doubted, if you've despaired, you've always 'done' it," his visitor subtly argued.

"We've done something or other," Dencombe conceded.

"Something or other is everything. It's the feasible. It's *you!*"

"Comforter!" poor Dencombe ironically sighed.

"But it's true," insisted his friend.

"It's true. It's frustration that doesn't count."

"Frustration's only life," said Dr. Hugh.

"Yes, it's what passes." Poor Dencombe was barely audible, but he had marked with the words the virtual end of his first and only chance.

1895

The Two Faces

"The Two Faces" first appeared (under the title "The Faces") in Harper's Bazaar in 1900.

The story well illustrates the characteristics of James' last phase: the closely knit structure, the complex style, the psychological subtlety, and the ironical emphasis are seen here in full development. Though dramatic in its method to an unusual degree, since dialogue is extensively used, the story nevertheless is told from the point of view of a single character, Shirley Sutton: "It is with Sutton's total impression," the author says quite explicitly, "that we are particularly and almost exclusively concerned." Sutton's, therefore, is the only consciousness into which the reader is given direct glimpses. But our interest in him is hardly as great (despite his apparently genuine disappointment in the object of his admiration) as our interest in the cruel Mrs. Grantham and her pathetic victim. The London world of fashion, as James portrays it, was a world of pretentious formalism, spitefulness, and intrigue.

Though James preferred the two-volume novel, he prided himself upon his ability to present an action capable of novel-length treatment within the confines of the short story. "The Two Faces" seemed to him a remarkable instance, even among his own short pieces, of skillful compression, for apropos of this story, James spoke of "the thrilling question of the poor painter's tormented acceptance, in advance, of the scanted canvas; of the writer's rueful, hopeful assent to the conditions known to him as 'too little room to turn round.'" It would be "of the liveliest interest, then," he said, "to see how he may nevertheless...effectively manoeuvre." "The value of the 'The Two Faces,'" he went on, "is thus peculiarly an economic one...The neat evolution, as I call it, the example of the turn of the whole coach and pair in the contracted court, without the 'spill' of a single passenger or the

derangement of a single parcel, is only in three or four cases (where the coach is fuller still) more appreciable."

The servant, who, in spite of his sealed stamped look, appeared to have his reasons, stood there for instruction in a manner not quite usual after announcing the name Mrs. Grantham, however, took it up—"Lord Gwyther?"—with a quick surprise that for an instant justified him even to the small scintilla in the glance she gave her companion, which might have had exactly the sense of the butler's hesitation. This companion, a shortish fairish youngish man, clean-shaven and keen-eyed, had, with a promptitude that would have struck an observer—which the butler indeed was—sprung to his feet and moved to the chimney-piece, though his hostess herself meanwhile managed not otherwise to stir. "Well?" she said as for the visitor to advance; which she immediately followed with a sharper "He's not there?"

"Shall I show him up, ma'am?"

"But of course!" The point of his doubt made her at last rise for impatience, and Bates, before leaving the room, might still have caught the achieved irony of her appeal to the gentleman into whose communion with her he had broken. "Why in the world not—? What a way—!" she exclaimed as Sutton felt beside his cheek the passage of her eyes to the glass behind him.

"He wasn't sure you'd see anyone."

"I don't see 'any one,' but I see individuals."

"That's just it—and sometimes you don't see them."

"Do you mean ever because of *you?*" she asked as she touched into place a tendril of hair. "That's just his impertinence, as to which I shall speak to him."

"Don't," said Shirley Sutton. "Never notice anything."

"That's nice advice from you," she laughed, "who notice everything!"

"Ah but I speak of nothing."

She looked at him a moment. "You're still more impertinent than Bates. You'll please not budge," she went on.

"Really? I must sit him out?" he continued as, after a minute, she had not again spoken—only glancing about, while she changed her place, partly for another look at the glass and partly to see if she could improve her seat. What she felt was rather more than, clever and charming though she was, she could hide. "If you're wondering how you seem I can tell you. Awfully cool and easy."

She gave him another stare. She was beautiful and conscious. "And if you're wondering how *you* seem—"

"Oh I'm not!" he laughed from before the fire. "I always perfectly know."

"How you seem," she retorted, "is as if you didn't!"

Once more for a little he watched her. "You're looking lovely for him—extraordinarily lovely, within the marked limits of your range. But that's enough. Don't be clever."

"Then who *will* be?"

"There you are!" he sighed with amusement.

"Do you know him?" she asked as, through the door left open by Bates, they heard steps on the landing.

Sutton had to think an instant, and produced a "No" just as Lord Gwyther was again announced, which gave an unexpectedness to the greeting offered him a moment later by this personage—a young man, stout and smooth and fresh, but not at all shy, who, after the happiest rapid passage with Mrs. Grantham, put out a hand with a straight free "How d'ye do?"

"Mr. Shirley Sutton," Mrs. Grantham explained.

"Oh yes," said her second visitor quite as if he knew; which, as he couldn't have known, had for her first the interest of confirming a perception that his lordship would be—no, not at all, in general embarrassed, only was now exceptionally and especially agitated. As it is, for that matter, with Sutton's total impression that we are particularly and almost exclusively concerned, it may be further mentioned that he was not less clear as to the really handsome way in which the young man kept himself together and little by little—though with all proper aid indeed—finally found his feet. All sorts of things, for the twenty minutes, occurred to Sutton, though one of them was certainly not that it would, after all, be better he should go. One of them was that their hostess was doing it in perfection—simply, easily, kindly, yet with something the least bit queer in her wonderful eyes; another was that if he had been recognized without the least ground it was through a tension of nerves on the part of his fellow guest that produced inconsequent motions; still another was that, even had departure been indicated, he would positively have felt dissuasion in the rare promise of the scene. This was in especial after Lord Gwyther not only had announced that he was now married, but had mentioned

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that he wished to bring his wife to Mrs. Grantham for the benefit so certain to be derived. It was the passage immediately produced by that speech that provoked in Sutton the intensity, as it were, of his arrest. He already knew of the marriage as well as Mrs. Grantham herself, and as well also as he knew of some other things, and this gave him doubtless the better measure of what took place before him and the keener consciousness of the quick look that, at a marked moment—though it was not absolutely meant for him any more than his companion —Mrs. Grantham let him catch.

She smiled, but it had a gravity. "I think, you know, you ought to have told me before."

"Do you mean when I first got engaged? Well, it all took place so far away, and we really told, at home, so few people."

Oh there might have been reasons; but it had not been quite right. "You were married at Stuttgart? That wasn't too far for *my* interest, at least, to reach."

"Awfully kind of you—and of course one knew you *would* be kind. But it wasn't at Stuttgart; it was over there, but quite in the country. We should have managed it in England but that her mother naturally wished to be present, yet wasn't in health to come. So it was really, you see, a sort of little hole-and-corner German affair."

This didn't in the least check Mrs. Grantham's claim, but it started a slight anxiety. "Will she be—a—then German?"

Sutton knew her to know perfectly what Lady Gwyther would "be," but he had by this time, while their friend explained, his independent interest. "Oh dear no! My father-in-law has never parted with the proud birthright of a Briton. But his wife, you see, holds an estate in Wurtemberg from *her* mother, Countess Kremnitz, on which, with the awful condition of his English property, you know, they've found it for years a tremendous saving to live. So that though Valda was luckily born at home she has practically spent her life over there."

"Oh I see." Then, after a slight pause, "Is Valda her pretty name?" Mrs. Grantham asked.

"Well," said the young man, only wishing, in his candor, it was clear, to be drawn out—"well, she has, in the manner of her mother's people, about thirteen; but that's the one we generally use."

Mrs. Grantham waited but an instant. "Than may *I* generally use it?"

"It would be too charming of you; and nothing would give her—as I assure you nothing would give *me*—greater pleasure." Lord Gwyther quite glowed with the thought.

"Then I think that instead of coming alone you might have brought her to see me."

"It's exactly what," he instantly replied, "I came to ask your leave to do." He explained that for the moment Lady Gwyther was not in town, having as soon as she arrived gone down to Torquay to put in a few days with one of her aunts, also her godmother, to whom she was an object of great interest. She had seen no one yet, and no one—not that *that* mattered—had seen her; she knew nothing whatever of London and was awfully frightened at facing it and at what (however little) might be expected of her. "She wants some one," he said, "some one who knows the whole thing, don't you see? and who's thoroughly kind and clever, as you would be, if I may say so, to take her by the hand." It was at this point and on these words that the eyes of Lord Gwyther's two auditors inevitably and wonderfully met. But there was nothing in the way he kept it up to show he caught the encounter. "She wants, if I may tell you so, a real friend for the great labyrinth; and asking myself what I could do to make things ready for her, and who would be absolutely the best woman in London—"

"You thought naturally of *me?*" Mrs. Grantham had listened with no sign but the faint flash just noted; now, however, she gave him the full light of her expressive face—which immediately brought Shirley Sutton, looking at his watch, once more to his feet.

"She *is* the best woman in London!" He addressed himself with a laugh to the other visitor, but offered his hand in farewell to their hostess.

"You're going?"

"I must," he said without scruple.

"Then we do meet at dinner?"

"I hope so." On which, to take leave, he returned with interest to Lord Gwyther the friendly clutch he had a short time before received.

II

They did meet at dinner, and if they were not, as it happened, side by side, they made that up afterwards in the happiest angle of a drawing-room that offered both shine and shadow and that was positively much appreciated, in the circle in which they moved, for the favorable "corners" created by its shrewd mistress. Mrs. Grantham's face, charged with something produced in it by Lord Gwyther's visit, had been with him so constantly

for the previous hours that, when she instantly challenged him on his "treatment" of her in the afternoon, he was on the point of naming it as his reason for not having remained with her. Something new had quickly come into her beauty; he couldn't as yet have said what, nor whether on the whole to its advantage or its loss. Till he should see this clearer, at any rate he would say nothing; so that he found with sufficient presence of mind a better excuse. If in short he had in defiance of her particular request left her alone with Lord Gwyther it was simply because the situation had suddenly turned so exciting that he had fairly feared the contagion of it—the temptation of its making him, most improperly, put in his word.

They could now talk of these things at their ease. Other couples, ensconced and scattered, enjoyed the same privilege, and Sutton had more and more the profit, such as it was, of feeling that his interest in Mrs. Grantham had become—what was the luxury of so high a social code—an acknowledged and protected relation. He knew his London well enough to know that he was on the way to be regarded as her main source of consolation for the trick Lord Gwyther had several months before publicly played on her. Many persons had not held that, by the high social code in question, his lordship could have "reserved the right" to turn up that way, from one day to another, engaged to be married. For himself London took, with its short cuts and its cheap psychology, an immense deal for granted. To his own sense he was never —could in the nature of things never be—any man's successor. Just what had constituted the predecessorship of other men was apparently that they had been able to make up their mind. He, worse luck, was at the mercy of her face, and more than ever at the mercy of it now, which meant moreover not that it made a slave of him, but that it made, disconcertingly, a sceptic. It was the absolute perfection of the handsome, but things had a way of coming into it. "I felt," he said, "that you were there together at a point at which you had a right to the ease the absence of a listener would give. I was sure that when you made me promise to stay you hadn't guessed—"

"That he could possibly have come to me on such an extraordinary errand? No, of course I hadn't guessed. Who *would?* But didn't you see how little I was upset by it?"

Sutton demurred. Then with a smile: "I think *he* saw how little."

"You yourself didn't then?"

He again held back, but not, after all, to answer. "He was wonderful, wasn't he?"

"I think he was," she returned after a moment. To which she added: "Why did he pretend that way he knew you?"

"He didn't pretend. He felt somehow on the spot that I was 'in it.' " Sutton had found this afterwards and found it to represent a reality. "It was an effusion of cheer and hope. He was so glad to see me there and to find you happy."

"Happy?"

"Happy. Aren't you?"

"Because of *you?*"

"Well,—according to the impression he received as he came in."

"That was sudden then," she asked, "and unexpected?"

Her companion thought. "Prepared in some degree, but confirmed by the sight of us, there together, so awfully jolly and sociable over your fire."

Mrs. Grantham turned this round. "If he knew I was 'happy' then—which, by the way, is none of his business, nor of yours either—why in the world did he come?"

"Well, for good manners, and for his idea," said Sutton.

She took it in, appearing to have no hardness of rancor that could bar discussion. "Do you mean by his idea his proposal that I should grandmother his wife? And if you do is the proposal your reason for calling him wonderful?"

Sutton laughed. "Pray what's yours?" As this was a question, however, that she took her time to answer or not to answer—only appearing interested for a moment in a combination that had formed itself on the other side of the room—he presently went on. "What's *his?*—that would seem to be the point. His, I mean, for having decided on the extraordinary step of throwing his little wife, bound hands and feet, into your arms. Intelligent as you are, and with these three or four hours to have thought it over, I yet don't see how that can fail still to mystify you."

She continued to watch their opposite neighbors. " 'Little,' you call her. Is she so very small?"

"Tiny, tiny—she *must* be; as different as possible in every way—of necessity—from you. They always *are* the opposite pole, you know," said Shirley Sutton.

She glanced at him now. "You strike me as of an impudence—!"

"No, no. I only like to make it out with you."

She looked away again and after a little went on. "I'm sure she's charming, and only hope one isn't to gather he's already tired of her."

"Not a bit! He's tremendously in love, and he'll remain so."

"So much the better. And if it's a question," said Mrs. Grantham, "of one's doing what one can for her, he has only, as I told him when you had gone, to give me the chance."

"Good! So he *is* to commit her to you?"

"You use extraordinary expressions, but it's settled that he brings her."

"And you'll really and truly help her?"

"Really and truly?" said Mrs. Grantham with her eyes again on him. "Why not? For what do you take me?"

"Ah isn't that just what I still have the discomfort, every day I live, of asking myself?"

She had made, as she spoke, a movement to rise, which, as if she was tired of his tone, his last words appeared to determine. But, also getting up, he held her, when they were on their feet, long enough to hear the rest of what he had to say. "If you do help her, you know, you'll show him you've understood."

"Understood what?"

"Why, his idea—the deep acute train of reasoning that has led him to take, as one may say, the bull by the horns; to reflect that as you might, as you probably *would*, in any case, get at her, he plays the wise game, as well as the bold one, by treating your generosity as a real thing and placing himself publicly under an obligation to you."

Mrs. Grantham showed not only that she had listened, but that she had for an instant considered. "What is it you elegantly describe as my getting 'at' her?"

"He takes his risk, but puts you, you see, on your honor."

She thought a moment more. "What profundities indeed then over the simplest of matters! And if your idea is," she went on, "that if I do help her I shall show him I've understood them, so it will be that if I don't—"

"You'll show him"—Sutton took her up—"that you haven't? Precisely. But in spite of not wanting to appear to have understood *too* much—"

"I may still be depended on to do what I can? Quite certainly. You'll see what I may still be depended on to do." And she moved away.

III

It was not, doubtless, that there had been anything in their rather sharp separation at that moment to sustain or prolong the interruption; yet it definitely befell that, circumstances aiding, they practically failed to meet again before the great party at Burbeck. This occasion was to gather in some thirty persons from a certain Friday to the following Monday, and it was on the Friday that Sutton went down. He had known in advance that Mrs. Grantham was to be there, and this perhaps, during the interval of hindrance, had helped him a little to be patient. He had before him that certitude of a real full cup—two days brimming over with the sight of her. He found, however, on his arrival that she was not yet in the field, and presently learned that her place would be in a small contingent that was to join the party on the morrow. This knowledge he extracted from Miss Banker, who was always the first to present herself at any gathering that was to enjoy her, and whom, moreover—partly on that very account—the wary not less than the speculative were apt to hold themselves well-advised to engage with at as early as possible a stage of the business. She was stout red rich mature universal—a massive much-fingered volume, alphabetical wonderful indexed, that opened of itself at the right place. She opened for Sutton instinctively at G—, which happened to be remarkably convenient. "What she's really waiting for is to bring down Lady Gwyther."

"Ah, the Gwythers are coming?"

"Yes; caught, through Mrs. Grantham, just in time. *She'll* be the feature—every one wants to see her."

Speculation and wariness met and combined at this moment in Shirley Sutton. "Do you mean—a—Mrs. Grantham?"

"Dear no! Poor little Lady Gwyther, who, but just arrived in England, appears now literally for the first time in her life in any society whatever, and whom (don't you know the extraordinary story? You ought to —*you!*) she, of all people, has so wonderfully taken up. It will be quite—here—as if she were 'presenting' her."

Sutton of course took in more things than even appeared. "I never know what I ought to know; I only know, inveterately, what I oughtn't. So what *is* the extraordinary story?"

"You really haven't heard—?"

"Really," he replied without winking.

"It happened indeed but the other day," said Miss Banker, "yet every one's already wondering. Gwyther has thrown his wife on her mercy—but I won't believe you if you pretend to me you don't know why he shouldn't."

Sutton asked himself then what he *could* pretend. "Do you mean because she's merciless?"

She hesitated. "If you don't know perhaps I oughtn't to tell you."

He liked Miss Banker and found just the right tone to plead. "*Do* tell me."

"Well," she sighed, "it will be your own fault—! They had been such friends that there could have been but one name for the crudity of his original *procédé*. When I was a girl we used to call it throwing over. They call it in French to *lâcher*. But I refer not so much to the act itself as to the manner of it, though you may say indeed of course that there's in such cases after all only one manner. Least said soonest mended."

Sutton seemed to wonder. "Oh he said too much?"

"He said nothing. That was it."

Sutton kept it up. "But was *what?*"

"Why, what she must, like any woman in her shoes, have felt to be his perfidy. He simply went and *did* it—took to himself this child, that is, without the preliminary of a scandal or a rupture—before she could turn round."

"I follow you. But it would appear from what you say that she *has* turned round now."

"Well," Miss Banker laughed, "we shall see for ourselves how far. It will be what every one will try to see."

"Oh then we've work cut out!" And Sutton certainly felt that he himself had—an impression that lost nothing from a further talk with Miss Banker in the course of a short stroll in the grounds with her the next day. He spoke as one who had now considered many things.

"Did I understand from you yesterday that Lady Gwyther's a 'child'?"

"Nobody knows. It's prodigious the way she has managed."

"The way Lady Gwyther has—?"

"No, the way May Grantham has kept her till this hour in her pocket."

He was quick at his watch. "Do you mean by 'this hour' that they're due now?"

"Not till tea. All the others arrive together in time for that." Miss Banker had clearly, since the previous day, filled in gaps and become, as it were, revised and enlarged. "She'll have kept a cat from seeing her, so as to produce her entirely herself."

"Well," Sutton mused, "that will have been a very noble sort of return—"

"For Gwyther's behavior? Very. Yet I feel creepy."

"Creepy?"

"Because so much depends for the girl—in the way of the right start or the wrong start—on the signs and omens of this first appearance. It's a great house and a great occasion, and we're assembled here, it strikes me, very much as the Roman mob at the circus used to be to see the next Christian maiden brought out to the tigers."

"Oh if she *is* a Christian maiden—!" Sutton murmured. But he stopped at what his imagination called up.

It perhaps fed that faculty a little that Miss Banker had the effect of making out that Mrs. Grantham might individually be, in any case, something of a Roman matron. "She has kept her in the dark so that we may only take her from her hand. She'll have formed her for us."

"In so few days?"

"Well, she'll have prepared her—decked her for the sacrifice with ribbons and flowers."

"Ah if you only mean that she'll have taken her to her dressmaker—!" And it came to Sutton, at once as a new light and as a check, almost, to anxiety, that this was all poor Gwyther, mistrustful probably of a taste formed by Stuttgart, might have desired of their friend.

There were usually at Burbeck many things taking place at once; so that wherever else, on such occasions, tea might be served, it went forward with matchless pomp, weather permitting, on a shaded stretch of one of the terraces and in presence of one of the prospects. Shirley Sutton, moving, as the afternoon waned, more restlessly about and mingling in dispersed groups only to find they had nothing to keep him quiet, came upon it as he turned a corner of the house—saw it seated there in all its state. It might be said that at Burbeck it was, like everything else, made the most of. It constituted immediately, with multiplied tables and glittering plate, with rugs and cushions and ices and fruit and wonderful porcelain and beautiful women, a scene of splendor, almost an incident of grand opera. One of the beautiful women might quite have been expected to rise with a gold cup and a celebrated song.

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14 **procédé**, behavior 16 **lâcher**, let go, cast off

One of them did rise, as happened, while Sutton drew near, and he found himself a moment later seeing nothing and nobody but Mrs. Grantham. They met on the terrace, just away from the others, and the movement in which he had the effect of arresting her might have been that of withdrawal. He quickly saw, however, that if she had been about to pass into the house it was only on some errand—to get something or to call some one—that would immediately have restored her to her public. It somehow struck him on the spot—and more than ever yet, though the impression was not wholly new to him—that she felt herself a figure for the forefront of the stage and indeed would have been recognized by any one at a glance as the *prima donna assoluta.* She caused, in fact, during the few minutes he stood talking to her, an extraordinary series of waves to roll extraordinarily fast over his sense, not the least mark of the matter being that the appearance with which it ended was again the one with which it had begun. "The face—the face," as he kept dumbly repeating; that was at last, as at first, all he could clearly see. She had a perfection resplendent, but what in the world had it done, this perfection, to her beauty? It was her beauty doubtless that looked out at him, but it was into something else that, as their eyes met, he strangely found himself looking

It was as if something had happened in consequence of which she had changed, and there was that in this swift perception that made him glance eagerly about for Lady Gwyther. But as he took in the recruited group—identities of the hour added to those of the previous twenty-four—he saw, among his recognitions, one of which was the husband of the person missing, that Lady Gwyther was not there. Nothing in the whole business was more singular than his consciousness that, as he came back to his interlocutress after the nods and smiles and handwaves he had launched, she knew what had been his thought She knew for whom he had looked without success; but why should this knowledge visibly have hardened and sharpened her, and precisely at a moment when she was unprecedentedly magnificent? The indefinable apprehension that had somewhat sunk after his second talk with Miss Banker and then had perversely risen again—this nameless anxiety now produced on him, with a sudden sharper pinch, the effect of a great suspense. The action of that, in turn, was to show him that he hadn't yet fully known how much he had at stake on a final view. It was revealed to him for the first time that he "really cared" whether Mrs. Grantham were a safe nature. It was too ridiculous by what a thread it hung, but something was certainly in the air that would definitely tell him.

What was in the air descended in the next moment to earth. He turned round as he caught the expression with which her eyes attached themselves to something that approached. A little person, very young and very much dressed, had come out of the house, and the expression in Mrs. Grantham's eyes was that of the artist confronted with her work and interested, even to impatience, in the judgment of others. The little person drew nearer, and though Sutton's companion, without looking at him now, gave it a name and met it, he had jumped for himself at certitude. He saw many things—too many, and they appeared to be feathers, frills, excrescences of silk and lace—massed together and conflicting, and after a moment also saw struggling out of them a small face that struck him as either scared or sick. Then, with his eyes again returning to Mrs. Grantham, he saw another.

He had no more talk with Miss Banker till late that evening—an evening during which he had felt himself too noticeably silent; but something had passed between this pair, across dinner-table and drawing-room, without speech, and when they at last found words it was in the needed ease of a quiet end of the long, lighted gallery, where she opened again at the very paragraph.

"You were right—that *was* it. She did the only thing that, at such short notice, she *could* do. She took her to her dressmaker."

Sutton, with his back to the reach of the gallery, had, as if to banish a vision, buried his eyes for a minute in his hands. "And oh the face—the face!"

"Which?" Miss Banker asked.

"Whichever one looks at."

"But May Grantham's glorious. She has turned herself out—"

"With a splendor of taste and a sense of effect, eh? Yes." Sutton showed he saw far.

"She *has* the sense of effect. The sense of effect as exhibited in Lady Gwyther's clothes—!" was something Miss Banker failed of words to express. "Everybody's overwhelmed. Here, you know, that sort of thing's grave. The poor creature's lost."

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14 **prima donna assoluta,** prima donna in an absolute sense—without rival

"Lost?"

"Since on the first impression, as we said, so much depends. The first impression's made—oh made!—I defy her now ever to unmake it. Her husband, who's proud, won't like her the better for it. And I don't see," Miss Banker went on, "that her prettiness *was* enough—a mere little feverish frightened freshness; what *did* he see in her?—to be so blasted. It has been done with an atrocity of art—"

"That supposes the dressmaker then also a devil?"

"Oh your London women and their dressmakers!" Miss Banker laughed.

"But the face—the face!" Sutton woefully repeated.

"May's?"

"The little girl's. It's exquisite."

"Exquisite?"

"For unimaginable pathos."

"Oh!" Miss Banker dropped.

"She has at last begun to see." Sutton showed again how far *he* saw. "It glimmers upon her innocence, she makes it dimly out—what has been done with her. She's even worse this evening—the way, my eye, she looked at dinner!—than when she came. Yes"—he was confident —"it has dawned (how couldn't it, out of all of you?) and she knows."

"She ought to have known before!" Miss Banker intelligently sighed.

"No; she wouldn't in that case have been so beautiful."

"Beautiful?" cried Miss Banker; "over loaded like a monkey in a show!"

"The face, yes; which goes to the heart. It's that that makes it," said Shirley Sutton. "And it's that"—he thought it out—"that makes the other."

"I see. Conscious?"

"Horrible!"

"You take it hard," said Miss Banker.

Lord Gwyther, just before she spoke, had come in sight and was now near them. Sutton on this, appearing to wish to avoid him, reached, before answering his companion's observation, a door that opened close at hand. "So hard," he replied from that point, "that I shall be off tomorrow morning."

"And not see the rest?" she called after him.

But he had already gone, and Lord Gwyther, arriving, amiably took up her question. "The rest of what?"

Miss Banker looked him well in the eyes. "Of Mrs. Grantham's clothes."

1903

REALISTS AND NATURALISTS: Garland, Crane, Norris, Dreiser

Hamlin Garland

1860 • 1940

In the battle of the realists against "effete romanticism" in the 1890's, William Dean Howells had perhaps his most militant ally in Hamlin Garland. For Garland, indeed, "realism" was too tame a term; he preferred to call himself a "veritist" or truth stater and his first important book, *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891), came close to being the most completely honest volume of its decade. Garland lacked the deep-rooted convictions and patience that Howells had; he fought with pitchforks and was easily discouraged. To most critics, therefore, Garland's is a story

of failure, of giving way to economic and social pressure.

The details of Garland's life are to be found in numerous autobiographical books, of which the most notable is *A Son of the Middle Border* (1917). Born in 1860 on a farm in western Wisconsin, he moved with his family first to northeastern Iowa, where he attended Cedar Valley Seminary at Osage, and then to northeastern South Dakota. As a boy he learned the endless routine of the dirt farmer—caring for stock, plowing, dragging, sowing, cultivating, harvesting. The world of books was more attractive, and, encouraged by his mother, he determined to make himself a teacher.

He chose to study in Boston and there, between 1884 and 1887, he quickly educated himself in the theaters, in the homes of friendly writers, actors, and artists, most of all in the Boston Public Library. He discovered Herbert Spencer and Henrik Ibsen and impressionism and the new novelists of Europe, realists most of them. Unsophisticated and far from intellectually radical, he was nevertheless influenced by the restlessness of the age.

Then, in 1887, he returned to South Dakota to visit his parents. His visit was to a West suffering the ills which were soon to call forth the People's Party and the oratory of William Jennings Bryan. Garland saw that farm life was far from idyllic and that the frontier had not fulfilled its promise. When he returned to Boston he wrote the tales collected in *Main-Travelled Roads.*

Garland's tragedy was that he never surpassed this initial effort. For a time, encouraged by the friendship of B. O. Flower, editor of *The Arena,* he thought of himself as a reformer; his anger at the plight of his native section and his reading of Henry George found expression in several political novels in 1892. For nearly twenty years he devoted himself to exemplifying the virtues of Western literature, only to find that Western themes and Western scenes were of themselves no guarantee of greatness. He wrote sixteen novels between 1895 and 1916. They show an increasing command of structure and are perhaps as good as the better magazine fiction of the period. Not one of them, however, is truly memorable and some are almost gushingly sentimental. In his search for fresh local color he failed to correct his greatest weakness as a novelist—his thin characterization. It is obvious that Garland's fondness for family and club life, for travel, for literary friendships, however satisfying to him personally, cost him much as an artist. The power which he had briefly in the years between 1887 and 1891 was largely gone.

After 1916, when he moved to New York, Garland attained a new popularity by turning to autobiography. The writer who had insisted that "the present is the vital theme" ransacked his journals and notebooks and memory for five volumes dealing with the "Middle Border" and four volumes of literary gossip. In 1922 *A Daughter of the Middle Border* won the Pulitzer Prize for biography. Social and literary historians will doubtless find these books invaluable. They make it clear, however, that Garland was never really a rebel. What seemed like revolt was an intensely personal emotional reaction to a particular situation; the true Garland was respectful of tradition and of success, wherever he found them. He was interested, moreover, in many things, perhaps too many for his artistic salvation. Veritism was only one cause among many, and although he tried to present life truthfully he never had an irrepressible passion to say something important supremely well.

A Son of the Middle Border, New York, 1917 • Roadside Meetings, New York, 1930 • F. B Millett, Contemporary American Authors: A Critical Survey and 219 Bio-Bibliographies, New York, 1940 • V. L. Parrington, The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America, 1860-1920, New York, 1930, 288-300 • W. F. Taylor, The Economic Novel in America, Chapel Hill, 1942, 148-183

Mrs. Ripley's Trip

In a Foreword to Main-Travelled Roads written in 1922 Garland told of his trip to South Dakota in 1887, after three years in Boston. On his way he stopped in Chicago to visit Joseph Kirkland, author of Zury, who suggested that Garland ought to write fiction (see A Son of the Middle Border). The farther he got beyond Chicago the more depressing he found the landscape, and when he got to Ordway, South Dakota, he found his mother "imprisoned in a small cabin on the enormous sunburnt, treeless plain, with no expectation of ever living anywhere else." "In that hot little house," he added in Roadside Meetings, "I wrote my first story, a sketch descriptive of

the life I had known as a boy. It was in truth only the amplification of a tale which my mother retold of an old neighbor in Iowa who, after many years of border life, went 'back to York State' on a visit. 'Mrs. Ripley' was not unlike a character in Mary Wilkins' stories [he was probably thinking of "The Revolt of 'Mother' "] and I wrote nearly two thousand words of her story one Sunday forenoon." Completed after Garland's return to Boston, "Mrs. Ripley's Trip" was accepted by Harper's Weekly and printed in the issue for November 24, 1888.

The night was in windy November, and the blast, threatening rain, roared around the poor little shanty of Uncle Ripley, set like a chicken-trap on the vast Iowa prairie. Uncle Ethan was mending his old violin, with many York State "dums!" and "I gol darns!" totally oblivious of his tireless old wife, who, having "finished the supper-dishes," sat knitting a stocking, evidently for the little grandson who lay before the stove like a cat.

Neither of the old people wore glasses, and their light was a tallow candle; they couldn't afford "none o' them new-fangled lamps." The room was small, the chairs were wooden, and the walls bare—a home where poverty was a never-absent guest The old lady looked pathetically little, weazened, and hopeless in her ill-fitting garments (whose original color had long since vanished), intent as she was on the stocking in her knotted, stiffened fingers, and there was a peculiar sparkle in her little black eyes, and an unusual resolution in the straight line of her withered and shapeless lips.

Suddenly she paused, stuck a needle in the spare knob of her hair at the back of her head, and looking at Ripley, said decisively: "Ethan Ripley, you'll haff to do your own cooking from now on to New Year's. I'm goin' back to Yaark State."

The old man's leather-brown face stiffened into a look of quizzical surprise for a moment; then he cackled, incredulously: "Ho! Ho! har! Sho! be y', now? I want to know if y' be."

"Well, you'll find out."

"Goin' to start to-morrow, mother?"

"No, sir, I ain't, but I am on Thursday. I want to get to Sally's by Sunday, sure, an' to Silas's on Thanksgivin'."

There was a note in the old woman's voice that brought genuine stupefaction into the face of Uncle Ripley. Of course in this case, as in all the others, the money consideration was uppermost.

"Howgy 'xpect to get the money, mother? Anybody died an' left yeh a pile?"

"Never you mind where I get the money, so 's 't *you* don't haff to bear it. The land knows if I'd 'a' waited for *you* to pay my way—"

"You needn't twit me of bein' poor, old woman," said Ripley, flaming up after the manner of many old people. "I've done *my* part t' get along. I've worked day in and day out—"

"Oh! I ain't done no work, have I?" snapped she, laying down the stocking and levelling a needle at him, and putting a frightful emphasis on "I."

"I didn't say you hadn't done no work."

"Yes, you did!"

"I didn't neither. I said—"

"I *know* what you said."

"I said I'd done *my part!*" roared the husband, dominating her as usual by superior lung power. "I didn't *say* you hadn't done your part," he added with an unfortunate touch of emphasis.

"I know y' didn't *say* it, but y' meant it. I don't know what y' call doin' my part, Ethan Ripley; but if cookin' for a drove of harvest hands and thrashin' hands, takin' care o' the eggs and butter, 'n' diggin' 'taters an' milkin' ain't *my* part, I don't never expect to do my part, 'n' you might as well know it fust 's last.

"I'm sixty years old," she went on, with a little break in her harsh voice, dominating him now by woman's logic, "an' I've never had a day to myself, not even Fourth o' July. If I've went a-visitin' 'r to a picnic, I've had to come home an' milk 'n' get supper for you menfolks. I ain't been away t' stay overnight for thirteen years in this house, 'n' it was just so in Davis County for ten more. For twenty-three years, Ethan Ripley, I've stuck right to the stove an' churn without a day or a night off."

Her voice choked again, but she rallied, and continued impressively, "And now I'm a-goin back to Yaark State."

Ethan was vanquished. He stared at her in speechless surprise, his jaw hanging. It was incredible.

"For twenty-three years," she went on, musingly, "I've just about promised myself every year I'd go back an' see my folks." She was distinctly talking to herself now, and her voice had a touching, wistful cadence. "I've wanted to go back an' see the old folks, an' the hills where we played, an' eat apples off the old tree down by

the well. I've had them trees an' hills in my mind days and days—nights, too—an' the girls I used to know, an' my own folks—"

She fell into a silent muse, which lasted so long that the ticking of the clock grew loud as a gong in the man's ears, and the wind outside seemed to sound drearier than usual. He returned to the money problem; kindly, though.

"But how y' goin' t' raise the money? I ain't got no extra cash this time. Agin Roach is paid, an' the interest paid, we ain't got no hundred dollars to spare, Jane, not by a jugful."

"Wal, don't you lay awake nights studyin' on where I'm a-goin' to get the money," said the old woman, taking delight in mystifying him. She had him now, and he couldn't escape. He strove to show his indifference, however, by playing a tune or two on the violin.

"Come, Tukey, you better climb the wooden hill," Mrs. Ripley said, a half-hour later, to the little chap on the floor, who was beginning to get drowsy under the influence of his grandpa's fiddling. "Pa, you had orta 'a' put that string in the clock to-day—on the 'larm side the string is broke," she said, upon returning from the boy's bedroom. "I orta git up early to-morrow, to git some sewin' done. Land knows, I can't fix up much, but they is a little I c'n do. I want to look decent."

They were alone now, and they both sat expectantly.

"You 'pear to think, mother, that I'm agin yer goin'."

"Wal, it would kinder seem as if y' hadn't hustled yerself any t' help me git off."

He was smarting under the sense of being wronged. "Wal, I'm just as willin' you should go as I am for myself, but if I ain't got no money I don't see how I'm goin' to send—"

"I don't want ye to send; nobody ast ye to, Ethan Ripley. I guess if I had what I've earnt since we came on this farm I'd have enough to go to Jericho with."

"You've got as much out of it as I have," he replied gently. "You talk about your goin' back. Ain't I been wantin' to go back myself? And ain't I kep' still 'cause I see it wa'n't no use? I guess I've worked jest as long and as hard as you, an' in storms an' in mud an' heat, ef it comes t' that."

The woman was staggered, but she wouldn't give up; she must get in one more thrust.

"Wal, if you'd 'a' managed as well as I have, you'd have some money to go with." And she rose and went to mix her bread and set it "raisin'."

He sat by the fire twanging his fiddle softly. He was plainly thrown into gloomy retrospection, something quite unusual for him. But his fingers picking out the bars of a familiar tune set him to smiling, and whipping his bow across the strings, he forgot all about his wife's resolutions and his own hardships. "Trouble always slid off his back like punkins off a haystack, anyway," his wife said.

The old man still sat fiddling softly after his wife disappeared in the hot and stuffy little bedroom off the kitchen. His shaggy head bent lower over his violin. He heard her shoes drop—*one, two.* Pretty soon she called:

"Come, put up that squeakin' old fiddle, and go to bed. Seems as if you orta have sense enough not to set there keepin' everybody in the house awake."

"You hush up," retorted he. "I'll come when I git ready, and not till. I'll be glad when you're gone—"

"Yes, I warrant *that.*"

With which amiable good-night they went off to sleep, or at least she did, while he lay awake pondering on "where under the sun she was goin' t' raise that money."

The next day she was up bright and early, working away on her own affairs, ignoring Ripley entirely, the fixed look of resolution still on her little old wrinkled face. She killed a hen and dressed and baked it. She fried up a pan of doughnuts and made a cake. She was engaged in the doughnuts when a neighbor came in, one of these women who take it as a personal affront when any one in the neighborhood does anything without asking their advice. She was fat, and could talk a man blind in three minutes by the watch. Her neighbor said:

"What's this I hear, Mis' Ripley?"

"I dun know. I expect you hear about all they is goin' on in this neighborhood," replied Mrs. Ripley, with crushing bluntness; but the gossip did not flinch.

"Well, Sett Turner told *me* that her husband told *her* that Ripley told *him* this mornin' that you was goin' back East on a visit."

"Wal, what of it?"

"Well, air yeh?"

"The Lord willin' an' the weather permittin', I expect I be."

"Good land, I want to know! Well, well! I never was

so astonished in my whole life. I said, says I, 'It can't be.' 'Well,' ses 'e, 'tha's what *she* told me,' ses 'e. 'But,' says I, 'she is the last woman in the world to go gallavantin' off East,' ses I. 'An',' ses he, 'but it comes from good authority,' ses he. 'Well, then, it must be so,' ses I. But, land sakes! do tell me all about it. How come you to make up y'r mind? All these years you've been kind a' talkin' it over, an' now y'r actshelly goin'—well, I *never!* 'I s'pose Ripley furnishes the money,' ses I to him. 'Well, no,' ses 'e. 'Ripley says he'll be blowed if he sees where the money's coming from,' ses 'e; and ses I, 'But maybe she's jest jokin',' ses I. 'Not much,' he says. S' 'e: 'Ripley believes she's goin' fast enough. He's jest as anxious to find out as we be—' "

Here Mrs. Doudney paused for breath; she had walked so fast and rested so little that her interminable flow of "ses I's" and "ses he's" ceased necessarily. She had reached, moreover, the point of most vital interest—the money.

"An' you'll find out jest 'bout as soon as he does," was the dry response from the figure hovering over the stove; and with all her manoeuvring that was all she got.

All day Ripley went about his work exceedingly thoughtful for him. It was cold blustering weather. The wind rustled among the cornstalks with a wild and mournful sound, the geese and ducks went sprawling down the wind, and the horses' coats were ruffled and backs raised.

The old man was husking all alone in the field, his spare form rigged out in two or three ragged coats, his hands inserted in a pair of gloves minus nearly all the fingers, his thumbs done up in "stalls," and his feet thrust into huge coarse boots. The "down ears" wet and chapped his hands, already worn to the quick. Toward night it grew colder and threatened snow. In spite of all these attacks he kept his cheerfulness, and though he was very tired, he was softened in temper.

Having plenty of time to think matters over, he had come to the conclusion that the old woman needed a play-spell. "I ain't likely to be no richer next year than I am this one; if I wait till I'm able to send her she won't never go. I calc'late I c'n git enough out o' them shoats to send her. I'd kind a' lotted on eat'n' them pigs done up in sassengers, but if the ol' woman goes East, Tukey an' me'll kind a' haff to pull through without 'em. We'll have a turkey f'r Thanksgivin', an' a chicken once 'n a while. Lord! but we'll miss the gravy on the flapjacks." (He smacked his lips over the thought of the lost dainty.) "But let 'er rip! We can stand it. Then there is my buffalo overcoat. I'd kind a' calc'lated on havin' a buffalo—but that's gone up the spout along with them sassengers."

These heroic sacrifices having been determined upon, he put them into effect at once.

This he was able to do, for his corn-rows ran alongside the road leading to Cedarville, and his neighbors were passing almost all hours of the day.

It would have softened Jane Ripley's heart could she have seen his bent and stiffened form among the corn-rows, the cold wind piercing to the bone through his threadbare and insufficient clothing. The rising wind sent the snow rattling among the moaning stalks at intervals. The cold made his poor dim eyes water, and he had to stop now and then to swing his arms about his chest to warm them. His voice was hoarse with shouting at the shivering team.

That night as Mrs. Ripley was clearing the dishes away she got to thinking about the departure of the next day, and she began to soften. She gave way to a few tears when little Tewksbury Gilchrist, her grandson, came up and stood beside her.

"Gran'ma, you ain't goin' to stay away always, are yeh?"

"Why, course not, Tukey. What made y' think that?"

"Well, y' ain't told us nawthin' 't all about it. An' yeh kind o' look 's if yeh was mad."

"Well, I ain't mad; I'm jest a-thinkin', Tukey. Y' see, I come away from them hills when I was a little girl a'most; before I married y'r grandad. And I ain't never been back. 'Most all my folks is there, sonny, an' we've been s' poor all these years I couldn't seem t' never git started. Now, when I'm 'most ready t' go, I feel kind a queer—'s if I'd cry."

And cry she did, while little Tewksbury stood patting her trembling hands. Hearing Ripley's step on the porch, she rose hastily and, drying her eyes, plunged at the work again.

Ripley came in with a big armful of wood, which he rolled into the wood-box with a thundering crash. Then he pulled off his mittens, slapped them together to knock off the ice and snow, and laid them side by side under the stove. He then removed cap, coat, blouse, and

finally his boots, which he laid upon the wood-box, the soles turned toward the stove-pipe.

As he sat down without speaking, he opened the front doors of the stove, and held the palms of his stiffened hands to the blaze. The light brought out a thoughtful look on his large, uncouth, yet kindly, visage. Life had laid hard lines on his brown skin, but it had not entirely soured a naturally kind and simple nature. It had made him penurious and dull and iron-muscled; had stifled all the slender flowers of his nature; yet there was warm soil somewhere hid in his heart.

"It's snowin' like all p'ssessed," he remarked finally. "I guess we'll have a sleigh-ride to-morrow. I calc'late t' drive y' daown in scrumptious style. If you must leave, why, we'll give yeh a whoopin' old send-off—won't we, Tukey?"

Nobody replying, he waited a moment. "I've ben a-thinkin' things over kind o' t'-day, mother, an' I've come t' the conclusion that we *have* been kind o' hard on yeh, without knowin' it, y' see. Y' see I'm kind o' easy-goin', an' little Tuke he's only a child, an' we ain't c'nsidered how you felt."

She didn't appear to be listening, but she was, and he didn't appear, on his part, to be talking to her, and he kept his voice as hard and dry as he could.

"An' I was tellin' Tukey t'-day that it was a dum shame our crops hadn't turned out better. An' when I saw ol' Hatfield go by I hailed him, an' asked him what he'd gimme for two o' m' shoats. Wal, the upshot is, I sent t' town for some things I calc'late you'd need. An' here's a ticket to Georgetown, and ten dollars. Why, ma, what's up?"

Mrs. Ripley broke down, and with her hands all wet with dishwater, as they were, covered her face, and sobbed. She felt like kissing him, but she didn't. Tewksbury began to whimper too; but the old man was astonished. His wife had not wept for years (before him). He rose and walking clumsily up to her timidly touched her hair—

"Why, mother! What's the matter? What've I done now? I was calc'latin' to sell them pigs anyway. Hatfield jest advanced the money on 'em."

She hopped up and dashed into the bedroom, and in a few minutes returned with a yarn mitten, tied around the wrist, which she laid on the table with a thump, saying: "I don't want yer money. There's money enough to take me where I want to go."

"Whee—ew! Thunder and gimpsum root! Where 'd ye get that? Didn't dig it out of a hole?"

"No, I jest saved it—a dime at a time—see!"

Here she turned it out on the table—some bills, but mostly silver dimes and quarters.

"Thunder and scissors! Must be two er three hundred dollars there," he exclaimed.

"They's jest seventy-five dollars and thirty cents; jest about enough to go back on. Tickets is fifty-five dollars, goin' and comin'. That leaves twenty dollars for other expenses, not countin' what I've already spent, which is six-fifty," said she, recovering her self-possession. "It's plenty."

"But y' ain't calc'lated on no sleepers nor hotel bills."

"I ain't goin' on no sleeper. Mis' Doudney says it's jest scandalous the way things is managed on them cars. I'm goin' on the old-fashioned cars, where they ain't no half-dressed men runnin' around."

"But *you* needn't be afraid of them, mother; at your age—"

"There! you needn't throw my age an' homeliness into my face, Ethan Ripley. If I hadn't waited an' tended on you so long, I'd look a little more's I did when I married yeh."

Ripley gave it up in despair. He didn't realize fully enough how the proposed trip had unsettled his wife's nerves. She didn't realize it herself.

"As for the hotel bills, they won't be none. I ain't agoin' to pay them pirates as much for a day's board as we'd charge for a week's, and have nawthin' to eat but dishes. I'm goin' to take a chicken an' some hard-boiled eggs, an' I'm goin' right through to Georgetown."

"Wal, all right, mother; but here's the ticket I got."

"I don't want yer ticket."

"But you've got to take it."

"Well, I haint."

"Why, yes, ye have. It's bought, an' they won't take it back."

"Won't they?" She was perplexed again.

"Not much they won't. I ast 'em. A ticket sold is sold."

"Wal, if they won't—"

"You bet they won't."

"I s'pose I'll haff to use it." And that ended it.

They were a familiar sight as they rode down the road toward town next day. As usual, Mrs. Ripley sat up straight and stiff as "a half-drove wedge in a white-oak log." The day was cold and raw. There was some snow

on the ground, but not enough to warrant the use of sleighs. It was "neither sleddin' nor wheelin'." The old people sat on a board laid across the box, and had an old quilt or two drawn up over their knees. Tewksbury lay in the back part of the box (which was filled with hay), where he jounced up and down, in company with a queer old trunk and a brand-new imitation-leather hand-bag.

There is no ride quite so desolate and uncomfortable as a ride in a lumber-wagon on a cold day in autumn, when the ground is frozen, and the wind is strong and raw with threatening snow. The wagon-wheels grind along in the snow, the cold gets in under the seat at the calves of one's legs, and the ceaseless bumping of the bottom of the box on the feet is almost intolerable.

There was not much talk on the way down, and what little there was related mainly to certain domestic regulations, to be strictly followed, regarding churning, pickles, pancakes, etc. Mrs. Ripley wore a shawl over her head, and carried her queer little black bonnet in her hand. Tewksbury was also wrapped in a shawl. The boy's teeth were pounding together like castanets by the time they reached Cedarville, and every muscle ached with the fatigue of shaking.

After a few purchases they drove down to the station, a frightful little den (common in the West), which was always too hot or too cold. It happened to be hot just now—a fact which rejoiced little Tewksbury.

"Now git my trunk *stamped, 'r fixed, 'r* whatever they call it," she said to Ripley, in a commanding tone, which gave great delight to the inevitable crowd of loafers beginning to assemble. "Now remember, Tukey, have grandad kill that biggest turkey night before Thanksgiving, an' then you run right over to Mis' Doudney's—she's got a nawful tongue, but she can bake a turkey first-rate—an' she'll fix up some squash-pies for yeh. You can warm up one o' them mince-pies. I wish ye could be with me, but ye can't; so do the best ye can."

Ripley returning now, she said: "Wal, now, I've fixed things up the best I could. I've baked bread enough to last a week, an' Mis' Doudney has promised to bake for yeh—"

"I don't like her bakin'."

"Wal, you'll haff to stand it till I get back, 'n' you'll find a jar o' sweet pickles an' some crab-apple sauce down suller, 'n' you'd better melt up brown sugar for 'lasses, 'n' for goodness' sake don't eat all them mince-pies up the fust week, 'n' see that Tukey ain't froze goin' to school. An' now you'd better get out for home. Good-by! an' remember them pies."

As they were riding home, Ripley roused up after a long silence.

"Did she—a—kiss you good-by, Tukey?"

"No, sir," piped Tewksbury.

"Thunder! didn't she?" After a silence: "She didn't me, neither. I guess she kind a' sort a' forgot it, bein' so flustrated, y' know."

One cold, windy, intensely bright day, Mrs. Stacey, who lives about two miles from Cedarville, looking out of the window, saw a queer little figure struggling along the road, which was blocked here and there with drifts. It was an old woman laden with a good half-dozen parcels, which the wind seemed determined to wrench from her.

She was dressed in black, with a full skirt, and her cloak being short, the wind had excellent opportunity to inflate her garments and sail her off occasionally into the deep snow outside the track, but she held out bravely till she reached the gate. As she turned in, Mrs. Stacey cried:

"Why! it's Gran'ma Ripley, just getting back from her trip. Why! how do you do? Come in. Why! you must be nearly frozen. Let me take off your hat and veil."

"No, thank ye kindly, but I can't stop," was the given reply. "I must be gittin' back to Ripley. I expec' that man has jest let ev'rything go six ways f'r Sunday."

"Oh, you *must* sit down just a minute and warm."

"Wal, I will; but I've got to git home by sundown sure. I don't s'pose they's a thing in the house to eat," she said solemnly.

"Oh, dear! I wish Stacey was here, so he could take you home. An' the boys at school—"

"Don't need any help, if 't wa'nt for these bundles an' things. I guess I'll jest leave some of 'em here, an'—Here! take one of these apples. I brought 'em from Lizy Jane's suller, back to Yaark State."

"Oh! they're delicious! You must have had a lovely time."

"Pretty good. But I kep' thinkin' of Ripley an' Tukey all the time. I s'pose they have had a gay time of it" (she meant the opposite of gay). "Wal, as I told Lizy Jane, I've had my spree, an' now I've got to git back to work. They ain't no rest for such as we are. As I told Lizy Jane, them folks in the big houses have Thanksgivin' dinners every day of their lives, and men an' women

in splendid clo's to wait on 'em, so 't Thanksgivin' don't mean anything to 'em; but we poor critters, we make a great to-do if we have a good dinner onct a year. I've saw a pile o' this world, Mrs. Stacey—a pile of it! I didn't think they was so many big houses in the world as I saw b'tween here an' Chicago. Wal, I can't set here gabbin'." She rose resolutely. "I must get home to Ripley. Jest kind o' stow them bags away. I'll take two an' leave them three others. Good-by! I must be gittin' home to Ripley. He'll want his supper on time."

And off up the road the indomitable little figure trudged, head held down to the cutting blast—little snow-fly, a speck on a measureless expanse, crawling along with painful breathing, and slipping, sliding steps —"Gittin' home to Ripley an' the boy."

Ripley was out to the barn when she entered, but Tewksbury was building a fire in the old cook-stove. He sprang up with a cry of joy, and ran to her. She seized him and kissed him, and it did her so much good she hugged him close, and kissed him again and again, crying hysterically.

"Oh, gran'ma, I'm so glad to see you! We've had an awful time since you've been gone."

She released him, and looked around. A lot of dirty dishes were on the table, the table-cloth was a "sight to behold" (as she afterward said), and so was the stove—kettle-marks all over the table-cloth, splotches of pan-cake batter all over the stove.

"Wal, I sh'd say as much," she dryly assented, untying her bonnet-strings.

When Ripley came in she had her regimentals on, the stove was brushed, the room swept, and she was elbow-deep in the dish-pan. "Hullo, mother! Got back, hev yeh?"

"I sh'd say it was about *time,*" she replied curtly, without looking up or ceasing work. "Has ol' 'Crumpy' dried up yit?" This was her greeting.

Her trip was a fact now, no chance could rob her of it. She had looked forward twenty-three years toward it, and now she could look back at it accomplished. She took up her burden again, never more thinking to lay it down

1887-1888

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42 down. The only extensive revision of the Harper's Weekly text was Garland's fortunate omission of the following ending: ". . . till her poor work weary, bony hands should be folded finally on her lean, pathetic old bosom. Her next trip will be so far away she will never return—far past the gates of space and time"

From

Crumbling Idols

Crumbling Idols: Twelve Essays on Art Dealing Chiefly with Literature, Painting and the Drama, published by the newly founded firm of Stone and Kimball in 1894, was an expansion, revision, and rearrangement of various critical articles and (presumably) lectures which Garland had written in the preceding several years. Although he was inclined in his later life to be a little scornful of his violence and youthfulness, Crumbling Idols is historically important. It reflects Garland's acceptance of Howells' faith in realism, his conviction (which he later recanted) that the literary center of the future was to be Chicago, his awareness of the interrelation of the arts, and the characteristic enthusiasms of the 1890's for Ibsen, impressionism, and local color. If there was any "manifesto" defending the general position of the local colorists, this book contained it. Of the two chapters here reprinted, "Local Color in Art" seems not to have been printed previously, but "The Local Novel" was apparently part of a lecture delivered as early as 1891 (see Roadside Meetings, p. 189) and is substantially the same as "The Future of Fiction," which had appeared in The Arena for April 1893. Other portions of the book had appeared in The Arena and The Forum.

V

LOCAL COLOR IN ART

Local color in fiction is demonstrably the life of fiction. It is the native element, the differentiating element. It corresponds to the endless and vital charm of individual

peculiarity. It is the differences which interest us; the similarities do not please, do not forever stimulate and feed as do the differences. Literature would die of dry rot if it chronicled the similarities only, or even largely.

Historically, the local color of a poet or dramatist is of the greatest value. The charm of Horace is the side light he throws on the manners and customs of his time. The vital in Homer lies, after all, in his local color, not in his abstractions. Because the sagas of the North delineate more exactly how men and women lived and wrought in those days, therefore they have always appealed to me with infinitely greater power than Homer.

Similarly, it is the local color of Chaucer that interests us to-day. We yawn over his tales of chivalry which were in the manner of his contemporaries, but the Miller and the Priest interest us. Wherever the man of the past in literature showed us what he really lived and loved, he moves us. We understand him, and we really feel an interest in him.

Historically, local color has gained in beauty and suggestiveness and humanity from Chaucer down to the present day. Each age has embodied more and more of its actual life and social conformation until the differentiating qualities of modern art make the best paintings of Norway as distinct in local color as its fiction is vital and indigenous.

Every great moving literature to-day is full of local color. It is this element which puts the Norwegian and Russian almost at the very summit of modern novel writing, and it is the comparative lack of this distinctive flavor which makes the English and French take a lower place in truth and sincerity.

Everywhere all over the modern European world, men are writing novels and dramas as naturally as the grass or corn or flax grows. The Provençal, the Hun, the Catalonian, the Norwegian, is getting a hearing. This literature is not the literature of scholars; it is the literature of lovers and doers; of men who love the modern and who have not been educated to despise common things.

These men are speaking a new word. They are not hunting themes, they are struggling to express.

Conventional criticism does not hamper or confine them. They are rooted in the soil. They stand among the corn-fields and they dig in the peat-bogs. They concern themselves with modern and very present words and themes, and they have brought a new word which is to divide in half the domain of beauty.

They have made art the re-creation of the beautiful *and the significant.* Mere beauty no longer suffices. Beauty is the world-old aristocrat who has taken for mate this mighty young plebeian Significance. Their child is to be the most human and humane literature ever seen.

It has taken the United States longer to achieve independence of English critics than it took to free itself from old-world political and economic rule. Its political freedom was won, not by its gentlemen and scholars, but by its yeomanry; and in the same way our national literature will come in its fulness when the common American rises spontaneously to the expression of his concept of life.

The fatal blight upon most American art has been, and is to-day, its imitative quality, which has kept it characterless and factitious,—a forced rose-culture rather than the free flowering of native plants.

Our writers despised or feared the home market. They rested their immortality upon the "universal theme," which was a theme of no interest to the public and of small interest to themselves.

During the first century and a half, our literature had very little national color. It was quite like the utterance of corresponding classes in England. But at length Bryant and Cooper felt the influence of our mighty forests and prairies. Whittier uttered something of New England boy-life, and Thoreau prodded about among newly discovered wonders, and the American literature got its first start.

Under the influence of Cooper came the stories of wild life from Texas, from Ohio, and from Illinois. The wild, rough settlements could not produce smooth and cultured poems or stories; they only furnished forth rough-and-ready anecdotes, but in these stories there were hints of something fine and strong and native.

As the settlements increased in size, as the pressure of the forest and the wild beast grew less, expression

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28 **Norwegian and Russian.** Garland refers to the work of Björnstjerne Bjornson (1832-1910) and Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883), two of the most famous novelists of the latter nineteenth century • 35 **Provençal . . . Catalonian,** a reference to the regional and national literatures of southern France, Hungary, and northeastern Spain, best represented perhaps by the poetry of the Provençal Frédéric Mistral (1830-1914) and the Hungarians Sándor Petöfi (1823-1849) and János Arany (1817-1882), and by the plays of the Catalonian Ángel Guimerá (1847-1924). The local color movement of the United States was preceded and paralleled by widespread regionalism in Europe

rose to a higher plane; men softened in speech and manner. All preparations were being made for a local literature raised to the level of art.

The Pacific slope was first in the line. By the exceptional interest which the world took in the life of the gold fields, and by the forward urge which seems always to surprise the pessimist and the scholiast, two young men were plunged into that wild life, led across the plains set in the shadow of Mount Shasta, and local literature received its first great marked, decided impetus.

To-day we have in America, at last, a group of writers who have no suspicion of imitation laid upon them. Whatever faults they may be supposed to have, they are at any rate, themselves. American critics can depend upon a characteristic American literature of fiction and the drama from these people.

The corn has flowered, and the cotton-boll has broken into speech.

Local color—what is it? It means that the writer spontaneously reflects the life which goes on around him. It is natural and unstrained art.

It is, in a sense, unnatural and artificial to find an American writing novels of Russia or Spain or the Holy Land. He cannot hope to do it so well as the native. The best he can look for is that poor word of praise, "He does it very well, considering he is an alien."

If a young writer complain that there are no themes at home, that he is forced to go abroad for perspective and romance, I answer there is something wrong in his education or his perceptive faculty. Often he is more anxious to win a money success than to be patiently one of art's unhurried devotees.

I can sympathize with him, however, for criticism has not helped him to be true. Criticism of the formal kind and spontaneous expression are always at war, like the old man and the youth. They may politely conceal it, but they are mutually destructive.

Old men naturally love the past; the books they read are the master-pieces; the great men are all dying off, they say; the young man should treat lofty and universal themes, as they used to do. These localisms are petty. These truths are disturbing. Youth annoys them. Spontaneousness is formlessness, and the criticism that does not call for the abstract and the ideal and the beautiful is leading to destruction, these critics say.

And yet there is a criticism which helps, which tends to keep a writer at his best; but such criticism recognizes the dynamic force of a literature, and tries to spy out tendencies. This criticism to-day sees that local color means national character, and is aiding the young writer to treat his themes in the best art.

I assert it is the most natural thing in the world for a man to love his native land and his native, intimate surroundings. Born into a web of circumstances, enmeshed in common life, the youthful artist begins to think. All the associations of that childhood and the love-life of youth combine to make that web of common affairs, threads of silver and beads of gold; the near-at-hand things are the dearest and sweetest after all.

As the reader will see, I am using local color to mean something more than a forced study of the picturesque scenery of a State.

Local color in a novel means that it has such quality of texture and back-ground that it could not have been written in any other place or by any one else than a native.

It means a statement of life as indigenous as the plant-growth. It means that the picturesque shall not be seen by the author,—that every tree and bird and mountain shall be dear and companionable and necessary, not picturesque; the tourist cannot write the local novel.

From this it follows that local color must not be put in for the sake of local color. It must go in, it *will* go in, because the writer naturally carries it with him half unconsciously, or conscious only of its significance, its interest to him.

He must not stop to think whether it will interest the reader or not. He must be loyal to himself, and put it in because he loves it. If he is an artist, he will make his reader feel it through his own emotion.

What we should stand for is not universality of theme, but beauty and strength of treatment, leaving the writer to choose his theme because he loves it.

Here is the work of the critic. Recognizing that the theme is beyond his control, let him aid the young writer to delineate simply and with unwavering strokes. Even here the critic can do little, if he is possessed of the idea that the young writer of to-day should model upon Addison or Macaulay or Swift.

There are new criterions to-day in writing as in paint-

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7 two young men, presumably Bret Harte (see p. 810) and Joaquin Miller (1841?-1913) • 9 Mount Shasta, in northern California

ing, and individual expression is the aim. The critic can do much to aid a young writer to *not* copy an old master or any other master. Good criticism can aid him to be vivid and simple and unhackneyed in his technique, the subject is his own affair.

I agree with him who says, Local art must be raised to the highest levels in its expression; but in aiding this perfection of technique we must be careful not to cut into the artist's spontaneity. To apply ancient dogmas of criticism to our life and literature would be benumbing to artist and fatal to his art.

VI

THE LOCAL NOVEL

The local novel seems to be the heir-apparent to the kingdom of poesy. It is already the most promising of all literary attempts to-day; certainly it is the most sincere. It seems but beginning its work. It is "hopelessly contemporaneous"; that is its strength. It is (at its best) unaffected, natural, emotional. It is sure to become all-powerful. It will redeem American literature, as it has already redeemed the South from its conventional and highly wrought romanticism.

By reason of growing truth and sincerity the fiction of the South has risen from the dead. It is now in the spring season of shooting wilding plants and timorous blades of sown grains. Its future is assured. Its soil is fertilized with the blood of true men. Its women are the repositories of great, vital, sincere, emotional experiences which will inevitably appear in their children, and at last in art, and especially in fiction. The Southern people are in the midst of a battle more momentous than the Rebellion, because it is the result of the Rebellion; that is, the battle of intrenched privilege against the swiftly-spreading democratic idea of equality before the law and in the face of nature.

They have a terribly, mightily dramatic race-problem on their hands. The South is the meeting-place of winds. It is the seat of swift and almost incalculable change; and this change, this battle, this strife of invisible powers, is about to enter their fiction.

The Negro has already entered it. He has brought a musical speech to his masters, and to the new fiction. He has brought a strange and pleading song into music. The finest writers of the New South already find him a never-failing source of interest. He is not, of course, the only subject of Southern fiction, nor even the principal figure; but he is a necessary part, and a most absorbingly interesting part.

The future of fiction in the South will also depict the unreconstructed rebel unreservedly, and the race-problem without hate or contempt or anger; for the highest art will be the most catholic in its sympathy. It will delineate vast contending forces, and it will be a great literature.

The Negro will enter the fiction of the South, first, as subject; second, as artist in his own right. His first attempts will be imitative, but he will yet utter himself, as surely as he lives. He will contribute a poetry and a novel as peculiarly his own as the songs he sings. He may appear, also, in a strange half-song, half-chant, and possibly in a drama peculiar to himself; but in some form of fiction he will surely utter the sombre and darkly-florid genius for emotional utterance which characterizes him.

In the North the novel will continue local for some time to come. It will delineate the intimate life and speech of every section of our enormous and widely scattered republic. It will catch and fix in charcoal the changing, assimilating races, delineating the pathos and humor and the infinite drama of their swift adjustment to new conditions. California, New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, Oregon, each wonderful locality in our Nation of Nations will yet find its native utterance. The superficial work of the tourist and outsider will not do. The real novelist of these sections is walking behind the plow or trudging to school in these splendid potential environments.

This local movement will include the cities as well, and St. Louis, Chicago, San Francisco, will be delineated by artists born of each city, whose work will be so true that it could not have been written by any one from the outside. The real utterance of a city or a locality can only come when a writer is born out of its intimate heart. To such an one, nothing will be "strange" or "picturesque;" all will be familiar, and full of significance or beauty. The novel of the slums must be written by one who has played there as a child, and taken part in all its amusements; not out of curiosity, but out of pleasure seeking. It cannot be done from above nor from the outside. It must be done out of a full heart and without seeking for effect.

The artist should not look abroad to see how others

are succeeding. Success does not always measure merit. It took nearly a third of a century for Whitman and Monet to be recognized. The great artist never conforms. He does not trail after some other man's success. He works out his individual perception of things.

The contrast of city and country, everywhere growing sharper, will find its reflection in this local novel of the immediate future,—the same tragedies and comedies, with the essential difference called local color, and taking place all over the land, wherever cities arise like fungi, unhealthy, yet absorbing as subjects of fictional art.

As I have elsewhere pointed out, the drama will join the novel in this study of local conditions. It will be derived from fiction, and in many cases the dramatist and novelist will be the same person. In all cases the sincerity of the author's love for his scenes and characters will find expression in tender care for truth, and there will be made to pass before our eyes wonderfully suggestive pictures of other lives and landscapes. The drama will grow in dignity and importance along these lines.

Both drama and novel will be colloquial. This does not mean that they will be exclusively in the dialects, but the actual speech of the people of each locality will unquestionably be studied more closely than ever before. Dialect is the life of a language, precisely as the common people of the nation form the sustaining power of its social life and art.

And so in the novel, in the short story, and in the drama—by the work of a multitude of loving artists, not by the work of an over-topping personality—will the intimate social, individual life of the nation be depicted. Before this localism shall pass away, such a study will have been made of this land and people as has never been made by any other age or social group,—a literature from the plain people, reflecting their unrestrained outlook on life, subtle in speech and color, humane beyond precedent, humorous, varied, simple in means, lucid as water, searching as sunlight.

To one who believes each age to be its own best interpreter, the idea of "decay of fiction" never comes. That which the absolutist takes for decay is merely change. The conservative fears change; the radical welcomes it. The conservative tries to argue that fundamentals cannot change; that they are the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. If that were true, then a sorrowful outlook on the future would be natural. Such permanency would be death. Life means change.

As a matter of fact, the minute differentiations of literature which the conservative calls its non-essentials, are really its essentials. Vitality and growth are in these "non-essentials." It is the difference in characters, not their similarity, which is forever interesting. It is the subtle coloring individuality gives which vitalizes landscape art, and so it is the subtle differences in the interpretation of life which each age gives that vitalizes its literature and makes it its own.

The individuality of the artist is the saving grace of art; and landscape painting will not be fantastic so long as men study nature. It will never be mere reproduction so long as the artist represents it as he sees it. The fact will correct the fantasy. The artist will color the fact.

The business of the present is not to express fundamentals, but to sincerely present its own minute and characteristic interpretation of life. This point cannot be too often insisted upon. Unless a writer add something to the literature of his race, has he justification? Is there glory in imitation? Is the painter greatest who copies old masters, or is it more praiseworthy to embody an original conception? These are very important questions for the young artist.

To perceive the hopelessness of absolutism in literature, you have but to stop a moment to think. Admit that there are perfect models to which must be referred all subsequent writing, and we are committed to a barren round of hopeless imitations. The young writer is disheartened or drawn off into imitations, and ruined for any real expression. This way of looking at literature produced our Barlows and Coltons and Hillhouses, with their "colossi of cotton-batting," and it produces blank-verse dramas to-day.

But the relativists in art are full of hope. They see that life is the model,—or, rather, that each man stands accountable to himself first, and to the perceived fact of life second. Life is always changing, and literature

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3 **Monet,** Claude Monet (1840-1926), French painter, who applied to his art the scientific principles of light and is regarded as the leader of the impressionists • **78 Barlows . . . Hillhouses.** Garland is probably echoing some contemporary judgment of early American literature, but the editors have been unable to place the phrase "colossi of cotton-batting." All the writers named were overambitious—Joel Barlow (1754-1812) in his epic, **The Columbiad;** James A Hillhouse (1789-1841) in his blank-verse drama, **Hadad** (1825); and George Hooker Colton (1818-1847) in **Tecumseh, or, The West Thirty Years Since** (1842), a romantic poem of nine cantos in the manner of Sir Walter Scott

changes with it. It never decays; it changes. Poetry—that is to say *impassioned personal outlook on life*—is in no more danger of extinction to-day than in the days of Edmund Spenser. The American novel will continue to grow in truth to American life without regard to the form and spirit of the novel or drama of the past. Consciously or unconsciously, the point of view of the modern writer is that of the veritist, or truth stater.

Once out of the period of tutelage, it is natural for youth to overleap barriers. He naturally discards the wig and cloak of his grandfathers. He comes at last to reject, perhaps a little too brusquely, the models which conservatism regards with awe. He respects them as history, but he has life, abounding, fresh, contiguous life; life that stings and smothers and overwhelms and exalts, like the salt, green, snow-tipped ocean surf, life, with its terrors and triumphs, right here and now; its infinite drama, its allurement, its battle, and its victories. Life is the model, truth is the master, the heart of the man himself his motive power. The pleasure of re-creating in the image of nature is the artist's unfailing reward.

To him who sees that difference, not similarity, is the vitalizing quality, there is no sorrow at change. The future will take care of itself. In the space of that word "difference" lies all the infinite range of future art. Some elements are comparatively unchanging. The snow will fall, spring will come, men and women love, the stars will rise and set, and grass return again and again in vast rhythms of green, but society will not be the same.

The physical conformation of our nation will change. It will lose its wildness, its austerity. Its unpeopled plains will pass away, and gardens will bloom where the hot sand now drifts. Cities will rise where now the elk and the mountain lions are. Swifter means of transportation will bring the lives of different sections into closer relationship. It will tend to equalize intellectual opportunities. The physical and mental life of men and women will be changed, the relation of man to man, and man to woman, will change in detail, and the fiction of the future will express these changes.

To the veritist, therefore, the present is the vital theme. The past is dead, and the future can be trusted to look after itself. The young men and maidens of that time will find the stars of their present brighter than the stars of '92, the people around them more absorbing than books, and their own outlook on life more reasonable than that of dead men. Their writing and painting, in proportion to its vitality and importance, will reflect this, their natural attitude, toward life and history.

1891-1893·1894

Stephen Crane

1871 • 1900

Stephen Crane has been called "the Chatterton of American literature"—a comparison which implies that, like the young English poet, he was (in Wordsworth's phrase) a "marvelous boy" who "perished in his pride." Although Crane himself would not have liked such a romantic tag, it contains an element of truth; a writer of indisputable genius, Crane died prematurely, leaving a body of work which, while excellent in itself, gave promise of still better work to come.

Crane was born in Newark, New Jersey, the son of a Methodist preacher. He spent one year at Lafayette College, where he shocked his English professor by declaring that Tennyson's poetry was "swill"; and another year at Syracuse University, where he played shortstop on the varsity nine. Believing earnestly that he must devote his life to "the business of writing," he began with journalism. His brief career as a newspaper writer gave him rich and varied opportunities for observation: in the New York Bowery, in Texas and Mexico, and—under war conditions—in Greece and in Cuba. After his mar-

riage in 1896 he lived in England; one of his close friends there was Joseph Conrad. Crane died in the Black Forest, in Germany, where he had gone with the hope of improving his health.

His fame rests upon a few poems, several short stories, and two short novels—*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893) and *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895). As a poet, Crane is an interesting link between Emily Dickinson and the Imagists of the 1910's. As a writer of fiction, he is important both as an early naturalist and as an expert craftsman. *Maggie* has been called the first naturalistic American novel. An honest picture of the brutal and sordid life of the New York slums, the book was such a novelty in 1893 that the author had to publish it at his own expense. *The Red Badge* is remarkable in both substance and technique. It is nominally the story of a battle in the Civil War; but any war and any battle would have served, because there is no attempt at localization. At the time of writing, Crane knew nothing of war at first hand. After his experiences in Greece and Cuba, he could say to a friend, "*The Red Badge* is all right!" Later experience had confirmed the truth first apprehended chiefly by the imagination. Henry Fleming, the soldier, ran panic-stricken when the enemy charged; but with experience, he gained courage. Before the end of the story, "he had been to touch the great death, and found that, after all, it was but the great death." *The Red Badge* is an acute psychological study of the raw recruit in action. Technically, the book is comparable with James' mature work in that the story, though written in the third person, is managed consistently from the point of view of the distraught soldier.

Crane was above all else (and in a sense applicable to comparatively few American writers) the disinterested artist. He aimed at complete honesty of treatment. He wrote with economy, restraint, and a respect for point of view. He chose words precisely and created images (in prose as well as in verse) which are colorful and impressionistic. He was a master of irony; he saw ironical implications everywhere. It was ironical that a nice girl like Maggie should have "blossomed in a mud puddle." It was ironical that the soldier, Henry Fleming, should have gained courage through an accidental knock on the head. Man's self-importance, to Crane, and his self-pity were ironical in a universe indifferent to man.

The Works of Stephen Crane, ed. Wilson Follett, 12 vols., New York, 1926 • Thomas Beer, Stephen Crane, New York, 1923

The Open Boat

A Tale intended to be after the Fact. Being the Experience of Four Men from the Sunk Steamer 'Commodore'

In December 1896, the steamer Commodore, carrying ammunition and a party of Cuban insurrectionists, sailed from Jacksonville, Florida, for Cuba, where a revolution was in progress. Crane was on board as war correspondent for a newspaper syndicate. The ship went down off the Florida coast, and Crane got into the last of the boats to leave the sinking vessel; the other men in the open boat were the ship's cook, the oiler, and the injured captain. Crane's story is based upon his actual experiences; it is indeed "after the fact."

The story is told from the point of view of the men in the boat; more especially from the point of view of the correspondent, who was Crane himself. If there are a few violations of this rule (as when the author intrudes to say that "there was not a life-saving station within twenty miles") the violations are designed to heighten the desired effect (in the instance cited, the effect of irony). "The Open Boat" is Crane at his best. Sustained point of view, restraint, ironical wit, poetic images and cadences, and Poe's virtue of totality—these are some of the characteristic qualities of Crane which make "The Open Boat" one of the short masterpieces of modern American prose.

I

None of them knew the colour of the sky. Their eyes glanced level, and were fastened upon the waves that swept toward them. These waves were of the hue of slate, save for the tops, which were of foaming white,

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and all of the men knew the colours of the sea. The horizon narrowed and widened, and dipped and rose, and at all times its edge was jagged with waves that seemed thrust up in points like rocks.

Many a man ought to have a bath-tub larger than the boat which here rode upon the sea. These waves were most wrongfully and barbarously abrupt and tall, and each froth-top was a problem in small boat navigation.

The cook squatted in the bottom and looked with both eyes at the six inches of gunwale which separated him from the ocean. His sleeves were rolled over his fat forearms, and the two flaps of his unbuttoned vest dangled as he bent to bail out the boat. Often he said: 'Gawd! That was a narrow clip.' As he remarked it he invariably gazed eastward over the broken sea.

The oiler, steering with one of the two oars in the boat, sometimes raised himself suddenly to keep clear of water that swirled in over the stern. It was a thin little oar and it seemed often ready to snap.

The correspondent, pulling at the other oar, watched the waves and wondered why he was there.

The injured captain, lying in the bow, was at this time buried in that profound dejection and indifference which comes, temporarily at least, to even the bravest and most enduring when, willy nilly, the firm fails, the army loses, the ship goes down. The mind of the master of a vessel is rooted deep in the timbers of her, though he command for a day or a decade, and this captain had on him the stern impression of a scene in the greys of dawn of seven turned faces, and later a stump of a top-mast with a white ball on it that slashed to and fro at the waves, went low and lower, and down. Thereafter there was something strange in his voice. Although steady, it was deep with mourning, and of a quality beyond oration or tears.

'Keep 'er a little more south, Billie,' said he.

'A little more south, sir,' said the oiler in the stern.

A seat in this boat was not unlike a seat upon a bucking broncho, and, by the same token, a broncho is not much smaller. The craft pranced and reared, and plunged like an animal. As each wave came, and she rose for it, she seemed like a horse making at a fence outrageously high. The manner of her scramble over these walls of water is a mystic thing, and, moreover, at the top of them were ordinarily these problems in white water, the foam racing down from the summit of each wave, requiring a new leap, and a leap from the air. Then, after scornfully bumping a crest, she would slide, and race, and splash down a long incline, and arrive bobbing and nodding in front of the next menace.

A singular disadvantage of the sea lies in the fact that after successfully surmounting one wave you discover that there is another behind it just as important and just as nervously anxious to do something effective in the way of swamping boats. In a ten-foot dingey one can get an idea of the resources of the sea in the line of waves that is not probable to the average experience which is never at sea in a dingey. As each slaty wall of water approached, it shut all else from the view of the men in the boat, and it was not difficult to imagine that this particular wave was the final outburst of the ocean, the last effort of the grim water. There was a terrible grace in the move of the waves, and they came in silence, save for the snarling of the crests.

In the wan light, the faces of the men must have been grey. Their eyes must have glinted in strange ways as they gazed steadily astern. Viewed from a balcony, the whole thing would doubtless have been weirdly picturesque. But the men in the boat had no time to see it, and if they had had leisure there were other things to occupy their minds. The sun swung steadily up the sky, and they knew it was broad day because the colour of the sea changed from slate to emerald-green, streaked with amber lights, and the foam was like tumbling snow. The process of the breaking day was unknown to them. They were aware only of this effect upon the colour of the waves that rolled toward them.

In disjointed sentences the cook and the correspondent argued as to the difference between a life-saving station and a house of refuge. The cook had said: 'There's a house of refuge just north of the Mosquito Inlet Light, and as soon as they see us, they'll come off in their boat and pick us up.'

'As soon as who see us?' said the correspondent.

'The crew,' said the cook.

'Houses of refuge don't have crews,' said the correspondent. 'As I understand them, they are only places where clothes and grub are stored for the benefit of shipwrecked people. They don't carry crews.'

'Oh, yes, they do,' said the cook.

'No, they don't,' said the correspondent.

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16 oiler, an engine-room greaser

'Well, we're not there yet, anyhow,' said the oiler, in the stern.

'Well,' said the cook, 'perhaps it's not a house of refuge that I'm thinking of as being near Mosquito Inlet Light. Perhaps it's a life-saving station.'

'We're not there yet,' said the oiler, in the stern.

II

As the boat bounced from the top of each wave, the wind tore through the hair of the hatless men, and as the craft plopped her stern down again the spray slashed past them. The crest of each of these waves was a hill, from the top of which the men surveyed, for a moment, a broad tumultuous expanse, shining and wind-riven. It was probably splendid. It was probably glorious, this play of the free sea, wild with lights of emerald and white and amber.

'Bully good thing it's an on-shore wind,' said the cook. 'If not, where would we be? Wouldn't have a show.'

'That's right,' said the correspondent.

The busy oiler nodded his assent.

Then the captain, in the bow, chuckled in a way that expressed humour, contempt, tragedy, all in one. 'Do you think we've got much of a show now, boys?' said he.

Whereupon the three were silent, save for a trifle of hemming and hawing. To express any particular optimism at this time they felt to be childish and stupid, but they all doubtless possessed this sense of the situation in their mind. A young man thinks doggedly at such times. On the other hand, the ethics of their condition was decidedly against any open suggestion of hopelessness. So they were silent.

'Oh, well,' said the captain, soothing his children, 'we'll get ashore all right.'

But there was that in his tone which made them think, so the oiler quoth: 'Yes! If this wind holds!'

The cook was bailing: 'Yes! If we don't catch hell in the surf.'

Canton flannel gulls flew near and far. Sometimes they sat down on the sea, near patches of brown seaweed that rolled over the waves with a movement like carpets on a line in a gale. The birds sat comfortably in groups, and they were envied by some in the dingey, for the wrath of the sea was no more to them than it was to a covey of prairie chickens a thousand miles inland. Often they came very close and stared at the men with black bead-like eyes. At these times they were uncanny and sinister in their unblinking scrutiny, and the men hooted angrily at them, telling them to be gone. One came, and evidently decided to alight on the top of the captain's head. The bird flew parallel to the boat and did not circle, but made short sidelong jumps in the air in chicken-fashion. His black eyes were wistfully fixed upon the captain's head. 'Ugly brute,' said the oiler to the bird. 'You look as if you were made with a jack-knife.' The cook and the correspondent swore darkly at the creature. The captain naturally wished to knock it away with the end of the heavy painter; but he did not dare do it, because anything resembling an emphatic gesture would have capsized this freighted boat, and so with his open hand, the captain gently and carefully waved the gull away. After it had been discouraged from the pursuit the captain breathed easier on account of his hair, and others breathed easier because the bird struck their minds at this time as being somehow gruesome and ominous.

In the meantime the oiler and the correspondent rowed. And also they rowed.

They sat together in the same seat, and each rowed an oar. Then the oiler took both oars; then the correspondent took both oars; then the oiler; then the correspondent. They rowed and they rowed. The very ticklish part of the business was when the time came for the reclining one in the stern to take his turn at the oars. By the very last star of truth, it is easier to steal eggs from under a hen than it was to change seats in the dingey. First the man in the stern slid his hand along the thwart and moved with care, as if he were of Sèvres. Then the man in the rowing seat slid his hand along the other thwart. It was all done with the most extraordinary care. As the two sidled past each other, the whole party kept watchful eyes on the coming wave, and the captain cried: 'Look out now! Steady there!'

The brown mats of seaweed that appeared from time to time were like islands, bits of earth. They were travelling, apparently, neither one way nor the other. They were, to all intents, stationary. They informed the men in the boat that it was making progress slowly toward the land.

The captain, rearing cautiously in the bow, after the

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37 **Canton flannel**, cotton fabric with a long, fleecy nap • 56 **painter**, a rope, usually at the bow, for fastening a boat • 74 **thwart**, a rower's seat • 75 **Sèvres**, costly porcelain manufactured at Sèvres, France

dingey soared on a great swell, said that he had seen the lighthouse at Mosquito Inlet. Presently the cook remarked that he had seen it. The correspondent was at the oars then, and for some reason he too wished to look at the lighthouse, but his back was toward the far shore and the waves were important, and for some time he could not seize an opportunity to turn his head. But at last there came a wave more gentle than the others, and when at the crest of it he swiftly scoured the western horizon.

'See it?' said the captain.

'No,' said the correspondent slowly, 'I didn't see anything.'

'Look again,' said the captain. He pointed. 'It's exactly in that direction.'

At the top of another wave, the correspondent did as he was bid, and this time his eyes chanced on a small still thing on the edge of the swaying horizon. It was precisely like the point of a pin. It took an anxious eye to find a lighthouse so tiny.

'Think we'll make it, captain?'

'If this wind holds and the boat don't swamp, we can't do much else,' said the captain.

The little boat, lifted by each towering sea, and splashed viciously by the crests, made progress that in the absence of seaweed was not apparent to those in her. She seemed just a wee thing wallowing, miraculously top up, at the mercy of five oceans. Occasionally, a great spread of water, like white flames, swarmed into her.

'Bail her, cook,' said the captain serenely.

'All right, captain,' said the cheerful cook.

III

It would be difficult to describe the subtle brotherhood of men that was here established on the seas. No one said that it was so. No one mentioned it. But it dwelt in the boat, and each man felt it warm him. They were a captain, an oiler, a cook, and a correspondent, and they were friends, friends in a more curiously iron-bound degree than may be common. The hurt captain, lying against the water-jar in the bow, spoke always in a low voice and calmly, but he could never command a more ready and swiftly obedient crew than the motley three of the dingey. It was more than a mere recognition of what was best for the common safety. There was surely in it a quality that was personal and heartfelt. And after this devotion to the commander of the boat there was this comradeship that the correspondent, for instance, who had been taught to be cynical of men, knew even at the time was the best experience of his life. But no one said that it was so. No one mentioned it.

'I wish we had a sail,' remarked the captain. 'We might try my overcoat on the end of an oar and give you two boys a chance to rest.' So the cook and the correspondent held the mast and spread wide the overcoat. The oiler steered, and the little boat made good way with her new rig. Sometimes the oiler had to scull sharply to keep a sea from breaking into the boat, but otherwise sailing was a success.

Meanwhile the lighthouse had been growing slowly larger. It had now almost assumed colour, and appeared like a little grey shadow on the sky. The man at the oars could not be prevented from turning his head rather often to try for a glimpse of this little grey shadow.

At last, from the top of each wave the men in the tossing boat could see land. Even as the lighthouse was an upright shadow on the sky, this land seemed but a long black shadow on the sea. It certainly was thinner than paper. 'We must be about opposite New Smyrna,' said the cook, who had coasted this shore often in schooners. 'Captain, by the way, I believe they abandoned that life-saving station there about a year ago.'

'Did they?' said the captain.

The wind slowly died away. The cook and the correspondent were not now obliged to slave in order to hold high the oar. But the waves continued their old impetuous swooping at the dingey, and the little craft, no longer under way, struggled woundily over them. The oiler or the correspondent took the oars again.

Shipwrecks are apropos of nothing. If men could only train for them and have them occur when the men had reached pink condition, there would be less drowning at sea. Of the four in the dingey none had slept any time worth mentioning for two days and two nights previous to embarking in the dingey, and in the excitement of clambering about the deck of a foundering ship they had also forgotten to eat heartily.

For these reasons, and for others, neither the oiler nor the correspondent was fond of rowing at this time. The correspondent wondered ingenuously how in the name of all that was sane could there be people who thought

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67 New Smyrna, a town on the east coast of Florida • 76 woundily, excessively

it amusing to row a boat. It was not an amusement; it was a diabolical punishment, and even a genius of mental aberrations could never conclude that it was anything but a horror to the muscles and a crime against the back. He mentioned to the boat in general how the amusement of rowing struck him, and the weary-faced oiler smiled in full sympathy. Previously to the foundering, by the way, the oiler had worked double-watch in the engine-room of the ship.

'Take her easy, now, boys,' said the captain. 'Don't spend yourselves. If we have to run a surf you'll need all your strength, because we'll sure have to swim for it. Take your time.'

Slowly the land arose from the sea. From a black line it became a line of black and a line of white, trees and sand. Finally, the captain said that he could make out a house on the shore. 'That's the house of refuge, sure,' said the cook. 'They'll see us before long, and come out after us.'

The distant-lighthouse reared high. 'The keeper ought to be able to make us out now, if he's looking through a glass,' said the captain. 'He'll notify the life-saving people.'

'None of those other boats could have got ashore to give word of the wreck,' said the oiler, in a low voice. 'Else the lifeboat would be out hunting us.'

Slowly and beautifully the land loomed out of the sea. The wind came again. It had veered from the north-east to the south-east. Finally, a new sound struck the ears of the men in the boat. It was the low thunder of the surf on the shore. 'We'll never be able to make the lighthouse now,' said the captain. 'Swing her head a little more north, Billie.'

'A little more north, sir,' said the oiler.

Whereupon the little boat turned her nose once more down the wind, and all but the oarsmen watched the shore grow. Under the influence of this expansion doubt and direful apprehension was leaving the minds of the men. The management of the boat was still most absorbing, but it could not prevent a quiet cheerfulness. In an hour, perhaps, they would be ashore.

Their backbones had become thoroughly used to balancing in the boat, and they now rode this wild colt of a dingey like circus men. The correspondent thought that he had been drenched to the skin, but happening to feel in the top pocket of his coat, he found therein eight cigars. Four of them were soaked with sea-water; four were perfectly scatheless. After a search, somebody produced three dry matches, and thereupon the four waifs rode impudently in their little boat, and with an assurance of an impending rescue shining in their eyes, puffed at the big cigars and judged well and ill of all men. Everybody took a drink of water.

IV

'Cook,' remarked the captain, 'there don't seem to be any signs of life about your house of refuge.'

'No,' replied the cook. 'Funny they don't see us!'

A broad stretch of lowly coast lay before the eyes of the men. It was of low dunes topped with dark vegetation. The roar of the surf was plain, and sometimes they could see the white lip of a wave as it spun up the beach. A tiny house was blocked out black upon the sky. Southward, the slim lighthouse lifted its little grey length.

Tide, wind, and waves were swinging the dingey northward. 'Funny they don't see us,' said the men.

The surf's roar was here dulled, but its tone was, nevertheless, thunderous and mighty. As the boat swam over the great rollers, the men sat listening to this roar. 'We'll swamp sure,' said everybody.

It is fair to say here that there was not a life-saving station within twenty miles in either direction, but the men did not know this fact, and in consequence they made dark and opprobrious remarks concerning the eyesight of the nation's life-savers. Four scowling men sat in the dingey and surpassed records in the invention of epithets.

'Funny they don't see us.'

The light-heartedness of a former time had completely faded. To their sharpened minds it was easy to conjure pictures of all kinds of incompetency and blindness and, indeed, cowardice. There was the shore of the populous land, and it was bitter and bitter to them that from it came no sign.

'Well,' said the captain, ultimately, 'I suppose we'll have to make a try for ourselves. If we stay out here too long, we'll none of us have strength left to swim after the boat swamps.'

And so the oiler, who was at the oars, turned the boat straight for the shore. There was a sudden tightening of muscles. There was some thinking.

'If we don't all get ashore—' said the captain. 'If we don't all get ashore, I suppose you fellows know where to send news of my finish?'

They then briefly exchanged some addresses and ad-

monitions. As for the reflections of the men, there was a great deal of rage in them. Perchance they might be formulated thus: 'If I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees? Was I brought here merely to have my nose dragged away as I was about to nibble the sacred cheese of life? It is preposterous. If this old ninny-woman, Fate, cannot do better than this, she should be deprived of the management of men's fortunes. She is an old hen who knows not her intention. If she has decided to drown me, why did she not do it in the beginning and save me all this trouble? The whole affair is absurd. . . . But no, she cannot mean to drown me. She dare not drown me. She cannot drown me. Not after all this work.' Afterward the man might have had an impulse to shake his fist at the clouds 'Just you drown me, now, and then hear what I call you!'

The billows that came at this time were more formidable. They seemed always just about to break and roll over the little boat in a turmoil of foam. There was a preparatory and long growl in the speech of them. No mind unused to the sea would have concluded that the dingey could ascend these sheer heights in time. The shore was still afar. The oiler was a wily surfman. 'Boys,' he said swiftly, 'she won't live three minutes more, and we're too far out to swim. Shall I take her to sea again, captain?'

'Yes! Go ahead!' said the captain.

This oiler, by a series of quick miracles, and fast and steady oarsmanship, turned the boat in the middle of the surf and took her safely to sea again.

There was a considerable silence as the boat bumped over the furrowed sea to deeper water. Then somebody in gloom spoke. 'Well, anyhow, they must have seen us from the shore by now.'

The gulls went in slanting flight up the wind toward the grey desolate east. A squall, marked by dingy clouds, and clouds brick-red, like smoke from a burning building, appeared from the south-east.

'What do you think of those life-saving people? Ain't they peaches?'

'Funny they haven't seen us.'

'Maybe they think we're out here for sport! Maybe they think we're fishin'. Maybe they think we're damned fools.'

It was a long afternoon. A changed tide tried to force them southward, but wind and wave said northward. Far ahead, where coastline, sea, and sky formed their mighty angle, there were little dots which seemed to indicate a city on the shore

'St. Augustine?'

The captain shook his head. 'Too near Mosquito Inlet.'

And the oiler rowed, and then the correspondent rowed. Then the oiler rowed. It was a weary business. The human back can become the seat of more aches and pains than are registered in books for the composite anatomy of a regiment. It is a limited area, but it can become the theatre of innumerable muscular conflicts, tangles, wrenches, knots, and other comforts.

'Did you ever like to row, Billie?' asked the correspondent.

'No,' said the oiler. 'Hang it.'

When one exchanged the rowing-seat for a place in the bottom of the boat, he suffered a bodily depression that caused him to be careless of everything save an obligation to wiggle one finger. There was cold sea-water swashing to and fro in the boat, and he lay in it. His head, pillowed on a thwart, was within an inch of the swirl of a wave crest, and sometimes a particularly obstreperous sea came in-board and drenched him once more. But these matters did not annoy him. It is almost certain that if the boat had capsized he would have tumbled comfortably out upon the ocean as if he felt sure that it was a great soft mattress.

'Look! There's a man on the shore!'

'Where?'

'There! See 'im? See 'im?'

'Yes, sure! He's walking along.'

'Now he's stopped. Look! He's facing us!'

'He's waving at us!'

'So he is! By thunder!'

'Ah, now we're all right! Now we're all right! There'll be a boat out here for us in half an hour.'

'He's going on. He's running. He's going up to that house there.'

The remote beach seemed lower than the sea, and it required a searching glance to discern the little black figure. The captain saw a floating stick and they rowed to it. A bath-towel was by some weird chance in the boat, and, tying this on the stick, the captain waved it. The oarsman did not dare turn his head, so he was obliged to ask questions.

'What's he doing now?'

'He's standing still again. He's looking, I think. . . . There he goes again. Toward the house. . . . Now he stopped again.'

'Is he waving at us?'

'No, not now! he was, though.'

'Look! There comes another man!'

'He's running.'

'Look at him go, would you.'

'Why, he's on a bicycle. Now he's met the other man. They're both waving at us. Look!'

'There comes something up the beach.'

'What the devil is that thing?'

'Why, it looks like a boat.'

'Why, certainly it's a boat.'

'No, it's on wheels.'

'Yes, so it is. Well, that must be the life-boat. They drag them along shore on a wagon.'

'That's the life-boat, sure.'

'No, by—, it's—it's an omnibus.'

'I tell you it's a life-boat.'

'It is not! It's an omnibus. I can see it plain. See? One of these big hotel omnibuses.'

'By thunder, you're right. It's an omnibus, sure as fate. What do you suppose they are doing with an omnibus? Maybe they are going around collecting the life-crew, hey?'

'That's it, likely. Look! There's a fellow waving a little black flag. He's standing on the steps of the omnibus. There come those other two fellows. Now they're all talking together. Look at the fellow with the flag. Maybe he ain't waving it.'

'That ain't a flag, is it? That's his coat. Why, certainly, that's his coat.'

'So it is. It's his coat. He's taken it off and is waving it around his head. But would you look at him swing it.'

'Oh, say, there isn't any life-saving station there. That's just a winter resort hotel omnibus that has brought over some of the boarders to see us drown.'

'What's that idiot with the coat mean? What's he signaling, anyhow?'

'It looks as if he were trying to tell us to go north. There must be a life-saving station up there.'

'No! He thinks we're fishing. Just giving us a merry hand. See? Ah, there, Willie.'

'Well, I wish I could make something out of those signals. What do you suppose he means?'

'He don't mean anything. He's just playing.'

'Well, if he'd just signal us to try the surf again, or to go to sea and wait, or go north, or go south, or go to hell —there would be some reason in it. But look at him. He just stands there and keeps his coat revolving like a wheel. The ass!'

'There come more people.'

'Now there's quite a mob. Look! Isn't that a boat?'

'Where? Oh, I see where you mean. No, that's no boat.'

'That fellow is still waving his coat.'

'He must think we like to see him do that. Why don't he quit it? It don't mean anything.'

'I don't know. I think he is trying to make us go north. It must be that there's a life-saving station there somewhere.'

'Say, he ain't tired yet. Look at 'im wave.'

'Wonder how long he can keep that up. He's been revolving his coat ever since he caught sight of us. He's an idiot. Why aren't they getting men to bring a boat out? A fishing boat—one of those big yawls—could come out here all right. Why don't he do something?'

'Oh, it's all right, now.'

'They'll have a boat out here for us in less than no time, now that they've seen us.'

A faint yellow tone came into the sky over the low land. The shadows on the sea slowly deepened. The wind bore coldness with it, and the men began to shiver.

'Holy smoke!' said one, allowing his voice to express his impious mood, 'if we keep on monkeying out here! If we've got to flounder out here all night!'

'Oh, we'll never have to stay here all night! Don't you worry. They've seen us now, and it won't be long before they'll come chasing out after us.'

The shore grew dusky. The man waving a coat blended gradually into this gloom, and it swallowed in the same manner the omnibus and the group of people. The spray, when it dashed uproariously over the side, made the voyagers shrink and swear like men who were being branded.

'I'd like to catch the chump who waved that coat. I feel like soaking him one, just for luck.'

'Why? What did he do?'

'Oh, nothing, but then he seemed so damned cheerful.'

In the meantime the oiler rowed, and then the correspondent rowed, and then the oiler rowed. Grey-faced and bowed forward, they mechanically, turn by turn, plied the leaden oars. The form of the lighthouse had vanished from the southern horizon, but finally a pale star ap-

peared, just lifting from the sea. The streaked saffron in the west passed before the all-merging darkness, and the sea to the east was black. The land had vanished, and was expressed only by the low and drear thunder of the surf.

'If I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees? Was I brought here merely to have my nose dragged away as I was about to nibble the sacred cheese of life?'

The patient captain, drooped over the water-jar, was sometimes obliged to speak to the oarsman.

'Keep her head up! Keep her head up!'

'"Keep her head up," sir.' The voices were weary and low.

This was surely a quiet evening. All save the oarsman lay heavily and listlessly in the boat's bottom. As for him, his eyes were just capable of noting the tall black waves that swept forward in a most sinister silence, save for an occasional subdued growl of a crest.

The cook's head was on a thwart, and he looked without interest at the water under his nose. He was deep in other scenes. Finally he spoke. 'Billie,' he murmured, dreamfully, 'what kind of pie do you like best?'

V

'Pie,' said the oiler and the correspondent, agitatedly. 'Don't talk about those things, blast you!'

'Well,' said the cook, 'I was just thinking about ham sandwiches, and—'

A night on the sea in an open boat is a long night. As darkness settled finally, the shine of the light, lifting from the sea in the south, changed to full gold. On the northern horizon a new light appeared, a small bluish gleam on the edge of the waters. These two lights were the furniture of the world. Otherwise there was nothing but waves.

Two men huddled in the stern, and distances were so magnificent in the dingey that the rower was enabled to keep his feet partly warmed by thrusting them under his companions. Their legs indeed extended far under the rowing-seat until they touched the feet of the captain forward. Sometimes, despite the efforts of the tired oarsman, a wave came piling into the boat, an icy wave of the night, and the chilling water soaked them anew. They would twist their bodies for a moment and groan, and sleep the dead sleep once more, while the water in the boat gurgled about them as the craft rocked.

The plan of the oiler and the correspondent was for one to row until he lost the ability, and then arouse the other from his sea-water couch in the bottom of the boat.

The oiler plied the oars until his head drooped forward, and the overpowering sleep blinded him. And he rowed yet afterward. Then he touched a man in the bottom of the boat, and called his name. 'Will you spell me for a little while?' he said, meekly.

'Sure, Billie,' said the correspondent, awakening and dragging himself to a sitting position. They exchanged places carefully, and the oiler, cuddling down in the sea-water at the cook's side, seemed to go to sleep instantly.

The particular violence of the sea had ceased. The waves came without snarling. The obligation of the man at the oars was to keep the boat headed so that the tilt of the rollers would not capsize her, and to preserve her from filling when the crests rushed past. The black waves were silent and hard to be seen in the darkness. Often one was almost upon the boat before the oarsman was aware.

In a low voice the correspondent addressed the captain. He was not sure that the captain was awake, although this iron man seemed to be always awake. 'Captain, shall I keep her making for that light north, sir?'

The same steady voice answered him. 'Yes. Keep it about two points off the port bow.'

The cook had tied a life-belt around himself in order to get even the warmth which this clumsy cork contrivance could donate, and he seemed almost stove-like when a rower, whose teeth invariably chattered wildly as soon as he ceased his labour, dropped down to sleep.

The correspondent, as he rowed, looked down at the two men sleeping underfoot. The cook's arm was around the oiler's shoulders, and, with their fragmentary clothing and haggard faces, they were the babes of the sea, a grotesque rendering of the old babes in the wood.

Later he must have grown stupid at his work, for suddenly there was a growling of water, and a crest came with a roar and a swash into the boat, and it was a wonder that it did not set the cook afloat in his life-belt. The cook continued to sleep, but the oiler sat up, blinking his eyes and shaking with the new cold.

'Oh, I'm awful sorry, Billie,' said the correspondent, contritely.

'That's all right, old boy,' said the oiler, and lay down again and was asleep.

Presently it seemed that even the captain dozed, and the correspondent thought that he was the one man afloat on all the oceans. The wind had a voice as it came over the waves, and it was sadder than the end.

There was a long, loud swishing astern of the boat, and a gleaming trail of phosphorescence, like blue flame, was furrowed on the black waters. It might have been made by a monstrous knife.

Then there came a stillness, while the correspondent breathed with the open mouth and looked at the sea.

Suddenly there was another swish and another long flash of bluish light, and this time it was alongside the boat, and might almost have been reached with an oar. The correspondent saw an enormous fin speed like a shadow through the water, hurling the crystalline spray and leaving the long glowing trail.

The correspondent looked over his shoulder at the captain. His face was hidden, and he seemed to be asleep. He looked at the babes of the sea. They certainly were asleep. So, being bereft of sympathy, he leaned a little way to one side and swore softly into the sea.

But the thing did not then leave the vicinity of the boat. Ahead or astern, on one side or the other, at intervals long or short, fled the long sparkling streak, and there was to be heard the whiroo of the dark fin. The speed and power of the thing was greatly to be admired. It cut the water like a gigantic and keen projectile.

The presence of this biding thing did not affect the man with the same horror that it would if he had been a picnicker. He simply looked at the sea dully and swore in an undertone.

Nevertheless, it is true that he did not wish to be alone with the thing. He wished one of his companions to awaken by chance and keep him company with it. But the captain hung motionless over the water-jar, and the oiler and the cook in the bottom of the boat were plunged in slumber.

VI

'If I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned—if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees?'

During this dismal night, it may be remarked that a man would conclude that it was really the intention of the seven mad gods to drown him, despite the abominable injustice of it. For it was certainly an abominable injustice to drown a man who had worked so hard, so hard. The man felt it would be a crime most unnatural. Other people had drowned at sea since galleys swarmed with painted sails, but still—

When it occurs to a man that nature does not regard him as important, and that she feels she would not maim the universe by disposing of him, he at first wishes to throw bricks at the temple, and he hates deeply the fact that there are no bricks and no temples. Any visible expression of nature would surely be pelleted with his jeers.

Then, if there be no tangible thing to hoot he feels, perhaps, the desire to confront a personification and indulge in pleas, bowed to one knee, and with hands supplicant, saying: 'Yes, but I love myself.'

A high cold star on a winter's night is the word he feels that she says to him. Thereafter he knows the pathos of his situation.

The men in the dingey had not discussed these matters, but each had, no doubt, reflected upon them in silence and according to his mind. There was seldom any expression upon their faces save the general one of complete weariness. Speech was devoted to the business of the boat.

To chime the notes of his emotion, a verse mysteriously entered the correspondent's head. He had even forgotten that he had forgotten this verse, but it suddenly was in his mind.

> 'A soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers,
> There was lack of woman's nursing, there was
> dearth of woman's tears;
> But a comrade stood beside him, and he took
> that comrade's hand,
> And he said: "I shall never see my own,
> my native land."'

In his childhood, the correspondent had been made acquainted with the fact that a soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers, but he had never regarded the fact as

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77 A soldier . . . land, from "Bingen on the Rhine," by Caroline E. S. Norton (1808-1877)

important. Myriads of his school-fellows had informed him of the soldier's plight, but the dinning had naturally ended by making him perfectly indifferent. He had never considered it his affair that a soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers, nor had it appeared to him as a matter for sorrow. It was less to him than the breaking of a pencil's point.

Now, however, it quaintly came to him as a human, living thing. It was no longer merely a picture of a few throes in the breast of a poet, meanwhile drinking tea and warming his feet at the grate; it was an actuality—stern, mournful, and fine.

The correspondent plainly saw the soldier. He lay on the sand with his feet out straight and still. While his pale left hand was upon his chest in an attempt to thwart the going of his life, the blood came between his fingers. In the far Algerian distance, a city of low square forms was set against a sky that was faint with the last sunset hues. The correspondent, plying the oars and dreaming of the slow and slower movements of the lips of the soldier, was moved by a profound and perfectly impersonal comprehension. He was sorry for the soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algiers.

The thing which had followed the boat and waited had evidently grown bored at the delay. There was no longer to be heard the slash of the cut-water, and there was no longer the flame of the long trail. The light in the north still glimmered, but it was apparently no nearer to the boat. Sometimes the boom of the surf rang in the correspondent's ears, and he turned the craft seaward then and rowed harder. Southward, someone had evidently built a watch-fire on the beach. It was too low and too far to be seen, but it made a shimmering, roseate reflection upon the bluff back of it, and this could be discerned from the boat. The wind came stronger, and sometimes a wave suddenly raged out like a mountain-cat, and there was to be seen the sheen and sparkle of a broken crest.

The captain, in the bow, moved on his water-jar and sat erect. 'Pretty long night,' he observed to the correspondent. He looked at the shore. 'Those life-saving people take their time.'

'Did you see that shark playing around?'

'Yes, I saw him. He was a big fellow, all right.'

'Wish I had known you were awake.'

Later the correspondent spoke into the bottom of the boat.

'Billie!' There was a slow and gradual disentanglement. 'Billie, will you spell me?'

'Sure,' said the oiler.

As soon as the correspondent touched the cold comfortable sea-water in the bottom of the boat, and had huddled close to the cook's life-belt he was deep in sleep, despite the fact that his teeth played all the popular airs. This sleep was so good to him that it was but a moment before he heard a voice call his name in a tone that demonstrated the last stages of exhaustion. 'Will you spell me?'

'Sure, Billie.'

The light in the north had mysteriously vanished, but the correspondent took his course from the wide-awake captain.

Later in the night they took the boat farther out to sea, and the captain directed the cook to take one oar at the stern and keep the boat facing the seas. He was to call out if he should hear the thunder of the surf This plan enabled the oiler and the correspondent to get respite together. 'We'll give those boys a chance to get into shape again,' said the captain. They curled down and, after a few preliminary chatterings and trembles, slept once more the dead sleep Neither knew they had bequeathed to the cook the company of another shark, or perhaps the same shark.

As the boat caroused on the waves, spray occasionally bumped over the side and gave them a fresh soaking, but this had no power to break their repose The ominous slash of the wind and the water affected them as it would have affected mummies.

'Boys,' said the cook, with the notes of every reluctance in his voice, 'she's drifted in pretty close I guess one of you had better take her to sea again ' The correspondent, aroused, heard the crash of the toppled crests.

As he was rowing, the captain gave him some whisky-and-water, and this steadied the chills out of him. 'If I ever get ashore and anybody shows me even a photograph of an oar—'

At last there was a short conversation.

'Billie. . . . Billie, will you spell me?'

'Sure,' said the oiler.

VII

When the correspondent again opened his eyes, the sea and the sky were each of the grey hue of the dawn-

ing. Later, carmine and gold was painted upon the waters. The morning appeared finally, in its splendour, with a sky of pure blue, and the sunlight flamed on the tips of the waves.

On the distant dunes were set many little black cottages, and a tall white windmill reared above them. No man, nor dog, nor bicycle appeared on the beach. The cottages might have formed a deserted village.

The voyagers scanned the shore. A conference was held in the boat. 'Well,' said the captain, 'if no help is coming, we might better try a run through the surf right away. If we stay out here much longer we will be too weak to do anything for ourselves at all.' The others silently acquiesced in this reasoning. The boat was headed for the beach. The correspondent wondered if none ever ascended the tall wind-tower, and if then they never looked seaward. This tower was a giant, standing with its back to the plight of the ants. It represented in a degree, to the correspondent, the serenity of nature amid the struggles of the individual—nature in the wind, and nature in the vision of men. She did not seem cruel to him then, nor beneficent, nor treacherous, nor wise. But she was indifferent, flatly indifferent. It is, perhaps, plausible that a man in this situation, impressed with the unconcern of the universe, should see the innumerable flaws of his life, and have them taste wickedly in his mind and wish for another chance. A distinction between right and wrong seems absurdly clear to him, then, in this new ignorance of the grave-edge, and he understands that if he were given another opportunity he would mend his conduct and his words, and be better and brighter during an introduction or at a tea.

'Now, boys,' said the captain, 'she is going to swamp sure. All we can do is to work her in as far as possible, and then when she swamps, pile out and scramble for the beach. Keep cool now, and don't jump until she swamps sure.'

The oiler took the oars. Over his shoulders he scanned the surf. 'Captain,' he said, 'I think I'd better bring her about, and keep her head-on to the seas and back her in.'

'All right, Billie,' said the captain. 'Back her in.' The oiler swung the boat then and, seated in the stern, the cook and the correspondent were obliged to look over their shoulders to contemplate the lonely and indifferent shore.

The monstrous in-shore rollers heaved the boat high until the men were again enabled to see the white sheets of water scudding up the slanted beach. 'We won't get in very close,' said the captain. Each time a man could wrest his attention from the rollers, he turned his glance toward the shore, and in the expression of the eyes during this contemplation there was a singular quality. The correspondent, observing the others, knew that they were not afraid, but the full meaning of their glances was shrouded.

As for himself, he was too tired to grapple fundamentally with the fact. He tried to coerce his mind into thinking of it, but the mind was dominated at this time by the muscles, and the muscles said they did not care. It merely occurred to him that if he should drown it would be a shame.

There were no hurried words, no pallor, no plain agitation. The men simply looked at the shore. 'Now, remember to get well clear of the boat when you jump,' said the captain.

Seaward the crest of a roller suddenly fell with a thunderous crash, and the long white comber came roaring down upon the boat.

'Steady now,' said the captain. The men were silent. They turned their eyes from the shore to the comber and waited. The boat slid up the incline, leaped at the furious top, bounced over it, and swung down the long back of the waves. Some water had been shipped and the cook bailed it out.

But the next crest crashed also. The tumbling boiling flood of white water caught the boat and whirled it almost perpendicular. Water swarmed in from all sides. The correspondent had his hands on the gunwale at this time, and when the water entered at that place he swiftly withdrew his fingers, as if he objected to wetting them.

The little boat, drunken with this weight of water, reeled and snuggled deeper into the sea.

'Bail her out, cook! Bail her out,' said the captain.

'All right, captain,' said the cook.

'Now, boys, the next one will do for us, sure,' said the oiler. 'Mind to jump clear of the boat.'

The third wave moved forward, huge, furious, implacable. It fairly swallowed the dingey, and almost simultaneously the men tumbled into the sea. A piece of life-belt had lain in the bottom of the boat, and as the correspondent went overboard he held this to his chest with his left hand.

The January water was icy, and he reflected immediately that it was colder than he had expected to find it off the coast of Florida. This appeared to his dazed mind as a fact important enough to be noted at the time. The coldness of the water was sad; it was tragic. This fact was somehow so mixed and confused with his opinion of his own situation that it seemed almost a proper reason for tears. The water was cold.

When he came to the surface he was conscious of little but the noisy water. Afterward he saw his companions in the sea. The oiler was ahead in the race. He was swimming strongly and rapidly. Off to the correspondent's left, the cook's great white and corked back bulged out of the water, and in the rear the captain was hanging with his one good hand to the keel of the overturned dingey.

There is a certain immovable quality to a shore, and the correspondent wondered at it amid the confusion of the sea.

It seemed also very attractive, but the correspondent knew that it was a long journey, and he paddled leisurely. The piece of life-preserver lay under him, and sometimes he whirled down the incline of a wave as if he were on a hand-sled.

But finally he arrived at a place in the sea where travel was beset with difficulty. He did not pause swimming to inquire what manner of current had caught him, but there his progress ceased. The shore was set before him like a bit of scenery on a stage, and he looked at it and understood with his eyes each detail of it.

As the cook passed, much farther to the left, the captain was calling to him, 'Turn over on your back, cook! Turn over on your back and use the oar.'

'All right, sir.' The cook turned on his back, and, paddling with an oar, went ahead as if he were a canoe.

Presently the boat also passed to the left of the correspondent with the captain clinging with one hand to the keel. He would have appeared like a man raising himself to look over a board fence, if it were not for the extraordinary gymnastics of the boat. The correspondent marvelled that the captain could still hold to it.

They passed on, nearer to shore—the oiler, the cook, the captain—and following them went the water-jar, bouncing gaily over the seas.

The correspondent remained in the grip of this strange new enemy—a current. The shore, with its white slope of sand and its green bluff, topped with little silent cottages, was spread like a picture before him. It was very near to him then, but he was impressed as one who in a gallery looks at a scene from Brittany or Algiers.

He thought: 'I am going to drown? Can it be possible? Can it be possible? Can it be possible?' Perhaps an individual must consider his own death to be the final phenomenon of nature.

But later a wave perhaps whirled him out of this small deadly current, for he found suddenly that he could again make progress toward the shore. Later still, he was aware that the captain, clinging with one hand to the keel of the dingey, had his face turned away from the shore and toward him, and was calling his name. 'Come to the boat! Come to the boat!'

In his struggle to reach the captain and the boat, he reflected that when one gets properly wearied, drowning must really be a comfortable arrangement, a cessation of hostilities accompanied by a large degree of relief, and he was glad of it, for the main thing in his mind for some moments had been horror of the temporary agony. He did not wish to be hurt.

Presently he saw a man running along the shore. He was undressing with most remarkable speed. Coat, trousers, shirt, everything flew magically off him.

'Come to the boat,' called the captain.

'All right, captain.' As the correspondent paddled, he saw the captain let himself down to bottom and leave the boat. Then the correspondent performed his one little marvel of the voyage. A large wave caught him and flung him with ease and supreme speed completely over the boat and far beyond it. It struck him even then as an event in gymnastics, and a true miracle of the sea. An overturned boat in the surf is not a plaything to a swimming man.

The correspondent arrived in water that reached only to his waist, but his condition did not enable him to stand for more than a moment. Each wave knocked him into a heap, and the under-tow pulled at him.

Then he saw the man who had been running and undressing, and undressing and running, come bounding into the water. He dragged ashore the cook, and then waded toward the captain, but the captain waved him away, and sent him to the correspondent. He was naked, naked as a tree in winter, but a halo was about his head, and he shone like a saint. He gave a strong pull, and a long drag, and a bully heave at the correspondent's hand.

The correspondent, schooled in the minor formulæ, said: 'Thanks, old man.' But suddenly the man cried: 'What's that?' He pointed a swift finger. The correspondent said: 'Go.'

In the shallows, face downward, lay the oiler. His forehead touched sand that was periodically, between each wave, clear of the sea.

The correspondent did not know all that transpired afterward. When he achieved safe ground he fell, striking the sand with each particular part of his body. It was as if he had dropped from a roof, but the thud was grateful to him.

It seems that instantly the beach was populated with men with blankets, clothes, and flasks, and women with coffee-pots and all the remedies sacred to their minds. The welcome of the land to the men from the sea was warm and generous, but a still and dripping shape was carried slowly up the beach, and the land's welcome for it could only be the different and sinister hospitality of the grave.

When it came night, the white waves paced to and fro in the moonlight, and the wind brought the sound of the great sea's voice to the men on shore, and they felt that they could then be interpreters.

1898

Frank Norris

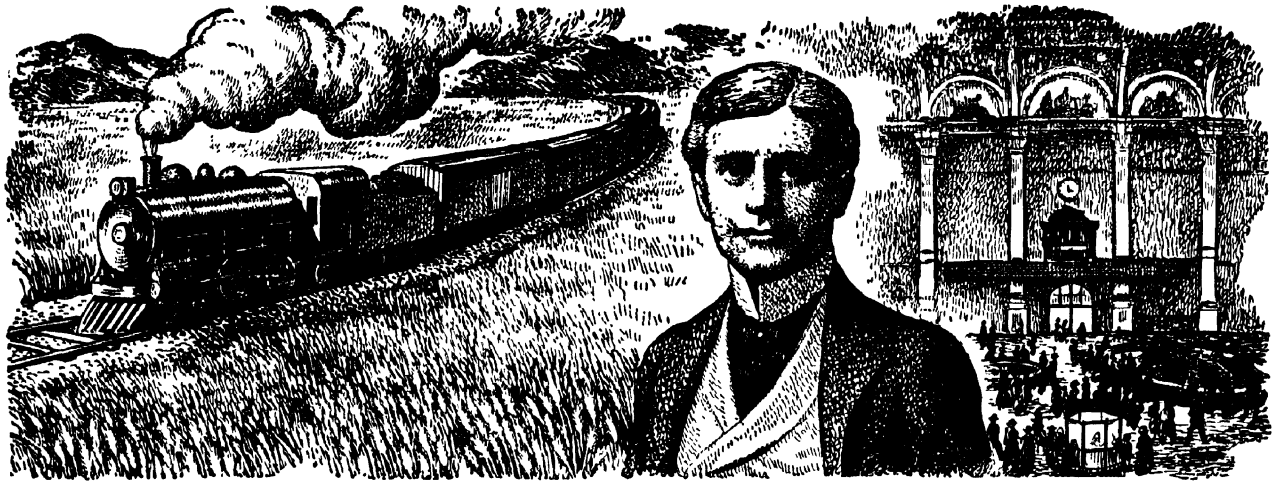
1870 · 1902

"Give us stories now," was Norris' plea; "give us men, strong, brutal men, with red-hot blood in 'em, blood and bones and viscera in 'em, and women, too, that move and have their being." As well as any utterance of Norris this entreaty shows his alliance not with reticent realism of the sort Howells wrote but with the naturalistic school which flourished in France in the later years of the nineteenth century.

Frank Norris adopted this creed after he had experimented with other methods of artistic expression. Born in Chicago to well-to-do parents in 1870, he moved with his family to San Francisco in 1884. Somehow, at the age of seventeen, he persuaded his family to allow him to study art in Paris. During his stay abroad, however, he changed his allegiance from the Atelier Julien to literature—literature, furthermore, of a romantic sort influenced by the French romantic writer Froissart and the English romantic writer Stevenson Some of Norris' earlier writings were clearly of the cloak-and-dagger school.

Back in California as a student at the University of California (1890-1894), he discovered the appeal of the French naturalistic school led by Zola, and of Rudyard Kipling. As a student at Harvard (1894-1895), he wrote two novels showing this newer influence: *Vandover and the Brute,* not published until 1914, and *McTeague,* published in 1899. Later, he wrote the two novels for which he is best remembered, *The Octopus* (1901) and *The Pit* (1903).

In part, Norris' enthusiasm for "living" characters derived from his feeling that life was superior to art. "Of all the difficult things," he said, "that enter into the learning of a difficult profession, the most difficult of all for the intended novelist . . . is that life is better



than literature. The amateur will say this with conviction, will preach it in public and practise the exact reverse in private. But it still remains true that all the temperament, all the sensitiveness to impressions, all the education in the world will not help one little, little bit in the writing of the novel if life itself, the crude, the vulgar, if you will, is not studied. An hour's experience is worth ten years of study."

Handsome, distinguished in appearance, gifted with a sense of fun, Norris had a talent for friendship. He took great delight in becoming one of the Bohemian group in Paris and equal delight in becoming a friend of athletes, men-about-the-campus, and scholars in his college fraternity. After college, a visit to the Big Dipper Mine in the Sierras or a trip to Tampa as a war correspondent was for him an adventure in new acquaintanceships.

Yet Norris was very much of a conscious artist, and his critical writings attest that he had thoroughly developed theories about technique. He had ideas about the handling of scene and plot, and he was a champion of naturalism. The sheer art of the storyteller attracted him. Each chapter of a novel, he felt, should be "distinct, separate, having a definite beginning, rise, height and end, the action continuous, containing no break in time, the locality unchanged throughout. . . . "

Norris liked to think of himself as a naturalist, and he believed a naturalist to be an author who attended to elemental forces in such a way as to give his narratives the sweep of epics. In *The Octopus* Norris pictured a poet eager to do what he approved—to strive, as he put it, "for the diapason, the great song which should embrace in itself a whole epoch, a complete era, the voice of the entire people." The scientific doctrine of the survival of the fittest and the sociological doctrine of economic determinism, also championed by naturalists, found expression in his books. *The Octopus* and *The Pit* were parts of a projected trilogy which was to show in epic terms the importance of wheat to all men's lives.

The career which came to an untimely end when Norris died in 1902 had, indeed, been a promising one. Norris' novels, it is true, for all his concern with the art of storytelling, were rather chaotic, but it seems very likely that, in time, he might have learned more about giving them unity. He is to be credited with introducing naturalism and what it stood for to a country in which naturalism was to be increasingly important. He foreshadows some of the aspects of the writings of notable modern authors—the unflinching depiction of sordid detail of Faulkner, the brutality of Hemingway, the poetic fervor of Wolfe.

The Complete Works of Frank Norris, 10 vols., Garden City, 1928 • Franklin Walker, Frank Norris, Garden City, 1932 • Ernest Marchand, Frank Norris: A Study, Stanford University, 1942

Panel (l. to r.): The wheatfields of California • Frank Norris at 30 • The grain trading "Pit" at Chicago

The Octopus

Norris was employed for several years by McClure's Magazine as a reader and author. The association was important, since he worked at an office with such socially conscious authors as Ray Stannard Baker, Ida Tarbell, and Lincoln Steffens. All these authors helped drive home a lesson that he felt he had learned from the great Zola—that the best novel was "the novel of purpose." He planned The Octopus as such a work.

"I am leaving for California Monday next," wrote Norris to a friend, April 5, 1899, "to be gone, very likely, until fall. It . . . is the result of a talk I had with the firm here. They believe with me that the big American novel is going to come out of the West—California. . . . I've got an idea that is as big as all outdoors and McClure is going to back me up while I put it through. . . . It involves a very long, a very serious, and perhaps a very terrible novel. It will be about the San Joaquin wheat raisers and the Southern Pacific, and I guess we'll call it The Octopus—catch on? . . . There's the chance for the big, epic, dramatic thing in this, and I mean to do it thoroughly—get at it from every point of view, the social, agricultural, and political. . . ."

Norris spent four months in California, collecting materials. Then he returned to New York and started work on the book. Says his biographer, Franklin Walker: "He wrote plot summaries, he wrote out an 'index sheet' for each character, he tabulated and arranged his notes, he made a map of the country where his action was to take place." In a sense he considered himself a research worker, unfolding a more or less objective "case study" which would reveal sociological truths. Such a study, inevitably, in his opinion, would be admirable as art. The writing itself, after the preliminaries had been completed, took a full year, and the novel was published in the spring of 1901.

Norris announced that this work was the first of "A Trilogy of the Epic of the Wheat"—three novels which were to tell, respectively, of "1) the production, 2) the distribution, 3) the consumption of American wheat." The first dealt, as he said, with "the war between the wheat grower and the Railroad Trust." Follower of Zola that he was, Norris naturally saw these two as particular symbols of more universal elements. For him, the wheat was a primitive force, nourished by the earth and a perennial, irresistible nourisher of life. The Trust—the Octopus—was the artificial exploiter and enemy of this life force.

To develop his thesis, Norris told his story very largely as it was seen by Presley, a poet who had a great longing to write an epic of the West in stirring hexameters. Presley was admirable for the author's purposes because of his ability to see with a poet's eye the life of south-central California and the symbolism of various events and happenings. Portions of the novel tell of mystic and romantic adventures of the characters which are related poetically to the main theme. The excerpts presented hereafter, however, tell only of the central conflict—that between the ranchers and the Railroad.

The time at the start is late September, with the harvest in the San Joaquin Valley just completed. Presley, who lives with the Derrick family at Los Muertos Rancho, pays a visit to some of the neighbors. Returning from a visit to Vanamee, a sheepherder and range rider, he is horrified by a scene which foreshadows the course of the narrative.

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from Book I, Chapter I

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE SHEEP

Presley had climbed the fence at the limit of the Quien Sabe ranch. Beyond was Los Muertos, but between the two ran the railroad. He had only time to jump back upon the embankment when, with a quivering of all the earth, a locomotive, single, unattached, shot by him with a roar, filling the air with the reek of hot oil, vomiting smoke and sparks; its enormous eye, cyclopean, red, throwing a glare far in advance, shooting by in a sudden crash of confused thunder; filling the night with the terrific clamor of its iron hoofs. 10

Abruptly Presley remembered. This must be the crack passenger engine of which Dyke had told him, the one delayed by the accident on the Bakersfield division, and for whose passage the track had been opened all the way to Fresno.

Before Presley could recover the shock of the irruption, while the earth was still vibrating, the rails still humming, the engine was far away, flinging the echo of its frantic gallop over all the valley. For a brief instant it roared with a hollow diapason on the Long Trestle over Broderson Creek, then plunged into a cutting further on, the quivering glare of its fires losing itself in the night, its thunder abruptly diminishing to a subdued and distant humming. All at once this ceased. The engine was gone.

But the moment the noise of the engine lapsed, Presley —about to start forward again—was conscious of a confusion of lamentable sounds that rose into the night from out the engine's wake. Prolonged cries of agony, sobbing wails of infinite pain, heartrending, pitiful.

The noises came from a little distance. He ran down the track, crossing the culvert, over the irrigating ditch, and at the head of the long reach of track—between the culvert and the Long Trestle—paused abruptly, held immovable at the sight of the ground and rails all about him.

In some way, the herd of sheep—Vanamee's herd—had found a breach in the wire fence by the right of way and had wandered out upon the tracks. A band had been crossing just at the moment of the engine's passage. The pathos of it was beyond expression. It was a slaughter, a massacre of innocents. The iron monster had charged full into the midst, merciless, inexorable. To the right and left, all the width of the right of way, the little bodies had been flung; backs were snapped against the fence posts; brains knocked out. Caught in the barbs of the wire, wedged in, the bodies hung suspended. Under foot it was terrible. The black blood, winking in the starlight, seeped down into the clinkers between the ties with a prolonged sucking murmur.

Presley turned away, horror-struck, sick at heart, overwhelmed with a quick burst of irresistible compassion for this brute agony he could not relieve. The sweetness was gone from the evening, the sense of peace, of security, and placid contentment was stricken from the landscape. The hideous ruin in the engine's path drove all thought of his poem from his mind. The inspiration vanished like a mist. The *de Profundis* had ceased to ring.

He hurried on across the Los Muertos ranch, almost running, even putting his hands over his ears till he was out of hearing distance of that all but human distress. Not until he was beyond earshot did he pause, looking back, listening. The night had shut down again. For a moment the silence was profound, unbroken.

Then, faint and prolonged, across the levels of the ranch, he heard the engine whistling for Bonneville. Again and again, at rapid intervals in its flying course, it whistled for road crossings, for sharp curves, for trestles; ominous notes, hoarse, bellowing, ringing with the accents of menace and defiance; and abruptly Presley saw again, in his imagination, the galloping monster, the terror of steel and steam, with its single eye, cyclopean, red, shooting from horizon to horizon; but saw it now as the symbol of a vast power, huge, terrible, flinging the echo of its thunder over all the reaches of the valley, leaving blood and destruction in its path; the leviathan, with tentacles of steel clutching into the soil, the soulless Force, the iron-hearted Power, the monster, the Colossus, the Octopus.

[The book moves on to represent the growers of wheat who are the intended victims of the Octopus. The following chapter describes the plowing at the Quien Sabe Rancho, the proprietor of which is Annixter, a leading character in the book.]

from Book I, Chapter IV

THE PLOWING

The day was fine. Since the first rain of the season there had been no other. Now the sky was without a cloud, pale blue, delicate, luminous, scintillating with morning. The great brown earth turned a huge flank to it, exhaling the moisture of the early dew. The atmosphere, washed clean of dust and mist, was translucent as crystal. Far off to the east, the hills on the other side of Broderson Creek stood out against the pallid saffron of the horizon as flat and as sharply outlined as if pasted on the sky. The campanile of the ancient Mission of San Juan seemed as fine as frost work. All about between the horizons, the carpet of the land unrolled itself to infinity. But now it was no longer parched with heat, cracked and warped by a merciless sun, powdered with

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43 de Profundis, from the depths, the first words of the Latin version of Psalm 130. Before the opening of this selection Presley had heard the nearby mission bells sounding this part of the nightfall service

dust. The rain had done its work; not a clod that was not swollen with fertility, not a fissure that did not exhale the sense of fecundity. One could not take a dozen steps upon the ranches without the brusque sensation that underfoot the land was alive; roused at last from its sleep, palpitating with the desire of reproduction. Deep down there in the recesses of the soil, the great heart throbbed once more, thrilling with passion, vibrating with desire, offering itself to the caress of the plow, insistent, eager, imperious. Dimly one felt the deep-seated trouble of the earth, the uneasy agitation of its members, the hidden tumult of its womb, demanding to be made fruitful, to reproduce, to disengage the eternal renascent germ of Life that stirred and struggled in its loins.

The plows, thirty-five in number, each drawn by its team of ten, stretched in an interminable line, nearly a quarter of a mile in length, behind and ahead of Vanamee. They were arranged, as it were, *en echelon,* not in file—not one directly behind the other, but each succeeding plow its own width further in the field than the one in front of it. Each of these plows held five shears, so that when the entire company was in motion, one hundred and seventy-five furrows were made at the same instant. At a distance, the plows resembled a great column of field artillery. Each driver was in his place, his glance alternating between his horses and the foreman nearest at hand. Other foremen, in their buggies or buckboards, were at intervals along the line, like battery lieutenants. Annixter himself, on horseback, in boots and campaign hat, a cigar in his teeth, overlooked the scene.

The division superintendent, on the opposite side of the line, galloped past to a position at the head. For a long moment there was a silence. A sense of preparedness ran from end to end of the column. All things were ready, each man in his place. The day's work was about to begin.

Suddenly, from a distance at the head of the line came the shrill trilling of a whistle. At once the foreman nearest Vanamee repeated it, at the same time turning down the line and waving one arm. The signal was repeated, whistle answering whistle, till the sounds lost themselves in the distance. At once the line of plows lost its immobility, moving forward, getting slowly under way, the horses straining in the traces. A prolonged movement rippled from team to team, disengaging in its passage a multitude of sounds—the click of buckles, the creak of straining leather, the subdued clash of machinery, the cracking of whips, the deep breathing of nearly four hundred horses, the abrupt commands and cries of the drivers, and, last of all, the prolonged, soothing murmur of the thick brown earth turning steadily from the multitude of advancing shears.

The plowing, thus commenced, continued. The sun rose higher. Steadily, the hundred iron hands kneaded and furrowed and stroked the brown, humid earth, the hundred iron teeth bit deep into the Titan's flesh. Perched on his seat, the moist, living reins slipping and tugging in his hands, Vanamee, in the midst of this steady confusion of constantly varying sensation, sight interrupted by sound, sound mingling with sight, on this swaying, vibrating seat, quivering with the prolonged thrill of the earth, lapsed to a sort of pleasing numbness, in a sense, hypnotized by the weaving maze of things in which he found himself involved. To keep his team at an even, regular gait, maintaining the precise interval, to run his furrows as closely as possible to those already made by the plow in front—this for the moment was the entire sum of his duties. But while one part of his brain, alert and watchful, took cognizance of these matters, all the greater part was lulled and stupefied with the long monotony of the affair.

The plowing, now in full swing, enveloped him in a vague, slow-moving whirl of things. Underneath him was the jarring, jolting, trembling machine; not a clod was turned, not an obstacle encountered, that he did not receive the swift impression of it through all his body, the very friction of the damp soil, sliding incessantly from the shiny surface of the shears, seemed to reproduce itself in his finger tips and along the back of his head. He heard the horse-hoofs by the myriads crushing down easily, deeply, into the loam, the prolonged clinking of trace-chains, the working of the smooth, brown flanks in the harness, the clatter of wooden hames, the champing of bits, the click of iron shoes against pebbles, the brittle stubble of the surface ground crackling and snapping as the furrows turned, the sonorous, steady breaths wrenched from the deep, laboring chests, strap-bound, shining with sweat, and all along the line the voices of the men talking to the horses. Everywhere there were visions of glossy brown backs, straining, heaving, swollen with muscle; harness streaked with specks of froth, broad, cup-shaped hoofs, heavy with brown loam, men's faces red with tan, blue overalls spotted with

axle-grease; muscled hands, the knuckles whitened in their grip on the reins, and through it all the ammoniacal smell of the horses, the bitter reek of perspiration of beasts and men, the aroma of warm leather, the scent of dead stubble—and stronger and more penetrating than everything else, the heavy, enervating odor of the upturned, living earth.

At intervals, from the top of one of the rare, low swells of the land, Vanamee overlooked a wider horizon. On the other divisions of Quien Sabe the same work was in progress. Occasionally he could see another column of plows in the adjoining division—sometimes so close at hand that the subdued murmur of its movements reached his ear, sometimes so distant that it resolved itself into a long, brown streak upon the gray of the ground. Further off to the west on the Osterman ranch other columns came and went, and, once, from the crest of the highest swell on his division, Vanamee caught a distant glimpse of the Broderson ranch. There, too, moving specks indicated that the plowing was under way. And further away still, far off there beyond the fine line of the horizons, over the curve of the globe, the shoulder of the earth, he knew were other ranches, and beyond these others, and beyond these still others, the immensities multiplying to infinity.

Everywhere throughout the great San Joaquin, unseen and unheard, a thousand plows up-stirred the land, tens of thousands of shares clutched deep into the warm, moist soil.

It was the long stroking caress, vigorous, male, powerful, for which the Earth seemed panting. The heroic embrace of a multitude of iron hands, gripping deep into the brown, warm flesh of the land that quivered responsive and passionate under this rude advance, so robust as to be almost an assault, so violent as to be veritably brutal. There, under the sun and under the speckless sheen of the sky, the wooing of the Titan began, the vast primal passion, the two world-forces, the elemental Male and Female, locked in a colossal embrace, at grapples in the throes of an infinite desire, at once terrible and divine, knowing no law, untamed, savage, natural, sublime.

From time to time the gang in which Vanamee worked halted on the signal from foreman or overseer. The horses came to a standstill, the vague clamor of the work lapsed away. Then the minutes passed. The whole work hung suspended. All up and down the line one demanded what had happened. The division superintendent galloped past, perplexed and anxious. For the moment, one of the plows was out of order, a bolt had slipped, a lever refused to work, or a machine had become immobilized in heavy ground, or a horse had lamed himself. Once, even, toward noon, an entire plow was taken out of the line, so out of gear that a messenger had to be sent to the division forge to summon the machinist.

Annixter had disappeared. He had ridden further on to the other divisions of his ranch, to watch the work in progress there. At twelve o'clock, according to his orders, all the division superintendents put themselves in communication with him by means of the telephone wires that connected each of the division houses, reporting the condition of the work, the number of acres covered, the prospects of each plow traversing its daily average of twenty miles.

At half-past twelve, Vanamee and the rest of the drivers ate their lunch in the field, the tin buckets having been distributed to them that morning after breakfast. But in the evening, the routine of the previous day was repeated, and Vanamee, unharnessing his team, riding one horse and leading the others, returned to the division barns and bunk-house.

It was between six and seven o'clock. The half hundred men of the gang threw themselves upon the supper the Chinese cooks had set out in the shed of the eating-house, long as a bowling alley, unpainted, crude, the seats benches, the table covered with oilcloth. Overhead a half-dozen kerosene lamps flared and smoked.

The table was taken as if by assault; the clatter of iron knives upon the tin plates was as the reverberation of hail upon a metal roof. The plowmen rinsed their throats with great draughts of wine, and, their elbows wide, their foreheads flushed, resumed the attack upon the beef and bread, eating as though they would never have enough. All up and down the long table, where the kerosene lamps reflected themselves deep in the oilcloth cover, one heard the incessant sounds of mastication, and saw the uninterrupted movement of great jaws. At every moment one or another of the men demanded a fresh portion of beef, another pint of wine, another half-loaf of bread. For upward of an hour the gang ate. It was no longer a supper. It was a veritable barbecue, a crude and primitive feasting, barbaric, homeric.

But in all this scene Vanamee saw nothing repulsive. Presley would have abhorred it—this feeding of the Peo-

ple, this gorging of the human animal, eager for its meat. Vanamee, simple, uncomplicated, living so close to nature and the rudimentary life, understood its significance. He knew very well that within a short half-hour after this meal the men would throw themselves down in their bunks to sleep without moving, inert and stupefied with fatigue, till the morning. Work, food, and sleep, all life reduced to its bare essentials, uncomplex, honest, healthy. They were strong, these men, with the strength of the soil they worked, in touch with the essential things, back again to the starting point of civilization, coarse, vital, real, and sane.

[Agent for the railroad in the district of the story is S. Behrman, grossly fat, avaricious, cruel. For the men of the valley, S. Behrman is the Pacific and Southwestern Railroad. His peremptory handling of freight rates riles the farmers, and they are further distressed by rumors that the railroad may shortly revalue the land which they have been leasing. At the celebration of the completion of a big barn on Annixter's ranch, their fears are confirmed and they take action.]

from Book I, Chapter VI

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LEAGUE

It was almost midnight. The dance drew toward its close in a storm of jubilation. The perspiring musicians toiled like galley slaves; the guests singing as they danced.

The group of men reassembled in the harness room. Even Magnus Derrick condescended to enter and drink a toast. Presley and Vanamee, still holding themselves aloof, looked on, Vanamee more and more disgusted. Dabney, standing to one side, overlooked and forgotten, continued to sip steadily at his glass, solemn, reserved. Garnett of the Ruby rancho, Keast from the ranch of the same name, Gethings of the San Pablo, and Chattern of the Bonanza, leaned back in their chairs, their waistcoats unbuttoned, their legs spread wide, laughing—they could not tell why. Other ranchers, men whom Annixter had never seen, appeared in the room, wheat growers from places as far distant as Goshen and Pixley; young men and old, proprietors of veritable principalities, hundreds of thousands of acres of wheat lands, a dozen of them, a score of them; men who were strangers to each other, but who made it a point to shake hands with Magnus Derrick, the "prominent man" of the valley Old Broderson, whom every one had believed had gone home, returned, though much sobered, and took his place, refusing, however, to drink another spoonful.

Soon the entire number of Annixter's guests found themselves in two companies, the dancers on the floor of the barn, frolicking through the last figures of the Virginia reel, and the boisterous gathering of men in the harness room, downing the last quarts of fertilizer. Both assemblies had been increased. Even the older people had joined in the dance, while nearly every one of the men who did not dance had found his way into the harness room. The two groups rivaled each other in their noise Out on the floor of the barn was a very whirlwind of gayety, a tempest of laughter, hand-clapping, and cries of amusement. In the harness room the confused shouting and singing, the stamping of heavy feet, set a quivering reverberation in the oil of the kerosene lamps, the flame of the candles in the Japanese lanterns flaring and swaying in the gusts of hilarity. At intervals, between the two, one heard the music, the wailing of the violins, the vigorous snarling of the cornet, and the harsh, incessant rasping of the snare drum.

And at times all these various sounds mingled in a single vague note, huge, clamorous, that rose up into the night from the colossal, reverberating compass of the barn and sent its echoes far off across the unbroken levels of the surrounding ranches, stretching out to infinity under the clouded sky, calm, mysterious, still.

Annixter, the punch bowl clasped in his arms, was pouring out the last spoonful of liquor into Caraher's glass when he was aware that some one was pulling at the sleeve of his coat. He set down the punch bowl.

"Well, where did *you* come from?" he demanded.

It was a messenger from Bonneville, the uniformed boy that the telephone company employed to carry messages. He had just arrived from town on his bicycle, out of breath and panting.

"Message for you, sir. Will you sign?"

He held the book to Annixter, who signed the receipt, wondering.

The boy departed, leaving a thick envelope of yellow paper in Annixter's hands, the address typewritten, the word "Urgent" written in blue pencil in one corner.

Annixter tore it open. The envelope contained other sealed envelopes, some eight or ten of them, addressed to Magnus Derrick, Osterman, Broderson, Garnett, Keast,

Gethings, Chattern, Dabney, and to Annixter himself.

Still puzzled, Annixter distributed the envelopes, muttering to himself:

"What's up now?"

The incident had attracted attention. A comparative quiet followed, the guests following the letters with their eyes as they were passed around the table. They fancied that Annixter had arranged a surprise.

Magnus Derrick, who sat next to Annixter, was the first to receive his letter. With a word of excuse he opened it.

"Read it, read it, Governor," shouted a half-dozen voices. "No secrets, you know. Everything above-board here to-night."

Magnus cast a glance at the contents of the letter, then rose to his feet and read:

Magnus Derrick,
Bonneville, Tulare Co., Cal.

Dear Sir:

By regrade of October 1st, the value of the Railroad land you occupy, included in your ranch of Los Muertos, has been fixed at $27.00 per acre. The land is now for sale at that price to any one.

Yours, etc.,

CYRUS BLAKELEE RUGGLES,
Land Agent, P. and S. W. R. R.
S. BEHRMAN,
Local Agent, P. and S. W. R. R.

In the midst of the profound silence that followed, Osterman was heard to exclaim grimly:

"That's a pretty good one. Tell us another."

But for a long moment this was the only remark.

The silence widened, broken only by the sound of torn paper as Annixter, Osterman, old Broderson, Garnett, Keast, Gethings, Chattern, and Dabney opened and read their letters. They were all to the same effect, almost word for word like the Governor's. Only the figures and the proper names varied. In some cases the price per acre was twenty-two dollars. In Annixter's case it was thirty.

"And—and the Company promised to sell to me, to—to all of us," gasped old Broderson, "at *two dollars and a half* an acre."

It was not alone the ranchers immediately around Bonneville who would be plundered by this move on the part of the Railroad. The "alternate section" system applied throughout all the San Joaquin. By striking at the Bonneville ranchers a terrible precedent was established. Of the crowd of guests in the harness room alone, nearly every man was affected, every man menaced with ruin. All of a million acres was suddenly involved.

Then suddenly the tempest burst. A dozen men were on their feet in an instant, their teeth set, their fists clinched, their faces purple with rage. Oaths, curses, maledictions exploded like the firing of successive mines. Voices quivered with wrath, hands flung upward, the fingers hooked, prehensile, trembled with anger. The sense of wrongs, the injustices, the oppression, extortion, and pillage of twenty years suddenly culminated and found voice in a raucous howl of execration. For a second there was nothing articulate in that cry of savage exasperation, nothing even intelligent. It was the human animal hounded to its corner, exploited, harried to its last stand, at bay, ferocious, terrible, turning at last with bared teeth and upraised claws to meet the death grapple. It was the hideous squealing of the tormented brute, its back to the wall, defending its lair, its mate and its whelps, ready to bite, to rend, to trample, to batter out the life of The Enemy in a primeval, bestial welter of blood and fury.

The roar subsided to intermittent clamor, in the pauses of which the sounds of music and dancing made themselves audible once more.

"S. Behrman again," vociferated Harran Derrick.

"Chose his moment well," muttered Annixter. "Hits his hardest when we're all rounded up having a good time."

"Gentlemen, this is ruin."

"What's to be done now?"

"Fight! My God! do you think we are going to stand this? Do you think we *can?"*

The uproar swelled again. The clearer the assembly of ranchers understood the significance of this move on the part of the Railroad, the more terrible it appeared, the more flagrant, the more intolerable. Was it possible, was it within the bounds of imagination, that this tyranny should be contemplated? But they knew—past years had driven home the lesson—the implacable, iron monster with whom they had to deal, and again and again the sense of outrage and oppression lashed them to their feet, their mouths wide with curses, their fists clinched tight, their throats hoarse with shouting.

"Fight! How fight? What *are* you going to do?"

"If there's a law in this land—"

"If there is, it is in Shelgrim's pocket. Who owns the courts in California? Ain't it Shelgrim?"

"God damn him."

"Well, how long are you going to stand it? How long before you'll settle up accounts with six inches of plugged gas-pipe?"

"And our contracts, the solemn pledges of the corporation to sell to us first of all—"

"And now the land is for sale to anybody."

"Why, it is a question of my home. Am I to be turned out? Why, I have put eight thousand dollars into improving this land."

"And I six thousand, and now that I have, the Railroad grabs it."

"And the system of irrigating ditches that Derrick and I have been laying out. There's thousands of dollars in that!"

"I'll fight this out till I've spent every cent of my money."

"Where? In the courts that the Company owns?"

"Think I am going to give in to this? Think I am to get off my land? By God, gentlemen, law or no law, railroad or no railroad, *I—will—not.*"

"Nor I."

"Nor I."

"Nor I."

"This is the last. Legal means first; if those fail—the shotgun."

"They can kill me. They can shoot me down, but I'll die—die fighting for my home—before I'll give in to this."

At length Annixter made himself heard:

"All out of the room but the ranch owners," he shouted. "Hooven, Caraher, Dyke, you'll have to clear out. This is a family affair. Presley, you and your friend can remain."

Reluctantly the others filed through the door. There remained in the harness room—besides Vanamee and Presley—Magnus Derrick, Annixter, old Broderson, Harran, Garnett from the Ruby rancho, Keast from the ranch of the same name, Gethings of the San Pablo, Chattern of the Bonanza, about a score of others, ranchers from various parts of the county, and, last of all, Dabney, ignored, silent, to whom nobody spoke and who, as yet, had not uttered a word.

But the men who had been asked to leave the harness room spread the news throughout the barn. It was repeated from lip to lip. One by one the guests dropped out of the dance. Groups were formed. By swift degrees the gayety lapsed away. The Virginia reel broke up. The musicians ceased playing, and in the place of the noisy, effervescent revelry of the previous half hour, a subdued murmur filled all the barn, a mingling of whispers, lowered voices, the coming and going of light footsteps, the uneasy shifting of positions, while from behind the closed doors of the harness room came a prolonged, sullen hum of anger and strenuous debate. The dance came to an abrupt end. The guests, unwilling to go as yet, stunned, distressed, stood clumsily about, their eyes vague, their hands swinging at their sides, looking stupidly into each other's faces. A sense of impending calamity, oppressive, foreboding, gloomy, passed through the air overhead in the night, a long shiver of anguish and of terror, mysterious, despairing.

In the harness room, however, the excitement continued unchecked. One rancher after another delivered himself of a torrent of furious words. There was no order, merely the frenzied outcry of blind fury. One spirit alone was common to all—resistance at whatever cost and to whatever lengths.

Suddenly Osterman leaped to his feet, his bald head gleaming in the lamp-light, his red ears distended, a flood of words filling his great, horizontal slit of a mouth, his comic actor's face flaming. Like the hero of a melodrama, he took the stage with a great sweeping gesture.

"Organization," he shouted, "that must be our watchword. The curse of the ranchers is that they fritter away their strength. Now, we must stand together, now, *now.* Here's the crisis, here's the moment. Shall we meet it? *I call for the League.* Not next week, not to-morrow, not in the morning, but now, now, now, this very moment, before we go out of that door. Every one of us here to join it, to form the beginnings of a vast organization, banded together to death, if needs be, for the protection of our rights and homes. Are you ready? Is it now or never? I call for the League."

Instantly there was a shout. With an actor's instinct, Osterman had spoken at the precise psychological moment. He carried the others off their feet, glib, dexterous, voluble. Just what was meant by the League the others did not know, but it was something, a vague engine, a

machine with which to fight. Osterman had not done speaking before the room rang with outcries, the crowd of men shouting, for what they did not know:

"The League! The League!"

"Now, to-night, this moment; sign our names before we leave."

"He's right. Organization! The League!"

"We have a committee at work already," Osterman vociferated. "I am a member, and also Mr. Broderson, Mr. Annixter, and Mr. Harran Derrick. What our aims are we will explain to you later. Let this committee be the nucleus of the League—temporarily, at least. Trust us. We are working for you and with you. Let this committee be merged into the larger committee of the League, and for President of the League"—he paused the fraction of a second—"for President there can be but one name mentioned, one man to whom we all must look as leader—Magnus Derrick."

The Governor's name was received with a storm of cheers. The harness room re-echoed with the shouts of:

"Derrick! Derrick!"

"Magnus for President!"

"Derrick, our natural leader."

"Derrick, Derrick, Derrick for President."

Magnus rose to his feet. He made no gesture. Erect as a cavalry officer, tall, thin, commanding, he dominated the crowd in an instant. There was a moment's hush.

"Gentlemen," he said, "if organization is a good word, moderation is a better one. The matter is too grave for haste. I would suggest that we each and severally return to our respective homes for the night, sleep over what has happened, and convene again to-morrow, when we are calmer and can approach this affair in a more judicious mood. As for the honor with which you would inform me, I must affirm that that, too, is a matter for grave deliberation. This League is but a name as yet. To accept control of an organization whose principles are not yet fixed is a heavy responsibility. I shrink from it—"

But he was allowed to proceed no further. A storm of protest developed. There were shouts of:

"No, no. The League to-night and Derrick for President."

"We have been moderate too long."

"The League first, principles afterward."

"We can't wait," declared Osterman. "Many of us can not attend a meeting to-morrow. Our business affairs would prevent it. Now we are all together. I propose a temporary chairman and secretary be named and a ballot be taken. But first the League. Let us draw up a set of resolutions to stand together, for the defence of our homes, to death, if needs be, and each man present affix his signature thereto."

He subsided amid vigorous applause. The next quarter of an hour was a vague confusion, every one talking at once, conversations going on in low tones in various corners of the room. Ink, pens, and a sheaf of foolscap were brought from the ranch house. A set of resolutions was drafted, having the force of a pledge, organizing the League of Defence. Annixter was the first to sign. Others followed, only a few holding back, refusing to join till they had thought the matter over. The roll grew; the paper circulated about the table; each signature was welcomed by a salvo of cheers. At length, it reached Harran Derrick, who signed amid tremendous uproar. He released the pen only to shake a score of hands.

"Now, Magnus Derrick."

"Gentlemen," began the Governor, once more rising, "I beg of you to allow me further consideration. Gentlemen—"

He was interrupted by renewed shouting.

"No, no, now or never. Sign, join the League."

"Don't leave us. We look to you to help."

But presently the excited throng that turned their faces toward the Governor were aware of a new face at his elbow. The door of the harness room had been left unbolted and Mrs. Derrick, unable to endure the heart-breaking suspense of waiting outside, had gathered up all her courage and had come into the room. Trembling, she clung to Magnus's arm, her pretty light-brown hair in disarray, her large young girl's eyes wide with terror and distrust. What was about to happen she did not understand, but these men were clamoring for Magnus to pledge himself to something, to some terrible course of action, some ruthless, unscrupulous battle to the death with the iron-hearted monster of steel and steam. Nerved with a coward's intrepidity, she, who so easily obliterated herself, had found her way into the midst of this frantic crowd, into this hot, close room, reeking of alcohol and tobacco smoke, into this atmosphere surcharged with hatred and curses. She seized her husband's arm imploring, distraught with terror.

"No, no," she murmured, "no, don't sign."

She was the feather caught in the whirlwind. *En masse,* the crowd surged toward the erect figure of the Governor, the pen in one hand, his wife's fingers in the other, the roll of signatures before him. The clamor was deafening; the excitement culminated brusquely. Half a hundred hands stretched toward him; thirty voices, at top pitch, implored, expostulated, urged, almost commanded. The reverberation of the shouting was as the plunge of a cataract.

It was the uprising of The People; the thunder of the outbreak of revolt; the mob demanding to be led, aroused at last, imperious, resistless, overwhelming. It was the blind fury of insurrection, the brute, many-tongued, red-eyed, bellowing for guidance, baring its teeth, unsheathing its claws, imposing its will with the abrupt, resistless pressure of the relaxed piston, inexorable, knowing no pity.

"No, no," implored Annie Derrick. "No, Magnus, don't sign."

"He *must,*" declared Harran, shouting in her ear to make himself heard, "he must. Don't you understand?"

Again the crowd surged forward, roaring. Mrs. Derrick was swept back, pushed to one side. Her husband no longer belonged to her. She paid the penalty for being the wife of a great man. The world, like a colossal iron wedge, crushed itself between. She was thrust to the wall. The throng of men, stamping, surrounded Magnus; she could no longer see him, but, terror-struck, she listened. There was a moment's lull, then a vast thunder of savage jubilation. Magnus had signed.

Harran found his mother leaning against the wall, her hands shut over her ears; her eyes, dilated with fear, brimming with tears. He led her from the harness room to the outer room, where Mrs. Tree and Hilma took charge of her, and then, impatient, refusing to answer the hundreds of anxious questions that assailed him, hurried back to the harness room.

Already the balloting was in progress, Osterman acting as temporary chairman. On the very first ballot he was made secretary of the League *pro tem.,* and Magnus unanimously chosen for its President. An executive committee was formed, which was to meet the next day at the Los Muertos ranch house.

It was half-past one o'clock. In the barn outside the greater number of the guests had departed. Long since the musicians had disappeared. There only remained the families of the ranch owners involved in the meeting in the harness room. These huddled in isolated groups in corners of the garish, echoing barn, the women in their wraps, the young men with their coat collars turned up against the draughts that once more made themselves felt.

For a long half hour the loud hum of eager conversation continued to issue from behind the door of the harness room. Then, at length, there was a prolonged scraping of chairs. The session was over. The men came out in groups, searching for their families.

At once the homeward movement began. Every one was worn out. Some of the ranchers' daughters had gone to sleep against their mothers' shoulders.

Billy, the stableman, and his assistant were awakened, and the teams were hitched up. The stable yard was full of a maze of swinging lanterns and buggy lamps. The horses fretted, champing the bits; the carry-alls creaked with the straining of leather and springs as they received their loads. At every instant one heard the rattle of wheels, as vehicle after vehicle disappeared in the night. A fine drizzling rain was falling, and the lamps began to show dim in a vague haze of orange light.

Magnus Derrick was the last to go. At the doorway of the barn he found Annixter, the roll of names—which it had been decided he was to keep in his safe for the moment—under his arm. Silently the two shook hands. Magnus departed. The grind of the wheels of his carry-all grated sharply on the gravel of the driveway in front of the ranch house, then, with a hollow roll across a little plank bridge, gained the roadway. For a moment the beat of the horses' hoofs made itself heard on the roadway. It ceased. Suddenly there was a great silence.

Annixter, in the doorway of the great barn, stood looking about him for a moment, alone, thoughtful. The barn was empty. That astonishing evening had come to an end. The whirl of things and people, the crowd of dancers, Delaney, the gun fight, Hilma Tree, her eyes fixed on him in mute confession, the rabble in the harness room, the news of the regrade, the fierce outburst of wrath, the hasty organizing of the League, all went spinning confusedly through his recollection. But he was exhausted. Time enough in the morning to think it all over. By now it was raining sharply. He put the roll

of names into his inside pocket, threw a sack over his head and shoulders, and went down to the ranch house.

But in the harness room, lighted by the glittering lanterns and flaring lamps, in the midst of overturned chairs, spilled liquor, cigar stumps, and broken glasses, Vanamee and Presley still remained talking, talking. At length, they rose, and came out upon the floor of the barn and stood for a moment looking about them.

Billy, the stableman, was going the rounds of the walls, putting out light after light. By degrees, the vast interior was growing dim. Upon the roof overhead the rain drummed incessantly, the eaves dripping. The floor was littered with pine needles, bits of orange peel, ends and fragments of torn organdies and muslins and bits of tissue paper from the "Phrygian Bonnets" and "Liberty Caps." The buckskin mare in the stall, dozing on three legs, changed position with a long sigh. The sweat stiffening the hair upon her back and loins, as it dried, gave off a penetrating, ammoniacal odor that mingled with the stale perfume of sachet and wilted flowers.

Presley and Vanamee stood looking at the deserted barn. There was a long silence. Then Presley said:

"Well . . . what do you think of it all?"

"I think," answered Vanamee slowly, "I think that there was a dance in Brussels the night before Waterloo."

[Despite the opposition of Magnus, the League decides to use money to bring about the election of two of the three members of the State Railway Commission, which is to fix the valuation of their property and the rates for the transportation of their wheat. One of the members backed by the League is Lyman Derrick, the "Governor's" eldest son, a corporation lawyer. At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the League which is held at the Los Muertos ranch, Lyman appears to tell about the new rates which the commissioners have fixed.]

from Book II, Chapter IV

LYMAN'S REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

At the time appointed, the men composing the Committee gathered about the table in the dining-room of the Los Muertos ranch house. It was almost a reproduction of the scene of the famous evening when Osterman had proposed the plan of the Ranchers' Railroad Commission. Magnus Derrick sat at the head of the table, in his buttoned frock coat. Whiskey bottles and siphons of soda-water were within easy reach. Presley, who by now was considered the confidential friend of every member of the Committee, lounged as before on the sofa, smoking cigarettes, the cat Nathalie on his knee. Besides Magnus and Annixter, Osterman was present, and old Broderson and Harran; Garnett from the Ruby Rancho and Gethings of the San Pablo, who were also members of the Executive Committee, were on hand, preoccupied, bearded men, smoking black cigars, and, last of all, Dabney, the silent old man, of whom little was known but his name, and who had been made a member of the Committee, nobody could tell why.

"My son Lyman should be here, gentlemen, within at least ten minutes. I have sent my team to meet him at Bonneville," explained Magnus, as he called the meeting to order. "The secretary will call the roll."

Osterman called the roll, and, to fill in the time, read over the minutes of the previous meeting. The treasurer was making his report as to the funds at the disposal of the League when Lyman arrived.

Magnus and Harran went forward to meet him, and the Committee rather awkwardly rose and remained standing while the three exchanged greetings, the members, some of whom had never seen their commissioner, eying him out of the corners of their eyes.

Lyman was dressed with his usual correctness. His cravat was of the latest fashion, his clothes of careful design and unimpeachable fit. His shoes, of patent leather, reflected the lamplight, and he carried a drab overcoat over his arm. Before being introduced to the Committee, he excused himself a moment and ran to see his mother, who waited for him in the adjoining sitting-room. But in a few moments he returned, asking pardon for the delay.

He was all affability; his protruding eyes, that gave such an unusual, foreign appearance to his very dark face, radiated geniality. He was evidently anxious to please, to produce a good impression upon the grave, clumsy farmers before whom he stood. But at the same time, Presley, watching him from his place on the sofa, could imagine that he was rather nervous. He was too nimble in his cordiality, and the little gestures he made in bringing his cuffs into view and in touching the ends

of his tight, black mustache with the ball of his thumb were repeated with unnecessary frequency.

"Mr. Broderson, my son, Lyman, my eldest son. Mr. Annixter, my son, Lyman."

The Governor introduced him to the ranchers, proud of Lyman's good looks, his correct dress, his ease of manner. Lyman shook hands all around, keeping up a flow of small talk, finding a new phrase for each member, complimenting Osterman, whom he already knew, upon his talent for organization, recalling a mutual acquaintance to the mind of old Broderson. At length, however, he sat down at the end of the table, opposite his brother. There was a silence.

Magnus rose to recapitulate the reasons for the extra session of the Committee, stating again that the Board of Railway Commissioners which they—the ranchers—had succeeded in seating had at length issued the new schedule of reduced rates, and that Mr. Derrick had been obliging enough to offer to come down to Los Muertos in person to acquaint the wheat-growers of the San Joaquin with the new rates for the carriage of their grain.

But Lyman very politely protested, addressing his father punctiliously as "Mr. Chairman," and the other ranchers as "Gentlemen of the Executive Committee of the League." He had no wish, he said, to disarrange the regular proceedings of the Committee. Would it not be preferable to defer the reading of his report till "new business" was called for? In the meanwhile, let the Committee proceed with its usual work. He understood the necessarily delicate nature of this work, and would be pleased to withdraw till the proper time arrived for him to speak.

"Good deal of backing and filling about the reading of a column of figures," muttered Annixter to the man at his elbow.

Lyman "awaited the Committee's decision." He sat down, touching the ends of his mustache.

"Oh, play ball," growled Annixter.

Gethings rose to say that as the meeting had been called solely for the purpose of hearing and considering the new grain tariff, he was of the opinion that routine business could be dispensed with and the schedule read at once. It was so ordered.

Lyman rose and made a long speech. Voluble as Osterman himself, he, nevertheless, had at his command a vast number of readymade phrases, the staples of a political speaker, the stock in trade of the commercial lawyer, which rolled off his tongue with the most persuasive fluency. By degrees, in the course of his speech, he began to insinuate the idea that the wheat-growers had never expected to settle their difficulties with the Railroad by the work of a single commission; that they had counted upon a long, continued campaign of many years, railway commission succeeding railway commission, before the desired low rates should be secured; that the present Board of Commissioners was only the beginning and that too great results were not expected from them. All this he contrived to mention casually, in the talk, as if it were a foregone conclusion, a matter understood by all.

As the speech continued, the eyes of the ranchers around the table were fixed with growing attention upon this well-dressed, city-bred young man, who spoke so fluently and who told them of their own intentions. A feeling of perplexity began to spread, and the first taint of distrust invaded their minds.

"But the good work has been most auspiciously inaugurated," continued Lyman. "Reforms so sweeping as the one contemplated can not be accomplished in a single night. Great things grow slowly, benefits to be permanent must accrue gradually. Yet, in spite of all this, your commissioners have done much. Already the phalanx of the enemy is pierced, already his armor is dinted. Pledged as were your commissioners to an average ten per cent reduction in rates for the carriage of grain by the Pacific and Southwestern Railroad, we have rigidly adhered to the demands of our constituency, we have obeyed the People. The main problem has not yet been completely solved; that is for later, when we shall have gathered sufficient strength to attack the enemy in his very stronghold; *but an average ten per cent cut has been made all over the State.* We have made a great advance, have taken a great step forward, and if the work is carried ahead, upon the lines laid down by the present commissioners and their constituents, there is every reason to believe that within a very few years equitable and stable rates for the shipment of grain from the San Joaquin Valley to Stockton, Port Costa, and tidewater will be permanently imposed."

"Well, hold on," exclaimed Annixter, out of order and ignoring the Governor's reproof, "hasn't your commission reduced grain rates in the San Joaquin?"

"We have reduced grain rates by ten per cent all over the State," rejoined Lyman. "Here are copies of the new schedule."

He drew them from his valise and passed them around the table.

"You see," he observed, "the rate between Mayfield and Oakland, for instance, has been reduced by twenty-five cents a ton."

"Yes—but—but—" said old Broderson, "it is rather unusual, isn't it, for wheat in that district to be sent to Oakland?"

"Why, look here," exclaimed Annixter, looking up from the schedule, "where is there any reduction in rates in the San Joaquin—from Bonneville and Guadalajara, for instance? I don't see as you've made any reduction at all. Is this right? Did you give me the right schedule?"

"Of course, *all* the points in the State could not be covered at once," returned Lyman. "We never expected, you know, that we could cut rates in the San Joaquin the very first move, that is for later. But you will see we made very material reductions on shipments from the upper Sacramento Valley; also the rate from Ione to Marysville has been reduced eighty cents a ton."

"Why, rot," cried Annixter, "no one ever ships wheat that way."

"The Salinas rate," continued Lyman, "has been lowered seventy-five cents; the St. Helena rate fifty cents, and please notice the very drastic cut from Red Bluff, north, along the Oregon route, to the Oregon State Line."

"Where not a carload of wheat is shipped in a year," commented Gethings of the San Pablo.

"Oh, you will find yourself mistaken there, Mr. Gethings," returned Lyman courteously. "And for the matter of that, a low rate would stimulate wheat-production in that district."

The order of the meeting was broken up, neglected; Magnus did not even pretend to preside. In the growing excitement over the inexplicable schedule, routine was not thought of. Every one spoke at will.

"Why, Lyman," demanded Magnus, looking across the table to his son, "is this schedule correct? You have not cut rates in the San Joaquin at all. We—these gentlemen here and myself—we are no better off than we were before we secured your election as commissioner."

"We were pledged to make an average ten per cent cut, sir—"

"It *is* an average ten per cent cut," cried Osterman. "Oh, yes, that's plain. It's an average ten per cent cut all right, but you've made it by cutting grain rates between points where practically no grain is shipped. *We,* the wheat-growers in the San Joaquin, where all the wheat is grown, are right where we were before. The Railroad won't lose a nickel. By Jingo, boys," he glanced around the table, "I'd like to know what this means."

"The Railroad, if you come to that," returned Lyman, "has already lodged a protest against the new rate."

Annixter uttered a derisive shout.

"A protest! That's good, that is. When the P. and S. W. objects to rates it don't 'protest,' m' son. The first you hear from Mr. Shelgrim is an injunction from the courts preventing the order for new rates from taking effect. By the Lord," he cried angrily, leaping to his feet, "I would like to know what all this means, too. Why didn't you reduce our grain rates? What did we elect you for?"

"Yes, what did we elect you for?" demanded Osterman and Gethings, also getting to their feet.

"Order, order, gentlemen," cried Magnus, remembering the duties of his office and rapping his knuckles on the table. "This meeting has been allowed to degenerate too far already."

"You elected us," declared Lyman doggedly, "to make an average ten per cent cut on grain rates. We have done it. Only because you don't benefit at once, you object. It makes a difference whose ox is gored, it seems."

"Lyman!"

It was Magnus who spoke. He had drawn himself to his full six feet. His eyes were flashing direct into his son's. His voice rang with severity.

"Lyman, what does this mean?"

The other spread out his hands.

"As you see, sir. We have done our best. I warned you not to expect too much. I told you that this question of transportation was difficult. You would not wish to put rates so low that the action would amount to confiscation of property."

"Why did you not lower rates in the valley of the San Joaquin?"

"That was not a *prominent* issue in the affair,"

responded Lyman, carefully emphasizing his words. "I understand, of course, it was to be approached *in time.* The main point was *an average ten per cent reduction.* Rates *will* be lowered in the San Joaquin. The ranchers around Bonneville will be able to ship to Port Costa at equitable rates, but so radical a measure as that can not be put through in a turn of the hand. We must study—"

"You *knew* the San Joaquin rate *was* an issue," shouted Annixter, shaking his finger across the table. "What do we men who backed you care about rates up in Del Norte and Siskiyou Counties? Not a whoop in hell. It was the San Joaquin rate we were fighting for, and we elected you to reduce that. You didn't do it and you don't intend to, and, by the Lord Harry, I want to know why."

"You'll know, sir—" began Lyman.

"Well, I'll tell you why," vociferated Osterman. "I'll tell you why. It's because we have been sold out. It's because the P. and S. W. have had their spoon in this boiling It's because our commissioners have betrayed us. It's because we're a set of damn fool farmers and have been cinched again."

Lyman paled under his dark skin at the direct attack. He evidently had not expected this so soon. For the fraction of one instant he lost his poise. He strove to speak, but caught his breath, stammering.

"What have you to say, then?" cried Harran, who, until now, had not spoken.

"I have this to say," answered Lyman, making head as best he might, "that this is no proper spirit in which to discuss business. The Commission has fulfilled its obligations. It has adjusted rates to the best of its ability. We have been at work for two months on the preparation of this schedule—"

"That's a lie," shouted Annixter, his face scarlet; "that's a lie. That schedule was drawn in the offices of the Pacific and Southwestern and you know it. It's a scheme of rates made for the Railroad and by the Railroad and you were bought over to put your name to it."

There was a concerted outburst at the words. All the men in the room were on their feet, gesticulating and vociferating.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," cried Magnus, "are we schoolboys, are we ruffians of the street?"

"We're a set of fool farmers and we've been betrayed," cried Osterman.

"Well, what have you to say? What have you to say?" persisted Harran, leaning across the table toward his brother. "For God's sake, Lyman, you've got *some* explanation."

"You've misunderstood," protested Lyman, white and trembling. "You've misunderstood. You've expected too much. Next year—next year—soon now, the Commission will take up the—the Commission will consider the San Joaquin rate. We've done our best, that is all."

"Have you, sir?" demanded Magnus.

The Governor's head was in a whirl; a sensation, almost of faintness, had seized upon him. Was it possible? Was it possible?

"Have you done your best?" For a second he compelled Lyman's eye. The glances of father and son met, and, in spite of his best efforts, Lyman's eyes wavered. He began to protest once more, explaining the matter over again from the beginning. But Magnus did not listen. In that brief lapse of time he was convinced that the terrible thing had happened, that the unbelievable had come to pass. It was in the air. Between father and son, in some subtle fashion, the truth that was a lie stood suddenly revealed. But even then Magnus would not receive it. Lyman do this! His son, his eldest son, descend to this! Once more and for the last time he turned to him and in his voice there was that ring that compelled silence.

"Lyman," he said, "I adjure you—I—I demand of you as you are my son and an honorable man, explain yourself. What is there behind all this? It is no longer as Chairman of the Committee I speak to you, you a member of the Railroad Commission. It is your father who speaks, and I address you as my son. Do you understand the gravity of this crisis; do you realize the responsibility of your position; do you not see the importance of this moment? Explain yourself."

"There is nothing to explain."

"You have not reduced rates in the San Joaquin? You have not reduced rates between Bonneville and tidewater?"

"I repeat, sir, what I said before. An average ten per cent cut—"

"Lyman, answer me, yes or no. Have you reduced the Bonneville rate?"

"It could not be done so soon. Give us time. We—"

"Yes or no! By God, sir, do you dare equivocate with me? Yes or no; have you reduced the Bonneville rate?"

"No."

"And answer *me,*" shouted Harran, leaning far across the table, "answer *me.* Were you paid by the Railroad to leave the San Joaquin rate untouched?"

Lyman, whiter than ever, turned furiously upon his brother.

"Don't you dare put that question to me again."

"No, I won't," cried Harran, "because I'll *tell* you to your villain's face that you *were* paid to do it."

On the instant the clamor burst forth afresh. Still on their feet, the ranchers had, little by little, worked around the table, Magnus alone keeping his place. The others were in a group before Lyman, crowding him, as it were, to the wall, shouting into his face with menacing gestures. The truth that was a lie, the certainty of a trust betrayed, a pledge ruthlessly broken, was plain to every one of them.

"By the Lord! men have been shot for less than this," cried Osterman. "You've sold us out, you, and if you ever bring that dago face of yours on a level with mine again, I'll slap it."

"Keep your hands off," exclaimed Lyman quickly, the aggressiveness of the cornered rat flaming up within him. "No violence. Don't you go too far."

"How much were you paid? How much were you paid?" vociferated Harran.

"Yes, yes, what was your price?" cried the others. They were beside themselves with anger; their words came harsh from between their set teeth; their gestures were made with their fists clinched.

"You know the Commission acted in good faith," retorted Lyman. "You know that all was fair and aboveboard."

"Liar," shouted Annixter; "liar, bribe-eater. You were bought and paid for," and with the words his arm seemed almost of itself to leap out from his shoulder. Lyman received the blow squarely in the face and the force of it sent him staggering backward toward the wall. He tripped over his valise and fell half-way, his back supported against the closed door of the room. Magnus sprang forward. His son had been struck, and the instincts of a father rose up in instant protest; rose for a moment, then forever died away in his heart. He checked the words that flashed to his mind. He lowered his upraised arm. No, he had but one son. The poor, staggering creature with the fine clothes, white face, and blood-streaked lips was no longer his. A blow could not dishonor him more than he had dishonored himself.

But Gethings, the older man, intervened, pulling Annixter back, crying:

"Stop, this won't do. Not before his father."

"I am no father to this man, gentlemen," exclaimed Magnus. "From now on I have but one son. You, sir," he turned to Lyman, "you, sir, leave my house."

Lyman, his handkerchief to his lips, his smart cravat in disarray, caught up his hat and coat. He was shaking with fury, his protruding eyes were bloodshot. He swung open the door.

"Ruffians," he shouted from the threshold, "ruffians, bullies. Do your own dirty business yourselves after this. I'm done with you. How is it, all of a sudden, you talk about honor? How is it that all at once you're so clean and straight? You weren't so particular at Sacramento just before the nominations. How was the Board elected? I'm a bribe-eater, am I? Is it any worse than *giving* a bribe? Ask Magnus Derrick what he thinks about that. Ask him how much he paid the Democratic bosses at Sacramento to swing the convention."

He went out, slamming the door.

Presley followed. The whole affair made him sick at heart, filled him with infinite disgust, infinite weariness. He wished to get away from it all. He left the dining-room and the excited, clamoring men behind him and stepped out on the porch of the ranch house, closing the door behind him. Lyman was nowhere in sight. Presley was alone. It was late, and after the lamp-heated air of the dining-room the coolness of the night was delicious, and its vast silence, after the noise and fury of the committee meeting, descended from the stars like a benediction. Presley stepped to the edge of the porch, looking off to southward.

And there before him, mile after mile, illimitable, covering the earth from horizon to horizon, lay the Wheat. The growth, now many days old, was already high from the ground. There it lay, a vast, silent ocean, shimmering a pallid green under the moon and under the stars; a mighty force, the strength of nations, the life of the world. There in the night, under the dome of the sky, it was growing steadily. To Presley's mind, the scene in the room he had just left dwindled to paltry insignifi-

cance before this sight. Ah, yes, the Wheat—it was over this that the Railroad, the ranchers, the traitor false to his trust, all the members of an obscure conspiracy, were wrangling. As if human agency could affect this colossal power! What were these heated, tiny squabbles, this feverish, small bustle of mankind, this minute swarming of the human insect, to the great, majestic, silent ocean of the Wheat itself! Indifferent, gigantic, resistless, it moved in its appointed grooves. Men, Liliputians, gnats in the sunshine, buzzed impudently in their tiny battles, were born, lived through their little day, died, and were forgotten; while the Wheat, wrapped in Nirvanic calm, grew steadily under the night, alone with the stars and with God.

[Thus betrayed by the agent whom they had expected to protect them, baffled in every other attempt they make to battle the forces against them, the ranchers are desperate. When, at a barbecue, some of the ranchers receive word that they have been dispossessed, open warfare ensues.]

from Book II, Chapter VI

OPEN WARFARE

Annixter, Harran, and Presley climbed to the level plateau where the games were to be held, to lay out the courses, and mark the distances. It was the very place where once Presley had loved to lounge entire afternoons, reading his books of poems, smoking and dozing. From this high point one dominated the entire valley to the south and west. The view was superb. The three men paused for a moment on the crest of the hill to consider it.

Young Vacca came running and panting up the hill after them, calling for Annixter.

"Well, well, what is it?"

"Mr. Osterman's looking for you, sir, you and Mr. Harran. Vanamee, that cowboy over at Derrick's, has just come from the Governor with a message. I guess it's important."

"Hello, what's up now?" muttered Annixter, as they turned back.

They found Osterman saddling his horse in furious haste. Near by him was Vanamee holding by the bridle an animal that was one lather of sweat. A few of the picnickers were turning their heads curiously in that direction. Evidently something of moment was in the wind.

"What's all up?" demanded Annixter, as he and Harran, followed by Presley, drew near.

"There's hell to pay," exclaimed Osterman under his breath. "Read that. Vanamee just brought it."

He handed Annixter a sheet of note paper, and turned again to the cinching of his saddle.

"We've got to be quick," he cried. "They've stolen a march on us."

Annixter read the note, Harran and Presley looking over his shoulder.

"Ah, it's them, is it?" exclaimed Annixter.

Harran set his teeth. "Now for it," he exclaimed.

"They've been to your place already, Mr. Annixter," said Vanamee. "I passed by it on my way up. They have put Delaney in possession, and have set all your furniture out in the road."

Annixter turned about, his lips white. Already Presley and Harran had run to their horses.

"Vacca," cried Annixter, "where's Vacca? Put the saddle on the buckskin, *quick*. Osterman, get as many of the League as are here together at *this* spot, understand. I'll be back in a minute. I must tell Hilma this."

Hooven ran up as Annixter disappeared. His little eyes were blazing, he was dragging his horse with him.

"Say, dose fellers come, hey? Me, I'm alretty, see I hev der guhn."

"They've jumped the ranch, little girl," said Annixter, putting one arm around Hilma. "They're in our house now. I'm off. Go to Derrick's and wait for me there."

She put her arms around his neck.

"You're going?" she demanded.

"I must. Don't be frightened. It will be all right. Go to Derrick's and—good-by."

She said never a word. She looked once long into his eyes, then kissed him on the mouth.

Meanwhile, the news had spread. The multitude rose to its feet. Women and men, with pale faces, looked at each other speechless, or broke forth into inarticulate exclamations. A strange, unfamiliar murmur took the place of the tumultuous gayety of the previous moments. A sense of dread, of confusion, of impending terror weighed heavily in the air. What was now to happen?

When Annixter got back to Osterman, he found a number of the Leaguers already assembled. They were

all mounted. Hooven was there and Harran, and besides these, Garnett of the Ruby rancho and Gethings of the San Pablo, Phelps, the foreman of Los Muertos, and, last of all, Dabney, silent as ever, speaking to no one. Presley came riding up.

"Best keep out of this, Pres," cried Annixter.

"Are we ready?" exclaimed Gethings.

"Ready, ready, we're all here."

"*All.* Is this all of us?" cried Annixter. "Where are the six hundred men who were going to rise when this happened?"

They had wavered, these other Leaguers. Now, when the actual crisis impended, they were smitten with confusion. Ah, no, they were not going to stand up and be shot at just to save Derrick's land. They were not armed. What did Annixter and Osterman take them for? No, sir; the Railroad had stolen a march on them. After all his big talk Derrick had allowed them to be taken by surprise. The only thing to do was to call a meeting of the Executive Committee. That was the only thing. As for going down there with no weapons in their hands, *no*, sir. That was asking a little *too* much.

"Come on, then, boys," shouted Osterman, turning his back on the others. "The Governor says to meet him at Hooven's. We'll make for the Long Trestle and strike the trail to Hooven's there."

They set off. It was a terrible ride. Twice during the scrambling descent from the hills, Presley's pony fell beneath him. Annixter, on his buckskin, and Osterman, on his thoroughbred, good horsemen both, led the others, setting a terrific pace. The hills were left behind. Broderson Creek was crossed and on the levels of Quien Sabe, straight through the standing wheat, the nine horses, flogged and spurred, stretched out to their utmost. Their passage through the wheat sounded like the rip and tear of a gigantic web of cloth. The landscape on either hand resolved itself into a long blur. Tears came to the eyes, flying pebbles, clods of earth, grains of wheat flung up in the flight, stung the face like shot. Osterman's thoroughbred took the second crossing of Broderson Creek in a single leap. Down under the Long Trestle tore the cavalcade in a shower of mud and gravel; up again on the further bank, the horses blowing like steam engines; on into the trail to Hooven's, single file now, Presley's pony lagging, Hooven's horse bleeding at the eyes, the buckskin, game as a fighting cock, catching her second wind, far in the lead now, distancing even the English thoroughbred that Osterman rode.

At last Hooven's unpainted house, beneath the enormous live-oak tree, came in sight. Across the Lower Road, breaking through fences and into the yard around the house, thundered the Leaguers. Magnus was waiting for them.

The riders dismounted, hardly less exhausted than their horses.

"Why, where's all the men?" Annixter demanded of Magnus.

"Broderson is here and Cutter," replied the Governor, "no one else. I thought *you* would bring more men with you."

"There are only nine of us."

"And the six hundred Leaguers who were going to rise when this happened!" exclaimed Garnett, bitterly.

"Rot the League," cried Annixter. "It's gone to pot—went to pieces at the first touch."

"We have been taken by surprise, gentlemen, after all," said Magnus. "Totally off our guard. But there are eleven of us. It is enough."

"Well, what's the game? Has the marshal come? How many men are with him?"

"The United States marshal from San Francisco," explained Magnus, "came down early this morning and stopped at Guadalajara. We learned it all through our friends in Bonneville about an hour ago. They telephoned me and Mr. Broderson. S. Behrman met him and provided about a dozen deputies. Delaney, Ruggles, and Christian joined them at Guadalajara. They left Guadalajara, going toward Mr. Annixter's ranch house on Quien Sabe. They are serving the writs in ejectment and putting the dummy buyers in possession. They are armed. S. Behrman is with them."

"Where are they now?"

"Cutter is watching them from the Long Trestle. They returned to Guadalajara. They are there now."

"Well," observed Gethings, "from Guadalajara they can only go to two places. Either they will take the Upper Road and go on to Osterman's next, or they will take the Lower Road to Mr. Derrick's."

"That is as I supposed," said Magnus. "That is why I wanted you to come here. From Hooven's here, we can watch both roads simultaneously."

"Is anybody on the lookout on the Upper Road?"

"Cutter. He is on the Long Trestle."

"Say," observed Hooven, the instincts of the old-time soldier stirring him, "say, dose feller pretty demn schmart, I tink. We got to put some picket way oudt bei der Lower Roadt alzoh, und he tek dose glassus Mist'r Ennixt'r got bei um. Say, look at dose irregation ditsch. Dot ditsch he run righd across *both* dose road, hey? Dat's some fine entrenchment, you bedt. We fighd um from dose ditsch."

In fact, the dry irrigating ditch was a natural trench, admirably suited to the purpose, crossing both roads as Hooven pointed out and barring approach from Guadalajara to all the ranches save Annixter's—which had already been seized.

Gethings departed to join Cutter on the Long Trestle, while Phelps and Harran, taking Annixter's field glasses with them, and mounting their horses, went out toward Guadalajara on the Lower Road to watch for the marshal's approach from that direction.

After the outposts had left them, the party in Hooven's cottage looked to their weapons. Long since, every member of the League had been in the habit of carrying his revolver with him. They were all armed and, in addition, Hooven had his rifle. Presley alone carried no weapon.

The main room of Hooven's house, in which the Leaguers were now assembled, was barren, poverty-stricken, but tolerably clean. An old clock ticked vociferously on a shelf. In one corner was a bed, with a patched, faded quilt. In the centre of the room, straddling over the bare floor, stood a pine table. Around this the men gathered, two or three occupying chairs, Annixter sitting sidewise on the table, the rest standing.

"I believe, gentlemen," said Magnus, "that we can go through this day without bloodshed. I believe not one shot need be fired. The Railroad will not force the issue, will not bring about actual fighting. When the marshal realizes that we are thoroughly in earnest, thoroughly determined, I am convinced that he will withdraw."

There were murmurs of assent.

"Look here," said Annixter, "if this thing can by any means be settled peaceably, I say let's do it, so long as we don't give in."

The others stared. Was this Annixter who spoke—the Hotspur of the League, the quarrelsome, irascible fellow who loved and sought a quarrel? Was it Annixter, who now had been the first and only one of them all to suffer, whose ranch had been seized, whose household possessions had been flung out into the road?

"When you come right down to it," he continued, "killing a man, no matter what he's done to you, is a serious business. I propose we make one more attempt to stave this thing off. Let's see if we can't get to talk with the marshal himself; at any rate, warn him of the danger of going any further. Boys, let's not fire the first shot. What do you say?"

The others agreed unanimously and promptly; and old Broderson, tugging uneasily at his long beard, added:

"No—no—no violence, no *unnecessary* violence, that is. I should hate to have innocent blood on my hands—that is, if it *is* innocent. I don't know, that S. Behrman—ah, he is a—a—surely he had innocent blood on *his* head. That Dyke affair, terrible, terrible; but then Dyke *was* in the wrong—driven to it, though; the Railroad did drive him to it. I want to be fair and just to everybody—"

"There's a team coming up the road from Los Muertos," announced Presley from the door.

"Fair and just to everybody," murmured old Broderson, wagging his head, frowning perplexedly. "I don't want to—to—to harm anybody unless they harm me."

"Is the team going toward Guadalajara?" inquired Garnett, getting up and coming to the door.

"Yes, it's a Portuguese, one of the garden truck men."

"We must turn him back," declared Osterman. "He can't go through here. We don't want him to take any news on to the marshal and S. Behrman."

"I'll turn him back," said Presley.

He rode out toward the market cart, and the others, watching from the road in front of Hooven's, saw him halt it. An excited interview followed. They could hear the Portuguese expostulating volubly, but in the end he turned back.

"Martial law on Los Muertos, isn't it?" observed Osterman. "Steady all," he exclaimed as he turned about, "here comes Harran."

Harran rode up at a gallop. The others surrounded him.

"I saw them," he cried. "They are coming this way. S. Behrman and Ruggles are in a two-horse buggy. All the others are on horseback. There are eleven of them.

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44 Hotspur, a proud, quarrelsome character in I Henry IV

Christian and Delaney are with them. Those two have rifles. I left Hooven watching them."

"Better call in Gethings and Cutter right away," said Annixter. "We'll need all our men."

"I'll call them in," Presley volunteered at once. "Can I have the buckskin? My pony is about done up."

He departed at a brisk gallop, but on the way met Gethings and Cutter returning. They, too, from their elevated position, had observed the marshal's party leaving Guadalajara by the Lower Road. Presley told them of the decision of the Leaguers not to fire until fired upon.

"All right," said Gethings. "But if it comes to a gun-fight, that means it's all up with at least one of us. Delaney never misses his man."

When they reached Hooven's again, they found that the Leaguers had already taken their position in the ditch. The plank bridge across it had been torn up. Magnus, two long revolvers lying on the embankment in front of him, was in the middle, Harran at his side. On either side, some five feet intervening between each man, stood the other Leaguers, their revolvers ready. Dabney, the silent old man, had taken off his coat.

"Take your places between Mr. Osterman and Mr. Broderson," said Magnus, as the three men rode up. "Presley," he added, "I forbid you to take any part in this affair."

"Yes, keep him out of it," cried Annixter from his position at the extreme end of the line. "Go back to Hooven's house, Pres, and look after the horses," he added. "This is no business of yours. And keep the road behind us clear. Don't let *any one* come near, not *any one,* understand?"

Presley withdrew, leading the buckskin and the horses that Gethings and Cutter had ridden. He fastened them under the great live-oak and then came out and stood in the road in front of the house to watch what was going on.

In the ditch, shoulder deep, the Leaguers, ready, watchful, waited in silence, their eyes fixed on the white shimmer of the road leading to Guadalajara.

"Where's Hooven?" inquired Cutter.

"I don't know," Osterman replied. "He was out watching the Lower Road with Harran Derrick. Oh, Harran," he called, "isn't Hooven coming in?"

"I don't know what he is waiting for," answered Harran. "He was to have come in just after me. He thought maybe the marshal's party might make a feint in this direction, then go around by the Upper Road, after all. He wanted to watch them a little longer. But he ought to be here now."

"Think he'll take a shot at them on his own account?"

"Oh, no, he wouldn't do that."

"Maybe they took him prisoner."

"Well, that's to be thought of, too."

Suddenly there was a cry. Around the bend of the road in front of them came a cloud of dust. From it emerged a horse's head.

"Hello, hello, there's something."

"Remember, we are not to fire first."

"Perhaps that's Hooven; I can't see. Is it? There only seems to be one horse."

"Too much dust for one horse."

Annixter, who had taken his field glasses from Harran, adjusted them to his eyes.

"That's not them," he announced presently, "nor Hooven either. That's a cart." Then, after another moment, he added, "The butcher's cart from Guadalajara."

The tension was relaxed. The men drew long breaths, settling back in their places.

"Do we let him go on, Governor?"

"The bridge is down. He can't go by and we must not let him go back. We shall have to detain him and question him. I wonder the marshal let him pass."

The cart approached at a lively trot.

"Anybody else in that cart, Mr. Annixter?" asked Magnus. "Look carefully. It may be a ruse. It is strange the marshal should have let him pass."

The Leaguers roused themselves again. Osterman laid his hand on his revolver.

"No," called Annixter, in another instant, "no, there's only one man in it."

The cart came up, and Cutter and Phelps, clambering from the ditch, stopped it as it arrived in front of the party.

"Hey—what—what?" exclaimed the young butcher, pulling up. "Is that bridge broke?"

But at the idea of being held, the boy protested at top voice, badly frightened, bewildered, not knowing what was to happen.

"No, no, I got my meat to deliver. Say, you let me go. Say, I ain't got nothing to do with you."

He tugged at the reins, trying to turn the cart about. Cutter, with his jack-knife, parted the reins just back of the bit.

"You'll stay where you are, m' son, for a while. We're not going to hurt you. But you are not going back to town till we say so. Did you pass anybody on the road out of town?"

In reply to the Leaguers' questions, the young butcher at last told them he had passed a two-horse buggy and a lot of men on horseback just beyond the railroad tracks. They were headed for Los Muertos.

"That's them, all right," muttered Annixter. "They're coming by this road, sure."

The butcher's horse and cart were led to one side of the road, and the horse tied to the fence with one of the severed lines. The butcher himself was passed over to Presley, who locked him in Hooven's barn.

"Well, what the devil," demanded Osterman, "has become of Bismarck?"

In fact, the butcher had seen nothing of Hooven. The minutes were passing, and still he failed to appear.

"What's he up to, anyways?"

"Bet you what you like, they caught him. Just like that crazy Dutchman to get excited and go too near. You can always depend on Hooven to lose his head."

Five minutes passed, then ten. The road toward Guadalajara lay empty, baking and white under the sun.

"Well, the marshal and S. Behrman don't seem to be in any hurry, either."

"Shall I go forward and reconnoitre, Governor?" asked Harran.

But Dabney, who stood next to Annixter, touched him on the shoulder and, without speaking, pointed down the road. Annixter looked, then suddenly cried out:

"Here comes Hooven."

The German galloped into sight, around the turn of the road, his rifle laid across his saddle. He came on rapidly, pulled up, and dismounted at the ditch.

"Dey're commen," he cried, trembling with excitement. "I watch um long dime bei der side oaf der roadt in der busches. Dey shtop bei der gate oder side der relroadt trecks and talk long dime mit one n'udder. Den dey gome on. Dey're gowun sure do zum monkey-doodle pizeness. Me, I see Gritschum put der kertridges in his guhn. I tink they gowun to gome *my* place first. Dey gowun to try to put me off, tek my home, bei Gott."

"All right, get down in here and keep quiet, Hooven. Don't fire unless—"

"Here they are."

A half-dozen voices uttered the cry at once.

There could be no mistake this time. A buggy, drawn by two horses, came into view around the curve of the road. Three riders accompanied it, and behind these, seen at intervals in a cloud of dust, were two—three—five—six others.

This, then, was S. Behrman with the United States marshal and his posse. The event that had been so long in preparation, the event which it had been said would never come to pass, the last trial of strength, the last fight between the Trust and the People, the direct, brutal grapple of armed men, the law defied, the Government ignored, behold, here it was close at hand.

Osterman cocked his revolver, and in the profound silence that had fallen upon the scene, the click was plainly audible from end to end of the line.

"Remember our agreement, gentlemen," cried Magnus, in a warning voice. "Mr. Osterman, I must ask you to let down the hammer of your weapon."

No one answered. In absolute quiet, standing motionless in their places, the Leaguers watched the approach of the marshal.

Five minutes passed. The riders came on steadily. They drew nearer. The grind of the buggy wheels in the grit and dust of the road, and the prolonged clatter of the horses' feet began to make itself heard. The Leaguers could distinguish the faces of their enemies.

In the buggy were S. Behrman and Cyrus Ruggles, the latter driving. A tall man in a frock coat and slouched hat—the marshal, beyond question—rode at the left of the buggy; Delaney, carrying a Winchester, at the right. Christian, the real estate broker, S. Behrman's cousin, also with a rifle, could be made out just behind the marshal. Back of these, riding well up, was a group of horsemen, indistinguishable in the dust raised by the buggy's wheels.

Steadily the distance between the Leaguers and the posse diminished.

"Don't let them get too close, Governor," whispered Harran.

When S. Behrman's buggy was about one hundred yards distant from the irrigating ditch, Magnus sprang out upon the road, leaving his revolvers behind him. He beckoned Garnett and Gethings to follow, and the three ranchers, who, with the exception of Broderson,

were the oldest men present, advanced, without arms, to meet the marshal.

Magnus cried aloud:

"Halt where you are."

From their places in the ditch, Annixter, Osterman, Dabney, Harran, Hooven, Broderson, Cutter, and Phelps, their hands laid upon their revolvers, watched silently, alert, keen, ready for anything.

At the Governor's words, they saw Ruggles pull sharply on the reins. The buggy came to a standstill, the riders doing likewise. Magnus approached the marshal, still followed by Garnett and Gethings, and began to speak. His voice was audible to the men in the ditch, but his words could not be made out. They heard the marshal reply quietly enough and the two shook hands. Delaney came around from the side of the buggy, his horse standing before the team across the road. He leaned from the saddle, listening to what was being said, but made no remark. From time to time, S. Behrman and Ruggles, from their seats in the buggy, interposed a sentence or two into the conversation, but at first, so far as the Leaguers could discern, neither Magnus nor the marshal paid them any attention. They saw, however, that the latter repeatedly shook his head and once they heard him exclaim in a loud voice:

"I only know my duty, Mr. Derrick."

Then Gethings turned about, and seeing Delaney close at hand, addressed an unheard remark to him. The cowpuncher replied curtly and the words seemed to anger Gethings. He made a gesture, pointing back to the ditch, showing the intrenched Leaguers to the posse. Delaney appeared to communicate the news that the Leaguers were on hand and prepared to resist, to the other members of the party. They all looked toward the ditch and plainly saw the ranchers there, standing to their arms.

But meanwhile Ruggles had addressed himself more directly to Magnus, and between the two an angry discussion was going forward. Once even Harran heard his father exclaim:

"The statement is a lie and no one knows it better than yourself."

"Here," growled Annixter to Dabney, who stood next him in the ditch, "those fellows are getting too close. Look at them edging up. Don't Magnus see that?"

The other members of the marshal's force had come forward from their places behind the buggy and were spread out across the road. Some of them were gathered about Magnus, Garnett, and Gethings; and some were talking together, looking and pointing toward the ditch. Whether acting upon signal or not, the Leaguers in the ditch could not tell, but it was certain that one or two of the posse had moved considerably forward. Besides this, Delaney had now placed his horse between Magnus and the ditch, and two others riding up from the rear had followed his example. The posse surrounded the three ranchers, and by now everybody was talking at once.

"Look here," Harran called to Annixter, "this won't do. I don't like the looks of this thing. They all seem to be edging up, and before we know it they may take the Governor and the other men prisoners."

"They ought to come back," declared Annixter.

"Somebody ought to tell them that those fellows are creeping up."

By now the angry argument between the Governor and Ruggles had become more heated than ever. Their voices were raised; now and then they made furious gestures.

"They ought to come back," cried Osterman. "We couldn't shoot now if anything should happen, for fear of hitting them."

"Well, it sounds as though something were going to happen pretty soon."

They could hear Gethings and Delaney wrangling furiously; another deputy joined in.

"I'm going to call the Governor back," exclaimed Annixter, suddenly clambering out of the ditch.

"No, no," cried Osterman, "keep in the ditch. They can't drive us out if we keep here."

Hooven and Harran, who had instinctively followed Annixter, hesitated at Osterman's words and the three halted irresolutely on the road before the ditch, their weapons in their hands.

"Governor," shouted Harran, "come on back. You can't do anything."

Still the wrangle continued, and one of the deputies, advancing a little from out the group, cried out:

"Keep back there! Keep back there, you!"

"Go to hell, will you?" shouted Harran on the instant. "You're on my land."

"Oh, come back here, Harran," called Osterman. "That ain't going to do any good."

"There—listen," suddenly exclaimed Harran. "The Governor is calling us. Come on; I'm going."

Osterman got out of the ditch and came forward, catching Harran by the arm and pulling him back.

"He didn't call. Don't get excited. You'll ruin everything. Get back into the ditch again."

But Cutter, Phelps, and the old man Dabney, misunderstanding what was happening, and seeing Osterman leave the ditch, had followed his example. All the Leaguers were now out of the ditch, and a little way down the road, Hooven, Osterman, Annixter, and Harran in front, Dabney, Phelps, and Cutter coming up from behind.

"Keep back, you," cried the deputy again.

In the group around S. Behrman's buggy, Gethings and Delaney were yet quarreling, and the angry debate between Magnus, Garnett, and the marshal still continued.

Till this moment, the real estate broker, Christian, had taken no part in the argument, but had kept himself in the rear of the buggy. Now, however, he pushed forward. There was but little room for him to pass, and, as he rode by the buggy, his horse scraped his flank against the hub of the wheel. The animal recoiled sharply, and, striking against Garnett, threw him to the ground. Delaney's horse stood between the buggy and the Leaguers gathered on the road in front of the ditch; the incident, indistinctly seen by them, was misinterpreted.

Garnett had not yet risen when Hooven raised a great shout:

"Hoch, der Kaiser! Hoch, der Vaterland!"

With the words he dropped to one knee, and, sighting his rifle carefully, fired into the group of men around the buggy.

Instantly the revolvers and rifles seemed to go off of themselves Both sides, deputies and Leaguers, opened fire simultaneously. At first, it was nothing but a confused roar of explosions; then the roar lapsed to an irregular, quick succession of reports, shot leaping after shot; then a moment's silence, and, last of all, regular as clock-ticks, three shots at exact intervals. Then stillness.

Delaney, shot through the stomach, slid down from his horse, and, on his hands and knees, crawled from the road into the standing wheat. Christian fell backward from the saddle toward the buggy, and hung suspended in that position, his head and shoulders on the wheel, one stiff leg still across his saddle. Hooven, in attempting to rise from his kneeling position, received a rifle ball squarely in the throat, and rolled forward upon his face. Old Broderson crying out, "Oh, they've shot me, boys," staggered sideways, his head bent, his hands rigid at his sides, and fell into the ditch. Osterman, blood running from his mouth and nose, turned about and walked back. Presley helped him across the irrigating ditch and Osterman laid himself down, his head on his folded arms. Harran Derrick dropped where he stood, turning over on his face, and lay motionless, groaning terribly, a pool of blood forming under his stomach. The old man Dabney, silent as ever, received his death speechless. He fell to his knees, got up again, fell once more, and died without a word. Annixter, instantly killed, fell his length to the ground, and lay without movement, just as he had fallen, one arm across his face.

[This bloody conflict marks the end of the struggle of the ranchers. The Railroad has been victorious—has rapaciously taken from the tillers of the soil their land. Presley writes in his journal his impressions of the unequal contest and its conclusion.]

from Book II, Chapter VII

PRESLEY'S JOURNAL

Presley did not close his eyes once during the night, he did not even remove his clothes. Long after the doctor had departed and that house of tragedy had quieted down, he still remained in his place by the open window of his little room, looking off across the leagues of growing wheat, watching the slow kindling of the dawn. Horror weighed intolerably upon him. Monstrous things, huge, terrible, whose names he knew only too well, whirled at a gallop through his imagination, or rose spectral and grisly before the eyes of his mind. Harran dead, Annixter dead, Broderson dead, Osterman, perhaps, even at that moment dying. Why, these men had made up his world. Annixter had been his best friend, Harran, his almost daily companion; Broderson and Osterman were familiar to him as brothers. They were all his

32 Hoch . . . Vaterland! Hail the Emperor! Hail the Fatherland!

associates, his good friends, the group was his environment, belonging to his daily life. And he, standing there in the dust of the road by the irrigating ditch, had seen them shot. He found himself suddenly at his table, the candle burning at his elbow, his journal before him, writing swiftly, the desire for expression, the craving for outlet to the thoughts that clamored tumultuous at his brain, never more insistent, more imperious. Thus he wrote:

"Dabney dead, Hooven dead, Harran dead, Annixter dead, Broderson dead, Osterman dying, S. Behrman alive, successful; the Railroad in possession of Quien Sabe. I saw them shot. Not twelve hours since I stood there at the irrigating ditch. Ah, that terrible moment of horror and confusion! powder smoke—flashing pistol barrels—blood stains—rearing horses—men staggering to their death—Christian in a horrible posture, one rigid leg high in the air across his saddle—Broderson falling sidewise into the ditch—Osterman laying himself down, his head on his arms, as if tired, tired out. These things, I have seen them. The picture of this day's work is from henceforth part of my mind, part of *me*. They have done it, S. Behrman and the owners of the railroad have done it, while all the world looked on, while the people of these United States looked on. Oh, come now and try your theories upon us, us of the ranchos, us, who have suffered, us, who *know*. Oh, talk to *us* now of the 'rights of Capital,' talk to *us* of the Trust, talk to *us* of the 'equilibrium between the classes.' Try your ingenious ideas upon us. *We know*. I can not tell whether or not your theories are excellent. I do not know if your ideas are plausible. I do not know how practical is your scheme of society. I do not know if the Railroad has a right to our lands, but I *do* know that Harran is dead, that Annixter is dead, that Broderson is dead, that Hooven is dead, that Osterman is dying, and that S. Behrman is alive, successful, triumphant; that he has ridden into possession of a principality over the dead bodies of five men shot down by his hired associates.

"I can see the outcome. The Railroad will prevail. The Trust will overpower us. Here in this corner of a great nation, here, on the edge of the continent, here, in this valley of the West, far from the great centres, isolated, remote, lost, the great iron hand crushes life from us, crushes liberty and the pursuit of happiness from us, and our little struggles, our moment's convulsion of death agony causes not one jar in the vast, clashing machinery of the nation's life; a fleck of grit in the wheels, perhaps, a grain of sand in the cogs—the momentary creak of the axle is the mother's wail of bereavement, the wife's cry of anguish—and the great wheel turns, spinning smooth again, even again, and the tiny impediment of a second, scarce noticed, is forgotten. Make the people believe that the faint tremor in their great engine is a menace to its function? What a folly to think of it. Tell them of the danger and they will laugh at you. Tell them, five years from now, the story of the fight between the League of the San Joaquin and the Railroad and it will not be believed. What! a pitched battle between Farmer and Railroad, a battle that cost the lives of seven men? Impossible, it could not have happened. Your story is fiction—is exaggerated.

"Yet it is Lexington—God help us, God enlighten us, God rouse us from our lethargy—it is Lexington; farmers with guns in their hands fighting for Liberty. Is our State of California the only one that has its ancient and hereditary foe? Are there no other Trusts between the oceans than this of the Pacific and Southwestern Railroad? Ask yourselves, you of the Middle West, ask yourselves, you of the North, ask yourselves, you of the East, ask yourselves, you of the South—ask yourselves, every citizen of every State from Maine to Mexico, from the Dakotas to the Carolinas, have you not the monster in your boundaries? If it is not a Trust of transportation, it is only another head of the same Hydra. Is not our death struggle typical? Is it not one of many, is it not symbolical of the great and terrible conflict that is going on everywhere in these United States? Ah, you people, blind, bound, tricked, betrayed, can you not see it? Can you not see how the monsters have plundered your treasures and holding them in the grip of their iron claws, dole them out to you only at the price of your blood, at the price of the lives of your wives and your little children? You give your babies to Moloch for the loaf of bread you have kneaded yourselves. You offer your starved wives to Juggernaut for the iron nail you have yourselves compounded."

1899-1900-1901

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84 Moloch, a Semitic god who was worshiped with human sacrifices • 86 Juggernaut, a Hindu god (a form of Vishnu). Legend had it that frenzied devotees allowed themselves to be crushed by the wheels of the car in which the idol of this deity was drawn during the festival of the god's car

Theodore Dreiser

1871 • 1945

Theodore Dreiser was our first full-fledged naturalist in fiction. Although Frederic, Crane, and Norris had pioneered in the naturalistic direction, a fully developed naturalism did not appear in the American novel until *Sister Carrie.*

The twelfth in a family of thirteen children, Dreiser was born in 1871, in Terre Haute, Indiana, where his father, a German emigrant, was proprietor of a woolen mill. The burning of the mill, which was not insured, left the family in extreme poverty. Dreiser's formal schooling was received in an Indiana high school and at Indiana University, where he stayed only one year because he felt that the curriculum "did not concern ordinary life at all." More useful than college to Dreiser were various odd jobs in Chicago—washing dishes in a restaurant, shoveling coal in a railroad yard, working in a hardware factory, collecting bills for a furniture store. Valuable also to the future novelist were his experiences as a reporter on the Chicago *Globe* and on other newspapers in St. Louis, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and New York. For a while he was connected with certain "pulp" magazines, and from 1907 to 1910 he was editor of *The Delineator.* Jobs like these were necessary to pay expenses; his novels brought him little money for many years. In the meantime, he had married but did not find marriage to his liking. "It was a binding state," he said, "and I was not to be bound I begged her to set me free, and she did."

For more than twenty years, Dreiser was the center of a great controversy. His books were condemned as "immoral" *Sister Carrie,* though printed in 1900, was not released for sale in America until 1906. His second novel, *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911), like *Sister Carrie,* was objected to because it told a story of unconventional sex relationships. Dreiser did not hold up Carrie or Jennie as examples for other girls to follow, nor did he treat sex salaciously; but conventional moralists found objectionable his sympathetic attitude toward such characters and his failure to mete out the usual rewards and punishments. *The Financier* (1912) and *The Titan* (1914), which describe the unscrupulous career of Frank Cowperwood, were attacked with especial violence by Stuart P. Sherman ("The Barbaric Naturalism of Theodore Dreiser," *On Contemporary Literature,* 1918), who declared, "Dreiser has just two things to tell us about Cowperwood: that he has a rapacious appetite for money; and that he has a rapacious appetite for women." The attack continued until 1925, the year of *An American Tragedy.* Although *An American Tragedy* was not radically different from its predecessors, it was an instantaneous success. No more striking evidence can be cited of the change in the intellectual and moral atmosphere of postwar America.

It is easy to point out weaknesses in Dreiser's novels: he lacks a sense of humor; his prose is pedestrian; the piling up of detail often makes for dull reading. But his work is important, both historically and intrinsically. No other American novelist has documented his stories quite so carefully or has written a social record of American life so convincingly authentic. No other American novelist has treated his subjects so sympathetically. Human actions, to Dreiser, are largely the result of social forces from without, and of chemical forces from within. Men and women, therefore, are not too much to blame for what they are and do. There is no satire or cynicism or smartness in Dreiser, no prurient exploitation of sex, no manipulation of plot or trick of style. He recorded life as he saw it—with naturalness, candor, and compassion.

Theodore Dreiser, Dawn (an autobiography), New York, 1931 • H. L. Mencken, **A Book of Prefaces**, New York, 1917 • Dorothy Dudley, **Forgotten Frontiers: Dreiser and the Land of the Free**, New York, 1932

The Second Choice

Although Dreiser can be best appreciated in the mass, a short story like "The Second Choice" illustrates well enough the essential characteristics of his work: prosaic, commonplace detail; a plodding style; a compassion which may easily be mistaken for sentimentality but which at its best has a genuine poignance; a natural narrative method free from trick or artifice. The last named characteristic is of special importance, for it marks Dreiser's break with the traditional short story in America. The traditional short story, as written by Poe, Bret Harte, and O. Henry, seemed meretricious to Dreiser and his followers because it sacrificed realism to artifice of plot and the surprise ending.

"The Second Choice" is taken from **Free and Other Stories**, published in 1918, but it is similar to the work which, before 1914, made Dreiser an important force in American fiction.

Shirley Dear:

You don't want the letters. There are only six of them, anyhow, and think, they're all I have of you to cheer me on my travels. What good would they be to you—little bits of notes telling me you're sure to meet me—but me—think of me! If I send them to you, you'll tear them up, whereas if you leave them with me I can dab them with musk and ambergris and keep them in a little silver box, always beside me.

Ah, Shirley dear, you really don't know how sweet I think you are, how dear! There isn't a thing we have ever done together that isn't as clear in my mind as this great big skyscraper over the way here in Pittsburgh, and far more pleasing. In fact, my thoughts of you are the most precious and delicious things I have, Shirley.

But I'm too young to marry now. You know that, Shirley, don't you? I haven't placed myself in any way yet, and I'm so restless that I don't know whether I ever will, really. Only yesterday, old Roxbaum—that's my new employer here—came to me and wanted to know if I would like an assistant overseership on one of his coffee plantations in Java, said there would not be much money in it for a year or two, a bare living, but later there would be more—and I jumped at it. Just the thought of Java and going there did that, although I knew I could make more staying right here. Can't you see how it is with me Shirl? I'm too restless and too young. I couldn't take care of you right, and you wouldn't like me after a while if I didn't.

But ah, Shirley sweet, I think the dearest things of you! There isn't an hour, it seems, but some little bit of you comes back—a dear, sweet bit—the night we sat on the grass in Tregore Park and counted the stars through the trees; that first evening at Sparrows Point when we missed the last train and had to walk to Langley. Remember the tree-toads, Shirl? And then that warm April Sunday in Atholby woods! Ah, Shirl, you

don't want the six notes! Let me keep them. But think of me, will you, sweet, wherever you go and whatever you do? I'll always think of you, and wish that you had met a better, saner man than me, and that I really could have married you and been all you wanted me to be. By-by, sweet. I may start for Java within the month. If so, and you would want them, I'll send you some cards from there—if they have any.

Your worthless

ARTHUR.

She sat and turned the letter in her hand, dumb with despair. It was the very last letter she would ever get from him. Of that she was certain. He was gone now, once and for all. She had written him only once, not making an open plea but asking him to return her letters, and then there had come this tender but evasive reply, saying nothing of a possible return but desiring to keep her letters for old times' sake—the happy hours they had spent together.

The happy hours! Oh, yes, yes, yes—the happy hours! In her memory now, as she sat here in her home after the day's work, meditating on all that had been in the few short months since he had come and gone, was a world of color and light—a color and light so transfiguring as to seem celestial, but now, alas, wholly dissipated. It had contained so much of all she had desired—love, romance, amusement, laughter. He had been so gay and thoughtless, or headstrong, so youthfully romantic, and with such a love of play and change and to be saying and doing anything and everything. Arthur could dance in a gay way, whistle, sing after a fashion, play. He could play cards and do tricks, and he had such a superior air, so genial and brisk, with a kind of innate courtesy in it and yet an intolerance for slowness and stodginess or anything dull or dingy, such as characterized—But here her thoughts fled from him. She refused to think of any one but Arthur.

Sitting in her little bedroom now, off the parlor on the ground floor in her home in Bethune Street, and looking out over the Kessels' yard, and beyond that—there being no fences in Bethune Street—over the "yards" or lawns of the Pollards, Bakers, Cryders, and others, she thought of how dull it must all have seemed to him, with his fine imaginative mind and experiences, his love of change and gaiety, his atmosphere of something better than she had ever known. How little she had been fitted, perhaps, by beauty or temperament to overcome this—the something—dullness in her work or her home, which possibly had driven him away. For, although many had admired her to date, and she was young and pretty in her simple way and constantly receiving suggestions that her beauty was disturbing to some, still, he had not cared for her—he had gone.

And now, as she meditated, it seemed that this scene, and all that it stood for—her parents, her work, her daily shuttling to and fro between the drug company for which she worked and this street and house—was typical of her life and what she was destined to endure always. Some girls were so much more fortunate. They had fine clothes, fine homes, a world of pleasure and opportunity in which to move. They did not have to scrimp and save and work to pay their own way. And yet she had always been compelled to do it, but had never complained until now—or until he came, and after. Bethune Street, with its commonplace front yards and houses nearly all alike, and this house, so like the others, room for room and porch for porch, and her parents, too, really like all the others, had seemed good enough, quite satisfactory, indeed, until then. But now, now!

Here, in their kitchen, was her mother, a thin, pale, but kindly woman, peeling potatoes and washing lettuce, and putting a bit of steak or a chop or a piece of liver in a frying pan day after day, morning and evening, month after month, year after year. And next door was Mrs. Kessel doing the same thing. And next door Mrs. Cryder. And next door Mrs. Pollard. But, until now, she had not thought it so bad. But now—now—oh! And on all the porches or lawns all along this street were the husbands and fathers, mostly middle-aged or old men like her father, reading their papers or cutting the grass before dinner, or smoking and meditating afterward. Her father was out in front now, a stooped, forbearing, meditative soul, who had rarely anything to say—leaving it all to his wife, her mother, but who was fond of her in his dull, quiet way. He was a pattern-maker by trade, and had come into possession of this small, ordinary home via years of toil and saving, her mother helping him. They had no particular religion, as he often said, thinking reasonably human conduct a sufficient passport to heaven, but they had gone occa-

sionally to the Methodist Church over in Nicholas Street, and she had once joined it. But of late she had not gone, weaned away by the other commonplace pleasures of her world.

And then in the midst of it, the dull drift of things, as she now saw them to be, he had come—Arthur Bristow—young, energetic, good-looking, ambitious, dreamful, and instanter, and with her never knowing quite how, the whole thing had been changed. He had appeared so swiftly—out of nothing, as it were.

Previous to him had been Barton Williams, stout, phlegmatic, good-natured, well-meaning, who was, or had been before Arthur came, asking her to marry him, and whom she allowed to half assume that she would. She had liked him in a feeble, albeit, as she thought, tender way, thinking him the kind, according to the logic of her neighborhood, who would make her a good husband, and, until Arthur appeared on the scene, had really intended to marry him. It was not really a love-match, as she saw now, but she thought it was, which was much the same thing, perhaps. But, as she now recalled, when Arthur came, how the scales fell from her eyes! In a trice, as it were, nearly, there was a new heaven and a new earth. Arthur had arrived, and with him a sense of something different.

Mabel Gove had asked her to come over to her house in Westleigh, the adjoining suburb, for Thanksgiving eve and day, and without a thought of anything, and because Barton was busy handling a part of the work in the despatcher's office of the Great Eastern and could not see her, she had gone. And then, to her surprise and strange, almost ineffable delight, the moment she had seen him, he was there—Arthur, with his slim, straight figure and dark hair and eyes and clean-cut features, as clean and attractive as those of a coin. And as he had looked at her and smiled and narrated humorous bits of things that had happened to him, something had come over her—a spell—and after dinner they had all gone round to Edith Barringer's to dance, and there as she had danced with him, somehow, without any seeming boldness on his part, he had taken possession of her, as it were, drawn her close, and told her she had beautiful eyes and hair and such a delicately rounded chin, and that he thought she danced gracefully and was sweet. She had nearly fainted with delight.

"Do you like me?" he had asked in one place in the dance, and, in spite of herself, she had looked up into his eyes, and from that moment she was almost mad over him, could think of nothing else but his hair and eyes and his smile and his graceful figure.

Mabel Gove had seen it all, in spite of her determination that no one should, and on their going to bed later, back at Mabel's home, she had whispered:

"Ah, Shirley, I saw. You like Arthur, don't you?"

"I think he's very nice," Shirley recalled replying, for Mabel knew of her affair with Barton and liked him, "but I'm not crazy over him." And for this bit of treason she had sighed in her dreams nearly all night.

And the next day, true to a request and a promise made by him, Arthur had called again at Mabel's to take her and Mabel to a "movie" which was not so far away, and from there they had gone to an ice-cream parlor, and during it all, when Mabel was not looking, he had squeezed her arm and hand and kissed her neck, and she had held her breath, and her heart had seemed to stop.

"And now you're going to let me come out to your place to see you, aren't you?" he had whispered.

And she had replied, "Wednesday evening," and then written the address on a little piece of paper and given it to him.

But now it was all gone, gone!

This house, which now looked so dreary—how romantic it had seemed that first night *he* called—the front room with its commonplace furniture, and later in the spring, the veranda, with its vines just sprouting, and the moon in May. Oh, the moon in May, and June and July, when he was here! How she had lied to Barton to make evenings for Arthur, and occasionally to Arthur to keep him from contact with Barton. She had not even mentioned Barton to Arthur because—because—well, because Arthur was so much better, and somehow (she admitted it to herself now) she had not been sure that Arthur would care for her long, if at all, and then —well, and then, to be quite frank, Barton might be good enough She did not exactly hate him because she had found Arthur—not at all. She still liked him in a way—he was so kind and faithful, so very dull and straightforward and thoughtful of her, which Arthur was certainly not. Before Arthur had appeared, as she well remembered, Barton had seemed to be plenty good enough—in fact, all that she desired in a pleasant, companionable way, calling for her, taking her places, bring-

ing her flowers and candy, which Arthur rarely did, and for that, if nothing more, she could not help continuing to like him and to feel sorry for him, and, besides, as she had admitted to herself before, if Arthur left her—. . . Weren't his parents better off than hers—and hadn't he a good position for such a man as he—one hundred and fifty dollars a month and the certainty of more later on? A little while before meeting Arthur, she had thought this very good, enough for two to live on at least, and she had thought some of trying it at some time or other—but now—now—

And that first night he had called—how well she remembered it—how it had transfigured the parlor next this in which she was now, filling it with something it had never had before, and the porch outside, too, for that matter, with its gaunt, leafless vine, and this street, too, even—dull, commonplace Bethune Street. There had been a flurry of snow during the afternoon while she was working at the store, and the ground was white with it. All the neighboring homes seemed to look sweeter and happier and more inviting than ever they had as she came past them, with their lights peeping from under curtains and drawn shades. She had hurried into hers and lighted the big red-shaded parlor lamp, her one artistic treasure, as she thought, and put it near the piano, between it and the window, and arranged the chairs, and then bustled to the task of making herself as pleasing as she might. For him she had gotten out her one best filmy house dress and done up her hair in the fashion she thought most becoming—and that he had not seen before—and powdered her cheeks and nose and darkened her eyelashes, as some of the girls at the store did, and put on her new gray satin slippers, and then, being so arrayed, waited nervously, unable to eat anything or to think of anything but him.

And at last, just when she had begun to think he might not be coming, he had appeared with that arch smile and a "Hello! It's here you live, is it? I was wondering. George, but you're twice as sweet as I thought you were, aren't you?" And then, in the little entryway, behind the closed door, he had held her and kissed her on the mouth a dozen times while she pretended to push against his coat and struggle and say that her parents might hear.

And, oh, the room afterward, with him in it in the red glow of the lamp, and with his pale handsome face made handsomer thereby, as she thought! He had made her sit near him and had held her hands and told her about his work and his dreams—all that he expected to do in the future—and then she had found herself wishing intensely to share just such a life—his life—anything that he might wish to do; only, she kept wondering, with a slight pain, whether he would want her to—he was so young, dreamful, ambitious, much younger and more dreamful than herself, although, in reality, he was several years older.

And then followed that glorious period from December to this late September, in which everything which was worth happening in love had happened. Oh, those wondrous days the following spring, when, with the first burst of buds and leaves, he had taken her one Sunday to Atholby, where all the great woods were, and they had hunted spring beauties in the grass, and sat on a slope and looked at the river below and watched some boys fixing up a sailboat and setting forth in it quite as she wished she and Arthur might be doing—going somewhere together—far, far away from all commonplace things and life! And then he had slipped his arm about her and kissed her cheek and neck, and tweaked her ear and smoothed her hair—and oh, there on the grass, with the spring flowers about her and a canopy of small green leaves above, the perfection of love had come—love so wonderful that the mere thought of it made her eyes brim now! And then had been days, Saturday afternoons and Sundays, at Atholby and Sparrows Point, where the great beach was, and in lovely Tregore Park, a mile or two from her home, where they could go of an evening and sit in or near the pavilion and have ice-cream and dance or watch the dancers. Oh, the stars, the winds, the summer breath of those days! Ah, me! Ah, me!

Naturally, her parents had wondered from the first about her and Arthur, and her and Barton, since Barton had already assumed a proprietary interest in her and she had seemed to like him. But then she was an only child and a pet, and used to presuming on that, and they could not think of saying anything to her. After all, she was young and pretty and was entitled to change her

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4 her— . . . The dots throughout the selection are Dreiser's and do not indicate an omission

mind; only, only—she had had to indulge in a career of lying and subterfuge in connection with Barton, since Arthur was headstrong and wanted every evening that he chose—to call for her at the store and keep her downtown to dinner and a show.

Arthur had never been like Barton, shy, phlegmatic, obedient, waiting long and patiently for each little favor, but, instead, masterful and eager, rifling her of kisses and caresses and every delight of love, and teasing and playing with her as a cat would a mouse. She could never resist him. He demanded of her her time and her affection without let or hindrance. He was not exactly selfish or cruel, as some might have been, but gay and unthinking at times, unconsciously so, and yet loving and tender at others—nearly always so. But always he would talk of things in the future as if they really did not include her—and this troubled her greatly—of places he might go, things he might do, which, somehow, he seemed to think or assume that she could not or would not do with him. He was always going to Australia sometime, he thought, in a business way, or to South Africa, or possibly to India. He never seemed to have any fixed clear future for himself in mind.

A dreadful sense of helplessness and of impending disaster came over her at these times, of being involved in some predicament over which she had no control, and which would lead her on to some sad end. Arthur, although plainly in love, as she thought, and apparently delighted with her, might not always love her. She began, timidly at first (and always, for that matter), to ask him pretty, seeking questions about himself and her, whether their future was certain to be together, whether he really wanted her—loved her—whether he might not want to marry some one else or just her, and whether she wouldn't look nice in a pearl satin wedding-dress with a long creamy veil and satin slippers and a bouquet of bridalwreath. She had been so slowly but surely saving to that end, even before he came, in connection with Barton; only, after *he* came, all thought of the import of it had been transferred to him. But now, also, she was beginning to ask herself sadly, "Would it ever be?" He was so airy, so inconsequential, so ready to say: "Yes, yes," and "Sure, sure! That's right! Yes, indeedy; you bet! Say, kiddie, but you'll look sweet!" but, somehow, it had always seemed as if this whole thing were a glorious interlude and that it could not last. Arthur was too gay and ethereal and too little settled in his own mind. His ideas of travel and living in different cities, finally winding up in New York or San Francisco, but never with her exactly until she asked him, were too ominous, although he always reassured her gaily: "Of course! Of course!" But somehow she could never believe it really, and it made her intensely sad at times, horribly gloomy. So often she wanted to cry, and she could scarcely tell why.

And then, because of her affection for him, she had finally quarreled with Barton, or nearly that, if one could say that one ever really quarreled with him. It had been because of a certain Thursday evening a few weeks before about which she had disappointed him. In a fit of generosity, knowing that Arthur was coming Wednesday, and because Barton had stopped in at the store to see her, she had told him that he might come, having regretted it afterward, so enamored was she of Arthur. And then when Wednesday came, Arthur had changed his mind, telling her he would come Friday instead, but on Thursday evening he had stopped in at the store and asked her to go to Sparrows Point, with the result that she had no time to notify Barton. He had gone to the house and sat with her parents until ten-thirty, and then, a few days later, although she had written him offering an excuse, had called at the store to complain slightly.

"Do you think you did just right, Shirley? You might have sent word, mightn't you? Who was it—the new fellow you won't tell me about?"

Shirley flared on the instant.

"Supposing it was? What's it to you? I don't belong to you yet, do I? I told you there wasn't any one, and I wish you'd let me alone about that. I couldn't help it last Thursday—that's all—and I don't want you to be fussing with me—that's all. If you don't want to, you needn't come any more, anyhow."

"Don't say that, Shirley," pleaded Barton. "You don't mean that. I won't bother you, though, if you don't want me any more."

And because Shirley sulked, not knowing what else to do, he had gone and she had not seen him since.

And then sometime later when she had thus broken with Barton, avoiding the railway station where he worked, Arthur had failed to come at his appointed time, sending no word until the next day, when a note

came to the store saying that he had been out of town for his firm over Sunday and had not been able to notify her, but that he would call Tuesday. It was an awful blow. At the time, Shirley had a vision of what was to follow. It seemed for the moment as if the whole world had suddenly been reduced to ashes, that there was nothing but black charred cinders anywhere—she felt that about all life. Yet it all came to her clearly then that this was but the beginning of just such days and just such excuses, and that soon, soon, he would come no more. He was beginning to be tired of her and soon he would not even make excuses. She felt it, and it froze and terrified her.

And then, soon after, the indifference which she feared did follow—almost created by her own thoughts, as it were. First, it was a meeting he had to attend somewhere one Wednesday night when he was to have come for her. Then he was going out of town again, over Sunday. Then he was going away for a whole week —it was absolutely unavoidable, he said, his commercial duties were increasing—and once he had casually remarked that nothing could stand in the way where she was concerned—never! She did not think of reproaching him with this; she was too proud. If he was going, he must go. She would not be willing to say to herself that she had ever attempted to hold any man. But, just the same, she was agonized by the thought. When he was with her, he seemed tender enough; only, at times, his eyes wandered and he seemed slightly bored. Other girls, particularly pretty ones, seemed to interest him as much as she did.

And the agony of the long days when he did not come any more for a week or two at a time! The waiting, the brooding, the wondering, at the store and here in her home—in the former place making mistakes at times because she could not get her mind off him and being reminded of them, and here at her own home at nights, being so absent-minded that her parents remarked on it. She felt sure that her parents must be noticing that Arthur was not coming any more, or as much as he had—for she pretended to be going out with him, going to Mabel Gove's instead—and that Barton had deserted her too, he having been driven off by her indifference, never to come any more, perhaps, unless she sought him out.

And then it was that the thought of saving her own face by taking up with Barton once more occurred to her, of using him and his affections and faithfulness and dullness, if you will, to cover up her own dilemma. Only, this ruse was not to be tried until she had written Arthur this one letter—a pretext merely to see if there was a single ray of hope, a letter to be written in a gentle-enough way and asking for the return of the few notes she had written him. She had not seen him now in nearly a month, and the last time she had, he had said he might soon be compelled to leave her awhile—to go to Pittsburgh to work. And it was his reply to this that she now held in her hand—from Pittsburgh! It was frightful! The future without him!

But Barton would never know really what had transpired, if she went back to him. In spite of all her delicious hours with Arthur, she could call him back, she felt sure. She had never really entirely dropped him, and he knew it. He had bored her dreadfully on occasion, arriving on off days when Arthur was not about, with flowers or candy, or both, and sitting on the porch steps and talking of the railroad business and of the whereabouts and doings of some of their old friends. It was shameful, she had thought at times, to see a man so patient, so hopeful, so good-natured as Barton, deceived in this way, and by her, who was so miserable over another. Her parents must see and know, she had thought at these times, but still, what else was she to do?

"I'm a bad girl," she kept telling herself. "I'm all wrong. What right have I to offer Barton what is left?" But still, somehow, she realized that Barton, if she chose to favor him, would only be too grateful for even the leavings of others where she was concerned, and that even yet, if she but deigned to crook a finger, she could have him. He was so simple, so good-natured, so stolid and matter of fact, so different to Arthur whom (she could not help smiling at the thought of it) she was loving now about as Barton loved her—slavishly, hopelessly.

And then, as the days passed and Arthur did not write any more—just this one brief note—she at first grieved horribly, and then in a fit of numb despair attempted, bravely enough from one point of view, to adjust herself to the new situation. Why should she despair? Why die of agony where there were plenty who would still sigh for her—Barton among others? She

was young, pretty, very—many told her so. She could, if she chose, achieve a vivacity which she did not feel. Why should she brook this unkindness without a thought of retaliation? Why shouldn't she enter upon a gay and heartless career, indulging in a dozen flirtations at once—dancing and killing all thoughts of Arthur in a round of frivolities? There were many who beckoned to her. She stood at her counter in the drug store on many a day and brooded over this, but at the thought of which one to begin with, she faltered. After her late love, all were so tame, for the present anyhow.

And then—and then—always there was Barton, the humble or faithful, to whom she had been so unkind and whom she had used and whom she still really liked. So often self-reproaching thoughts in connection with him crept over her. He must have known, must have seen how badly she was using him all this while, and yet he had not failed to come and come, until she had actually quarreled with him, and any one would have seen that it was literally hopeless. She could not help remembering, especially now in her pain, that he adored her. He was not calling on her now at all—by her indifference she had finally driven him away—but a word, a word—she waited for days, weeks, hoping against hope, and then—

The office of Barton's superior in the Great Eastern terminal had always made him an easy object for her blandishments, coming and going, as she frequently did, via this very station. He was in the office of the assistant train-despatcher on the ground floor, where passing to and from the local, which, at times, was quicker than a street-car, she could easily see him by peering in; only, she had carefully avoided him for nearly a year. If she chose now, and would call for a message blank at the adjacent telegraph-window which was a part of his room, and raised her voice as she often had in the past, he could scarcely fail to hear, if he did not see her. And if he did, he would rise and come over—of that she was sure, for he never could resist her. It had been a wile of hers in the old days to do this or to make her presence felt by idling outside. After a month of brooding, she felt that she must act—her position as a deserted girl was too much. She could not stand it any longer really—the eyes of her mother, for one.

It was six-fifteen one evening when, coming out of the store in which she worked, she turned her step disconsolately homeward. Her heart was heavy, her face rather pale and drawn. She had stopped in the store's retiring-room before coming out to add to her charms as much as possible by a little powder and rouge and to smooth her hair. It would not take much to reallure her former sweetheart, she felt sure—and yet it might not be so easy after all. Suppose he had found another? But she could not believe that. It had scarcely been long enough since he had last attempted to see her, and he was really so very, very fond of her and so faithful. He was too slow and certain in his choosing—he had been so with her. Still, who knows? With this thought, she went forward in the evening, feeling for the first time the shame and pain that comes of deception, the agony of having to relinquish an ideal and the feeling of despair that comes to those who find themselves in the position of suppliants, stooping to something which in better days and better fortune they would not know. Arthur was the cause of this.

When she reached the station, the crowd that usually filled it at this hour was swarming. There were so many pairs like Arthur and herself laughing and hurrying away or so she felt. First glancing in the small mirror of a weighing scale to see if she were still of her former charm, she stopped thoughtfully at a little flower stand which stood outside, and for a few pennies purchased a tiny bunch of violets. She then went inside and stood near the window, peering first furtively to see if he were present. He was. Bent over his work, a green shade over his eyes, she could see his solid genial figure at a table. Stepping back a moment to ponder, she finally went forward and, in a clear voice asked,

"May I have a blank, please?"

The infatuation of the discarded Barton was such that it brought him instantly to his feet. In his stodgy, stocky way he rose, his eyes glowing with a friendly hope, his mouth wreathed in smiles, and came over. At the sight of her, pale, but pretty—paler and prettier, really, than he had ever seen her—he thrilled dumbly.

"How are you, Shirley?" he asked sweetly, as he drew near, his eyes searching her face hopefully. He had not seen her for so long that he was intensely hungry, and her paler beauty appealed to him more than ever. Why wouldn't she have him? he was asking himself. Why wouldn't his persistent love yet win her? Perhaps it

might. "I haven't seen you in a month of Sundays, it seems. How are the folks?"

"They're all right, Bart," she smiled archly, "and so am I. How have you been? It has been a long time since I've seen you. I've been wondering how you were. Have you been all right? I was just going to send a message."

As he had approached, Shirley had pretended at first not to see him, a moment later to affect surprise, although she was really suppressing a heavy sigh. The sight of him, after Arthur, was not reassuring. Could she really interest herself in him any more? Could she?

"Sure, sure," he replied genially; "I'm always all right. You couldn't kill me, you know. Not going away, are you, Shirl?" he queried interestedly.

"No; I'm just telegraphing to Mabel. She promised to meet me to-morrow, and I want to be sure she will."

"You don't come past here as often as you did, Shirley," he complained tenderly. "At least, I don't seem to see you so often," he added with a smile. "It isn't anything I have done, is it?" he queried, and then, when she protested quickly, added: "What's the trouble, Shirl? Haven't been sick, have you?"

She affected all her old gaiety and ease, feeling as though she would like to cry.

"Oh, no," she returned; "I've been all right. I've been going through the other door, I suppose, or coming in and going out on the Langdon Avenue car." (This was true, because she had been wanting to avoid him.) "I've been in such a hurry, most nights, that I haven't had time to stop, Bart. You know how late the store keeps us at times."

He remembered, too, that in the old days she had made time to stop or meet him occasionally.

"Yes, I know," he said tactfully. "But you haven't been to any of our old card-parties either of late, have you? At least, I haven't seen you. I've gone to two or three, thinking you might be there."

That was another thing Arthur had done—broken up her interest in these old store and neighborhood parties and a banjo-and-mandolin club to which she had once belonged. They had all seemed so pleasing and amusing in the old days—but now. . . In those days Bart had been her usual companion when his work permitted.

"No," she replied evasively, but with a forced air of pleasant remembrance; "I have often thought of how much fun we had at those, though. It was a shame to drop them. You haven't seen Harry Stull or Trina Trask recently, have you?" she inquired, more to be saying something than for any interest she felt.

He shook his head negatively, then added:

"Yes, I did, too; here in the waiting-room a few nights ago. They were coming down-town to a theater, I suppose."

His face fell slightly as he recalled how it had been their custom to do this, and what their one quarrel had been about. Shirley noticed it. She felt the least bit sorry for him, but much more for herself, coming back so disconsolately to all this.

"Well, you're looking as pretty as ever, Shirley," he continued, noting that she had not written the telegram and that there was something wistful in her glance. "Prettier, I think," and she smiled sadly. Every word that she tolerated from him was as so much gold to him, so much of dead ashes to her. "You wouldn't like to come down some evening this week and see 'The Mouse-Trap,' would you? We haven't been to a theater together in I don't know when." His eyes sought hers in a hopeful, doglike way.

So—she could have him again—that was the pity of it! To have what she really did not want, did not care for! At the least nod now he would come, and this very devotion made it all but worthless, and so sad. She ought to marry him now for certain, if she began in this way, and could in a month's time if she chose, but oh, oh—could she? For the moment she decided that she could not, would not. If he had only repulsed her—told her to go—ignored her—but no; it was her fate to be loved by him in this moving, pleading way, and hers not to love him as she wished to love—to be loved. Plainly, he needed some one like her, whereas she, she—She turned a little sick, a sense of the sacrilege of gaiety at this time creeping into her voice, and exclaimed:

"No, no!" Then seeing his face change, a heavy sadness come over it, "Not this week, anyhow, I mean" ("Not so soon," she had almost said). "I have several engagements this week and I'm not feeling well. But"—seeing his face change, and the thought of her own state returning—"you might come out to the house some evening instead, and then we can go some other time."

His face brightened intensely. It was wonderful how he longed to be with her, how the least favor from her

comforted and lifted him up. She could see also now, however, how little it meant to her, how little it could ever mean, even if to him it was heaven. The old relationship would have to be resumed in toto, once and for all, but did she want it that way now that she was feeling so miserable about this other affair? As she meditated, these various moods racing to and fro in her mind, Barton seemed to notice, and now it occurred to him that perhaps he had not pursued her enough—was too easily put off. She probably did like him yet. This evening, her present visit, seemed to prove it.

"Sure, sure!" he agreed. "I'd like that. I'll come out Sunday, if you say. We can go any time to the play. I'm sorry, Shirley, if you're not feeling well. I've thought of you a lot these days. I'll come out Wednesday, if you don't mind."

She smiled a wan smile. It was all so much easier than she had expected—her triumph—and so ashenlike in consequence, a flavor of dead-sea fruit and defeat about it all, that it was pathetic. How could she, after Arthur? How could he, really?

"Make it Sunday," she pleaded, naming the farthest day off, and then hurried out.

Her faithful lover gazed after her, while she suffered an intense nausea. To think—to think—it should all be coming to this! She had not used her telegraph-blank, and now had forgotten all about it. It was not the simple trickery that discouraged her, but her own future which could find no better outlet than this, could not rise above it apparently, or that she had no heart to make it rise above it. Why couldn't she interest herself in some one different to Barton? Why did she have to return to him? Why not wait and meet some other—ignore him as before? But no, no; nothing mattered now—no one—it might as well be Barton as any one, and she would at least make him happy and at the same time solve her own problem. She went out into the train-shed and climbed into her train. Slowly, after the usual pushing and jostling of a crowd, it drew out toward Latonia, that suburban region in which her home lay. As she rode, she thought.

"What have I just done? What am I doing?" she kept asking herself as the clacking wheels on the rails fell into a rhythmic dance and the houses of the brown, dry, endless city fled past in a maze. "Severing myself decisively from the past—the happy past—for supposing, once I am married, Arthur should return and want me again—suppose! Suppose!"

Below at one place, under a shed, were some market-gardeners disposing of the last remnants of their day's wares—a sickly, dull life, she thought. Here was Rutgers Avenue, with its line of red street-cars, many wagons and tracks and counter-streams of automobiles—how often had she passed it morning and evening in a shuttle-like way, and how often would, unless she got married! And here, now, was the river flowing smoothly between its banks lined with coal-pockets and wharves—away, away to the huge deep sea which she and Arthur had enjoyed so much. Oh, to be in a small boat and drift out, out into the endless, restless, pathless deep! Somehow the sight of this water, to-night and every night, brought back those evenings in the open with Arthur at Sparrows Point, the long line of dancers in Eckert's Pavilion, the woods at Atholby, the park, with the dancers in the pavilion—she choked back a sob. Once Arthur had come this way with her on just such an evening as this, pressing her hand and saying how wonderful she was. Oh, Arthur! Arthur! And now Barton was to take his old place again—forever, no doubt. She could not trifle with her life longer in this foolish way, or his. What was the use? But think of it!

Yes, it must be—forever now, she told herself. She must marry. Time would be slipping by and she would become too old. It was her only future—marriage. It was the only future she had ever contemplated really, a home, children, the love of some man whom she could love as she loved Arthur. Ah, what a happy home that would have been for her! But now, now—

But there must be no turning back now, either. There was no other way. If Arthur ever came back—but fear not, he wouldn't! She had risked so much and lost—lost him. Her little venture into true love had been such a failure Before Arthur had come all had been well enough. Barton, stout and simple and frank and direct, had in some way—how, she could scarcely realize now—offered sufficient of a future. But now, now! He had enough money, she knew, to build a cottage for the two of them. He had told her so. He would do his best always to make her happy, she was sure of that. They could live in about the state her parents were living in—or a little better, not much—and would never want. No doubt there would be children, because he craved them

—several of them—and that would take up her time, long years of it—the sad, gray years! But then Arthur, whose children she would have thrilled to bear, would be no more, a mere memory—think of that!—and Barton, the dull, the commonplace, would have achieved his finest dream—and why?

Because love was a failure for her—that was why—and in her life there could be no more true love. She would never love any one again as she had Arthur. It could not be, she was sure of it. He was too fascinating, too wonderful. Always, always, wherever she might be, whoever she might marry, he would be coming back, intruding between her and any possible love, receiving any possible kiss. It would be Arthur she would be loving or kissing. She dabbed at her eyes with a tiny handkerchief, turned her face close to the window and stared out, and then as the environs of Latonia came into view, wondered (so deep is romance): What if Arthur should come back at some time—or now! Supposing he should be here at the station now, accidentally or on purpose, to welcome her, to soothe her weary heart. He had met her here before. How she would fly to him, lay her head on his shoulder, forget forever that Barton ever was, that they had ever separated for an hour. Oh, Arthur! Arthur!

But no, no; here was Latonia—here the viaduct over her train, the long business street and the cars marked "Center" and "Langdon Avenue" running back into the great city. A few blocks away in tree-shaded Bethune Street, duller and plainer than ever, was her parents' cottage and the routine of that old life which was now, she felt, more fully fastened upon her than ever before—the lawn-mowers, the lawns, the front porches all alike. Now would come the going to and fro of Barton to business as her father and she now went to business, her keeping house, cooking, washing, ironing, sewing for Barton as her mother now did these things for her father and herself. And she would not be in love really, as she wanted to be. Oh, dreadful! She could never escape it really, now that she could endure it less, scarcely for another hour. And yet she must, must, for the sake of—for the sake of—she closed her eyes and dreamed.

She walked up the street under the trees, past the houses and lawns all alike to her own, and found her father on their veranda reading the evening paper. She sighed at the sight.

"Back, daughter?" he called pleasantly.

"Yes."

"Your mother is wondering if you would like steak or liver for dinner. Better tell her."

"Oh, it doesn't matter."

She hurried into her bedroom, threw down her hat and gloves, and herself on the bed to rest silently, and groaned in her soul. To think that it had all come to this!—Never to see him any more!—To see only Barton, and marry him and live in such a street, have four or five children, forget all her youthful companionships—and all to save her face before her parents, and her future. Why must it be? Should it be, really? She choked and stifled. After a little time her mother, hearing her come in, came to the door—thin, practical, affectionate, conventional.

"What's wrong, honey? Aren't you feeling well to-night? Have you a headache? Let me feel."

Her thin cool fingers crept over her temples and hair. She suggested something to eat or a headache powder right away.

"I'm all right, mother. I'm just not feeling well now. Don't bother. I'll get up soon. Please don't."

"Would you rather have liver or steak to-night, dear?"

"Oh, anything—nothing—please don't bother—steak will do—anything"—if only she could get rid of her and be at rest.

Her mother looked at her and shook her head sympathetically, then retreated quietly, saying no more. Lying so, she thought and thought—grinding, destroying thoughts about the beauty of the past, the darkness of the future—until able to endure them no longer she got up and, looking distractedly out of the window into the yard and the house next door, stared at her future fixedly. What should she do? What should she really do? There was Mrs. Kessel in her kitchen getting her dinner as usual, just as her own mother was now, and Mr. Kessel out on the front porch in his shirt-sleeves reading the evening paper. Beyond was Mr. Pollard in his yard, cutting the grass. All along Bethune Street were such houses and such people—simple, commonplace souls all—clerks, managers, fairly successful craftsmen, like her father and Barton, excellent in their way but not like Arthur the beloved, the lost—and here was she, perforce, or by decision of necessity, soon to be one of them, in some such street as this no doubt, forever and—. For the moment it choked and stifled her.

She decided that she would not. No, no, no! There must be some other way—many ways. She did not have to do this unless she really wished to—would not—only—. Then going to the mirror she looked at her face and smoothed her hair.

"But what's the use?" she asked of herself wearily and resignedly after a time. "Why should I cry? Why shouldn't I marry Barton? I don't amount to anything, anyhow. Arthur wouldn't have me. I wanted him, and I am compelled to take some one else—or no one—what difference does it really make who? My dreams are too high, that's all. I wanted Arthur, and he wouldn't have me. I don't want Barton, and he crawls at my feet. I'm a failure, that's what's the matter with me."

And then, turning up her sleeves and removing a fichu which stood out too prominently from her breast, she went into the kitchen and, looking about for an apron, observed:

"Can't I help? Where's the tablecloth?" and finding it among napkins and silverware in a drawer in the adjoining room, proceeded to set the table.

1918

POETS "IN TIME OF HESITATION": Lanier, Dickinson, Moody



Sidney Lanier

1842 • 1881

Sidney Lanier was a Southerner, but he did not belong to the planter aristocracy, nor was he in sympathy with their feudal ideals. His background was urban and professional: his father was a lawyer, and the boy grew up in the little city of Macon, Georgia. When the Civil War broke out shortly after his graduation from Oglethorpe College, he enlisted as a Confederate soldier, and he served faithfully for the war's duration, spending the last five months in a federal prison. But in the novel

Panel (l. to r.): Sidney Lanier at 28 • The Lanier Oak, Brunswick, Georgia • The musician • The Confederate soldier

based upon his war experiences (*Tiger Lilies,* 1867), there is no glorification of war as such, nor idealization of the "lost cause," nor nostalgia for the Southern order destroyed by the war.

Lanier wanted ardently to be a musician and a poet. And since there was little opportunity for the cultivation of music and poetry in the South during the reconstruction years, he sought a more favorable environment, and found it in Baltimore. In that half-Northern, half-Southern city, in the 1870's, he played the flute with professional skill in the Peabody Symphony Orchestra, and lectured on English literature at the Johns Hopkins University. Before he was quite forty, death of tuberculosis cut short a career of promise.

In addition to *Tiger Lilies,* his prose works include *The English Novel, Shakspere and His Forerunners,* and *The Science of English Verse.* In *The English Novel* he prudishly condemns the eighteenth-century English novel as "unsavory muck," and finds the perfect flower of the novel's development in the work of George Eliot. In *Shakspere and His Forerunners* he shows a surprising range of reading (in view of his limited opportunities) in English poetry, including Anglo-Saxon poetry, and is especially attracted to the Elizabethan sonnets. His most significant prose work is *The Science of English Verse,* which is an original and ingenious, though unconvincing, treatment of verse in terms of music. Verse he regards as "in all respects a phenomenon of sound"; "the main distinction between music and verse is . . . the difference between the scale of tones used in music and the scale of tones used by the human speaking-voice." His method of scansion, which employs the musical system of notation, would make a metronome an almost indispensable part of one's equipment

Ardent and excitable, Lanier wrote poetry which suffers from the lack of emotional and intellectual control. His eagerness to embrace all that seemed to him beautiful and noble and his attempt to deal with the problems of modern life resulted in poetry that is frequently confused and febrile, despite the sincerity of its moral idealism. Moreover, his metaphors are often unsuccessful. In "My Springs" his wife's eyes are "two dove-cotes of gray doves"—which is unnatural. In "Sunrise" the sun is "the great Sun-Bee," that flashes from its "hive-hole"—which is belittling. In "Corn" the abandoned Georgia hill is "gashed and hairy Lear" —which is too tragic. Perhaps Lanier read too indiscriminately and too susceptibly in the conceitful English sonnets of the 1590's.

That he was capable of writing with clearly focused objectivity, however, is shown in his narrative poems (notably, "The Revenge of Hamish") and in brief passages in the philosophical poems. One is grateful for many true objective renderings of Southern landscape, even though the objectivity may be only briefly sustained. Lanier is worthy of praise also for his experiments with musical effects in verse. "The Symphony" contains some extraordinary approximations of the sounds of individual instruments. the flute, the violin, "the melting clarionet," "the bold straightforward horn" Equally remarkable is his attempt at "symphonic" structure. The problem must be referred to the musical experts, it has never been dealt with adequately by Lanier's critics, who, unfortunately, have not been musicians. But it may be said here, simply, that "The Marshes of Glynn," for example, appears to be constructed after the manner of a symphony, and should be read as a sequence of symphonic movements, the first of which is the magnificently sustained opening of twenty lines

Lanier's reputation as a poet does not stand nearly so high today as it did at the turn of the century. Hard-boiled critics have resented his prudishness and sentimentality. Logical critics have objected to both the unsoundness of his metaphors and the vagueness and confusion in his thought (a vagueness and confusion, it may be added, which can be found in generous measure in the Victorian poets of England). An influential school of Southern regionalists (see John Crowe Ransom, "Hearts and Heads," *The American Review,* March 1934) has condemned Lanier for the very qualities which had recommended him to progressive Southerners in 1900, namely, in Professor Edwin Mims' phrase, "the cosmopolitanism and modernness of his mind." But after whatever deductions, one may still find much in Lanier to admire. His high devotion to music and poetry was admirable. He has many lines which are felicitous and true. And the musical aspects of his verse are yet to be properly appreciated

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Poems of Sidney Lanier, ed Mary Day Lanier, New York, 1884 • Centennial Edition of the Writings of Sidney Lanier, 10 vols , ed. C R. Anderson and others, Baltimore, 1946 • Edwin Mims, Sidney Lanier, Boston, 1905 • A H. Starke, Sidney Lanier, Chapel Hill, 1933 • S. T. Williams, "Lanier," American Writers on American Literature, ed. John Macy, New York, 1931

Corn

In sending the manuscript of "Corn" to a friend for criticism, Lanier wrote as follows: "I inclose the manuscript of a poem in which I have endeavored to carry some very prosaic matters up to a loftier plane. I have been struck with alarm in seeing the number of old, deserted homesteads and gullied hills in the older counties of Georgia; and though they are dreadfully commonplace, I have thought they are surely mournful enough to be poetic." For further evidence of Lanier's constructive interest in Southern agricultural problems, the student should read his essay "The New South," published in 1880.

After having been rejected by William Dean Howells, editor of the **Atlantic Monthly**, "Corn" was accepted by **Lippincott's Magazine**, in Philadelphia, and appeared in the February 1875 number. It was Lanier's first poem to win wide recognition.

Today the woods are trembling through and through
With shimmering forms, that flash before my view,
Then melt in green as dawn-stars melt in blue.
  The leaves that wave against my cheek caress
  Like women's hands; the embracing boughs express
  A subtlety of mighty tenderness;
  The copse-depths into little noises start,
  That sound anon like beatings of a heart,
  Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart.
  The beech dreams balm, as a dreamer hums a song;
  Through that vague wafture, expirations strong
  Throb from young hickories breathing deep and long
With stress and urgence bold of prisoned spring
    And ecstasy of burgeoning.
  Now, since the dew-plashed road of morn is dry,
  Forth venture odors of more quality
  And heavenlier giving. Like Jove's locks awry,
    Long muscadines
Rich-wreathe the spacious foreheads of great pines,
And breathe ambrosial passion from their vines.
  I pray with mosses, ferns and flowers shy
  That hide like gentle nuns from human eye
  To lift adoring perfumes to the sky.
I hear faint bridal-sighs of brown and green
Dying to silent hints of kisses keen
As far lights fringe into a pleasant sheen.
  I start at fragmentary whispers, blown
  From undertalks of leafy souls unknown,
  Vague purports sweet, of inarticulate tone.

Dreaming of gods, men, nuns and brides, between
Old companies of oaks that inward lean
To join their radiant amplitudes of green
  I slowly move, with ranging looks that pass
  Up from the matted miracles of grass
Into yon veined complex of space,
Where sky and leafage interlace
  So close, the heaven of blue is seen
  Inwoven with a heaven of green.

I wander to the zigzag-cornered fence
Where sassafras, intrenched in brambles dense,
Contests with stolid vehemence
  The march of culture, setting limb and thorn
  As pikes against the army of the corn.

There, while I pause, my fieldward-faring eyes
Take harvests, where the stately corn-ranks rise,
    Of inward dignities
And large benignities and insights wise,
    Graces and modest majesties.
Thus, without theft, I reap another's field;
Thus, without tilth, I house a wondrous yield,
And heap my heart with quintuple crops concealed.

Look, out of line one tall corn-captain stands
Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,
  And waves his blades upon the very edge
  And hottest thicket of the battling hedge.
Thou lustrous stalk, that ne'er mayst walk nor talk,
  Still shalt thou type the poet-soul sublime
  That leads the vanward of his timid time
  And sings up cowards with commanding rhyme—
Soul calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
By double increment, above, below;
  Soul homely, as thou art, yet rich in grace like thee,

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50 tilth, act of tilling or cultivating the soil

Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry
That moves in gentle curves of courtesy;
Soul filled like thy long veins with sweetness tense,
By every godlike sense
Transmuted from the four wild elements.
Drawn to high plans,
Thou lift'st more stature than a mortal man's,
Yet ever piercest downward in the mold
And keepest hold
Upon the reverend and steadfast earth
That gave thee birth;
Yea, standest smiling in thy future grave,
Serene and brave,
With unremitting breath
Inhaling life from death,
Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
Thyself thy monument.

As poets should
Thou hast built up thy hardihood
With universal food,
Drawn in select proportion fair
From honest mold and vagabond air;
From darkness of the dreadful night,
And joyful light;
From antique ashes, whose departed flame
In thee has finer life and longer fame;
From wounds and balms,
From storms and calms,
From potsherds and dry bones
And ruin-stones.
Into thy vigorous substance thou hast wrought
Whate'er the hand of Circumstance hath brought;
Yea, into cool solacing green hast spun
White radiance hot from out the sun.
So thou dost mutually leaven
Strength of earth with grace of heaven;
So thou dost marry new and old
Into a one of higher mold;
So thou dost reconcile the hot and cold,
The dark and bright,
And many a heart-perplexing opposite:
And so,
Akin by blood to high and low,
Fitly thou playest out thy poet's part,
Richly expending thy much-bruisèd heart
In equal care to nourish lord in hall
Or beast in stall:
Thou took'st from all that thou might'st give to all.

O steadfast dweller on the selfsame spot
Where thou wast born, that still repinest not—
Type of the home-fond heart, the happy lot!—
Deeply thy mild content rebukes the land
Whose flimsy homes, built on the shifting sand
Of trade, forever rise and fall
With alternation whimsical,
Enduring scarce a day,
Then swept away
By swift engulfments of incalculable tides
Whereon capricious Commerce rides.
Look, thou substantial spirit of content!
Across this little vale, thy continent,
To where, beyond the moldering mill,
Yon old deserted Georgian hill
Bares to the sun his piteous aged crest
And seamy breast,
By restless-hearted children left to lie
Untended there beneath the heedless sky,
As barbarous folk expose their old to die.
Upon that generous-rounding side,
With gullies scarified
Where keen Neglect his lash hath plied,
Dwelt one I knew of old, who played at toil,
And gave to coquette Cotton soul and soil.
Scorning the slow reward of patient grain,
He sowed his heart with hopes of swifter gain,
Then sat him down and waited for the rain.
He sailed in borrowed ships of usury—
A foolish Jason on a treacherous sea,
Seeking the Fleece and finding misery.
Lulled by smooth-rippling loans, in idle trance
He lay, content that unthrift Circumstance
Should plow for him the stony field of Chance.
Yea, gathering crops whose worth no man might tell,
He staked his life on games of Buy-and-Sell,
And turned each field into a gambler's hell.
Aye, as each year began,
My farmer to the neighboring city ran;

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91 **potsherds**, fragments of broken earthen pots, as in Job 2 8: "And he took a potsherd to scrape himself withal . . ." • 132 **scarified**, cut • 135 **coquette Cotton**. Contrast Timrod's attitude toward cotton in "Ethnogenesis" and "The Cotton Boll" • 140 **Jason**, in Greek mythology, went in quest of the Golden Fleece

Passed with a mournful anxious face
Into the banker's inner place;
Parleyed, excused, pleaded for longer grace;
  Railed at the drought, the worm, the rust, the grass;
  Protested ne'er again 'twould come to pass;
  With many an *oh* and *if* and *but alas*
Parried or swallowed searching questions rude,
And kissed the dust to soften Dives's mood.
At last, small loans by pledges great renewed,
  He issues smiling from the fatal door,
  And buys with lavish hand his yearly store
  Till his small borrowings will yield no more.
Aye, as each year declined,
With bitter heart and ever-brooding mind
He mourned his fate unkind.
  In dust, in rain, with might and main,
  He nursed his cotton, cursed his grain,
  Fretted for news that made him fret again,
Snatched at each telegram of Future Sale,
And thrilled with Bulls' or Bears' alternate wail—
In hope or fear alike forever pale.
  And thus from year to year, through hope and fear,
  With many a curse and many a secret tear,
  Striving in vain his cloud of debt to clear,
    At last
He woke to find his foolish dreaming past,
  And all his best-of-life the easy prey
  Of squandering scamps and quacks that lined his way
    With vile array,
From rascal statesman down to petty knave;
Himself, at best, for all his bragging brave,
A gamester's catspaw and a banker's slave.
  Then, worn and gray, and sick with deep unrest,
  He fled away into the oblivious West,
  Unmourned, unblest.

Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear
Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer—
  King, that no subject man nor beast may own,
  Discrowned, undaughtered and alone—
Yet shall the great God turn thy fate,
And bring thee back into thy monarch state
    And majesty immaculate.
  Lo, through hot waverings of the August morn,
  Thou givest from thy vasty sides forlorn
  Visions of golden treasuries of corn—
Ripe largesse lingering for some bolder heart
That manfully shall take thy part,
    And tend thee,
    And defend thee,
With antique sinew and with modern art.

1874·1875

The Symphony

Lanier wrote to a friend on March 24, 1875, concerning the composition of "The Symphony": "About four days ago, a certain poem which I had vaguely ruminated a week before took hold of me like a real James River ague, and I have been in a mortal shake with the same, day and night, ever since. I call it 'The Symphony': I personify each instrument in the orchestra, and make them discuss various deep social questions of the times, in the progress of the music." The "deep social questions" have to do with the evils of "Trade": the poem is an indictment of "Trade," by which Lanier means not only industrialism or the factory system, but all competitive business.

> Does business mean, Die, you—live, I?
> Then 'Trade is trade' but sings a lie:
> 'Tis only war grown miserly.

Humanitarian sympathy, moral idealism, an artist's temperament, devotion to the chivalric code ("Trade killed Chivalry," he said), and the aristocratic Southern tradition—all unite, no doubt, to explain his contempt for the commercial spirit of the modern age.

153 **worm**, bollworm, which devours the bolls of the cotton plant. The boll weevil did not invade the South until the 1890's • 157 **Dives**, the rich man in "the parable of the rich man and Lazarus." The proper name does not appear in the Biblical account (Luke 16.19-31), but owes its origin to the Latin adjective "dives" (meaning "rich") in the Vulgate. The name is here applied to the banker of l. 151 • 168 **Future Sale**, speculative selling for delivery at a future time; dealing in "futures" • 169 **Bulls**, those who buy, expecting a rise in price • 169 **Bears**, those who sell, expecting a fall in price • 181 **gamester's catspaw**, gambler's tool • 185 **Lear . . . Cordelia**, a reference to King Lear, of Shakespeare's play, who was cruelly abused by his older daughters, and devotedly cared for by his youngest daughter, Cordelia • 194 **vasty**, vast. This word occurs in Shakespeare • 196 **largesse**, bounty or reward. The word is Chaucerian

The poem's argument is less interesting than its style. Many lines are marvelously suggestive of the tones of the individual instruments and of orchestral effects.

The poem first appeared in Lippincott's Magazine for June 1875.

"O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead!
The Time needs heart—'tis tired of head:
We're all for love," the violins said.
"Of what avail the rigorous tale
Of bill for coin and box for bale?
Grant thee, O Trade! thine uttermost hope:
Level red gold with blue sky-slope,
And base it deep as devils grope:
When all's done, what hast thou won
Of the only sweet that's under the sun?
Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh
Of true love's least, least ecstasy?"
Then, with a bridegroom's heart-beats trembling,
All the mightier strings assembling
Ranged them on the violins' side
As when the bridegroom leads the bride,
And, heart in voice, together cried:
"Yea, what avail the endless tale
Of gain by cunning and plus by sale?
Look up the land, look down the land,
The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand
Wedged by the pressing of Trade's hand
Against an inward-opening door
That pressure tightens evermore:
They sigh a monstrous foul-air sigh
For the outside leagues of liberty,
Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky
Into a heavenly melody.
'Each day, all day' (these poor folks say),
'In the same old year-long, drear-long way,
We weave in the mills and heave in the kilns,
We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,
And thieve much gold from the Devil's bank tills,
To relieve, O God, what manner of ills?—
The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die;
And so do we, and the world's a sty;
Hush, fellow-swine: why nuzzle and cry?
Swinehood hath no remedy
Say many men, and hasten by,
Clamping the nose and blinking the eye.
But who said once, in the lordly tone,
Man shall not live by bread alone
But all that cometh from the Throne?
Hath God said so?
But Trade saith *No:*
And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say *Go!*
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we know.
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;
'Trade is trade.'"
Thereat this passionate protesting
Meekly changed, and softened till
It sank to sad requesting
And suggesting sadder still:
"And oh, if men might some time see
How piteous-false the poor decree
That trade no more than trade must be!
Does business mean, *Die, you—live, I?*
Then 'Trade is trade' but sings a lie:
'Tis only war grown miserly.
If business is battle, name it so:
War-crimes less will shame it so,
And widows less will blame it so.
Alas, for the poor to have some part
In yon sweet living lands of Art,
Makes problem not for head, but heart.
Vainly might Plato's brain revolve it:
Plainly the heart of a child could solve it."

And then, as when from words that seem but rude
We pass to silent pain that sits abrood
Back in our heart's great dark and solitude,
So sank the strings to gentle throbbing
Of long chords change-marked with sobbing—
Motherly sobbing, not distinctlier heard
Than half wing-openings of the sleeping bird,
Some dream of danger to her young hath stirred.
Then stirring and demurring ceased, and lo!
Every least ripple of the strings' song-flow
Died to a level with each level bow
And made a great chord tranquil-surfaced so,

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4 tale, a reckoning by numbers • 42 Man . . . Throne. Compare Luke 4:4

As a brook beneath his curving bank doth go
To linger in the sacred dark and green
Where many boughs the still pool overlean
And many leaves make shadow with their sheen.
  But presently
A velvet flute-note fell down pleasantly
Upon the bosom of that harmony,
And sailed and sailed incessantly,
As if a petal from a wild-rose blown
Had fluttered down upon that pool of tone
And boatwise dropped o' the convex side
And floated down the glassy tide
And clarified and glorified
The solemn spaces where the shadows bide.
From the warm concave of that fluted note
Somewhat, half song, half odor, forth did float,
As if a rose might somehow be a throat:
"When Nature from her far-off glen
Flutes her soft messages to men,
  The flute can say them o'er again;
  Yea, Nature, singing sweet and lone,
Breathes through life's strident polyphone
The flute-voice in the world of tone.
  Sweet friends,
  Man's love ascends
To finer and diviner ends
Than man's mere thought e'er comprehends,
For I, e'en I,
As here I lie,
A petal on a harmony,
Demand of Science whence and why
Man's tender pain, man's inward cry,
When he doth gaze on earth and sky?
I am not overbold:
  I hold
Full powers from Nature manifold.
I speak for each no-tonguèd tree
That, spring by spring, doth nobler be,
And dumbly and most wistfully
His mighty prayerful arms outspreads
Above men's oft-unheeding heads,
And his big blessing downward sheds.
I speak for all-shaped blooms and leaves,
Lichens on stones and moss on eaves,
Grasses and grains in ranks and sheaves;
Broad-fronded ferns and keen-leaved canes,
And briery mazes bounding lanes,
And marsh-plants, thirsty-cupped for rains,
And milky stems and sugary veins;
For every long-armed woman-vine
That round a piteous tree doth twine;
For passionate odors, and divine
Pistils, and petals crystalline;
All purities of shady springs,
All shynesses of film-winged things
That fly from tree-trunks and bark-rings;
All modesties of mountain-fawns
That leap to covert from wild lawns,
And tremble if the day but dawns;
All sparklings of small beady eyes
Of birds, and sidelong glances wise
Wherewith the jay hints tragedies;
All piquancies of prickly burs,
And smoothnesses of downs and furs,
Of eiders and of minivers;
All limpid honeys that do lie
At stamen-bases, nor deny
The humming-birds' fine roguery,
Bee-thighs, nor any butterfly,
All gracious curves of slender wings,
Bark-mottlings, fibre-spiralings,
Fern-wavings and leaf-flickerings;
Each dial-marked leaf and flower-bell
Wherewith in every lonesome dell
Time to himself his hours doth tell;
All tree-sounds, rustlings of pine-cones,
Wind-sighings, doves' melodious moans,
And night's unearthly under-tones;
All placid lakes and waveless deeps,
All cool reposing mountain-steeps,
Vale-calms and tranquil lotos-sleeps;—
Yea, all fair forms, and sounds, and lights,
And warmths, and mysteries, and mights,
Of Nature's utmost depths and heights.
—These doth my timid tongue present,
Their mouthpiece and leal instrument

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126 **Broad-fronded,** broad-leafed • 145 **minivers,** ermines or weasels in white winter coats • 157 **doves' . . . moans** echoes Tennyson's "moan of doves in immemorial elms" in **The Princess,** Song VII, l. 207 • 161 **lotos-sleeps.** The lotus fruit, when eaten, produced a dreamy contentment and complete forgetfulness of home and friends; see Tennyson's "Lotus-Eaters"

And servant, all love-eloquent.
I heard, when *'All for love'* the violins cried:
So, Nature calls through all her system wide,
Give me thy love, O man, so long denied.
Much time is run, and man hath changed his ways,
Since Nature, in the antique fable-days,
Was hid from man's true love by proxy fays,
False fauns and rascal gods that stole her praise.
The nymphs, cold creatures of man's colder brain,
Chilled Nature's streams till man's warm heart was fain
Never to lave its love in them again.
Later, a sweet Voice *Love thy neighbor* said,
Then first the bounds of neighborhood outspread
Beyond all confines of old ethnic dread,
Vainly the Jew might wag his covenant head:
'All men are neighbors,' so the sweet Voice said.
So, when man's arms had circled all man's race,
The liberal compass of his warm embrace
Stretched bigger yet in the dark bounds of space;
With hands a-grope he felt smooth Nature's grace,
Drew her to breast and kissed her sweetheart face:
Yea, man found neighbors in great hills and trees
And streams and clouds and suns and birds and bees,
And throbbed with neighbor-loves in loving these.
But oh, the poor! the poor! the poor!
That stand by the inward-opening door
Trade's hand doth tighten ever more,
And sigh their monstrous foul-air sigh
For the outside hills of liberty,
Where Nature spreads her wild blue sky
For Art to make into melody!
Thou Trade! thou king of the modern days!
    Change thy ways,
    Change thy ways;
Let the sweaty laborers file
    A little while,
    A little while,
Where Art and Nature sing and smile.
Trade! is thy heart all dead, all dead?
And hast thou nothing but a head?
I'm all for heart," the flute-voice said,
And into sudden silence fled,
Like as a blush that while 'tis red
Dies to a still, still white instead.

Thereto a thrilling calm succeeds,
Till presently the silence breeds
A little breeze among the reeds
That seems to blow by sea-marsh weeds:
Then from the gentle stir and fret
Sings out the melting clarionet,
Like as a lady sings while yet
Her eyes with salty tears are wet.
"O Trade! O Trade!" the Lady said,
"I too will wish thee utterly dead
If all thy heart is in thy head.
For O my God! and O my God!
What shameful ways have women trod
At beckoning of Trade's golden rod!
Alas when sighs are traders' lies,
And heart's-ease eyes and violet eyes
    Are merchandise!
O purchased lips that kiss with pain!
O cheeks coin-spotted with smirch and stain!
O trafficked hearts that break in twain!
—And yet what wonder at my sisters' crime?
So hath Trade withered up Love's sinewy prime,
Men love not women as in olden time.
Ah, not in these cold merchantable days
Deem men their life an opal gray, where plays
The one red Sweet of gracious ladies'-praise.
Now, comes a suitor with sharp prying eye—
Says, *Here, you Lady, if you'll sell, I'll buy:*
Come, heart for heart—a trade? What! weeping? why?
Shame on such wooers' dapper mercery!
I would my lover kneeling at my feet
In humble manliness should cry, *O sweet!*
I know not if thy heart my heart will greet:
I ask not if thy love my love can meet:
Whate'er thy worshipful soft tongue shall say,
I'll kiss thine answer, be it yea or nay:
I do but know I love thee, and I pray
To be thy knight until my dying day.
Woe him that cunning trades in hearts contrives!
Base love good women to base loving drives.
If men loved larger, larger were our lives,
And wooed they nobler, won they nobler wives."

There thrust the bold straightforward horn
To battle for that lady lorn,

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178 Love . . . neighbor. See Matthew 22 39 • 181 covenant refers to the legalism of the Old Testament • 240 dapper mercery, slick bargaining

With heartsome voice of mellow scorn,
Like any knight in knighthood's morn.
"Now comfort thee," said he,
"Fair Lady.
For God shall right thy grievous wrong,
And man shall sing thee a true-love song,
Voiced in act his whole life long,
Yea, all thy sweet life long,
Fair Lady.
Where's he that craftily hath said,
The day of chivalry is dead?
I'll prove that lie upon his head,
Or I will die instead,
Fair Lady.
Is Honor gone into his grave?
Hath Faith become a caitiff knave,
And Selfhood turned into a slave
To work in Mammon's cave,
Fair Lady?
Will Truth's long blade ne'er gleam again?
Hath Giant Trade in dungeons slain
All great contempts of mean-got gain
And hates of inward stain,
Fair Lady?
For aye shall name and fame be sold,
And place be hugged for the sake of gold,
And smirch-robed Justice feebly scold
At Crime all money-bold,
Fair Lady?
Shall self-wrapt husbands aye forget
Kiss-pardons for the daily fret
Wherewith sweet wifely eyes are wet—
Blind to lips kiss-wise set—
Fair Lady?
Shall lovers higgle, heart for heart,
Till wooing grows a trading mart
Where much for little, and all for part,
Make love a cheapening art,
Fair Lady?
Shall woman scorch for a single sin
That her betrayer may revel in,
And she be burnt, and he but grin
When that the flames begin,
Fair Lady?
Shall ne'er prevail the woman's plea,
We maids would far, far whiter be
If that our eyes might sometimes see
Men maids in purity,
Fair Lady?
Shall Trade aye salve his conscience-aches
With jibes at Chivalry's old mistakes—
The wars that o'erhot knighthood makes
For Christ's and ladies' sakes,
Fair Lady?
Now by each knight that e'er hath prayed
To fight like a man and love like a maid,
Since Pembroke's life, as Pembroke's blade,
I' the scabbard, death, was laid,
Fair Lady,
I dare avouch my faith is bright
That God doth right and God hath might.
Nor time hath changed His hair to white,
Nor His dear love to spite,
Fair Lady.
I doubt no doubts: I strive, and shrive my clay,
And fight my fight in the patient modern way
For true love and for thee—ah me! and pray
To be thy knight until my dying day,
Fair Lady."
Made end that knightly horn, and spurred away
Into the thick of the melodious fray.

And then the hautboy played and smiled,
And sang like any large-eyed child,
Cool-hearted and all undefiled.
"Huge Trade!" he said,
"Would thou wouldst lift me on thy head
And run where'er my finger led!
Once said a Man—and wise was He—
Never shalt thou the heavens see,
Save as a little child thou be."
Then o'er sea-lashings of commingling tunes
The ancient wise bassoons,
Like weird,

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264 **Where's . . . dead,** an allusion to a famous passage in Edmund Burke's **Reflections on the Revolution in France** ("But the age of chivalry is gone. . . ."), though "craftily" is meant to apply not at all to Burke, but perhaps to some anonymous cynic • 272 **Mammon's cave,** described in Spenser's **Faerie Queene,** Bk. II, Canto vii, is filled with "great heapes of gold" • 292 **cheapening,** bargaining • 311 **Pembroke,** probably William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke (1580-1630). Lanier may have had in mind Pembroke's participation in 1606 in a tournament, in which he spoke a challenge to all "knights adventurers of hereditary note" • 333 **Never . . . be.** See Matthew 18:3

Gray-beard
Old harpers sitting on the high sea-dunes,
Chanted runes:
"Bright-waved gain, gray-waved loss,
The sea of all doth lash and toss,
One wave forward and one across:
But now 'twas trough, now 'tis crest,
And worst doth foam and flash to best,
And curst to blest.

"Life! Life! thou sea-fugue, writ from east to west,
Love, Love alone can pore
On thy dissolving score
Of harsh half-phrasings,
Blotted ere writ,
And double erasings
Of chords most fit.
Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
May read thy weltering palimpsest.
To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,
And ever to solve the discords true—
Love alone can do.
And ever Love hears the poor-folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women's sighing,
And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.

"And yet shall Love himself be heard,
Though long deferred, though long deferred:
O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred:
Music is Love in search of a word."

1875

The Revenge of Hamish

The story of "The Revenge of Hamish" was based upon an incident in William Black's **Macleod of Dare**, a novel appearing serially in **Harper's Magazine** in 1878 (see A. H. Starke, **Sidney Lanier**, p. 310). Lanier achieves in this poem something of the economy, naturalness, and directness of the old ballads. Different in both style and subject matter from his usual work, "The Revenge of Hamish" is interesting not only in itself but as evidence of the craftsman's virtuosity and the catholic literary interests of its author.

It was three slim does and a ten-tined buck in the bracken lay;
And all of a sudden the sinister smell of a man,
Awaft on a wind-shift, wavered and ran,
Down the hill-side and sifted along through the bracken and passed that way.

Then Nan got a-tremble at nostril; she was the daintiest doe;
In the print of her velvet flank on the velvet fern
She reared, and rounded her ears in turn.
Then the buck leapt up, and his head as a king's to a crown did go

Full high in the breeze, and he stood as if Death had the form of a deer;
And the two slim does long lazily stretching arose,
For their day-dream slowlier came to a close,
Till they woke and were still, breath-bound with waiting and wonder and fear.

Then Alan the huntsman sprang over the hillock, the hounds shot by,
The does and the ten-tined buck made a marvellous bound,
The hounds swept after with never a sound,
But Alan loud winded his horn in sign that the quarry was nigh.

For at dawn of that day proud Maclean of Lochbuy to the hunt had waxed wild,
And he cursed at old Alan till Alan fared off with the hounds
For to drive him the deer to the lower glen-grounds:
"I will kill a red deer," quoth Maclean, "in the sight of the wife and the child."

The Symphony • 367 **O'er . . . whirred** recalls the dove sent from Noah's ark; see Genesis 8 8-12

The Revenge of Hamish • 1 **ten-tined**, ten branches of the antler

So gayly he paced with the wife and the child to his chosen stand;
But he hurried tall Hamish the henchman ahead: "Go turn,"—
Cried Maclean,—"if the deer seek to cross to the burn,
Do thou turn them to me: nor fail, lest thy back be red as thy hand."

Now hard-fortuned Hamish, half blown of his breath with the height of the hill,
Was white in the face when the ten-tined buck and the does
Drew leaping to burn-ward; huskily rose
His shouts, and his nether lip twitched, and his legs were o'er-weak for his will.

So the deer darted lightly by Hamish and bounded away to the burn.
But Maclean never bating his watch tarried waiting below;
Still Hamish hung heavy with fear for to go
All the space of an hour; then he went, and his face was greenish and stern,

And his eye sat back in the socket, and shrunken the eye-balls shone,
As withdrawn from a vision of deeds it were shame to see.
"Now, now, grim henchman, what is 't with thee?"
Brake Maclean, and his wrath rose red as a beacon the wind hath upblown.

"Three does and a ten-tined buck made out," spoke Hamish, full mild,
"And I ran for to turn, but my breath it was blown; and they passed;
I was weak, for ye called ere I broke me my fast."
Cried Maclean: "Now a ten-tined buck in the sight of the wife and the child
I had killed if the gluttonous kern had not wrought me a snail's own wrong!"
Then he sounded, and down came kinsmen and clansmen all:
"Ten blows, for ten tine, on his back let fall,
And reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of thong!"

So Hamish made bare, and took him his strokes; at the last he smiled.
"Now I'll to the burn," quoth Maclean, "for it still may be,
If a slimmer-paunched henchman will hurry with me,
I shall kill me the ten-tined buck for a gift to the wife and the child!"

Then the clansmen departed, by this path and that; and over the hill
Sped Maclean with an outward wrath for an inward shame;
And that place of the lashing full quiet became;
And the wife and the child stood sad; and bloody-backed Hamish sat still.

But look! red Hamish has risen; quick about and about turns he.
"There is none betwixt me and the crag-top!" he screams under breath.
Then, livid as Lazarus lately from death,
He snatches the child from the mother, and clambers the crag toward the sea.

Now the mother drops breath; she is dumb, and her heart goes dead for a space,
Till the motherhood, mistress of death, shrieks, shrieks through the glen,
And that place of the lashing is live with men,
And Maclean, and the gillie that told him, dash up in a desperate race.

Not a breath's time for asking; an eye-glance reveals all the tale untold
They follow mad Hamish afar up the crag toward the sea,
And the lady cries: "Clansmen, run for a fee!
Yon castle and lands to the two first hands that shall hook him and hold

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23 burn, brook • 41 kern, peasant, boor • 55 Lazarus. The account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead is given in John 11

"Fast Hamish back from the brink!"—and ever she flies up the steep,
And the clansmen pant, and they sweat, and they jostle and strain.
But, mother, 'tis vain; but, father, 'tis vain;
Stern Hamish stands bold on the brink, and dangles the child o'er the deep.

Now a faintness falls on the men that run, and they all stand still.
And the wife prays Hamish as if he were God, on her knees,
Crying: "Hamish! O Hamish! but please, but please
For to spare him!" and Hamish still dangles the child, with a wavering will.

On a sudden he turns; with a sea-hawk scream, and a gibe, and a song,
Cries: "So; I will spare ye the child if, in sight of ye all,
Ten blows on Maclean's bare back shall fall,
And ye reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of the thong!"

Then Maclean he set hardly his tooth to his lip that his tooth was red,
Breathed short for a space, said: "Nay, but it never shall be!
Let me hurl off the damnable hound in the sea!"
But the wife: "Can Hamish go fish us the child from the sea, if dead?

"Say yea!—Let them lash *me,* Hamish?"—"Nay!"—"Husband, the lashing will heal;
But, oh, who will heal me the bonny sweet bairn in his grave?
Could ye cure me my heart with the death of a knave?
Quick! Love! I will bare thee—so—kneel!" Then Maclean 'gan slowly to kneel

With never a word, till presently downward he jerked to the earth.
Then the henchman—he that smote Hamish—would tremble and lag;
"Strike, hard!" quoth Hamish, full stern, from the crag;
Then he struck him, and "One!" sang Hamish, and danced with the child in his mirth.

And no man spake beside Hamish; he counted each stroke with a song.
When the last stroke fell, then he moved him a pace down the height,
And he held forth the child in the heartaching sight
Of the mother, and looked all pitiful grave, as repenting a wrong.

And there as the motherly arms stretched out with the thanksgiving prayer—
And there as the mother crept up with a fearful swift pace,
Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie's face—
In a flash fierce Hamish turned round and lifted the child in the air,

And sprang with the child in his arms from the horrible height in the sea,
Shrill screeching, "Revenge!" in the wind-rush; and pallid Maclean,
Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,
Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and locked hold of dead roots of a tree—

And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood from his back drip-dripped in the brine,
And a sea-hawk flung down a skeleton fish as he flew,
And the mother stared white on the waste of blue,
And the wind drove a cloud to seaward, and the sun began to shine.

1878

The Marshes of Glynn

"The Marshes of Glynn" first appeared in A Masque of Poets, a collection of anonymous verse by various authors published in Boston in 1878. The marshes described are located near Brunswick, Georgia. The poem shows "Lanier's spiritual maturity," says Starke, "to which he has worked through all his other poems." It is the best known and perhaps the best loved of his compositions.

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—

Emerald twilights,—
Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,
Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire,—
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of leaves,—
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that grieves,
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-day long did shine
Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth seem
Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of the oak,
And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome sound of the stroke
Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn
Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me of yore
When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bitterness sore,
And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable pain
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face
The vast sweet visage of space.
To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the dawn,
For a mete and a mark
To the forest-dark:—
So:
Affable live-oak, leaning low,—
Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!),
Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand
On the firm-packed sand,
Free
By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.
Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering band
Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the folds of the land.
Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines linger and curl
As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.
Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping of light.
And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods stands high?
The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and the sky!
A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad in the blade,
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or a shade,
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!

Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies.
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty the sea
Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,
Everywhere,
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the low-lying lanes,
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
Farewell, my lord Sun!
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass stir;
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr;
Passeth, and all is still and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvellous marshes of Glynn.

1878

Emily Dickinson

1830 • 1886

On April 16, 1862, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a clergyman in Worcester, Massachusetts, found in his mailbox a strange little note. "Mr. Higginson,—" it began, "Are you too deeply occupied to say if my verse is alive?" Enclosed were four extraordinary little poems and, tucked away in a separate envelope, as if the writer had wished to hide it, the poet's name—Emily Dickinson.

Higginson, intrigued by the quaint way his correspondent had written him and impressed by the unusual talent shown in the poetry, wrote of his admiration for Miss Dickinson's songs, asked to see more, and made some inquiries about his reticent correspondent's life.



Her reply contained vague answers to his questions, as if she were eager to keep details about her life secret. To his query about her age, for instance, she replied somewhat irrelevantly that she had written little poetry "until this winter, sir." "You ask of my companions," she said a few lines later. "Hills, sir, and the sundown, and a dog large as myself, that my father bought me. They are better than beings because they know, but do not tell; and the noise in the pool at noon excels my piano." At the end she expressed fear that her "story" was growing fatiguing and asked innocently whether her letter told what he had asked her to tell.

The incident might typify the way knowledge of this shy, playful, odd poet has eluded biographers Some facts about her are clear enough: that she was the daughter of Lawyer Edward Dickinson of Amherst, Massachusetts, a rather stern Calvinist, that despite her repressive surroundings she was a vivacious, fun-loving girl; that she was well educated in the Amherst Academy and Mount Holyoke, that in time, something happened to her which caused her to become a recluse in her house at Amherst, writing much verse but refusing to publish it.

Exactly what led to Miss Dickinson's reclusiveness has been explained in various ways by various biographers, most of whom have found evidence of an unhappy love affair, though agreement has not been reached about even the identity of the man she supposedly loved. Probably the most believable version of her story is that written by Professor George F. Whicher. His thesis is that most of Miss Dickinson's few relationships with men were completely intellectual, her only "love" was all on her side and the object of it was never aware of it, and she did not become a recluse suddenly and dramatically but drifted by degrees into her habit of living apart from the world.

What is even more puzzling than the details of her life is the paradox of her personality. Here is a child of New England Puritanism sternly reared in a strict household, shut off from much of life, increasingly retiring. But here also is a playful humorist, a passionate rebel, daring in her feeling, thinking, and expression. Here, too, as more and more readers recognize, is a fine poet. For, though details about Miss Dickinson's biography have led, in studies of her, to somewhat more emphasis on her personal history, somewhat less on her work, than may be desirable, she has been given growing recognition as a poet of significance. The first selection of her poetry, published posthumously in 1890, was frequently reprinted, and other selections appeared in 1892, 1896, 1914, 1924, 1929, 1936, and 1945. Beginning in the 1920's many critics have praised her, along with Whitman, for pioneering in modern poetry.

The uses Miss Dickinson made of imperfect rhyme or eye-rhyme, the liberties she took with grammar and rhythm, and, in particular, her habit of packing her lines with cryptic meanings have endeared her to present-day readers. Too, her vivid imagination and her playful spirit made her as fond of poetic conceits as John

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Panel (l. to r.)· The Dickinson home at Amherst • Emily Dickinson at 20 • Early spring in Massachusetts

Donne, idol of the moderns, had been in the seventeenth century. The resemblance to Donne was almost certainly not the result of imitation: like the best modern poets, Miss Dickinson evolved a way of her own with words. Higginson, on reading her verse, thought perhaps Whitman's style had influenced her; but she said she had never read him—that she had been told "that he was disgraceful." Emerson, however, she knew in person and as an author, and Professor Boynton has noted important stylistic resemblances between the verse of the Transcendentalist leader and that of Miss Dickinson. "How many fairly discriminating readers," asks Mr. Boynton, "might be puzzled if asked to tell which of the poets wrote the following quatrains?

He who has no hands
Perforce must use his tongue;
Foxes are so cunning
Because they are not strong.

Ever the Rock of Ages melts
  Into the mineral air,
To be the quarry whence to build
  Thought and its mansions fair.

They are, in fact, both Emerson's; but it is doubtful if any but Emersoniacs and Emilists could be certain in their ascriptions, and even then the answer would depend more on recognition than on judgment." Mr. Boynton correctly adds that despite this similarity it would be wrong to see in the younger poet either an imitator or an unconscious reflection of the older—that Emerson's influence at most simply was "effective in reinforcing what 'the candidate preliminary was.'" Yet the kinship of her technique with that of two of the most radical prosodic innovators of her time is significant.

Significant also is the kinship of Miss Dickinson's way of thinking with that of her day. As Professor Whicher says, "What she actually represents is the last surprising bloom—the November witch-hazel blossom—of New England's flowering time . . . . She was a child of the Golden Day and never lost the impress of the period. Three of its strongest currents came to a confluence in her poetry: The Puritan tradition in which she was nurtured; the Yankee or, more broadly, American humor that was just coming out of the ground; and the spiritual unrest, typified by Emerson, which everywhere was melting the frost of custom . . . . Each was implicit in her surroundings and was absorbed from the atmosphere of her time. Blended, they gave her a style that was both original and native."

The Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson, ed Martha Dickinson Bianchi and A. L. Hampson, Boston, 1937 • **Bolts of Melody**, ed. Millicent Todd Bingham, New York, 1945 • **Letters of Emily Dickinson**, New and Enlarged Edition, ed. Mabel Loomis Todd, New York, 1931 • G F. Whicher, **This Was a Poet**, New York, 1939 • Millicent Todd Bingham, **Ancestors' Brocades**, New York, 1945

My Sabbath

This poem was one of the few published by Miss Dickinson herself during her lifetime: it appeared in **The Round Table**, edited by the author's cousins, Henry E. and Charles H. Sweetser, on March 12, 1864. Millicent Todd Bingham, in **Ancestor's Brocades**, suggests that it might have been the reception given to this poem which convinced the poet that "it was useless to attempt to gain a hearing."

Some keep the Sabbath going to church,
  I keep it staying at home,
With a bobolink for a chorister,
  And an orchard for a dome.

Some keep the Sabbath in surplice,
  I just wear my wings,
And instead of tolling the bell for church,
  Our little sexton sings.

God preaches—a noted clergyman,
  And the sermon is never long;
So instead of going to heaven at last,
  I'm going all along.

1864

The Snake

Miss Dickinson had not consented to its publication when this poem appeared in the Springfield Republican, February 14, 1866. She was annoyed with some liberties taken by the editor in the division of lines and in the punctuation. But she later made only a few changes in the wording: l. 4, "sudden" was substituted for "instant"; l. 11, "child" for "boy"; l. 12, "morn" for "noon." Here, as in other poems, the author uses figurative expressions which not only portray accurately but also connote the emotion of the poet. Increasingly, it suggests the effects of the snake which are summarized in the last line—"zero at the bone."

A narrow fellow in the grass
Occasionally rides;
You may have met him,—did you not?
His notice instant is.

The grass divides as with a comb,
A spotted shaft is seen;
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on.

He likes a boggy acre,
A floor too cool for corn,
Yet when a boy, and barefoot,
I more than once, at noon,

Have passed, I thought, a whip-lash
Unbraiding in the sun,—
When, stooping to secure it,
It wrinkled, and was gone.

Several of nature's people
I know, and they know me;
I feel for them a transport
Of cordiality;

But never met this fellow,
Attended or alone,
Without a tighter breathing,
And zero at the bone.

1866

This Is My Letter

Poems of Emily Dickinson (1890), as the title-page announced, was "edited by two of her friends, Mabel Loomis Todd and T. W. Higginson." The editors chose "This Is My Letter" as a fitting prelude. Despite its simplicity of form and language, the poem indicates the author's feeling about the nature of her work and typifies her compact yet rich way of expressing her ideas. The selections from Miss Dickinson's writings printed hereafter, unlike our selections from other authors, do not have the dates of publication affixed. These writings were all published posthumously, and the dates of their appearance have no relevance to the dates of their composition.

This is my letter to the world,
  That never wrote to me,—
The simple news that Nature told,
  With tender majesty.

Her message is committed
  To hands I cannot see;
For love of her, sweet countrymen,
  Judge tenderly of me!

The Humming Bird

"The Humming Bird" is a revision of an earlier version, and Professor Whicher (This Was a Poet, pp. 261-262) gives an interesting analysis of the changes made. "Here," he says of the final version, "is the whole sensation of hummingbird: first, a dazzle of sudden sense impressions, movement, motion of wings, color, and whir (in the reiterated r's), all at once; then (the bird's departure taken for granted) the emptiness emphasized by the clear picture of nodding blossoms; and finally the startled mind of the (assumed) spectator regaining its poise with a whimsical comment. Nothing could be spared and no more is needed. Emily Dickinson was never to write a better nature poem

than this, but the stepping-stones that led up to her finest achievement are, many of them, monuments of an artistry only slightly less perfect." As this analysis indicates, the poem is a striking example of the author's skill in giving concrete expression to abstract ideas—one of her most notable abilities.

A route of evanescence
With a revolving wheel,
A resonance of emerald,
A rush of cochineal;
And every blossom on the bush
Adjusts its tumbled head,—
The mail from Tunis, probably,
An easy morning's ride.

I Like to See It Lap the Miles

"Your true poet," a character in Santayana's writings is made to say, "catches the charm of something or anything, dropping the thing itself." Here Miss Dickinson depicts a locomotive as if it were a mythical and mighty horse. The metaphor makes possible suggestions of the superhuman power and the paradoxical servitude of this lapper of miles and parer of quarries.

I like to see it lap the miles,
And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks;
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,
And, supercilious, peer
In shanties by the sides of roads;
And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,
Complaining all the while
In horrid, hooting stanza;
Then chase itself down hill

And neigh like Boanerges;
Then, punctual as a star,
Stop—docile and omnipotent—
At its own stable door.

The Chariot

This poem illustrates how, in Professor Whicher's words, Miss Dickinson's line of thinking at times "rises to a . . . level where abstract ideas are personified and dramatized, filled with vital breath, and placed in exciting relation with each other." By telling vividly of the start of a journey by carriage to eternity, with Death as the coachman, the poem thus fancifully gives concrete expression to the hope for immortality. The details of the poem are arranged so as to disassociate the travelers more and more from earthly life. In the opening lines, "I could not stop" ambiguously suggests a laborer who could not put off toil. The second stanza shows that the poet has "put away" not only toil but also leisure. Now the slow carriage passes children at play, oblivious of the nearby travelers; next it passes fields which emphasize the lifelessness of the poet and the driver by "gazing" at them. After the darkness has come with the passing by of the setting sun, the travelers pause before a grave whose tenant has crumbled to dust: even that semblance of being has disappeared. Such is the preparation for the final stanza, in which immortality has replaced completely the mortality of earth.

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played
At wrestling in a ring;

We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 't is centuries; but each
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

Papa Above

This is a mockery of anthropomorphism, the tendency of man to create God in his own image. "Suppose," Miss Dickinson seems to have thought, "suppose a mouse conjured up a vision of God and eternity—what would this vision be like?" Playfully, then, she pictured the animal considering a Cat as the angel of death and conceiving of heaven as a snug cupboard where, for all eternity, the angel-mouse might nibble at his cheese. The irreverent way she played with religious concepts was much in the spirit of many contemporaneous nineteenth-century American humorists. Robert Burdette's "The Brakeman at Church" (1879), for instance, was a translation of the tenets of various religious sects into the jargon of the railroad man.

Papa above!
Regard a Mouse
O'erpowered by the Cat;
Reserve within thy Kingdom
A "mansion" for the Rat!

Snug in seraphic cupboards
To nibble all the day,
While unsuspecting cycles
Wheel pompously away.

As Imperceptibly as Grief

Although it ostensibly tells of the imperceptible passing of summer, this composition also may be read as a comment upon change and death. The meaning is subtly suggested by figures such as "as imperceptibly as grief" and "without a wing," and by symbols. The symbols are figures perhaps only vaguely suggestive of their implications unless Miss Dickinson's peculiarly personal ways of using them in a number of her poems are taken into account. As Mr. Thomas Dillon Howells has noticed in an unpublished Master's dissertation, morning, for her, signifies "hope, purity, innocence"; afternoon, customarily, is associated with death, funerals; twilight or dusk, "a solemn time of day, completion, peace."

As imperceptibly as grief
The summer lapsed away,—
Too imperceptible, at last,
To seem like perfidy.

A quietness distilled,
As twilight long begun,
Or Nature, spending with herself
Sequestered afternoon.

The dusk drew earlier in,
The morning foreign shone,—
A courteous, yet harrowing grace,
As guest who would be gone.

And thus, without a wing,
Or service of a keel,
Our summer made her light escape
Into the beautiful.

Papa Above • 5 **Rat.** Evidently the mouse thinks of rathood as a heavenly glorification of the mouse

The Preacher

Brought up by a strict Puritan father, Miss Dickinson, despite her rebellion against some of the excesses of Calvinism, probably resented the highly intellectualized and at times snobbish liberal religion which was replacing it. The pretentious "modern" preacher, talking at length about virtues which perhaps could better be practiced than defined, gets his "come-uppance" in this ironic poem. The final lines gibe at the figure conjured up at the start of the poem, first by comparing mock gold (pyrites) with gold (here, as elsewhere in Miss Dickinson's poetry, a symbol of integrity) and then by imagining how Christ would feel upon confronting him.

He preached upon "breadth" till it argued him narrow,—
The broad are too broad to define;
And of "truth" until it proclaimed him a liar,—
The truth never flaunted a sign.

Simplicity fled from this counterfeit presence
As gold the pyrites would shun.
What confusion would cover the innocent Jesus
To meet so enabled a man!

Farther in Summer than the Birds

Mr. Yvor Winters, who considers this poem one of the five or six of the greatest by Miss Dickinson, says that in it "we are shown the essential cleavage between man, as represented by the author-reader, and nature, as represented by the insects in the late summer grass; the subject is the plight of man, the willing and freely-moving entity, in a universe in which he is by virtue of his essential qualities a foreigner. . . . The change described in the last two lines is the change in the appearance of nature and in the feeling of the observer which results from a recognition of the cleavage. . . . The first two lines of the last stanza are written in the author's personal grammatical shorthand; they are no doubt defective in this respect, but the defect is minor. They mean: There is as yet no diminution of beauty, no mark of change on the brightness. The twelfth line contains a meaningless inversion. On the other hand, the false rhymes are employed with unusually fine modulation; the first rhyme is perfect, the second and third represent successive stages of departure, and the last a return to what is roughly the stage of the second. These effects are complicated by the rhyming, both perfect and imperfect, from stanza to stanza. The intense strangeness of the poem could not have been achieved with standard rhyming."

Farther in summer than the birds,
Pathetic from the grass,
A minor nation celebrates
Its unobtrusive mass.

No ordinance is seen,
So gradual the grace,
A pensive custom it becomes,
Enlarging loneliness.

Antiquest felt at noon
When August, burning low,
Calls forth this spectral canticle,
Repose to typify.

Remit as yet no grace,
No furrow on the glow,
Yet a druidic difference
Enhances nature now.

I Taste a Liquor Never Brewed

Thomas Bailey Aldrich thought that this composition needed "only a slight revision of the initial stanza to entitle it to rank with some of the swallow flights in Heine's

lyrical intermezzos." He "tucked a rhyme into that opening stanza" to make it read:

> I taste a liquor never brewed
> In vats along the Rhine;
> No tankard ever held a draught
> Of alcohol like mine.

Miss Genevieve Taggard, in The Life and Mind of Emily Dickinson, defends the original version thus: " 'From tankards scooped in pearl' enjoins our attention, after being so vandalized. Quite apart from the sounds received and carried on by it, it runs the voice from the a's in 'tankards' to the o's in 'scooped' and then produces the word 'pearl,' on which to let them culminate; the nk and the r in 'tankard' catching all the other consonants as the ripple of tone-colour runs down the line. If anyone needs the pale device of rhyme after such interplay of sound, culminating in 'Yield such an alcohol,' he is tone-deaf and deserves to be so. But he should be told that, while he was hearing nothing, the stanza as a whole has been giving off the variations on the sound of I, firmly placed in the middle of the first line, at the end of the second, near the beginning of the third to culminate in 'yield' and the I's of 'alcohol.' "

I taste a liquor never brewed,
From tankards scooped in pearl;
Not all the vats upon the Rhine
Yield such an alcohol!

Inebriate of air am I,
And debauchee of dew,
Reeling, through endless summer days,
From inns of molten blue.

When landlords turn the drunken bee
Out of the foxglove's door,
When butterflies renounce their drams,
I shall but drink the more!

Till seraphs swing their snowy hats,
And saints to windows run,
To see the little tippler
Leaning against the sun!

If You Were Coming in the Fall

If you were coming in the fall,
I'd brush the summer by
With half a smile and half a spurn,
As housewives do a fly.

If I could see you in a year,
I'd wind the months in balls,
And put them each in separate drawers,
Until their time befalls.

If only centuries delayed,
I'd count them on my hand,
Subtracting till my fingers dropped
Into Van Dieman's land.

If certain, when this life was out,
That yours and mine should be,
I'd toss it yonder like a rind,
And taste eternity.

But now, all ignorant of the length
Of time's uncertain wing,
It goads me, like the goblin bee,
That will not state its sting.

The Wife

She rose to his requirement, dropped
The playthings of her life
To take the honorable work
Of woman and of wife.

If aught she missed in her new day
Of amplitude, or awe,

If You Were Coming in the Fall • 12 Van Dieman's land, Tasmania; here used as a symbol for a remote and far-distant place

Or first prospective, or the gold
In using wore away,

It lay unmentioned, as the sea
Develops pearl and weed,
But only to himself is known
The fathoms they abide.

Real

I like a look of agony,
Because I know it's true;
Men do not sham convulsion,
Nor simulate a throe.

The eyes glaze once, and that is death
Impossible to feign
The beads upon the forehead
By homely anguish strung

The Bustle in a House

The bustle in a house
The morning after death
Is solemnest of industries
Enacted upon earth,—

The sweeping up the heart,
And putting love away
We shall not want to use again
Until eternity.

I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose

I'll tell you how the sun rose,—
A ribbon at a time.
The steeples swam in amethyst,
The news like squirrels ran.

The hills untied their bonnets,
The bobolinks begun.
Then I said softly to myself,
"That must have been the sun!"

* * *

But how he set, I know not.
There seemed a purple stile
Which little yellow boys and girls
Were climbing all the while

Till when they reached the other side,
A dominie in gray
Put gently up the evening bars,
And led the flock away.

I Died for Beauty

I died for beauty, but was scarce
Adjusted in the tomb,
When one who died for truth was lain
In an adjoining room.

He questioned softly why I failed?
"For beauty," I replied.
"And I for truth—the two are one,
We brethren are," he said.

And so, as kinsmen met a night,
We talked between the rooms,
Until the moss had reached our lips,
And covered up our names.

I've Seen a Dying Eye

I've seen a dying eye
Run round and round a room
In search of something, as it seemed,
Then cloudier become;
And then, obscure with fog,

There's a Certain Slant of Light

There's a certain slant of light,
On winter afternoons,
That oppresses like the weight
Of cathedral tunes.

Heavenly hurt it gives us;
We can find no scar,
But internal difference
Where the meanings are.

None may teach it anything,
'T is the seal, despair,—
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the air.

When it comes, the landscape listens,
Shadows hold their breath;
When it goes, 't is like the distance
On the look of death.

The Robin's My Criterion of Tune

The Robin's my criterion of tune
Because I grow where robins do—
But were I Cuckoo born
I'd swear by him—
The ode familiar rules the morn.
The Buttercup's my whim
For bloom—
Because we're orchard-sprung—
But were I Britain-born
I'd daisies spurn—
None but the Nut October fits
Because through dropping it
The seasons flit, I'm taught.
Without the snow's tableau
Provincially.

'Twas Warm at First Like Us

'Twas warm at first like us,
Until there crept thereon
A chill, like frost upon a glass
Till all the scene be gone.

The forehead copied stone,
The fingers grew too cold
To ache, and like a skater's brook
The busy eyes congealed.

It straightened—that was all.
It crowded cold to cold—
It multiplied indifference
As Pride were all it could.

And even when with cords
'T was lowered like a freight,
It made no signal, nor demurred,
But dropped like adamant.



William Vaughn Moody

1869 · 1910

The one American poet who stood out from among his fellows in the first decade of the twentieth century was William Vaughn Moody. Like his friend Edwin Arlington Robinson (see p. 1132), whose fame was to come later, Moody was on the whole traditional in his forms, although not slavishly so. Frequently reminiscent of the later English Victorians, his verses nevertheless have the distinction of revealing a sensitive and observant individual whose bookishness did not obscure his fresh perceptions of a uniquely puzzling world. Moody saw the United States in the "progressive" era and he did not like its lack of direction, its materialism, its apparent desertion of ideals. But he was not bitter, as Crane was, nor a crusader, as were some of the novelists of his generation. His very detachment was to a degree a virtue, for it enabled him to describe with admirable balance the state of the American mind at the opening of a new century.

Moody was born in a small town in south-central Indiana, but was brought up in New Albany, on the Ohio River across from Louisville. As a boy he was fond of outdoor exercise, but also of music and painting and study; his liking for all these stayed with him. The death of his father broke up the family while Moody was in art school, but with the help of an uncle he prepared for college and in 1889 entered Harvard. Although he worked his way through, he found time for many contributions to the *Harvard Monthly,* the literary magazine, and for the rich friendships which became perhaps his greatest glory.

Having satisfied the requirements for graduation in three years, Moody spent his senior year in Europe, tutoring a young man getting ready for Harvard. They walked through the English lake country and the Black Forest, saw the sights of Paris, Florence, and Athens. Before he died, he returned to Europe five more times, sometimes for months on end; like Howells and Henry James and many other Americans he found the other side of the Atlantic a second home. In 1893, however, he went back to Cambridge for his own commencement to read the Class Day poem, staying on at Harvard for two years of graduate study. He then accepted an instructorship in English at the University of Chicago, which was rising dramatically to eminence. In Chicago he spent the larger part of seven years, teaching, editing school textbooks to supplement his income, enjoying the companionship of a lively literary and artistic set, leaving at intervals for vacations in Europe, northern Michigan, and Colorado. Always, moreover, there was writing, which he was coming to regard as his real profession. In 1902 he was enabled to give it his full time through the success of a textbook, *A History of English Literature,* written in collaboration with his friend Robert Morss Lovett. Its royalties supported a farewell to the classroom.

His true work had already begun with a poetic drama, *The Masque of Judgment* (1898), and a thin volume of *Poems* (1901), containing twenty-five pieces, some of them previously published in magazines. His production in the eight remaining years of his life was

not large, primarily because he was fighting a losing battle with the tumorous condition which caused his death in 1910. Of the quality of what he did, however, there has never been any question. A dozen additional short poems, *The Fire-Bringer* (1904, a second poetic drama which with *The Masque of Judgment* and the uncompleted "Death of Eve" forms his most ambitious work), and two prose plays, *The Great Divide* (produced in 1906, it ran for two years and gave him his first genuine financial security) and *The Faith Healer* (1909)—these and his letters are all that we have.

There is nothing quite like Moody's writings in American literature for the combination of fresh experience and scholarship. The two poles of Moody's life and thought were Chicago and Europe—crude, throbbing, undisciplined force on the one hand, the shaping and ever-present awareness of past excellence on the other. Respect for power and a sense of the merits of tradition are combined in almost everything that Moody wrote, from his short lyrics to the trilogy in which he hoped to display the unity of God and man by reinterpreting the stories of Prometheus, the Day of Judgment, and Eve. Curiously enough, the combination is a fairly happy one. Like Whitman before him, Moody accepted the world and humanity, whatever their manifestations, as ultimately good and meaningful, refusing to separate the spiritual from the physical. He was no doubter, although he was often discouraged. Like Robert Browning, whom he much resembles, Moody had the intellectuality and fastidiousness that come with systematic study of literary art. He lived in an age of doubt and uncertainty which he quite fully shared, but his humanism carried him through and he was able to comment with quiet penetration upon the world he saw.

The Poems and Plays of William Vaughn Moody, ed. J. M. Manly, 2 vols., Boston, 1912 • Selected Poems of William Vaughn Moody, ed. R. M. Lovett, Boston, 1931 • Some Letters of William Vaughn Moody, ed. D. G. Mason, Boston, 1913 • Letters to Harriet, ed. Percy Mackaye, Boston, 1935 • D. D. Henry, William Vaughn Moody: A Study, Boston, 1934

An Ode in Time of Hesitation

[After seeing at Boston the statue of Robert Gould Shaw, killed while storming Fort Wagner, July 18, 1863, at the head of the first enlisted Negro regiment, the 54th Massachusetts.]

On one of his walking tours in Europe in July 1897 Moody read the account of the dedication of Saint Gaudens' monument to Col. Robert Gould Shaw, on Boston Common across from the State House. Professor Lovett, his companion, was able to tell of the stories of jeering at Shaw and his Negro regiment before their departure for the South. After his return to the United States, Moody saw the monument and in 1900, deeply distressed that American troops were being used to put down the insurrection of the Filipinos led by Emilio Aguinaldo, he wrote the following poem, based upon the contrast between Shaw's idealism and the imperialistic policy which he believed was being followed in the Philippines. It was published in the Atlantic Monthly for May 1900. A few words were changed when Moody collected his poems for the 1901 volume.

The "Ode" was much admired from the first. Its relatively free form is typical of Moody, who in many ways anticipated the "new poetry" which became popular after 1915. Typical also are its allusions and literary echoes, its occasionally archaic diction and venturesome metaphor. Bookish but not exotic, it is a courageous political poem on a subject of which Americans have not yet heard the last word.

I

Before the solemn bronze Saint Gaudens made
To thrill the heedless passer's heart with awe,
And set here in the city's talk and trade
To the good memory of Robert Shaw,

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1 **Saint Gaudens,** Augustus Saint Gaudens (1848-1907), Irish-born American sculptor, best known perhaps for his mantled figure over the grave of Mrs. Henry Adams in Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D.C. (see p. 1051). He dominated sculpture in the United States after 1880, and the Shaw monument is only one of many commissions commemorating Civil War heroes

This bright March morn I stand,
And hear the distant spring come up the land;
Knowing that what I hear is not unheard
Of this boy soldier and his Negro band,
For all their gaze is fixed so stern ahead,
For all the fatal rhythm of their tread.
The land they died to save from death and shame
Trembles and waits, hearing the spring's great name,
And by her pangs these resolute ghosts are stirred.

II

Through street and mall the tides of people go
Heedless; the trees upon the Common show
No hint of green; but to my listening heart
The still earth doth impart
Assurance of her jubilant emprise,
And it is clear to my long-searching eyes
That love at last has might upon the skies.
The ice is runneled in the little pond;
A telltale patter drips from off the trees;
The air is touched with southland spiceries,
As if but yesterday it tossed the frond
Of pendent mosses where the live-oaks grow
Beyond Virginia and the Carolines,
Or had its will among the fruits and vines
Of aromatic isles asleep beyond
Florida and the Gulf of Mexico.

III

Soon shall the Cape Ann children shout in glee,
Spying the arbutus, spring's dear recluse;
Hill lads at dawn shall hearken the wild goose
Go honking northward over Tennessee;
West from Oswego to Sault Sainte-Marie,
And on to where the Pictured Rocks are hung,
And yonder where, gigantic, willful, young,
Chicago sitteth at the northwest gates,
With restless violent hands and casual tongue
Moulding her mighty fates,
The Lakes shall robe them in ethereal sheen;
And like a larger sea, the vital green
Of springing wheat shall vastly be outflung
Over Dakota and the prairie states.
By desert people immemorial
On Arizonan mesas shall be done
Dim rites unto the thunder and the sun;
Nor shall the primal gods lack sacrifice
More splendid, when the white Sierras call
Unto the Rockies straightway to arise
And dance before the unveiled ark of the year,
Sounding their windy cedars as for shawms,
Unrolling rivers clear
For flutter of broad phylacteries;
While Shasta signals to Alaskan seas
That watch old sluggish glaciers downward creep
To fling their icebergs thundering from the steep,
And Mariposa through the purple calms
Gazes at far Hawaii crowned with palms
Where East and West are met,—
A rich seal on the ocean's bosom set
To say that East and West are twain,
With different loss and gain:
The Lord hath sundered them; let them be sundered yet.

IV

Alas! what sounds are these that come
Sullenly over the Pacific seas,—
Sounds of ignoble battle, striking dumb
The season's half-awakened ecstasies?
Must I be humble, then,
Now when my heart hath need of pride?
Wild love falls on me from these sculptured men;
By loving much the land for which they died
I would be justified.
My spirit was away on pinions wide
To soothe in praise of her its passionate mood
And ease it of its ache of gratitude,
Too sorely heavy is the debt they lay
On me and the companions of my day.
I would remember now
My country's goodliness, make sweet her name.
Alas! what shade art thou
Of sorrow or of blame
Liftest the lyric leafage from her brow,
And pointest a slow finger at her shame?

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30 **Cape Ann.** See note, p. 637 • 35 **Pictured Rocks,** on the south shore of Lake Superior, east of Marquette, Michigan • 50 **unveiled ark,** an allusion to the ark of the covenant, symbol of the favor of God to the Jews, and referred to frequently in the Bible • 57 **Mariposa,** a town and county of the high Sierras, in California

V

Lies! lies! It cannot be! The wars we wage
Are noble, and our battles still are won
By justice for us, ere we lift the gage.
We have not sold our loftiest heritage.
The proud republic hath not stooped to cheat
And scramble in the market-place of war;
Her forehead weareth yet its solemn star.
Here is her witness: this, her perfect son,
This delicate and proud New England soul
Who leads despisèd men, with just-unshackled feet,
Up the large ways where death and glory meet,
To show all peoples that our shame is done,
That once more we are clean and spirit-whole.

VI

Crouched in the sea fog on the moaning sand
All night he lay, speaking some simple word
From hour to hour to the slow minds that heard,
Holding each poor life gently in his hand
And breathing on the base rejected clay
Till each dark face shone mystical and grand
Against the breaking day;
And lo, the shard the potter cast away
Was grown a fiery chalice crystal-fine
Fulfilled of the divine
Great wine of battle wrath by God's ring-finger stirred.
Then upward, where the shadowy bastion loomed
Huge on the mountain in the wet sea light,
Whence now, and now, infernal flowerage bloomed,
Bloomed, burst, and scattered down its deadly seed,—
They swept, and died like freemen on the height,
Like freemen, and like men of noble breed;
And when the battle fell away at night
By hasty and contemptuous hands were thrust
Obscurely in a common grave with him
The fair-haired keeper of their love and trust.
Now limb doth mingle with dissolvèd limb
In nature's busy old democracy
To flush the mountain laurel when she blows
Sweet by the southern sea,
And heart with crumbled heart climbs in the rose:—
The untaught hearts with the high heart that knew
This mountain fortress for no earthly hold
Of temporal quarrel, but the bastion old
Of spiritual wrong.
Built by an unjust nation sheer and strong,
Expugnable but by a nation's rue
And bowing down before that equal shrine
By all men held divine,
Whereof his band and he were the most holy sign.

VII

O bitter, bitter shade!
Wilt thou not put the scorn
And instant tragic question from thine eyes?
Do thy dark brows yet crave
That swift and angry stave—
Unmeet for this desirous morn—
That I have striven, striven to evade?
Gazing on him, must I not deem they err
Whose careless lips in street and shop aver
As common tidings, deeds to make his cheek
Flush from the bronze, and his dead throat to speak?
Surely some elder singer would arise,
Whose harp hath leave to threaten and to mourn
Above this people when they go astray.
Is Whitman, the strong spirit, overworn?
Has Whittier put his yearning wrath away?
I will not and I dare not yet believe!
Though furtively the sunlight seems to grieve,
And the spring-laden breeze
Out of the gladdening west is sinister
With sounds of nameless battle overseas;
Though when we turn and question in suspense
If these things be indeed after these ways,
And what things are to follow after these,
Our fluent men of place and consequence
Fumble and fill their mouths with hollow phrase,
Or for the end-all of deep arguments
Intone their dull commercial liturgies—
I dare not yet believe! My ears are shut!
I will not hear the thin satiric praise
And muffled laughter of our enemies,
Bidding us never sheathe our valiant sword
Till we have changed our birthright for a gourd
Of wild pulse stolen from a barbarian's hut;
Showing how wise it is to cast away
The symbols of our spiritual sway,
That so our hands with better ease
May wield the driver's whip and grasp the jailer's keys.

VIII

Was it for this our fathers kept the law?
This crown shall crown their struggle and their ruth?
Are we the eagle nation Milton saw
Mewing its mighty youth,
Soon to possess the mountain winds of truth,
And be a swift familiar of the sun
Where aye before God's face his trumpets run?
Or have we but the talons and the maw,
And for the abject likeness of our heart
Shall some less lordly bird be set apart?—
Some gross-billed wader where the swamps are fat?
Some gorger in the sun? Some prowler with the bat?

IX

Ah no!
We have not fallen so.
We are our fathers' sons: let those who lead us know!
'T was only yesterday sick Cuba's cry
Çame up the tropic wind, "Now help us, for we die!"
Then Alabama heard,
And rising, pale, to Maine and Idaho
Shouted a burning word.
Proud state with proud impassioned state conferred,
And at the lifting of a hand sprang forth,
East, west, and south, and north,
Beautiful armies. Oh, by the sweet blood and young
Shed on the awful hill slope at San Juan,
By the unforgotten names of eager boys
Who might have tasted girls' love and been stung
With the old mystic joys
And starry griefs, now the spring nights come on,
But that the heart of youth is generous,—
We charge you, ye who lead us,
Breathe on their chivalry no hint of stain!
Turn not their new-world victories to gain!
One least leaf plucked for chaffer from the bays
Of their dear praise,
One jot of their pure conquest put to hire,
The implacable republic will require;
With clamor, in the glare and gaze of noon,
Or subtly, coming as a thief at night,
But surely, very surely, slow or soon
That insult deep we deeply will requite.
Tempt not our weakness, our cupidity!
For save we let the island men go free,
Those baffled and dislaureled ghosts
Will curse us from the lamentable coasts
Where walk the frustrate dead.
The cup of trembling shall be drainèd quite,
Eaten the sour bread of astonishment,
With ashes of the hearth shall be made white
Our hair, and wailing shall be in the tent;
Then on your guiltier head
Shall our intolerable self-disdain
Wreak suddenly its anger and its pain;
For manifest in that disastrous light
We shall discern the right
And do it, tardily.—O ye who lead,
Take heed!
Blindness we may forgive, but baseness we will smite.

1900

On a Soldier Fallen in the Philippines

Moody's opposition to imperialism was perhaps presented even more effectively in this poem, first published in the Atlantic Monthly in February 1901, than in "An Ode in Time of Hesitation." In March of the same year, with the capture of Aguinaldo, the Filipino independence movement was crushed.

Streets of the roaring town,
Hush for him, hush, be still!
He comes, who was stricken down
Doing the word of our will.
Hush! Let him have his state,
Give him his soldier's crown.
The grists of trade can wait
Their grinding at the mill,
But he cannot wait for his honor, now the trumpet has been blown.
Wreathe pride now for his granite brow, lay love on his breast of stone.

An Ode . . . 172 Milton. John Milton (1608-1674) wrote of England as "an eagle mewing her mighty youth" • 194 San Juan. San Juan Hill, near Santiago de Cuba, was taken by American forces on July 1, 1898, with casualties amounting to 10 per cent of the attacking force. It was in this action that Theodore Roosevelt won distinction as a military leader

Toll! Let the great bells toll
Till the clashing air is dim.
Did we wrong this parted soul?
We will make it up to him.
Toll! Let him never guess
What work we set him to.
Laurel, laurel, yes;
He did what we bade him do.
Praise, and never a whispered hint but the fight he fought was good;
Never a word that the blood on his sword was his country's own heart's-blood.

A flag for the soldier's bier
Who dies that his land may live;
O, banners, banners here,
That he doubt not nor misgive!
That he heed not from the tomb
The evil days draw near
When the nation, robed in gloom,
With its faithless past shall strive.
Let him never dream that his bullet's scream went wide of its island mark,
Home to the heart of his darling land where she stumbled and sinned in the dark.

1901

CRITICS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY: Bellamy, Dunne, Adams

Edward Bellamy

1850 • 1898

"Depression" is still a painful word to most Americans, who more than a decade later cannot erase the memories of personal misery which the history books will never quite catch in their accounts of the stock-market crash of 1929, the closing of the banks in 1933, and the measures of the "alphabet" agencies—NRA, RFC, AAA, CCC, PWA, and WPA. Yet depressions have come so regularly to the United States—one about every twenty years—that many persons regard them as the inevitable end and fresh beginning of the "business cycle" of capitalist economy.

Others have always insisted that an industrialized society of enormous productive capacity ought somehow to be able to find a way of avoiding periodic breakdowns in its system of distribution. Wholesale bankruptcies, the unemployment of able-bodied men and women, and starvation not for lack of food but for lack of buying power—these seemed too high a price to pay for free enterprise.

In the aftermath of the Civil War there was a long stretch of hard times; between the Panic of 1873 and that of 1893 there was no genuine recovery. Social planners had time to perfect their schemes of amelioration through years when almost everyone demanded change. The result was a vast literature of social criticism, of which Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) is the best example.

Edward Bellamy was both a moralist and a product of long-continued hard times. He had a "call" to reaffirm the philosophy of the rights of man and a "vision" of a society in which there would no longer be poverty for the many and riches for the few but abundance for all. Bellamy's better world was to be achieved by a new nationalism, best described as a religion of democracy, closely akin to Christian socialism. His vivid and concrete description of a technology organized for production rather than for profit is the most famous of American Utopias, and among the best visualizations of an ideal society in

all literature.

Bellamy was born in Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, in 1850. Failing to achieve his ambition of an appointment to West Point, he entered Union College, but stayed only one year. At eighteen he spent the better part of a year in Europe, where, as he wrote later, "my eyes were first fully opened to the extent and consequences of man's inhumanity to man." After two years of study he was admitted to the bar, but he gave up law almost at once in favor of journalism. Seven of the next nine years he spent as editorial writer and reviewer, on the New York *Evening Post* (seven months in 1871-1872), the Springfield *Union* (1872-1877), and the Springfield *Penny News* (1880), in the last of which he was a partner with his brother. In 1875 Bellamy began to contribute short stories to the national magazines and by 1880 had published nine times in *Scribner's Monthly* (later *Century*), *Lippincott's,* and *Appleton's.* Two novelettes came out in book form and a portion of a serial appeared in a Great Barrington, Massachusetts, newspaper. The serial, *The Duke of Stockbridge: A Romance of Shays' Rebellion,* reflects Bellamy's concern with Populism and the debtor classes. Although most of it was written before 1880, the book was not completed and published until 1900, two years after Bellamy's death. *Six to One: A Nantucket Idyl* (1878), a somewhat callow study of feminine psychology, is an early example of his persistent romanticism about women. *Dr. Heidenhoff's Progress* (1880) was a Hawthornesque treatment of the psychological effects of evil upon the evildoer. In the early eighties, after Bellamy had decided to give all of his time to his writing, another handful of short stories appeared and a third novelette, *Miss Ludington's Sister: A Romance of Immortality* (1884).

Then, late in 1886, the year of the Haymarket affair in Chicago, Bellamy sat at his desk "with the definite purpose of trying to reason out a method of economic organization by which the republic might guarantee the livelihood and material welfare of its citizens on a basis of equality corresponding to and supplementing their political equality." *Looking Backward: 2000-1887,* the novel which resulted, was completed in August 1887 and published in the following January. It changed its author from a somewhat casual liberal to a leader of a Socialistic movement.

Looking Backward convinced thousands of Americans that the society it described was just what they wanted. By the middle of June 1888 there was talk of a "Nationalist" movement and by the end of the year Nationalist clubs were being organized. A monthly magazine, *The Nationalist,* began publication in Boston, May 1889. As the sales of his novel skyrocketed into the hundreds of thousands Bellamy elaborated his program in lectures and articles. In January 1891 he founded his own weekly, *The New Nation,* and it is probable that his followers lent their influence to the formation of the People's Party, founded in May 1891 on a platform which included, among other items, "national ownership of all means of public communication and transportation." Nationalism faded, however, even more quickly than Populism, partly because of lack of leadership but largely because of the same forces of conservatism which defeated William Jennings Bryan in the election of 1896.

The opposition to Nationalism is well summarized in the review of *Looking Backward* by W. T. Harris, one of the foremost philosophers and educators of his time, which appeared in *The Forum* for October 1889. Harris asserted that two assumptions of Bellamy's were unsupported by fact. The first is that under the principle of competition the rich grow richer and fewer while the poor grow poorer and more numerous. The second is that the few rich people are rich at the expense of the poor. Harris also objected to the regimentation of Bellamy's system, concluding that "private property and free competition constitute the simple device by which civilization has been able to isolate individuals from one another and develop a sense of the sacredness of personality."

Bellamy, never robust, was a sick man after 1896, but he managed a sequel to *Looking Backward. Equality* (1897), though much more a tract than a novel, is well worth reading for its revelation of the breadth of his interests and his prophetic views of developments which have come in the last half century. Of especial interest are his comments on "How the Profit System Nullified the Benefit of Inventions" and "What Became of the Great Cities." There is scarcely an aspect of present-day social planning with which he did not deal in some detail.

Edward Bellamy Speaks Again, Kansas City, 1937 • A. E. Morgan, **Edward Bellamy,** New York, 1944 • Lewis Mumford, **The Story of Utopias,** New York, 1922, 159-169 • Vernon L. Parrington, Jr., **American Dreams,** Providence, 1947

From

Looking Backward

Julian West, the narrator, is a wealthy Bostonian who in 1887 is engaged to be married to Edith Bartlett. He is subject to insomnia and sleeps in a tomblike chamber beneath the foundation of his house, sometimes hiring a hypnotist to put him to sleep. No one knows of these arrangements except his servant and the hypnotist, and on May 30 the hypnotist leaves town and the servant dies in a fire which destroys West's house and, presumably, West himself. In September of the year 2000 a Boston physician, Dr. Leete, uncovers a mass of masonry in his garden, finds West, and resuscitates him. **Looking Backward** is West's account of what he finds at the end of the twentieth century. Among the wonders are airplanes, the radio, television, paper fabrics for clothing and draperies, electrical heat—all of them unknown in 1887. More important, however, is the peaceful Socialistic society, so much in contrast with that of 1887, which West describes as like a coach to which the masses of humanity are harnessed, while a few ride on top. The climax of the story is a nightmare in which West finds himself back in 1887, tries to tell of what he has seen, and is denounced as an anarchist. Running through the story is the romance of West and Edith Leete, who turns out to be the great-granddaughter of Edith Bartlett.

In the chapters reprinted here will be found Dr. Leete's account of how the change to the new society was accomplished and of how the "dirty work" gets done by the "industrial army," together with the description of the means by which regimentation is avoided. These are the crucial matters if we may believe the critics who attacked Bellamy. It should be added that many pages are devoted to displaying the extensive recreational facilities and the material comforts provided by the nationalized state.

CHAPTER V

When, in the course of the evening the ladies retired, leaving Dr. Leete and myself alone, he sounded me as to my disposition for sleep, saying that if I felt like it my bed was ready for me; but if I was inclined to wakefulness nothing would please him better than to bear me company. "I am a late bird, myself," he said, "and, without suspicion of flattery, I may say that a companion more interesting than yourself could scarcely be imagined. It is decidedly not often that one has a chance to converse with a man of the nineteenth century."

Now I had been looking forward all the evening with some dread to the time when I should be alone, on retiring for the night. Surrounded by these most friendly strangers, stimulated and supported by their sympathetic interest, I had been able to keep my mental balance. Even then, however, in pauses of the conversation I had had glimpses, vivid as lightning flashes, of the horror of strangeness that was waiting to be faced when I could no longer command diversion. I knew I could not sleep that night, and as for lying awake and thinking, it argues no cowardice, I am sure, to confess that I was afraid [of] it. When, in reply to my host's question, I frankly told him this, he replied, that it would be strange if I did not feel just so, but that I need have no anxiety about sleeping; whenever I wanted to go to bed, he would give me a dose which would insure me a sound night's sleep without fail. Next morning, no doubt, I would awake with the feeling of an old citizen.

"Before I acquire that," I replied, "I must know a little more about the sort of Boston I have come back to You told me when we were upon the housetop that though a century only had elapsed since I fell asleep, it had been marked by greater changes in the conditions of humanity than many a previous millennium. With the city before me I could well believe that, but I am very curious to know what some of the changes have been. To make a beginning somewhere, for the subject is doubtless a large one, what solution, if any, have you found for the labor question? It was the Sphinx's riddle of the nineteenth century, and when I dropped out the Sphinx was threatening to devour society, because the answer was not forthcoming. It is well worth sleeping a hundred years

to learn what the right answer was, if, indeed, you have found it yet."

"As no such thing as the labor question is known nowadays," replied Dr. Leete, "and there is no way in which it could arise, I suppose we may claim to have solved it. Society would indeed have fully deserved being devoured if it had failed to answer a riddle so entirely simple. In fact, to speak by the book, it was not necessary for society to solve the riddle at all. It may be said to have solved itself. The solution came as the result of a process of industrial evolution which could not have terminated otherwise. All that society had to do was to recognize and co-operate with that evolution, when its tendency had become unmistakable."

"I can only say," I answered, "that at the time I fell asleep no such evolution had been recognized."

"It was in 1887 that you fell into this sleep, I think you said."

"Yes, May 30th, 1887."

My companion regarded me musingly for some moments. Then he observed, "And you tell me that even then there was no general recognition of the nature of the crisis which society was nearing? Of course, I fully credit your statement. The singular blindness of your contemporaries to the signs of the times is a phenomenon commented on by many of our historians, but few facts of history are more difficult for us to realize, so obvious and unmistakable as we look back seem the indications, which must also have come under your eyes, of the transformation about to come to pass. I should be interested, Mr. West, if you would give me a little more definite idea of the view which you and men of your grade of intellect took of the state and prospects of society in 1887. You must, at least, have realized that the widespread industrial and social troubles, and the underlying dissatisfaction of all classes with the inequalities of society, and the general misery of mankind, were portents of great changes of some sort."

"We did, indeed, fully realize that," I replied. "We felt that society was dragging anchor and in danger of going adrift. Whither it would drift nobody could say, but all feared the rocks."

"Nevertheless," said Dr. Leete, "the set of the current was perfectly perceptible if you had but taken pains to observe it, and it was not toward the rocks, but toward a deeper channel."

"We had a popular proverb," I replied, "that 'hindsight is better than foresight,' the force of which I shall now, no doubt, appreciate more fully than ever. All I can say is, that the prospect was such when I went into that long sleep that I should not have been surprised had I looked down from your housetop to-day on a heap of charred and moss-grown ruins instead of this glorious city."

Dr. Leete had listened to me with close attention and nodded thoughtfully as I finished speaking. "What you have said," he observed, "will be regarded as a most valuable vindication of Storiot, whose account of your era has been generally thought exaggerated in its picture of the gloom and confusion of men's minds. That a period of transition like that should be full of excitement and agitation was indeed to be looked for, but seeing how plain was the tendency of the forces in operation, it was natural to believe that hope rather than fear would have been the prevailing temper of the popular mind."

"You have not yet told me what was the answer to the riddle which you found," I said "I am impatient to know by what contradiction of natural sequence the peace and prosperity which you now seem to enjoy could have been the outcome of an era like my own."

"Excuse me," replied my host, "but do you smoke?" It was not till our cigars were lighted and drawing well that he resumed. "Since you are in the humor to talk rather than to sleep, as I certainly am, perhaps I cannot do better than to try to give you enough idea of our modern industrial system to dissipate at least the impression that there is any mystery about the process of its evolution. The Bostonians of your day had the reputation of being great askers of questions, and I am going to show my descent by asking you one to begin with. What should you name as the most prominent feature of the labor troubles of your day?"

"Why, the strikes, of course," I replied.

"Exactly; but what made the strikes so formidable?"

"The great labor organizations."

"And what was the motive of these great organizations?"

Text: the first edition (1888) Bellamy later made some changes and revisions in the details of his scheme, good evidence of the seriousness of his social purpose • 58 **Storiot,** evidently a historian of Dr. Leete's time

"The workmen claimed they had to organize to get their rights from the big corporations," I replied.

"That is just it," said Dr. Leete; "the organization of labor and the strikes were an effect, merely, of the concentration of capital in greater masses than had ever been known before. Before this concentration began, while as yet commerce and industry were conducted by innumerable petty concerns with small capital, instead of a small number of great concerns with vast capital, the individual workman was relatively important and independent in his relations to the employer. Moreover, when a little capital or a new idea was enough to start a man in business for himself, workingmen were constantly becoming employers and there was no hard and fast line between the two classes. Labor unions were needless then, and general strikes out of the question. But when the era of small concerns with small capital was succeeded by that of the great aggregations of capital, all this was changed. The individual laborer who had been relatively important to the small employer was reduced to insignificance and powerlessness over against the great corporation, while, at the same time, the way upward to the grade of employer was closed to him. Self-defence drove him to union with his fellows.

"The records of the period show that the outcry against the concentration of capital was furious. Men believed that it threatened society with a form of tyranny more abhorrent than it had ever endured. They believed that the great corporations were preparing for them the yoke of a baser servitude than had ever been imposed on the race, servitude not to men but to soulless machines incapable of any motive but insatiable greed. Looking back, we cannot wonder at their desperation, for certainly humanity was never confronted with a fate more sordid and hideous than would have been the era of corporate tyranny which they anticipated.

"Meanwhile, without being in the smallest degree checked by the clamor against it, the absorption of business by ever larger monopolies continued. In the United States, where this tendency was later in developing than in Europe, there was not, after the beginning of the last quarter of the century, any opportunity whatever for individual enterprise in any important field of industry, unless backed by a great capital. During the last decade of the century, such small businesses as still remained were fast failing survivals of a past epoch, or mere parasites on the great corporations, or else existed in fields too small to attract the great capitalists. Small businesses, as far as they still remained, were reduced to the condition of rats and mice, living in holes and corners, and counting on evading notice for the enjoyment of existence. The railroads had gone on combining till a few great syndicates controlled every rail in the land. In manufactories, every important staple was controlled by a syndicate. These syndicates, pools, trusts, or whatever their name, fixed prices and crushed all competition except when combinations as vast as themselves arose. Then a struggle, resulting in a still greater consolidation, ensued. The great city bazar crushed its country rivals with branch stores, and in the city itself absorbed its smaller rivals till the business of a whole quarter was concentrated under one roof, with a hundred former proprietors of shops serving as clerks. Having no business of his own to put his money in, the small capitalist, at the same time that he took service under the corporation, found no other investment for his money but its stocks and bonds, thus becoming doubly dependent upon it.

"The fact that the desperate popular opposition to the consolidation of business in a few powerful hands had no effect to check it, proves that there must have been a strong economical reason for it. The small capitalists, with their innumerable petty concerns, had, in fact, yielded the field to the great aggregations of capital, because they belonged to a day of small things and were totally incompetent to the demands of an age of steam and telegraphs and the gigantic scale of its enterprises. To restore the former order of things, even if possible, would have involved returning to the day of stage-coaches. Oppressive and intolerable as was the regime of the great consolidations of capital, even its victims, while they cursed it, were forced to admit the prodigious increase of efficiency which had been imparted to the national industries, the vast economies effected by concentration of management and unity of organization, and to confess that since the new system had taken the place of the old, the wealth of the world had increased at a rate before undreamed of. To be sure this vast increase had gone chiefly to make the rich richer, increasing the gap between them and the poor; but the fact remained that, as a means merely of producing wealth, capital had been proved efficient in proportion to its consolidation. The restoration of the old system with the subdivision of capital, if it were possible, might indeed bring back a greater equality of conditions with

more individual dignity and freedom, but it would be at the price of general poverty and the arrest of material progress.

"Was there, then, no way of commanding the services of the mighty wealth-producing principle of consolidated capital, without bowing down to a plutocracy like that of Carthage? As soon as men began to ask themselves these questions, they found the answer ready for them. The movement toward the conduct of business by larger and larger aggregations of capital, the tendency toward monopolies, which had been so desperately and vainly resisted, was recognized at last, in its true significance, as a process which only needed to complete its logical evolution to open a golden future to humanity.

"Early in the last century the evolution was completed by the final consolidation of the entire capital of the nation. The industry and commerce of the country, ceasing to be conducted by a set of irresponsible corporations and syndicates of private persons at their caprice and for their profit, were intrusted to a single syndicate representing the people, to be conducted in the common interest for the common profit. The nation, that is to say, organized as the one great business corporation in which all other corporations were absorbed; it became the one capitalist in the place of all other capitalists, the sole employer, the final monopoly in which all previous and lesser monopolies were swallowed up, a monopoly in the profits and economies of which all citizens shared. In a word, the people of the United States concluded to assume the conduct of their own business, just as one hundred odd years before they had assumed the conduct of their own government, organizing now for industrial purposes on precisely the same grounds that they had then organized for political purposes. At last, strangely late in the world's history, the obvious fact was perceived that no business is so essentially the public business as the industry and commerce on which the people's livelihood depends, and that to entrust it to private persons to be managed for private profit, is a folly similar in kind, though vastly greater in magnitude, to that of surrendering the functions of political government to kings and nobles to be conducted for their personal glorification."

"Such a stupendous change as you describe," said I, "did not, of course, take place without great bloodshed and terrible convulsions."

"On the contrary," replied Dr. Leete, "there was absolutely no violence. The change had been long foreseen. Public opinion had become fully ripe for it, and the whole mass of the people was behind it. There was no more possibility of opposing it by force than by argument. On the other hand the popular sentiment toward the great corporations and those identified with them had ceased to be one of bitterness, as they came to realize their necessity as a link, a transition phase, in the evolution of the true industrial system. The most violent foes of the great private monopolies were now forced to recognize how invaluable and indispensable had been their office in educating the people up to the point of assuming control of their own business. Fifty years before, the consolidation of the industries of the country under national control would have seemed a very daring experiment to the most sanguine. But by a series of object lessons, seen and studied by all men, the great corporations had taught the people an entirely new set of ideas on this subject. They had seen for many years syndicates handling revenues greater than those of states, and directing the labors of hundreds of thousands of men with an efficiency and economy unattainable in smaller operations. It had come to be recognized as an axiom that the larger the business the simpler the principles that can be applied to it; that, as the machine is truer than the hand, so the system, which in a great concern does the work of the master's eye in a small business, turns out more accurate results. Thus it came about that, thanks to the corporations themselves, when it was proposed that the nation should assume their functions, the suggestion implied nothing which seemed impracticable even to the timid. To be sure it was a step beyond any yet taken, a broader generalization, but the very fact that the nation would be the sole corporation in the field would, it was seen, relieve the undertaking of many difficulties with which the partial monopolies had contended."

CHAPTER VI

Dr. Leete ceased speaking, and I remained silent, endeavoring to form some general conception of the changes in the arrangements of society implied in the tremendous revolution which he had described.

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7 Carthage, which was an oligarchy dominated by commercial interests • 28 shared. In later editions Bellamy inserted the sentence: "The epoch of trusts had ended in The Great Trust"

Finally I said, "The idea of such an extension of the functions of government is, to say the least, rather overwhelming."

"Extension!" he repeated, "where is the extension?"

"In my day," I replied, "it was considered that the proper functions of government, strictly speaking, were limited to keeping the peace and defending the people against the public enemy, that is, to the military and police powers."

"And, in heaven's name, who are the public enemies?" exclaimed Dr. Leete. "Are they France, England, Germany, or hunger, cold and nakedness? In your day governments were accustomed, on the slightest international misunderstanding, to seize upon the bodies of citizens and deliver them over by hundreds of thousands to death and mutilation, wasting their treasures the while like water; and all this oftenest for no imaginable profit to the victims. We have no wars now, and our governments no war powers, but in order to protect every citizen against hunger, cold and nakedness, and provide for all his physical and mental needs, the function is assumed of directing his industry for a term of years. No, Mr. West, I am sure on reflection you will perceive that it was in your age, not in ours, that the extension of the functions of governments was extraordinary. Not even for the best ends would men now allow their governments such powers as were then used for the most maleficent."

"Leaving comparisons aside," I said, "the demagoguery and corruption of our public men would have been considered, in my day, insuperable objections to any assumption by government of the charge of the national industries. We should have thought that no arrangement could be worse than to entrust the politicians with control of the wealth-producing machinery of the country. Its material interests were quite too much the football of parties as it was."

"No doubt you were right," rejoined Dr. Leete, "but all that is changed now. We have no parties or politicians, and as for demagoguery, and corruption, they are words having only an historical significance."

"Human nature itself must have changed very much," I said.

"Not at all," was Dr. Leete's reply, "but the conditions of human life have changed, and with them the motives of human action. The organization of society no longer offers a premium on baseness. But these are matters which you can only understand as you come, with time, to know us better."

"But you have not yet told me how you have settled the labor problem. It is the problem of capital which we have been discussing," I said. "After the nation had assumed conduct of the mills, machinery, railroads, farms, mines and capital in general of the country, the labor question still remained. In assuming the responsibilities of capital the nation had assumed the difficulties of the capitalist's position."

"The moment the nation assumed the responsibilities of capital, those difficulties vanished," replied Dr. Leete. "The national organization of labor under one direction was the complete solution of what was, in your day and under your system, justly regarded as the insoluble labor problem. When the nation became the sole employer, all the citizens, by virtue of their citizenship, became employees, to be distributed according to the needs of industry."

"That is," I suggested, "you have simply applied the principle of universal military service, as it was understood in our day, to the labor question."

"Yes," said Dr. Leete, "that was something which followed as a matter of course as soon as the nation had become the sole capitalist. The people were already accustomed to the idea that the obligation of every citizen, not physically disabled, to contribute his military services to the defence of the nation, was equal and absolute. That it was equally the duty of every citizen to contribute his quota of industrial or intellectual services to the maintenance of the nation, was equally evident, though it was not until the nation became the employer of labor that citizens were able to render this sort of service with any pretence either of universality or equity. No organization of labor was possible when the employing power was divided among hundreds or thousands of individuals and corporations, between which concert of any kind was neither desired, nor indeed feasible. It constantly happened then that vast numbers who desired to labor could find no opportunity, and on the other hand, those who desired to evade a part or all of their debt could easily do so."

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47 baseness. The point here was expanded by several sentences in later editions

"Service, now, I suppose, is compulsory upon all," I suggested.

"It is rather a matter of course than of compulsion," replied Dr. Leete. "It is regarded as so absolutely natural and reasonable that the idea of its being compulsory has ceased to be thought of. He would be thought to be an incredibly contemptible person who should need compulsion in such a case. Nevertheless, to speak of service being compulsory would be a weak way to state its absolute inevitableness. Our entire social order is so wholly based upon and deduced from it that if it were conceivable that a man could escape it, he would be left with no possible way to provide for his existence. He would have excluded himself from the world, cut himself off from his kind, in a word, committed suicide."

"Is the term of service in this industrial army for life?"

"Oh, no; it both begins later and ends earlier than the average working period in your day. Your workshops were filled with children and old men, but we hold the period of youth sacred to education, and the period of maturity, when the physical forces begin to flag, equally sacred to ease and agreeable relaxation. The period of industrial service is twenty-four years, beginning at the close of the course of education at twenty-one and terminating at forty-five. After forty-five, while discharged from labor, the citizen still remains liable to special calls, in case of emergencies causing a sudden great increase in the demand for labor, till he reaches the age of fifty-five, but such calls are rarely, in fact almost never, made. The fifteenth day of October of every year is what we call Muster Day, because those who have reached the age of twenty-one are then mustered into the industrial service, and at the same time those who, after twenty-four years service, have reached the age of forty-five are honorably mustered out. It is the great day of the year with us, whence we reckon all other events, our Olympiad, save that it is annual."

CHAPTER VII

"It is after you have mustered your industrial army into service," I said, "that I should expect the chief difficulty to arise, for there its analogy with a military army must cease. Soldiers have all the same thing, and a very simple thing, to do, namely, to practice the manual of arms, to march and stand guard. But the industrial army must learn and follow two or three hundred diverse trades and avocations. What administrative talent can be equal to determining wisely what trade or business every individual in a great nation shall pursue?"

"The administration has nothing to do with determining that point."

"Who does determine it, then?" I asked.

"Every man for himself in accordance with his natural aptitude, the utmost pains being taken to enable him to find out what his natural aptitude really is. The principle on which our industrial army is organized is that a man's natural endowments, mental and physical, determine what he can work at most profitably to the nation and most satisfactorily to himself. While the obligation of service in some form is not to be evaded, voluntary election, subject only to necessary regulation, is depended on to determine the particular sort of service every man is to render. As an individual's satisfaction during his term of service depends on his having an occupation to his taste, parents and teachers watch from early years for indications of special aptitudes in children. Manual industrial training is no part of our educational system, which is directed to general culture and the humanities, but a theoretical knowledge of the processes of the various industries is given, and our youth are constantly encouraged to visit the workshops, and are frequently taken on long excursions to acquire familiarity with special industries. Usually, long before he is mustered into service, a young man, if he has a taste for any special pursuit, has found it out and probably acquired a great deal of information about it. If, however, he has no special taste, and makes no election when opportunity is offered, he is assigned to any avocation among those of an unskilled character which may be in need of men."

"Surely," I said, "it can hardly be that the number of volunteers for any trade is exactly the number needed in that trade. It must be generally either under or over the demand."

"The supply of volunteers is always expected to fully equal the demand," replied Dr. Leete. "It is the business of the administration to see that this is the case. The rate of volunteering for each trade is closely watched.

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65 children. The remainder of this paragraph was later much revised

If there be a noticeably greater excess of volunteers over men needed in any trade, it is inferred that the trade offers greater attractions than others. On the other hand, if the number of volunteers for a trade tends to drop below the demand, it is inferred that it is thought more arduous. It is the business of the administration to seek constantly to equalize the attractions of the trades, so far as the conditions of labor in them are concerned, so that all trades shall be equally attractive to persons having natural tastes for them. This is done by making the hours of labor in different trades to differ according to their arduousness. The lighter trades, prosecuted under the most agreeable circumstances, have in this way the longest hours, while an arduous trade, such as mining, has very short hours. There is no theory, no *a priori* rule, by which the respective attractiveness of industries is determined. The administration, in taking burdens off one class of workers and adding them to other classes, simply follows the fluctuations of opinion among the workers themselves as indicated by the rate of volunteering. The principle is that no man's work ought to be, on the whole, harder for him than any other man's for him, the workers themselves to be the judges. There are no limits to the application of this rule. If any particular occupation is in itself so arduous or so oppressive that, in order to induce volunteers, the day's work in it had to be reduced to ten minutes, it would be done. If, even then, no man was willing to do it, it would remain undone. But of course, in point of fact, a moderate reduction in the hours of labor, or addition of other privileges, suffices to secure all needed volunteers for any occupation necessary to men. If, indeed, the unavoidable difficulties and dangers of such a necessary pursuit were so great that no inducement of compensating advantages would overcome men's repugnance to it, the administration would only need to take it out of the common order of occupations by declaring it 'extra hazardous,' and those who pursued it especially worthy of the national gratitude, to be overrun with volunteers. Our young men are very greedy of honor, and do not let slip such opportunities. Of course you will see that dependence on the purely voluntary choice of avocations involves the abolition in all of anything like unhygienic conditions or special peril to life and limb. Health and safety are conditions common to all industries. The nation does not maim and slaughter its workmen by thousands, as did the private capitalists and corporations of your day."

"When there are more who want to enter a particular trade than there is room for, how do you decide between the applicants?" I inquired.

"Preference is given to those with the best general records in their preliminary service as unskilled laborers, and as youths in their educational course. No man, however, who through successive years remains persistent in his desire to show what he can do at any particular trade, is in the end denied an opportunity. I should add, in reference to the counter-possibility of some sudden failure of volunteers in a particular trade, or some sudden necessity of an increased force, that the administration, while depending on the voluntary system for filling up the trades as a rule, holds always in reserve the power to call for special volunteers, or draft any force needed from any quarter. Generally, however, all needs of this sort can be met by details from the class of unskilled or common laborers."

"How is this class of common laborers recruited?" I asked. "Surely nobody voluntarily enters that."

"It is the grade to which all new recruits belong for the first three years of their service. It is not till after this period, during which he is assignable to any work at the discretion of his superiors, that the young man is allowed to elect a special avocation. These three years of stringent discipline none are exempt from."

"As an industrial system, I should think this might be extremely efficient," I said, "but I don't see that it makes any provision for the professional classes, the men who serve the nation with brains instead of hands. Of course you can't get along without the brain-workers. How, then, are they selected from those who are to serve as farmers and mechanics? That must require a very delicate sort of sifting process, I should say."

"So it does," replied Dr. Leete; "the most delicate possible test is needed here, and so we leave the question whether a man shall be a brain or hand worker entirely to him to settle. At the end of the term of three years as a common laborer, which every man must serve, it is for him to choose in accordance to his natural tastes whether he will fit himself for an art or profession, or be a farmer or mechanic. If he feels that he can do better work with his brains than his muscles he finds every facility provided for testing the reality of his sup-

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51 **Preference.** In later editions this point was more fully dealt with

posed bent, of cultivating it, and if fit, of pursuing it as his avocation. The schools of technology, of medicine, or art, of music, of histrionics and of higher liberal learning, are always open to aspirants without condition."

"Are not the schools flooded with young men whose only motive is to avoid work?"

Dr. Leete smiled a little grimly.

"No one is at all likely to enter the professional schools for the purpose of avoiding work, I assure you," he said. "They are intended for those with special aptitude for the branches they teach, and any one without it would find it easier to do double hours at his trade than try to keep up with the classes. Of course many honestly mistake their vocation, and, finding themselves unequal to the requirements of the schools, drop out and return to the industrial service; no discredit attaches to such persons, for the public policy is to encourage all to develop suspected talents which only actual tests can prove the reality of. The professional and scientific schools of your day depended on the patronage of their pupils for support, and the practice appears to have been common of giving diplomas to unfit persons, who afterwards found their way into the professions. Our schools are national institutions, and to have passed their tests is a proof of special abilities not to be questioned.

"This opportunity for a professional training," the doctor continued, "remains open to every man till the age of thirty-five is reached, after which students are not received, as there would remain too brief a period before the age of discharge in which to serve the nation in their professions. In your day young men had to choose their professions very young, and therefore, in a large proportion of instances, wholly mistook their vocations. It is recognized nowadays that the natural aptitudes of some are later than those of others in developing, and therefore, while the choice of profession may be made as early as twenty-four, it remains open for eleven years longer. I should add that the right of transfer, under proper restrictions, from a trade first chosen to one preferred later in life, also remains open to a man till thirty-five."

A question which had a dozen times before been on my lips, now found utterance, a question which touched upon what, in my time, had been regarded the most vital difficulty in the way of any final settlement of the industrial problem. "It is an extraordinary thing," I said, "that you should not yet have said a word about the method of adjusting wages. Since the nation is the sole employer the government must fix the rate of wages and determine just how much everybody shall earn, from the doctors to the diggers. All I can say is, that this plan would never have worked with us, and I don't see how it can now unless human nature has changed. In my day, nobody was satisfied with his wages or salary. Even if he felt he received enough, he was sure his neighbor had too much, which was as bad. If the universal discontent on this subject, instead of being dissipated in curses and strikes directed against innumerable employers, could have been concentrated upon one, and that the government, the strongest ever devised would not have seen two pay days."

Dr. Leete laughed heartily.

"Very true, very true," he said, "a general strike would most probably have followed the first pay day, and a strike directed against a government is a revolution."

"How, then, do you avoid a revolution every pay day?" I demanded. "Has some prodigious philosopher devised a new system of calculus satisfactory to all for determining the exact and comparative value of all sorts of service, whether by brawn or brain, by hand or voice, by ear or eye? Or has human nature itself changed, so that no man looks upon his own things but 'every man on the things of his neighbor?' One or the other of these events must be the explanation."

"Neither one nor the other, however, is," was my host's laughing response. "And now, Mr. West," he continued, "you must remember that you are my patient as well as my guest, and permit me to prescribe sleep for you before we have any more conversation. It is after three o'clock."

"The prescription is, no doubt, a wise one," I said; "I only hope it can be filled."

"I will see to that," the doctor replied, and he did, for he gave me a wine glass of something or other which sent me to sleep as soon as my head touched the pillow.

1886-1887-1888

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29 **thirty-five.** Bellamy later reduced the age to thirty • 75 **explanation.** In the next chapter, not here reprinted, Dr. Leete explains how wages and money have been eliminated, each citizen being given at the beginning of each year a credit corresponding to his share of the annual product of the nation, on which he can obtain what he needs from the public storehouses

Finley Peter Dunne

1867 • 1936

What Jack Downing was for the opening decades of the nineteenth century, Mr. Dooley, the character created by Finley Peter Dunne, was for its closing years. In Chicago, which had been Dunne's birthplace, he attended high school and worked his way up from office boy on a newspaper to a job as a reporter. When in 1892 he chanced to put a piece commenting on current affairs into the dialect of an Irish saloonkeeper, he hit upon a way of writing destined to make him famous.

After some experiments and changes, the saloonkeeper became Martin Dooley, who, in his place on Archey Road, talked at length on all sorts of subjects. At first it was chiefly a Chicago audience which enjoyed his remarks; but when Mr. Dooley got to talking about the Spanish-American War in 1898, he became a national favorite. His monologues appeared in many newspapers, and when they were collected in books they found many purchasers. Dunne's books included *Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War* (1898), *Mr. Dooley in the Hearts of His Countrymen* (1899), *Mr. Dooley's Philosophy* (1900), *Mr. Dooley's Opinions* (1901), *Observations of Mr. Dooley* (1902), *Dissertations by Mr. Dooley* (1906), *Mr. Dooley Says* (1910), *New Dooley Book* (1911), and *Mr. Dooley on Making a Will* (1919). After a long career as a satirical writer, Dunne died in 1936.

Mr. Dooley discussed a wide range of topics. He touched upon the split in the Democratic party: "Whin ye see two men with white neckties go into a sthreet-car and set in opposite corners while wan mutthers 'Thraiter' an' th' other hisses 'Miscreent,' ye can bet they're two Dimmycratic leaders thryin' to re-unite th' gran' ol' party." He summarized the curricula of progressive schools—"rompin' an' dancin' an independence uv speech, an' beauty songs, an' swate thoughts, an' how to make home home-like." He said his say about the various presidents, the captains of industry, social critics, the proletariat, imperialism, the tariff, golf, grand opera, college athletics, exclusive balls, and a host of other subjects—always wittily.

Mr. Dooley's relationship with the long line of horse-sense humorists admired by Americans is clear. His unlearned but vivid diction and his common-sensical philosophy show his alliance with such commentators. It is noteworthy, however, that this well-realized character was more closely related to the earlier figures, such as Downing and Biglow, than to the literary comedians almost contemporaneous with him. For his immediate readers, as Mr. Mark Sullivan says, "Mr. Dooley supplied the softening solvent of humor to the American atmosphere in times of acute controversy. Just when we were getting worked up into factional passion, with everybody searching the cellar of his vocabulary for verbal lumps of coal, Mr. Dooley would come out in the Sunday papers with a picture of the situation that made every

reader laugh at it, and at himself." For later readers, Dunne furnished saltily phrased essays which amusingly illuminate the times which produced them. They do more: because they are rich in their commentary upon human foibles of all periods, they have enduring merit. Much of Mr. Dooley's talk, without change or, at most, with changes in only a few names, has the sting of satire on affairs of the present day. And Mr. Dooley and a good many of those whom he talks about continue to be vividly human characterizations.

Mr. Dooley at His Best, ed. Elmer Ellis, New York, 1938 • Elmer Ellis, Mr. Dooley's America: A Life of Finley Peter Dunne, New York, 1941

From

Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War

ON WAR PREPARATIONS

Says Professor Ellis, introducing this piece: "The opera bouffe character of certain aspects of the Spanish-American War in 1898 furnished Mr. Dooley with subjects for comment that increased his circle of admirers enormously. The confusion of organizing an army was more than evident in the newspapers of the day. The two chief concentration camps were at Chickamauga Park and Tampa. The fondness of the commanding general, Nelson A. Miles, for public statements and gold braids was often noted. When he left Washington to 'take the field' at Tampa, he was accompanied by Mrs. Miles, a daughter, and a son."

Mr. Dooley, one of the few of our crackerbox sages to be blessed, himself, with a sense of humor, has a delightful time ironically jesting about Gin'ral Miles' strange preparations for warfare.

"Well," Mr. Hennessy asked, "how goes th' war?"

"Splendid, thank ye," said Mr. Dooley. "Fine, fine. It makes me hear-rt throb with pride that I'm a citizen iv th' Sixth Wa-ard."

"Has th' ar-rmy started f'r Cuba yet?"

"Wan ar-rmy, says ye? Twinty! Las' Choosdah an advance ar-rmy iv wan hundherd an' twinty thousand men landed fr'm th' Gussie, with tin thousand cannons hurlin' projick-tyles weighin' eight hundherd pounds sivinteen miles. Winsdah night a second ar-rmy iv injineers, miners, plumbers, an' lawn tinnis experts, numberin' in all four hundherd an' eighty thousand men, ar-rmed with death-dealin' canned goods, was hurried to Havana to storm th' city.

"Thursdah mornin' three thousand full rigimints iv r-rough r-riders swum their hor-rses acrost to Matoonzas, an' afther a spirited battle captured th' Rainy Christmy golf links, two up an' hell to play, an' will hold thim again all comers. Th' same afthernoon th' reg'lar cavalry, con-sistin' iv four hundherd an' eight thousan' well-mounted men, was loaded aboord th' tug Lucy J., and departed on their earned iv death amidst th' cheers iv eight millyon sojers left behind at Chickamaha. These cav'lry'll cooperate with Commodore Schlow; an' whin he desthroys th' Spanish fleet, as he does ivry Sundah an' holy day except in Lent, an' finds out where they ar-re an' desthroys thim, but thinks they ar-re on their way f'r to fight Cousin George Dooley, th' cav'lry will make a dash back to Tampa, where Gin'ral Miles is preparin' to desthroy th' Spanish at wan blow, —an' he's th' boy to blow.

"The gin'ral arrived th' other day, fully prepared f'r th' bloody wurruk iv war. He had his intire fam'ly with him. He r-rode recklessly into camp, mounted on a superb specyal ca-ar. As himsilf an' Uncle Mike Miles, an' Cousin Hennery Miles, an' Master Miles, aged eight years, dismounted fr'm th' specyal train, they were received with wild cheers be eight millyon iv th' bravest sojers that iver give up their lives f'r their country. Th' press cinchorship is so pow'rful that no news is allowed to go out; but I have it fr'm th' specyal corryspondint iv Mesilf, Clancy th' Butcher, Mike Casey, an' th' City Directhry that Gin'ral Miles instantly repaired himsilf to th' hotel, where he made his plans f'r cr-rushin' th' Spanyards at wan blow. He will equip th' ar-rmy with blow-guns at wanst. His uniforms ar-re comin' down in specyal steel protected buhyon trains fr'm th' mint, where they've been kept f'r a year. He

has ordhered out th' gold resarve f'r to equip his staff, numberin' eight thousan' men, manny iv whom ar-re clubmen; an', as soon as he can have his pitchers took, he will cr-rush th' Spanish with wan blow. Th' pur-pose iv th' gin'ral is to permit no delay. Decisive action is demanded be th' people. An', whin th' hot air masheens has been sint to th' front, Gin'ral Miles will strike wan blow that'll be th' damdest blow since th' year iv th' big wind in Ireland.

"Iv coorse, they'se dissinsions in th' cabinet; but they don't amount to nawthin'. Th' Sicrety iv War is in favor iv sawin' th' Spanish ar'rmy into two-be-four joists. Th' Sicrety iv th' Threeasury has a scheme f'r roonin' thim be lindin' thim money. Th' Sicrety iv th' Navy wants to sue thim befure th' Mattsachusetts Supreme Coort. I've heerd that th' Prisident is arrangin' a knee dhrill, with th' idee iv prayin' th' villyans to th' divvil. But these diff'rences don't count. We're all wan people, an' we look to Gin'ral Miles to desthroy th' Spanish with wan blow. Whin it comes, trees will be lifted out be th' roots. Morro Caste'll cave in, an' th' air'll be full iv Spanish whiskers. A long blow, a sthrong blow, an' a blow all together."

"We're a gr-reat people," said Mr. Hennessy, earnestly.

"We ar-re," said Mr. Dooley. "We ar-re that. An' th' best iv it is, we know we ar're"

ON REFORM CANDIDATES

A product of the dissatisfaction of some with local government in this period was the "reform candidate," here satirized by Mr. Dooley. Too often, as the sage Irishman points out, the silk-stocking office seeker was completely unaware of the mass of voters who lived out beyond the best business and residential districts—a mass so numerous that it could decide many elections. Willie Boye, amusingly sketched by Mr. Dooley, is an example. Flannigan, on the other hand, is the practical ward politician who gets acquainted intimately with the people of the slums. Mr. Dooley's story is a vivid little parable about impractical versus practical politics.

"That frind iv ye'ers, Dugan, is an intilligent man," said Mr. Dooley. "All he needs is an index an' a few illusthrations to make him a bicyclopedja iv useless information."

"Well," said Mr. Hennessy, judiciously, "he ain't no Socrates an' he ain't no answers-to-questions colum; but he's a good man that goes to his jooty, an' as handy with a pick as some people are with a cocktail spoon. What's he been doin' again ye?"

"Nawthin'," said Mr. Dooley, "but he was in here Choosday. 'Did ye vote?' says I. 'I did,' says he. 'Which wan iv th' distinguished bunko steerers got ye'er invalu'ble suffrage?' says I. 'I didn't have none with me,' says he, 'but I voted f'r Charter Haitch,' says he. 'I've been with him in six ilictions,' says he, 'an' he's a good man,' he says. 'D'ye think ye're votin' f'r th' best?' says I 'Why, man alive,' I says, 'Charter Haitch was assassinated three years ago,' I says. 'Was he?' says Dugan. 'Ah, well, he's lived that down be this time. He was a good man,' he says.

"Ye see, that's what thim rayform lads wint up again. If I liked rayformers, Hinnissy, an' wanted f'r to see thim win out wanst in their lifetime, I'd buy thim each a suit iv chilled steel, ar-rm thim with raypeatin' rifles, an' take thim east iv State Sthreet an' south iv Jackson Bullyvard At prisint th' opinion that pre-vails in th' ranks iv th' gloryous ar-rmy iv ray-form is that there ain't annything worth seein' in this lar-rge an' commodyous desert but th' pest-house an' the bridewell. Me frind Willum J O'Brien is no rayformer. But Willum J. undherstands that there's a few hundherds iv thousands iv people livin' in a part iv th' town that looks like nawthin' but smoke fr'm th' roof iv th' Onion League Club that have on'y two pleasures in life, to wur-ruk an' to vote, both iv which they do at th' uniform rate iv wan dollar an' a half a day. That's why Willum J. O'Brien is now a sinitor an' will be an aldherman afther next Thursdah, an' it's why other people are sinding him flowers.

"This is th' way a rayform candydate is ilicted. Th' boys down town has heerd that things ain't goin' r-right somehow. Franchises is bein' handed out to none iv thim; an' wanst in a while a mimber iv th' club, comin' home a little late an' thryin' to riconcile a pair iv r-round feet with an embroidered sidewalk, meets a sthrong ar-rm boy that pushes in his face an' takes away all his marbles. It begins to be talked that th' time has come f'r good citizens f'r to brace up an' do somethin', an'

they agree to nomynate a candydate f'r aldherman. 'Who'll we put up?' says they. 'How's Clarence Doolittle?' says wan. 'He's laid up with a coupon thumb, an' can't r-run.' 'An' how about Arthur Doheny?' 'I swore an oath whin I came out iv colledge I'd niver vote f'r a man that wore a made tie.' 'Well, thin, let's thry Willie Boye.' 'Good,' says th' comity. 'He's jus' th' man f'r our money.' An' Willie Boye, after thinkin' it over, goes to his tailor an' ordhers three dozen pairs iv pants, an' decides f'r to be th' sthandard-bearer iv th' people. Musin' over his fried eyesthers an' asparagus an' his champagne, he bets a polo pony again a box of golf-balls he'll be ilicted unanimous; an' all th' good citizens make a vow f'r to set th' alar-rm clock f'r half-past three on th' afthernoon iv iliction day, so's to be up in time to vote f'r th' riprisintitive iv pure gover'mint.

" 'Tis some time befure they comprehind that there ar-re other candydates in th' field. But th' other candydates know it. Th' sthrongest iv thim—his name is Flannigan, an' he's a re-tail dealer in wines an' liquors, an' he lives over his establishment. Flannigan was nomynated enthusyastically at a prim'ry held in his bar-rn; an' befure Willie Boye had picked out pants that wud match th' color iv th' Austhreelyan ballot this here Flannigan had put a man on th' day watch, tol' him to speak gently to anny raygistered voter that wint to sleep behind th' sthove, an' was out that night visitin' his frinds. Who was it judged th' cake walk? Flannigan. Who was it carrid th' pall? Flannigan. Who was it sthud up at th' christening? Flannigan. Whose ca-ards did th' grievin' widow, and th' blushin' bridegroom, or th' happy father find in th' hack? Flannigan's. Ye bet ye'er life. Ye see Flannigan wasn't out f'r th' good iv th' community. Flannigan was out f'r Flannigan an' th' stuff.

"Well, iliction day come around; an' all th' imminent frinds iv good gover'mint had special wires sthrung into th' club, an' waited f'r th' returns. Th' first precin't showed 28 votes f'r Willie Boye to 14 f'r Flannigan. 'That's my precin't,' says Willie. 'I wondher who voted thim fourteen?' 'Coachmen,' says Clarence Doolittle. 'There are thirty-five precin'ts in this ward,' says th' leader iv th' rayform ilimint. 'At this rate, I'm sure iv 440 meejority. Gossoon,' he says, 'put a keg iv sherry wine on th' ice,' he says. 'Well,' he says, 'at last th' community is relieved fr'm misrule,' he says. 'To-morrah I will start in arrangin' amindmints to th' tariff



Mr. Dooley and Mr. Hennessey.

schedool an' th' ar-bitration threety,' he says. 'We must be up an' doin',' he says. 'Hol' on there,' says wan iv th' comity. 'There must be some mistake in this fr'm th' sixth precin't,' he says. 'Where's the sixth precin't?' says Clarence. 'Over be th' dumps,' says Willie. 'I told me futman to see to that. He lives at th' corner iv Desplaines an Bloo Island Av'noo on Goose's Island,' he says. 'What does it show?' 'Flannigan, three hundherd an' eighty-five, Hansen, forty-eight; Schwartz, twinty; O'Malley, sivinteen; Casey, ten; O'Day, eight; Larsen, five; O'Rourke, three, Mulcahy, two; Schmitt, two; Moloney, two; Riordon, two; O'Malley, two, Willie Boye, wan.' 'Gintlemin,' says Willie Boye, arisin' with a stern look in his eyes, 'Th' rascal has bethrayed me. Waither, take th' sherry wine off th' ice. They'se no hope f'r sound financial legislation this year. I'm goin' home.'

"An', as he goes down th' sthreet, he hears a band play an' sees a procission headed be a calceem light, an', in a carredge, with his plug hat in his hand an' his di'mond makin' th' calceem look like a piece iv punk in a smoke-house, is Flannigan, payin' his first visit this side iv th' thracks."

3 **coupon thumb,** a thumb made sore by clipping many coupons to collect interest on bonds

ON CHARITY

The preceding accounts of Mr. Dooley show his practical mind, his sense of humor, his witty way of making a point. "On Charity" not only sets forth his ideas but also catches some of the tenderer qualities of the man. His charity, inconsistent as it is with his preachments, makes him not only an amusing character but also a lovable one.

"Br-r-r!" cried Mr. McKenna, entering stiffly and spreading his hands over the potbellied stove. "It's cold."

"Where?" asked Mr. Dooley. "Not here."

"It's cold outside," said Mr. McKenna. "It was ten below at Shannahan's grocery when I went by, and the wind blowing like all possessed. Lord love us, but I pity them that's got to be out to-night."

"Save ye'er pity," said Mr. Dooley, comfortably. "It ain't cowld in here. There's frost on th' window, 'tis thrue for ye; an' th' wheels has been singin' th' livelong day. But what's that to us? Here I am, an' there ye are, th' stove between us an' th' kettle hummin'. In a minyit it'll bile, an' thin I'll give ye a taste iv what'll make a king iv ye.

"Well, tubby sure, 'tis thryin' to be dhrivin' a coal wagon or a sthreet-car; but 'tis all in a lifetime. Th' diff'rence between me an' th' man that sets up in th' seat thumpin' his chest with his hands is no more thin th' diff'rence beween him an' th' poor divvle that walks along behind th' wagon with his shovel on his shoulder, an' 'll thank th' saints f'r th' first chanst to put tin ton iv ha-ard coal into a cellar f'r a quarther iv a dollar. Th' lad afoot invies th' dhriver, an' th' dhriver invies me, an' I might invy big Cleveland if it wasn't f'r th' hivinly smell iv this here noggin. An' who does Cleveland invy? Sure, it'd be sacreliege f'r me to say.

"Me ol' father, who was as full iv sayin's as an almanac, used to sink his spoon into th' stirabout, an' say, 'Well, lads, this ain't bacon an' greens an' porther; but it'll be annything ye like if ye'll on'y think iv th' Cassidys.' Th' Cassidys was th' poorest fam'ly in th' parish. They waked th' oldest son in small beer, an' was little thought of. Did me father iver ask thim in to share th' stirabout? Not him An' he was the kindest man in th' wurruld. He had a heart in him as big as a lump iv turf, but he'd say, 'Whin ye grow up, take no wan's sorrows to ye'ersilf,' he says. ' 'Tis th' wise man that goes through life thinkin' iv himsilf, fills his own stomach, an' takes away what he can't ate in his pocket.' An' he was r-right, Jawn. We have throubles enough iv our own. Th' wurruld goes on just th' same, an' ye can find fifty men to say th' lit'ny f'r ye to wan that'll give ye what'll relieve a fastin' spit. Th' dead ar-re always pop'lar. I knowed a society wanst to vote a monyment to a man an' refuse to help his fam'ly, all in wan night. 'Tis cowld outside th' dure, ye say, but 'tis war-rum in here; an' I'm gettin' in me ol' age to think that the diff'rence between hivin an' hell is no broader"—

Mr. Dooley's remarks were cut short by a cry from the back room. It was unmistakably a baby's cry. Mr. McKenna turned suddenly in amazement as Mr. Dooley bolted.

"Well, in the name of the saints, what's all this?" he cried, following his friend into the back room. He found the philosopher, with an expression of the utmost sternness, sitting on the side of his bed, with a little girl of two or three in his arms. The philosopher was singing:—

Ar-rah rock-a-bye, babby, on th' three top:
Whin th' wind blo-ows, th' cradle ull r-rock;
An', a-whin th' bough breaks, th' cradle ull fa-a-a-ll,
An' a-down ull come babby, cradle, an' all.

Then he sang:—

In th' town iv Kilkinny there du-wilt a fair ma-aid,
In th' town iv Kilkinny there du-wilt a fair ma-aid.
She had cheeks like th' roses, an' hair iv th' same,
An' a mouth like ripe sthrawburries burrid in crame.

He rocked the child to and fro, and its crying ceased while he sang:—

Chip, chip, a little horse;
Chip, chip, again, sir.
How manny miles to Dublin?
Threescure an' tin, sir.

The little girl went to sleep on Mr. Dooley's white apron. He lifted her tenderly, and carried her over to his bed. Then he tiptoed out with an apprehensive face, and whispered: "It's Jawn Donahue's kid that wandherd away fr'm home, an' wint to sleep on me dure-step. I sint th' Dorsey boy to tell th' mother, but he's a long time gone. Do ye run over, Jawn, an' lave thim know."

1898



Henry Adams

1838 • 1918

"Probably no child, born in the same year, held better cards than he." In these words Henry Adams, in mature life, assessed the circumstances of his own birth, which had occurred in Boston in 1838. His remark was less a snobbish boast than an objective statement of fact. The cards had been good indeed: no financial problem faced him; his mother was the daughter of the wealthiest man in his native city. Part of the infant's heritage was a brilliant mind, and his family cherished fine old traditions of culture and useful service. His forebears, including two Presidents of the United States and three ministers to England as well as several notable scholars, had been most distinguished. The Adamses were one of the honored families of Massachusetts, and many people in New England took for granted that any member of the tribe was destined to have an outstanding career.

It was not surprising that, after Henry Adams had been trained in a Boston private school, then in Harvard, and finally—for some years—in centers of European culture, he showed real talents for several different kinds of endeavor. During the Civil War period, he efficiently acted as secretary to his father, who served for a time as United States congressman and later as minister to England. Between 1868 and 1870, he was a journalistic commentator, of much promise, upon domestic and foreign affairs. Between 1870 and 1876, he was the competent editor of a long-established and distinguished magazine, the *North American Review.* Simultaneously he was a highly successful teacher of medieval history at Harvard, where, among other important innovations, he introduced the graduate seminar.

Panel (l. to r.): The Adams mansion, Boston • Henry Adams at 69 • Beacon Hill • "The Peace of God," Saint Gaudens' monument on the grave of Mrs. Henry Adams

In Washington, D. C., to which he moved from Boston, Adams composed two noteworthy novels, *Democracy* (1880) and *Esther* (1884), as well as several studies in American history. These included, in addition to shorter works, a pair of excellent biographies, *Life of Albert Gallatin* (1879) and *John Randolph* (1882), and a much admired nine-volume *History of the United States During the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison* (1889-1891). His interpretation of medieval life, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1904, revised in 1913), was praised by literary critics as well as by historians. (Professor John Spencer Bassett, in the *Cambridge History of American Literature,* calls the book "probably the best expression of the Middle Ages yet published in the English language.") His crowning achievement, in the opinion of most, was a philosophical autobiography cryptically titled *The Education of Henry Adams,* privately printed in 1907 but not made available to the general public until 1918, the year of the author's death.

The aptitudes thus displayed, considering Adams' nature and nurture, were not surprising But the varied nature of his efforts was an outward sign of an inward discontent. The "education" which he achieved, one which did not end with college but extended throughout a long lifetime, was, in Adams' opinion, an indecisive one. Despite the fine cards dealt to him by fate, he said, characteristically writing of himself in the third person, "he never got to the point of playing the game at all; he lost himself in the study of it, watching the errors of the players . . . ." His aim, in large part, as he watched and thoughtfully pondered what he saw, was to find some secret of orderliness, some meaningful scheme, in the complex world of his time. Widely traveled though he was not only in Europe but in America, Mexico, the South Seas, Egypt, and Russia as well; closely acquainted though he was with a host of the leading figures of the day in several fields; well read though he was in books on many subjects, he found that the answer consistently proved elusive.

Adams' first novel, *Democracy,* shows what discouraging conclusions he reached when he studied and weighed the values of one important phase of American life—our governmental system. Sternly, in the spirit of doubt which was moving many of our authors in the 1880's, Adams tells a story underlining faults which he had seen in our government while living in Washington. As Ludwig Lewisohn observes, in *Expression in America,* "He rejects the life of the American collectivity at its densest and most representative place and point; he despairs of the Republic; he leaves the reader with not a shred of illusion concerning the national government and its method." And Adams' skepticism about ways of living in his era became much more inclusive by the time he reached his sixties and wrote his two most famous books.

These books, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* and *The Education,* dramatically indicate the great problem which this author attempted to solve, and record his search for a solution. The former examines the point in the long history of the human race at which, he believes, "man had held the highest idea of himself as a unit in a unified universe." The art and the architecture of the medieval period during which were erected the two great cathedrals of his title, Adams contends, are symbols of an age of unity, an age during which man had found answers satisfactory to himself to questions about the nature of the universe and man's place in it. Such an age of peaceful adjustment was made possible, Adams holds, by man's transference of the vital power of the Virgin—Mary, the central figure of medieval faith—into both belief and action.

Adams thus looks back with wistful nostalgia at the distant age which had solved the problem of living. But when he turns to his own time he sees a contrast which creates a different mood. He sees the age in which he has lived as one not of unity but of chaotic multiplicity. His *Education* gives an account of its author's continuously baffled search—in many parts of the earth during a long period—for some up-to-date, unified meaning or faith comparable to that which had motivated medieval worshipers. In politics, in religion, in philosophy, in physics, in biology, in psychology, he finds evidence which leads him to draw a distressing conclusion: "Chaos was the law of nature; Order was the dream of man." Adams' autobiography, therefore, marks the attainment of a high point in the skepticism characteristic of its author's period. But it has more than a negative value: for one thing, it sets forth Adams' "dynamic theory of history," which interestingly attempts to interpret cause-effect relationships in our past in terms of certain laws of the physical world. For another, it positively insists upon our need for "a new social mind" to grapple with complex modern life, and

thus it foreshadows a growing concern of the present day.

The form employed by Adams in his life story makes both the account and the message memorable. No hysteria of the sort far too frequent in American pessimistic writing enters into it; rather the whole thoughtful narrative is set down with detachment and quiet irony. Adams was equipped, by training and temperament, not only for an objective, amused consideration of the world in which he lived but also for something even more noteworthy—a smiling contemplation of himself, scion of the great Adams family, scurrying over the face of the earth to carry on a lifelong quest which, although it is always frustrated, is eternally hopeful. His very use of the third person (instead of the first person typical of autobiography) emphasizes his playful objectivity. His refusal to consider in any detail several deeply tragic events in his life—such as the death of his wife in 1885—helps him maintain the tone of high comedy. His style is quiet, reserved, cynical—implicit in its nuances rather than explicit and direct. *The Education,* descriptive of chaos though it is, is anything but chaotic. subtlety and sureness down to the minutest detail make the book an outstanding masterpiece among American works of its genre.

J. T. Adams, **Henry Adams,** New York, 1933 • R. A. Hume, "The Style and Literary Background of Henry Adams, with Attention to **The Education,**" **American Literature,** January 1945 • R F. Nichols, "The Dynamic Interpretation of History," **New England Quarterly,** June 1935 • T K. Whipple, "Henry Adams," **Spokesmen: Modern Writers and American Life,** New York, 1928

From

The Education of Henry Adams

Chapter XXV

THE DYNAMO AND THE VIRGIN (1900)

Chapter XXV of Adams' autobiography tells how, at the Paris Exposition of 1900, instructed by the scientist Langley, Adams became aware of the power and the mystery of the dynamo. "As he grew accustomed to the great gallery of machines," he writes of himself, "he began to feel the forty-foot dynamos as a moral force, much as the early Christians felt the Cross." Was it possible, he wondered, for a historian to chart man's development in terms of this twentieth-century embodiment of force? "Symbol or energy," he writes, "the Virgin had acted as the greatest force the Western world ever felt and had drawn man's activities to herself more strongly than any other power, natural or supernatural, had ever done; the historian's business was to follow the track of the energy; to find where it came from and where it went to; its complex source and shifting channels; its values, equivalents, conversions." The chapter tells how the dynamo and the thoughts it stimulated brought additional puzzlement to Adams and started him on a new search for understanding.

Until the Great Exposition of 1900 closed its doors in November, Adams haunted it, aching to absorb knowledge, and helpless to find it. He would have liked to know how much of it could have been grasped by the best-informed man in the world. While he was thus meditating chaos, Langley came by, and showed it to him. At Langley's behest, the Exhibition dropped its superfluous rags and stripped itself to the skin, for Langley knew what to study, and why, and how; while Adams might as well have stood outside in the night, staring at the Milky Way. Yet Langley said nothing new, and taught nothing that one might not have learned from Lord Bacon, three hundred years before; but though one should have known the "Advancement of Science" as well as one knew the "Comedy of Errors," the literary knowledge counted for nothing until some teacher should show how to apply it. Bacon took a vast deal of trouble in teaching King James I and his subjects, American or other, towards the year 1620, that true science was the development or economy of forces; yet an elderly American in 1900 knew neither the formula nor the forces; or even so much as to say to himself that his historical business in the Exposition

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13 **Lord Bacon,** Francis Bacon (1561-1626), English philosopher, whose work on "Advancement of Science" was **The Advancement of Learning** (1605) • 15 **Comedy of Errors,** Shakespeare s play • 18 **King James I** (1566-1625) was king of Great Britain from 1603 until his death

concerned only the economies or developments of force since 1893, when he began the study at Chicago.

Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts. Adams had looked at most of the accumulations of art in the storehouses called Art Museums; yet he did not know how to look at the art exhibits of 1900. He had studied Karl Marx and his doctrines of history with profound attention, yet he could not apply them at Paris. Langley, with the ease of a great master of experiment, threw out of the field every exhibit that did not reveal a new application of force, and naturally threw out, to begin with, almost the whole art exhibit. Equally, he ignored almost the whole industrial exhibit. He led his pupil directly to the forces. His chief interest was in new motors to make his airship feasible, and he taught Adams the astonishing complexities of the new Daimler motor, and of the automobile, which, since 1893, had become a nightmare at a hundred kilometres an hour, almost as destructive as the electric tram which was only ten years older; and threatening to become as terrible as the locomotive steam-engine itself, which was almost exactly Adams's own age.

Then he showed his scholar the great hall of dynamos, and explained how little he knew about electricity or force of any kind, even of his own special sun, which spouted heat in inconceivable volume, but which, as far as he knew, might spout less or more, at any time, for all the certainty he felt in it. To him, the dynamo itself was but an ingenious channel for conveying somewhere the heat latent in a few tons of poor coal hidden in a dirty engine-house carefully kept out of sight; but to Adams the dynamo became a symbol of infinity. As he grew accustomed to the great gallery of machines, he began to feel the forty-foot dynamos as a moral force, much as the early Christians felt the Cross. The planet itself seemed less impressive, in its old-fashioned, deliberate, annual or daily revolution, than this huge wheel, revolving within arm's-length at some vertiginous speed, and barely murmuring—scarcely humming an audible warning to stand a hair's-breadth further for respect of power—while it would not wake the baby lying close against its frame. Before the end, one began to pray to it; inherited instinct taught the natural expression of man before silent and infinite force. Among the thousand symbols of ultimate energy, the dynamo was not so human as some, but it was the most expressive.

Yet the dynamo, next to the steam-engine, was the most familiar of exhibits. For Adams's objects its value lay chiefly in its occult mechanism. Between the dynamo in the gallery of machines and the engine-house outside, the break of continuity amounted to abysmal fracture for a historian's objects. No more relation could he discover between the steam and the electric current than between the Cross and the cathedral. The forces were interchangeable if not reversible, but he could see only an absolute *fiat* in electricity as in faith. Langley could not help him. Indeed, Langley seemed to be worried by the same trouble, for he constantly repeated that the new forces were anarchical, and specially that he was not responsible for the new rays, that were little short of parricidal in their wicked spirit towards science. His own rays, with which he had doubled the solar spectrum, were altogether harmless and beneficent; but Radium denied its God—or, what was to Langley the same thing, denied the truths of his Science. The force was wholly new.

A historian who asked only to learn enough to be as futile as Langley or Kelvin, made rapid progress under this teaching, and mixed himself up in the tangle of ideas until he achieved a sort of Paradise of ignorance vastly consoling to his fatigued senses. He wrapped himself in vibrations and rays which were new, and he would have hugged Marconi and Branly had he met them, as he hugged the dynamo; while he lost his arithmetic in trying to figure out the equation between the discoveries and the economies of force. The economies, like the discoveries, were absolute, supersensual, occult; incapable of expression in horse-power. What mathematical equivalent could he suggest as the value of a Branly coherer? Frozen air, or the electric furnace, had some scale of measurement, no doubt, if somebody could invent a thermometer adequate to the purpose; but X-rays had played no part whatever in man's con-

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2 1893, the year of the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago, which Adams had visited. In Chapter XXII, he told of the questions raised by the scientific and industrial exhibits • 18 Daimler, Gottlieb Daimler (1834-1900), the discoverer of important improvements in the gasoline engine • 65 Radium . . . God. Scientists were still puzzled by the activity of this recently discovered element • 69 Kelvin, William Thomson Kelvin, Baron (1824-1907), British mathematician and physicist, an authority on molecular dynamics • 74 Branly, Édouard Branly (1846-1940) French physicist. Branly's coherer was useful in detecting electric waves

sciousness, and the atom itself had figured only as a fiction of thought. In these seven years man had translated himself into a new universe which had no common scale of measurement with the old. He had entered a supersensual world, in which he could measure nothing except by chance collisions of movements imperceptible to his senses, perhaps even imperceptible to his instruments, but perceptible to each other, and so to some known ray at the end of the scale. Langley seemed prepared for anything, even for an indeterminable number of universes interfused—physics stark mad in metaphysics.

Historians undertake to arrange sequences,—called stories, or histories—assuming in silence a relation of cause and effect. These assumptions, hidden in the depths of dusty libraries, have been astounding, but commonly unconscious and childlike; so much so, that if any captious critic were to drag them to light, historians would probably reply, with one voice, that they had never supposed themselves required to know what they were talking about. Adams, for one, had toiled in vain to find out what he meant. He had even published a dozen volumes of American history for no other purpose than to satisfy himself whether, by the severest process of stating, with the least possible comment, such facts as seemed sure, in such order as seemed rigorously consequent, he could fix for a familiar moment a necessary sequence of human movement. The result had satisfied him as little as at Harvard College. Where he saw sequence, other men saw something quite different, and no one saw the same unit of measure. He cared little about his experiments and less about his statesmen, who seemed to him quite as ignorant as himself and, as a rule, no more honest; but he insisted on a relation of sequence, and if he could not reach it by one method, he would try as many methods as science knew. Satisfied that the sequence of men led to nothing and that the sequence of their society could lead no further, while the mere sequence of time was artificial, and the sequence of thought was chaos, he turned at last to the sequence of force; and thus it happened that, after ten years' pursuit, he found himself lying in the Gallery of Machines at the Great Exposition of 1900, his historical neck broken by the sudden irruption of forces totally new.

Since no one else showed much concern, an elderly person without other cares had no need to betray alarm. The year 1900 was not the first to upset schoolmasters. Copernicus and Galileo had broken many professorial necks about 1600; Columbus had stood the world on its head towards 1500; but the nearest approach to the revolution of 1900 was that of 310, when Constantine set up the Cross The rays that Langley disowned, as well as those which he fathered, were occult, supersensual, irrational; they were what, in terms of medieval science, were called immediate modes of the divine substance.

The historian was thus reduced to his last resources. Clearly if he was bound to reduce all these forces to a common value, this common value could have no measure but that of their attraction on his own mind. He must treat them as they had been felt; as convertible, reversible, interchangeable attractions on thought. He made up his mind to venture it; he would risk translating rays into faith. Such a reversible process would vastly amuse a chemist, but the chemist could not deny that he, or some of his fellow physicists, could feel the force of both. When Adams was a boy in Boston, the best chemist in the place had probably never heard of Venus except by way of scandal, or of the Virgin except as idolatry; neither had he heard of dynamos or automobiles or radium; yet his mind was ready to feel the force of all, though the rays were unborn and the women were dead.

Here opened another totally new education, which promised to be by far the most hazardous of all. The knife-edge along which he must crawl, like Sir Lancelot in the twelfth century, divided two kingdoms of force which had nothing in common but attraction. They were as different as a magnet is from gravitation, supposing one knew what a magnet was, or gravitation, or love. The force of the Virgin was still felt at Lourdes, and seemed to be as potent as X-rays but in America neither Venus nor Virgin ever had value as a force—at most as sentiment. No American had ever truly been afraid of either.

This problem in dynamics gravely perplexed an American historian. The Woman had once been su-

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48 **Copernicus,** Nikolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), Polish astronomer who had revolutionized thought concerning the mechanics of the universe • 48 **Galileo,** Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Italian astronomer • 51 **Constantine** (272?-337), Roman emperor who was converted to Christianity about 310 • 75 **Sir Lancelot,** according to one medieval story, had to crawl along a knife-edge to enter a castle from which he rescued Guinevere • 80 **Lourdes,** town in southwestern France, famous for its miraculous grotto • 86 **The Woman,** the feminine force

preme; in France she still seemed potent, not merely as a sentiment, but as a force. Why was she unknown in America? For evidently America was ashamed of her, and she was ashamed of herself, otherwise they would not have strewn fig-leaves so profusely all over her. When she was a true force, she was ignorant of fig-leaves, but the monthly-magazine-made American female had not a feature that would have been recognized by Adam. The trait was notorious, and often humorous, but any one brought up among Puritans knew that sex was a sin. In any previous age, sex was strength. Neither art nor beauty was needed. Every one, even among Puritans, knew that neither Diana of the Ephesians nor any of the Oriental goddesses was worshipped for her beauty. She was goddess because of her force; she was the animated dynamo; she was reproduction—the greatest and most mysterious of all energies; all she needed was to be fecund. Singularly enough, not one of Adams's many schools of education had ever drawn his attention to the opening lines of Lucretius, though they were perhaps the finest in all Latin literature, where the poet invoked Venus exactly as Dante invoked the Virgin:—

"Quae quoniam rerum naturam *sola* gubernas."

The Venus of Epicurean philosophy survived in the Virgin of the Schools:—

"Donna, sei tanto grande, e tanto vali,
Che qual vuol grazia, e a te non ricorre,
Sua disianza vuol volar senz' ali."

All this was to American thought as though it had never existed. The true American knew something of the facts, but nothing of the feelings; he read the letter, but he never felt the law. Before this historical chasm, a mind like that of Adams felt itself helpless; he turned from the Virgin to the Dynamo as though he were a Branly coherer. On one side, at the Louvre and at Chartres, as he knew by the record of work actually done and still before his eyes, was the highest energy ever known to man, the creator of four-fifths of his noblest art, exercising vastly more attraction over the human mind than all the steam-engines and dynamos ever dreamed of; and yet this energy was unknown to the American mind. An American Virgin would never dare command; an American Venus would never dare exist.

The question, which to any plain American of the nineteenth century seemed as remote as it did to Adams, drew him almost violently to study, once it was posed; and on this point Langleys were as useless as though they were Herbert Spencers or dynamos. The idea survived only as art. There one turned as naturally as though the artist were himself a woman. Adams began to ponder, asking himself whether he knew of any American artist who had ever insisted on the power of sex, as every classic had always done; but he could think only of Walt Whitman; Bret Harte, as far as the magazines would let him venture; and one or two painters, for the flesh-tones. All the rest had used sex for sentiment, never for force; to them, Eve was a tender flower, and Herodias an unfeminine horror. American art, like the American language and American education, was as far as possible sexless. Society regarded this victory over sex as its greatest triumph, and the historian readily admitted it, since the moral issue, for the moment, did not concern one who was studying the relations of unmoral force. He cared nothing for the sex of the dynamo until he could measure its energy.

Vaguely seeking a clue, he wandered through the art exhibit, and, in his stroll, stopped almost every day before St. Gaudens's General Sherman, which had been given the central post of honor. St. Gaudens himself was in Paris, putting on the work his usual interminable last touches, and listening to the usual contradictory suggestions of brother sculptors. Of all the American artists who gave to American art whatever life it breathed in the seventies, St. Gaudens was perhaps the most sympathetic, but certainly the most inarticulate. General Grant or Don Cameron had scarcely less in-

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13 **Diana**, fertility goddess of Ephesus • 20 **Lucretius**, Titus Lucretius Carus (96-55 B C), Roman poet • 24 **Quae quoniam** . . . . "Since thou art, then, sole mistress of the nature of things."—Lucretius, **On the Nature of Things**, I. 21 • 27 **Donna, sei tanto** . . . .

Lady, thou are so great, and so prevailing,
That he who wishes grace, nor runs to thee,
His aspirations without wings would fly.

—Dante, "Paradiso," XXXIII, ll. 13-15 (Longfellow's translation)

• 49 **Herbert Spencer** (1820-1903), English philosopher • 59 **Herodias**, the wife of Herod Antipas, by feminine guile, she brought about the death of John the Baptist • 69 **St. Gaudens's . . . Sherman.** Augustus Saint Gaudens (see note, p. 1032) was a friend of Adams His statue of General Sherman, then on display in Paris, now stands in Central Park, New York • 77 **Don Cameron**, J. D. Cameron (1833-1918), a senator from Pennsylvania and another friend of Adams

stinct of rhetoric than he. All the others—the Hunts, Richardson, John La Farge, Stanford White—were exuberant; only St. Gaudens could never discuss or dilate on an emotion, or suggest artistic arguments for giving to his work the forms that he felt. He never laid down the law, or affected the despot, or became brutalized like Whistler by the brutalities of his world. He required no incense; he was no egoist; his simplicity of thought was excessive; he could not imitate, or give any form but his own to the creations of his hand. No one felt more strongly than he the strength of other men, but the idea that they could affect him never stirred an image in his mind.

This summer his health was poor and his spirits were low. For such a temper, Adams was not the best companion, since his own gaiety was not *folle;* but he risked going now and then to the studio on Mont Parnasse to draw him out for a stroll in the Bois de Boulogne, or dinner as pleased his moods, and in return St. Gaudens sometimes let Adams go about in his company.

Once St. Gaudens took him down to Amiens, with a party of Frenchmen, to see the cathedral. Not until they found themselves actually studying the sculpture of the western portal, did it dawn on Adams's mind that, for his purposes, St. Gaudens on that spot had more interest to him than the cathedral itself. Great men before great monuments express great truths, provided they are not taken too solemnly. Adams never tired of quoting the supreme phrase of his idol Gibbon, before the Gothic cathedrals: "I darted a contemptuous look on the stately monuments of superstition." Even in the footnotes of his history, Gibbon had never inserted a bit of humor more human than this, and one would have paid largely for a photograph of the fat little historian, on the background of Notre Dame of Amiens, trying to persuade his readers—perhaps himself—that he was darting a contemptuous look on the stately monument, for which he felt in fact the respect which every man of his vast study and active mind always feels before objects worthy of it; but besides the humor, one felt also the relation. Gibbon ignored the Virgin, because in 1789 religious monuments were out of fashion. In 1900 his remark sounded fresh and simple as the green fields to ears that had heard a hundred years of other remarks, mostly no more fresh and certainly less simple. Without malice, one might find it more instructive than a whole lecture of Ruskin. One sees what one brings, and at that moment Gibbon brought the French Revolution. Ruskin brought reaction against the Revolution. St. Gaudens had passed beyond all. He liked the stately monuments much more than he liked Gibbon or Ruskin; he loved their dignity; their unity; their scale; their lines; their lights and shadows; their decorative sculpture; but he was even less conscious than they of the force that created it all—the Virgin, the Woman—by whose genius "the stately monuments of superstition" were built, through which she was expressed. He would have seen more meaning in Isis with the cow's horns, at Edfoo, who expressed the same thought. The art remained, but the energy was lost even upon the artist.

Yet in mind and person St. Gaudens was a survival of the 1500, he bore the stamp of the Renaissance, and should have carried an image of the Virgin round his neck, or stuck in his hat, like Louis XI. In mere time he was a lost soul that had strayed by chance into the twentieth century, and forgotten where it came from. He writhed and cursed at his ignorance, much as Adams did at his own, but in the opposite sense. St. Gaudens was a child of Benvenuto Cellini, smothered in an American cradle. Adams was a quintessence of Boston, devoured by curiosity to think like Benvenuto. St. Gaudens's art was starved from birth, and Adams's instinct was blighted from babyhood. Each had but half of a nature, and when they came together before the Virgin of Amiens they ought both to have felt in her the force that made them one; but it was not so. To Adams she became more than ever a channel of force; to St. Gaudens she remained as before a channel of taste.

For a symbol of power, St. Gaudens instinctively preferred the horse, as was plain in his horse and Victory of the Sherman monument. Doubtless Sherman also

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1 the Hunts, Richard Morris Hunt (1827-1895), an architect; William Morris Hunt (1824-1879), a painter • **2 Richardson,** Henry H. Richardson (1838-1886), an architect • **2 John La Farge** (1835-1910), painter and sculptor • **2 Stanford White** (1853-1906), an architect • **7 Whistler,** James M. Whistler (1834-1903), sharp-tongued American artist who lived in Europe • **16 folle,** mad or extravagant • **29 Gibbon,** Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), English historian and skeptic • **47 Ruskin,** John Ruskin (1819-1900), English art critic whose philosophizing about cathedrals differed greatly from Adams' • **58 Isis.** Adams had seen a statue of this Egyptian goddess of fertility in Edfu, Egypt • **64 Louis XI** (1423-1483), king of France • **69 Benvenuto Cellini** (1500-1571), a great Italian craftsman in metals, here used to represent the artistry of the Renaissance

felt it so. The attitude was so American that, for at least forty years, Adams had never realized that any other could be in sound taste. How many years had he taken to admit a notion of what Michael Angelo and Rubens were driving at? He could not say; but he knew that only since 1895 had he begun to feel the Virgin or Venus as force, and not everywhere even so. At Chartres—perhaps at Lourdes—possibly at Cnidos if one could still find there the divinely naked Aphrodite of Praxiteles—but otherwise one must look for force to the goddesses of Indian mythology. The idea died out long ago in the German and English stock. St. Gaudens at Amiens was hardly less sensitive to the force of the female energy than Matthew Arnold at the Grande Chartreuse. Neither of them felt goddesses as power—only as reflected emotion, human expression, beauty, purity, taste, scarcely even as sympathy. They felt a railway train as power; yet they, and all other artists, constantly complained that the power embodied in a railway train could never be embodied in art. All the steam in the world could not, like the Virgin, build Chartres.

Yet in mechanics, whatever the mechanicians might think, both energies acted as interchangeable forces on man, and by action on man all known force may be measured. Indeed, few men of science measured force in any other way. After once admitting that a straight line was the shortest distance between two points, no serious mathematician cared to deny anything that suited his convenience, and rejected no symbol, unproved or unproveable, that helped him to accomplish work. The symbol was force, as a compass-needle or a triangle was force, as the mechanist might prove by losing it, and nothing could be gained by ignoring their value. Symbol or energy, the Virgin had acted as the greatest force the Western world ever felt, and had drawn man's activities to herself more strongly than any other power, natural or supernatural, had ever done; the historian's business was to follow the track of the energy; to find where it came from and where it went to; its complex source and shifting channels; its values, equivalents, conversions. It could scarcely be more complex than radium; it could hardly be deflected, diverted, polarized, absorbed more perplexingly than other radiant matter. Adams knew nothing about any of them, but as a mathematical problem of influence on human progress, though all were occult, all reacted on his mind, and he rather inclined to think the Virgin easiest to handle.

The pursuit turned out to be long and tortuous, leading at last into the vast forests of scholastic science. From Zeno to Descartes, hand in hand with Thomas Aquinas, Montaigne, and Pascal, one stumbled as stupidly as though one were still a German student of 1860. Only with the instinct of despair could one force one's self into this old thicket of ignorance after having been repulsed at a score of entrances more promising and more popular. Thus far, no path had led anywhere, unless perhaps to an exceedingly modest living. Forty-five years of study had proved to be quite futile for the pursuit of power; one controlled no more force in 1900 than in 1850, although the amount of force controlled by society had enormously increased. The secret of education still hid itself somewhere behind ignorance, and one fumbled over it as feebly as ever. In such labyrinths, the staff is a force almost more necessary than the legs; the pen becomes a sort of blind-man's dog, to keep him from falling into the gutters. The pen works for itself, and acts like a hand, modelling the plastic material over and over again to the form that suits it best. The form is never arbitrary, but is a sort of growth like crystallization, as any artist knows too well; for often the pencil or pen runs into side-paths and shapelessness, loses its relations, stops or is bogged. Then it has to return on its trail, and recover, if it can, its line of force. The result of a year's work depends more on what is struck out than on what is left in; on the sequence of the main lines of thought, than on their play or variety. Compelled once more to lean heavily on this support, Adams covered more thousands of pages with figures as formal as though they were algebra, laboriously striking out, altering, burning, experimenting, until the year had expired, the Exposition had long been closed, and winter drawing to its end before he sailed from Cherbourg, on January 19, 1901 for home.

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8 Cnidos, site of the temple in which was placed the statue of Aphrodite which was the masterpiece of the great Greek sculptor, Praxiteles • 14 Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), English poet and critic, told, in his poem "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," of his religious experiences • 52 Zeno, Greek philosopher of the fourth century B.C.; founder of stoicism • 52 Descartes, René Descartes (1596-1650), French philosopher—a rationalist • 52 Aquinas, Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225?-1274), Catholic philosopher • 53 Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (1533-1592), French essayist and philosopher • 53 Pascal, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), French mathematician and philosopher

Chapter XXXIII

A DYNAMIC THEORY OF HISTORY (1904)

In 1910, Adams sent out to a number of his fellow historians A Letter to American Teachers of History. In his letter, he (1) held that the hypothesis of evolution had been overthrown by a discovery in physics—the second law of thermodynamics, which suggested that the unrestorable mechanical energy of the earth was being dissipated; (2) urged his colleagues to work out a formula for the course of history in terms of this law. Though historians in general worked on no such scheme, Adams had tentatively formulated his use of the principle in an essay, "The Rule of Phase Applied to History" (later published in The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma in 1918), and in two chapters (XXXIII and XXXIV) of The Education. In "Henry Adams on History" (New England Quarterly, June 1935), Roy F. Nichols summarizes the theory thus: "Adams's studies of force led him to believe that thought followed its developments. The order of the appearance of the great forces conveniently corresponded to the order of their intensity. First, there was human reproductive energy as represented by women; second, faith, culminating in Christianity; third, mechanical power; fourth, electricity; and finally, radium."

Chapter XXXIII applies the formula to the course of man's experiences down to 1900. The concluding lines are transitional to Chapter XXXIV, "A Law of Acceleration," which suggests that as the forces involved in successive phases became increasingly powerful, the phases became of briefer and briefer duration.

Mr. Nichols notes "the veritable revolution in science" which has taken place since Adams' day because "the theory of relativity, the phenomena of radioactivity, and quantum mechanics have come to the fore." As a result, he concludes, "Henry Adams's challenge to teachers of history to seek a dynamic interpretation still stands, even though his own attempt to formulate it must be discarded. Historian and scientist may well work together—but they will work in a different direction from that pointed out by Adams." Even after historian and scientist succeed in this endeavor, however—if they ever do—Adams' account will continue to be of interest as an interpretation of the past of mankind based upon the suggestions of the science of the day and also upon the pessimistic conclusions of its author.

A dynamic theory, like most theories, begins by begging the question: it defines Progress as the development and economy of Forces. Further, it defines force as anything that does, or helps to do work. Man is a force; so is the sun; so is a mathematical point, though without dimensions or known existence.

Man commonly begs the question again by taking for granted that he captures the forces. A dynamic theory, assigning attractive force to opposing bodies in proportion to the law of mass, takes for granted that the forces of nature capture man. The sum of force attracts, the feeble atom or molecule called man is attracted; he suffers education or growth; he is the sum of the forces that attract him; his body and his thought are alike their product; the movement of the forces controls the progress of his mind, since he can know nothing but the motions which impinge on his senses, whose sum makes education.

For convenience as an image, the theory may liken man to a spider in its web, watching for chance prey. Forces of nature dance like flies before the net, and the spider pounces on them when it can; but it makes many fatal mistakes, though its theory of force is sound. The spider-mind acquires a faculty of memory, and, with it, a singular skill of analysis and synthesis, taking apart and putting together in different relations the meshes of its trap. Man had in the beginning no power of analysis or synthesis approaching that of the spider, or even of the honey-bee; but he had acute sensibility to the higher forces. Fire taught him secrets that no other animal could learn; running water probably taught him even more, especially in his first lessons of mechanics; the animals helped to educate him, trusting themselves into his hands merely for the sake of their food, and carrying his burdens or supplying his clothing; the grasses and grains were academies of study. With little or no effort on his part, all these forces formed his thought, induced his action, and even shaped his figure.

Long before history began, his education was complete, for the record could not have been started until he had been taught to record. The universe that had formed him took shape in his mind as a reflection of his own unity, containing all forces except himself. Either separately, or in groups, or as a whole, these forces never ceased to act on him, enlarging his mind as they enlarged the surface foliage of a vegetable, and the mind needed only to respond, as the forests did, to these

attractions. Susceptibility to the highest forces is the highest genius; selection between them is the highest science; their mass is the highest educator. Man always made, and still makes, grotesque blunders in selecting and measuring forces, taken at random from the heap, but he never made a mistake in the value he set on the whole, which he symbolized as unity and worshipped as God. To this day, his attitude towards it has never changed, though science can no longer give to force a name.

Man's function as a force of nature was to assimilate other forces as he assimilated food. He called it the love of power. He felt his own feebleness, and he sought for an ass or a camel, a bow or a sling, to widen his range of power, as he sought a fetish or a planet in the world beyond. He cared little to know its immediate use, he could afford to throw nothing away which he could conceive to have possible value in this or any other existence. He waited for the object to teach him its use, or want of use, and the process was slow. He may have gone on for hundreds of thousands of years, waiting for Nature to tell him her secrets; and, to his rivals among the monkeys, Nature has taught no more than at their start; but certain lines of force were capable of acting on individual apes, and mechanically selecting types of race or sources of variation. The individual that responded or reacted to lines of new force then was possibly the same individual that reacts on it now, and his conception of the unity seems never to have changed in spite of the increasing diversity of forces; but the theory of variation is an affair of other science than history, and matters nothing to dynamics. The individual or the race would be educated on the same lines of illusion, which, according to Arthur Balfour, had not essentially varied down to the year 1900.

To the highest attractive energy, man gave the name of divine, and for its control he invented the science called Religion, a word which meant, and still means, cultivation of occult force whether in detail or mass. Unable to define Force as a unity, man symbolized it and pursued it, both in himself, and in the infinite, as philosophy and theology; the mind is itself the subtlest of all known forces, and its self-introspection necessarily created a science which had the singular value of lifting his education, at the start, to the finest, subtlest, and broadest training both in analysis and synthesis, so that, if language is a test, he must have reached his highest powers early in his history; while the mere motive remained as simple an appetite for power as the tribal greed which led him to trap an elephant. Hunger, whether for food or for the infinite, sets in motion multiplicity and infinity of thought, and the sure hope of gaining a share of infinite power in eternal life would lift most minds to effort.

He had reached this completeness five thousand years ago, and added nothing to his stock of known forces for a very long time. The mass of nature exercised on him so feeble an attraction that one can scarcely account for his apparent motion. Only a historian of very exceptional knowledge would venture to say at what date between 3000 B.C. and 1000 A.D., the momentum of Europe was greatest; but such progress as the world made consisted in economies of energy rather than in its development; it was proved in mathematics, measured by names like Archimedes, Aristarchus, Ptolemy, and Euclid; or in Civil Law, measured by a number of names which Adams had begun life by failing to learn; or in coinage, which was most beautiful near its beginning, and most barbarous at its close; or it was shown in roads, or the size of ships, or harbors; or by the use of metals, instruments, and writing; all of them economies of force, sometimes more forceful than the forces they helped; but the roads were still travelled by the horse, the ass, the camel, or the slave; the ships were still propelled by sails or oars; the lever, the spring, and the screw bounded the region of applied mechanics. Even the metals were old.

Much of the same thing could be said of religious or supernatural forces. Down to the year 300 of the Christian era they were little changed, and in spite of Plato and the sceptics were more apparently chaotic than ever. The experience of three thousand years had educated society to feel the vastness of Nature, and the infinity of her resources of power, but even this increase of attraction had not yet caused economies in its methods of pursuit.

There the Western world stood till the year A.D. 305, when the Emperor Diocletian abdicated; and there it

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33 Arthur Balfour, the Earl of Balfour (1848-1930), British philosopher and statesman • 64 Archimedes (287?-212 B.C.), Greek mathematician • 64 Aristarchus, a third-century B.C. philosopher and a native of Samos, was the chief exponent of the heliocentric theory of the universe • 64 Ptolemy, a second-century Greco-Egyptian astronomer • 65 Euclid, Greek geometer who lived about 300 B.C. • 86 Diocletian (245-313), Roman emperor

was that Adams broke down on the steps of Ara Cœli, his path blocked by the scandalous failure of civilization at the moment it had achieved complete success. In the year 305 the empire had solved the problems of Europe more completely than they have ever been solved since. The Pax Romana, the Civil Law, and Free Trade should, in four hundred years, have put Europe far in advance of the point reached by modern society in the four hundred years since 1500, when conditions were less simple.

The efforts to explain, or explain away, this scandal had been incessant, but none suited Adams unless it were the economic theory of adverse exchanges and exhaustion of minerals; but nations are not ruined beyond a certain point by adverse exchanges, and Rome had by no means exhausted her resources. On the contrary, the empire developed resources and energies quite astounding. No other four hundred years of history before A.D. 1800 knew anything like it; and although some of these developments, like the Civil Law, the roads, aqueducts, and harbors, were rather economies than force, yet in northwestern Europe alone the empire had developed three energies—France, England, and Germany—competent to master the world. The trouble seemed rather to be that the empire developed too much energy, and too fast.

A dynamic law requires that two masses—nature and man—must go on, reacting upon each other, without stop, as the sun and a comet react on each other, and that any appearance of stoppage is illusive. The theory seems to exact excess, rather than deficiency, of action and reaction to account for the dissolution of the Roman Empire, which should, as a problem of mechanics, have been torn to pieces by acceleration. If the student means to try the experiment of framing a dynamic law, he must assign values to the forces of attraction that caused the trouble; and in this case he has them in plain evidence. With the relentless logic that stamped Roman thought, the empire, which had established unity on earth, could not help establishing unity in heaven. It was induced by its dynamic necessities to economize the gods.

The Church has never ceased to protest against the charge that Christianity ruined the empire, and, with its usual force, has pointed out that its reforms alone saved the State. Any dynamic theory gladly admits it. All it asks is to find and follow the force that attracts. The Church points out this force in the Cross, and history needs only to follow it. The empire loudly asserted its motive. Good taste forbids saying that Constantine the Great speculated as audaciously as a modern stock-broker on values of which he knew at the utmost only the volume; or that he merged all uncertain forces into a single trust, which he enormously overcapitalized, and forced on the market; but this is the substance of what Constantine himself said in his Edict of Milan in the year 313, which admitted Christianity into the Trust of State Religions. Regarded as an Act of Congress, it runs: "We have resolved to grant to Christians as well as all others the liberty to practise the religion they prefer, in order that whatever exists of divinity or celestial power may help and favor us and all who are under our government." The empire pursued power—not merely spiritual but physical—in the sense in which Constantine issued his army order the year before, at the battle of the Milvian Bridge: *In hoc signo vinces!* using the Cross as a train of artillery, which, to his mind, it was. Society accepted it in the same character. Eighty years afterwards, Theodosius marched against his rival Eugene with the Cross for physical champion; and Eugene raised the image of Hercules to fight for the pagans; while society on both sides looked on, as though it were a boxing-match, to decide a final test of force between the divine powers. The Church was powerless to raise the ideal. What is now known as religion affected the mind of old society but little. The laity, the people, the million, almost to a man, bet on the gods as they bet on a horse.

No doubt the Church did all it could to purify the process, but society was almost wholly pagan in its point of view, and was drawn to the Cross because, in its system of physics, the Cross had absorbed all the old occult or fetish-power. The symbol represented the sum of nature—the Energy of modern science—and society believed it to be as real as X-rays; perhaps it was! The emperors used it like rays in medicine; the dying clung to it as the quintessence of force, to protect them from the forces of evil on their road to the next life.

Throughout these four centuries the empire knew

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6 **Pax Romana**, Roman peace • 49 **Constantine**. See note, p. 1055 • 65 **Milvian Bridge**, ancient bridge over the Tiber, where Maxentius was drowned after his defeat (312 A.D.) by Constantine • 65 **In hoc . . . vinces!** "In this sign you will conquer!" • 68 **Theodosius** (346?-395), Roman emperor • 69 **Eugene**, or Eugenius, a Roman emperor who was defeated and slain by Theodosius in 394

that religion disturbed economy, for even the cost of heathen incense affected the exchanges; but no one could afford to buy or construct a costly and complicated machine when he could hire an occult force at trifling expense. Fetish-power was cheap and satisfactory, down to a certain point. Turgot and Auguste Comte long ago fixed this stage of economy as a necessary phase of social education, and historians seem now to accept it as the only gain yet made towards scientific history. Great numbers of educated people—perhaps a majority—cling to the method still, and practise it more or less strictly; but, until quite recently, no other was known. The only occult power at man's disposal was fetish. Against it, no mechanical force could compete except within narrow limits.

Outside of occult or fetish-power, the Roman world was incredibly poor. It knew but one productive energy resembling a modern machine—the slave. No artificial force of serious value was applied to production or transportation, and when society developed itself so rapidly in political and social lines, it had no other means of keeping its economy on the same level than to extend its slave-system and its fetish-system to the utmost.

The result might have been stated in a mathematical formula as early as the time of Archimedes, six hundred years before Rome fell. The economic needs of a violently centralizing society forced the empire to enlarge its slave-system until the slave-system consumed itself and the empire too, leaving society no resource but further enlargement of its religious system in order to compensate for the losses and horrors of the failure. For a vicious circle, its mathematical completeness approached perfection. The dynamic law of attraction and reaction needed only a Newton to fix it in algebraic form.

At last, in 410, Alaric sacked Rome, and the slave-ridden, agricultural, uncommercial Western Empire—the poorer and less Christianized half—went to pieces. Society, though terribly shocked by the horrors of Alaric's storm, felt still more deeply the disappointment in its new power, the Cross, which had failed to protect its Church. The outcry against the Cross became so loud among Christians that its literary champion, Bishop Augustine of Hippo—a town between Algiers and Tunis—was led to write a famous treatise in defence of the Cross, familiar still to every scholar, in which he defended feebly the mechanical value of the symbol—arguing only that pagan symbols equally failed—but insisted on its spiritual value in the *Civitas Dei* which had taken the place of the *Civitas Romae* in human interest. "Granted that we have lost all we had! Have we lost faith? Have we lost piety? Have we lost the wealth of the inner man who is rich before God? These are the wealth of Christians!" The *Civitas Dei,* in its turn, became the sum of attraction for the Western world, though it also showed the same weakness in mechanics that had wrecked the *Civitas Romae.* St. Augustine and his people perished at Hippo towards 430, leaving society in appearance dull to new attraction.

Yet the attraction remained constant. The delight of experimenting on occult force of every kind is such as to absorb all the free thought of the human race. The gods did their work; history has no quarrel with them; they led, educated, enlarged the mind; taught knowledge; betrayed ignorance, stimulated effort. So little is known about the mind—whether social, racial, sexual or heritable; whether material or spiritual; whether animal, vegetable or mineral—that history is inclined to avoid it altogether; but nothing forbids one to admit, for convenience, that it may assimilate food like the body, storing up new force and growing, like a forest, with the storage. The brain has not yet revealed its mysterious mechanism of gray matter. Never has Nature offered it so violent a stimulant as when she opened to it the possibility of sharing infinite power in eternal life, and it might well need a thousand years of prolonged and intense experiment to prove the value of the motive. During these so-called Middle Ages, the Western mind reacted in many forms, on many sides, expressing its motives in modes, such as Romanesque and Gothic architecture, glass windows and mosaic walls, sculpture and poetry, war and love, which still affect some people as the noblest work of man, so that, even today, great masses of idle and ignorant tourists travel from far countries to look at Ravenna and San Marco, Palermo and Pisa, Assisi, Cordova, Chartres, with vague notions about the force that created them, but with a certain surprise that a social mind of such singular energy and unity should still lurk in their shadows.

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6 Turgot, Anne Robert Jacques Turgot (1727-1781), French economist • 6 Auguste Comte (1798-1857), French philosopher • 33 Newton, Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), English mathematician • 34 Alaric 370?-410), king of the Visigoths who conquered Rome • 41 Bishop Augustine, Augustinus (354-430), early Christian philosopher, author of City of God • 47 Civitas Dei, "City of God" • 83 Ravenna . . . Chartres, Old World cities the architecture of which embodies the Christian culture of the medieval period

The tourist more rarely visits Constantinople or studies the architecture of Sancta Sofia, but when he does, he is distinctly conscious of forces not quite the same. Justinian has not the simplicity of Charlemagne. The Eastern Empire showed an activity and variety of forces that classical Europe had never possessed. The navy of Nicephoras Phocas in the tenth century would have annihilated in half an hour any navy that Carthage or Athens or Rome ever set afloat. The dynamic scheme began by asserting rather recklessly that between the Pyramids (B.C. 3000), and the Cross (A.D. 300), no new force affected Western progress, and antiquarians may easily dispute the fact; but in any case the motive influence, old or new, which raised both Pyramids and Cross was the same attraction of power in a future life that raised the dome of Sancta Sofia and the Cathedral at Amiens, however much it was altered, enlarged, or removed to distance in space. Therefore, no single event has more puzzled historians than the sudden, unexplained appearance of at least two new natural forces of the highest educational value in mechanics, for the first time within record of history. Literally, these two forces seemed to drop from the sky at the precise moment when the Cross on one side and the Crescent on the other, proclaimed the complete triumph of the *Civitas Dei.* Had the Manichean doctrine of Good and Evil as rival deities been orthodox, it would alone have accounted for this simultaneous victory of hostile powers.

Of the compass, as a step towards demonstration of the dynamic law, one may confidently say it proved, better than any other force, the widening scope of the mind, since it widened immensely the range of contact between nature and thought. The compass educated. This must prove itself as needing no proof.

Of Greek fire and gunpowder, the same thing cannot certainly be said, for they have the air of accidents due to the attraction of religious motives. They belong to the spiritual world; or to the doubtful ground of Magic which lay between Good and Evil. They were chemical forces, mostly explosive, which acted and still act as the most violent educators ever known to man, but they were justly feared as diabolic, and whatever insolence man may have risked towards the milder teachers of his infancy, he was an abject pupil towards explosives. The Sieur de Joinville left a record of the energy with which the relatively harmless Greek fire educated and enlarged the French mind in a single night in the year 1249, when the crusaders were trying to advance on Cairo. The good king St. Louis and all his staff dropped on their knees at every fiery flame that flew by, praying—"God have pity on us!" and never man had more reason to call on his gods than they, for the battle of religion between Christian and Saracen was trifling compared with that of education between gunpowder and the Cross.

The fiction that society educated itself, or aimed at a conscious purpose, was upset by the compass and gunpowder which dragged and drove Europe at will through frightful bogs of learning. At first, the apparent lag for want of volume in the new energies lasted one or two centuries, which closed the great epochs of emotion by the Gothic cathedrals and scholastic theology. The moment had Greek beauty and more than Greek unity, but it was brief; and for another century or two, Western society seemed to float in space without apparent motion. Yet the attractive mass of nature's energy continued to attract, and education became more rapid than ever before. Society began to resist, but the individual showed greater and greater insistence, without realizing what he was doing. When the Crescent drove the Cross in ignominy from Constantinople in 1453, Gutenberg and Fust were printing their first Bible at Mainz under the impression that they were helping the Cross. When Columbus discovered the West Indies in 1492, the Church looked on it as a victory for the Cross. When Luther and Calvin upset Europe half a century later, they were trying, like St. Augustine, to substitute the *Civitas Dei* for the *Civitas Romae.* When the Puritans set out for New England in 1620, they too were looking to found a *Civitas Dei* in State Street;

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4 Justinian, Flavius Anicius Justinianus (483-565), Byzantine emperor • 4 Charlemagne, Charles I (742-814), emperor of the West, 800-814 • 7 Nicephoras Phocas (913?-969), emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, 963-969 • 24 the Crescent, the emblem of the Turkish empire • 26 Manichean doctrine, the doctrine of the third century Persian, Mani, who taught the dualistic belief that although man's body is the product of the Kingdom of Darkness (Evil), his soul is the product of the Kingdom of Light (Good) • 45 Sieur de Joinville, Sire Jean de Joinville (1224?-1317), French chronicler • 49 St. Louis, King Louis IX (1214-1270) of France • 72 Gutenberg, Johann Gutenberg (1397?-1468), alleged inventor of printing from movable types • 72 Fust, Johann Fust (1400?-1466), German pioneer printer associated with Gutenberg • 76 Luther, Martin Luther (1483-1546), leader of the German Reformation • 76 Calvin, John Calvin (1509-1564), the Protestant theologian • 80 State Street, a figurative term for the location of New England government

and when Bunyan made his Pilgrimage in 1678, he repeated St. Jerome. Even when, after centuries of license, the Church reformed its discipline, and, to prove it, burned Giordano Bruno in 1600, besides condemning Galileo in 1630—as science goes on repeating to us every day—it condemned anarchists, not atheists. None of the astronomers were irreligious men; all of them made a point of magnifying God through his works; a form of science which did their religion no credit. Neither Galileo nor Kepler, neither Spinoza nor Descartes, neither Leibnitz nor Newton, any more than Constantine the Great—if so much—doubted Unity. The utmost range of their heresies reached only its personality.

This persistence of thought-inertia is the leading idea of modern history. Except as reflected in himself, man has no reason for assuming unity in the universe, or an ultimate substance, or a prime-motor. The *a priori* insistence on this unity ended by fatiguing the more active—or reactive—minds; and Lord Bacon tried to stop it. He urged society to lay aside the idea of evolving the universe from a thought, and to try evolving thought from the universe. The mind should observe and register forces—take them apart and put them together—without assuming unity at all. "Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed." "The imagination must be given not wings but weights." As Galileo reversed the action of earth and sun, Bacon reversed the relation of thought to force. The mind was thenceforth to follow the movement of matter, and unity must be left to shift for itself.

The revolution in attitude seemed voluntary, but in fact was as mechanical as the fall of a feather. Man created nothing. After 1500, the speed of progress so rapidly surpassed man's gait as to alarm every one, as though it were the acceleration of a falling body which the dynamic theory takes it to be. Lord Bacon was as much astonished by it as the Church was, and with reason. Suddenly society felt itself dragged into situations altogether new and anarchic—situations which it could not affect, but which painfully affected it. Instinct taught it that the universe in its thought must be in danger when its reflection lost itself in space. The danger was all the greater because men of science covered it with "larger synthesis," and poets called the undevout astronomer mad. Society knew better. Yet the telescope held it rigidly standing on its head; the microscope revealed a universe that defied the senses; gunpowder killed whole races that lagged behind; the compass coerced the most imbruted mariner to act on the impossible idea that the earth was round; the press drenched Europe with anarchism. Europe saw itself, violently resisting, wrenched into false positions, drawn along new lines as a fish that is caught on a hook; but unable to understand by what force it was controlled. The resistance was often bloody, sometimes humorous, always constant. Its contortions in the eighteenth century are best studied in the wit of Voltaire, but all history and all philosophy from Montaigne and Pascal to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche deal with nothing else; and still, throughout it all, the Baconian law held good; thought did not evolve nature, but nature evolved thought. Not one considerable man of science dared face the stream of thought; and the whole number of those who acted, like Franklin, as electric conductors of the new forces from nature to man, down to the year 1800, did not exceed a few score, confined to a few towns in Western Europe. Asia refused to be touched by the stream, and America, except for Franklin, stood outside.

Very slowly the accretion of these new forces, chemical and mechanical, grew in volume until they acquired sufficient mass to take the place of the old religious science, substituting their attraction for the attractions of the *Civitas Dei*, but the process remained the same. Nature, not mind, did the work that the sun does on the planets. Man depended more and more absolutely on forces other than his own, and on instruments which superseded his senses. Bacon foretold it: "Neither the naked hand nor the understanding, left to itself, can effect much. It is by instruments and helps that work is done." Once done, the mind resumed its illusion, and society forgot its impotence; but no one better than Bacon knew its tricks and for his true followers science always meant

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1 Bunyan, John Bunyan (1628-1688), author of Pilgrim's Progress • 2 St. Jerome (340?-420), Latin church father • 4 Giordano Bruno (1548?-1600), Italian philosopher who was burned at the stake • 10 Kepler, Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), German astronomer • 10 Spinoza, Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Dutch philosopher • 11 Leibnitz, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz (1646-1716), German philosopher • 58 Voltaire, François Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694-1778), French philosopher and author • 60 Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Arthur Schopenhauer (1778-1860) and Friedrich W. Nietzsche (1844-1900), German philosophers

self-restraint, obedience, sensitiveness to impulse from without. "Non fingendum aut excogitandum sed inveniendum quid Natura faciat aut ferat."

The success of this method staggers belief, and even to-day can be treated by history only as a miracle of growth, like the sports of nature. Evidently a new variety of mind had appeared. Certain men merely held out their hands—like Newton, watched an apple; like Franklin, flew a kite; like Watt, played with a tea-kettle—and great forces of nature stuck to them as though she were playing ball. Governments did almost nothing but resist. Even gunpowder and ordnance, the great weapon of government, showed little development between 1400 and 1800. Society was hostile or indifferent, as Priestly and Jenner, and even Fulton, with reason complained in the most advanced societies in the world, while its resistance became acute wherever the Church held control; until all mankind seemed to draw itself out in a long series of groups, dragged on by an attractive power in advance, which even the leaders obeyed without understanding, as the planets obeyed gravity, or the trees obeyed heat and light.

The influx of new force was nearly spontaneous. The reaction of mind on the mass of nature seemed not greater than that of a comet on the sun; and had the spontaneous influx of force stopped in Europe, society must have stood still, or gone backward, as in Asia or Africa. Then only economies of process would have counted as new force, and society would have been better pleased; for the idea that new force must be in itself a good is only an animal or vegetable instinct. As Nature developed her hidden energies, they tended to become destructive. Thought itself became tortured, suffering reluctantly, impatiently, painfully, the coercion of new method. Easy thought had always been movement of inertia, and mostly mere sentiment; but even the processes of mathematics measured feebly the needs of force.

The stupendous acceleration after 1800 ended in 1900 with the appearance of the new class of supersensual forces, before which the man of science stood at first as bewildered and helpless, as in the fourth century, a priest of Isis before the Cross of Christ.

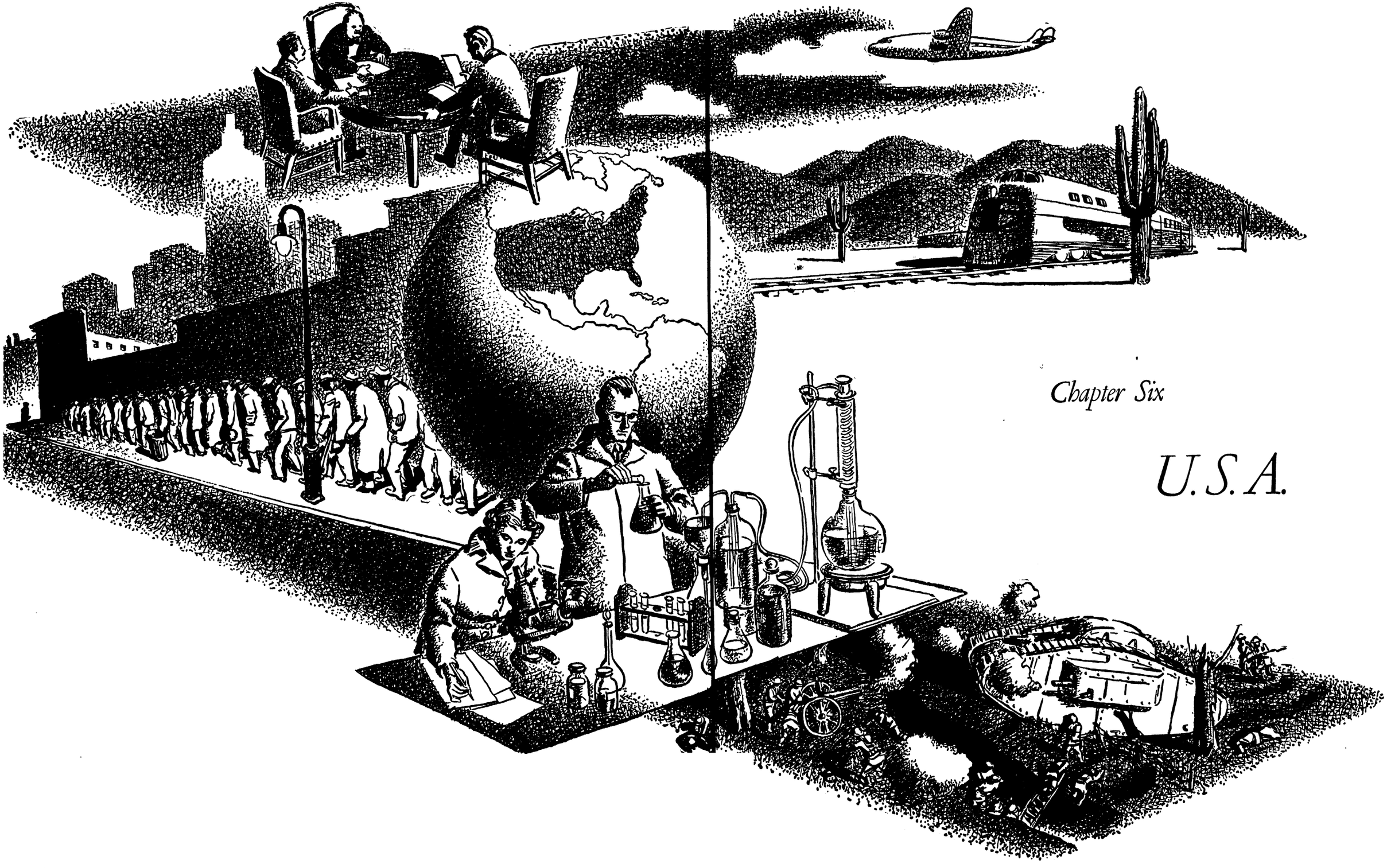
This, then, or something like this, would be a dynamic formula of history. Any schoolboy knows enough to object at once that it is the oldest and most universal of all theories. Church and State, theology and philosophy, have always preached it, differing only in the allotment of energy between nature and man. Whether the attractive energy has been called God or Nature, the mechanism has been always the same, and history is not obliged to decide whether the Ultimate tends to a purpose or not, or whether ultimate energy is one or many. Every one admits that the will is a free force, habitually decided by motives. No one denies that motives exist adequate to decide the will; even though it may not always be conscious of them. Science has proved that forces, sensible and occult, physical and metaphysical, simple and complex, surround, traverse, vibrate, rotate, repel, attract, without stop; that man's senses are conscious of few, and only in a partial degree; but that, from the beginning of organic existence his consciousness has been induced, expanded, trained in the lines of his sensitiveness; and that the rise of his faculties from a lower power to a higher, or from a narrower to a wider field, may be due to the function of assimilating and storing outside force or forces. There is nothing unscientific in the idea that, beyond the lines of force felt by the senses, the universe may be—as it has always been—either a supersensuous chaos or a divine unity, which irresistibly attracts, and is either life or death to penetrate. Thus far, religion, philosophy, and science seem to go hand in hand. The schools begin their vital battle only there. In the earlier stages of progress, the forces to be assimilated were simple and easy to absorb, but, as the mind of man enlarged its range, it enlarged the field of complexity, and must continue to do so, even into chaos, until the reservoirs of sensuous or supersensuous energies are exhausted, or cease to affect him, or until he succumbs to their excess.

For past history, this way of grouping its sequences may answer for a chart of relations although any serious student would need to invent another, to compare or correct its errors; but past history is only a value of relation to the future, and this value is wholly one of convenience, which can be tested only by experiment. Any law of movement must include, to make it a convenience, some mechanical formula of acceleration.

1907

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2 Non fingendum. . . . "One must not invent or excogitate what nature does or produces, but one must find out" • 9 Watt, James Watt (1736-1819), Scottish inventor of the steam engine • 14 Priestly, Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), British scientist • 15 Jenner, Edward Jenner (1749-1823), famous English physician • 15 Fulton, Robert Fulton (1765-1815), American engineer and inventor



Chapter Six

U.S.A.

Chapter 6

U.S.A.

1914 to the present

"U.S.A. is the slice of a continent. . . .
U.S.A. is the world's greatest rivervalley
fringed with mountains and hills. . . .
But mostly U.S.A. is the speech of the people."

—Dos Passos

I. Intellectual Currents

THE MODERN PESSIMISM

Thinking of the Civil War, Hawthorne spoke of the tragedy in the lives of the women whose husbands and sweethearts were killed in battle: "The girls that would have loved them," he said, "and made happy firesides for them, will pine and wither, and tread along many sour and discontented years, and at last go out of life without knowing what life is. Every shot that takes effect kills one and worse than kills the other." This aspect of war's aftermath found expression in many literary works during and after the first World War. Two illustrations will suffice: Amy Lowell's "Patterns" (1915) and Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude* (1928). The poem is a powerful expression of sexual frustration:

> For the man who should loose me is dead,
> Fighting with the Duke of Flanders,
> In a pattern called a war.
> Christ! What are patterns for?

In the "strangled explosion" of the last line, "half-oath, half-prayer" (as Miss Lowell's biographer aptly describes it) is compressed much of war's misery. Instead of Miss Lowell's rigid control, O'Neill, in a similar situation, shows breakdown. After the death of her fiancé in the war, Nina Leeds went to pieces, giving herself promiscuously to the men in an army hospital. One of the characters in the play attributed her behavior to "a desire to be kind" and "a morbid longing for martyrdom." In both instances the psychological effects of war on women are poignantly portrayed.

Other literary works deal with those who took part in the war. John Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers* (1921) is concerned chiefly with the irksomeness of army life to a man of aesthetic temperament. John Andrews, graduate of Harvard, wanted to write great music. When he was arrested for desertion at the end of the story, the wind scattered about the room the leaves of the musical score on which he had been working. War is hateful to the artist, Dos Passos said, and destructive of his art. In the minds of many men—whether artists or persons of average sensitivity—the war left memories of experiences which they tried in vain to forget. The case of the war veteran,

Stetson, in T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* (1922) is a classic instance. Stetson's tragic experience is likened to a corpse "planted" in a garden, which will either be dug up by "the Dog" of memory or "sprout" and "bloom" in the subconscious mind.

The tragic effects of World War I are best epitomized perhaps in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). In *The Sun Also Rises* we are shown the "lost generation" of expatriates who, with shattered nerves and illusions, sought amusement and forgetfulness at bullfights in Spain and in the cafés of Paris. The chief character, Jake Barnes, had been made sexually impotent by a physical injury received in the war. His condition is symbolic of the spiritual impotence of the "lost generation." In *A Farewell to Arms* also the war deprived its victims of high aims and ideals. After the "Retreat from Caporetto" (which has been justly called the finest account in all literature of the collapse of an army) Frederic Henry, the American ambulance driver, could see nothing worth living for except physical satisfactions. In the wreckage of the world about him, thought became a torment and a futile occupation. Hence his famous conclusion: "I was not made to think. I was made to eat. My God, yes. Eat and drink and sleep with Catherine."

A New Criticism of America

We had entered World War I, as Woodrow Wilson expressed it, "to make the world safe for democracy," and the failure of that high mission produced a cynical reaction in many minds. Possibly the United States was hardly qualified to play such an exalted rôle. It was natural that many writers should turn a critical—sometimes a jaundiced—eye upon the American scene and that they should see much more to condemn than to admire. "Debunking" became a favorite literary approach; after Pearl Harbor it was called "selling America short."

Biographers of the 1920's attempted to show that our national idols had feet of clay. Historians insisted that materialistic rather than idealistic motives had determined the entire course of our history since Jamestown and Plymouth Rock. The most popular magazine of the period among the literate was H. L. Mencken's *American Mercury,* which exposed in a monthly department called "Americana" a wealth of current stupidities—at once laughable and deplorable—culled from the newspapers of the forty-eight states.

The most effective and the most popular criticism of the American scene of the twenties was written by Sinclair Lewis (p. 1098). *Main Street* (p. 1099) satirized the small town of the Middle West, where Lewis found "dullness made God." *Babbitt* (1922) ridiculed the American businessman so successfully that "Babbitt" and "Babbittry" were added to the dictionary. The hard-hitting satire got under the skins of many Rotarians and boosters. Among the items in Lewis' indictment were questionable business ethics, an undeveloped literary taste, commercial criteria of success, and ultraconservatism in social and political thinking. *Babbitt* epitomized the unlovely aspects of the Harding era. *Arrowsmith* (1925) showed an America inimical to scholarship and pure research. Heroically devoted to medical experimentation, Dr. Martin Arrowsmith found many stupid obstacles in his path. *Dodsworth* (1929) satirized the American woman. Fran Dodsworth was unmercifully exposed as a pampered, selfish, superficial, pretentious snob; she is the most damning portrait in Lewis' entire gallery. Reading between the lines today, one can see that Lewis really enjoyed many of the people whom he ridiculed and relished much in the life which he professed to view with contempt. He appears today as a folksy humorist who would not exchange his Gopher Prairie or his Zenith for Utopia. But readers in the 1920's saw only the devastating satire; they hailed him as the greatest of all debunkers, being unaware that he transcended the narrow boundaries of the debunking age. His greatness may very well lie in the subtle quality which escaped his current readers.

Though Lewis was the chief of the satirists in the 1920's, many other writers presented indictments of America. Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* (1925) showed a society vitiated by perverted notions of the good life. Though the reader might wonder if Clyde Griffiths would have amounted to much under ideal conditions, the mores of his materialistic and class-conscious world were bad enough to corrupt a stronger character. Carl Sandburg (p. 1156) exposed the increasing evils of capitalism: "people living in shanties," "$6 a week department store girls," "steel trust wops, dead without having lived, gray and shrunken at forty years of age." Allied with Big Business, the Church, Sandburg charged, travestied the teachings of Jesus. Following Sandburg's lead, other writers directed attention to conditions among the workers, and the word "proletariat" came for the first time into general American use.

O'Neill's *Hairy Ape* (p. 1191) presented the worker's growing dissociation from his work, his growing feeling of not "belonging." Carlyle had pointed out nearly a hundred years earlier the inadequacy, from the human standpoint, of the "cash-payment nexus": a feeling of loyalty, of belonging, is necessary to a man's satisfaction in his work. It is still perhaps the central problem of modern industrialism. While O'Neill expressed the problem in stirring modern terms, he offered nothing constructive: the conclusion of *The Hairy Ape* is futile and defeatist. In another remarkable play of the twenties (*The Adding Machine,* 1923) Elmer Rice argued that the modern machine had a degrading effect upon the worker, that machine-tending is the lowest of all serfdoms in human history, and that man deteriorates as the machine improves. It seemed bitterly ironical to the author that "the finest triumph of the evolutionary process" should be a machine-tender, "operating a super-hyper-adding machine with the great toe of his right foot." A distinguished anthropologist expressed a similar view of the problem when he said: "There is real danger that the engineers will make apes of all of us. By the invention of tools, engineers brought man up from the level of an ape, but the human curve starts downward when tools can be used without cerebral exertion, when the individual is allowed not only to stop sweating but also to stop thinking."

Despite these and other searching criticisms, the America of the 1920's was relatively complacent. For the three consecutive administrations of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, conservatism was in the saddle. We enjoyed a better-than-average prosperity. Yale undergraduates (see Lewis' *Dodsworth*) aspired to become Wall Street brokers and owners of yachts. A few economists foresaw the crash of 1929, but their warnings were lost in the mania for money. Irving Fisher and President Hoover assured us to the bitter end that the economic structure of the country was "fundamentally sound." After the crash came the Great Depression.

During the years of the Great Depression, criticism of America in literature became more serious, more bitter, and more brutal. Whether the accounts presented were of contemporary life or of life in an earlier period, many writers joined in a strident, damning chorus. With lurid, Gothic power, William Faulkner's novels (p. 1212) told of violence and moral perversion in "Jefferson," Mississippi. In the words of his best interpreter, Faulkner "projected in fiction the conflict between his inherent traditional values and the modern world." With equal brutality, but in more natural and more human situations, James T. Farrell's *Studs Lonigan* (1932-1935) showed the collapse of the middle-class morality in southside Chicago. The traditional character-building institutions—the home, the school, and the church—were powerless to prevent the moral ruin of Studs. Again starkly, but with human warmth, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (p. 1250)—perhaps the best single expression in our literature of the difficulties peculiar to the Depression—told of the Joads of Oklahoma, who were tractored off the land, of their Westward migration in a jalopy, and of their sufferings in California, where the family of seven workers, including women and children, were able to earn the sum total of $3.50 a day. The book gives an impression of a powerful mass movement: the Okies are less arresting as individuals than as representatives of the mass. The proletarian novel "arrived" in *The Grapes of Wrath.*

The Dominance of Science and Quasi-Science

Not only the wreckage of war and the mounting criticism of American economic and social life, but science also contributed to the dominant mood of pessimism between the wars. Perhaps it would be more correct to say "popular science," for the reference is not to science as such, but to its embodiment in literature, where it is easily susceptible of misconstruction and falsification. In any case, the scientist is hardly to blame. It is regrettable that some of his discoveries had unfortunate results.

The new physics gave the impression to the lay mind that the universe is somehow doomed. Historians and interpreters of science had much to say in the twenties and thirties about the second law of thermodynamics or the law of entropy, which meant that energy is deteriorating or becoming less available, that the universe is cooling off and running down, and that the earth will someday be unfit for human habitation. The ultimate destination of man on this planet appeared to be the "heat-death." This view of things colored the thinking of many moderns, writers and readers alike; it found its most forceful literary expression in the poetry of Robinson Jeffers, who wrote in "To the Stone-Cutters":

. . . man will be blotted out, the blithe earth die,
the brave sun
Die blind, his heart blackening.

It was better so, the poet reasoned, for he saw in man's deepest nature a subconscious desire to return to the prenatal darkness and silence of the womb. In "Night" he declared,

The sun-lovers have a blond favorite,
A father of lights and noises, wars, weeping, and laughter,
Hot labor, lust and delight and the other blemishes.
Quietness
Flows from her deeper fountain; and he [the sun] will die; and she [the night] is immortal.

Inspired by the new physics, Jeffers regarded life as a "blemish," and extinction as the greatest good.

Freudian psychology left its mark everywhere in the literature between the wars. Possibly the first fictional work in America to exemplify the conscious and deliberate use of Freudian principles was Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), where almost everyone is abnormal and the abnormalities are explained in terms of sexual repression. O'Neill's *Strange Interlude* (1928) and *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931) appear to have been constructed from Freudian blueprints. Faulkner's novels seemed designed, from a psychological point of view, to illustrate all of the sexual perversions described by Krafft-Ebing, the German neurologist, in *Psychopathia Sexualis*. The new psychological principles were employed also in biography and literary history. Psychoanalyzing Poe (*Edgar Allan Poe,* 1926), Joseph Wood Krutch found that Poe's sexual impotence accounted for much that is distinctive in his poems and tales. Applying Freud to American literary history (*Expression in America,* 1932), Ludwig Lewisohn was able to reveal an amazing number and variety of psychological maladies among men of letters: Hawthorne's sense of guilt, for example, was "precipitated by the incest wish of infancy." By the middle thirties many sophisticated moderns, through a kind of "scientific" mania for sex-analysis and sex-experimentation, had succeeded in making themselves almost as morbid on the subject as the prudish, hypocritical Victorians, whom they regarded with unmitigated horror (note Lewisohn's remarks on Howells in *Expression in America*). It appeared about time to call a halt when no one could quite escape the glint of a psychiatric eye, when all behavior, however natural, was psychiatrically suspect.

Closely associated in the popular mind with Freudian psychology was the biology of glandular secretions, which, to many, seemed a new source of tyranny. Oversexed persons, like Lady Brett in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises,* could blame the endocrine or some other glands for their immoral behavior. Stupid, brutal persons, like Lennie in Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937), could point to hypothyroidism as the sign of their fate. Little by little, the modern sciences, which had begun as a great liberating force, seemed to be imprisoning man as tightly as he had ever been imprisoned by the pseudo-sciences of the Middle Ages.

The new sciences of economics and sociology tended to overplay their legitimate rôles. Charles A. Beard (*The Economic Interpretation of the Constitution,* 1913) and his successors exaggerated the importance of economic factors in American history. V. L. Parrington (*Main Currents in American Thought,* 1927-1930) and his disciples likewise exaggerated the importance of economic elements in American literature. It is not surprising that in much of the fiction of the period economic pressure appeared decisive or that before the end of the period man's life appeared to consist, contrary to Holy Writ, in the amount of commodities which he possessed. Meanwhile social pressures vied strenuously with the economic ones for the honor of being the chief determinant in human destiny. William Graham Sumner had declared that folkways were decisive, and his successors elaborated and illustrated the proposition. Clyde Griffiths in Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* and Studs Lonigan in Farrell's trilogy demonstrated brilliantly enough the apparent impossibility of escape from the mores.

The Helplessness of the Individual

Many signs, in short, seemed to point to the growing helplessness of the individual. There appeared no longer to be any such thing as an autonomous and morally responsible person. In actual life, of course, there continued to be many such persons, but the species well-nigh disappeared from books written in the spirit of the age. This spirit found its best philosophical statement in Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Modern Temper* (1929).

Modern civilization, to Krutch, was decadent, for thought itself is a mark of decadence. The future belongs, as always, to the barbarians, "absorbed in the processes of life for their own sake, eating without asking if it is worth while to eat, begetting children without asking why they should beget them, and conquering without asking for what purpose they conquer."

The poets brilliantly expressed the mood of failure and despair. Robinson's "man against the sky" was by no means sure that he was not pursuing a

> blind atomic pilgrimage
> Whereon by crass chance billeted we go. . . .

Eliot gave the classic picture of futility in Prufrock (p. 1169):

> "I have measured out my life with coffee
> spoons. . . ."

The Hamlet of A. MacLeish (1928) echoed, with modern mutations and overtones, the despair of Shakespeare's Hamlet:

> Thou wouldst not think
> How ill all's here about my heart!

These three poems may be taken as sufficiently characteristic of the period. The Hamlet mood was congenial to all of them, but they exemplified Hamlet's confusion and indecision rather than his capacity for heroic action. Submerged in endless debate, the man against the sky or Prufrock or MacLeish's Hamlet could never have killed the king.

While Krutch and the intellectual poets were displaying the helplessness of the thinking man, entangled in the toils of thought, the novelists were discovering another kind of helplessness in the masses of men—a helplessness obviously not explicable by intellectualism, but by biological and social determinism. Several novels already mentioned—*An American Tragedy, Studs Lonigan, The Grapes of Wrath*—abundantly illustrate the tyranny of social and economic pressure and the impotence of the individual in the face of overwhelming circumstance. But the most complete illustration in American fiction of the modern determinism is Dos Passos' *U. S. A.* (1930-1936), which is at once—in the apt description of Alfred Kazin—"the dominant social novel of the thirties" and "the coldest and most mechanical of tragic novels." It is indeed our largest and most comprehensive fictional gallery of human automatons. The reader finds it difficult, if not impossible, to take an interest in its people as persons: it has been justly said that Dos Passos did not create character. The twenty-odd people in *U. S. A.* (p. 1237) exhibit the mechanical behavior, the unawareness, the moral irresponsibility, of robots, as they are pushed about over the continents by irrational force. A contradiction in the novel, of which the author may not have been aware, affords the only ground for hope: unlike the fictional characters, the subjects of the "biographies," which were taken from contemporary history, are by no means helpless. The discrepancy suggests how far the pattern of the social novel in the middle thirties had deviated from life.

COUNTER ATTITUDES

American literature between the wars was thus predominantly pessimistic. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that all American literature in this period was negative and despairing. The old positive forces were not dead; they were rooted too deep in man's nature to die. It goes without saying that certain names appearing among those supporting the prevalent pessimism will reappear among those expressing more positive views, for few writers were entirely negative or completely pessimistic.

First among the positive forces was what Browning called "our manhood's prime vigor": "How good is man's life, the mere living!" exclaimed that now unfashionable Victorian poet. However outmoded his message, one would not expect to find an entire generation of American writers silent on this theme. In fact, it appears frequently in the literature of the period between the wars. The most notable examples of *élan vital* are found in the writings of those incorrigible romanticists, Ernest Hemingway (p. 1180) and Thomas Wolfe (p. 1271). Whatever the state of the world at large might be, these writers were still able to enjoy living. No author has ever shown a greater avidity for life than Wolfe. In this respect he stands at the opposite pole from Jeffers. No author has ever celebrated friendship and love with greater ardor and tenderness than Hemingway. At the end of *For*

Whom the Bell Tolls (1940), Robert Jordan "told himself," "You had a lot of luck to have had such a good life."

Other instinctive forces which would not down, no matter how mechanical or scientific the age, were the love of the earth, the love of humanity, the love of country—they appeared separately and combined in a variety of patterns. The good earth was never better than in the poems of Robert Frost (p. 1137), and was never exhibited with greater tang or economic urgency than in the essays of the Southern Agrarians (*I'll Take My Stand,* 1930), who brilliantly argued for the way of life of Thomas Jefferson and John Taylor of Carolina. Love of humanity still manifested itself, ranging from individuals to the mass, from personal kindness to faith in the common man. Sandburg was devoted to "the people" with an ardor as warm as Whitman's and more militant. People were "beautiful" to William Saroyan. Steinbeck's characters had a friendly warmth: human kindness could hardly go further than in the concluding scene of *The Grapes of Wrath.* Love of country still flourished, ranging between a lively sense of the past and its historic glories and a passionate, instinctive attachment to the place of one's birth. Stephen Vincent Benét was inspired by the history of the Civil War to write our best historical narrative in verse in *John Brown's Body* (1928). Wolfe's devotion to America was more instinctive. To him, it was the "fabulous country—the place where miracles not only happen, but where they happen all the time" (*Of Time and the River,* 1935). Like Whitman, he tried to take in all of America equally, though neither quite succeeded; for just as Whitman's affection was intensely localized in Manhattan and the Brooklyn Ferry, so Wolfe's was rooted deepest in "old Catawba, there in the hills of home."

The positive forces thus far considered were largely instinctive, but there were also positive intellectual and moral forces at work in the literature of the twenties and thirties. In the midst of a world which appeared given over to naturalism and lawlessness, the "neo-humanists"—More, Babbitt, and Foerster—argued for the necessity of discipline, of standards of excellence, and of traditional values. Control must come from within, they reasoned; the "inner check" is the only saving virtue, and the most available sources of that virtue are the classic disciplines (*Humanism and America,* 1930, by Foerster and others). Less "humanistic" but more human and genuinely fortifying was the note sounded with charm and firmness by two of the finest novelists of the period—Ellen Glasgow and Willa Cather. While most of the male novelists were advertising failure, it was natural that Miss Glasgow and Miss Cather should carry banners inscribed with the legend "Success," for women have often been more courageous than men. In *Barren Ground* (1925), Miss Glasgow reversed two stock pictures of failure: failure on the farm and failure through disappointment in love. It had been generally supposed since Garland's *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891) that success of any sort on an American farm was no longer possible, but Dorinda Oakley actually reclaimed the barren ground, thereby fulfilling Lanier's prophecy in "Corn" fifty years earlier. It had been generally supposed, too—especially in the South—that a girl could scarcely survive disappointment in love, but Dorinda survived. "Dorinda exists," Miss Glasgow declared, "wherever the spirit of fortitude has triumphed over the sense of futility." Miss Cather also liked to show the triumph of fortitude. *My Ántonia* (1918) portrayed a pioneer immigrant woman, passionately devoted to her family and to her life on the Nebraska prairie, triumphant over difficulties which would have defeated a less robust soul. It is a beautiful and heart-warming picture. *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) is likewise a story of heroism—the heroism of two Catholic missionaries in the Spanish Southwest. They made a great team: Latour curbing Vaillant's rashness, Vaillant stimulating and inspiring Latour. The building of the cathedral in Santa Fé was a splendid culmination of their efforts. Even in the pessimistic gloom of the years between the wars, Miss Cather and Miss Glasgow—brave women—were able to say: Success is the reward of the stronghearted. This is the meaning of America, and of life.

One other force on the positive side must be mentioned, religious faith. In the literature of no other period in our history had the note of religious faith been so nearly absent. Its rare occurrence seemed anachronistic to many readers, though later generations may judge otherwise of—to mention two commanding examples—*Death Comes for the Archbishop* and *Ash-Wednesday* (p. 1174). "Where there is great love," Father Latour said, "there are always miracles. The miracles of the

Church seem to me to rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from afar off, but upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what there is about us always." If Miss Cather's case for religion was chiefly emotional and aesthetic, T. S. Eliot's was chiefly intellectual. After the futility of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917) and the despair of *The Waste Land* (1922)—the most powerful single statement of the aridity of the world between the wars and the most influential poem of the century—Eliot moved firmly on to the religious position of *Ash-Wednesday* (1930). The poem does not record an easy victory. There is no disposition to nurse the illusion that the modern man can recover the spontaneous, unquestioning faith of an earlier age. the poet does not "hope to know again the infirm glory of the positive hour." The road to belief is a tortuous one, and is symbolized in the poem by a staircase which one climbs with difficulty, and down which one can see the "twisted shapes" left below. Final attainment is possible only through realizing the necessity of surrendering the individual will to the divine will. *Ash-Wednesday* concludes with Dante's words, "Our peace in His will," which are themselves a rephrasing of the words of Jesus, "Not my will but thine be done."

The usual contemporary comment on the religious attitudes of Miss Cather and Eliot was that they were impossible because they were essentially medieval attitudes inapplicable to modern times. The objection loses its weight if the values of religion are timeless.

THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE

The years between 1914 and 1946 seem today to fall into a series of periods each of which profoundly affected the lives of all Americans: World War I, reluctantly entered by the United States in 1917; the period of peacemaking, which ended with general disillusionment about the value of war; the boom-time era, which, after several portents had been unnoted, ended with the stock-market crash of 1929; the period of depression, followed by slow recovery; then the period during which the world drifted toward another great war; and finally World War II and its aftermath.

Each of these eras was marked by political disputes, some of them unusually bitter. Looking back, we may see that the domestic conflict centered upon the rôle of the state versus the rôle of the individual, while the conflict concerning our foreign relations set isolationism against participation in world affairs.

The domestic policies of the Democrats under Woodrow Wilson were thus summarized by the party in 1916: "We found our country hampered by special privilege, a vicious tariff, obsolete banking laws and an inelastic currency. . . . Under our administration, under a leadership that has never faltered, these abuses have been corrected and our people freed therefrom." Such was the work of Wilson's "New Freedom," as seen by his followers. The Republican Presidents who came into office after the war, by contrast, tended to give business a freer hand and to increase tariffs. Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover tended to emphasize free enterprise and minimize governmental activity. Hoover wrote in 1922: "Salvation will not come to us out of the wreckage of individualism. What we need today is steady devotion to a better, brighter, broader individualism—an individualism that carries increasing responsibility and service to our fellows." Those who took an opposing point of view, championed by Franklin D. Roosevelt, came into power after Hoover's policies failed to end the depression which had begun in 1929. Their position was that the federal government had to assume a greater responsibility in curbing a ruthless economic individualism and in assisting its victims. The "New Deal," as a result, comprised many measures which limited the scope of free enterprise. On into the 1940's the battle of free enterprise versus a modified form of collectivism continued.

The attitude of the general public moved more in harmony in the discussion of international affairs. At the end of World War I, the public was in favor of the League of Nations and the participation of the United States in world affairs. After the disillusionment of the peace, however, the country tended toward pacifism and isolationism. As Fascism and Nazism developed in the 1930's, and as the inevitability of war became increasingly apparent, a growing group became convinced that the United States would eventually become involved, though there was a widespread hope that the evil day might be indefinitely postponed.

PEARL HARBOR and "The SHAPE of BOOKS to COME"

Pearl Harbor was a rude awakening. With war thrust upon us, many felt that we were "spiritually unprepared" for the conflict. Although the positive forces enumerated were by no means negligible, by and large they had been overwhelmed for more than twenty years by the negative forces of pessimism. If life was a futile thing, why fight? If America was a sorry spectacle, why fight? A generation of readers had gone to school to the pessimists. Some of the more articulate war patriots felt that we had been betrayed by our writers, that they had committed a kind of spiritual sabotage and were guilty of a profound and insidious treason. Articles appeared in the press sharply censuring all writers who had belittled the human spirit or deprecated the American way of life. But it is doubtful if this censure was just: perhaps the authors were the voice of the age rather than its creator.

Some of the older authors—like Steinbeck—went to the front to report the everyday life of the soldiers. A few seemed to experience a spiritual conversion. The author of *The Hamlet of A. MacLeish,* for example, spoke out boldly against "The Irresponsibles" (*A Time to Speak*). As Allen Tate (p. 1178) ironically put it, referring to the earlier influence of *The Waste Land:*

> Spirits grown Eliotic
> Now patriotic
> Are.

But most of the writers who had flourished between the wars were stunned into silence. Literature passed largely into the hands of the statesmen, the war correspondents, and the news analysts, a situation which lasted for some time after hostilities had ceased.

Meanwhile, there has been much speculation concerning "the shape of books to come." Naturalism in fiction seems to have reached its *ne plus ultra.* The cult of the esoteric in poetry and literary criticism appears to have stultified itself. Though we shall continue to respect science for its contributions to physical well-being, we can no longer worship it as the infallible savior of mankind. The modern pessimism is at last seen to be suicidal. Some sort of radical change in our thought and literature appears to be indicated. The young writers are producing in ever-increasing numbers. Whether they can effect this change depends a great deal upon the spiritual atmosphere in which they find themselves. R. S.

II. Literary Trends

If names meant anything, the literary movement which began about 1914 was, at first, a "little" movement. In cities and towns all over the nation and, after World War I, in Paris and London, "little groups" devoted themselves to the modest project of revolutionizing literature. They produced plays in "little theaters" and published poems and stories in "little magazines." The oft-repeated word "little" proclaimed hostility to "big" theatrical producers and "big" national magazines and publishing houses which catered to masses of people.

The word also implied rebellion against the alleged conservatism and shallowness of writers for large audiences. Such writers, the rebels contended, prolonged the thoughtless optimism, the prudishness, the simple and unlifelike depictions, of "The Victorians." Like literary rebels who had started movements in previous ages, modern writers looked to other times and other lands for models which met their peculiar needs. Dramatists turned for inspiration to the experimental playwrights of Europe. Poets turned to radical American poets of the past (such as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Stephen Crane) and to the poets of France and Great Britain. Novelists looked back to American realists and naturalists or looked abroad for contemporary models. Adapting the methods of a host of un-Victorian authors, American writers between World Wars I and II produced highly experimental works which they believed represented life more truly than older writings had.

And though the movement, at the start, was "little," in the end it tended to dominate our national literature. Group theaters developed leading playwrights; and several poets and fiction writers who had started as contributors to *Poetry, The Little Review, transition, Story,* or other little magazines eventually won national or even international recognition. Other authors of importance who came late in the period clearly showed the influence of the "little group" pioneers. In the end, drama, poetry, and fiction, the outstanding literary forms of the period, were greatly changed as a result of the movement.

EXPERIMENTS in DRAMA

Although Americans wrote and produced many dramas from colonial times to the modern period, our drama did not come of age until the present era. Rebellion helped its development.

After 1910, many intelligent Americans felt that the commercial theater in this country was unsatisfactory because, having capitulated to the movies, it no longer provided "road shows" carrying drama to remote parts of the country, and because it was too much concerned with box-office success to give art much of a chance. Many young Americans traveling abroad between 1900 and 1916 found European theaters very stimulating. The Théâtre-Libre of Paris, which had been founded in 1887, the Abbey Theater of Dublin (1894), the Moscow Art Theater (1897), the Kleines Theater of Berlin (1902) all were carrying on interesting experiments in the drama which seemed to point the way to healthy changes.

Returning home, these travelers preached their new gospel and won converts. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, numerous community playhouses or workshops—little theaters—were established all over the country, from Boston, where the Toy Theater produced plays, to Palo Alto, California, where the Stanford University Theater was active. A number of colleges, simultaneously, offered work in playwriting and production under such teachers as George Pierce Baker of Harvard, Thomas Wood Stevens of Carnegie Institute of Technology, A. M. Drummond of Cornell, E. C. Mabie of Iowa, and Frederick Henry Koch of North Carolina. In little theaters and campus workshops, amateur authors, actors, and producers carried on experiments more radical than any which commercial theatrical folk were likely to attempt.

In time, this movement had impacts upon the commercial theater. It cultivated audiences receptive to novelty in dramatic writing and staging. It supplied producers, actors, and playwrights who had learned their trade in community playhouses and college classrooms. And in three important instances, little theater groups became leading commercial producers: The Washington Square Players, founded in Greenwich Village in 1915, became the Theatre Guild in 1919; the Provincetown Players, also founded in 1915, left their fishing-smack playhouse on Cape Cod to go to New York City and to become active in production there; and the Group Theatre, founded by some insurgent Theatre Guild members, became professionally active in 1931. These organizations, which were successful both commercially and artistically, were responsible for initial productions of plays by outstanding authors such as Edna St. Vincent Millay, Paul Green, Eugene O'Neill, and Clifford Odets.

Imagination and Realism

Authors writing for the new theater not only tried to avoid the clichés of plot, characterization, dialogue, acting, and staging which had caused the older theater to become dull; in addition, they experimented in a very imaginative fashion with modes and methods. Even when they were highly successful with one type of play, a number of authors gladly tried their hands at completely different types.

Two men trained by Professor Baker of Harvard, for instance, alternated between writing highly successful social comedies and the writing of fantasies: Philip Barry won success with his sparkling *You and I* (1923), then wrote a poetic play about street cleaners—*White Wings* (1927); and S. N. Behrman, after making a hit with *The Second Man* (1927), offered a comic version of a classic legend in *Amphitryon 38* (1937). Later, both wrote additional social comedies. Marc Connelly, who began his career as a collaborator with George S. Kaufman in writing satirical comedies such as *To the Ladies* (1922), turned, with Kaufman, to the writing of the expressionistic play *Beggar on Horseback* (1924), and later wrote, solo, the prize-winning folk Biblical play, *The Green Pastures* (1930), based upon Roark Bradford's Negro Sunday-school stories. Elmer Rice, trained by the Morningside Players, a little theater group, succeeded equally well in writing his expressionistic *Adding Machine* (1923) and his realistic *Street Scene* (1929). Maxwell Anderson, a graduate of Stanford, collaborated with Laurence Stallings in the realistic play *What Price Glory?* (1924), and later authored verse dramas such as *Elizabeth the Queen* (1930) and *Winterset* (1935); the prose satire, *Both Your Houses;* and a musical comedy satire, *Knickerbocker Holiday* (1938). Paul Green, trained in the playwrighting courses of the University of North Carolina, became widely known for his realistic Negro play, *In Abraham's Bosom* (1927) but followed it with *Roll, Sweet Chariot* (1934), "a symphonic play of the

Negro people," then with *Johnny Johnson* (1937), a musical comedy fantasy.

Clearly, the writers and the public of this period saw values in both realistic modes of writing and the more imaginative modes. Such hospitality led to one development, evident in some dramas, which was more or less peculiar to the period—the mingling of the realistic with the romantic or the fanciful. The "folk plays" of Paul Green, staged by little theater groups and by experimental New York producers, are an example, since they show life close to the soil but employ songs and poetic dialogue.

Expressionism and "The Hairy Ape"

An extreme of this sort of mingling is found in various expressionistic plays popular during the period—*Beggar on Horseback,* for instance. This play starts with a scene in the apartment of the hero, Neil, a penniless composer. The settings are realistic. The characters are introduced as true-to-life figures—the workingwoman with whom the hero is in love, the rich Gladys Cady, whom he is tempted to marry, and Gladys' money-grubbing family. Then the hero takes a sedative and has a dream forecasting the life he is to have if he marries the rich girl. The dream, thereafter, is presented objectively on the stage, with the distortion, the stylization, the symbolism of some dreams, set forth in dialogue which often has the repetitious quality, the rhythmic cadences, and the vocabulary of poetry. The costumes and settings are not realistic but are like those in dreams. A few lines of the stage directions at the time the dream starts suggest the technique:

> . . . . it begins to grow light again—but it is no longer Neil's room. It is a railway station, with the arch of Track 37 prominently visible, and other arches flanking it at the side. A muddled train schedule is printed on the station walls, with strange towns that never existed. Neil's piano, however, has remained where it was, and so has his easy chair. Then, down the aisles of the lighted theatre, there comes suddenly a double wedding procession. One section is headed by Mr. Cady and Gladys—Mr. Cady in golf knickers and sox, knitted vest, and frock coat, with a silk hat prominently on his arm. Gladys is the gorgeously attired bride, bearing proudly a bouquet that consists entirely of banknotes. Behind them stream four ushers—spats, frock coats, and high hats, to say nothing of huge bridal veils, draped over their heads.

When the dream has concluded, the scene again becomes the composer's apartment, and the action returns to the realm of the everyday world.

Similar experiments mark this whole period. In addition, the drama, rather more than in previous periods, spoke out in behalf of political, social, and economic beliefs, many of them decidedly leftist in tendency. In the 1920's, *Beggar on Horseback* satirized wealth and big business. Later, as the populace in general tended leftward, authors such as Lillian Hellman and Clifford Odets wrote plays supporting labor or attacking Fascistic tendencies. The Group Theatre, quite active in this movement, attracted attention when, in 1935, it produced Odets' *Waiting for Lefty.* This depiction of a strike of taxicab drivers used a number of the devices of the little theater productions—the presentation of action in the auditorium as well as on the stage, the unfolding of the story in episodic blackouts, and the employment of rhetorical language. And its purpose was to vivify the difficulties of laborers and to plead their cause.

Eugene O'Neill, who was, by general agreement, the outstanding dramatist of the interwar period, represents several of the main tendencies of the time. He studied playwrighting in Professor Baker's class at Harvard, and he had his first plays produced by the Provincetown Players and his later plays produced by the Theatre Guild. A highly experimental author, he shifted from realistic writing in plays such as *Beyond the Horizon* (1920) and *Anna Christie* (1921) to expressionistic writing in plays such as *The Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1922), then to naturalistic dramas, and then to still other types (see p. 1190).

The Hairy Ape is an expressionistic drama which forcefully voices the discontentment of the proletariat. Some of the scenery and much of the dialogue and action are realistic. In some scenes, however, the masked characters, the marionette-like processions, the monologues, and the choric effects lift the action into the realm of fantasy. The primitive Yank, despite his tough vocabulary, has an articulateness which is more in character for O'Neill than for the battered stoker. The rhythms of

much of the dialogue are much more poetic than those of ordinary speech. Reading this play one easily sees why O'Neill, as he once wrote Professor Quinn, "sets most store by himself as a bit of a poet, who has labored with the spoken word to evolve original rhythms of beauty where beauty apparently isn't—*Jones, Ape, God's Chillun, Desire* etc.—and to see the transfiguring nobility of tragedy, in as near the Greek sense as one can grasp it, in seemingly the most ignoble, debased lives." The formula is one which applies to many dramatists of the period. O'Neill stands out from the rest, not because he has attempted something entirely unique, but because he brings to his task a unique talent.

THE POETIC RENAISSANCE

Although various dates have been mentioned as marking the beginning of the poetic renaissance, the date most widely accepted is 1912, the year of the founding of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* by Harriet Monroe (1860-1936) and a group of subscribers. The motive of this publication, as the first issue stated it, was "to give to poetry her own place, her own voice." "The popular magazines," explained the editors, "can afford her but scant courtesy—a Cinderella corner in the ashes—because they seek a large public which is not hers, a public which buys them not for their verse but for their stories, pictures, journalism, rarely for their literature even in prose .... We believe that there is a public for poetry, that it will grow, and that as it becomes more numerous and more appreciative the work produced in this art will grow in power, in beauty, in significance."

The magazine, from its founding down to the present, has admirably fulfilled its function, and in time its prophecy was justified. *Poetry* introduced many new poets to the public. The books of some poets, notably Masters' *Spoon River Anthology* (1915), which was extraordinarily popular for poetry, attracted additional readers. Poets who lectured—Frost, Sandburg, and Lindsay in particular—won a wider audience. Then there were various little magazines which, following the lead of *Poetry,* devoted much space to poems and to critical discussion: *Contemporary Verse* (1916-1929), *The Double Dealer* (1921-1926), *Fugitive* (1923-1925), *Palms* (1923-1940), and others. Books on the new poetry by persuasive critics (Amy Lowell, Louis Untermeyer, John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, and Allen Tate, to name but a few) helped cultivate understanding and appreciation. The result was the creation of a sizable cultured public which bought contemporary poetry and read it with enthusiasm.

Critics of modern poetry, many of whom urged the detailed analysis of poems, found that a common attitude among the new poets was one of rebellion against Victorian poetry. Sometimes, as in the works of E. A. Robinson (p. 1132), this rebellion was visible chiefly in *what* the poet said—the voicing of un-Victorian philosophical attitudes. More often, however, the poets rebelled not only against conventional beliefs but also against conventional poetic techniques—a rebellion indicated by *how* the poet expressed himself.

In poetry, as in the drama, there were innumerable experiments. As Robert Frost once observed humorously, "Poetry . . . was tried without punctuation. It was tried without capital letters. It was tried without any image but those to the eye.... It was tried without content under the name of poesie pure. It was tried without phrase, epigram, coherence, logic, and consistency. It was tried without ability. . . . It was tried without feeling or sentiment. . . ." The sources of these experimental techniques were also numerous—the English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, the symbolists of France, the "radical" American poets of the nineteenth century, and others. A complete consideration of the period, therefore, would deal with innovations and influences by the score. Our more limited consideration will deal with three of the chief rebellions against older techniques: (1) against the older ideas about the "seriousness" proper to poetry, (2) against conventional versification, and (3) against conventional "poetic" diction.

"Serious Humor"

During the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, poets in general lagged behind radical realistic and naturalistic fiction writers in adapting their methods to changing views of life in the United States. The more advanced novelists, dissatisfied with what they had thought were romantic simplifications, had turned to realism and naturalism partly because they believed that these modes made possible more inclusive—and truer—representations of life. But most poets had continued to write romantic poetry. Love or hate or sorrow had continued to be an "all out" business with them, completely disconnected from workaday concerns such as digging ditches, say, or sipping

coffee, or selecting neckties. The attitude of the best poetry, in literal accordance with the urgings of Matthew Arnold and other leading critics, was one of "high seriousness." Poets had values about which they cherished no doubts, and though their poems sometimes showed vacillations, they moved forward steadily to firm conclusions.

There had been some exceptions: Whitman (p. 676) had fused "fleshly" and "spiritual" viewpoints; Emily Dickinson (p. 1021) had been simultaneously playful and serious while writing of love, religion, or even death; William Vaughn Moody had assumed the comic rôle of "a little man in trousers, slightly jagged," to discuss the serious problem of evolution; Stephen Crane had told with irony of the indifference of the universe to man's suffering. These poets, it now developed, foreshadowed the conception of "seriousness" combined with humor which was to shape interwar poetry. Cleanth Brooks, in *Modern Poetry and the Tradition,* interestingly contrasts the new conception with the older one:

> The two conceptions are almost diametrically opposed. Arnold's sincerity expresses itself as a vigilance which keeps out of the poem all those extraneous and distracting elements which might seem to contradict what the poet wishes to communicate to his audience. It is the sincerity of the conscientious expositor who makes his point, even at the expense of suppressions and exclusions. . . . The second conception of poetry, on the other hand, reveals itself as an unwillingness to ignore the complexity of experience. The poet attempts to fuse the conflicting elements in a harmonious whole.

Modern poets, in other words, feeling that life is more complicated than most romantic poets have admitted, reveal its conflicting aspects, its colliding values. Inevitably, therefore, their poems—excepting those who view life as completely tragic—deal with incongruities; and humor, wit, or irony of varied shades become important even in very serious poems. The poet is not necessarily vacillating indecisively; in making up his mind, he is trying to take into account manifold aspects of life.

Incongruity in many of Lindsay's best poems, for instance, is akin to that in American folklore. In such poems, one may hear echoes of the fireside talk of frontier yarnspinners. Lindsay is a mythmaker—and though his myths stop short of the most inventive tall tales, they achieve comparable fusings of the real and the imagined. His Andrew Jackson "was eight feet tall. . . . His sword was so long he dragged it on the ground." His General Booth (p. 1150) enters a Heaven which is part supernatural, part Illinois country town. His Simon Legree is the legendary creation of a Negro poet, and his Congo blacks (p. 1152) are a white man's fabulous interpretation of savagery. Even his Lincoln, stalking through Springfield at night (p. 1155), assumes the guise of a folk creation.

Sandburg, likewise, embodies playful myths and imaginative tall tales in serious poems. His "Chicago" (p. 1157) is a giant personification comparable to the frontier braggarts; he praises the people by telling of their folklore. In addition to frontier or rural humor, however, he makes use of the wry humor of the dispossessed as it is voiced in hobo ballads which he has reproduced in his *American Songbag:* it mingles hate, bitter contempt, and tenderness in "To a Contemporary Bunkshooter" (p. 1158) and "A.E.F." (p. 1164).

The humor of two New England poets, Robinson and Frost, as Constance Rourke has remarked in *American Humor,* also prolongs an older tradition:

> For companions in the legendary village of Tilbury Town Robinson has chosen types recurrent throughout early American comedy, ne'er-do-wells, liars, the quirky, the large-hearted and lost, spendthrifts of time and money and love. Robinson is master of that unobtrusive irony that has belonged to the Yankee; like the older Yankee he turns constantly to a dry metaphor—"an old vanity that is half as rich in salvage as old ashes." . . . A reticent humor runs through much of Robinson's poetry, so quietly as to pass unnoticed by many readers, yet producing a constant lightning and relief and change, with a balance of forces against the impending tragedy . . . . Frost [too] has kept the native humor, often deepened to a bitter irony, but delicately infused; most of his humor, like that of the early Yankee tradition, is so deeply inwoven with his further speech as to be almost inseparable from it.

These poets of New England, then, show relationships to the Yankee humor of Seba Smith.

Four modern poets, to summarize, re-create in serious

poetry the extravagant humor of the old West or the dry humor of Down East. Another group—which includes poets such as John Crowe Ransom, Archibald MacLeish, E. E. Cummings, Robert Penn Warren, Wallace Stevens, and others, and which is represented in this text by Eliot and Tate—embodies more subtle (albeit ironic) incongruities in its poetry. Cleanth Brooks sees "wit" as the instrument used by these poets in fusing disparates; and his definition of wit shows how it may be used for serious purposes:

> Wit is not only an acute perception of analogies; it is a lively awareness of the fact that the obvious attitude toward a given situation is not the only possible attitude. Because wit, for us, is still associated with levity, it may be well to state it in its most serious terms. The witty poet's glancing at other attitudes is not merely "play"—an attempt to puzzle or show off his acuteness of perception; it is possible to describe it as merely his refusal to blind himself to a multiplicity which exists.

The perception of such multiplicity has frequently caused poets in this group to discard or greatly modify older ways of organizing poems in favor of "witty" organizations which emphasize ironic incongruities. Contrasting aspects or values are placed side by side and their disparate qualities are emphasized by the omission of most transitions. What Eliot calls " 'links in the chain,' of explanatory and connecting matter" are left out. Though such arrangements may, for a time, puzzle readers used to Victorian poetry, they are, considering the poets' assumptions about reality, inevitable. As Eliot has pointed out, "Such selection of sequences of images and ideas has nothing chaotic about it. There is a logic of imagination as well as logic of concepts." Eliot and others of his group, in their poems, seek to arrange details in accordance with what he calls "the logic of the imagination."

A poem held together by what Eliot calls "the logic of concepts" might begin with a poetic statement of the idea that modern man is less romantic than man was in the past. "Look upon modern man," it might continue, and thereupon it might describe modern man in unromantic terms. The description might be followed by a transition—"It was not so with man in other days"—and the transition might introduce a description of a romantic character of the past. Possibly the poet might thereafter summarize the whole idea of the poem, and then lament the departure of romance. In such a structure no "links in the chain" would be missing and the meaning would be explicitly formulated. Contrast Eliot's "logic of imagination" in a terse passage in *The Waste Land.* Note that there are no transitions, generalizations, or statements of attitudes—simply juxtaposed images, with those of the opening two lines providing a meaningful ironic contrast with those of the last four:

> At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives
> Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
> The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
> Her stove, and lays out food in tins
> Out of the window perilously spread
> Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays. . . .

The opening two lines here connote the romance of purple twilight for adventurous sailors turning homeward; the remaining lines show the drab office worker cleaning up dirty breakfast dishes, dining on canned food, and then washing and hanging out her underwear in the late afternoon sun.

Comparable ironic contrasts—or ironic parallelisms—or (more often) parallelisms and contrasts combined—are implied in the order of the images in many modern poems. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (p. 1169), "The Hippopotamus," or "Gerontion" (p. 1172) the images are much more complex, but the juxtaposition of those images is the essential thing. Thus "the logic of the imagination" which shapes these poems expresses irony, and in its "serious humor" Eliot's poetry shows its kinship to that of even such a broadly humorous poet as Vachel Lindsay.

New Rhythms

During the early years of the poetic renaissance, one great battle was for the recognition of free verse. Keith Preston, a Chicago newspaper columnist, implied what was a widespread belief when he wrote, in a witty quatrain:

Of all the literary scenes,
The saddest that I see
Are graves of little magazines
That died to make verse free.

Casual readers, for a long time, thought that "the new poetry" and "free verse" were synonymous. Many leaders in the movement did for a time write much free verse—Amy Lowell, Edgar Lee Masters, John Gould Fletcher, Hilda Doolittle, Wallace Stevens, and others. Writers of such verse, obviously in the tradition of Whitman, are represented in this text by Carl Sandburg.

By degrees, poets won this battle. They were aided by the growth of Whitman's reputation which took place during this period, by the popular success of the *Spoon River Anthology,* by critics, poets, and teachers who championed *vers libre.* By 1940, radio plays written in free verse appealed to wide audiences, and many an amateur poet who mailed his early efforts to the hometown newspaper wrote, without any sense of being daring, in free verse.

Free verse won its spurs, but after a period during which it was used by more and more poets, there came a period during which it was used by fewer and fewer. By 1941, many leading poets considered it rather old-fashioned. Having won all the freedom they wanted, many poets eventually decided that they could do with less freedom than *vers libre* allowed. Nevertheless, free verse had important effects, for it offered clues about possible variations in verse forms. Robinson, for instance, in some ways highly conventional in his prosody, diverged from regularity rather more than he probably would have done in an earlier period—and was less criticized for his divergences. And other poets, when they departed from established prosodic methods, did so without a twinge, and without disastrous consequences.

Even so "classical" a poet as Robert Frost has not been untouched by the new tendency toward freedom. His theory of prosody, as Lawrance Thompson explains in *Fire and Ice,* attempts to reconcile "three separate planes of sound" which affect rhythms:

> The first of these is the basic and theoretically rigid meter, which Frost is willing to reduce "virtually" to "strict iambic" and "loose iambic." These basic accents, fitted to the variable structure of the line and of the stanza, offer an underlying foundation of words and phrases. The second plane of sound is derived from the words and phrases as they might be pronounced without regard to meaning, without regard to context. The third plane of sound is derived from the tones of voice which give particularly intended shades of meaning to the words when they are spoken as units in their contexts of phrases and sentences.

For instance, in the opening lines of "Mending Wall" (p. 1140), the "basic pattern" is iambic pentameter. However, normal accentuation, regardless of contexts, in such words as "something," "ground-swell," and "makes gaps" causes deviations from the regular iambic pattern. A proper reading of the poem, also, will suggest the character of the speaker and the quizzical, teasing tone of his remarks: such a character, probably, would maliciously emphasize and caress with his tongue the word "spills"—a word which embodies the whole playful destruction of walls by nature which so distresses the orderly neighbor. And later, in line 15, the word "between," important as it is in the concept being developed, may properly be given a stress—may properly be set off by a significant pause—suggestive of its contextual importance. The sense Frost manifests, here and in other poems, of these three different planes of sound doubtless does much to account for a quality which many critics have seen in his poems: often they are, for poetry, extraordinarily close in their rhythms to the everyday talk of New England farmers.

Vachel Lindsay, as his remarks here and there about metrics indicate, learned a great deal about versification from three poets—John Dryden (1631-1700), Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), and Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909). Each of these achieved noteworthy effects by varying established rhythms and by exploiting, to the full, possibilities of tone color—vowel and consonant arrangements. Dryden's "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day" brilliantly utilizes variations possible in an irregular ode to contrast the sounds of musical instruments, and it is not difficult to imagine Lindsay writing a gloss for Dryden comparable to that on "The Congo" offering instructions like those below for the reading of the lines:

The trumpet's loud clangor	Shrilly and with increasing speed.
Excites us to arms	
With shrill notes of anger	
And mortal alarms.	
The double, double, double beat	To be chanted in deep bass, all the heavy accents very heavy.
Of the thundering drum	
Cries hark! the foes come;	
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat!	
The soft complaining flute	To be read slowly and softly in the manner of insinuating music, all the o sounds very golden.
In dying notes discovers	
The woes of hopeless lovers,	
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.	

So glossed, Dryden's lines show clearly the source of some of Lindsay's practices.

But Lindsay's rhythms also had more immediate sources. During his boyhood in Springfield, Lindsay came to know well the rhythms of church oratory, both white and Negro, and also those of open-air political oratory. While at Hiram College, he was well trained in the florid public speaking fashionable during his young manhood. The rhythms of the Gregorian Chant were also, he acknowledged, influential. "From Boston to Los Angeles," he wrote, "we American versifiers, democratic poets, face the problem of our potential audiences of one million or one hundred million that we have never conquered, but which the Chatauqua orator like Bryan . . . may reach any day. From this standpoint, Bryan is the one living American poet till we make a few songs sturdy enough to endure the confusion of the Chatauqua tent . . . ." To capture such audiences, Lindsay wrote such poems as "General William Booth" and "The Congo"—experiments in what he called "The Higher Vaudeville" —designed to attract popular attention. Recited as this poet recited such poems,* these and other songs proved attractive to unsophisticated high-school students and even to tired businessmen.

Although T. S. Eliot, Allen Tate, and other poets in their "school" probably are not overfond of Lindsay, they adapt rhythms to materials in a comparable fashion. Eliot, who wrote a few poems close to free verse in form during his early career, eventually came to use rhyme and fairly conventional meters. Like Lindsay, however, he found contrasts in rhythms useful to enforce contrasting moods, attitudes, or materials. That Tate conceives of rhythm similarly is indicated by his discussion of his own prosody.

The effect, in the end, of all the experimentation with rhythms was to give interwar poets a very wide range indeed in their handling of rhythms. Patterns of emphasis could be adjusted in many ways to the thoughts and emotions expressed in poems, and readers accustomed to the new poetry readily accepted any metrical patterns, no matter how bizarre, which justified themselves by their achievements. And the flexible rhythms became highly appropriate to the expression of the contrasts and the incongruities so important in many modern poems.

The Language of Modern Poetry

After 1914 there was about as much variety in the kinds of language used as there was in the kinds of rhythms. Robinson, in general, used the same sort of diction as had been used in the Victorian period, though shorn of clichés and many of its ornaments, and so did some other poets. However, at the start of the period, some poets—like Dryden, Wordsworth, and Whitman before them—consciously rebelled against what they believed to be "unnatural" or ineffective ways of saying things characteristic of older poetry. The rebellion was justified, so writers said, by several convictions—that a new language was needed to cope in a real way with the modern world, that expressions not worn threadbare had particular impact, that concrete rather than abstract words were best for stating truth, and that poets did well to draw upon the common speech which was a great source of poetry.

The ways of rebelling, however, differed. They differed, quite often, in accordance with the poets' ideas about the ways "common speech" should be translated into poetry. For in this period when the talk of various classes differed greatly, naturally it was possible to disagree about the class of men whose talk should be imitated. Should it be the class of the factory worker, say, of the farmer, or of the learned scholar? And naturally, even after deciding upon the kind of speech to be used in poetry, poets differed about the selection, the intensification necessary if ordinary talk was to be transmuted.

Robert Frost conceives of himself as a user of the talk of New Hampshire farmers. He has approvingly quoted Emerson's lines about Down East talk in "Monadnock," lines which point out that country folk, with their paltry vocabularies of a hundred words or so, are "the masters who can teach" the poet our "ancient speech,"

*Some of his readings are available on records issued by Columbia University. Listening to such records, or to those of Frost, Sandburg, or Eliot, is of great value to the student

and he has admired dialogues in Shakespeare, made up as they are of "lean sharp sentences, with the give and take, the thread of thought and action quick, nor lost in a maze of metaphor and adjective." Frost usually lives up to his implied ideal. He uses an extraordinarily large proportion of monosyllables (forty in a row, for instance, at one point in "The Death of the Hired Man," p. 1141), and very few long words; he often employs provincialisms. His lines, whether they serve as dialogue or as first-person voicings of the poet's thought, often have a sparse epigrammatic quality like that of folk speech. (Note, for instance, ll. 1, 27, 32-33 in "Mending Wall," p. 1140). Since Frost deliberately uses such simple, undecorated diction, very close to ordinary speech, he perforce suggests poetic meanings in subtle and delicate ways; and the unwary reader is likely to miss complexities firmly embodied in his laconic poems.

Lindsay and Sandburg employ words in a fashion in some ways comparable to Frost: some of their poems are couched in the Middlewestern counterpart of New England farm language. Each of these poets, however, following the example of Whitman (whom both admire), mingles poetic words with more vernacular expressions. And each experiments with somewhat different elements in our national speech. The language which Lindsay calls "really American" is the pure and simple English of the Elizabethan period, still spoken in unspoiled rural districts: he cites as an example of it Mark Twain's *Roughing It* (see p. 854). But he conceives of this language as potentially "eloquent" since its speakers "are all orators and preserve in eloquent periods the United States language." Such are the elements in our speech which Lindsay tries to utilize in his poetry—"the Grand Style" but employed with earthiness and native humor. Sandburg draws upon the talk of common men for the epigrams and sayings in some of his poems. He draws, in addition, upon the language of the factory or of the city sidewalk for such expressions as "where do you get that stuff"; "the . . . bunch backing you"; "a good four flusher"; and "he starts people puking"—all in "To a Contemporary Bunk-shooter"—language highly appropriate to express the proletarian sentiments of the speaker.

A charge frequently brought against modern poets is that they are obscure. Even such an old-fashioned poet as Robinson is obscure now and then, and so are such ordinarily forthright poets as Lindsay and Sandburg. Such obscurity, whether occasional or customary, is not, as some claim, the result of a deliberate attempt to blur meaning: actually it attempts to express meaning which is hard to decipher chiefly because it is complicated. Many difficult passages are as justifiable as those employed by Eliot, and though Eliot writes poetry not immediately clear even to sophisticated readers, he amply justifies his diction in notably intelligent critical writings.

Difficult though some of his poetry is, Eliot indicates in his writings that he shares the belief that poets do well to write verse after the manner of the actual talk of men He praises Donne, the seventeenth-century British metaphysical poet, for "managing to maintain a tone of direct and informal address"; he commends Dryden for having a talent which is "exactly the same" as Donne's; he holds that "no serious critic" will disapprove of Wordsworth's avowed attempt "to imitate, and as far as possible, to adopt, the very language of men." In general, carrying out his own theories, Eliot does achieve a conversational tone in his poems.

But Eliot sees clearly that at times certain demands of poetry may make conversational language unsatisfactory. "There is," he says, "no conversational or other form which can be applied indiscriminately": some ideas and feelings may be best expressed in other styles. Moreover, he feels that the poet cannot "talk like *any* class of society," since he has to talk "like himself—rather better, we hope, than any actual class; though when any class of society happens to have the best word, phrase, or expletive for anything, then the poet is entitled to it."

And indeed the poet who achieves all that Eliot sees him doing must be an artist in manipulating language. The language important to the poet, Eliot feels, "is that which is smuggling to digest and express new objects, new groups of objects, new feelings, new aspects. . . ." Such living language, this poet holds, combines traditional with novel meanings: "whatever words a writer employs, he benefits by knowing as much as possible of the history of those words, of the uses to which they have already been applied . . . . The essential of tradition is this: in getting as much as possible the whole weight of the history of the language behind his word." Hence a sense of the traditional is valuable. The essential of novelty, by contrast, is the expression of that which is characteristic not only of the age but also of the individual poet. The modern poet, aware of the complexity of his period and of his reactions to it, must "become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in

order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning." In addition to thus expressing what is traditional and what is unique, the language of today's poetry, Eliot thinks, fuses two other elements—feeling and thought. Poets of today will be condemned if, like Tennyson and Browning, "they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of the rose." Instead each should reveal in his words "a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or re-creation of thought into feeling, which is exactly what we find in Donne," greatly admired by Eliot as well as other modern authors.

The title and one of the lines of a poem by Eliot offer examples of these fusings in diction. The words "love song" in the title, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," have *traditional* signification: in past periods, they stood for an expression of affection which was direct and passionate. This *individual* love song, by contrast, represents our peculiar era by not expressing affection and by being indirect and unimpassioned. Similarly, the word "song," which in the past stood for simple singing, in this poem stands for complex thinking. Again in "J. Alfred Prufrock" (one of those names "parted on the side," today typical of some pretentious people), "Alfred" has been *traditionally* associated with the man of action, Alfred the Great; but in this *individual* poem, it applies to a "hero" who is exactly the opposite of a man of action. Fusion of *thought* and *feeling* is illustrated by line 51, in which Prufrock thinks "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons." Prufrock's thought is that he has wasted his life in meaningless social rituals; but this is expressed in sensory terms—terms of feeling —in the image of annoyed frustration: the delicate handling of ineffectual little spoons from which coffee cannot be savored but must be sipped.

Some modern poets, then, for all their approval of the use of conversational language, often depart from the simplicities of social talk in order to express complex meanings. Therefore the language aids the "serious humor" and the varied rhythms in voicing the ideas and feelings poets have about the modern world.

THE NEW FICTION

During the period between 1912 and 1920, as we have seen, "the new drama" and "the new poetry" reached notable heights. "The new fiction," by contrast—at least that which people bought and talked about a great deal—lagged behind. Consistent authors of best sellers included Gene Stratton Porter, Harold Bell Wright, Zane Grey, and Eleanor H. Porter. The most popular novels left out the less savory aspects of American life, and their optimistic plots showed virtuous characters triumphant, after a struggle, over vicious villains. Obviously this fiction, although written in the twentieth century, prolonged the tradition of nineteenth-century sentimentalism.

Early in the 1920's, though, the beginning of a change became apparent. On the best-seller list appeared F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise,* Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence,* and Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street,* books in sharp contrast with previous best sellers. The last of these shortly became sensationally successful. In an article in *Bookman,* September 1921, a British novelist, Archibald Marshall, considered "half a dozen novels said to represent a new development in American fiction, all of which are now being widely read." There was, indeed, "a new development." During the years that followed, pre-1920 novelists tended slowly to recede in importance while very different writers such as Lewis, Hemingway, Faulkner, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, and Wolfe replaced them not only in critical esteem but also—at least at times—in general popularity.

Probably the huge audience which fictionists had was in large measure responsible for the late burgeoning of the new fiction. A larger audience than either poetry or drama reached, fiction readers were, for a long time, content with old-fashioned narratives. They preferred "pure" and "sweet" stories to the more rugged works of the Stephen Cranes and the Theodore Dreisers. But after many readers had been disillusioned by the outcome of World War I or had been converted by preachers of disillusionment such as Henry Adams and H. L. Mencken, a part of the older audience seceded and began to demand fictional works of a different sort. These were joined by a large share of the younger readers. Increasing numbers approved of the tendency which Archibald Marshall saw in best sellers "to portray the meanness of life in a particular [American] community." Attacks made by older neglected novelists, voiced anew, were considered with respect. Interest in Howe, Kirkland, and Crane was reawakened and redoubled. Dreiser's reputation prospered, and in 1925, when Dreiser published *An American Tragedy,* he found to his pleased surprise that the new audience was large enough to make that book for a time a best seller. By the 1930's, many books as stern as Dreiser's managed to win wide and apprecia-

tive audiences—not such wide ones, to be sure, as escapist novels like *Anthony Adverse* and *Gone with the Wind* but very respectable audiences nevertheless.

Readers, then, who turned to fiction writers of the newer sort did so less because of their manner than because of their matter. But the authors of the new fiction, like the interwar poets, rebelled against older techniques, and they naturally needed new techniques appropriate to their preachments. Looking back to their most sympathetic predecessors, the realists and naturalists of the period 1880-1920, they found useful hints. And considering their new views of life, they hit upon methods of unfolding narratives which served their purposes.

Regardless of the sources of their procedures, fiction writers tended to drop the old argument concerning the relative merits of romanticism, realism, naturalism, expressionism, and other "isms," and to agree with Percy Lubbock, an admired critic of fiction, when he wrote: "The best form is that which makes the most of its subject —there is no other definition of the meaning of form in fiction." Authors and critics admired equally the novels of Dreiser and Farrell, cast in the form of naturalism; those of James Branch Cabell, written after the pattern of romances; and those of Robert Nathan, in the form of fantasy. What mattered most was that the fiction, as the phrase constantly had it, should "tell the real truth about life as it was." Detail, plot, and characterization were manipulated chiefly to achieve the end Mencken had in mind when he spoke of the "fundamental purpose" as being "to make the novel true."

Detail in Modern Fiction

Two ways of handling detail, perhaps, are outstanding in modern fiction—the "documentary" way and the "poetic" way. The documentary method, discoverable in the writings of Sinclair Lewis, John Dos Passos, and many modern novelists, is extraordinary for its massing of detail. Probably Dreiser, as much as any previous author, is its parent, and its ideal is something like scientific accuracy and completeness. An example of this method in an extreme form is the chapter in *Main Street* wherein Lewis tells of Carol Kennicott's stroll down the street after which the novel is named. A grocery is thus described:

> Howland & Gould's Grocery. In the display window, black, overripe bananas and lettuce on which a cat was sleeping. Shelves lined with red crêpe paper which was now faded and torn and concentrically spotted. Flat against the wall of the second story the signs of lodges—the Knights of Pythias, the Maccabees, the Woodmen, the Masons.

In similar detail, for several pages, building after building along the street is told about—a total of twenty-five of them. The method is almost photographic in the multiplicity of descriptive touches used. The intention, apparently, is to give such overwhelming documentation that the reader feels that the picture must be accurate.

Similarly, when Lewis records conversations, he sets down something close to a complete transcript: the repetitions of phrase, the peculiarities of expression, seem to be mimicked to perfection. Consider this snatch of conversation between Babbitt and Littlefield, after Babbitt has brought up the subject of politics:

> "In my opinion, what the country needs, first and foremost, is a good, sound, business-like conduct of its affairs. What we need is—a business administration!" said Littlefield.
>
> "I'm glad to hear you say that! [said Babbitt] I certainly am glad to hear you say that! I didn't know how you'd feel about it, with all your association with colleges and so on, and I'm glad you feel that way. What the country needs—just at this present juncture—is neither a college president nor a lot of monkeying with foreign affairs, but a good—sound—economical—business—administration, that will give us a chance to have something like a decent turnover."

The details in this speech and others monotonously repeating phrases and "thoughts" seem almost stenographic in their accuracy and their completeness.

Of course, there is selection even in such passages as these, and other authors who use this method are likely to be somewhat more selective than Lewis. The basis of the selection is the author's view of the scene or speech he is presenting. Lewis, for instance, gives an impression of the tawdriness, the dullness of Main Street in the first passage, and an impression of the unintellectual, standardized attitudes of Americans in the second. The abundant details are so chosen as to document amply each interpretation.

The "poetic" handling of detail, by contrast, is very highly selective, and although the details are likely to be literally accurate, they are also likely to be symbolically, i.e., poetically, significant—reminiscent not so much of Dreiser as of Stephen Crane and Frank Norris.

Willa Cather discussed the problem of detail in "The Novel Démeublé" (the unfurnished novel). She quotes approvingly Mérimée's dictum to the effect that the art of choosing from innumerable details is more important than attentive observation or exact rendition, and scoffs at the "popular superstition that 'realism' asserts itself in the cataloguing of a great number of material objects . . . and in minutely and unsparingly describing physical sensations." Balzac, she holds, failed as an artist in so far as he "tried out the value of literalness . . . to the uttermost." Tolstoy, by contrast, succeeded because he made the physical details "so much a part of the emotions of the people that they are perfectly synthesized." Hawthorne, too, used details sparsely but made all he used unobtrusively valuable to the mood of the story. Miss Cather concludes:

> Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there—that, one might say, is created. It is the inexplicable presence of the thing not named, of the overtone divined by the ear but not heard by it, the verbal mood, the emotional aura of the fact or the thing or the deed, that gives high quality to the novel or the drama, as well as to poetry itself.

The implication, of course, is that the details in a novel by Miss Cather, if she puts her theories into practice, will have an "emotional aura," an implicit value, comparable to that of the images in poetry.

Ernest Hemingway, although unlike Miss Cather in many respects, has similar theories about the handling of details. In all save one of his books (*To Have and Have Not,* 1937, wherein he briefly tries, with dubious success, to write like Dos Passos), Hemingway reduces descriptive detail to the minimum. His problem—the problem of all writers—as he sees it, consists of "knowing what you truly felt, rather than what you were supposed to feel," and then setting down "the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion." Details, in other words, primarily are valuable to suggest the experiencing of feelings, and Hemingway believes that if these are stated "purely enough," they will be "valid . . . always." "All good books are alike," he has said, "in that they are truer than if they had really happened and after you are finished reading one you will feel that all that happened to you and afterwards it all belongs to you: the good and the bad, the ecstasy, the remorse and the sorrow, the people and the places and how the weather was. If you can get so you can give that to people, then you are a writer." The details, selected with the lyric skill necessary for such an achievement, ideally get what this author calls "a fourth and fifth dimension"—perhaps the prototype of Miss Cather's "whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named." The fact or the detail becomes a symbol, and Hemingway, like his master, the Mark Twain of *Huckleberry Finn,* achieves poetry in what appears to be matter-of-fact prose.

This may be seen in the opening paragraph of "In Another Country" (p. 1187):

> In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty, and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers. It was a cold fall and the wind came down from the mountains.

The paragraph is factual, but it contrasts with Lewis' description of *Main Street* because of the nature of its details. Hemingway's details are sparse, and they are more than literal: they are symbolic as well as accurate. Poetically they stand for the "other countries" which the lonely characters portrayed in the story sense but do not enter—the country of battle from which their wounds have removed them, that of peace which they glimpse through lighted windows from darkened streets, the country of nature symbolized by the game, and the country, finally, of death—connoted by the cold, the dark, and by the wind which blows from the mountains.

Poetic details comparable to those in the passage by Hemingway just quoted are to be found, as one would expect, in the writings of Willa Cather. They are to be found in Steinbeck and Wolfe, although both of these

writers often employ the literal method characteristic of Lewis. In fact, if a trend in the handling of detail is to be discovered in the interwar period, it is a trend toward selectivity and poetic suggestion rather than exhaustive documentation.

Plot Patterns

When, in December 1930, Sinclair Lewis accepted the Nobel Prize, he made an address, "The American Fear of Literature," in which he catalogued conservative criticisms of contemporaneous writers. Eugene O'Neill, for instance, who had transformed American drama "from a false world of neat and complete trickery to a world of splendor and fear and greatness," was criticized because "he has seen life as not to be neatly arranged in the study of a scholar but as a terrifying magnificent, and often quite horrible thing akin to the tornado, the earthquake, the devastating fire" The description applies not only to this dramatist but also to a number of fiction writers. They, too, refused to arrange happenings in neat and complete patterns comparable to those in older fiction. It was this fact, probably, that Archibald Marshall had in mind when he accused the new fictionists of failing to tell a story. "There is no progress," he complained.

Like Marshall, readers fond of Victorian plots believe that many modern novels, especially those of the twenties, bewilderingly depart from established narrative forms. Often, novelists like Dreiser, whom many of them admire, are satisfied to write simply the biographies of characters—sometimes from birth to death, sometimes from day to day over a shorter but not particularly exciting period. Such biographies often tell of characters who do not change: like picaresque figures they merely do various things and meet a series of people. Marshall instanced Carol Kennicott in *Main Street,* who, he said, "remains at the end much as she was at the beginning." "And her successive revolts," he added, "have little dramatic quality in them." Similarly, in *Babbitt, Arrowsmith, Elmer Gantry, Dodsworth,* and other novels, as Carl Van Doren notices, Sinclair Lewis "employs an easy arrangement nearer chronicle than drama." James T. Farrell and Thomas Wolfe, in their novels, also use such arrangements as are supplied by apparently unmanipulated biography, although they continue their biographies through several volumes.

John Dos Passos uses a similar technique in *Three Soldiers,* but he tends to complicate his story element by unfolding, simultaneously, several biographical chronicles —moving briskly and without transitions from one to the other. *"Manhattan Transfer,"* as Professor Beach remarks in *American Fiction, 1920-1940,* "is a picture of chaos moral and social; and the narrative technique corresponds to the theme. Each chapter is a loose bundle of incidents from the lives of many different persons or groups, anywhere from four or sixteen in number, completely unrelated save in time and their common involvement in the chaos of Manhattan." *U. S. A.* does much the same thing with a broader picture screen, the entire nation, as a background. The biographies of twelve people, scattered from the east to the west coast, are presented in fragmentary parts. These people encounter many characters who move into and out of their lives. In addition, at intervals, "Newsreels," "The Camera Eye," and biographies of leading public figures are interspersed. The newsreels present impressionistic pictures of the nation of the day. The "Camera Eye" passages offer stream-of-consciousness interpretations. The brief biographies show, with selected details, the lives of leaders in ways which emphasize the trends of the times. These thumbnail biographical accounts are comparable, as a result, to the biographies of major characters, although their parts are drawn together—are not separated by stretches of narrative.

But there are many modern narratives, nevertheless, which do show developments, developments which occur when the characters learn something—discover something. Faulkner's narratives often show a discovery of the terrible in human existence. "A Rose for Emily" (p. 1213), although it is comparatively uncomplicated, shows the method in miniature, for it tells how the villagers learn, detail by detail, of the horror of Miss Emily Grierson's life. Sometimes it is not the characters so much as the readers who make the discovery. *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), for example, one of Faulkner's best works, follows a jumbled plan, even as to time, which is justifiable largely because it makes such an unfolding possible. The order and relationships of happenings are further obscured because the story is told as it is seen not by one character but by three characters, in turn, and then the author. But the result of the whole procedure is a parading of various fragments which finally cease to be disconnected and become, instead, interrelated parts of a terrible picture. The discovery, therefore, takes place in the mind of the reader rather than in that of anyone in the story. And

Faulkner uses similar schemes—in eventual effect, at any rate—in other narratives.

The plot of discovery may be useful, of course, for affirmative as well as negative fictional works. Willa Cather, rather often, shows characters seeking and finding satisfactory self-fulfillment—the artist in *Song of the Lark,* the pioneer in *My Ántonia,* the soldier in *One of Ours,* the intellectual in *The Professor's House,* religious men in *Death Comes for the Archbishop.* When, in the latter part of the 1930's, fiction writers (like writers in other fields) began to forsake critical attacks in favor of positive preachments, this pattern tended to be prevalent.

Hemingway marks this transition. His "The Killers" (p. 1182) shows the youthful Nick apprehending some of the terror of the world—apprehending ruthlessness and violence, not through books and motion pictures but through first-hand experiences. Hemingway's early novels (*The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*) and various short stories show characters making discoveries, usually of such a primitive sort that they indicate not the rehabilitation of human values so much as their disintegration. The chief character in *To Have and To Have Not* and even more notably the chief character in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* find a faith beyond individual creature comfort, a social faith. Increasingly, as the United States moved toward World War II, and affirmations became more important for some novelists than attacks, fictional narratives tended to show similar discoveries—in Lewis' *Work of Art* and *It Can't Happen Here,* in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath,* and in Wolfe's *You Can't Go Home Again.* In the later part of the period, nevertheless, as in the earlier, the plots of discovery served admirably for the development of the authors' ideas.

Characterization and Psychology

From the beginning, authors of fiction have had certain limited ways of characterizing—showing the characteristics of the people about whose lives they wrote: they could comment upon them, describe their physical backgrounds and their outward appearance, tell of their actions or of their thoughts, set forth their conversations or the conversations of others about them. During the interwar period, fictionists did not manage to hit upon any new devices; but in various ways they manipulated and modified the older ones. One older device tended to disappear —the comment of the author upon the characters. Fearful of appearing to moralize, and dubious, as a matter of fact, about their ability to state positive values, the authors in these years tended to drop out of their stories, to become relatively dramatic—objective—in their characterization. The characters were shown, and the reader was allowed to draw his conclusions.

Two other characterizing devices, although they did not disappear, were used rather sparingly. Some authors, as has been suggested, depended upon detailed description of background and upon description of physical appearance, but the description was minimized. Characterization was chiefly achieved, therefore, by the presentation of words, deeds, and thoughts of the characters.

The handling of these was shaped largely by the science of psychology, which, as has been stated (p. 1071), was of great importance in modern fiction. Seemingly, like Henry James before them (see p. 918), modern authors found central to their writing problem the selection of a fictional point of view—the kind of insight or insights they as authors were to have into the minds of their characters. And, of course, the statement of the insights was determined by the authors' concepts of psychology. Hemingway, for example, in some of his writings, seems to follow one lead suggested by behavioristic psychologists* when they scoffed at the scientific value of a study of "consciousness" and urged, instead, the observation of human activity—behavior. Often, Hemingway objectively sets down remarks and actions of the characters, or, as he puts it, "what really happens in action" —but he leaves to be inferred what the characters feel or think. "The Killers" is a perfect example, set forth as it is without a single glimpse into its characters' thoughts: it has the dramatic objectivity of a play. And first-person narrative though it is, "In Another Country" holds to a minimum the unfolding of the narrator's thoughts. When such a technique is used, to be sure, whether Hemingway's characters in a given narrative are sophisticates or prizefighters, the subtle nuances of their thoughts and feelings—exactly the things with which Henry James was chiefly concerned—are not and cannot be presented.

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*The chief scholarly consideration is J. B. Watson's Behavior: An Introduction to Comparative Psychology, New York, 1914; the chief popular study is a best-selling book by G. A. Dorsey, Why We Behave Like Human Beings, New York, 1914. In the 1920's behaviorism was quite influential in psychological study

Hemingway's belief, apparently, is that such subtleties are relatively unimportant—that the primitive and universal emotions related to physical pleasure or pain are those most significant both in life and in art. Hence Hemingway, at times, has been classified as a "primitivist."

Steinbeck, too, is often a primitivist in his psychology. His tendency, as Edmund Wilson notices in *The Boys in the Back Room* (1941), is "to present life in animal terms," to deal "either with the lower animals or with human beings so rudimentary that they are almost on the animal level." In consequence, as Wilson says, "The chief subject of Mr. Steinbeck's fiction has been . . . not those aspects of humanity in which it is most thoughtful, imaginative, constructive, nor even those aspects of animals that seem most attractive to humans, but rather the processes of life itself. . . . And it is only, as a rule, on this primitive level that Mr. Steinbeck deals with moral questions: the virtues like the crimes for Mr. Steinbeck are still a part of . . . planless and almost aimless, of . . . almost unconscious, processes of life." Even the psychology of labor movements, as this author sees it, is animal-like. Striking fruit-pickers become "groupmen," and a character thus describes them."It was like all of them disappeared, and it was just one big animal, going down the road. Just all one animal. . . ."

The somewhat similar psychological technique employed by Dos Passos also might well have stemmed from the "animal psychology" of the behaviorists—a psychology which tends to reduce action to two elements, stimuli and responses. His vast collection of human beings, though varied, seem, as Professor Beach suggests, to be capable of only a few responses to basic stimuli. Dos Passos' characters behave in a pretty automatic fashion. "The presence of a given organism within the field of vision," as Beach perceives, "provokes the response of 'love'; discomfort drives one to a more comfortable attitude; a feeling of emptiness provokes boredom and sets one on the track of entertainment and novelty; a business opportunity releases effort and ambition." Dos Passos' human beings are comparable to laboratory mice which react one way when a bell rings, another way when a light flashes.

Such psychology tends to make characterization simpler in modern fiction than it was in the older fiction. In some instances, by contrast, modern psychological concepts tend to make characterization rather more complex. Freud and his various followers have made authors aware of the complexity of some human motives and of the strangely illogical processes of the subconscious. Therefore, when some writers peer into the minds of characters, they see thoughts following devious pathways. These complicated mental processses the writers may reproduce by the "stream-of-consciousness" technique, the strange digressions, the random associations, which take place in the mind. In *The Sound and the Fury,* Faulkner, using the "floating point of view" described earlier, records different happenings as they are held or considered in the thoughts—both conscious and unconscious—of a series of characters. (The device, incidentally, is very helpful to the gradual unfolding of horror his narrative achieves.) Katherine Anne Porter, in a number of notable stories, has focused upon the happenings by showing the thoughts a leading character has about them. Hemingway, in some of the most important passages of *A Farewell to Arms, To Have and Have not,* and *For Whom the Bells Tolls,* momentarily departs from the dramatic method. Peering into the excited minds of his characters, he uses the stream-of-consciousness technique to tell what thoughts and fragments of thoughts are running through their minds. And Wolfe, when he tells what a leading character is thinking, may resort to poetic prose suggestive of both thought and emotion.

Such are some of the varied methods of characterization which have been suggested to modern fictionists by psychology. Psychological insights characteristic of the modern period have had, as we have seen, profound effects upon the form of drama (notably expressionistic drama), upon the form of poetry, and upon the forms of novels and stories.

Anyone who has followed the devious pathways of our literature from colonial times to World War II will know that such a molding of forms and techniques by intellectual concepts of the period is far from unusual—that it is, as a matter of fact, typical. As we have traced the multiple changes in writing methods which have taken place as this nation grew from a tiny set of colonies to one of the great nations of the world, we have seen how in era after era, the thoughts, the historical developments, and the personalities of authors have profoundly influenced the methods whereby authors have told of our struggles, of our failures and our successes, and of our hopes for the future. W. B.



Henry Louis Mencken

1880 •

The impact of Henry Louis Mencken upon the United States of the 1920's and 1930's was truly remarkable. Because, as an announcer of the cynicism of the times, he ferociously attacked many cherished beliefs and established institutions, intellectuals idolized him. His enemies, however, were as vituperative as he was. The *New Haven Union*, for instance, called him "a treacherous alien sapping at the vitals of America's proudest and most essential institutions, an indecent buffoon wallowing in obscenity as he howls with glee." During 1926 he was castigated in more than four hundred editorials, usually in very strong language.

Mencken was born in Baltimore in 1880, of German ancestry. His education at Baltimore Polytechnic was augmented by some correspondence-school work, but he never attended college. After becoming a reporter at nineteen, he plied his trade so successfully that within a couple of years he became an editor. In those two years he had launched into creative work to produce some short stories and a book of mediocre poetry, *Ventures in Verse,* which was to appear in 1903. He worked as a journalist on the *Baltimore Herald* (1903-1906), and intermittently on the Baltimore *Sunpapers* (1906-1941).

When a book by Mencken on George Bernard Shaw (1905) and another on the philosophy of Nietzsche (1908) attracted attention beyond Baltimore, he became

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Panel (l. to r.): Henry Louis Mencken • Main Street, U. S. A., about 1920 • Sinclair Lewis

editor of a national magazine, *Smart Set* (1908-1914). His writings for this periodical and his syndicated weekly column for the *Evening Sun* won him a national following. In 1924, when the *American Mercury* was established, he became its editor, to serve until 1933.

It was while Mencken, assisted by George Jean Nathan, was directing this magazine that he was most influential. He championed authors such as Dreiser, Cather, and Lewis, but his attacks were more heeded than his defenses. In article after article, he lambasted Rotarians, fundamentalists, reformers, professors, and leading politicians. He sneered and snorted at the masses, at government by the masses, at Victorian morality, at sentimental literature, at prohibition, at poetry.

His style had much to do with his appeal. The love for words which led him to compile the scholarly study *The American Language* (1919, revised in 1921, 1923, 1936 and supplemented in 1945) helped him find and employ words which gave his writing gusto and power. His mastery of invective led to his introducing telling phrases such as "Bible Belt," "Yahoo," and "booboisie." His sentences mingled elegant words with such nicknames, with slang, with metaphors, and with words borrowed from foreign tongues, all placed in the right order for climactic emphasis. And his articles and essays, like his sentences, were full of fire and force.

This was just what many people, at the time, wanted. As Oscar Cargill recounts in *Intellectual America*, "Over the verdant countryside poured a green flood of *Mercuries*, sweeping away palings, fences, and battlements, erasing marshes and boundaries, wetting priest and parishman, destroying every convention, moral and taboo. The liberated masses and the ebullient bourgeoisie read together from the same page, forgetting all class distinctions. Stenographers went to work with the *Mercury* under their arms; millionaires laid it aside on their blotters. . . . It became a badge of freedom, a visible symbol of intelligence, the sure sign of sophistication." Mencken's followers regarded him as a great emancipator, their leader in attacks upon old-fashioned conventions and values.

In 1933, however, when Mencken retired from the *Mercury* editorship, many of the battles he had fought had been won, and others had begun to seem less significant. His political tenets, to many, appeared to be as old-fashioned as those of Thomas Jefferson, from which they had been derived, though with many changes. His influence was definitely on the wane, and no one was much surprised when he began to write his reminiscences. Nor was anyone surprised when the reminiscences, upon publication, proved to be gusty, vivid, and highly amusing.

Selected Prejudices, New York, 1927 • **Treatise on the Gods**, New York, 1930 • **Happy Days**, New York, 1940 • **Newspaper Days**, New York, 1941 • Isaac Goldberg, **The Man Mencken**, New York, 1925

From • Prejudices: Third Series

On Being an American

Characteristic of the rough and derisive criticism leveled at the United States by Mencken in the 1920's is "On Being an American." Here, as he offers his reasons for not joining the migrants of the day in their self-exile to Europe, he jeers with characteristic gusto at a whole series of faults and foibles in American life.

I

Apparently there are those who begin to find it disagreeable—nay, impossible. Their anguish fills the Liberal weeklies, and every ship that puts out from New York carries a groaning cargo of them, bound for Paris, London, Munich, Rome and way points—anywhere to escape the great curses and atrocities that make life intolerable for them at home. Let me say at once that I find little to cavil at in their basic complaints. In more than one direction, indeed, I probably go a great deal further than even the Young Intellectuals. It is, for example, [10] one of my firmest and most sacred beliefs, reached after

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10 Young Intellectuals, the intellectual members of the "lost generation," many of whom, in the 1920's, left this country for Europe

an inquiry extending over a score of years and supported by incessant prayer and meditation, that the government of the United States, in both its legislative arm and its executive arm, is ignorant, incompetent, corrupt, and disgusting—and from this judgment I except no more than twenty living lawmakers and no more than twenty executioners of their laws. It is a belief no less piously cherished that the administration of justice in the Republic is stupid, dishonest, and against all reason and equity—and from this judgment I except no more than thirty judges, including two upon the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. It is another that the foreign policy of the United States—its habitual manner of dealing with other nations, whether friend or foe—is hypocritical, disingenuous, knavish, and dishonorable—and from this judgment I consent to no exceptions whatever, either recent or long past. And it is my fourth (and, to avoid too depressing a bill, final) conviction that the American people taking one with another, constitute the most timorous, sniveling, poltroonish, ignominious mob of serfs and goose-steppers ever gathered under one flag in Christendom since the end of the Middle Ages, and that they grow more timorous, more sniveling, more poltroonish, more ignominious every day.

So far I go with the fugitive Young Intellectuals—and into the Bad Lands beyond. Such, in brief, are the cardinal articles of my political faith, held passionately since my admission to citizenship and now growing stronger and stronger as I gradually disintegrate into my component carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, phosphorus, calcium, sodium, nitrogen and iron. This is what I believe and preach, *in nomine Domini,* Amen. Yet I remain on the dock, wrapped in the flag, when the Young Intellectuals set sail. Yet here I stand, unshaken and undespairing, a loyal and devoted Americano, even a chauvinist, paying taxes without complaint, obeying all laws that are physiologically obeyable, accepting all the searching duties and responsibilities of citizenship unprotestingly, investing the sparse usufructs of my miserable toil in the obligations of the nation, avoiding all commerce with men sworn to overthrow the government, contributing my mite toward the glory of the national arts and sciences, enriching and embellishing the native language, spurning all lures (and even all invitations) to get out and stay out—here am I, a bachelor of easy means, forty-two years old, unhampered by debts or issue, able to go wherever I please and to stay as long as I please—here am I, contentedly and even smugly basking beneath the Stars and Stripes, a better citizen, I daresay, and certainly a less murmurous and exigent one, than thousands who put the Hon. Warren Gamaliel Harding beside Friedrich Barbarossa and Charlemagne, and hold the Supreme Court to be directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, and belong ardently to every Rotary Club, Ku Klux Klan, and Anti-Saloon League, and choke with emotion when the band plays "The Star-Spangled Banner," and believe with the faith of little children that one of Our Boys, taken at random, could dispose in a fair fight of ten Englishmen, twenty Germans, thirty Frogs, forty Wops, fifty Japs, or a hundred Bolsheviki.

Well, then, why am I still here? Why am I so complacent (perhaps even to the point of offensiveness), so free from bile, so little fretting and indignant, so curiously happy? Why did I answer only with a few academic "Hear, Hears" when Henry James, Ezra Pound, Harold Stearns and the *emigrés* of Greenwich Village issued their successive calls to the corn-fed *intelligentsia* to flee the shambles, escape to fairer lands, throw off the curse forever? The answer, of course, is to be sought in the nature of happiness, which tempts to metaphysics. But let me keep upon the ground. To me, at least (and I can only follow my own nose) happiness presents itself in an aspect that is tripartite. To be happy (reducing the thing to its elementals) I must be:

a. Well-fed, unhounded by sordid cares, at ease in Zion.

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33 **in nomine Domini,** in the name of the Lord • 52 **Warren Gamaliel Harding** (1865-1923), twenty-ninth President of the United States • 53 **Friedrich Barbarossa** (1123?-1190), emperor of Germany, 1152-1190 • 55 **Rotary Club,** the well-known business and professional men's club founded in 1905; a target of many jeers from the intelligentsia in the 1920's • 55 **Ku Klux Klan,** a nation-wide secret organization founded in Georgia in 1915 under the name used by a reconstruction society. It preached white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and anti-Catholicism and was influential in the politics of the 1920's • 60 **Frogs . . . Wops,** insulting nicknames used by intolerant Americans—the former, for Frenchmen; the latter, for Italians • 61 **Bolsheviki,** the Russian Socialists who were feared by many in the 1920's—the equivalent, in that period, of today's Russian Communists • 66 **Ezra Pound** (1885-), Idaho-born poet who, in 1908, went abroad to live • 67 **Harold Stearns** (1891-1943), an expatriate American writer who, in **America and the Young Intellectual** (1923), sternly criticized civilization in the United States

b. Full of a comfortable feeling of superiority to the masses of my fellow-men.

c. Delicately and unceasingly amused according to my taste.

It is my contention that, if this definition be accepted, there is no country on the face of the earth wherein a man roughly constituted as I am—a man of my general weaknesses, vanities, appetites, prejudices, and aversions—can be so happy, or even one-half so happy, as he can be in these free and independent states. Going further, I lay down the proposition that it is a sheer physical impossibility for such a man to live in These States and *not* be happy—that it is as impossible to him as it would be to a schoolboy to weep over the burning down of his school-house. If he says that he isn't happy here, then he either lies or is insane. Here the business of getting a living, particularly since the war brought the loot of all Europe to the national strong-box, is enormously easier than it is in any other Christian land —so easy, in fact, that an educated and forehanded man who fails at it must actually make deliberate efforts to that end. Here the general average of intelligence, of knowledge, of competence, of integrity, of self-respect, of honor is so low that any man who knows his trade, does not fear ghosts, has read fifty good books, and practices the common decencies stands out as brilliantly as a wart on a bald head, and is thrown willy-nilly into a meager and exclusive aristocracy. And here, more than anywhere else that I know of or have heard of, the daily panorama of human existence, of private and communal folly—the unending procession of governmental extortions and chicaneries, of commercial brigandages and throat-slittings, of theological buffooneries, of aesthetic ribaldries, of legal swindles and harlotries, of miscellaneous rogueries, villainies, imbecilities, grotesqueries, and extravagances—is so inordinately gross and preposterous, so perfectly brought up to the highest conceivable amperage, so steadily enriched with an almost fabulous daring and originality, that only the man who was born with a petrified diaphragm can fail to laugh himself to sleep every night, and to awake every morning with all the eager, unflagging expectation of a Sunday-school superintendent touring the Paris peep-shows.

A certain sough of rhetoric may be here. Perhaps I yield to words as a chautauqua lecturer yields to them, belaboring and fermenting the hinds with his Message from the New Jerusalem. But fundamentally I am quite as sincere as he is. For example, in the matter of attaining to ease in Zion, of getting a fair share of the national swag, now piled so mountainously high. It seems to me, sunk in my Egyptian night, that the man who fails to do this in the United States to-day is a man who is somehow stupid—maybe not on the surface, but certainly deep down. Either he is one who cripples himself unduly, say by setting up a family before he can care for it, or by making a bad bargain for the sale of his wares, or by concerning himself too much about the affairs of other men; or he is one who endeavors fatuously to sell something that no normal American wants. Whenever I hear a professor of philosophy complain that his wife has eloped with some moving-picture actor or bootlegger who can at least feed and clothe her, my natural sympathy for the man is greatly corrupted by contempt for his lack of sense. Would it be regarded as sane and laudable for a man to travel the Soudan trying to sell fountain-pens, or Greenland offering to teach double-entry bookkeeping or counterpoint? Coming closer, would the judicious pity or laugh at a man who opened a shop for the sale of incunabula in Little Rock, Ark., or who demanded a living in McKeesport, Pa., on the ground that he could read Sumerian? In precisely the same way it seems to me to be nonsensical for a man to offer generally some commodity that only a few rare and dubious Americans want, and then weep and beat his breast because he is not patronized. One seeking to make a living in a country must pay due regard to the needs and tastes of that country. Here in the United States we have no jobs for grand dukes, and none for *Wirkliche Geheimräte,* and none for palace eunuchs, and none for masters of the buckhounds, and none (any more) for brewery *Todsaufer* —and very few for oboe-players, metaphysicians, astrophysicists, assyriologists, water-colorists, stylites and epic poets. There was a time when the *Todsaufer* served a public need and got an adequate reward, but it is no more. There may come a time when the composer of string quartettes is paid as much as a railway conductor, but it is not yet. Then why practice such trades—that is,

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78 **Wirkliche Geheimräte,** real privy councilor • 80 **Todsaufer,** a taster of brews whose function was to insure against poison

as trades? The man of independent means may venture into them prudently; when he does so, he is seldom molested; it may even be argued that he performs a public service by adopting them. But the man who has a living to make is simply silly if he goes into them; he is like a soldier going over the top with a coffin strapped to his back. Let him abandon such puerile vanities, and take to the uplift instead, as, indeed, thousands of other victims of the industrial system have already done. Let him bear in mind that, whatever its neglect of the humanities and their monks, the Republic has never got half enough bond salesmen, quack doctors, ward leaders, phrenologists, Methodist evangelists, circus clowns, magicians, soldiers, farmers, popular song writers, moonshine distillers, forgers of gin labels, mine guards, detectives, spies, snoopers, and *agents provocateurs*. The rules are set by Omnipotence; the discreet man observes them. Observing them, he is safe beneath the starry bed-tick, in fair weather or foul. The *boobus Americanus* is a bird that knows no closed season—and if he won't come down to Texas oil stock, or one-night cancer cures, or building lots in Swampshurst, he will always come down to Inspiration and Optimism, whether political, theological, pedagogical, literary, or economic.

The doctrine that it is *infra dignitatem* for an educated man to take a hand in the snaring of this goose is one in which I see nothing convincing. It is a doctrine chiefly voiced, I believe, by those who have tried the business and failed. They take refuge behind the childish notion that there is something honorable about poverty *per se*—the Greenwich Village complex. This is nonsense. Poverty may be an unescapable misfortune, but that no more makes it honorable than a cocked eye is made honorable by the same cause. Do I advocate, then, the ceaseless, senseless hogging of money? I do not. All I advocate—and praise as virtuous—is the hogging of enough to provide security and ease. Despite all the romantic superstitions to the contrary, the artist cannot do his best work when he is oppressed by unsatisfied wants. Nor can the philosopher. Nor can the man of science. The best and clearest thinking of the world is done and the finest art is produced, not by men who are hungry, ragged and harassed, but by men who are well-fed, warm and easy in mind. It is the artist's first duty to his art to achieve that tranquility for himself. Shakespeare tried to achieve it; so did Beethoven, Wagner, Brahms, Ibsen and Balzac. Goethe, Schopenhauer, Schumann and Mendelssohn were born to it. Joseph Conrad, Richard Strauss and Anatole France have got it for themselves in our own day. In the older countries, where competence is far more general and competition is thus more sharp, the thing is often cruelly difficult, and sometimes almost impossible. But in the United States it is absurdly easy, given ordinary luck. Any man with a superior air, the intelligence of a stockbroker, and the resolution of a hat-check girl—in brief, any man who believes in himself enough, and with sufficient cause, to be called a journeyman—can cadge enough money, in this glorious commonwealth of morons, to make life soft for him.

And if a lining for the purse is thus facilely obtainable, given a reasonable prudence and resourcefulness, then balm for the ego is just as unlaboriously got, given ordinary dignity and decency. Simply to exist, indeed, on the plane of a civilized man is to attain, in the Republic, to a distinction that should be enough for all save the most vain; it is even likely to be too much, as the frequent challenges of the Ku Klux Klan, the American Legion, the Anti-Saloon League, and other such vigilance committees of the majority testify. Here is a country in which all political thought and activity are concentrated upon the scramble for jobs—in which the normal politician, whether he be a President or a village road supervisor, is willing to renounce any principle, however precious to him, and to adopt any lunacy, however offensive to him, in order to keep his place at the trough. Go into politics, then, without seeking or wanting office, and at once you are as conspicuous as a red-haired blackamoor—in fact, a great deal more conspicuous, for red-haired blackamoors have been seen, but who has ever seen or heard of an American politician, Democrat or Republican, Socialist or Liberal, Whig or Tory, who did not itch for a job? Again, here is a country in which it is an axiom that a business man shall be a member of a Chamber of Commerce, an admirer of Charles M. Schwab, a reader of the *Saturday Evening Post*, a golfer—in brief, a vegetable. Spend your hours

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19 **boobus Americanus**, American boob or dumbbell—a phrase coined and frequently used by Mencken • 25 **infra dignitatem**, undignified • 31 **Greenwich . . . complex.** In the 1920's, Greenwich Village was famous as the proud dwelling place of indigent artists • 85 **Charles M. Schwab (1862-1939)**, a steel tycoon

of escape from *Geschäft* reading Remy de Gourmont or practicing the violoncello, and the local Sunday newspaper will infallibly find you out and hymn the marvel —nay, your banker will summon you to discuss your notes, and your rivals will spread the report (probably truthful) that you were pro-German during the war. Yet again, here is a land in which women rule and men are slaves. Train your women to get your slippers for you, and your ill fame will match Galileo's or Darwin's. Once more, here is the Paradise of back-slappers, of democrats, of mixers, of go-getters. Maintain ordinary reserve, and you will arrest instant attention—and have your hand kissed by multitudes who, despite democracy, have all the inferior man's unquenchable desire to grovel and admire.

Nowhere else in the world is superiority more easily attained or more eagerly admitted. The chief business of the nation, as a nation, is the setting up of heroes, mainly bogus. It admired the literary style of the late Woodrow; it respects the theological passion of Bryan; it venerates J. Pierpont Morgan; it takes Congress seriously; it would be unutterably shocked by the proposition (with proof) that a majority of its judges are ignoramuses, and that a respectable minority of them are scoundrels. The manufacture of artificial *Durchlauchten, k. k. Hoheiten* and even gods goes on feverishly and incessantly; the will to worship never flags. Ten iron-molders meet in the back-room of a near-beer saloon, organize a lodge of the Noble and Mystic Order of American Rosicrucians, and elect a wheelwright Supreme Worthy Whimwham; a month later they send a notice to the local newspaper that they have been greatly honored by an official visit from that Whimwham, and that they plan to give him a jeweled fob for his watch-chain. The chief national heroes—Lincoln, Lee, and so on—cannot remain mere men. The mysticism of the mediæval peasantry gets into the communal view of them, and they begin to sprout haloes and wings. As I say, no intrinsic merit—at least, none commensurate with the mob estimate—is needed to come to such august dignities. Everything American is a bit amateurish and childish, even the national gods. The most conspicuous and respected American in nearly every field of endeavor, saving only the purely commercial (I exclude even the financial) is a man who would attract little attention in any other country. The leading American critic of literature, after twenty years of diligent exposition of his ideas, has yet to make it clear what he is in favor of, and why. The queen of the *haut monde,* in almost every American city, is a woman who regards Lord Reading as an aristocrat and her superior, and whose grandfather slept in his underclothes. The leading American musical director, if he went to Leipzig, would be put to polishing trombones and copying drum parts. The chief living American military-man—the national heir to Frederick, Marlborough, Wellington, Washington and Prince Eugene—is a member of the Elks, and proud of it. The leading American philosopher (now dead, with no successor known to the average pedagogue) spent a lifetime erecting an epistemological defense for the national aesthetic maxim: "I don't know nothing about music, but I know what I like." The most eminent statesman the United States has produced since Lincoln was fooled by Arthur James Balfour, and miscalculated his public support by more than 5,000,000 votes. And the current Chief Magistrate of the nation—its defiant substitute for czar and kaiser—is a small-town printer who, when he wishes to enjoy himself in the Executive Mansion, invites in a homeopathic doctor, a Seventh Day Adventist evangelist, and a couple of moving-picture actresses . . . .

IV

All the while I have been forgetting the third of my reasons for remaining so faithful a citizen of the Federation, despite all the lascivious inducements from expatriates to follow them beyond the seas, and all the surly suggestions from patriots that I succumb. It is the reason which grows out of my mediæval but unashamed taste for the bizarre and indelicate, my congenital weakness for comedy of the grosser varieties. The United States, to my eye, is incomparably the greatest show on earth. It is a show which avoids diligently all the kinds of clowning which tire me most quickly—for example,

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1 **Geschäft,** employment • 1 **Remy de Gourmont** (1858-1915), a French dramatist and novelist • 19 **Woodrow,** Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), twenty-eighth President of the United States • 19 **Bryan,** William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925), an enthusiastic fundamentalist who fought against teaching evolution in the schools • 20 **J. Pierpont Morgan** (1837-1913), American financier • 24 **Durchlauchten,** Highnesses • 25 **k. k. Hoheiten,** royal imperial Highnesses • 29 **Rosicrucians,** a mystic religious order • 48 **haut monde,** world of fashion • 63 **Balfour.** See note, p. 1060 Mencken here assumes that Balfour misled the "eminent statesman," Woodrow Wilson • 65 **Chief Magistrate,** Warren G Harding

royal ceremonials, the tedious hocus-pocus of *haut politique,* the taking of politics seriously—and lays chief stress upon the kinds which delight me unceasingly—for example, the ribald combats of demagogues, the exquisitely ingenious operations of master rogues, the pursuit of witches and heretics, the desperate struggles of inferior men to claw their way into Heaven. We have clowns in constant practice among us who are as far above the clowns of any other great state as a Jack Dempsey is above a paralytic—and not a few dozen or score of them, but whole droves and herds. Human enterprises which, in all other Christian countries, are resigned despairingly to an incurable dullness—things that seem devoid of exhilarating amusement by their very nature—are here lifted to such vast heights of buffoonery that contemplating them strains the midriff almost to breaking. I cite an example: the worship of God. Everywhere else on earth it is carried on in a solemn and dispiriting manner; in England, of course, the bishops are obscene, but the average man seldom gets a fair chance to laugh at them and enjoy them. Now come home. Here we not only have bishops who are enormously more obscene than even the most gifted of the English bishops; we have also a huge force of lesser specialists in ecclesiastical mountebankery—tin-horn Loyolas, Savonarolas and Xaviers of a hundred fantastic rites, each performing untiringly and each full of a grotesque and illimitable whimsicality. Every American town, however small, has one of its own: a holy clerk with so fine a talent for introducing the arts of jazz into the salvation of the damned that his performance takes on all the gaudiness of a four-ring circus, and the bald announcement that he will raid Hell on such and such a night is enough to empty all the town blind-pigs and bordellos and pack his sanctuary to the doors. And to aid him and inspire him there are traveling experts to whom he stands in the relation of a wart to the Matterhorn—stupendous masters of theological imbecility, contrivers of doctrines utterly preposterous, heirs to the Joseph Smith, Mother Eddy and John Alexander Dowie tradition—Bryan, Sunday, and their like. These are the eminences of the American Sacred College. I delight in them. Their proceedings make me a happier American.

Turn, now, to politics. Consider, for example, a campaign for the Presidency. Would it be possible to imagine anything more uproariously idiotic—a deafening, nerve-wracking battle to the death between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Harlequin and Sganarelle, Gobbo and Dr. Cook—the unspeakable, with fearful snorts, gradually swallowing the inconceivable? I defy any one to match it elsewhere on this earth. In other lands, at worst, there are at least intelligible issues, coherent ideas, salient personalities. Somebody says something, and somebody replies. But what did Harding say in 1920, and what did Cox reply? Who was Harding, anyhow, and who was Cox? Here, having perfected democracy, we lift the whole combat to symbolism, to transcendentalism, to metaphysics. Here we load a pair of palpably tin cannon with blank cartridges charged with talcum powder, and so let fly. Here one may howl over the show without any uneasy reminder that it is serious, and that some one may be hurt. I hold that this elevation of politics to the plane of undiluted comedy is peculiarly American, that nowhere else on this disreputable ball has the art of the sham-battle been developed to such fineness. Two experiences are in point. During the Harding-Cox combat of bladders an article of mine, dealing with some of its more melodramatic phases, was translated into German and reprinted by a Berlin paper. At the head of it the editor was careful to insert a preface explaining to his readers, but recently delivered to democracy, that such contests were not taken seriously by intelligent Americans, and warning them solemnly against getting into sweats over politics. At about the same time I had dinner with an Englishman. From cocktails to bromo seltzer he bewailed the political lassitude of the English populace—its growing indifference to the whole partisan harlequinade. Here were two typical foreign attitudes: the Germans were in danger of making politics too harsh and implacable, and the English were in danger of forgetting politics altogether. Both attitudes, it must be plain, make for bad shows. Observing a German

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1 **haut politique,** political ceremony • 25 **Loyolas . . . Xaviers,** religious leaders • 39 **Joseph Smith** (1805-1844), American founder of Mormonism • 39 **Mother Eddy,** Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), founder of Christian Science • 40 **John Alexander Dowie,** a famed evangelist • 40 **Sunday,** Billy Sunday, an evangelist • 47 **Tweedledum . . . Dr. Cook,** disputes between nonentities, clowns, and prevaricators • 55 **Cox.** James Cox was Harding's rival candidate for the Presidency in 1920

campaign, one is uncomfortably harassed and stirred up; observing an English campaign (at least in times of peace), one falls asleep. In the United States the thing is done better. Here politics is purged of all menace, all sinister quality, all genuine significance, and stuffed with such gorgeous humors, such inordinate farce that one comes to the end of a campaign with one's ribs loose, and ready for "King Lear," or a hanging, or a course of medical journals.

But feeling better for the laugh. *Ridi si sapis,* said Martial. Mirth is necessary to wisdom, to comfort, above all, to happiness. Well, here is the land of mirth, as Germany is the land of metaphysics and France is the land of fornication. Here the buffoonery never stops. What could be more delightful than the endless struggle of the Puritan to make the joy of the minority unlawful and impossible? The effort is itself a greater joy to one standing on the side-lines than any or all of the carnal joys that it combats. Always, when I contemplate an uplifter at his hopeless business, I recall a scene in an old-time burlesque show, witnessed for hire in my days as a dramatic critic. A chorus girl executed a fall upon the stage, and Rudolph Krausemeyer, the Swiss comedian, rushed to her aid. As he stooped painfully to succor her, Irving Rabinovitz, the Zionist comedian, fetched him a fearful clout across the cofferdam with a slap-stick. So the uplifter, the soul-saver, the Americanizer, striving to make the Republic fit for Y. M. C. A. secretaries. He is the eternal American, ever moved by the best intentions, ever running *à la* Krausemeyer to the rescue of virtue, and ever getting his pantaloons fanned by the Devil. I am naturally sinful, and such spectacles caress me. If the slap-stick were a sash-weight the show would be cruel, and I'd probably complain to the *Polizei.* As it is, I know that the uplifter is not really hurt, but simply shocked. The blow, in fact, does him good, for it helps to get him into Heaven, as exegetes prove from Matthew V, ii: *Heureux serez-vous, lorsqu'on vous outragera, qu'on vous persécutera,* and so on. As for me, it makes me a more contented man, and hence a better citizen. One man prefers the Republic because it pays better wages than Bulgaria. Another because it has laws to keep him sober and his daughter chaste. Another because the Woolworth Building is higher than the cathedral at Chartres. Another because, living here, he can read the New York *Evening Journal.* Another because there is a warrant out for him somewhere else. Me, I like it because it amuses me to my taste. I never get tired of the show. It is worth every cent it costs.

That cost, it seems to me is very moderate. Taxes in the United States are not actually high. I figure, for example, that my private share of the expense of maintaining the Hon. Mr. Harding in the White House this year will work out to less than 80 cents. Try to think of better sport for the money: in New York it has been estimated that it costs $8 to get comfortably tight, and $17.50, on an average, to pinch a girl's arm. The United States Senate will cost me perhaps $11 for the year, but against that expense set the subscription price of the *Congressional Record,* about $15, which as a journalist, I receive for nothing. For $4 less than nothing I am thus entertained as Solomon never was by his hooch dancers. Col. George Brinton McClellan Harvey costs me but 25 cents a year; I get Nicholas Murray Butler free. Finally, there is young Teddy Roosevelt, the naval expert. Teddy costs me, as I work it out, about 11 cents a year, or less than a cent a month. More, he entertains me doubly for the money, first as a naval expert, and secondly as a walking *attentat* upon democracy, a devastating proof that there is nothing, after all, in that superstition. We Americans subscribe to the doctrine of human equality—and the Rooseveltii reduce it to an absurdity as brilliantly as the sons of Veit Bach. Where is your equal opportunity now? Here in this Eden of clowns, with the highest rewards of clowning theoretically open to every poor boy—here in the very citadel of democracy we found and cherish a clown *dynasty!*

1922

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11 **Martial,** Marcus Valerius Martialis (40?-102?), Latin author of epigrams • 35 **Polizei,** police • 38 **Heureux serez-vous . . . .** The beginning of a French translation of Matthew 5:2, which, in the King James version, reads: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, for my sake" • 64 **George Brinton McClellan Harvey** (1864-1928), American journalist who was influential in politics • 65 **Nicholas Murray Butler,** long-time president of Columbia University and a pundit on national and international affairs • 66 **Teddy Roosevelt,** son of Theodore Roosevelt • 70 **attentat,** outrage • 74 **Veit Bach** (born about 1555), believed to be the founder of the famous Bach family; great-great-grandfather of Johann Sebastian Bach

Sinclair Lewis

1885 • 1951

Sinclair Lewis is an instance of a satirist and caricaturist whose victims generously supported their lampooner. Gibing at the supposedly sacred mores of his countrymen, he saw his books almost perennially best sellers for a quarter of a century. The fact suggests both that there was widespread agreement with his discontent about certain patterns of life in the United States and that his portrayal was far from merciless. Like a shrewdly observant and gossipy neighbor, he used his gift of gab for caustic running comment on the false fronts and pompous vanities and stupid conventions which are readily found in every level of society, and was so entertaining on the foibles of others that most of us forgave his obvious exaggeration of our own little faults. Lewis was in fact an incurable romanticist in his disappointment that life was not more like the storybooks where boy meets girl and they live happily ever after.

Lewis was born at Sauk Centre, in central Minnesota, in 1885. His father was a physician; his mother died when he was only five. Small-town life was uncongenial to him. Yearning for the romance of the East, he spent six months at Oberlin to prepare himself for college entrance examinations and entered Yale with the class of 1907. There he earned much of his way by newspaper work, spent two summer vacations on the then traditional cattle-boat tour to Europe, and gained some reputation as a writer for the college literary magazines. Dropping out of college at the beginning of his senior year, he joined the group at Helicon Hall, the Socialist community established by Upton Sinclair at Englewood, New Jersey, with the profits from *The Jungle*. A brief stretch as janitor ended in illness. When he recovered he spent some months as a free-lance writer and editor in New York City and then returned to Yale to graduate in 1908. Seven years of odd literary jobs followed—reporting, editing, reading for publishers, writing advertising. Meanwhile he was writing fiction in his spare time. A juvenile under the pseudonym of Tom Graham, *Hike and the Aeroplane,* appeared in 1912; it was followed by *Our Mr. Wrenn* (1914), the story of a clerk who goes to Europe on a cattle boat, and *The Trail of the Hawk* (1915), which relates the rise of a typical American boy. At about the time that his third book was published Lewis at length found himself selling his short stories; he promptly gave up his job as advertising manager for the firm of George H. Doran to begin the untrammeled wandering of a free lance.

His success was almost immediate, although it was five years before he startled the literary world into heated debate on the merits of *Main Street* (1920). During the war years he sold numerous short stories and published three novels: *The Innocents* (1917), *The Job* (1917), and *Free Air* (1919), all of them essentially love stories but distinguished by a tentative use of slangy lingo and characters on the prowl for "better things" in life.

In *Main Street* Lewis' great talent as a satirist became evident to all. From the rather heavy irony of its Foreword through the sharp details of its description and the cutting edges with which the various village types

are presented, Lewis hammered and slashed at smug provincialism. With few exceptions the rest of his stories have been on essentially the same theme. He has devoted himself to laying bare whatever has seemed to him fraudulent in American life. *Babbitt* (1922) gave a new word to the language by his exposure of the emptiness of a businessman's world; *Arrowsmith* (1925) suggested that even a scientist cannot easily be honest; *Elmer Gantry* (1927) was a broad hint that charlatanism is not wholly absent in clerical circles; *Dodsworth* (1929) brought down the tycoon nearly, if not quite, to the humility of George F. Babbitt. These, by common consent, are Lewis' best novels. For *Arrowsmith* he was offered the Pulitzer Prize, which he dramatically refused; in 1930 he received the Nobel Prize, being the first American writer so honored.

Among his less successful stories must be counted *Mantrap* (1926), *The Man Who Knew Coolidge* (1928), *Ann Vickers* (1933), *Work of Art* (1934), *The Prodigal Parents* (1938), *Bethel Merriday* (1940), *Gideon Planish* (1943), *Cass Timberlane* (1945), *Kingsblood Royal* (1946), and *The God-Seeker* (1949) However, everyone of them has points of interest Lewis' chief handicaps were his difficulty in achieving memorable characterization and his too great fluency. His novels are peopled with allegorical figures with names carefully chosen to reveal their typical implication and his style is frequently slapstick rather than subtle.

It is now clear, however, that the novels of Sinclair Lewis are the historical record of the crassness of an epoch. The United States between World War I and II had need of reformers and in Lewis it had one of its most persistent, although by no means most virulent, gadflies. Lewis was a debunker, but no misanthrope. He liked the absurdities which he found everywhere in American life, and he shared the aspirations of his countrymen for getting ahead in the world and their delight in mechanical gadgets and material comforts, their yearning for warm personal relationships, their basic optimism. Life seemed so interesting to him that he seldom was discouraged about it and he never plumbed the depths of pessimism as did Mark Twain.

T. K Whipple, **Spokesmen: Modern Writers and American Life**, New York, 1928 • Harry Hartwick, **The Foreground of American Fiction**, Cincinnati, 1934 • P H Boynton, **America in Contemporary Fiction**, Chicago, 1940 • Alfred Kazin, **On Native Grounds: An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature**, New York, 1942 • H. A. Grunwald, "Main Street 1947," **Life**, June 23, 1947

Main Street

In 1904-1905, when he was a sophomore at Yale, Lewis planned a novel tentatively entitled "The Village Virus," which would destroy the myth that the small town was the abiding place of virtue. He returned to it in the summer of 1919 while living in Minnesota and completed it in the following spring at Washington. Published in October, **Main Street** soon led the best-seller lists and was translated into several European languages. In some ways it is more a sociological study than a novel and it was so received by the public, which divided into those who agreed that Main Street everywhere was like Lewis' description and those who insisted that it was not. Twenty years later it was still possible to debate whether or not small-town life was less provincial than it had been when Lewis wrote.

The distinction of **Main Street** among Lewis' novels is that Carol Kennicott, its heroine, is one of his few full-length portraits, a woman who is at once typical and to most readers real. The selections which follow are a series of vignettes from the life of Carol, a life which was a struggle with Gopher Prairie and what Gopher Prairie stood for.

FOREWORD

This is America—a town of a few thousand, in a region of wheat and corn and dairies and little groves.

The town is, in our tale, called "Gopher Prairie, Minnesota." But its Main Street is the continuation of

Main Streets everywhere. The story would be the same in Ohio or Montana, in Kansas or Kentucky or Illinois, and not very differently would it be told Up York State or in the Carolina hills.

Main Street is the climax of civilization. That this Ford car might stand in front of the Bon Ton Store, Hannibal invaded Rome and Erasmus wrote in Oxford cloisters. What Ole Jenson the grocer says to Ezra Stowbody the banker is the new law for London, Prague, and the unprofitable isles of the sea; whatsoever Ezra does not know and sanction, that thing is heresy, worthless for knowing and wicked to consider.

Our railway station is the final aspiration of architecture. Sam Clark's annual hardware turnover is the envy of the four counties which constitute God's Country. In the sensitive art of the Rosebud Movie Palace there is a Message, and humor strictly moral.

Such is our comfortable tradition and sure faith. Would he not betray himself an alien cynic who should otherwise portray Main Street, or distress the citizens by speculating whether there may not be other faiths?

[Carol Milford, when she meets Dr. Will Kennicott of Gopher Prairie, is twenty-four; the year is 1911. She is a Middlewestern girl, brought up at Mankato, where her Massachusetts-born father was a judge. Her mother has been dead since she was nine, her father since she was thirteen. She has graduated from Blodgett College, a "bulwark of sound religion" on the edge of Minneapolis, has spent a year in library school in Chicago, and for the past three years has worked in the public library of St. Paul. She is bookish, plays the violin, and is given to dramatizing herself through intense but seldom long-lived enthusiasms. Of all her "notions" the most persistent is to get her hands upon a prairie village and make it beautiful—an idea which is traceable to a sociology course in college. It is not surprising, therefore, that she tells Will at their first meeting that a doctor can, if he will, transform a whole community.]

CHAPTER II

II

Of the love-making of Carol and Will Kennicott there is nothing to be told which may not be heard on every summer evening, on every shadowy block.

They were biology and mystery; their speech was slang phrases and flares of poetry; their silences were contentment, or shaky crises when his arm took her shoulder. All the beauty of youth, first discovered when it is passing—and all the commonplaceness of a well-to-do unmarried man encountering a pretty girl at the time when she is slightly weary of her employment and sees no glory ahead nor any man she is glad to serve.

They liked each other honestly—they were both honest. She was disappointed by his devotion to making money, but she was sure that he did not lie to patients, and that he did keep up with the medical magazines. What aroused her to something more than liking was his boyishness when they went tramping.

They walked from St. Paul down the river to Mendota, Kennicott more elastic-seeming in a cap and a soft crêpe shirt, Carol youthful in a tam-o'-shanter of mole velvet, a blue serge suit with an absurdly and agreeably broad turn-down linen collar, and frivolous ankles above athletic shoes. The High Bridge crosses the Mississippi, mounting from low banks to a palisade of cliffs. Far down beneath it on the St. Paul side, upon mud flats, is a wild settlement of chicken-infested gardens and shanties patched together from discarded sign-boards, sheets of corrugated iron, and planks fished out of the river. Carol leaned over the rail of the bridge to look down at this Yang-tse village; in delicious imaginary fear she shrieked that she was dizzy with the height; and it was an extremely human satisfaction to have a strong male snatch her back to safety, instead of having a logical woman teacher or librarian sniff, "Well, if you're scared, why don't you get away from the rail, then?"

From the cliffs across the river Carol and Kennicott looked back at St. Paul on its hills; an imperial sweep from the dome of the cathedral to the dome of the state capitol.

The river road led past rocky field slopes, deep glens, woods flamboyant now with September, to Mendota, white walls and a spire among trees beneath a hill, old-world in its placid ease. And for this fresh land, the place is ancient. Here is the bold stone house which General Sibley, the king of fur-traders, built in 1835, with plaster of river mud, and ropes of twisted grass for laths. It has an air of centuries. In its solid rooms Carol and Kennicott found prints from other days which the house had seen—tail-coats of robin's-egg blue, clumsy Red River carts laden with luxurious furs, whiskered

Union soldiers in slant forage caps and rattling sabers.

It suggested to them a common American past, and it was memorable because they had discovered it together. They talked more trustingly, more personally, as they trudged on. They crossed the Minnesota River in a rowboat ferry. They climbed the hill to the round stone tower of Fort Snelling. They saw the junction of the Mississippi and the Minnesota, and recalled the men who had come here eighty years ago—Maine lumbermen, York traders, soldiers from the Maryland hills.

"It's a good country, and I'm proud of it. Let's make it all that those old boys dreamed about," the unsentimental Kennicott was moved to vow.

"Let's!"

"Come on. Come to Gopher Prairie. Show us. Make the town—well—make it artistic. It's mighty pretty, but I'll admit we aren't any too darn artistic. Probably the lumberyard isn't as scrumptious as all these Greek temples. But go to it! Make us change!"

"I would like to. Some day!"

"Now! You'd love Gopher Prairie. We've been doing a lot with lawns and gardening the past few years, and it's so homey—the big trees and—— And the best people on earth. And keen. I bet Luke Dawson——"

Carol but half listened to the names. She could not fancy their ever becoming important to her.

"I bet Luke Dawson has got more money than most of the swells on Summit Avenue; and Miss Sherwin in the high school is a regular wonder—reads Latin like I do English; and Sam Clark, the hardware man, he's a corker —not a better man in the state to go hunting with; and if you want culture, besides Vida Sherwin there's Reverend Warren, the Congregational preacher, and Professor Mott, the superintendent of schools, and Guy Pollock, the lawyer—they say he writes regular poetry and—and Raymie Wutherspoon, he's not such an awful boob when you get to *know* him, and he sings swell. And—— And there's plenty of others. Lym Cass. Only of course none of them have your finesse, you might call it. But they don't make 'em any more appreciative and so on. Come on! We're ready for you to boss us!"

They sat on the bank below the parapet of the old fort, hidden from observation. He circled her shoulder with his arm. Relaxed after the walk, a chill nipping her throat, conscious of his warmth and power, she leaned gratefully against him.

"You know I'm in love with you, Carol!"

She did not answer, but she touched the back of his hand with an exploring finger.

"You say I'm so darn materialistic. How can I help it, unless I have you to stir me up?"

She did not answer. She could not think.

"You say a doctor could cure a town the way he does a person. Well, you cure the town of whatever ails it, if anything does, and I'll be your surgical kit."

She did not follow his words, only the burning resoluteness of them.

She was shocked, thrilled, as he kissed her cheek and cried, "There's no use saying things and saying things and saying things. Don't my arms talk to you—now?"

"Oh, please, please!" She wondered if she ought to be angry, but it was a drifting thought, and she discovered that she was crying.

Then they were sitting six inches apart, pretending that they had never been nearer, while she tried to be impersonal:

"I would like to—would like to see Gopher Prairie."

"Trust me! Here she is! Brought some snapshots down to show you."

Her cheek near his sleeve, she studied a dozen village pictures. They were streaky; she saw only trees, shrubbery, a porch indistinct in leafy shadows. But she exclaimed over the lakes: dark water reflecting wooded bluffs, a flight of ducks, a fisherman in shirt sleeves and a wide straw hat, holding up a string of croppies. One winter picture of the edge of Plover Lake had the air of an etching: lustrous slide of ice, snow in the crevices of a boggy bank, the mound of a muskrat house, reeds in thin black lines, arches of frosty grasses. It was an impression of cool clear vigor.

"How'd it be to skate there for a couple of hours, or go zinging along on a fast ice-boat, and skip back home for coffee and some hot wienies?" he demanded.

"It might be—fun."

"But here's the picture. Here's where you come in."

A photograph of a forest clearing: pathetic new furrows straggling among stumps, a clumsy log cabin chinked with mud and roofed with hay. In front of it a sagging woman with tight-drawn hair, and a baby bedraggled, smeary, glorious-eyed.

"Those are the kind of folks I practise among, good share of the time. Nels Erdstrom, fine clean young

Svenska. He'll have a corking farm in ten years, but now—— I operated his wife on a kitchen table, with my driver giving the anesthetic. Look at that scared baby! Needs some woman with hands like yours. Waiting for you! Just look at that baby's eyes, look how he's begging——"

"Don't! They hurt me. Oh, it would be sweet to help him—so sweet."

As his arms moved toward her she answered all her doubts with "Sweet, so sweet."

[Carol and Will marry after a year of "conversational" courtship and go to Colorado for their honeymoon. The reader meets them next upon the train going to Gopher Prairie, Carol thinking of the provinciality of the farmers who crowd the train and of the contrast between the beauty of the countryside and the bleak ugliness of the small towns. As she wonders what Gopher Prairie will be like, the train pulls in, and she knows that it is just like all the others—a "junk-heap," she decides to herself. They are met by a group of the Doctor's friends.]

CHAPTER IV

"The Clarks have invited some folks to their house to meet us, tonight," said Kennicott, as he unpacked his suit-case.

"Oh, that is nice of them!"

"You bet. I told you you'd like 'em. Squarest people on earth. Uh, Carrie—— Would you mind if I sneaked down to the office for an hour, just to see how things are?"

"Why, no. Of course not. I know you're keen to get back to work."

"Sure you don't mind?"

"Not a bit. Out of my way. Let me unpack."

But the advocate of freedom in marriage was as much disappointed as a drooping bride at the alacrity with which he took that freedom and escaped to the world of men's affairs. She gazed about their bedroom, and its full dismalness crawled over her: the awkward knuckly L-shape of it; the black walnut bed with apples and spotty pears carved on the headboard; the imitation maple bureau, with pink-daubed scent-bottles and a petticoated pin-cushion on a marble slab uncomfortably like a gravestone; the plain pine washstand and the garlanded water-pitcher and bowl. The scent was of horsehair and plush and Florida Water.

"How could people ever live with things like this?" she shuddered. She saw the furniture as a circle of elderly judges, condemning her to death by smothering. The tottering brocade chair squeaked, "Choke her—choke her—smother her." The old linen smelled of the tomb. She was alone in this house, this strange still house, among the shadows of dead thoughts and haunting repressions. " I hate it! I hate it!" she panted. "Why did I ever——"

She remembered that Kennicott's mother had brought these family relics from the old home in Lac-qui-Meurt. "Stop it! They're perfectly comfortable things. They're —comfortable. Besides—— Oh, they're horrible! We'll change them, right away."

Then, "But of course he *has* to see how things are at the office——"

She made a pretense of busying herself with unpacking. The chintz-lined, silver-fitted bag which had seemed so desirable a luxury in St. Paul was an extravagant vanity here. The daring black chemise of frail chiffon and lace was a hussy at which the deep-bosomed bed stiffened in disgust, and she hurled it into a bureau drawer, hid it beneath a sensible linen blouse.

She gave up unpacking. She went to the window, with a purely literary thought of village charm—hollyhocks and lanes and apple-cheeked cottagers. What she saw was the side of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church —a plain clapboard wall of a sour liver color; the ash-pile back of the church; an unpainted stable; and an alley in which a Ford delivery-wagon had been stranded. This was the terraced garden below her boudoir; this was to be her scenery for——

"I mustn't! I mustn't! I'm nervous this afternoon. Am I sick? . . . Good Lord, I hope it isn't that! Not now! How people lie! How these stories lie! They say the bride is always so blushing and proud and happy when she finds that out, but—I'd hate it! I'd be scared to death! Some day but—— Please, dear nebulous Lord, not now! Bearded sniffy old men sitting and demanding that we bear children. If *they* had to bear them——! I wish they did have to! Not now! Not till I've got hold of this job of liking the ash-pile out there! . . . I must shut up. I'm mildly insane.

I'm going out for a walk. I'll see the town by myself. My first view of the empire I'm going to conquer!"

She fled from the house.

She stared with seriousness at every concrete crossing, every hitching-post, every rake for leaves; and to each house she devoted all her speculation. What would they come to mean? How would they look six months from now? In which of them would she be dining? Which of these people whom she passed, now mere arrangements of hair and clothes, would turn into intimates, loved or dreaded, different from all the other people in the world?

As she came into the small business-section she inspected a broad-beamed grocer in an alpaca coat who was bending over the apples and celery on a slanted platform in front of his store. Would she ever talk to him? What would he say if she stopped and stated, "I am Mrs. Kennicott. Some day I hope to confide that a heap of extremely dubious pumpkins as a window-display doesn't exhilarate me much."

(The grocer was Mr. Frederick F. Ludelmeyer, whose market is at the corner of Main Street and Lincoln Avenue. In supposing that only she was observant Carol was ignorant, misled by the indifference of cities. She fancied that she was slipping through the streets invisible; but when she had passed, Mr. Ludelmeyer puffed into the store and coughed at his clerk, "I seen a young woman, she come along the side street. I bet she iss Doc Kennicott's new bride, good-looker, nice legs, but she wore a hell of a plain suit, no style, I wonder will she pay cash, I bet she goes to Howland & Gould's more as she does here, what you done with the poster for Fluffed Oats?")

II

When Carol had walked for thirty-two minutes she had completely covered the town, east and west, north and south; and she stood at the corner of Main Street and Washington Avenue and despaired.

Main Street with its two-story brick shops, its story-and-a-half wooden residences, its muddy expanse from concrete walk to walk, its huddle of Fords and lumber-wagons, was too small to absorb her. The broad, straight, unenticing gashes of the streets let in the grasping prairie on every side. She realized the vastness and the emptiness of the land. The skeleton iron windmill on the farm a few blocks away, at the north end of Main Street, was like the ribs of a dead cow. She thought of the coming of the Northern winter, when the unprotected houses would crouch together in terror of storms galloping out of that wild waste. They were so small and weak, the little brown houses. They were shelters for sparrows, not homes for warm laughing people.

She told herself that down the street the leaves were a splendor. The maples were orange; the oaks a solid tint of raspberry. And the lawns had been nursed with love. But the thought would not hold. At best the trees resembled a thinned woodlot. There was no park to rest the eyes. And since not Gopher Prairie but Wakamin was the county-seat, there was no court-house with its grounds.

She glanced through the fly-specked windows of the most pretentious building in sight, the one place which welcomed strangers and determined their opinion of the charm and luxury of Gopher Prairie—the Minnie-mashie House. It was a tall lean shabby structure, three stories of yellow-streaked wood, the corners covered with sanded pine slabs purporting to symbolize stone. In the hotel office she could see a stretch of bare unclean floor, a line of rickety chairs with brass cuspidors between, a writing-desk with advertisements in mother-of-pearl letters upon the glass-covered back. The dining-room beyond was a jungle of stained table-cloths and catsup bottles.

She looked no more at the Minniemashie House.

A man in cuffless shirt-sleeves with pink arm-garters, wearing a linen collar but no tie, yawned his way from Dyer's Drug Store across to the hotel. He leaned against the wall, scratched a while, sighed, and in a bored way gossiped with a man tilted back in a chair. A lumber-wagon, its long green box filled with large spools of barbed-wire fencing, creaked down the block. A Ford, in reverse, sounded as though it were shaking to pieces, then recovered and rattled away. In the Greek candy-store was the whine of a peanut-roaster, and the oily smell of nuts.

There was no other sound nor sign of life.

She wanted to run, fleeing from the encroaching prairie demanding the security of a great city. Her dreams of creating a beautiful town were ludicrous.

Oozing out from every drab wall, she felt a forbidding spirit which she could never conquer.

She trailed down the street on one side, back on the other, glancing into the cross streets. It was a private Seeing Main Street tour. She was within ten minutes beholding not only the heart of a place called Gopher Prairie, but ten thousand towns from Albany to San Diego:

Dyer's Drug Store, a corner building of regular and unreal blocks of artificial stone. Inside the store, a greasy marble soda-fountain with an electric lamp of red and green and curdled-yellow mosaic shade. Pawed-over heaps of toothbrushes and combs and packages of shaving-soap. Shelves of soap-cartons, teething-rings, garden-seeds, and patent medicines in yellow packages—nostrums for consumption, for "women's diseases"—notorious mixtures of opium and alcohol, in the very shop to which her husband sent patients for the filling of prescriptions.

From a second-story window the sign "W. P. Kennicott, Phys. & Surgeon," gilt on black sand.

A small wooden motion-picture theater called "The Rosebud Movie Palace." Lithographs announcing a film called "Fatty in Love."

Howland & Gould's Grocery. In the display window, black, overripe bananas and lettuce on which a cat was sleeping. Shelves lined with red crêpe paper which was now faded and torn and concentrically spotted. Flat against the wall of the second story the signs of lodges—the Knights of Pythias, the Maccabees, the Woodmen, the Masons.

Dahl & Oleson's Meat Market—a reek of blood.

A jewelry shop with tinny-looking wrist-watches for women. In front of it, at the curb, a huge wooden clock which did not go.

A fly-buzzing saloon with a brilliant gold and enamel whisky sign across the front. Other saloons down the block. From them a stink of stale beer, and thick voices bellowing pidgin German or trolling out dirty songs—vice gone feeble and unenterprising and dull—the delicacy of a mining-camp minus its vigor. In front of the saloons, farmwives sitting on the seats of wagons, waiting for their husbands to become drunk and ready to start home.

A tobacco shop called "The Smoke House," filled with young men shaking dice for cigarettes. Racks of magazines, and pictures of coy fat prostitutes in striped bathing-suits.

A clothing store with a display of "ox-blood-shade Oxfords with bull-dog toes." Suits which looked worn and glossless while they were still new, flabbily draped on dummies like corpses with painted cheeks.

The Bon Ton Store—Haydock & Simons'—the largest shop in town. The first-story front of clear glass, the plates cleverly bound at the edges with brass. The second story of pleasant tapestry brick. One window of excellent clothes for men, interspersed with collars of floral piqué which showed mauve daisies on a saffron ground. Newness and an obvious notion of neatness and service. Haydock & Simons. Haydock. She had met a Haydock at the station; Harry Haydock; an active person of thirty-five. He seemed great to her, now, and very like a saint. His shop was clean!

Axel Egge's General Store, frequented by Scandinavian farmers. In the shallow dark window-space heaps of sleazy sateens, badly woven galateas, canvas shoes designed for women with bulging ankles, steel and red glass buttons upon cards with broken edges, a cottony blanket, a granite-ware frying-pan reposing on a sun-faded crêpe blouse.

Sam Clark's Hardware Store. An air of frankly metallic enterprise. Guns and churns and barrels of nails and beautiful shiny butcher knives.

Chester Dashaway's House Furnishing Emporium. A vista of heavy oak rockers with leather seats, asleep in a dismal row.

Billy's Lunch. Thick handleless cups on the wet oilcloth-covered counter. An odor of onions and the smoke of hot lard. In the doorway a young man audibly sucking a toothpick.

The warehouse of the buyer of cream and potatoes. The sour smell of a dairy.

The Ford Garage and the Buick Garage, competent one-story brick and cement buildings opposite each other. Old and new cars on grease-blackened concrete floors. Tire advertisements. The roaring of a tested motor; a racket which beat at the nerves. Surly young men in khaki union-overalls. The most energetic and vital places in town.

A large warehouse for agricultural implements. An impressive barricade of green and gold wheels, of shafts and sulky seats, belonging to machinery of which Carol

knew nothing—potato-planters, manure-spreaders, silage-cutters, disk-harrows, breaking-plows.

A feed store, its windows opaque with the dust of bran, a patent medicine advertisement painted on its roof.

Ye Art Shoppe, Prop. Mrs Mary Ellen Wilks, Christian Science Library open daily free. A touching fumble at beauty. A one-room shanty of boards recently covered with rough stucco. A show-window delicately rich in error: vases starting out to imitate tree-trunks but running off into blobs of gilt—an aluminum ash-tray labeled "Greetings from Gopher Prairie"—a Christian Science magazine—a stamped sofa-cushion portraying a large ribbon tied to a small poppy, the correct skeins of embroidery-silk lying on the pillow. Inside the shop, a glimpse of bad carbon prints of bad and famous pictures, shelves of phonograph records and camera films, wooden toys, and in the midst an anxious small woman sitting in a padded rocking chair.

A barber shop and pool room. A man in shirt sleeves, presumably Del Snafflin the proprietor, shaving a man who had a large Adam's apple.

Nat Hicks's Tailor Shop, on a side street off Main. A one-story building. A fashion-plate showing human pitchforks in garments which looked as hard as steel plate.

On another side street a raw red-brick Catholic Church with a varnished yellow door.

The post-office—merely a partition of glass and brass shutting off the rear of a mildewed room which must once have been a shop. A tilted writing-shelf against a wall rubbed black and scattered with official notices and army recruiting-posters.

The damp, yellow-brick schoolbuilding in its cindery grounds.

The State Bank, stucco masking wood.

The Farmers' National Bank. An Ionic temple of marble. Pure, exquisite, solitary. A brass plate with "Ezra Stowbody, Pres't."

A score of similar shops and establishments.

Behind them and mixed with them, the houses, meek cottages or large, comfortable, soundly uninteresting symbols of prosperity.

In all the town not one building save the Ionic bank which gave pleasure to Carol's eyes; not a dozen buildings which suggested that, in the fifty years of Gopher Prairie's existence, the citizens had realized that it was either desirable or possible to make this, their common home, amusing or attractive.

It was not only the unsparing unapologetic ugliness and the rigid straightness which overwhelmed her. It was the planlessness, the flimsy temporariness of the buildings, their faded unpleasant colors. The street was cluttered with electric light poles, telephone poles, gasoline pumps for motor cars, boxes of goods. Each man had built with the most valiant disregard of all the others. Between a large new "block" of two-story brick shops on one side, and the fire-brick Overland garage on the other side, was a one-story cottage turned into a millinery shop. The white temple of the Farmers' Bank was elbowed back by a grocery of glaring yellow brick. One store-building had a patchy galvanized iron cornice; the building beside it was crowned with battlements and pyramids of brick capped with blocks of red sandstone.

She escaped from Main Street, fled home.

She wouldn't have cared, she insisted, if the people had been comely. She had noted a young man loafing before a shop, one unwashed hand holding the cord of an awning; a middle-aged man who had a way of staring at women as though he had been married too long and too prosaically; an old farmer, solid, wholesome, but not clean—his face like a potato fresh from the earth. None of them had shaved for three days.

"If they can't build shrines, out here on the prairie, surely there's nothing to prevent their buying safety-razors!" she raged.

She fought herself: "I must be wrong. People do live here. It *can't* be as ugly as—as I know it is! I must be wrong. But I can't do it. I can't go through with it."

She came home too seriously worried for hysteria; and when she found Kennicott waiting for her, and exulting, "Have a walk? Well, like the town? Great lawns and trees, eh?" she was able to say, with a self-protective maturity new to her, "It's very interesting."

IV

The recently built house of Sam Clark, in which was given the party to welcome Carol, was one of the largest

in Gopher Prairie. It had a clean sweep of clapboards, a solid squareness, a small tower, and a large screened porch. Inside, it was as shiny, as hard, and as cheerful as a new oak upright piano.

Carol looked imploringly at Sam Clark as he rolled to the door and shouted, "Welcome, little lady! The keys of the city are yourn!"

Beyond him, in the hallway and the living-room, sitting in a vast prim circle as though they were attending a funeral, she saw the guests. They were *waiting* so! They were waiting for her! The determination to be all one pretty flowerlet of appreciation leaked away. She begged of Sam, "I don't dare face them! They expect so much. They'll swallow me in one mouthful—glump!—like that!"

"Why, sister, they're going to love you—same as I would if I didn't think the doc here would beat me up!"

"B-but—— I don't dare! Faces to the right of me, faces in front of me, volley and wonder!"

She sounded hysterical to herself; she fancied that to Sam Clark she sounded insane. But he chuckled, "Now you just cuddle under Sam's wing, and if anybody rubbers at you too long, I'll shoo 'em off. Here we go! Watch my smoke—Sam'l, the ladies' delight and the bridegrooms' terror!"

His arm about her, he led her in and bawled, "Ladies and worser halves, the bride! We won't introduce her round yet, because she'll never get your bum names straight anyway. Now bust up this star-chamber!"

They tittered politely, but they did not move from the social security of their circle, and they did not cease staring.

Carol had given creative energy to dressing for the event. Her hair was demure, low on her forehead with a parting and a coiled braid. Now she wished that she had piled it high. Her frock was an ingénue slip of lawn, with a wide gold sash and a low square neck, which gave a suggestion of throat and molded shoulders. But as they looked her over she was certain that it was all wrong. She wished alternately that she had worn a spinsterish high-necked dress, and that she had dared to shock them with a violent brick-red scarf which she had bought in Chicago.

She was led about the circle. Her voice mechanically produced safe remarks:

"Oh, I'm sure I'm going to like it here ever so much," and "Yes, we did have the best time in Colorado—mountains," and "Yes, I lived in St. Paul several years. Euclid P. Tinker? No, I don't *remember* meeting him, but I'm pretty sure I've heard of him."

Kennicott took her aside and whispered, "Now I'll introduce you to them, one at a time."

"Tell me about them first."

"Well, the nice-looking couple over there are Harry Haydock and his wife, Juanita. Harry's dad owns most of the Bon Ton, but it's Harry who runs it and gives it the pep. He's a hustler. Next to him is Dave Dyer the druggist—you met him this afternoon—mighty good duck-shot. The tall husk beyond him is Jack Elder—Jackson Elder—owns the planing-mill, and the Minnie-mashie House, and quite a share in the Farmers' National Bank. Him and his wife are good sports—him and Sam and I go hunting together a lot. The old cheese there is Luke Dawson, the richest man in town. Next to him is Nat Hicks, the tailor."

"Really? A tailor?"

"Sure. Why not? Maybe we're slow, but we are democratic. I go hunting with Nat same as I do with Jack Elder."

"I'm glad. I've never met a tailor socially. It must be charming to meet one and not have to think about what you owe him. And do you—— Would you go hunting with your barber, too?"

"No but—— No use running this democracy thing into the ground. Besides, I've known Nat for years, and besides, he's a mighty good shot and—— That's the way it is, see? Next to Nat is Chet Dashaway. Great fellow for chinning. He'll talk your arm off, about religion or politics or books or anything."

Carol gazed with a polite approximation to interest at Mr. Dashaway, a tan person with a wide mouth. "Oh, I know! He's the furniture-store man!" She was much pleased with herself.

"Yump, and he's the undertaker. You'll like him. Come shake hands with him."

"Oh no, no! He doesn't—he doesn't do the embalming and all that—himself? I couldn't shake hands with an undertaker!"

"Why not? You'd be proud to shake hands with a great surgeon, just after he'd been carving up people's bellies."

She sought to regain her afternoon's calm of maturity.

"Yes. You're right. I want—oh, my dear, do you know how much I want to like the people you like? I want to see people as they are."

"Well, don't forget to see people as other folks see them as they are! They have the stuff. Did you know that Percy Bresnahan came from here? Born and brought up here!"

"Bresnahan?"

"Yes—you know—president of the Velvet Motor Company of Boston, Mass.—make the Velvet Twelve—biggest automobile factory in New England."

"I think I've heard of him."

"Sure you have. Why, he's a millionaire several times over! Well, Perce comes back here for the black-bass fishing almost every summer, and he says if he could get away from business, he'd rather live here than in Boston or New York or any of those places. *He* doesn't mind Chet's undertaking."

"Please! I'll—I'll like everybody. I'll be the community sunbeam!"

He led her to the Dawsons.

Luke Dawson, lender of money on mortgages, owner of Northern cut-over land, was a hesitant man in unpressed soft gray clothes, with bulging eyes in a milky face. His wife had bleached cheeks, bleached hair, bleached voice, and a bleached manner. She wore her expensive green frock, with its passementeried bosom, bead tassels, and gaps between the buttons down the back, as though she had bought it second-hand and was afraid of meeting the former owner. They were shy. It was "Professor" George Edwin Mott, superintendent of schools, a Chinese mandarin turned brown, who held Carol's hand and made her welcome.

When the Dawsons and Mr. Mott had stated that they were "pleased to meet her," there seemed to be nothing else to say, but the conversation went on automatically.

"Do you like Gopher Prairie?" whimpered Mrs. Dawson.

"Oh, I'm sure I'm going to be ever so happy."

"There's so many nice people." Mrs. Dawson looked to Mr. Mott for social and intellectual aid. He lectured:

"There's a fine class of people. I don't like some of these retired farmers who come here to spend their last days—especially the Germans. They hate to pay school-taxes. They hate to spend a cent. But the rest are a fine class of people. Did you know that Percy Bresnahan came from here? Used to go to school right at the old building!"

"I heard he did."

"Yes. He's a prince. He and I went fishing together, last time he was here."

The Dawsons and Mr. Mott teetered upon weary feet, and smiled at Carol with crystallized expressions. She went on:

"Tell me, Mr. Mott: Have you ever tried any experiments with any of the new educational systems? The modern kindergarten methods or the Gary system?"

"Oh. Those. Most of these would-be reformers are simply notoriety-seekers. I believe in manual training, but Latin and mathematics always will be the backbone of sound Americanism, no matter what these faddists advocate—heaven knows what they do want—knitting, I suppose, and classes in wiggling the ears!"

The Dawsons smiled their appreciation of listening to a savant. Carol waited till Kennicott should rescue her. The rest of the party waited for the miracle of being amused.

Harry and Juanita Haydock, Rita Simons and Dr. Terry Gould—the young smart set of Gopher Prairie. She was led to them. Juanita Haydock flung at her in a high, cackling, friendly voice:

"Well, this is *so* nice to have you here. We'll have some good parties—dances and everything. You'll have to join the Jolly Seventeen. We play bridge and we have a supper once a month. You play, of course?"

"N-no, I don't."

"Really? In St. Paul?"

"I've always been such a book-worm."

"We'll have to teach you. Bridge is half the fun of life." Juanita had become patronizing, and she glanced disrespectfully at Carol's golden sash, which she had previously admired.

Harry Haydock said politely, "How do you think you're going to like the old burg?"

"I'm sure I shall like it tremendously."

"Best people on earth here. Great hustlers, too. Course I've had lots of chances to go live in Minneapolis, but we like it here. Real he-town. Did you know that Percy Bresnahan came from here?"

Carol perceived that she had been weakened in the biological struggle by disclosing her lack of bridge. Roused to nervous desire to regain her position she

turned on Dr. Terry Gould, the young and pool-playing competitor of her husband. Her eyes coquetted with him while she gushed:

"I'll learn bridge. But what I really love most is the outdoors. Can't we all get up a boating party, and fish, or whatever you do, and have a picnic supper afterwards?"

"Now you're talking!" Dr. Gould affirmed. He looked rather too obviously at the cream-smooth slope of her shoulder. "Like fishing? Fishing is my middle name. I'll teach you bridge. Like cards at all?"

"I used to be rather good at bezique."

She knew that bezique was a game of cards—or a game of something else. Roulette, possibly. But her lie was a triumph. Juanita's handsome, high-colored, horsey face showed doubt. Harry stroked his nose and said humbly, "Bezique? Used to be great gambling game, wasn't it?"

While others drifted to her group, Carol snatched up the conversation. She laughed and was frivolous and rather brittle. She could not distinguish their eyes. They were a blurry theater-audience before which she self-consciously enacted the comedy of being the Clever Little Bride of Doc Kennicott:

"These-here celebrated Open Spaces, that's what I'm going out for. I'll never read anything but the sporting-page again. Will converted me on our Colorado trip. There were so many mousey tourists who were afraid to get out of the motor 'bus that I decided to be Annie Oakley, the Wild Western Wampire, and I bought oh! a vociferous skirt which revealed my perfectly nice ankles to the Presbyterian glare of all the Ioway schoolma'ams, and I leaped from peak to peak like the nimble chamoys, and—— You may think that Herr Doctor Kennicott is a Nimrod, but you ought to have seen me daring him to strip to his B. V. D.'s and go swimming in an icy mountain brook."

She knew that they were thinking of becoming shocked, but Juanita Haydock was admiring, at least. She swaggered on:

"I'm sure I'm going to ruin Will as a respectable practitioner—— Is he a good doctor, Dr. Gould?"

Kennicott's rival gasped at this insult to professional ethics, and he took an appreciable second before he recovered his social manner. "I'll tell you, Mrs. Kennicott." He smiled at Kennicott, to imply that whatever he might say in the stress of being witty was not to count against him in the commercio-medical warfare. "There's some people in town that say the doc is a fair to middlin' diagnostician and prescription-writer, but let me whisper this to you—but for heaven's sake don't tell him I said so—don't you ever go to him for anything more serious than a pendectomy of the left ear or a strabismus of the cardiograph."

No one save Kennicott knew exactly what this meant, but they laughed, and Sam Clark's party assumed a glittering lemon-yellow color of brocade panels and champagne and tulle and crystal chandeliers and sporting duchesses. Carol saw that George Edwin Mott and the blanched Mr. and Mrs. Dawson were not yet hypnotized. They looked as though they wondered whether they ought to look as though they disapproved. She concentrated on them:

"But I know whom I wouldn't have dared to go to Colorado with! Mr. Dawson there! I'm sure he's a regular heartbreaker. When we were introduced he held my hand and squeezed it frightfully."

"Haw! Haw! Haw!" The entire company applauded. Mr. Dawson was beatified. He had been called many things—loan-shark, skinflint, tightwad, pussyfoot—but he had never before been called a flirt.

"He is wicked, isn't he, Mrs. Dawson? Don't you have to lock him up?"

"Oh no, but maybe I better," attempted Mrs. Dawson, a tint on her pallid face.

For fifteen minutes Carol kept it up. She asserted that she was going to stage a musical comedy, that she preferred café parfait to beefsteak, that she hoped Dr. Kennicott would never lose his ability to make love to charming women, and that she had a pair of gold stockings. They gaped for more. But she could not keep it up. She retired to a chair behind Sam Clark's bulk. The smile-wrinkles solemnly flattened out in the faces of all the other collaborators in having a party, and again they stood about hoping but not expecting to be amused.

Carol listened. She discovered that conversation did not exist in Gopher Prairie. Even at this affair, which brought out the young smart set, the hunting squire set, the respectable intellectual set, and the solid financial set, they sat up with gaiety as with a corpse.

Juanita Haydock talked a good deal in her rattling voice but it was invariably of personalities: the rumor

that Raymie Wutherspoon was going to send for a pair of patent leather shoes with gray buttoned tops; the rheumatism of Champ Perry; the state of Guy Pollock's grippe; and the dementia of Jim Howland in painting his fence salmon-pink.

Sam Clark had been talking to Carol about motor cars, but he felt his duties as host. While he droned, his brows popped up and down. He interrupted himself, "Must stir 'em up." He worried at his wife, "Don't you think I better stir 'em up?" He shouldered into the center of the room, and cried:

"Let's have some stunts, folks."

"Yes, let's!" shrieked Juanita Haydock.

"Say, Dave, give us that stunt about the Norwegian catching a hen."

"You bet; that's a slick stunt; do that, Dave!" cheered Chet Dashaway.

Mr. Dave Dyer obliged.

All the guests moved their lips in anticipation of being called on for their own stunts.

"Ella, come on and recite 'Old Sweetheart of Mine,' for us," demanded Sam.

Miss Ella Stowbody, the spinster daughter of the Ionic bank, scratched her dry palms and blushed. "Oh, you don't want to hear that old thing again."

"Sure we do! You bet!" asserted Sam.

"My voice is in terrible shape tonight."

"Tut! Come on!"

Sam loudly explained to Carol, "Ella is our shark at elocuting. She's had professional training. She studied singing and oratory and dramatic art and shorthand for a year, in Milwaukee."

Miss Stowbody was reciting. As encore to "An Old Sweetheart of Mine," she gave a peculiarly optimistic poem regarding the value of smiles.

There were four other stunts: one Jewish, one Irish, one juvenile, and Nat Hicks's parody of Mark Antony's funeral oration.

During the winter Carol was to hear Dave Dyer's hen-catching impersonation seven times, "An Old Sweetheart of Mine" nine times, the Jewish story and the funeral oration twice; but now she was ardent and, because she did so want to be happy and simple-hearted, she was as disappointed as the others when the stunts were finished, and the party instantly sank back into coma.

They gave up trying to be festive; they began to talk naturally, as they did at their shops and homes.

The men and women divided, as they had been tending to do all evening. Carol was deserted by the men, left to a group of matrons who steadily pattered of children, sickness, and cooks—their own shop-talk. She was piqued. She remembered visions of herself as a smart married woman in a drawing-room, fencing with clever men. Her dejection was relieved by speculation as to what the men were discussing, in the corner between the piano and the phonograph. Did they rise from these housewifely personalities to a larger world of abstractions and affairs?

She made her best curtsy to Mrs. Dawson; she twittered, "I won't have my husband leaving me so soon! I'm going over and pull the wretch's ears." She rose with a *jeune fille* bow. She was self-absorbed and self-approving because she had attained that quality of sentimentality. She proudly dipped across the room and, to the interest and commendation of all beholders, sat on the arm of Kennicott's chair.

He was gossiping with Sam Clark, Luke Dawson, Jackson Elder of the planing-mill, Chet Dashaway, Dave Dyer, Harry Haydock, and Ezra Stowbody, president of the Ionic bank.

Ezra Stowbody was a troglodyte. He had come to Gopher Prairie in 1865. He was a distinguished bird of prey—swooping thin nose, turtle mouth, thick brows, port-wine cheeks, floss of white hair, contemptuous eyes. He was not happy in the social changes of thirty years. Three decades ago, Dr. Westlake, Julius Flickerbaugh the lawyer, Merriman Peedy the Congregational pastor and himself had been the arbiters. That was as it should be; the fine arts—medicine, law, religion, and finance—recognized as aristocratic; four Yankees democratically chatting with but ruling the Ohioans and Illini and Swedes and Germans who had ventured to follow them. But Westlake was old, almost retired; Julius Flickerbaugh had lost much of his practice to livelier attorneys; Reverend (not The Reverend) Peedy was dead; and nobody was impressed in this rotten age of automobiles by the "spanking grays" which Ezra still drove. The town was as heterogeneous as Chicago. Norwegians and Germans owned stores. The social leaders were common merchants. Selling nails was considered as sacred as banking. These upstarts—the Clarks, the Haydocks—had no dig-

nity. They were sound and conservative in politics, but they talked about motor cars and pump-guns and heaven only knew what new-fangled fads. Mr. Stowbody felt out of place with them. But his brick house with the mansard roof was still the largest residence in town, and he held his position as squire by occasionally appearing among the younger men and reminding them by a wintry eye that without the banker none of them could carry on their vulgar business.

As Carol defied decency by sitting down with the men, Mr. Stowbody was piping to Mr. Dawson, "Say, Luke, when was't Biggins first settled in Winnebago Township? Wa'n't it in 1879?"

"Why no 'twa'n't!" Mr. Dawson was indignant. "He come out from Vermont in 1867—no, wait, in 1868, it must have been—and took a claim on the Rum River, quite a ways above Anoka."

"He did not!" roared Mr. Stowbody. "He settled first in Blue Earth County, him and his father!"

("What's the point at issue?") Carol whispered to Kennicott.

("Whether this old duck Biggins had an English setter or a Llewellyn. They've been arguing it all evening!")

Dave Dyer interrupted to give tidings, "D' tell you that Clara Biggins was in town couple days ago? She bought a hot-water bottle—expensive one, too—two dollars and thirty cents!"

"Yaaaaaah!" snarled Mr. Stowbody. "Course. She's just like her grandad was. Never save a cent. Two dollars and twenty—thirty, was it?—two dollars and thirty cents for a hot-water bottle! Brick wrapped up in a flannel petticoat just as good, anyway!"

"How's Ella's tonsils, Mr. Stowbody?" yawned Chet Dashaway.

While Mr. Stowbody gave a somatic and psychic study of them, Carol reflected, "Are they really so terribly interested in Ella's tonsils, or even in Ella's esophagus? I wonder if I could get them away from personalities? Let's risk damnation and try."

"There hasn't been much labor trouble around here, has there, Mr. Stowbody?" she asked innocently.

"No, ma'am, thank God, we've been free from that, except maybe with hired girls and farm-hands. Trouble enough with these foreign farmers; if you don't watch these Swedes they turn socialist or populist or some fool thing on you in a minute. Of course, if they have loans you can make 'em listen to reason. I just have 'em come into the bank for a talk, and tell 'em a few things. I don't mind their being democrats, so much, but I won't stand having socialists around. But thank God, we ain't got the labor trouble they have in these cities. Even Jack Elder here gets along pretty well, in the planing-mill, don't you, Jack?"

"Yep. Sure. Don't need so many skilled workmen in my place, and it's a lot of these cranky, wage-hogging, half-baked skilled mechanics that start trouble —reading a lot of this anarchist literature and union papers and all."

"Do you approve of union labor?" Carol inquired of Mr. Elder.

"Me? I should say not! It's like this: I don't mind dealing with my men if they think they've got any grievances—though Lord knows what's come over workmen, nowadays—don't appreciate a good job. But still, if they come to me honestly, as man to man, I'll talk things over with them. But I'm not going to have any outsider, any of these walking delegates, or whatever fancy names they call themselves now—bunch of rich grafters, living on the ignorant workmen! Not going to have any of those fellows butting in and telling *me* how to run *my* business!"

Mr. Elder was growing more excited, more belligerent and patriotic. "I stand for freedom and constitutional rights. If any man don't like my shop, he can get up and git. Same way, if I don't like him, he gits. And that's all there is to it. I simply can't understand all these complications and hoop-te-doodles and government reports and wage-scales and God knows what all that these fellows are balling up the labor situation with, when it's all perfectly simple. They like what I pay 'em, or they get out. That's all there is to it!"

"What do you think of profit-sharing?" Carol ventured.

Mr. Elder thundered his answer, while the others nodded, solemnly and in tune, like a shop-window of flexible toys, comic mandarins and judges and ducks and clowns, set quivering by a breeze from the open door:

"All this profit-sharing and welfare work and insurance and old-age pension is simply poppycock. Enfeebles a workman's independence—and wastes a

lot of honest profit. The half-baked thinker that isn't dry behind the ears yet, and these suffragettes and God knows what all buttinskis there are that are trying to tell a business man how to run his business, and some of these college professors are just about as bad, the whole kit and bilin' of 'em are nothing in God's world but socialism in disguise! And it's my bounden duty as a producer to resist every attack on the integrity of American industry to the last ditch. Yes—SIR!"

Mr. Elder wiped his brow.

Dave Dyer added, "Sure! You bet! What they ought to do is simply to hang every one of these agitators, and that would settle the whole thing right off. Don't you think so, doc?"

"You bet," agreed Kennicott.

The conversation was at last relieved of the plague of Carol's intrusions and they settled down to the question of whether the justice of the peace had sent that hobo drunk to jail for ten days or twelve. It was a matter not readily determined. Then Dave Dyer communicated his carefree adventures on the gipsy trail:

"Yep. I get good time out of the flivver. 'Bout a week ago I motored down to New Wurttemberg. That's forty-three—— No, let's see: It's seventeen miles to Belldale, and 'bout six and three-quarters, call it seven, to Torgenquist, and it's a good nineteen miles from there to New Wurttemberg—seventeen and seven and nineteen, that makes, uh, let me see: seventeen and seven 's twenty-four, plus nineteen, well say plus twenty, that makes forty-four, well anyway, say about forty-three or -four miles from here to New Wurttemberg. We got started about seven-fifteen, prob'ly seven-twenty, because I had to stop and fill the radiator, and we ran along, just keeping up a good steady gait——"

Mr. Dyer did finally, for reasons and purposes admitted and justified, attain to New Wurttemberg.

Once—only once—the presence of the alien Carol was recognized. Chet Dashaway leaned over and said asthmatically, "Say, uh, have you been reading this serial 'Two Out' in *Tingling Tales?* Corking yarn! Gosh, the fellow that wrote it certainly can sling baseball slang!"

The others tried to look literary. Harry Haydock offered, "Juanita is a great hand for reading high-class stuff, like 'Mid the Magnolias' by this Sara Hetwiggin Butts, and 'Riders of Ranch Reckless.' Books. But me," he glanced about importantly, as one convinced that no other hero had ever been in so strange a plight, "I'm so darn busy I don't have much time to read."

"I never read anything I can't check against," said Sam Clark.

Thus ended the literary portion of the conversation, and for seven minutes Jackson Elder outlined reasons for believing that the pike-fishing was better on the west shore of Lake Minniemashie than on the east—though it was indeed quite true that on the east shore Nat Hicks had caught a pike altogether admirable.

The talk went on. It did go on! Their voices were monotonous, thick, emphatic. They were harshly pompous, like men in the smoking-compartments of Pullman cars. They did not bore Carol. They frightened her. She panted, "They will be cordial to me, because my man belongs to their tribe. God help me if I were an outsider!"

Smiling as changelessly as an ivory figurine she sat quiescent, avoiding thought, glancing about the living-room and hall, noting their betrayal of unimaginative commercial prosperity. Kennicott said, "Dandy interior, eh? My idea of how a place ought to be furnished. Modern." She looked polite, and observed the oiled floors, hard-wood staircase, unused fireplace with tiles which resembled brown linoleum, cut-glass vases standing upon doilies, and the barred, shut, forbidding unit bookcases that were half filled with swashbuckler novels and unread-looking sets of Dickens, Kipling, O. Henry, and Elbert Hubbard.

She perceived that even personalities were failing to hold the party. The room filled with hesitancy as with a fog. People cleared their throats, tried to choke down yawns. The men shot their cuffs and the women stuck their combs more firmly into their back hair.

Then a rattle, a daring hope in every eye, the swinging of a door, the smell of strong coffee, Dave Dyer's mewing voice in a triumphant, "The eats!" They began to chatter. They had something to do. They could escape from themselves. They fell upon the food—chicken sandwiches, maple cake, drug-store ice cream. Even when the food was gone they remained cheerful. They could go home, any time now, and go to bed!

They went, with a flutter of coats, chiffon scarfs, and good-bys.

"They were terribly sweet to me."

"Uh, Carrie—— You ought to be more careful about shocking folks. Talking about gold stockings, and about showing your ankles to schoolteachers and all!" More mildly: "You gave 'em a good time, but I'd watch out for that, 'f I were you. Juanita Haydock is such a damn cat. I wouldn't give her a chance to criticize me."

"My poor effort to lift up the party! Was I wrong to try to amuse them?"

"No! No! Honey, I didn't mean—— You were the only up-and-coming person in the bunch. I just mean—— Don't get onto legs and all that immoral stuff. Pretty conservative crowd."

She was silent, raw with the shameful thought that the attentive circle might have been criticizing her, laughing at her.

"Don't, please don't worry!" he pleaded.

Silence.

"Gosh, I'm sorry I spoke about it. I just meant—— But they were crazy about you. Sam said to me, 'That little lady of yours is the slickest thing that ever came to this town,' he said; and Ma Dawson—I didn't hardly know whether she'd like you or not, she's such a dried-up old bird, but she said, 'Your bride is so quick and bright, I declare, she just wakes me up.'"

Carol liked praise, the flavor and fatness of it, but she was so energetically being sorry for herself that she could not taste this commendation.

"Please! Come on! Cheer up!" His lips said it, his anxious shoulder said it, his arm about her said it, as they halted on the obscure porch of their house.

"Do you care if they think I'm flighty, Will?"

"Me? Why, I wouldn't care if the whole world thought you were this or that or anything else. You're my—well, you're my soul!"

He was an undefined mass, as solid-seeming as rock. She found his sleeve, pinched it, cried, "I'm glad! It's sweet to be wanted! You must tolerate my frivolousness. You're all I have!"

He lifted her, carried her into the house, and with her arms about his neck she forgot Main Street.

[The persons whom Carol finds most "interesting" as she settles into her new home are the eccentrics of Gopher Raymie Wutherspoon, the slightly effeminate manager of the Bon Ton Store; and the young lawyer, Guy Pollock, like Wutherspoon a bachelor. All share to some degree her rebelliousness. Gradually she learns of the narrowness of small-town life: the prying curiosity of neighbors, the humiliation of wives who have to ask their husbands for money for household expenses, the unvarying pattern of social affairs. In an attempt to break the monotony, Carol gives a housewarming with a number of "ice-breaking" games; but the next week the Dashaways give a party without such "novelties."]

CHAPTER VII

II

She had, she meditated, passed through the novelty of seeing the town and meeting people, of skating and sliding and hunting. Bea was competent; there was no household labor except sewing and darning and gossipy assistance to Bea in bed-making. She couldn't satisfy her ingenuity in planning meals. At Dahl & Oleson's Meat Market you didn't give orders—you wofully inquired whether there was anything today besides steak and pork and ham. The cuts of beef were not cuts. They were hacks. Lamb chops were as exotic as sharks' fins. The meat-dealers shipped their best to the city, with its higher prices.

In all the shops there was the same lack of choice. She could not find a glass-headed picture-nail in town; she did not hunt for the sort of veiling she wanted —she took what she could get; and only at Howland & Gould's was there such a luxury as canned asparagus. Routine care was all she could devote to the house. Only by such fussing as the Widow Bogart's could she make it fill her time.

She could not have outside employment. To the village doctor's wife it was taboo.

She was a woman with a working brain and no work.

There were only three things which she could do: Have children; start her career of reforming; or become so definitely a part of the town that she would be fulfilled by the activities of church and study-club and bridge-parties.

Children, yes, she wanted them, but—— She was

not quite ready. She had been embarrassed by Kennicott's frankness, but she agreed with him that in the insane condition of civilization, which made the rearing of citizens more costly and perilous than any other crime, it was inadvisable to have children till he had made more money. She was sorry—— Perhaps he had made all the mystery of love a mechanical cautiousness but—— She fled from the thought with a dubious, "Some day."

Her "reforms," her impulses toward beauty in raw Main Street, they had become indistinct. But she would set them going now. She would! She swore it with soft fist beating the edges of the radiator. And at the end of all her vows she had no notion as to when and where the crusade was to begin.

Become an authentic part of the town? She began to think with unpleasant lucidity. She reflected that she did not know whether the people liked her. She had gone to the women at afternoon-coffees, to the merchants in their stores, with so many outpouring comments and whimsies that she hadn't given them a chance to betray their opinions of her. The men smiled—but did they like her? She was lively among the women—but was she one of them? She could not recall many times when she had been admitted to the whispering of scandal which is the secret chamber of Gopher Prairie conversation.

She was poisoned with doubt, as she drooped up to bed.

Next day, through her shopping, her mind sat back and observed. Dave Dyer and Sam Clark were as cordial as she had been fancying; but wasn't there an impersonal abruptness in the "H' are yuh?" of Chet Dashaway? Howland the grocer was curt. Was that merely his usual manner?

"It's infuriating to have to pay attention to what people think. In St. Paul I didn't care. But here I'm spied on. They're watching me. I mustn't let it make me self-conscious," she coaxed herself—overstimulated by the drug of thought, and offensively on the defensive.

III

A thaw which stripped the snow from the sidewalks; a ringing iron night when the lakes could be heard booming; a clear roistering morning. In tam o'shanter and tweed skirt Carol felt herself a college junior going out to play hockey. She wanted to whoop, her legs ached to run. On the way home from shopping she yielded, as a pup would have yielded. She galloped down a block and as she jumped from a curb across a welter of slush, she gave a student "Yippee!"

She saw that in a window three old women were gasping. Their triple glare was paralyzing. Across the street, at another window, the curtain had secretively moved. She stopped, walked on sedately, changed from the girl Carol into Mrs. Dr. Kennicott.

She never again felt quite young enough and defiant enough and free enough to run and halloo in the public streets; and it was as a Nice Married Woman that she attended the next weekly bridge of the Jolly Seventeen.

IV

The Jolly Seventeen (the membership of which ranged from fourteen to twenty-six) was the social cornice of Gopher Prairie. It was the country club, the diplomatic set, the St. Cecilia, the Ritz oval room, the Club de Vingt. To belong to it was to be "in." Though its membership partly coincided with that of the Thanatopsis study club, the Jolly Seventeen as a separate entity guffawed at the Thanatopsis, and considered it middle-class and even "highbrow."

Most of the Jolly Seventeen were young married women, with their husbands as associate members. Once a week they had a women's afternoon-bridge; once a month the husbands joined them for supper and evening-bridge; twice a year they had dances at I.O.O.F. Hall. Then the town exploded. Only at the annual balls of the Firemen and of the Eastern Star was there such prodigality of chiffon scarfs and tangoing and heart-burnings, and these rival institutions were not select—hired girls attended the Firemen's Ball, with section-hands and laborers. Ella Stowbody had once gone to a Jolly Seventeen Soirée in the village hack, hitherto confined to chief mourners at funerals; and Harry Haydock and Dr. Terry Gould always appeared in the town's only specimen of evening clothes.

The afternoon-bridge of the Jolly Seventeen which followed Carol's lonely doubting was held at Juanita Haydock's new concrete bungalow, with its door of

polished oak and beveled plate-glass, jar of ferns in the plastered hall, and in the living-room, a fumed oak Morris chair, sixteen color-prints, and a square varnished table with a mat made of cigar-ribbons on which was one Illustrated Gift Edition and one pack of cards in a burnt-leather case.

Carol stepped into a sirocco of furnace heat. They were already playing. Despite her flabby resolves she had not yet learned bridge. She was winningly apologetic about it to Juanita, and ashamed that she should have to go on being apologetic.

Mrs. Dave Dyer, a sallow woman with a thin prettiness, devoted to experiments in religious cults, illnesses, and scandal-bearing, shook her finger at Carol and trilled, "You're a naughty one! I don't believe you appreciate the honor, when you got into the Jolly Seventeen so easy!"

Mrs. Chet Dashaway nudged her neighbor at the second table. But Carol kept up the appealing bridal manner so far as possible. She twittered, "You're perfectly right. I'm a lazy thing. I'll make Will start teaching me this very evening." Her supplication had all the sound of birdies in the nest, and Easter church-bells, and frosted Christmas cards. Internally she snarled, "That ought to be saccharine enough." She sat in the smallest rocking-chair, a model of Victorian modesty. But she saw or she imagined that the women who had gurgled at her so welcomingly when she had first come to Gopher Prairie were nodding at her brusquely.

During the pause after the first game she petitioned Mrs. Jackson Elder, "Don't you think we ought to get up another bob-sled party soon?"

"It's so cold when you get dumped in the snow," said Mrs. Elder, indifferently.

"I hate snow down my neck," volunteered Mrs. Dave Dyer, with an unpleasant look at Carol and, turning her back, she bubbled at Rita Simons, "Dearie, won't you run in this evening? I've got the loveliest new Butterick pattern I want to show you."

Carol crept back to her chair. In the fervor of discussing the game they ignored her. She was not used to being a wallflower. She struggled to keep from oversensitiveness, from becoming unpopular by the sure method of believing that she was unpopular; but she hadn't much reserve of patience, and at the end of the second game, when Ella Stowbody sniffily asked her, "Are you going to send to Minneapolis for your dress for the next soirée—heard you were," Carol said "Don't know yet" with unnecessary sharpness.

She was relieved by the admiration with which the *jeune fille* Rita Simons looked at the steel buckles on her pumps; but she resented Mrs. Howland's tart demand, "Don't you find that new couch of yours is too broad to be practical?" She nodded, then shook her head, and touchily left Mrs. Howland to get out of it any meaning she desired. Immediately she wanted to make peace. She was close to simpering in the sweetness with which she addressed Mrs. Howland: "I think that is the prettiest display of beef-tea your husband has in his store."

"Oh yes, Gopher Prairie isn't so much behind the times," gibed Mrs. Howland. Some one giggled.

Their rebuffs made her haughty; her haughtiness irritated them to franker rebuffs; they were working up to a state of painfully righteous war when they were saved by the coming of food.

Though Juanita Haydock was highly advanced in the matters of finger-bowls, doilies, and bath-mats, her "refreshments" were typical of all the afternoon-coffees. Juanita's best friends, Mrs. Dyer and Mrs. Dashaway, passed large dinner plates, each with a spoon, a fork, and a coffee cup without saucer. They apologized and discussed the afternoon's game as they passed through the thicket of women's feet. Then they distributed hot buttered rolls, coffee poured from an enamel-ware pot, stuffed olives, potato salad, and angel's-food cake. There was, even in the most strictly conforming Gopher Prairie circles, a certain option as to collations. The olives need not be stuffed. Doughnuts were in some houses well thought of as a substitute for the hot buttered rolls. But there was in all the town no heretic save Carol who omitted angel's-food.

They ate enormously. Carol had a suspicion that the thriftier housewives made the afternoon treat do for evening supper.

She tried to get back into the current. She edged over to Mrs. McGanum. Chunky, amiable, young Mrs. McGanum, with her breast and arms of a milkmaid, and her loud delayed laugh which burst startlingly from a sober face, was the daughter of old Dr. Westlake, and the wife of Westlake's partner, Dr. McGanum. Kennicott asserted that Westlake and McGanum and

their contaminated families were tricky, but Carol had found them gracious. She asked for friendliness by crying to Mrs. McGanum, "How is the baby's throat now?" and she was attentive while Mrs. McGanum rocked and knitted and placidly described symptoms.

Vida Sherwin came in after school, with Miss Ethel Villets, the town librarian. Miss Sherwin's optimistic presence gave Carol more confidence. She talked. She informed the circle, "I drove almost down to Wahkeenyan with Will, a few days ago. Isn't the country lovely! And I do admire the Scandinavian farmers down there so: their big red barns and silos and milking-machines and everything. Do you all know that lonely Lutheran church, with the tin-covered spire, that stands out alone on a hill? It's so bleak; somehow it seems so brave. I do think the Scandinavians are the hardiest and best people——"

"Oh, do you *think* so?" protested Mrs. Jackson Elder. "My husband says the Svenskas that work in the planing-mill are perfectly terrible—so silent and cranky, and so selfish, the way they keep demanding raises. If they had their way they'd simply ruin the business."

"Yes, and they're simply *ghastly* hired girls!" wailed Mrs. Dave Dyer. "I swear, I work myself to skin and bone trying to please my hired girls—when I can get them! I do everything in the world for them. They can have their gentleman friends call on them in the kitchen any time, and they get just the same to eat as we do, if there's any left over, and I practically never jump on them."

Juanita Haydock rattled, "They're ungrateful, all that class of people. I do think the domestic problem is simply becoming awful. I don't know what the country's coming to, with these Scandahoofian clodhoppers demanding every cent you can save, and so ignorant and impertinent, and on my word, demanding bath-tubs and everything—as if they weren't mighty good and lucky at home if they got a bath in the wash-tub."

They were off, riding hard. Carol thought of Bea and waylaid them:

"But isn't it possibly the fault of the mistresses if the maids are ungrateful? For generations we've given them the leavings of food, and holes to live in. I don't want to boast, but I must say I don't have much trouble with Bea. She's so friendly. The Scandinavians are sturdy and honest——"

Mrs. Dave Dyer snapped, "Honest? Do you call it honest to hold us up for every cent of pay they can get? I can't say that I've had any of them steal anything (though you might call it stealing to eat so much that a roast of beef hardly lasts three days), but just the same I don't intend to let them think they can put anything over on *me!* I always make them pack and unpack their trunks down-stairs, right under my eyes, and then I know they aren't being tempted to dishonesty by any slackness on *my* part!"

"How much do the maids get here?" Carol ventured.

Mrs. B. J Gougerling, wife of the banker, stated in a shocked manner, "Any place from three-fifty to five-fifty a week! I know positively that Mrs. Clark, after swearing that she wouldn't weaken and encourage them in their outrageous demands, went and paid five-fifty—think of it! practically a dollar a day for unskilled work and, of course, her food and room and a chance to do her own washing right in with the rest of the wash. *How much do you pay, Mrs. Kennicott?*"

"Yes! How much do you pay?" insisted half a dozen.

"W-why, I pay six a week," she feebly confessed.

They gasped. Juanita protested, "Don't you think it's hard on the rest of us when you pay so much?" Juanita's demand was re-inforced by the universal glower.

Carol was angry. "I don't care! A maid has one of the hardest jobs on earth. She works from ten to eighteen hours a day. She has to wash slimy dishes and dirty clothes. She tends the children and runs to the door with wet chapped hands and——"

Mrs. Dave Dyer broke into Carol's peroration with a furious, "That's all very well, but believe me, I do those things myself when I'm without a maid—and that's a good share of the time for a person that isn't willing to yield and pay exorbitant wages!"

Carol was retorting, "But a maid does it for strangers, and all she gets out of it is the pay——"

Their eyes were hostile. Four of them were talking at once. Vida Sherwin's dictatorial voice cut through, took control of the revolution:

"Tut, tut, tut, tut! What angry passions—and what an idiotic discussion! All of you getting too serious. Stop it! Carol Kennicott, you're probably right, but you're too much ahead of the times. Juanita, quit looking so belligerent. What is this, a card party or

a hen fight? Carol, you stop admiring yourself as the Joan of Arc of the hired girls, or I'll spank you. You come over here and talk libraries with Ethel Villets. Boooooo! If there's any more pecking, I'll take charge of the hen roost myself!"

They all laughed artificially, and Carol obediently "talked libraries."

A small-town bungalow, the wives of a village doctor and a village dry-goods merchant, a provincial teacher, a colloquial brawl over paying a servant a dollar more a week. Yet this insignificance echoed cellar-plots and cabinet meetings and labor conferences in Persia and Prussia, Rome and Boston, and the orators who deemed themselves international leaders were but the raised voices of a billion Juanitas denouncing a million Carols, with a hundred thousand Vida Sherwins trying to shoo away the storm.

Carol felt guilty. She devoted herself to admiring the spinsterish Miss Villets—and immediately committed another offense against the laws of decency.

"We haven't seen you at the library yet," Miss Villets reproved.

"I've wanted to run in so much but I've been getting settled and—— I'll probably come in so often you'll get tired of me! I hear you have such a nice library."

"There are many who like it. We have two thousand more books than Wakamin."

"Isn't that fine. I'm sure you are largely responsible. I've had some experience, in St. Paul."

"So I have been informed. Not that I entirely approve of library methods in these large cities. So careless, letting tramps and all sorts of dirty persons practically sleep in the reading-rooms."

"I know, but the poor souls—— Well, I'm sure you will agree with me in one thing: The chief task of a librarian is to get people to read."

"You feel so? My feeling, Mrs. Kennicott, and I am merely quoting the librarian of a very large college, is that the first duty of the *conscientious* librarian is to preserve the books."

"Oh!" Carol repented her "Oh." Miss Villets stiffened, and attacked:

"It may be all very well in cities, where they have unlimited funds, to let nasty children ruin books and just deliberately tear them up, and fresh young men take more books out than they are entitled to by the regulations, but I'm never going to permit it in this library!"

"What if some children are destructive? They learn to read. Books are cheaper than minds."

"Nothing is cheaper than the minds of some of these children that come in and bother me simply because their mothers don't keep them home where they belong. Some librarians may choose to be so wishy-washy and turn their libraries into nursing-homes and kindergartens, but as long as I'm in charge, the Gopher Prairie library is going to be quiet and decent, and the books well kept!"

Carol saw that the others were listening, waiting for her to be objectionable. She flinched before their dislike. She hastened to smile in agreement with Miss Villets, to glance publicly at her wrist-watch, to warble that it was "so late—have to hurry home—husband—such nice party—maybe you were right about maids, prejudiced because Bea so nice—such perfectly divine angel's-food, Mrs. Haydock must give me the recipe—good-by, such happy party——"

She walked home. She reflected, "It was my fault. I was touchy. And I opposed them so much. Only—— I can't! I can't be one of them if I must damn all the maids toiling in filthy kitchens, all the ragged hungry children. And these women are to be my arbiters, the rest of my life!"

She ignored Bea's call from the kitchen; she ran up-stairs to the unfrequented guest-room; she wept in terror, her body a pale arc as she knelt beside a cumbrous black-walnut bed, beside a puffy mattress covered with a red quilt, in a shuttered and airless room.

CHAPTER VIII

II

Four days after the Jolly Seventeen débâcle Vida Sherwin called and casually blew Carol's world to pieces.

"May I come in and gossip a while?" she said, with such excess of bright innocence that Carol was uneasy. Vida took off her furs with a bounce, she sat down as though it were a gymnasium exercise, she flung out:

"Feel disgracefully good, this weather! Raymond Wutherspoon says if he had my energy he'd be a grand opera singer. I always think this climate is the finest in the world, and my friends are the dearest

people in the world, and my work is the most essential thing in the world. Probably I fool myself. But I know one thing for certain: You're the pluckiest little idiot in the world."

"And so you are about to flay me alive." Carol was cheerful about it.

"Am I? Perhaps. I've been wondering—I know that the third party to a squabble is often the most to blame: the one who runs between A and B having a beautiful time telling each of them what the other has said. But I want you to take a big part in vitalizing Gopher Prairie and so—— Such a very unique opportunity and—— Am I silly?"

"I know what you mean. I was too abrupt at the Jolly Seventeen."

"It isn't that. Matter of fact, I'm glad you told them some wholesome truths about servants. (Though perhaps you were just a bit tactless.) It's bigger than that. I wonder if you understand that in a secluded community like this every newcomer is on test? People cordial to her but watching her all the time. I remember when a Latin teacher came here from Wellesley, they resented her broad A. Were sure it was affected. Of course they have discussed you——"

"Have they talked about me much?"

"My dear!"

"I always feel as though I walked around in a cloud, looking out at others but not being seen. I feel so inconspicuous and so normal—so normal that there's nothing about me to discuss. I can't realize that Mr. and Mrs. Haydock must gossip about me." Carol was working up a small passion of distaste. "And I don't like it. It makes me crawly to think of their daring to talk over all I do and say. Pawing me over! I resent it. I hate——"

"Wait, child! Perhaps they resent some things in you. I want you to try and be impersonal. They'd paw over anybody who came in new. Didn't you, with newcomers in College?"

"Yes."

"Well then! Will you be impersonal? I'm paying you the compliment of supposing that you can be. I want you to be big enough to help me make this town worth while."

"I'll be as impersonal as cold boiled potatoes. (Not that I shall ever be able to help you 'make the town worth while.') What do they say about me? Really. I want to know."

"Of course the illiterate ones resent your references to anything farther away than Minneapolis. They're so suspicious—that's it, suspicious. And some think you dress too well."

"Oh, they do, do they! Shall I dress in gunny-sacking to suit them?"

"Please! Are you going to be a baby?"

"I'll be good," sulkily.

"You certainly will, or I won't tell you one single thing. You must understand this: I'm not asking you to change yourself. Just want you to know what they think. You must do that, no matter how absurd their prejudices are, if you're going to handle them. Is it your ambition to make this a better town, or isn't it?"

"I don't know whether it is or not!"

"Why—why—— Tut, tut, now, of course it is! Why, I depend on you. You're a born reformer."

"I am not—not any more!"

"Of course you are."

"Oh, if I really could help—— So they think I'm affected?"

"My lamb, they do! Now don't say they're nervy. After all, Gopher Prairie standards are as reasonable to Gopher Prairie as Lake Shore Drive standards are to Chicago. And there's more Gopher Prairies than there are Chicagos. Or Londons. And—— I'll tell you the whole story: They think you're showing off when you say 'American' instead of 'Ammurrican.' They think you're too frivolous. Life's so serious to them that they can't imagine any kind of laughter except Juanita's snortling. Ethel Villets was sure you were patronizing her when——"

"Oh, I was not!"

"——you talked about encouraging reading; and Mrs. Elder thought you were patronizing when you said she had 'such a pretty little car.' She thinks it's an enormous car! And some of the merchants say you're too flip when you talk to them in the store and——"

"Poor me, when I was trying to be friendly!"

"————every housewife in town is doubtful about your being so chummy with your Bea. All right to be kind, but they say you act as though she were your

cousin. (Wait now! There's plenty more.) And they think you were eccentric in furnishing this room—they think the broad couch and that Japanese dingus are absurd. (Wait! I know they're silly.) And I guess I've heard a dozen criticize you because you don't go to church oftener and——"

"I can't stand it—I can't bear to realize that they've been saying all these things while I've been going about so happily and liking them. I wonder if you ought to have told me? It will make me self-conscious."

"I wonder the same thing. Only answer I can get is the old saw about knowledge being power. And some day you'll see how absorbing it is to have power, even here; to control the town—— Oh, I'm a crank. But I do like to see things moving."

"It hurts. It makes these people seem so beastly and treacherous, when I've been perfectly natural with them. But let's have it all. What did they say about my Chinese housewarming party?"

"Why, uh——"

"Go on. Or I'll make up worse things than anything you can tell me."

"They did enjoy it. But I guess some of them felt you were showing off—pretending that your husband is richer than he is."

"I can't—— Their meanness of mind is beyond any horrors I could imagine. They really thought that I—— And you want to 'reform' people like that when dynamite is so cheap? Who dared to say that? The rich or the poor?"

"Fairly well assorted."

"Can't they at least understand me well enough to see that though I might be affected and culturine, at least I simply couldn't commit that other kind of vulgarity? If they must know, you may tell them, with my compliments, that Will makes about four thousand a year, and the party cost half of what they probably thought it did. Chinese things are not very expensive, and I made my own costume——"

"Stop it! Stop beating me! I know all that. What they meant was: they felt you were starting dangerous competition by giving a party such as most people here can't afford. Four thousand is a pretty big income for this town."

"I never thought of starting competition. Will you believe that it was in all love and friendliness that I tried to give them the gayest party I could? It was foolish; it was childish and noisy. But I did mean it so well."

"I know, of course. And it certainly is unfair of them to make fun of your having that Chinese food—chow men, was it?—and to laugh about your wearing those pretty trousers——"

Carol sprang up, whimpering, "Oh, they didn't do that! They didn't poke fun at my feast, that I ordered so carefully for them! And my little Chinese costume that I was so happy making—I made it secretly, to surprise them. And they've been ridiculing it, all this while!"

She was huddled on the couch.

Vida was stroking her hair, muttering, "I shouldn't——"

Shrouded in shame, Carol did not know when Vida slipped away. The clock's bell, at half past five, aroused her. "I must get hold of myself before Will comes. I hope he never knows what a fool his wife is. . . . Frozen, sneering, horrible hearts."

Like a very small, very lonely girl she trudged upstairs, slow step by step, her feet dragging, her hand on the rail. It was not her husband to whom she wanted to run for protection—it was her father, her smiling understanding father, dead these twelve years.

[Carol is now aware of her precarious position in Gopher Prairie. Wanting to be tolerated, to be liked, she nevertheless cannot give up hope that in some way the town can be made more lovely. She dreams for a time that the Thanatopsis, to which the wives of all the substantial men belong, can be turned to the problem of civic improvement. But the women are quite satisfied with things as they are; their husbands are even more so. A venture into amateur dramatics is almost equally disappointing, as are later efforts to enliven the town library and the Chautauqua. Frustration and boredom drive Carol to a flirtation with Guy Pollock, but when he criticizes the "commercial hatred" of physicians she turns back to Will, and for a time dramatizes herself as the country doctor's wife. For two years after the birth of her son, Hugh, she is content; then the reform spirit stirs her once more. Meanwhile Vida Sherwin has married Raymie Wutherspoon.]

CHAPTER XXII

I

The greatest mystery about a human being is not his reaction to sex or praise, but the manner in which he contrives to put in twenty-four hours a day. It is this which puzzles the longshoreman about the clerk, the Londoner about the bushman. It was this which puzzled Carol in regard to the married Vida. Carol herself had the baby, a larger house to care for, all the telephone calls for Kennicott when he was away; and she read everything, while Vida was satisfied with newspaper headlines.

But after detached brown years in boarding-houses, Vida was hungry for housework, for the most pottering detail of it. She had no maid, nor wanted one. She cooked, baked, swept, washed supper-cloths, with the triumph of a chemist in a new laboratory. To her the hearth was veritably the altar. When she went shopping she hugged the cans of soup, and she bought a mop or a side of bacon as though she were preparing for a reception. She knelt beside a bean sprout and crooned, "I raised this with my own hands—I brought this new life into the world."

"I love her for being so happy," Carol brooded. "I ought to be that way. I worship the baby, but the housework—— Oh, I suppose I'm fortunate; so much better off than farm-women on a new clearing, or people in a slum."

It has not yet been recorded that any human being has gained a very large or permanent contentment from meditation upon the fact that he is better off than others.

In Carol's own twenty-four hours a day she got up, dressed the baby, had breakfast, talked to Oscarina about the day's shopping, put the baby on the porch to play, went to the butcher's to choose between steak and pork chops, bathed the baby, nailed up a shelf, had dinner, put the baby to bed for a nap, paid the iceman, read for an hour, took the baby out for a walk, called on Vida, had supper, put the baby to bed, darned socks, listened to Kennicott's yawning comment on what a fool Dr. McGanum was to try to use that cheap X-ray outfit of his on an epithelioma, repaired a frock, drowsily heard Kennicott stoke the furnace, tried to read a page of Thorstein Veblen—and the day was gone.

Except when Hugh was vigorously naughty, or whiney, or laughing, or saying "I like my chair" with thrilling maturity, she was always enfeebled by loneliness. She no longer felt superior about that misfortune. She would gladly have been converted to Vida's satisfaction in Gopher Prairie and mopping the floor.

II

Carol drove through an astonishing number of books from the public library and from city shops. Kennicott was at first uncomfortable over her disconcerting habit of buying them. A book was a book, and if you had several thousand of them right here in the library, free, why the dickens should you spend your good money? After worrying about it for two or three years, he decided that this was one of the Funny Ideas which she had caught as a librarian and from which she would never entirely recover.

The authors whom she read were most of them frightfully annoyed by the Vida Sherwins. They were young American sociologists, young English realists, Russian horrorists; Anatole France, Rolland, Nexo, Wells, Shaw, Key, Edgar Lee Masters, Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, Henry Mencken, and all the other subversive philosophers and artists whom women were consulting everywhere, in batik-curtained studios in New York, in Kansas farmhouses, San Francisco drawing-rooms, Alabama schools for Negroes. From them she got the same confused desire which the million other women felt; the same determination to be class-conscious without discovering the class of which she was to be conscious.

Certainly her reading precipitated her observations of Main Street, of Gopher Prairie and of the several adjacent Gopher Prairies which she had seen on drives with Kennicott. In her fluid thought certain convictions appeared, jaggedly, a fragment of an impression at a time, while she was going to sleep, or manicuring her nails, or waiting for Kennicott.

These convictions she presented to Vida Sherwin—Vida Wutherspoon—beside a radiator, over a bowl of not very good walnuts and pecans from Uncle Whittier's grocery, on an evening when both Kennicott and Raymie had gone out of town with the other officers of the Ancient and Affiliated Order of Spartans, to

inaugurate a new chapter at Wakamin. Vida had come to the house for the night. She helped in putting Hugh to bed, sputtering the while about his soft skin. Then they talked till midnight.

What Carol said that evening, what she was passionately thinking, was also emerging in the minds of women in ten thousand Gopher Prairies. Her formulations were not pat solutions but visions of a tragic futility. She did not utter them so compactly that they can be given in her words; they were roughened with "Well, you see" and "if you get what I mean" and "I don't know that I'm making myself clear." But they were definite enough, and indignant enough.

III

In reading popular stories and seeing plays, asserted Carol, she had found only two traditions of the American small town. The first tradition, repeated in scores of magazines every month, is that the American village remains the one sure abode of friendship, honesty, and clean sweet marriageable girls. Therefore all men who succeed in painting in Paris or in finance in New York at last become weary of smart women, return to their native towns, assert that cities are vicious, marry their childhood sweethearts and, presumably, joyously abide in those towns until death.

The other tradition is that the significant features of all villages are whiskers, iron dogs upon lawns, gold bricks, checkers, jars of gilded cat-tails, and shrewd comic old men who are known as "hicks" and who ejaculate "Waal I swan." This altogether admirable tradition rules the vaudeville stage, facetious illustrators, and syndicated newspaper humor, but out of actual life it passed forty years ago. Carol's small town thinks not in hoss-swapping but in cheap motor cars, telephones, ready-made clothes, silos, alfalfa, kodaks, phonographs, leather-upholstered Morris chairs, bridge-prizes, oil-stocks, motion-pictures, land-deals, unread sets of Mark Twain, and a chaste version of national politics.

With such a small-town life a Kennicott or a Champ Perry is content, but there are also hundreds of thousands, particularly women and young men, who are not at all content. The more intelligent young people (and the fortunate widows!) flee to the cities with agility and, despite the fictional tradition, resolutely stay there, seldom returning even for holidays. The most protesting patriots of the towns leave them in old age, if they can afford it, and go to live in California or in the cities.

The reason, Carol insisted, is not a whiskered rusticity. It is nothing so amusing!

It is an unimaginatively standardized background, a sluggishness of speech and manners, a rigid ruling of the spirit by the desire to appear respectable. It is contentment . . . the contentment of the quiet dead, who are scornful of the living for their restless walking. It is negation canonized as the one positive virtue. It is the prohibition of happiness. It is slavery self-sought and self-defended. It is dullness made God.

A savorless people, gulping tasteless food, and sitting afterward, coatless and thoughtless, in rocking-chairs prickly with inane decorations, listening to mechanical music, saying mechanical things about the excellence of Ford automobiles, and viewing themselves as the greatest race in the world.

IV

She had inquired as to the effect of this dominating dullness upon foreigners. She remembered the feeble exotic quality to be found in the first-generation Scandinavians; she recalled the Norwegian Fair at the Lutheran Church, to which Bea had taken her. There, in the *bondestue,* the replica of a Norse farm kitchen, pale women in scarlet jackets embroidered with gold thread and colored beads, in black skirts with a line of blue, green-striped aprons, and ridged caps very pretty to set off a fresh face, had served *rommegrod og lefse*—sweet cakes and sour milk pudding spiced with cinnamon. For the first time in Gopher Prairie Carol had found novelty. She had reveled in the mild foreignness of it.

But she saw these Scandinavian women zealously exchanging their spiced puddings and red jackets for fried pork chops and congealed white blouses, trading the ancient Christmas hymns of the fjords for "She's My Jazzland Cutie," being Americanized into uniformity, and in less than a generation losing in the grayness whatever pleasant new customs they might have added to the life of the town. Their sons finished the process. In ready-made clothes and ready-made high-

school phrases they sank into propriety, and the sound American customs had absorbed without one trace of pollution another alien invasion.

And along with these foreigners, she felt herself being ironed into glossy mediocrity, and she rebelled, in fear.

The respectability of the Gopher Prairies, said Carol, is reinforced by vows of poverty and chastity in the matter of knowledge. Except for half a dozen in each town the citizens are proud of that achievement of ignorance which it is so easy to come by. To be "intellectual" or "artistic" or, in their own word, to be "highbrow," is to be priggish and of dubious virtue.

Large experiments in politics and in co-operative distribution, ventures requiring knowledge, courage, and imagination, do originate in the West and Middlewest, but they are not of the towns, they are of the farmers. If these heresies are supported by the townsmen it is only by occasional teachers, doctors, lawyers, the labor unions, and workmen like Miles Bjornstam, who are punished by being mocked as "cranks," as "half-baked parlor socialists." The editor and the rector preach at them. The cloud of serene ignorance submerges them in unhappiness and futility.

V

Here Vida observed, "Yes—well—— Do you know, I've always thought that Ray would have made a wonderful rector. He has what I call an essentially religious soul. My! He'd have read the service beautifully! I suppose it's too late now, but as I tell him, he can also serve the world by selling shoes and—— I wonder if we oughtn't to have family-prayers?"

VI

Doubtless all small towns, in all countries, in all ages, Carol admitted, have a tendency to be not only dull but mean, bitter, infested with curiosity. In France or Tibet quite as much as in Wyoming or Indiana these timidities are inherent in isolation.

But a village in a country which is taking pains to become altogether standardized and pure, which aspires to succeed Victorian England as the chief mediocrity of the world, is no longer merely provincial, no longer downy and restful in its leaf-shadowed ignorance. It is a force seeking to dominate the earth, to drain the hills and sea of color, to set Dante at boosting Gopher Prairie, and to dress the high gods in Klassy Kollege Klothes. Sure of itself, it bullies other civilizations, as a traveling salesman in a brown derby conquers the wisdom of China and tacks advertisements of cigarettes over arches for centuries dedicate to the sayings of Confucius.

Such a society functions admirably in the large production of cheap automobiles, dollar watches, and safety razors. But it is not satisfied until the entire world also admits that the end and joyous purpose of living is to ride in flivvers, to make advertising-pictures of dollar watches, and in the twilight to sit talking not of love and courage but of the convenience of safety razors.

And such a society, such a nation, is determined by the Gopher Prairies. The greatest manufacturer is but a busier Sam Clark, and all the rotund senators and presidents are village lawyers and bankers grown nine feet tall.

Though a Gopher Prairie regards itself as a part of the Great World, compares itself to Rome and Vienna, it will not acquire the scientific spirit, the international mind, which would make it great. It picks at information which will visibly procure money or social distinction. Its conception of a community ideal is not the grand manner, the noble aspiration, the fine aristocratic pride, but cheap labor for the kitchen and rapid increase in the price of land. It plays at cards on greasy oil-cloth in a shanty, and does not know that prophets are walking and talking on the terrace.

If all the provincials were as kindly as Champ Perry and Sam Clark there would be no reason for desiring the town to seek great traditions. It is the Harry Haydocks, the Dave Dyers, the Jackson Elders, small busy men crushingly powerful in their common purpose, viewing themselves as men of the world but keeping themselves men of the cash-register and the comic film, who make the town a sterile oligarchy.

VII

She had sought to be definite in analyzing the surface ugliness of the Gopher Prairies. She asserted that

struction, so that the towns resemble frontier camps; of neglect of natural advantages, so that the hills are covered with brush, the lakes shut off by railroads, and the creeks lined with dumping-grounds; of depressing sobriety of color; rectangularity of buildings; and excessive breadth and straightness of the gashed streets, so that there is no escape from gales and from sight of the grim sweep of land, nor any windings to coax the loiterer along, while the breadth which would be majestic in an avenue of palaces makes the low shabby shops creeping down the typical Main Street the more mean by comparison.

The universal similarity—that is the physical expression of the philosophy of dull safety. Nine-tenths of the American towns are so alike that it is the completest boredom to wander from one to another. Always, west of Pittsburg, and often, east of it, there is the same lumber yard, the same railroad station, the same Ford garage, the same creamery, the same box-like houses and two-story shops. The new, more conscious houses are alike in their very attempts at diversity: the same bungalows, the same square houses of stucco or tapestry brick. The shops show the same standardized, nationally advertised wares; the newspapers of sections three thousand miles apart have the same "syndicated features"; the boy in Arkansas displays just such a flamboyant ready-made suit as is found on just such a boy in Delaware, both of them iterate the same slang phrases from the same sporting-pages, and if one of them is in college and the other is a barber, no one may surmise which is which.

If Kennicott were snatched from Gopher Prairie and instantly conveyed to a town leagues away, he would not realize it. He would go down apparently the same Main Street (almost certainly it would be called Main Street); in the same drug store he would see the same young man serving the same ice-cream soda to the same young woman with the same magazines and phonograph records under her arm. Not till he had climbed to his office and found another sign on the door, another Dr. Kennicott inside, would he understand that something curious had presumably happened.

Finally, behind all her comments, Carol saw the fact that the prairie towns no more exist to serve the farmers who are their reason of existence than do the great for the townsmen large motors and social preferment; and, unlike the capitals, they do not give to the district in return for usury a stately and permanent center, but only this ragged camp. It is a "parasitic Greek civilization"—minus the civilization.

"There we are then," said Carol. "The remedy? Is there any? Criticism, perhaps, for the beginning of the beginning. Oh, there's nothing that attacks the Tribal God Mediocrity that doesn't help a little . . . and probably there's nothing that helps very much. Perhaps some day the farmers will build and own their market-towns. (Think of the club they could have!) But I'm afraid I haven't any 'reform program.' Not any more! The trouble is spiritual, and no League or Party can enact a preference for gardens rather than dumping-grounds. . . . There's my confession. *Well?*"

"In other words, all you want is perfection?" said Vida.

"Yes! Why not?"

"How you hate this place! How can you expect to do anything with it if you haven't any sympathy?"

"But I have! And affection. Or else I wouldn't fume so. I've learned that Gopher Prairie isn't just an eruption on the prairie, as I thought first, but as large as New York. In New York I wouldn't know more than forty or fifty people, and I know that many here. Go on! Say what you're thinking."

"Well, my dear, if I *did* take all your notions seriously, it would be pretty discouraging. Imagine how a person would feel, after working hard for years and helping to build up a nice town, to have you airily flit in and simply say 'Rotten!' Think that's fair?"

"Why not? It must be just as discouraging for the Gopher Prairieite to see Venice and make comparisons."

"It would not! I imagine gondolas are kind of nice to ride in, but we've got better bath-rooms! But—— My dear, you're not the only person in this town who has done some thinking for herself, although (pardon my rudeness) I'm afraid you think so. I'll admit we lack some things. Maybe our theater isn't as good as shows in Paris. All right! I don't want to see any foreign culture suddenly forced on us—whether it's street-planning or table-manners or crazy communistic ideas."

Vida sketched what she termed "practical things that will make a happier and prettier town, but that

do belong to our life, that actually are being done." Of the Thanatopsis Club she spoke; of the rest-room, the fight against mosquitos, the campaign for more gardens and shade-trees and sewers—matters not fantastic and nebulous and distant, but immediate and sure.

Carol's answer was fantastic and nebulous enough:

"Yes. . . . Yes. . . . I know. They're good. But if I could put through all those reforms at once, I'd still want startling, exotic things. Life is comfortable and clean enough here already. And so secure. What it needs is to be less secure, more eager. The civic improvements which I'd like the Thanatopsis to advocate are Strindberg plays, and classic dancers—exquisite legs beneath tulle—and (I can see him so clearly!) a thick, black-bearded, cynical Frenchman who would sit about and drink and sing opera and tell bawdy stories and laugh at our proprieties and quote Rabelais and not be ashamed to kiss my hand!"

"Huh! Not sure about the rest of it but I guess that's what you and all the other discontented young women really want: some stranger kissing your hand!" At Carol's gasp, the old squirrel-like Vida darted out and cried, "Oh, my dear, don't take that too seriously. I just meant——"

"I know. You just meant it. Go on. Be good for my soul. Isn't it funny: here we all are—me trying to be good for Gopher Prairie's soul, and Gopher Prairie trying to be good for my soul. What are my other sins?"

"Oh, there's plenty of them. Possibly some day we shall have your fat cynical Frenchman (horrible, sneering, tobacco-stained object, ruining his brains and his digestion with vile liquor!) but, thank heaven, for a while we'll manage to keep busy with our lawns and pavements! You see, these things really are coming! The Thanatopsis is getting somewhere. And you——" Her tone italicized the words—"to my great disappointment, are doing less, not more, than the people you laugh at! Sam Clark, on the school-board, is working for better school ventilation. Ella Stowbody (whose elocuting you always think is so absurd) has persuaded the railroad to share the expense of a parked space at the station, to do away with that vacant lot.

"You sneer so easily. I'm sorry, but I do think there's something essentially cheap in your attitude. Especially about religion.

"If you must know, you're not a sound reformer at all. You're an impossibilist. And you give up too easily. You gave up on the new city hall, the anti-fly campaign, club papers, the library-board, the dramatic association—just because we didn't graduate into Ibsen the very first thing. You want perfection all at once. Do you know what the finest thing you've done is—aside from bringing Hugh into the world? It was the help you gave Dr. Will during baby-welfare week. You didn't demand that each baby be a philosopher and artist before you weighed him, as you do with the rest of us.

"And now I'm afraid perhaps I'll hurt you. We're going to have a new schoolbuilding in this town—in just a few years—and we'll have it without one bit of help or interest from you!

"Professor Mott and I and some others have been dinging away at the moneyed men for years. We didn't call on you because you would never stand the pound-pound-pounding year after year without one bit of encouragement. And we've won! I've got the promise of everybody who counts that just as soon as war-conditions permit, they'll vote the bonds for the schoolhouse. And we'll have a wonderful building—lovely brown brick, with big windows, and agricultural and manual-training departments. When we get it, that'll be my answer to all your theories!"

"I'm glad. And I'm ashamed I haven't had any part in getting it. But—— Please don't think I'm unsympathetic if I ask one question: Will the teachers in the hygienic new building go on informing the children that Persia is a yellow spot on the map, and 'Cæsar' the title of a book of grammatical puzzles?"

VIII

Vida was indignant; Carol was apologetic; they talked for another hour, the eternal Mary and Martha—an immoralist Mary and a reformist Martha. It was Vida who conquered.

The fact that she had been left out of the campaign for the new schoolbuilding disconcerted Carol. She laid her dreams of perfection aside. When Vida asked her to take charge of a group of Camp Fire Girls, she obeyed, and had definite pleasure out of the Indian dances and ritual and costumes. She went more regu-

larly to the Thanatopsis. With Vida as lieutenant and unofficial commander she campaigned for a village nurse to attend poor families, raised the fund herself, saw to it that the nurse was young and strong and amiable and intelligent.

Yet all the while she beheld the burly cynical Frenchman and the diaphanous dancers as clearly as the child sees its air-born playmates; she relished the Camp Fire Girls not because, in Vida's words, "this Scout training will help so much to make them Good Wives," but because she hoped that the Sioux dances would bring subversive color into their dinginess.

She helped Ella Stowbody to set out plants in the tiny triangular park at the railroad station; she squatted in the dirt, with a small curved trowel and the most decorous of gardening gauntlets; she talked to Ella about the public-spiritedness of fuchsias and cannas; and she felt that she was scrubbing a temple deserted by the gods and empty even of incense and the sound of chanting. Passengers looking from trains saw her as a village woman of fading prettiness, incorruptible virtue, and no abnormalities; the baggageman heard her say, "Oh yes, I do think it will be a good example for the children"; and all the while she saw herself running garlanded through the streets of Babylon.

Planting led her to botanizing. She never got much farther than recognizing the tiger lily and the wild rose, but she rediscovered Hugh. "What does the buttercup say, mummy?" he cried, his hand full of straggly grasses, his cheek gilded with pollen. She knelt to embrace him; she affirmed that he made life more than full; she was altogether reconciled . . . for an hour.

But she awoke at night to hovering death. She crept away from the hump of bedding that was Kennicott; tiptoed into the bathroom and, by the mirror in the door of the medicine-cabinet, examined her pallid face.

Wasn't she growing visibly older in ratio as Vida grew plumper and younger? Wasn't her nose sharper? Wasn't her neck granulated? She stared and choked. She was only thirty. But the five years since her marriage—had they not gone by as hastily and stupidly as though she had been under ether; would time not slink past till death? She pounded her fist on the cool enameled rim of the bathtub and raged mutely against the indifferent gods:

"I don't care! I won't endure it! They lie so—Vida and Will and Aunt Bessie—they tell me I ought to be satisfied with Hugh and a good home and planting seven nasturtiums in a station garden! I am I! When I die the world will be annihilated, as far as I'm concerned. I am I! I'm not content to leave the sea and the ivory towers to others. I want them for me! Damn Vida! Damn all of them! Do they think they can make me believe that a display of potatoes at Howland & Gould's is enough beauty and strangeness?"

[It is now 1917 and the United States is at war. Carol grows more and more away from Will, who cannot understand her concern about "highbrow stuff." When Gopher Prairie unites to persecute a youthful tailor, Erik Valborg, Carol defends him, gives him her friendship, comes perilously close to an affair with him. Will, so the reader understands, succumbs to the wiles of the neurotic Maud Dyer. In an attempt to save herself and her marriage, although she does not know about Maud, Carol asks Will to take her to California. When she returns she finds that she is still at odds with Gopher Prairie.]

CHAPTER XXXVI

I

Kennicott was not so inhumanly patient that he could continue to forgive Carol's heresies, to woo her as he had on the venture to California. She tried to be inconspicuous, but she was betrayed by her failure to glow over the boosting. Kennicott believed in it; demanded that she say patriotic things about the White Way and the new factory. He snorted, "By golly, I've done all I could, and now I expect you to play the game. Here you been complaining for years about us being so poky, and now when Blausser comes along and does stir up excitement and beautify the town like you've always wanted somebody to, why, you say he's a roughneck, and you won't jump on the band-wagon."

Once, when Kennicott announced at noon-dinner, "What do you know about this! They say there's a chance we may get another factory—cream-separator works!" he added, "You might try to look interested, even if you ain't!" The baby was frightened by the Jovian roar; ran wailing to hide his face in Carol's

lap; and Kennicott had to make himself humble and court both mother and child. The dim injustice of not being understood even by his son left him irritable. He felt injured.

An event which did not directly touch them brought down his wrath.

In the early autumn, news came from Wakamin that the sheriff had forbidden an organizer for the National Nonpartisan League to speak anywhere in the county. The organizer had defied the sheriff, and announced that in a few days he would address a farmers' political meeting. That night, the news ran, a mob of a hundred business men led by the sheriff—the tame village street and the smug village faces ruddled by the light of bobbing lanterns, the mob flowing between the squatty rows of shops—had taken the organizer from his hotel, ridden him on a fence-rail, put him on a freight train, and warned him not to return.

The story was threshed out in Dave Dyer's drug store, with Sam Clark, Kennicott, and Carol present.

"That's the way to treat those fellows—only they ought to have lynched him!" declared Sam, and Kennicott and Dave Dyer joined in a proud "You bet!"

Carol walked out hastily, Kennicott observing her.

Through supper-time she knew that he was bubbling and would soon boil over. When the baby was abed, and they sat composedly in canvas chairs on the porch, he experimented, "I had a hunch you thought Sam was kind of hard on that fellow they kicked out of Wakamin."

"Wasn't Sam rather needlessly heroic?"

"All these organizers, yes, and a whole lot of the German and Squarehead farmers themselves, they're seditious as the devil—disloyal, non-patriotic, pro-German pacifists, that's what they are!"

"Did this organizer say anything pro-German?"

"Not on your life! They didn't give him a chance!" His laugh was stagey.

"So the whole thing was illegal—and led by the sheriff! Precisely how do you expect these aliens to obey your law if the officer of the law teaches them to break it? Is it a new kind of logic?"

"Maybe it wasn't exactly regular, but what's the odds? They knew this fellow would try to stir up trouble. Whenever it comes right down to a question of defending Americanism and our constitutional rights, it's justifiable to set aside ordinary procedure."

"What editorial did he get that from?" she wondered, as she protested, "See here, my beloved, why can't you Tories declare war honestly? You don't oppose this organizer because you think he's seditious but because you're afraid that the farmers he is organizing will deprive you townsmen of the money you make out of mortgages and wheat and shops. Of course, since we're at war with Germany, anything that any one of us doesn't like is 'pro-German,' whether it's business competition or bad music. If we were fighting England, you'd call the radicals 'pro-English.' When this war is over, I suppose you'll be calling them 'red anarchists.' What an eternal art it is—such a glittery delightful art —finding hard names for our opponents! How we do sanctify our efforts to keep them from getting the holy dollars we want for ourselves! The churches have always done it, and the political orators—and I suppose I do it when I call Mrs. Bogart a 'Puritan' and Mr. Stowbody a 'capitalist.' But you business men are going to beat all the rest of us at it, with your simple-hearted, energetic, pompous——"

She got so far only because Kennicott was slow in shaking off respect for her. Now he bayed:

"That'll be about all from you! I've stood for your sneering at this town, and saying how ugly and dull it is. I've stood for your refusing to appreciate good fellows like Sam. I've even stood for your ridiculing our Watch Gopher Prairie Grow campaign. But one thing I'm not going to stand: I'm not going to stand my own wife being seditious. You can camouflage all you want to, but you know darn well that these radicals, as you call 'em, are opposed to the war, and let me tell you right here and now, and you and all these long-haired men and short-haired women can beef all you want to, but we're going to take these fellows, and if they ain't patriotic, we're going to make them be patriotic. And—Lord knows I never thought I'd have to say this to my own wife—but if you go defending these fellows, then the same thing applies to you! Next thing, I suppose you'll be yapping about free speech. Free speech! There's too much free speech and free gas and free beer and free love and all the rest of your damned mouthy freedom, and if I had my way I'd make you folks live up to the established rules of decency even if I had to take you——"

"Will!" She was not timorous now. "Am I pro-

German if I fail to throb to Honest Jim Blausser, too? Let's have my whole duty as a wife!"

He was grumbling, "The whole thing's right in line with the criticism you've always been making. Might have known you'd oppose any decent constructive work for the town or for——"

"You're right. All I've done has been in line. I don't belong to Gopher Prairie. That isn't meant as a condemnation of Gopher Prairie, and it may be a condemnation of me. All right! I don't care! I don't belong here, and I'm going. I'm not asking permission any more. I'm simply going."

He grunted. "Do you mind telling me, if it isn't too much trouble, how long you're going for?"

"I don't know. Perhaps for a year. Perhaps for a life-time."

"I see. Well, of course, I'll be tickled to death to sell out my practise and go anywhere you say. Would you like to have me go with you to Paris and study art, maybe, and wear velveteen pants and a woman's bonnet, and live on spaghetti?"

"No, I think we can save you that trouble. You don't quite understand. I am going—I really am—and alone! I've got to find out what my work is——"

"Work? Work? Sure! That's the whole trouble with you! You haven't got enough work to do. If you had five kids and no hired girl, and had to help with the chores and separate the cream, like these farmers' wives, then you wouldn't be so discontented."

"I know. That's what most men—and women—like you *would* say. That's how they would explain all I am and all I want. And I shouldn't argue with them. These business men, from their crushing labors of sitting in an office seven hours a day, would calmly recommend that I have a dozen children. As it happens, I've done that sort of thing. There've been a good many times when we hadn't a maid, and I did all the housework, and cared for Hugh, and went to Red Cross, and did it all very efficiently. I'm a good cook and a good sweeper, and you don't dare say I'm not!"

"N-no, you're——"

"But was I more happy when I was drudging? I was not. I was just bedraggled and unhappy. It's work—but not my work. I could run an office or a library, or nurse and teach children. But solitary dish-washing isn't enough to satisfy me—or many other women. We're going to chuck it. We're going to wash 'em by machinery, and come out and play with you men in the offices and clubs and politics you've cleverly kept for yourselves! Oh, we're hopeless, we dissatisfied women! Then why do you want to have us about the place, to fret you? So it's for your sake that I'm going!"

"Of course a little thing like Hugh makes no difference!"

"Yes, all the difference. That's why I'm going to take him with me."

"Suppose I refuse?"

"You won't!"

Forlornly, "Uh—— Carrie, what the devil is it you want, anyway?"

"Oh, conversation! No, it's much more than that. I think it's a greatness of life—a refusal to be content with even the healthiest mud."

"Don't you know that nobody ever solved a problem by running away from it?"

"Perhaps. Only I choose to make my own definition of 'running away.' I don't call—— Do you realize how big a world there is beyond this Gopher Prairie where you'd keep me all my life? It may be that some day I'll come back, but not till I can bring something more than I have now. And even if I am cowardly and run away—all right, call it cowardly, call me anything you want to! I've been ruled too long by fear of being called things. I'm going away to be quiet and think. I'm—I'm going! I have a right to my own life."

"So have I to mine!"

"Well?"

"I have a right to my life—and you're it, you're my life! You've made yourself so. I'm damned if I'll agree to all your freak notions, but I will say I've got to depend on you. Never thought of that complication, did you, in this 'off to Bohemia, and express yourself, and free love, and live your own life' stuff!"

"You have a right to me if you can keep me. Can you?"

He moved uneasily.

II

For a month they discussed it. They hurt each other very much, and sometimes they were close to weep-

ing, and invariably he used banal phrases about her duties and she used phrases quite as banal about freedom, and through it all, her discovery that she really could get away from Main Street was as sweet as the discovery of love. Kennicott never consented definitely. At most he agreed to a public theory that she was "going to take a short trip and see what the East was like in wartime."

She set out for Washington in October—just before the war ended.

She had determined on Washington because it was less intimidating than the obvious New York, because she hoped to find streets in which Hugh could play, and because in the stress of war-work, with its demand for thousands of temporary clerks, she could be initiated into the world of offices.

Hugh was to go with her, despite the wails and rather extensive comments of Aunt Bessie.

She wondered if she might not encounter Erik in the East, but it was a chance thought, soon forgotten.

III

The last thing she saw on the station platform was Kennicott, faithfully waving his hand, his face so full of uncomprehending loneliness that he could not smile but only twitch up his lips. She waved to him as long as she could, and when he was lost she wanted to leap from the vestibule and run back to him. She thought of a hundred tendernesses she had neglected.

She had her freedom, and it was empty. The moment was not the highest of her life, but the lowest and most desolate, which was altogether excellent, for instead of slipping downward she began to climb.

She sighed, "I couldn't do this if it weren't for Will's kindness, his giving me money." But a second after: "I wonder how many women would always stay home if they had the money?"

Hugh complained, "Notice me, mummy!" He was beside her on the red plush seat of the day-coach; a boy of three and a half. "I'm tired of playing train. Let's play something else. Let's go see Auntie Bogart."

"Oh, *no!* Do you really like Mrs. Bogart?"

"Yes. She gives me cookies and she tells me about the Dear Lord. You never tell me about the Dear Lord. Why don't you tell me about the Dear Lord? Auntie Bogart says I'm going to be a preacher. Can I be a preacher? Can I preach about the Dear Lord?"

"Oh, please wait till my generation has stopped rebelling before yours starts in!"

"What's a generation?"

"It's a ray in the illumination of the spirit."

"That's foolish." He was a serious and literal person, and rather humorless. She kissed his frown, and marveled:

"I am running away from my husband, after liking a Swedish ne'er-do-well and expressing immoral opinions, just as in a romantic story. And my own son reproves me because I haven't given him religious instruction. But the story doesn't go right. I'm neither groaning nor being dramatically saved. I keep on running away, and I enjoy it. I'm mad with joy over it. Gopher Prairie is lost back there in the dust and stubble, and I look forward——"

She continued it to Hugh: "Darling, do you know what mother and you are going to find beyond the blue horizon rim?"

"What?" flatly.

"We're going to find elephants with golden howdahs from which peep young maharanees with necklaces of rubies, and a dawn sea colored like the breast of a dove, and a white and green house filled with books and silver tea-sets."

"And cookies?"

"Cookies? Oh, most decidedly cookies. We've had enough of bread and porridge. We'd get sick on too many cookies, but ever so much sicker on no cookies at all."

"That's foolish."

"It is, O male Kennicott!"

"Huh!" said Kennicott II, and went to sleep on her shoulder.

IV

The theory of the *Dauntless* regarding Carol's absence:

> Mrs. Will Kennicott and son Hugh left on No. 24 on Saturday last for a stay of some months in Minneapolis, Chicago, New York, and Washington. Mrs. Kennicott confided to Ye Scribe that she will be connected with one of the multifarious war activities now center-

ing in the Nation's Capital for a brief period before returning. Her countless friends who appreciate her splendid labors with the local Red Cross realize how valuable she will be to any war board with which she chooses to become connected. Gopher Prairie thus adds another shining star to its service flag, and without wishing to knock any neighboring communities, we would like to know any town of anywheres near our size in the state that has such a sterling war record. Another reason why you'd better Watch Gopher Prairie Grow.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. David Dyer, Mrs. Dyer's sister, Mrs. Jennie Dayborn of Jackrabbit, and Dr. Will Kennicott drove to Minniemashie on Tuesday for a delightful picnic.

[Carol lives for nearly two years in Washington, working in the Bureau of War Risk Insurance. Will comes to see her and Hugh after thirteen months, takes her on a trip through the South, and asks her to return to Gopher Prairie. At length, pregnant with her second child, she goes back.]

CHAPTER XXXIX

I

She wondered all the way home what her sensations would be. She wondered about it so much that she had every sensation she had imagined. She was excited by each familiar porch, each hearty "Well, well!" and flattered to be, for a day, the most important news of the community. She bustled about, making calls. Juanita Haydock bubbled over their Washington encounter, and took Carol to her social bosom. This ancient opponent seemed likely to be her most intimate friend, for Vida Sherwin, though she was cordial, stood back and watched for imported heresies.

In the evening Carol went to the mill. The mystical Om-Om-Om of the dynamos in the electric-light plant behind the mill was louder in the darkness. Outside sat the night watchman, Champ Perry. He held up his stringy hands and squeaked, "We've all missed you terrible."

Who in Washington would miss her?

Who in Washington could be depended upon like Guy Pollock? When she saw him on the street, smiling as always, he seemed an eternal thing, a part of her own self.

After a week she decided that she was neither glad nor sorry to be back. She entered each day with the matter-of-fact attitude with which she had gone to her office in Washington. It was her task; there would be mechanical details and meaningless talk; what of it?

The only problem which she had approached with emotion proved insignificant. She had, on the train, worked herself up to such devotion that she was willing to give up her own room, to try to share all of her life with Kennicott.

He mumbled, ten minutes after she had entered the house, "Say, I've kept your room for you like it was. I've kind of come round to your way of thinking. Don't see why folks need to get on each other's nerves just because they're friendly. Darned if I haven't got so I like a little privacy and mulling things over by myself."

II

She had left a city which sat up nights to talk of universal transition; of European revolution, guild socialism, free verse. She had fancied that all the world was changing.

She found that it was not.

In Gopher Prairie the only ardent new topics were prohibition, the place in Minneapolis where you could get whisky at thirteen dollars a quart, recipes for home-made beer, the "high cost of living," the presidential election, Clark's new car, and not very novel foibles of Cy Bogart. Their problems were exactly what they had been two years ago, what they had been twenty years ago, and what they would be for twenty years to come. With the world a possible volcano, the husbandmen were plowing at the base of the mountain. A volcano does occasionally drop a river of lava on even the best of agriculturists, to their astonishment and considerable injury, but their cousins inherit the farms and a year or two later go back to the plowing.

She was unable to rhapsodize much over the seven new bungalows and the two garages which Kennicott had made to seem so important. Her intensest thought about them was, "Oh yes, they're all right I suppose." The change which she did heed was the erection of the schoolbuilding, with its cheerful brick walls, broad

windows, gymnasium, classrooms for agriculture and cooking. It indicated Vida's triumph, and it stirred her to activity—any activity. She went to Vida with a jaunty, "I think I shall work for you. And I'll begin at the bottom."

She did. She relieved the attendant at the rest-room for an hour a day. Her only innovation was painting the pine table a black and orange rather shocking to the Thanatopsis. She talked to the farmwives and soothed their babies and was happy.

Thinking of them she did not think of the ugliness of Main Street as she hurried along it to the chatter of the Jolly Seventeen.

She wore her eye-glasses on the street now. She was beginning to ask Kennicott and Juanita if she didn't look young, much younger than thirty-three. The eye-glasses pinched her nose. She considered spectacles. They would make her seem older, and hopelessly settled. No! She would not wear spectacles yet. But she tried on a pair at Kennicott's office. They really were much more comfortable.

III

Dr. Westlake, Sam Clark, Nat Hicks, and Del Snafflin were talking in Del's barber shop.

"Well, I see Kennicott's wife is taking a whirl at the rest-room, now," said Dr. Westlake. He emphasized the "now."

Del interrupted the shaving of Sam and, with his brush dripping lather, he observed jocularly:

"What'll she be up to next? They say she used to claim this burg wasn't swell enough for a city girl like her, and would we please tax ourselves about thirty-seven point nine and fix it all up pretty, with tidies on the hydrants and statoos on the lawns——"

Sam irritably blew the lather from his lips, with milky small bubbles, and snorted, "Be a good thing for most of us roughnecks if we did have a smart woman to tell us how to fix up the town. Just as much to her kicking as there was to Jim Blausser's gassing about factories. And you can bet Mrs. Kennicott is smart, even if she is skittish. Glad to see her back."

Dr. Westlake hastened to play safe. "So was I! So was I! She's got a nice way about her, and she knows a good deal about books—or fiction anyway. Of course she's like all the rest of these women—not solidly founded—not scholarly—doesn't know anything about political economy—falls for every new idea that some windjamming crank puts out. But she's a nice woman. She'll probably fix up the rest-room, and the rest-room is a fine thing, brings a lot of business to town. And now that Mrs. Kennicott's been away, maybe she's got over some of her fool ideas. Maybe she realizes that folks simply laugh at her when she tries to tell us how to run everything."

"Sure. She'll take a tumble to herself," said Nat Hicks, sucking in his lips judicially. "As far as I'm concerned, I'll say she's as nice a looking skirt as there is in town. But yow!" His tone electrified them. "Guess she'll miss that Swede Valborg that used to work for me! They was a pair! Talking poetry and moonshine! If they could of got away with it, they'd of been so darn lovey-dovey——"

Sam Clark interrupted, "Rats, they never even thought about making love. Just talking books and all that junk. I tell you, Carrie Kennicott's a smart woman, and these smart educated women all get funny ideas, but they get over 'em after they've had three or four kids. You'll see her settled down one of these days, and teaching Sunday School and helping at sociables and behaving herself, and not trying to butt into business and politics. Sure!"

After only fifteen minutes of conference on her stockings, her son, her separate bedroom, her music, her ancient interest in Guy Pollock, her probable salary in Washington, and every remark which she was known to have made since her return, the supreme council decided that they would permit Carol Kennicott to live, and they passed on to a consideration of Nat Hicks's New One about the traveling salesman and the old maid.

IV

For some reason which was totally mysterious to Carol, Maud Dyer seemed to resent her return. At the Jolly Seventeen Maud giggled nervously, "Well, I suppose you found war-work a good excuse to stay away and have a swell time. Juanita! Don't you think we ought to make Carrie tell us about the officers she met in Washington?"

They rustled and stared. Carol looked at them. Their curiosity seemed natural and unimportant.

"Oh yes, yes indeed, have to do that some day," she yawned.

She no longer took Aunt Bessie Small seriously enough to struggle for independence. She saw that Aunt Bessie did not mean to intrude, that she wanted to do things for all the Kennicotts. Thus Carol hit upon the tragedy of old age, which is not that it is less vigorous than youth, but that it is not needed by youth; that its love and prosy sageness, so important a few years ago, so gladly offered now, are rejected with laughter. She divined that when Aunt Bessie came in with a jar of wild-grape jelly she was waiting in hope of being asked for the recipe. After that she could be irritated but she could not be depressed by Aunt Bessie's simoom of questioning.

She wasn't depressed even when she heard Mrs. Bogart observe, "Now we've got prohibition it seems to me that the next problem of the country ain't so much abolishing cigarettes as it is to make folks observe the Sabbath and arrest these law-breakers that play baseball and go to the movies and all on the Lord's Day."

Only one thing bruised Carol's vanity. Few people asked her about Washington. They who had most admiringly begged Percy Bresnahan for his opinions were least interested in her facts. She laughed at herself when she saw that she had expected to be at once a heretic and a returned hero; she was very reasonable and merry about it; and it hurt just as much as ever.

V

Her baby, born in August, was a girl. Carol could not decide whether she was to become a feminist leader or marry a scientist or both, but did settle on Vassar and a tricolette suit with a small black hat for her Freshman year.

VI

Hugh was loquacious at breakfast. He desired to give his impressions of owls and F Street.

"Don't make so much noise. You talk too much," growled Kennicott.

Carol flared. "Don't speak to him that way! Why don't you listen to him? He has some very interesting things to tell."

"What's the idea? Mean to say you expect me to spend all my time listening to his chatter?"

"Why not?"

"For one thing, he's got to learn a little discipline. Time for him to start getting educated."

"I've learned much more discipline, I've had much more education, from him than he has from me."

"What's this? Some new-fangled idea of raising kids you got in Washington?"

"Perhaps. Did you ever realize that children are people?"

"That's all right. I'm not going to have him monopolizing the conversation."

"No, of course. We have our rights, too. But I'm going to bring him up as a human being. He has just as many thoughts as we have, and I want him to develop them, not take Gopher Prairie's version of them. That's my biggest work now—keeping myself, keeping you, from 'educating' him."

"Well, let's not scrap about it. But I'm not going to have him spoiled."

Kennicott had forgotten it in ten minutes; and she forgot it—this time.

VII

The Kennicotts and the Sam Clarks had driven north to a duck-pass between two lakes, on an autumn day of blue and copper.

Kennicott had given her a light twenty-gauge shotgun. She had a first lesson in shooting, in keeping her eyes open, not wincing, understanding that the bead at the end of the barrel really had something to do with pointing the gun. She was radiant; she almost believed Sam when he insisted that it was she who had shot the mallard at which they had fired together.

She sat on the bank of the reedy lake and found rest in Mrs. Clark's drawling comments on nothing. The brown dusk was still. Behind them were dark marshes. The plowed acres smelled fresh. The lake was garnet and silver. The voices of the men, waiting for the last flight, were clear in the cool air.

"Mark left!" sang Kennicott, in a long-drawn call.

Three ducks were swooping down in a swift line. The guns banged, and a duck fluttered. The men pushed their light boat out on the burnished lake, disappeared beyond the reeds. Their cheerful voices and the slow splash and clank of oars came back to Carol from the dimness. In the sky a fiery plain sloped down to a serene harbor. It dissolved; the lake was white marble;

and Kennicott was crying, "Well, old lady, how about hiking out for home? Supper taste pretty good, eh?"

"I'll sit back with Ethel," she said, at the car.

It was the first time she had called Mrs. Clark by her given name; the first time she had willingly sat back, a woman of Main Street.

"I'm hungry. It's good to be hungry," she reflected, as they drove away.

She looked across the silent fields to the west. She was conscious of an unbroken sweep of land to the Rockies, to Alaska; a dominion which will rise to unexampled greatness when other empires have grown senile. Before that time, she knew, a hundred generations of Carols will aspire and go down in tragedy devoid of palls and solemn chanting, the humdrum inevitable tragedy of struggle against inertia.

"Let's all go to the movies tomorrow night. Awfully exciting film," said Ethel Clark.

"Well, I was going to read a new book but—— All right, let's go," said Carol.

VIII

"They're too much for me," Carol sighed to Kennicott. "I've been thinking about getting up an annual Community Day, when the whole town would forget feuds and go out and have sports and a picnic and a dance. But Bert Tybee (why did you ever elect him mayor?)—he's kidnapped my idea. He wants the Community Day, but he wants to have some politician 'give an address.' That's just the stilted sort of thing I've tried to avoid. He asked Vida, and of course she agreed with him."

Kennicott considered the matter while he wound the clock and they tramped up-stairs.

"Yes, it would jar you to have Bert butting in," he said amiably. "Are you going to do much fussing over this Community stunt? Don't you ever get tired of fretting and stewing and experimenting?"

"I haven't even started. Look!" She led him to the nursery door, pointed at the fuzzy brown head of her daughter. "Do you see that object on the pillow? Do you know what it is? It's a bomb to blow up smugness. If you Tories were wise, you wouldn't arrest anarchists; you'd arrest all these children while they're asleep in their cribs. Think what that baby will see and meddle with before she dies in the year 2000! She may see an industrial union of the whole world, she may see aeroplanes going to Mars."

"Yump, probably be changes all right," yawned Kennicott.

She sat on the edge of his bed while he hunted through his bureau for a collar which ought to be there and persistently wasn't.

"I'll go on, always. And I am happy. But this Community Day makes me see how thoroughly I'm beaten."

"That darn collar certainly is gone for keeps," muttered Kennicott and, louder, "Yes, I guess you—— I didn't quite catch what you said, dear."

She patted his pillows, turned down his sheets, as she reflected:

"But I have won in this: I've never excused my failures by sneering at my aspirations, by pretending to have gone beyond them. I do not admit that Main Street is as beautiful as it should be! I do not admit that Gopher Prairie is greater or more generous than Europe! I do not admit that dish-washing is enough to satisfy all women! I may not have fought the good fight, but I have kept the faith."

"Sure. You bet you have," said Kennicott. "Well, good night. Sort of feels to me like it might snow tomorrow. Have to be thinking about putting up the storm-windows pretty soon. Say, did you notice whether the girl put that screwdriver back?"

1920



Edwin Arlington Robinson

1869 · 1935

In the second decade of the twentieth century, a poetic renaissance burst upon America. Poetry fairly boomed, as never before or since in our history. The following names and titles were some of the highlights of the period: Amy Lowell, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seeds* (1914); Robert Frost, *North of Boston* (1914); Vachel Lindsay, *The Congo and Other Poems* (1914); Edgar Lee Masters, *Spoon River Anthology* (1915); Carl Sandburg, *Chicago Poems* (1916); and Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Renascence* (1917). An important organ of the movement was *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, edited in Chicago by Harriet Monroe. The poetic renaissance flourished for about ten years; by the early twenties, these writers had said about all that they had to say. World War I, moreover, interrupted the movement and produced a spiritual climate which required a different kind of poetry. The appearance of Eliot's *Waste Land* in 1922 marked the beginning of a new phase.

Edwin Arlington Robinson is associated in popular memory with the renaissance. His *Man Against the Sky* (1916) was hailed along with the works of the new poets. Yet Robinson was not really one of the new poets; he had been publishing poetry for twenty years before he achieved recognition, which was a by-product of the renaissance proper. But if Robinson preceded the new poets, his belated fame, which they helped him to achieve, more than kept pace with theirs. In the twenties, he was generally regarded as America's greatest living poet, and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize three times—in 1922 for *Collected Poems*, in 1925 for *The Man Who Died Twice*, and in 1928 for *Tristram*.

Robinson was born in the village of Head Tide, Maine, and spent his youth in nearby Gardiner, the "Tilbury Town" of his poems. After finishing the high-school course in Gardiner, he entered Harvard, but left after two years, returning to Gardiner to devote himself to the writing of poetry. In 1897 he moved to New York, where he lived for the rest of his life, except for summers spent, after 1911, at the MacDowell Colony near Peterborough, New Hampshire. He went to Europe once, but never traveled in the United States beyond New England and New York City. Unmarried and shy, he lived quietly and inexpensively; he had little money, but, like another New Englander, Henry Thoreau, he could be rich by making his wants few. He published over twenty volumes of poetry, some of the more notable of which are: *The Children of the Night* (1897), *Captain Craig* (1902), *The Town down the River* (1910), *The Man Against the Sky* (1916), *Merlin* (1917), *Lancelot* (1920), *Dionysus in Doubt* (1925), *Tristram* (1927), and *Matthias at the Door* (1931). Though written in conventional nineteenth-century forms, Robinson's poetry is "modern" in diction and temper. He may have been influenced by Robert Browning's dramatic monologue and analysis of men and women, but his view of life is nearer Thomas Hardy's than any other earlier poet's. His poetry is sober, reflective, pessimistic, and now and then obscure.

Robinson's development was, roughly, in two phases. Before 1916 he excelled in "Tilbury" portraits which were sharply etched and indigenous to New England. In the second phase Robinson became medieval and

philosophical. He retold the Arthurian stories in *Merlin, Lancelot,* and *Tristram,* and gave free rein, in these poems and in others, to philosophical disquisition. At their best, the philosophical parts have dignity and strength; at their worst, they are wordy and vague. Although his fame dates from the second phase, critical opinion today, ironically enough, seems to prefer the early portraits of Tilbury Town.

The Man Against the Sky suggests Robinson's qualities as a philosophical poet. The Man Against the Sky, Robinson's Everyman, is a figure of doubtful heroism. His course is ambiguous. But his road—whatever it may have been—was a dark one and led only to apparent failure or, at best, to an equivocal success. This being so, "Why live?" the poet asks. The answer is a little uncertain: there is, he says, "an orient Word that will not be erased." This "orient Word" makes life significant even though its meaning is but dimly understood. The poet seems to counsel a kind of despairing courage to seek out the meaning.

Other poems suggest similar moods and attitudes. In "Flammonde," "we've each a darkening hill to climb." Miniver Cheevy "scratched his head and kept on thinking." In "Credo," the poet could not find his way, though he felt "the coming glory of the Light."

Despite his large use of Arthurian materials, Robinson is in the native New England tradition. He reflects that tradition, though, in the process of decay. The accent is still Puritan, but no longer vigorous and triumphant.

Collected Poems, New York, 1937 • Amy Lowell, **Tendencies in Modern American Poetry,** Boston, 1917 • Mark Van Doren, **Edwin Arlington Robinson,** New York, 1927

Cliff Klingenhagen

Cliff Klingenhagen had me in to dine
With him one day; and after soup and meat,
And all the other things there were to eat,
Cliff took two glasses and filled one with wine
And one with wormwood. Then, without a sign
For me to choose at all, he took the draught
Of bitterness himself, and lightly quaffed
It off, and said the other one was mine.

And when I asked him what the deuce he meant
By doing that, he only looked at me
And smiled, and said it was a way of his.
And though I know the fellow, I have spent
Long time a-wondering when I shall be
As happy as Cliff Klingenhagen is.

1897

Richard Cory

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
'Good-morning,' and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

1897

Credo

I cannot find my way: there is no star
In all the shrouded heavens anywhere;
And there is not a whisper in the air
Of any living voice but one so far
That I can hear it only as a bar
Of lost, imperial music, played when fair
And angel fingers wove, and unaware,

Dead leaves to garlands where no roses are.
No, there is not a glimmer, nor a call,
For one that welcomes, welcomes when he fears,
The black and awful chaos of the night;
For through it all—above, beyond it all—
I know the far-sent message of the years,
I feel the coming glory of the Light.

1897

L'Envoi

Now in a thought, now in a shadowed word,
Now in a voice that thrills eternity,
Ever there comes an onward phrase to me
Of some transcendent music I have heard;
No piteous thing by soft hands dulcimered,
No trumpet crash of blood-sick victory,
But a glad strain of some vast harmony
That no brief mortal touch has ever stirred.
There is no music in the world like this,
No character wherewith to set it down,
No kind of instrument to make it sing.
No kind of instrument? Ah, yes, there is;
And after time and place are overthrown,
God's touch will keep its one chord quivering.

1897

Miniver Cheevy

Although it reads like a satire on nineteenth-century medievalism—shades of Mark Twain's **Connecticut Yankee**!—this poem actually foreshadows the poet's deep interest in the Arthurian stories. If Miniver Cheevy could have written **Merlin** and **Tristram**, perhaps he would not have required the solace of alcohol.

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
    Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
    And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
    When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
    Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
    And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
    And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
    That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
    And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
    Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
    Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
    And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the mediaeval grace
    Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
    But sore annoyed was he without it;
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
    And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
    Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
    And kept on drinking.

1907

Flammonde

"Flammonde" illustrates Robinson's fascinated interest in psychological enigmas: what "satanic kink" in the mind of Flammonde prevented him from being the grand success that he might otherwise have been?

The man Flammonde, from God knows where,
With firm address and foreign air,

"Miniver Cheevy" from **The Town Down the River** by Edwin Arlington Robinson; published by Charles Scribner's Sons; copyright, 1910, by Charles Scribner's Sons and 1938 by Ruth Niveson; used by permission of the publishers

With news of nations in his talk
And something royal in his walk,
With glint of iron in his eyes,
But never doubt, nor yet surprise,
Appeared, and stayed, and held his head
As one by kings accredited.

Erect, with his alert repose
About him, and about his clothes,
He pictured all tradition hears
Of what we owe to fifty years.
His cleansing heritage of taste
Paraded neither want nor waste;
And what he needed for his fee
To live, he borrowed graciously.

He never told us what he was,
Or what mischance, or other cause,
Had banished him from better days
To play the Prince of Castaways.
Meanwhile he played surpassing well
A part, for most, unplayable;
In fine, one pauses, half afraid
To say for certain that he played.

For that, one may as well forego
Conviction as to yes or no;
Nor can I say just how intense
Would then have been the difference
To several, who, having striven
In vain to get what he was given,
Would see the stranger taken on
By friends not easy to be won.

Moreover, many a malcontent
He soothed and found munificent;
His courtesy beguiled and foiled
Suspicion that his years were soiled;
His mien distinguished any crowd,
His credit strengthened when he bowed;
And women, young and old, were fond
Of looking at the man Flammonde.

There was a woman in our town
On whom the fashion was to frown;
But while our talk renewed the tinge
Of a long-faded scarlet fringe,
The man Flammonde saw none of that,
And what he saw we wondered at—
That none of us, in her distress,
Could hide or find our littleness.

There was a boy that all agreed
Had shut within him the rare seed
Of learning. We could understand,
But none of us could lift a hand.
The man Flammonde appraised the youth,
And told a few of us the truth;
And thereby, for a little gold,
A flowered future was enrolled.

There were two citizens who fought
For years and years, and over nought;
They made life awkward for their friends,
And shortened their own dividends.
The man Flammonde said what was wrong
Should be made right; nor was it long
Before they were again in line,
And had each other in to dine.

And these I mention are but four
Of many out of many more.
So much for them. But what of him—
So firm in every look and limb?
What small satanic sort of kink
Was in his brain? What broken link
Withheld him from the destinies
That came so near to being his?

What was he, when we came to sift
His meaning, and to note the drift
Of incommunicable ways
That make us ponder while we praise?
Why was it that his charm revealed
Somehow the surface of a shield?
What was it that we never caught?
What was he, and what was he not?

How much it was of him we met
We cannot ever know; nor yet
Shall all he gave us quite atone
For what was his, and his alone;

Nor need we now, since he knew best,
Nourish an ethical unrest:
Rarely at once will nature give
The power to be Flammonde and live.

We cannot know how much we learn
From those who never will return,
Until a flash of unforeseen
Remembrance falls on what has been.
We've each a darkening hill to climb;
And this is why, from time to time
In Tilbury Town, we looked beyond
Horizons for the man Flammonde.

1915

Mr. Flood's Party

"Mr. Flood's Party" is another of Robinson's masterful Tilbury Town portraits, clearly conceived and sharply etched. The "party" consists of only one person, since Mr. Flood's contemporaries have long been dead, and the younger generation of Tilbury are unfriendly to him. Mr. Flood is thus reduced to the misfortune of drinking alone. In a special sense, the poem suggests the loneliness of rural New England, but in a larger sense, the loneliness of old age anywhere.

The reference to Roland seems quaintly incongruous in a New England setting. There is little resemblance between Mr. Flood and the famous knight of medieval romance except that each fought a losing battle alone and went down in defeat at last.

Old Eben Flood, climbing alone one night
Over the hill between the town below
And the forsaken upland hermitage
That held as much as he should ever know
On earth again of home, paused warily.
The road was his with not a native near;
And Eben, having leisure, said aloud,
For no man else in Tilbury Town to hear:

'Well, Mr. Flood, we have the harvest moon
Again, and we may not have many more;
The bird is on the wing, the poet says,
And you and I have said it here before.
Drink to the bird.' He raised up to the light
The jug that he had gone so far to fill,
And answered huskily: 'Well, Mr. Flood,
Since you propose it, I believe I will.'

Alone, as if enduring to the end
A valiant armor of scarred hopes outworn,
He stood there in the middle of the road
Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn.
Below him, in the town among the trees,
Where friends of other days had honored him,
A phantom salutation of the dead
Rang thinly till old Eben's eyes were dim.

Then, as a mother lays her sleeping child
Down tenderly, fearing it may awake,
He set the jug down slowly at his feet
With trembling care, knowing that most things break;
And only when assured that on firm earth
It stood, as the uncertain lives of men
Assuredly did not, he paced away,
And with his hand extended paused again:

'Well, Mr. Flood, we have not met like this
In a long time; and many a change has come
To both of us, I fear, since last it was
We had a drop together. Welcome home!'
Convivially returning with himself,
Again he raised the jug up to the light;
And with an acquiescent quaver said:
'Well, Mr. Flood, if you insist, I might.

'Only a very little, Mr. Flood—
For auld lang syne. No more, sir; that will do.'
So, for the time, apparently it did,
And Eben evidently thought so too;
For soon amid the silver loneliness
Of night he lifted up his voice and sang,
Secure, with only two moons listening,
Until the whole harmonious landscape rang—

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20 **Roland's ghost,** an allusion to the hero of the famous French romance of the eleventh century, the Chanson de Roland. The reference obliquely reflects Robinson's absorbing interest in the European Middle Ages

'For auld lang syne.' The weary throat gave out,
The last word wavered, and the song was done.
He raised again the jug regretfully
And shook his head, and was again alone.

There was not much that was ahead of him,
And there was nothing in the town below—
Where strangers would have shut the many doors
That many friends had opened long ago.

1921



Robert Frost

1875 •

Despite the fact that his natal place was San Francisco, California, Robert Frost's forebears for nine generations had been New Englanders, and most of his life, from 1885 to the present, has been lived in New England. Frost's father died in San Francisco when the boy was ten, and the widow went East to Lawrence, Massachusetts, with her children, to live with their grandfather. Frost attended school in Lawrence, and did such good work that, at graduation, he was high-school valedictorian. In the autumn of 1892 Frost entered Dartmouth, but, finding college life unattractive, he shortly withdrew. During the next few years, he worked in a mill for a time, took a tramping trip through the South, did some teaching, some newspaper work, and married Elinor White, who in high school had been his only rival for class valedictorian. In 1897, he tried college again, this time Harvard, where he enjoyed the study of Latin, Greek, and philosophy. At

Panel (l. to r.): Frost's farmhouse, Franconia, New Hampshire • Robert Frost at 55 • "Something there is that doesn't love a wall"

the end of two years, however, he again left college, and moved to a farm near Derry, New Hampshire, which had been given to him by his grandfather. Because farming, during a period of eleven years, proved pretty unprofitable, Frost turned to teaching at nearby Pinkerton Academy (1905-1911) and then at New Hampshire State Normal (1911-1912).

Meanwhile, he had made a rather discouraging start as a poet. He had from early boyhood been an enthusiastic reader and writer of poetry. In his teens he had begun to publish a few of his poems in magazines. His poetry, however, did not seem very attractive to most buyers: in twenty years, he earned about two hundred dollars, in all, from his verses. In 1911, at thirty-six, he decided to sell his farm and to spend a few years in concentrated poetic work, to determine once and for all whether he could succeed in literature. Attracted by the relatively low cost of living in England, he went there, with his family, in 1912. By 1913 he managed to find a British publisher for his first book of verse, *A Boy's Will.* This, as well as his second book, *North of Boston* (1914), was very favorably received by English readers and critics.

When, in 1915, Frost returned to America, he learned that his two books, upon re-publication in this country, had won appreciation of a sort to make him rub his eyes. Regardless, he resumed his old vocations of farming—in New Hampshire and Vermont—and of teaching; but now he gave more time to composition. Since 1915 he has taught at Amherst College, the University of Michigan, the University of Vermont, and Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury. He has published several books of verse, notably *Mountain Interval* (1916), *New Hampshire* (1924), *West-Running Brook* (1928), *A Further Range* (1936), *A Witness Tree* (1942), *Come In* (1943), *Masque of Reason* (1945), *Steeple Bush* (1947), *A Masque of Mercy* (1948), and three issues of *Selected Poems* (1923, 1931, 1934). Four times, in 1924, 1931, 1937, and 1943, Frost has received the Pulitzer Award for American poetry.

The poetry of Frost has been influenced, of course, by various authors whom he admires. Virgil, the Latin poet of the *Georgics* and the *Eclogues,* has left his imprint. Frost's work is in the tradition, too, of New England predecessors such as Emerson, Thoreau, and Emily Dickinson. Yet, for the most part, bookish influences seem less important than those of the poet's inheritance and environment. The scenery, the characters, the habits of life in his section north of Boston are the stuff of much of the verse. The rocky farms, the lush woodlands, the old houses, and the stone fences of Yankeeland are in his poems. So are the rugged folk of the section—their hard lives devoted to tilling thin soil, their quirks, their ironic humor, their emotional crises. Writing of such people, often in monologues and dialogues, the poet subtly translates into rhythms the intonations, as well as expressions, which are pure New England. And much of the verse is read best when the reader uses the tight-lipped way of talking characteristic of farm folk in New Hampshire and Vermont. Frost himself, a stalwart, rough-hewn figure of a man with the weathered face of a farmer, so reads them to perfection.

Although, at first reading or hearing, the poems may seem to be lucidly simple, after better acquaintance they turn out to be, in many instances, rich in hidden meanings. Some words which Emily Dickinson applied to herself apply to Frost; like her, he "thinks New Englandly." There is a certain reticence, a teasing indirectness, in his way of telling his thought. Generally he avoids personal involvement by dramatizing: "Everything written," he has said, "is as good as it is dramatic." Often he merely presents an incident or scene, and leaves to the reader the search for any implied significance; and even when he states a moral (as in "Mending Wall") frequently a more general meaning is implied. "If I must be classified as a poet," he once said, half jestingly, half earnestly, "I might be called a Synecdochist; for I prefer the synecdoche in poetry—that figure of speech in which we use a part for the whole." Furthermore, it appears that he avoids explicit formulations partly, at least, because he does not want to commit himself to any solution which runs the danger of being simple-minded. Life, he sees, is full of apparent paradoxes. It is tragic and hilariously comic, beautiful and ugly, chaotic and unified, and he refuses to take an extreme "either-or" position. Therefore, as Mark Van Doren has said (*American Scholar,* 1936), "Mr. Frost's place is and always has been singularly central. He has nothing to do with the extremes where most of our shouting has been heard. . . . There is an ignoble way of avoiding ex-

tremes. It is the way of being nobody and saying nothing; or never, at any rate, being or saying enough to count. But there is another way which, difficult though it may be to define, is the only way worth considering. It consists in occupying or touching both extremes at once, and inhabiting all the space between. It consists in being capable of excess while actually achieving more than excess achieves. It consists in finding the golden mean which, far from signifying that the extremes have been avoided, signifies that they have been enclosed and contained." A careful study of the poetry of Robert Frost will show that, for all his appearance of rustic simplicity, he has more of significance to say than many of the contemporaneous poets among whom he holds a high position.

Collected Poems, New York, 1930 • R. P. Coffin, New Poetry of New England, Baltimore, 1938 • Recognition of Robert Frost, ed. Richard Thornton, New York, 1937 • Lawrance Thompson, Fire and Ice: The Art and Thought of Robert Frost, New York, 1942

Mowing

A one-sentence interpretation of this poem by its author is, "The youth takes up life simply with the small tasks." Wrote T. K. Whipple, in Spokesmen: "Robert Frost's is preëminently a farmer's poetry. His familiarity with nature and with objects is not, for all his deservedly famous observation, that of the observer or spectator, but that of the man who has worked with them and used them. His acquaintance with them is more intimate and more intuitive than that of the onlooker. A grindstone to him is not a quaint object with rustic associations, but something which has made him groan and sweat; a scythe does not remind him of Theocritus but of the feel of the instrument as he swung it." In "Mowing," the poet is concerned with suggesting to the reader his "intimate and intuitive acquaintance" with a swinging scythe—his sensing of significance in an ordinary task. The verse form, since it is a sonnet with its own individual rhyme-scheme, and since its iambic rhythms are adjusted to those of a conversational tone, represents the modified modernism of the author's versification.

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound—
And that was why it whispered and did not speak
It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:
Anything more than the truth would have seemed
too weak
To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows,
Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
(Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.
My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

1913

The Demiurge's Laugh

A "demiurge," according to Greek mythology, was a subordinate god who created or fashioned the world. Frost has said that "The Demiurge's Laugh" is "about science." Hence "the Demon" whom the poet pursued may have been some false god worshiped by science as a creator, perhaps creative evolution as a final explanation of all history and progress. Thinking he was on the trail of this scientific fable, the poet heard a sound "behind him instead of before"—a mocking sound which made him realize that his belief that he was progressing toward understanding was fallacious. Abashed by this realization, he abandoned the search. Such an interpretation of the poem (others are possible) at least is consistent with the author's lifelong habit of rejecting oversimplified solutions and faiths.

It was far in the sameness of the wood;
I was running with joy on the Demon's trail,

Though I knew what I hunted was no true god.
    It was just as the light was beginning to fail
That I suddenly heard—all I needed to hear.
It has lasted me many and many a year.

The sound was behind me instead of before,
    A sleepy sound, but mocking half,
As of one who utterly couldn't care.
    The Demon arose from his wallow to laugh,
Brushing the dirt from his eye as he went;
And well I knew what the Demon meant.

I shall not forget how his laugh rang out.
    I felt as a fool to have been so caught,
And checked my steps to make pretence
    It was something among the leaves I sought
(Though doubtful whether he stayed to see).
Thereafter I sat me against a tree.

1913

Mending Wall

Characteristic details often repeated in the New England landscape are stone fences, laboriously kept in neat repair by their owners. In this poem, which tells of the springtime ritual of mending such a wall, two kinds of Yankees—or of men—are dramatically contrasted. The "I" of the poem is unconventional in his thinking and impish in his discourse; his neighbor is a person who doggedly takes for granted that anything which his father has thought and said must be a final fact. The narrator opens with some of his reflections about the way nature seems to battle, in its mysterious way, against a wall. He then tells of an annual arrangement he has with his neighbor to repair winter damages—"to set the wall between us once again." There is irony, of course, in the fact that those who live near to one another thus cooperate to set themselves apart, an irony which is heightened by the fact that this particular wall has no real purpose. In the brief argument which follows, the narrator teases his neighbor about this situation; but the neighbor repeats, with unction, an old adage which he has thoughtlessly accepted. Some will take this poem to be a little character etching; others, perhaps, will take it to be a parable about the way tradition works against nature to keep men or even nations apart. Frost merely tells the story. Writes G. R. Elliott, in The Nation, 1919: "'Good fences make good neighbors'; but also, on the other hand, 'Something there is that doesn't love a wall.' This two-sided text . . . is the underlying theme of the poet's whole work. Does it not also represent, in miniature, the great paradox which now confronts human society? 'Walls' are indispensable, we find, and yet our progress toward human brotherhood seems sadly cramped by 'walls.' That this paradox is soluble in the spirit of true neighborliness, but that the solution of it is laborious and exciting, is what one is made to feel keenly in reading Mr. Frost's poetry."

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbours.'
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:

'*Why* do they make good neighbours? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbours.'

1914

The Death of the Hired Man

"The Death of the Hired Man," like "Mending Wall," dramatically presents a group of contrasting characters, but here there are three instead of two. Aside from some brief descriptive and narrative passages, it is a dialogue, and the conversation typifies Robert Frost's skill in making verse sound like talk and in delineating the folk of his region. The temperament and history of the hired man, Silas, are shown indirectly by the discussion about him, and his return and death are important incidents. Silas is a lazy, sponging rogue who, on many occasions, has wandered away only to return and take advantage of the kindness of his employers, Mary and Warren. These employers reveal their characters as they converse about the latest return of this pathetic but rather ingratiating creature. In the discussion which follows, the wife deftly wins the farmer over to her point of view. When Warren goes to speak with Silas, he makes an ironic discovery.

Mary sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with the news
And put him on his guard. 'Silas is back.'
She pushed him outward with her through the door
And shut it after her. 'Be kind,' she said.
She took the market things from Warren's arms
And set them on the porch, then drew him down
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.

'When was I ever anything but kind to him?
But I'll not have the fellow back,' he said.
'I told him so last haying, didn't I?
"If he left then," I said, "that ended it."
What good is he? Who else will harbour him
At his age for the little he can do?
What help he is there's no depending on.
Off he goes always when I need him most.
"He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,
Enough at least to buy tobacco with,
So he won't have to beg and be beholden."
"All right," I say, "I can't afford to pay
Any fixed wages, though I wish I could."
"Someone else can." "Then someone else will have to."
I shouldn't mind his bettering himself
If that was what it was. You can be certain,
When he begins like that, there's someone at him
Trying to coax him off with pocket-money,—
In haying time, when any help is scarce.
In winter he comes back to us. I'm done.'

'Sh! not so loud: he'll hear you,' Mary said.

'I want him to: he'll have to soon or late.'

'He's worn out. He's asleep beside the stove.
When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,
Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,
A miserable sight, and frightening, too—
You needn't smile—I didn't recognise him—
I wasn't looking for him—and he's changed.
Wait till you see.'

'Where did you say he'd been?'

'He didn't say. I dragged him to the house,
And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke.
I tried to make him talk about his travels.
Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off.'

What did he say? Did he say anything?'

'But little.'

'Anything? Mary, confess
He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me.'

'Warren!'

'But did he? I just want to know.'

'Of course he did. What would you have him say?
Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old man
Some humble way to save his self-respect.
He added, if you really care to know,
He meant to clear the upper pasture, too.
That sounds like something you have heard before?
Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look
Two or three times—he made me feel so queer—
To see if he was talking in his sleep.
He ran on Harold Wilson—you remember—
The boy you had in haying four years since.
He's finished school, and teaching in his college.
Silas declares you'll have to get him back.
He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft
On education—you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,
Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on.'

'Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot.'

'Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn't think they would. How some things linger!
Harold's young college boy's assurance piqued him.
After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathise. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.
Harold's associated in his mind with Latin.
He asked me what I thought of Harold's saying
He studied Latin like the violin
Because he liked it—that an argument!
He said he couldn't make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong—
Which showed how much good school had ever done him.
He wanted to go over that. But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay—'

'I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.
He bundles every forkful in its place,
And tags and numbers it for future reference,
So he can find and easily dislodge it
In the unloading. Silas does that well.
He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.
You never see him standing on the hay
He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself.'

'He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be
Some good perhaps to someone in the world.
He hates to see a boy the fool of books.
Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
And nothing to look backward to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different.'

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw it
And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard some tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.
'Warren,' she said, 'he has come home to die:
You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time.'

'Home,' he mocked gently.

'Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he's nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail.'

'Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.'

'I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve.'

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.
'Silas has better claim on us you think
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles
As the road winds would bring him to his door.
Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.
Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,
A somebody—director in the bank.'

'He never told us that.'

'We know it though.'

'I think his brother ought to help, of course.
I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of right
To take him in, and might be willing to—
He may be better than appearances.
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think
If he had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time?'

'I wonder what's between them.'

'I can tell you.
Silas is what he is—we wouldn't mind him—
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.
He never did a thing so very bad.
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As anybody. Worthless though he is,
He won't be made ashamed to please his brother.'

'I can't think Si ever hurt anyone.'

'No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-back.
He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.
You must go in and see what you can do.
I made the bed up for him there to-night.
You'll be surprised at him—how much he's broken.
His working days are done, I'm sure of it.'

'I'd not be in a hurry to say that.'

'I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.
But, Warren, please remember how it is:
He's come to help you ditch the meadow.
He has a plan. You mustn't laugh at him.
He may not speak of it, and then he may.
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon.'

It hit the moon.
Then there were three there, making a dim row,
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.

Warren returned—too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.

'Warren?' she questioned.

'Dead,' was all he answered.

1914

The Hill Wife

In Fire and Ice, an illuminating study of Robert Frost, Professor Thompson writes these helpful comments: "An implied dramatic narrative is fashioned from five very short lyrics in 'The Hill Wife'. . . . It stands out by implication as a miniature lyric drama in five scenes. The first scene, of twelve lines only, sets the stage for tragedy, and establishes the theme of fear-in-loneliness. The Hill Wife tries to tell her husband that something must be wrong with them to be so sad and lonely. . . . The second scene is even shorter than the first. In it a chorus voice describes the fear of the empty house when the Hill Wife returns with her husband at night. . . . In the third scene, the Hill Wife describes her fear caused by the way a passing tramp smiled strangely and unfathomably at her before he walked into the woods with the bread she had given him. Fear of yet another kind shows itself in the fourth scene. Briefly the chorus voice tells how the Hill Wife is troubled by the persistent scrape of a pine branch which

fumbles against her bedroom window with 'tireless but ineffectual hands.' The fifth scene, entitled 'The Impulse,' contains climax and denouement. The chorus voice tells how the Hill Wife followed her silent husband in field and wood, hoping that his nearness might relieve her fear of loneliness. Once, when she strayed off so far that she scarcely heard when he shouted to her, she hid herself instead of answering him. The conclusion [comprising the last two stanzas] is terse enough. In 'The Hill Wife' the psychological analysis is developed entirely through implication, and hinges on the growing failure of the man to sympathize with the woman's accumulated psychosis."

LONELINESS

Her Word

One ought not to have to care
    So much as you and I
Care when the birds come round the house
    To seem to say good-bye;

Or care so much when they come back
    With whatever it is they sing;
The truth being we are as much
    Too glad for the one thing

As we are too sad for the other here—
    With birds that fill their breasts
But with each other and themselves
    And their built or driven nests.

HOUSE FEAR

Always—I tell you this they learned—
Always at night when they returned
To the lonely house from far away
To lamps unlighted and fire gone gray,
They learned to rattle the lock and key
To give whatever might chance to be
Warning and time to be off in flight:
And preferring the out- to the in-door night,
They learned to leave the house-door wide
Until they had lit the lamp inside.

THE SMILE

Her Word

I didn't like the way he went away.
That smile! It never came of being gay.
Still he smiled—did you see him?—I was sure!
Perhaps because we gave him only bread
And the wretch knew from that that we were poor.
Perhaps because he let us give instead
Of seizing from us as he might have seized.
Perhaps he mocked at us for being wed,
Or being very young (and he was pleased
To have a vision of us old and dead).
I wonder how far down the road he's got.
He's watching from the woods as like as not.

THE OFT-REPEATED DREAM

She had no saying dark enough
    For the dark pine that kept
Forever trying the window-latch
    Of the room where they slept.

The tireless but ineffectual hands
    That with every futile pass
Made the great tree seem as a little bird
    Before the mystery of glass!

It never had been inside the room,
    And only one of the two
Was afraid in an oft-repeated dream
    Of what the tree might do.

THE IMPULSE

It was too lonely for her there,
    And too wild,
And since there were but two of them,
    And no child,

And work was little in the house,
    She was free,
And followed where he furrowed field,
    Or felled tree.

She rested on a log and tossed
    The fresh chips,

With a song only to herself
    On her lips.

And once she went to break a bough
    Of black alder.
She strayed so far she scarcely heard
    When he called her—

And didn't answer—didn't speak—
    Or return.
She stood, and then she ran and hid
    In the fern.

He never found her, though he looked
    Everywhere,
And he asked at her mother's house
    Was she there.

Sudden and swift and light as that
    The ties gave,
And he learned of finalities
    Besides the grave.

1916

Birches

A man, upon seeing bent birches, recalls how, as a boy, he had swung upon such trees. Then, by means of an analogy, he contrasts the swinging of a boy, toward Heaven and back to earth, with death.

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.
Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.
But I was going to say when Truth broke in
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
I should prefer to have some boy bend them
As he went out and in to fetch the cows—
Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father's trees
By riding them down over and over again
Until he took the stiffness out of them,
And not one but hung limp, not one was left
For him to conquer. He learned all there was
To learn about not launching out too soon
And so not carrying the tree away
Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.
So was I once myself a swinger of birches.
And so I dream of going back to be.
It's when I'm weary of considerations,
And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having lashed across it open.
I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.
May no fate willfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better.
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,

But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

1916

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

The speaker in this brief monologue is a farmer who has stopped his sleigh for a time to admire the snow falling over the night-darkened woods. His horse, puzzled by the pause, takes the same attitude toward it which would be taken by anyone with a worldly scheme of values: the stop serves no material purpose, so why make it? In time, the traveler himself recalls worldly demands—remembers that he has "promises to keep" and a schedule to follow. It is, perhaps, a simple story of a momentary halt to admire beauty, in the business of living. Or perhaps—if one wants to follow some of the unobtrusive suggestions—it is a picture of a man who, in the midst of life, has a brief and dim comprehension of the inevitable sleep which is death.

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

1923

Two Tramps in Mud-Time

In splitting wood, a man may find a physical and emotional pleasure similar to the one Frost describes in this poem and in "Mowing." Suppose, though, that someone who has a financial need for work asks for the ax or the scythe? This question is posed by "Two Tramps in Mud-Time." Cleanth Brooks notices that the opening stanzas "establish the character of the speaker so that the generalization . . . is dramatically justified." He criticizes Frost, however, because here the generalization "is made finally in the mode of prose rather than in terms of symbol." The criticism might not be valid if, as some may hold, the solution is not Frost's own, or if the solution—like the moral of "Mending Wall"—has emotional and logical implications above and beyond those explicitly stated.

Out of the mud two strangers came
And caught me splitting wood in the yard.
And one of them put me off my aim
By hailing cheerily "Hit them hard!"
I knew pretty well why he dropped behind
And let the other go on a way.
I knew pretty well what he had in mind:
He wanted to take my job for pay.

Good blocks of beech it was I split,
As large around as the chopping-block;
And every piece I squarely hit
Fell splinterless as a cloven rock.
The blows that a life of self-control
Spares to strike for the common good
That day, giving a loose to my soul,
I spent on the unimportant wood.

The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day:
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,
A wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

A bluebird comes tenderly up to alight
And fronts the wind to unruffle a plume,
His song so pitched as not to excite
A single flower as yet to bloom.
It is snowing a flake: and he half knew
Winter was only playing possum.
Except in color he isn't blue,
But he wouldn't advise a thing to blossom.

The water for which we may have to look
In summertime with a witching-wand,
In every wheelrut's now a brook,
In every print of a hoof a pond.
Be glad of water, but don't forget
The lurking frost in the earth beneath
That will steal forth after the sun is set
And show on the water its crystal teeth.

The time when most I loved my task
These two must make me love it more
By coming with what they came to ask.
You'd think I never had felt before
The weight of an ax head poised aloft,
The grip on earth of outspread feet,
The life of muscles rocking soft
And smooth and moist in vernal heat.

Out of the woods two hulking tramps
(From sleeping God knows where last night
But not long since in the lumber camps).
They thought all chopping was theirs of right.
Men of the woods and lumber-jacks,
They judged me by their appropriate tool.
Except as a fellow handled an ax,
They had no way of knowing a fool.

Nothing on either side was said.
They knew they had but to stay their stay
And all their logic would fill my head:
As that I had no right to play
With what was another man's work for gain.
My right might be love but theirs was need.
And where the two exist in twain
Theirs was the better right — agreed.

But yield who will to their separation,
My object in life is to unite
My avocation and my vocation
As my two eyes make one in sight.
Only where love and need are one,
And the work is play for mortal stakes,
Is the deed ever really done
For Heaven and the future's sakes.

1936

Vachel Lindsay

1879 • 1931

Better, perhaps, than any recent poet, Vachel Lindsay represented some of the important attitudes of the great Middle West — its agrarianism, its democracy, and its evangelism. Born and reared in Springfield, Illinois, he spent his youth in a city which is the capital of the largely rural state of Illinois. Andrew Jackson, Walt Whitman, and Lincoln were his political idols. From childhood, he was a member of the intensely evangelical Campbellite religious sect. And each of these influences, as well as his work in art, did much to determine the nature of Lindsay's poetry.

Both of Lindsay's parents were Kentuckians whose

thinking had been molded by that of the agrarian South. Each summer, the boy visited his grandparents' farm in Indiana, where he heard the talk of pioneers and farmers. The ideal oratory of his childhood was that of the pulpit, the political stump, and the Fourth of July platform.

Study in the Springfield public schools was followed by work in Hiram College in Ohio. Later he lived in Chicago, studying in the Art Institute (1900-1903) and eking out his meager allowance by working at various part-time jobs. He also studied in the New York School of Art (1904-1905), "drawing architecture, drawing sculpture, trying to draw the Venus of Milo, and imitating the Japanese Prints and Beardsley, and trying to draw like Blake and all such masters."

Lindsay's art work and his thinking next led him into some ventures which seem strange but were definitely in character. Impelled by his faith in art and literature as regenerating forces in American life, he went on tramping trips (1906, 1908, 1912) to various parts of the country, and he made still other tours as a lecturer for the Y.M.C.A. and the Anti-Saloon League. In his travels, he was a sort of lay evangelist, attempting to convert his countrymen to a way of living in which art was important. Some of his experiences were recounted in a volume called *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty* (1914).



Self-portrait of Vachel Lindsay.

It was during a walking trip from Illinois to New Mexico in 1912 that he composed the poem "General William Booth Enters into Heaven," which, because of the novelty of its material and its form, was to win Lindsay's first national acclaim when it was published in *Poetry*, the newly founded magazine. *General William Booth Enters into Heaven and Other Poems* was published in 1913; *The Congo and Other Poems*, in 1914; *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems*, in 1917; *The Golden Whales of California and Other Rhymes*, in 1920.

Shortly after his first success, Lindsay became a favorite of the lecture platform, one who traveled to every corner of the country. His success, to some extent, was the result of his invention of what he called "the higher vaudeville," devised to convert indifferent audiences to the beauties of poetry. This consisted, as he said, of "elaborate reading . . . reading that comes to the edge of a chant without having the literary meaning crowded by the chant." Some idea of his reading is suggested by marginal notations on a number of his poems, but the best way to learn how he sounded is to listen to records of some of his recitations. His flexible voice and his handling of rhythms gave his poetry unique appeal.

The poems thus presented were typical of the man in several ways. They showed the student of art in their techniques, their images. In the rhythms of country oratory, they set forth myths and folklore. They were frequently the product of the robust imaginative humor of the common man. They preached Lindsay's deeply held convictions—his ethical and religious ideals and the tenets of his political faith. Finally, they mirrored emotions which ranged from bounding exuberance to sadness—emotions which he experienced in alternating moods.

In the end Lindsay wearied of his platform appearances, since he felt that the theatrical quality of his reading obscured not only his message but also his lyrical artistry. His later books of poetry—*Going-to-the-Sun* (1923), *Going-to-the-Stars* and *The Candle in the Cabin* (1926), and *Every Soul Is a Circus* (1929)—which were more lyrical in nature, did not succeed as his earlier works had. Supporting his wife and their two children was almost impossible on his small income. Always subject to occasional fits of melancholia, in his last years he gave way more and more frequently to a feeling of depression. He died by his own hand in 1931.

Collected Poems, Revised and Illustrated Edition (contains poems before 1923; later poems have not been collected), New York, 1925 • A. E. Trombley, **Lindsay, Adventurer**, Columbia, Missouri, 1929 • E. L. Masters, **Vachel Lindsay: A Poet in America**, New York, 1935

Proclamations

At the conclusion of his tramping trip of 1912, Lindsay issued a series of proclamations, which were published first in a national magazine, Farm and Fireside, and later at the conclusion of Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty. The following two selections touch upon tenets which were to be developed in his prose and poetry during the rest of his career. The first offers rural ways of living and thinking as a substitute for the woeful existence offered by cities. The second urges a reconciliation of "Religion, Equality, and Beauty."

A PROCLAMATION OF BALM IN GILEAD

Go to the fields, O city laborers, till your wounds are healed. Forget the streetcars, the skyscrapers, the slums, the Marseillaise song.

We proclaim to the broken-hearted, still able to labor, the glories of the ploughed land. The harvests are wonderful. And there is a spiritual harvest appearing. A great agricultural flowering of art and song is destined soon to appear. Where corn and wheat are growing, men are singing the psalms of David, not the Marseillaise.

You to whom the universe has become a blast-furnace, a coke-oven, a cinder-strewn freight-yard, to whom the history of all ages is a tragedy with the climax now, to whom our democracy and our flag are but playthings of the hypocrite,— turn to the soil, turn to the earth, your mother, and she will comfort you. Rest, be it ever so little, from your black broodings. Think with the farmer once more, as your fathers did. Revere with the farmer our centuries-old civilization, however little it meets the city's trouble. Revere the rural customs that have their roots in the immemorial benefits of nature.

With the farmer look again upon the Constitution as something brought by Providence, prepared for by the ages. Go to church, the cross-roads church, and say the Lord's Prayer again. Help them with their temperance crusade. It is a deeper matter than you think. Listen to the laughter of the farmer's children. Know that not all the earth is a-weeping. Know that so long as there is black soil deep on the prairie, so long as grass will grow on it, we have a vast green haven.

The roots of some of our trees are still in the earth. Our mountains need not to be moved from their places. Wherever there is tillable land, there is a budding and blooming of old-fashioned Americanism, which the farmer is making splendid for us against the better day.

There is perpetual balm in Gilead, and many city workmen shall turn to it and be healed. This by faith, and a study of the signs, we proclaim!

PROCLAMATION

Of the Coming of Religion, Equality and Beauty

In our new day, so soon upon us, for the first time in the history of Democracy, art and the church shall be hand in hand and equally at our service. Neither craftsmanship nor prayer shall be purely aristocratic any more, nor at war with each other, nor at war with the State. The priest, the statesman and the singer shall discern one another's work more perfectly and give thanks to God

Even now our best churches are blossoming in beauty Our best political life, whatever the howlers may say, is tending toward equality, beauty and holiness

Political speech will cease to turn only upon the price of grain, but begin considering the price of cross-roads fountains and people's palaces. Our religious life will no longer trouble itself with the squabbles of orthodoxy. It will give us the outdoor choral procession, the ceremony of dedicating the wheat-field or the new-built private house to God. That politician who would benefit the people will not consider all the world wrapped up in the defence or destruction of a tariff schedule. He will serve the public as did Pericles, with the world's greatest dramas. He will rebuild the local Acropolis. He will make his particular Athens rule by wisdom and philosophy, not trade alone. Our crowds shall be audiences, not hurrying mobs; dancers, not brawlers; observers, not restless curiosity-seekers. Our mobs shall become assemblies and our assemblies religious; devout in a subtle sense, equal in privilege and courtesy, delicate of spirit, a perfectly rounded democracy.

All this shall come through the services of three kinds of men in wise coöperation: the priests, the statesmen and the artists. Our priests shall be religious men like

St. Francis, or John Wesley, or General Booth, or Cardinal Newman. They shall be many types, but supreme of their type.

Our statesmen shall find their exemplars and their inspiration in Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln, as all good Americans devoutly desire.

But even these cannot ripen the land without the work of men as versatile as William Morris or Leonardo. Our artists shall fuse the work of these other workers, and give expression to the whole cry and the whole weeping and rejoicing of the land. We shall have Shelleys with a heart for religion, Ruskins with a comprehension of equality.

Religion, equality and *beauty!* By these America shall come into a glory that shall justify the yearning of the sages for her perfection, and the prophecies of the poets, when she was born in the throes of Valley Forge.

This by faith and a study of the signs, we proclaim!

1913

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8 **William Morris** (1834-1896) was not only an English author but also an artisan and a designer • 8 **Leonardo**, Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1510), in addition to being an artist, was also an architect and an engineer • 11 **Shelley**, Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), British poet, was an atheist and hence, in Lindsay's opinion, irreligious • 12 **Ruskin**. See note, p 1057 Ruskin had views of democracy with which Lindsay did not agree

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General William Booth Enters into Heaven

This poem is a fanciful memorial of General William Booth (1829-1912), the English founder of the Salvation Army. Like many of Lindsay's poems, it is notable for its rhythm. Here the beat is determined by the music of the Salvation Army band: the first line, and other lines in the poem, echo the "boom-boom-Boom-Boom-Boom" of a drum, and the refrain, "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" is a line from a favorite song of the evangelists whom Booth led. Notable, too, is the imagery: Lindsay here shows why he urged that his poems be judged "for lifetime and even hereditary thoughts and memories of painting." Like the old medieval plays which localized Biblical scenes in terms of the experiences of the audience, this poem shows Heaven in the guise of a county seat in a little Midwestern town. Around the courthouse square, Booth leads the band of bedraggled sinners whom his army has saved, and like a local mayor welcoming a visiting celebrity, Jesus comes from the courthouse to welcome Booth. The English evangelist doubtless appealed to the poet because of the democratic faith which both championed. The author's evangelism is displayed in the picturing of the regeneration of the motley marchers and in the repeated refrain which, at the end, is addressed directly to the reader.

(To be sung to the tune of "The Blood of the Lamb" with indicated instruments.)

I

(Bass drum beaten loudly.)
Booth led boldly with his big bass drum,
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
The saints smiled gravely, and they said,
"He's come"
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,
Drabs from the alleyways and drug-fiends pale—
Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail!
Vermin-eaten saints with moldy breath
Unwashed legions with the ways of death—
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

(Banjos.)
Every slum had sent its half-a-score
The round world over.— (Booth had groaned for more.)
Every banner that the wide world flies
Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes.
Big-voiced lasses made their banjos bang!
Tranced, fanatical, they shrieked and sang;—
"Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"
Hallelujah! It was queer to see
Bull-necked convicts with that land make free!
Loons with trumpets blowed a blare, blare, blare—
On, on, upward thro' the golden air!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

(Bass drum slower and softer.)
Booth died blind, and still by faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.
Booth led boldly, and he looked the chief.
Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.

(Sweet flute music.)
Jesus came from out the Courthouse door,
Stretched His hands above the passing poor.
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there
'Round and 'round the mighty Courthouse square.
Yet in an instant all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled
And blind eyes opened on a new sweet world.

(Bass drum louder.)
Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole!
Gone was the weasel-head, the snout, the jowl!
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!

(Grand chorus of all instruments. Tambourines to the foreground.)
The hosts were sandaled and their wings were fire!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
But their noise played havoc with the angel-choir.
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
Oh, shout Salvation! it was good to see
Kings and Princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of Queens!

(Reverently sung, no instruments.)
And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master thro' the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth the soldier, while the throng knelt down.
He saw King Jesus. They were face to face,
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

1912-1913

The Eagle That Is Forgotten

John Altgeld, governor of Illinois during Lindsay's youth, won the poet's respect by championing the liberal cause. Altgeld's ideas on the penal system and taxation, his pardoning of anarchists, and his protest against the breaking of strikes by federal troops caused him to be abused as a "radical" by many newspapers. Lindsay was sympathetic to the liberal agrarian movement symbolized by Altgeld.

Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.

"We have buried him now," thought your foes, and in secret rejoiced.
They made a brave show of their mourning, their hatred unvoiced.
They had snarled at you, barked at you, foamed at you, day after day.
Now you were ended. They praised you . . . and laid you away.

The others, that mourned you in silence and terror and truth,
The widow bereft of her crust, and the boy without youth,
The mocked and the scorned and the wounded, the lame and the poor,
That should have remembered forever, . . . Remember no more.

Where are those lovers of yours, on what name do they call,
The lost, that in armies wept over your funeral pall?
They call on the names of a hundred high-valiant ones,
A hundred white eagles have risen, the sons of your sons,
The zeal in their wings is a zeal that your dreaming began,
The valor that wore out your soul in the service of man.

Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.
Sleep on, O brave-hearted, O wise man that kindled the flame—
To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name,
To live in mankind, far, far more than . . . to live in a name.

1912?-1913

At the baboon butler in the agate door,
And the well-known tunes of the parrot band
That trilled on the bushes of that magic land.

A troupe of skull-faced witch-men came — With pomposity.
Through the agate doorway in suits of flame,
Yea, long-tailed coats with a gold-leaf crust
And hats that were covered with diamond-dust.
And the crowd in the court gave a whoop and a call
And danced the juba from wall to wall.
But the witch-men suddenly stilled the throng — With a great deliberation and ghostliness.
With a stern cold glare, and a stern old song:—
"Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you." . . .
Just then from the doorway, as fat as shotes,
Came the cake-walk princes in their long red coats,. — With overwhelming assurance, good cheer, and pomp.
Canes with a brilliant lacquer shine,
And tall silk hats that were red as wine.
And they pranced with their butterfly partners there,
Coal-black maidens with pearls in their hair, — With growing speed and sharply marked dance-rhythm.
Knee-skirts trimmed with the jassamine sweet,
And bells on their ankles and little black-feet.
And the couples railed at the chant and the frown
Of the witch-men lean, and laughed them down
(O rare was the revel, and well worth while
That made those glowering witch-men smile.)

The cake-walk royalty then began
To walk for a cake that was tall as a man
To the tune of "Boomlay, boomlay, BOOM,"
While the witch-men laughed, with a sinister air,
And sang with the scalawags prancing there:— — With a touch of Negro dialect, and as rapidly as possible toward the end
"Walk with care, walk with care,
Or Mumbo-Jumbo, God of the Congo,
And all of the other
Gods of the Congo,
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you.
Beware, beware, walk with care,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom.
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay,
BOOM."
Oh rare was the revel, and well worth while — Slow philosophic calm.
That made those glowering witch-men smile.

1914

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

(In Springfield, Illinois)

Professor T. K. Whipple sees in this poem an example of what he calls Lindsay's "myth-making faculty." The myths in the poet's works, he notes, "partake of the nature of visions" such as "the figure of Lincoln walking through the streets of Springfield in the darkness. . . . Such phantasms have an epic scope, legendary, fabulous, racial. All Lindsay's best work has this folk-quality. No one equals him in ability to discern symbols of national significance underlying the national life. . . . Always at his best he has this intimate relationship with the American scene; like other American writers, he profits by staying close to the soil. . . ."

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight, in our little town
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old courthouse pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play,
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us:—as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free:
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

1914



Censers of the angels swinging over Lincoln's home- a drawing by Lindsay from The Village Magazine.

The Flower-Fed Buffaloes

The flower-fed buffaloes of the spring
In the days of long ago,
Ranged where the locomotives sing
And the prairie flowers lie low:—
The tossing, blooming, perfumed grass
Is swept away by the wheat,
Wheels and wheels and wheels spin by
In the spring that still is sweet.
But the flower-fed buffaloes of the spring
Left us, long ago.
They gore no more, they bellow no more,
They trundle around the hills no more:—
With the Blackfeet, lying low.
With the Pawnees, lying low,
Lying low.

1924



Carl Sandburg

1878 •

Back in the later years of the nineteenth century, a large number of recently arrived Swedish immigrants were working in Galesburg, Illinois, and several of them had the common Swedish name, Johnson. To avoid confusion, August Johnson, a blacksmith with a railway construction gang, changed his name to Sandburg. Thus when August's son, born in Galesburg in 1878, became well-known, he was famous not as Carl Johnson but as Carl Sandburg. Probably Sandburg would have been pleased to have a more ordinary name than he has. For as a writer, he conceived of his work as the articulation of the experiences, the thoughts, and the dreams of ordinary men and women.

Panel (l. to r.): The ballad singer • Carl Sandburg at 45 • Looking north on Michigan Avenue, Chicago

When he was thirteen, Carl Sandburg left school to drive a milkwagon. Later he was a porter in a Galesburg barber shop, and then a worker in a brickyard. In the years before the Spanish-American War began, he traveled a good deal (mostly on the underside of boxcars), stopping off in Kansas, say, to work in the wheatfields, or in Denver or Omaha to wash dishes in a hotel. It was during his eight-month enlistment for the Spanish-American War that he was persuaded by an alumnus of Lombard College at Galesburg that he ought to go to college.

After working his way through Lombard, he became a traveling salesman of stereopticon slides, and he was engaged in this work when, in 1904, a former professor arranged for the publication of his first book, a little pamphlet called *In Reckless Ecstasy.* Sandburg later was to be glad that this collection of rather imitative poems had not had a wide sale, but he never renounced the passages in it which foreshadowed all his future work.

A few years after his first book appeared, Sandburg became a journalist in Milwaukee, working as labor reporter on Socialist Victor Berger's *Milwaukee Leader.* For a time, he was secretary to Milwaukee's Socialist mayor, Emil Seidel. In Milwaukee in 1908, he married Lillian Steichen, who, like him, was interested in the fortunes of laborers. In 1912 he and his wife drifted to Chicago, where he worked for several publications, notably the *Daily News.*

When *Poetry* was started in Chicago, Sandburg was one of its early contributors; and in 1916 his first book of poems to be put out by a nationally known publisher appeared. *Chicago Poems* was followed by *Cornhuskers* (1918), *Smoke and Steel* (1920), *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1922), *Good Morning, America* (1928), *The People, Yes* (1936), and *Collected Poems* (1951).

Meanwhile, Sandburg had become well known as a singer of ballads. In various parts of the country, he had appeared on platforms to sing the folk songs collected on his travels—songs of cowboys, hobos, and workmen, and spirituals learned from their Negro makers. In time, some of the songs he sang, accompanying himself on a guitar, were recorded. In time, too, the folk songs he had collected were published in *The American Songbag* (1927), a book admired by the scholar and the general reader alike.

When Sandburg eventually turned to the writing of history, he produced a biography of Lincoln *The Prairie Years* (1926) carried Lincoln's story down to the time Lincoln left for the White House and *The War Years* (1940) told of Lincoln as President.

The poetry, the ballad collecting, and the biography are all of a piece. Frequently Sandburg has quoted with admiration the saying of one of Kipling's characters—"I will be the word of the people. Mine will be the bleeding mouth from which the gag is snatched. I will say everything." As Sandburg has conceived of his task, it has been to voice the thoughts and feelings of the common folk.

His poetry is expressive of his times in both its form and its subject matter. It is free verse of the sort becoming fashionable when he started to write. His diction is the American language, the richness of which was being discovered in Sandburg's young manhood. He, like others, was bewildered by the shift of America from the agrarian way of living to the industrial way. He, like others, was resentful of the injustices and the hypocrisies of a transitional period. Finally he, like others, found a hope and a belief which he could affirm. For him, these grew, naturally enough, from what he had seen and learned of the people—*The People, Yes.*

Harry Hansen, **Midwest Portraits**, New York, 1923 • Bruce Weirick, **From Whitman to Sandburg in American Poetry**, New York, 1928 • T. K. Whipple, **Spokesmen: Modern Writers and American Life**, New York, 1928 • Vernon Loggins, **I Hear America . . . : Literature in the United States Since 1900**, New York, 1937

Chicago

"What Sandburg likes in Chicago," note Carl and Mark Van Doren, "is its newness and hopefulness, which a different poet might call its rawness and callowness. . . . Above all he admires the superb insolence of the untamed capital. . . . Sandburg is equally insolent. He too discards the past and its patterns; he too reaches out and grasps whatever seems to him full of life and molds it to his own uses; he too speaks his own language, though it comes to him from the streets rather than from the dictionaries. To the extent that Chicago is the metropolis of the present and the future, Sandburg is the poet of these eras."

When "Chicago" appeared in Poetry in 1914, it was the subject of a great deal of controversy. Its unconventional rhythms, diction, and imagery seemed to some to depart deliberately from those of conventional poetry. Nevertheless, the poem has something more than a casual structure. The opening lines offer a series of descriptions summarized in the fifth line, "City of the Big Shoulders"—a suggestion of the city's power. Lines 6-8 show the grim aspects, but line 9 marks a turn, and the defense of the city begins with other details about strength. In lines 19-23, climactically, this strength is shown overcoming the sorrow and sordidness earlier described, and in the final line the words of the opening lines are repeated, this time linked with the pride and the laughter of Chicago.

Hog Butcher for the World
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

1914

To a Contemporary Bunkshooter

In this fierce poem, Sandburg angrily contrasts the preachments of the theatrical revivalist of the day with the teachings of Christ. The author's sympathy with the underprivileged makes him contemptuous of sermonizing under the guise of religion which serves the purpose of their exploiters by urging people to suffer wrongs with a humble spirit. His conception of Jesus is of a quiet man who gave his life as a sacrifice for humble sufferers—a very different sort from the encourager of exploitation pictured by the athletic preacher here apostrophized.

You come along . . . tearing your shirt . . . yelling about Jesus.
Where do you get that stuff?
What do you know about Jesus?
Jesus had a way of talking soft and outside of a few bankers and higher-ups among the con men of Jerusalem everybody liked to have this Jesus around because he never made any fake passes and everything he said went and he helped the sick and gave the people hope.

You come along squirting words at us, shaking your fist and call us all dam fools so fierce the froth slobbers over your lips . . . always blabbing we're all going to hell straight off and you know all about it.

I've read Jesus' words. I know what he said. You don't throw any scare into me. I've got your number. I know how much you know about Jesus.

He never came near clean people or dirty people but they felt cleaner because he came along. It was your crowd of bankers and business men and lawyers hired the sluggers and murderers who put Jesus out of the running.

I say the same bunch backing you nailed the nails into the hands of this Jesus of Nazareth. He had lined up against him the same crooks and strong-arm men now lined up with you paying your way.

This Jesus was good to look at, smelled good, listened good. He threw out something fresh and beautiful from the skin of his body and the touch of his hands wherever he passed along.

You slimy bunkshooter, you put a smut on every human blossom in reach of your rotten breath belching about hell-fire and hiccupping about this Man who lived a clean life in Galilee.

When are you going to quit making the carpenters build emergency hospitals for women and girls driven crazy with wrecked nerves from your gibberish about Jesus?—I put it to you again: Where do you get that stuff? What do you know about Jesus?

Go ahead and bust all the chairs you want to. Smash a whole wagon-load of furniture at every performance. Turn sixty somersaults and stand on your nutty head. If it wasn't for the way you scare the women and kids I'd feel sorry for you and pass the hat.

I like to watch a good four-flusher work, but not when he starts people puking and calling for the doctors.

I like a man that's got nerve and can pull off a great original performance, but you—you're only a bughouse pedlar of second-hand gospel—you're only shoving out a phoney imitation of the goods this Jesus wanted free as air and sunlight.

You tell people living in shanties Jesus is going to fix it up all right with them by giving them mansions in the skies after they're dead and the worms have eaten 'em.

You tell $6 a week department store girls all they need is Jesus; you take a steel trust wop, dead without having lived, grey and shrunken at forty years of age, and you tell him to look at Jesus on the cross and he'll be all right.

You tell poor people they don't need any more money on pay day and even if it's fierce to be out of a job, Jesus'll fix that up all right, all right—all they gotta do is take Jesus the way you say.

I'm telling you Jesus wouldn't stand for the stuff you're handing out Jesus played it different. The bankers and lawyers of Jerusalem got their sluggers and murderers to go after Jesus just because Jesus wouldn't play their game. He didn't sit in with the big thieves.

I don't want a lot of gab from a bunkshooter in my religion.

I won't take my religion from any man who never works except with his mouth and never cherishes any memory except the face of the woman on the American silver dollar.

I ask you to come through and show me where you're pouring out the blood of your life.

I've been to this suburb of Jerusalem they call Golgotha, where they nailed Him, and I know if the story is straight it was real blood ran from His hands and the nail-holes, and it was real blood spurted in red drops where the spear of the Roman soldier rammed in between the ribs of this Jesus of Nazareth.

1914

The Harbor

"Poems," Sandburg has said, "are the results of moods I don't approach a subject in the same mood every day." A comparison between the picture of Chicago given here and that presented in "Chicago" shows how the poet's mood determines what details he will present. Here, instead of being lusty and gay, the city is cramped and

tragic. The confinement of its walls and the bafflement of its inhabitants are set off against the lack of restraint and the freedom of the open sky. In one mood, at any rate, Sandburg saw the city as something evil and frustrating—something opposed to the goodness of unspoiled nature.

Passing through huddled and ugly walls
By doorways where women
Looked from their hunger-deep eyes,
Haunted with shadows of hunger-hands,
Out from the huddled and ugly walls,
I came sudden, at the city's edge,
On a blue burst of lake,
Long lake waves breaking under the sun
On a spray-flung curve of shore;
And a fluttering storm of gulls,
Masses of great gray wings
And flying white bellies
Veering and wheeling free in the open.

1916

I Am the People, the Mob

This poem comes as near as anything Sandburg has written to expressing one of the poet's most important beliefs. Here is a positive statement of his remedy for the evils he sees in the world of his day—a realization, on the part of the people, of their needs and their own power to supply them.

I am the people — the mob — the crowd — the mass.
Do you know that all the great work of the world is done through me?
I am the workingman, the inventor, the maker of the world's food and clothes.
I am the audience that witnesses history. The Napoleons come from me and the Lincolns.
They die. And then I send forth more Napoleons and Lincolns.
I am the seed ground. I am a prairie that will stand for much plowing. Terrible storms pass over me.
forget. The best of me is sucked out and wasted. I forget. Everything but Death comes to me and makes me work and give up what I have. And I forget.
Sometimes I growl, shake myself and spatter a few red drops for history to remember. Then — I forget.
When I, the People, learn to remember, when I, the People, use the lessons of yesterday and no longer forget who robbed me last year, who played me for a fool,— then there will be no speaker in all the world say the name: "The People," with any fleck of a sneer in his voice or any far-off smile of derision.
The mob — the crowd — the mass — will arrive then.

1916

Prairie

"Ostensibly," writes Harry Hansen, "he [Sandburg] was of the city, but the great wide prairie was close at hand; he was to grow up with the music of the wind through its corn fields in his ears; like the young Lincoln he was to tread the furrows of rich, black loam and feel the soft grass of the meadow lands under his bare feet." This song expresses his kinship, his affection.

More than the preceding poems in this text, this poem shows Sandburg's considerable indebtedness to Whitman. Not only are the phrasings and rhythms similar, but the mood is Whitmanesque. Perhaps this is because Sandburg here is praising the vast American landscape, the joy of work, and the brotherhood of man. There is a difference, however, which is rather hard to define. Perhaps the most important fact is that Sandburg worked a great deal in the fields before he wrote about them, and his experience gave his poem somewhat more particularity than a typical poem by Whitman about farming.

I was born on the prairie and the milk of its wheat, the red of its clover, the eyes of its women, gave me a song and a slogan.

Here the water went down, the icebergs slid with gravel, the gaps and the valleys hissed, and the black loam came, and the yellow sandy loam.

Here between the sheds of the Rocky Mountains and the Appalachians, here now a morning star fixes a fire sign over the timber claims and cow pastures, the corn belt, the cotton belt, the cattle ranches.

Here the gray geese go five hundred miles and back with a wind under their wings honking the cry for a new home.

Here I know I will hanker after nothing so much as one more sunrise or a sky moon of fire doubled to a river moon of water.

The prairie sings to me in the forenoon and I know in the night I rest easy in the prairie arms, on the prairie heart.

• • •

After the sunburn of the day
handling a pitchfork at a hayrack,
after the eggs and biscuit and coffee,
the pearl-gray haystacks
in the gloaming
are cool prayers
to the harvest hands.

In the city among the walls the overland passenger train is choked and the pistons hiss and the wheels curse.

On the Prairie the overland flits on phantom wheels and the sky and the soil between them muffle the pistons and cheer the wheels.

• • •

I am here when the cities are gone.
I am here before the cities come.
I nourished the lonely men on horses
I will keep the laughing men who ride iron.
I am dust of men.

The running water babbled to the deer, the cottontail, the gopher.

You came in wagons, making streets and schools,

Kin of the ax and rifle, kin of the plow and horse,

Singing *Yankee Doodle, Old Dan Tucker, Turkey in the Straw,*

You in the coonskin cap at a log house door hearing a lone wolf howl,

You at a sod house door reading the blizzards and chinooks let loose from Medicine Hat,

I am dust of your dust, as I am brother and mother

To the copper faces, the worker in flint and clay,

The singing women and their sons a thousand years ago

Marching single file the timber and the plain.

I hold the dust of these amid changing stars.

I last while old wars are fought, while peace broods mother-like,

While new wars arise and the fresh killings of young men.

I fed the boys who went to France in great dark days.

Appomattox is a beautiful word to me and so is Valley Forge and the Marne and Verdun,

I who have seen the red births and the red deaths

Of sons and daughters, I take peace or war, I say nothing and wait.

Have you seen a red sunset drip over one of my cornfields, the shore of night stars, the wave lines of dawn up a wheat valley?

Have you heard my threshing crews yelling in the chaff of a strawpile and the running wheat of the wagon-boards, my cornhuskers, my harvest hands hauling crops, singing dreams of women, worlds, horizons?

• • •

Rivers cut a path on flat lands.
The mountains stand up.
The salt oceans press in
And push on the coast lines.
The sun, the wind, bring rain
And I know what the rainbow writes across the east or west in a half-circle.
A love-letter pledge to come again.

• • •

Towns on the Soo Line,
Towns on the Big Muddy,
Laugh at each other for cubs
And tease as children.

Omaha and Kansas City, Minneapolis and St. Paul, sisters in a house together, throwing slang, growing up.
Towns in the Ozarks, Dakota wheat towns, Wichita, Peoria, Buffalo, sisters throwing slang, growing up.

• • •

Out of prairie-brown grass crossed with a streamer of wigwam smoke — out of a smoke pillar, a blue promise — out of wild ducks woven in greens and purples —
Here I saw a city rise and say to the peoples round world: Listen, I am strong, I know what I want.
Out of log houses and stumps — canoes stripped from tree-sides — flatboats coaxed with an ax from the timber claims — in the years when the red and the white men met — the houses and streets rose.

A thousand red men cried and went away to new places for corn and women: a million white men came and put up skyscrapers, threw out rails and wires, feelers to the salt sea: now the smokestacks bite the skyline with stub teeth.

In an early year the call of a wild duck woven in greens and purples: now the riveter's chatter, the police patrol, the song-whistle of the steamboat.

To a man across a thousand years I offer a handshake.
I say to him: Brother, make the story short, for the stretch of a thousand years is short.

• • •

What brothers these in the dark?
What eaves of skyscrapers against a smoke moon?
These chimneys shaking on the lumber shanties
When the coal boats plow by on the river —
The hunched shoulders of the grain elevators —
The flame sprockets of the sheet steel mills
And the men in the rolling mills with their shirts off
Playing their flesh arms against the twisting wrists of steel:

what brothers these
in the dark
of a thousand years?

• • •

A headlight searches a snowstorm.
A funnel of white light shoots from over the pilot of the Pioneer Limited crossing Wisconsin.

In the morning hours, in the dawn,
The sun puts out the stars of the sky
And the headlight of the Limited train.

The fireman waves his hand to a country school teacher on a bobsled.
A boy, yellow hair, red scarf and mittens, on the bobsled, in his lunch box a pork chop sandwich and a V of gooseberry pie.

The horses fathom a snow to their knees.
Snow hats are on the rolling prairie hills.
The Mississippi bluffs wear snow hats.

• • •

Keep your hogs on changing corn and mashes of grain, O farmerman.
Cram their insides till they waddle on short legs
Under the drums of bellies, hams of fat.
Kill your hogs with a knife slit under the ear.
Hack them with cleavers.
Hang them with hooks in the hind legs.

• • •

A wagonload of radishes on a summer morning.
Sprinkles of dew on the crimson-purple balls.
The farmer on the seat dangles the reins on the rumps of dapple-gray horses.
The farmer's daughter with a basket of eggs dreams of a new hat to wear to the county fair.

• • •

On the left- and right-hand side of the road,
Marching corn —
I saw it knee high weeks ago — now it is head high — tassels of red silk creep at the ends of the ears.

• • •

I am the prairie, mother of men, waiting.
They are mine, the threshing crews eating beefsteak, the farmboys driving steers to the railroad cattle pens.

They are mine, the crowds of people at a Fourth of July basket picnic, listening to a lawyer read the Declaration of Independence, watching the pinwheels and Roman candles at night, the young men and women two by two hunting the bypaths and kissing bridges.

They are mine, the horses looking over a fence in the frost of late October saying good-morning to the horses hauling wagons of rutabaga to market.

They are mine, the old zigzag rail fences, the new barb wire.

• • •

The cornhuskers wear leather on their hands.
There is no let-up to the wind.
Blue bandannas are knotted at the ruddy chins.

Falltime and winter apples take on the smolder of the five-o'clock November sunset: falltime, leaves, bonfires, stubble, the old things go, and the earth is grizzled.

The land and the people hold memories, even among the anthills and the angleworms, among the toads and woodroaches — among gravestone writings rubbed out by the rain — they keep old things that never grow old.

The frost loosens corn husks.
The sun, the rain, the wind
loosen corn husks.
The men and women are helpers.
They are all cornhuskers together.
I see them late in the western evening
in a smoke-red dust.

• • •

The phantom of a yellow rooster flaunting a scarlet comb, on top of a dung pile crying hallelujah to the streaks of daylight,

The phantom of an old hunting dog nosing in the underbrush for muskrats, barking at a coon in a treetop at midnight, chewing a bone, chasing his tail round a corncrib,

The phantom of an old workhorse taking the steel point of a plow across a forty-acre field in spring, hitched to a harrow in summer, hitched to a wagon among cornshocks in fall,

These phantoms come into the talk and wonder of people on the front porch of a farmhouse late summer nights.

"The shapes that are gone are here," said an old man with a cob pipe in his teeth one night in Kansas with a hot wind on the alfalfa.

• • •

Look at six eggs
In a mockingbird's nest.

Listen to six mockingbirds
Flinging follies of O-be-joyful
Over the marshes and uplands.

Look at songs
Hidden in eggs.

• • •

When the morning sun is on the trumpet-vine blossoms, sing at the kitchen pans: Shout All Over God's Heaven.

When the rain slants on the potato hills and the sun plays a silver shaft on the last shower, sing to the bush at the backyard fence: Mighty Lak a Rose.

When the icy sleet pounds on the storm windows and the house lifts to a great breath, sing for the outside hills: The Ole Sheep Done Know the Road, the Young Lambs Must Find the Way.

• • •

Spring slips back with a girl face calling always: "Any new songs for me? Any new songs?"

O prairie girl, be lonely, singing, dreaming, waiting — your lover comes — your child comes — the years creep with toes of April rain on new-turned sod.

O prairie girl, whoever leaves you only crimson poppies to talk with, whoever puts a good-by kiss on your lips and never comes back —

There is a song deep as the falltime redhaws, long as the layer of black loam we go to, the shine of the morning star over the corn belt, the wave line of dawn up a wheat valley.

O prairie mother, I am one of your boys.
I have loved the prairie as a man with a heart shot full of pain over love.
Here I know I will hanker after nothing so much as one more sunrise or a sky moon of fire doubled to a river moon of water.

• • •

I speak of new cities and new people.
I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes.
I tell you yesterday is a wind gone down, a sun dropped in the west.
I tell you there is nothing in the world only an ocean of to-morrows, a sky of to-morrows.

I am a brother of the cornhuskers who say at sundown:
To-morrow is a day.

1918

Cool Tombs

When Abraham Lincoln was shoveled into the tombs, he forgot the copperheads 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.

1918

A. E. F.

In 1920, when this poem was written, many authors were expressing, as Sandburg does here, their belief that World War I had been futile. The reverie-like quietness of this poem makes it rather more impressive than some of the more strident announcements of the same idea. So, too, does the contrast of the final slangy clause with the different kind of language in the earlier lines. The slangy advice to the spider, coming in a climactic phrase at the conclusion, forcefully summarizes the poet's ironic feeling about the war.

There will be a rusty gun on the wall, sweetheart,
The rifle grooves curling with flakes of rust.
A spider will make a silver string nest in the darkest, warmest corner of it.
The trigger and the range-finder, they too will be rusty.
And no hands will polish the gun, and it will hang on the wall.
Forefingers and thumbs will point absently and casually toward it.
It will be spoken among half-forgotten, wished-to-be-forgotten things.
They will tell the spider: Go on, you're doing good work.

1920

From

The People, Yes

In his fifty-ninth year, Sandburg published a book-long poem made up pretty largely of the sayings and tales of the people—"stories and psalms nobody would laugh at," but which represent the unending quest of the masses for happiness and truth. Sandburg thus developed in detail a theme which he had stated in a brief poem, "I Am the People, the Mob," in 1916.

The following are two excerpts from **The People, Yes.** The first collects some of the yarns produced by the folk of America, many of them exaggerations of a sort

long popular in American comic humor. The second tells of one of the great American folk heroes, Paul Bunyan, the creation of the loggers, whose biography has been presented notably by Esther Shephard in Paul Bunyan. Both represent the modern tendency to embody folklore in literature.

THEY HAVE YARNS

They have yarns
Of a skyscraper so tall they had to put hinges
On the two top stories so to let the moon go by,
Of one corn crop in Missouri when the roots
Went so deep and drew off so much water
The Mississippi riverbed that year was dry,
Of pancakes so thin they only had one side,
Of "a fog so thick we shingled the barn and six feet out on the fog,"
Of Pecos Pete straddling a cyclone in Texas and riding it to the west coast where "it rained out under him,"
Of the man who drove a swarm of bees across the Rocky Mountains and the Desert "and didn't lose a bee,"
Of a mountain railroad curve where the engineer in his cab can touch the caboose and spit in the conductor's eye,
Of the boy who climbed a cornstalk growing so fast he would have starved to death if they hadn't shot biscuits up to him,
Of the old man's whiskers: "When the wind was with him his whiskers arrived a day before he did,"
Of the hen laying a square egg and cackling "Ouch!" and of hens laying eggs with the dates printed on them,
Of the ship captain's shadow: it froze to the deck one cold winter night,
Of mutineers on that same ship put to chipping rust with rubber hammers,
Of the sheep counter who was fast and accurate: "I just count their feet and divide by four,"
Of the man so tall he must climb a ladder to shave himself,
Of the runt so teeny-weeny it takes two men and a boy to see him,
Of mosquitoes: one can kill a dog, two of them a man,
Of a cyclone that sucked cookstoves out of the kitchen, up the chimney flue, and on to the next town,
Of the same cyclone picking up wagon-tracks in Nebraska and dropping them over in the Dakotas,
Of the hook-and-eye snake unlocking itself into forty pieces, each piece two inches long, then in nine seconds flat snapping itself together again,
Of the watch swallowed by the cow — when they butchered her a year later the watch was running and had the correct time,
Of horned snakes, hoop snakes that roll themselves where they want to go, and rattlesnakes carrying bells instead of rattles on their tails,
Of the herd of cattle in California getting lost in a giant redwood tree that had hollowed out,
Of the man who killed a snake by putting its tail in its mouth so it swallowed itself,
Of railroad trains whizzing along so fast they reach the station before the whistle,

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2 **skyscraper so tall.** The structure so tall that hinges are needed to protect the moon and the sun turns up frequently in American folklore. Captain Stormalong, hero of New England tall tales, built a mast with such an arrangement, according to Charles Edward Brown's **Old Stormalong Yarns.** Paul Bunyan built an oil rig with a similar arrangement, according to John Lee Brooks' "Paul Bunyan, Oil Man" in **Follow de Drinkin' Gou'd** • **9 Pecos Pete,** or Pecos Bill (the name usually given him in Texas windies), thus busted a cyclone. See Edward O'Reilly, "The Saga of Pecos Bill," **Century,** October 1923 • **10 swarm of bees.** The boast about herding the swarm of bees occurs in the play **Lightnin'** (1918) by Winchell Smith and Frank Bacon • **12 the boy . . . cornstalk.** This story is told of Paul Bunyan's handy man, Swede Charlie, in Ida Turney's "The Scissorbills" in **Paul Bunyan Marches On** • **15 ship captain's shadow.** In Mark Twain's **Following the Equator,** Chap. 26, the ship's mate had this difficulty with his shadow on an arctic voyage • **20 mosquitoes.** Sandburg may be recalling the mosquitoes described by a steamboat mate, Mr. H., in Chap. 34 of Mark Twain's **Life on the Mississippi.** If so, he errs in his statistics. Says Twain of Mr. H.. "He said that two of them could whip a dog, and that four of them could hold a man down . . . 'butcher' him." Mr. Sandburg appears to be exaggerating somewhat • **25 horned snakes.** Sandburg may have confused these with "horn-snakes," which are described in H. E. Taliaferro's **Fisher's River Scenes and Characters.** This snake, as described by Uncle Davy, an eyewitness, was ten feet long, had a head as big as a saucer, and had a stinger in his tail which was "six inches long and sharp as a needle." "This snake," said Uncle Davy, "he cotched the eend uv his tail in his mouth, he did, and come rollin' down the mounting . . . jist like a hoop." The snake landed, by chance, so that his stinger caught in a tree, and soon the tree was "dead as a herrin'; all the leaves was wilted like a fire had gone through its branches." This happened in North Carolina

Of pigs so thin the farmer had to tie knots in their tails
to keep them from crawling through the cracks in
their pens,
Of Paul Bunyan's big blue ox, Babe, measuring between
the eyes forty-two ax-handles and a plug of Star
tobacco exactly,
Of John Henry's hammer and the curve of its swing
and his singing of it as "a rainbow round my
shoulder."

"Do tell!"
"I want to know!"
"You don't say so!"
"For the land's sake!"
"Gosh all fish-hooks!"
"Tell me some more.
I don't believe a word you say
but I love to listen
to your sweet harmonica
to your chin-music.
Your fish stories hang together
when they're just a pack of lies:
you ought to have a leather medal:
you ought to have a statue
carved of butter: you deserve
a large bouquet of turnips."

"Yessir," the traveler drawled,
"Away out there in the petrified forest
everything goes on the same as usual.
The petrified birds sit in their petrified nests
and hatch their petrified young from petrified eggs."

A high pressure salesman jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge
and was saved by a policeman. But it didn't take
him long to sell the idea to the policeman. So to-
gether they jumped off the bridge.

One of the oil men in heaven started a rumor of a gusher
down in hell. All the other oil men left in a hurry
for hell. As he gets to thinking about the rumor he
had started he says to himself there might be some-
thing in it after all. So he leaves for hell in a hurry.

"The number 42 will win this raffle, that's my number."
And when he won they asked him whether he
guessed the number or had a system. He said he had
a system, "I took up the old family album and there
on page 7 was my grandfather and grandmother
both on page 7. I said to myself this is easy for 7
times 7 is the number that will win and 7 times 7
is 42."

Once a shipwrecked sailor caught hold of a stateroom
door and floated for hours till friendly hands from
out of the darkness threw him a rope. And he called
across the night, "What country is this?" and hear-
ing voices answer, "New Jersey," he took a fresh
hold on the floating stateroom door and called back
half-wearily, "I guess I'll float a little farther."

An Ohio man bundled up the tin roof of a summer
kitchen and sent it to a motor car maker with a com-
plaint of his car not giving service. In three weeks
a new car arrived for him and a letter: "We regret
delay in shipment but your car was received in a very
bad order."
A Dakota cousin of this Ohio man sent six years of tin
can accumulations to the same works, asking them
to overhaul his car. Two weeks later came a rebuilt
car, five old tin cans, and a letter: "We are also
forwarding you five parts not necessary in our new
model."
Thus fantasies heard at filling stations in the midwest.
Another relates to a Missouri mule who took aim
with his heels at an automobile rattling by. The car
turned a somersault, lit next a fence, ran right along
through a cornfield till it came to a gate, moved
onto the road and went on its way as though nothing
had happened. The mule heehawed with desolation,
"What's the use?"
Another tells of a farmer and his family stalled on a rail-
road crossing, how they jumped out in time to see

30 **blue ox, Babe,** a wonderful animal, very helpful on logging operations. Babe could pull great sleds of logs, could pile lumber with his tail, and make himself useful in many other ways • 31 **John Henry,** folk hero of the Negroes, was a great steel-driver. He died in a steel-driving contest with a machine. See p. 762 and also "John Henry of the Cape Fear," in **Bundles of Troubles and Other Tarheel Tales** • 49 **the petrified forest,** a forest in Yellowstone Park apparently discovered by Jim Bridger. See J Cecil Alter, **James Bridger.** One of the most remarkable facts about this forest was that there the law of gravity was petrified

a limited express knock it into flinders, the farmer calling, "Well, I always did say that car was no shucks in a real pinch." 60

When the Masonic Temple in Chicago was the tallest building in the United States west of New York, two men who would cheat the eyes out of you if you gave 'em a chance, took an Iowa farmer to the top of the building and asked him, "How is this for high?" They told him that for $25 they would go down in the basement and turn the building around on its turn-table for him while he stood on the roof and saw how this seventh wonder of the world worked. He handed them $25. They went. He waited. They never came back.

This is told in Chicago as a folk tale, the same as the legend of Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicking over the barn lamp that started the Chicago fire, when the Georgia visitor, Robert Toombs, telegraphed an Atlanta crony, "Chicago is on fire, the whole city burning down, God be praised!"

Nor is the prize sleeper Rip Van Winkle and his scolding wife forgotten, nor the headless horseman scooting through Sleepy Hollow

Nor the sunken treasure-ships in coves and harbors, the hideouts of gold and silver sought by Coronado, nor the Flying Dutchman rounding the Cape doomed to nevermore pound his ear nor ever again take a snooze for himself

Nor the sailor's caretaker Mother Carey seeing to it that every seafaring man in the afterworld has a seabird to bring him news of ships and women, an albatross for the admiral, a gull for the deckhand

Nor the sailor with a sweetheart in every port of the world, nor the ships that set out with flying colors and all the promises you could ask, the ships never heard of again,

Nor Jim Liverpool, the riverman who could jump across any river and back without touching land he was that quick on his feet,

Nor Mike Fink along the Ohio and the Mississippi, half wild horse and half cock-eyed alligator, the rest of him snags and snapping turtle. "I can out-run, out-jump, out-shoot, out-brag, out-drink, and out-fight, rough and tumble, no holts barred, any man on both sides of the river from Pittsburgh to New Orleans and back again to St. Louis. My trigger finger itches and I want to go redhot. War, famine and bloodshed puts flesh on my bones, and hardship's my daily bread."

Nor the man so lean he threw no shadow: six rattlesnakes struck at him at one time and every one missed him.

WHO MADE PAUL BUNYAN?

Who made Paul Bunyan, who gave him birth as a myth, who joked him into life as the Master Lumberjack, who fashioned him forth as an apparition easing the hours of men amid axes and trees, saws and lumber? The people, the bookless people, they made Paul and had him alive long before he got into the books for those who read He grew up in shanties, around the hot stoves of winter, among socks and mittens drying, in the smell of tobacco smoke and the roar of laughter mocking the outside weather And some of Paul came overseas in wooden bunks below decks in sailing vessels And some of Paul is old as the hills, young as the alphabet. 70

The Pacific Ocean froze over in the winter of the Blue Snow and Paul Bunyan had long teams of oxen hauling regular white snow over from China. This was the winter Paul gave a party to the Seven Axmen. Paul fixed a granite floor sunk two hundred feet deep for them to dance on. Still, it tipped and tilted as the dance went on. And because the Seven Axmen refused to take off their hob-nailed boots, the sparks from the nails of their dancing feet lit up the place so that Paul didn't light the kerosene lamps No women being on the Big Onion river at that time the Seven Axmen had to dance with each other, the one left over in each set taking Paul as a partner. The commotion of the dancing that night brought on an earthquake and the Big Onion river moved over three counties to the east.

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64 **hideouts . . . silver.** See J. Frank Dobie, Coronado's Children, for some of these legends • 68 **Mike Fink** (1770?-1823) was a boastful and brash ranger, keelboatman, and trapper. The remarks quoted are one of his boasts. See Walter Blair and F. J. Meine, Mike Fink

One year when it rained from St. Patrick's Day till the Fourth of July, Paul Bunyan got disgusted because his celebration of the Fourth was spoiled. He dived into Lake Superior and swam to where a solid pillar of water was coming down. He dived under this pillar, swam up into it and climbed with powerful swimming strokes, was gone about an hour, came splashing down, and as the rain stopped, he explained, "I turned the dam thing off." This is told in the Big North Woods and on the Great Lakes, with many particulars.

Two mosquitoes lighted on one of Paul Bunyan's oxen, killed it, ate it, cleaned the bones, and sat on a grub shanty picking their teeth as Paul came along. Paul sent to Australia for two special bumble bees to kill these mosquitoes. But the bees and the mosquitoes intermarried; their children had stingers on both ends. And things kept getting worse till Paul brought a big boatload of sorghum up from Louisiana and while all the bee-mosquitoes were eating at the sweet sorghum he floated them down to the Gulf of Mexico. They got so fat that it was easy to drown them all between New Orleans and Galveston

Paul logged on the Little Gimlet in Oregon one winter. The cook stove at that camp covered an acre of ground. They fastened the side of a hog on each snowshoe and four men used to skate on the griddle while the cook flipped the pancakes. The eating table was three miles long; elevators carried the cakes to the ends of the table where boys on bicycles rode back and forth on a path down the center of the table dropping the cakes where called for.

Benny, the Little Blue Ox of Paul Bunyan, grew two feet every time Paul looked at him, when a youngster. The barn was gone one morning and they found it on Benny's back; he grew out of it in a night. One night he kept pawing and bellowing for more pancakes, till there were two hundred men at the cook shanty stove trying to keep him fed. About breakfast time Benny broke loose, tore down the cook shanty, ate all the pancakes piled up for the loggers' breakfast. And after that Benny made his mistake; he ate the red hot stove; and that finished him. This is only one of the hot stove stories told in the North Woods.

1935•1936

Thomas Stearns Eliot

1888 •

Born in St. Louis, where his grandfather had founded Washington University, and educated at Harvard, where he was influenced by George Santayana and Irving Babbitt, Thomas Stearns Eliot has resided in England since 1914 and since 1927 has been a British subject. The award to him of the Nobel Prize in 1948 was an appropriate recognition of his great fame.

During the nineteen twenties and early nineteen thirties, Eliot was more influential than any other poet or critic writing in English. His *The Waste Land* (1922) set the style for a whole generation of younger poets. His essays—especially "The Metaphysical Poets"

(1921), "Andrew Marvell" (1921), and "John Dryden" (1922)—altered the current of literary criticism. At a time when the influence of the nineteenth century was still dominant, Eliot brushed that century aside, a little contemptuously, and sought standards in an earlier tradition, particularly that of the seventeenth century. He raised the question in 1921 whether the virtue of the seventeenth-century English poets "was not something permanently valuable, which subsequently disappeared, but ought not to have disappeared." His affirmative answer, elaborated in his essays and demonstrated in his poetry, wrought a revolution in critical taste. Eliot contrasted, for example, the "mistiness" and "vagueness" of William Morris (1834-1896) with the "bright, hard precision" of Marvell (1621-1678). Good poetry must have "wit"—"a tough reasonableness beneath the slight lyric grace." "When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work," he declared, "it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience"—a description which gave a favorable turn to Dr. Johnson's famous objection that the metaphysical poets yoked together by violence the most heterogeneous ideas. If the metaphysical method failed, the failure, Eliot insisted, was not in the heterogeneousness of the ideas but in the imperfect yoking or amalgamation. Owing largely to Eliot's original influence, the "metaphysical" became a mark of excellence, and English and American poets were reappraised in the light of this new standard. Many idols were shattered: Tennyson and even Keats suffered. John Donne became the pattern of the perfect poet; almost everyone could quote Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress"; Gerard Manley Hopkins and Emily Dickinson—nineteenth-century poets who wrote "metaphysical" poetry—were raised to a new eminence. In the essays of Eliot and others (notably John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks, R. P. Blackmur, and Yvor Winters), the metaphysical revolution produced a body of criticism which is remarkable for its close analysis of the relation of structure and style to content.

Eliot's influence waned somewhat after 1930. His famous announcement that he had become "an Anglo-Catholic in religion, a classicist in literature, and a royalist in politics" presented difficulties to many of his admirers in two of the three categories named: in politics and in religion. The religious, if not the political, development, however, seemed natural enough in Eliot's case. The return to the seventeenth century (and to Dante) implied a deep religious interest. The world described in the early poems ("Prufrock," 1917, "Gerontion," 1920, and *The Waste Land,* 1922, for example) was obviously a world paralyzed by the loss of religious faith. The decay of Protestantism, Eliot believed, was the most significant and the most tragic fact in modern history. The religious argument of *Ash-Wednesday* (1930), therefore, was a logical step in his development. The "Word" of St. John was "lost". the poem attempted to answer the question, "Where shall the Word be found?" The argument was continued in *Four Quartets* (1943). in the chaos of the modern world, we have only "hints and guesses"—"the rest is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action."

But Eliot ultimately transcends political and religious questions and literary theories, for he is preeminently a poet. In poetry, he has striven for, and achieved, the utmost condensation. His aim, he has said, is "to write poetry which should be essentially poetry, with nothing 'poetic' about it, poetry standing naked in its bare bones."

H R. Williamson, **The Poetry of T. S. Eliot,** New York, 1933 • F. O. Matthiessen, **The Achievement of T. S. Eliot,** Boston, 1935 • Cleanth Brooks, **Modern Poetry and the Tradition,** Chapel Hill, 1939 • J. C Ransom, **The New Criticism,** Norfolk, Connecticut, 1941

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

Written while Eliot was still an undergraduate at Harvard, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" has attained the rank of an American classic. Prufrock is a modern Hamlet, that is, a Hamlet without the capacity for heroic action. The poem is a consummate portrait of the modern intellectual who is inhibited and bewildered by his intellectualism. (For an extraordinarily acute analysis, see Brooks and Warren, Understanding Poetry, pp. 589-596.)

S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,

Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.
Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo
Non torno vivo alcun, s'i'odo il vero,
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question. . .
Oh, do not ask, 'What is it?'
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, 'Do I dare?' and, 'Do I dare?'
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
(They will say: 'How his hair is growing thin!')
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—
(They will say: 'But how his arms and legs are thin!')
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all:—
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room.
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
And how should I presume?
And I have known the arms already, known them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?

. . . . . .

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows? . . .
I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

. . . . . .

S'Io . . . rispondo. If I could believe that my answer might be to a person who should ever return into the world, this flame would stand without more quiverings; but inasmuch as, if I hear the truth, never from this depth did any living man return, without fear of infamy I answer thee (from Dante's "Inferno," Canto XXVII, ll. 61-66)



And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed by long fingers,
Asleep . . . tired . . . or it malingers,
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter,
I am no prophet—and here's no great matter;
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,
Would it have been worth while,
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,
To say: 'I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all'—
If one, settling a pillow by her head,
  Should say: 'That is not what I
    meant at all,
  That is not it, at all.'

. . . . . .

And would it have been worth it, after all,
Would it have been worth while,
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—
And this, and so much more?—
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:
Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say:
  'That is not it at all,
  That is not what I meant, at all.'

. . . . . .

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

1917

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82 head . . . platter, an allusion to the beheading of John the Baptist, whose head was brought to Herod "in a charger." See Matthew 14:1-11 • **94 Lazarus.** See John 11 • **117 Full . . . sentence,** full of wisdom, said of the speech of Chaucer's "clerk of Oxenford." **See the "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales, l. 306**

Sweeney among the Nightingales

Matthiessen's comment is helpful: "Eliot once remarked that all he consciously set out to create in 'Sweeney among the Nightingales' was a sense of foreboding. Yet the very exactitude with which he has built up his impression by means of the close details of his night-town scene, as well as by the way he underlines his effect through a reference both in the epigraph and in the final stanza to another scene of foreboding that ended in the murder of Agamemnon, inevitably causes his delineation to take on wider implications. The sharp contrast that seems at first simply to be mocking a debased present as it juxtaposes Sweeney with the hero of antiquity, ends in establishing also an undercurrent of moving drama: for a sympathetic feeling for Sweeney is set up by the realization that he is a man as well as Agamemnon, and that his plotted death is therefore likewise a human tragedy."

ὤμοι πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω.

Apeneck Sweeney spreads his knees
Letting his arms hang down to laugh,
The zebra stripes along his jaw
Swelling to maculate giraffe.

The circles of the stormy moon
Slide westward toward the River Plate,
Death and the Raven drift above
And Sweeney guards the hornèd gate.

Gloomy Orion and the Dog
Are veiled; and hushed the shrunken seas;
The person in the Spanish cape
Tries to sit on Sweeney's knees

Slips and pulls the table cloth
Overturns a coffee-cup,
Reorganized upon the floor
She yawns and draws a stocking up;

The silent man in mocha brown
Sprawls at the window-sill and gapes;
The waiter brings in oranges
Bananas figs and hothouse grapes;

The silent vertebrate in brown
Contracts and concentrates, withdraws;
Rachel *née* Rabinovitch
Tears at the grapes with murderous paws;

She and the lady in the cape
Are suspect, thought to be in league;
Therefore the man with heavy eyes
Declines the gambit, shows fatigue,

Leaves the room and reappears
Outside the window, leaning in,
Branches of wistaria
Circumscribe a golden grin;

The host with someone indistinct
Converses at the door apart,
The nightingales are singing near
The Convent of the Sacred Heart,

And sang within the bloody wood
When Agamemnon cried aloud,
And let their liquid siftings fall
To stain the stiff dishonoured shroud.

1920

Gerontion

Broadly speaking, "Gerontion" repeats the general situation of "Prufrock," but Gerontion is a more tragic figure: he had more brilliant capacities than Prufrock and his disintegration is more complete. The poem is a masterly

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ὤμοι . . . ἔσω. Alas! I am stricken by a timely blow within (from the Agamemnon of Aeschylus) • 6 **River Plate**, Río de la Plata, an estuary in South America • 8 **hornèd gate**. In classical mythology, the gate of horn is the gate of the abode of Sleep through which true dreams come forth • 9 **Orion . . . Dog**, constellations • 28 **gambit**, strategy in chess by which a player gives up a piece to gain an advantage • 38 **Agamemnon**. His murder by his wife and her lover is the basis of the play by Aeschylus

embodiment of the metaphysical method described by Eliot in his essay on "The Metaphysical Poets" as "a development by rapid association of thought which requires considerable agility on the part of the reader." Matthiessen comments as follows on the method: "The transitions are sudden, but, in terms of the context, unmistakable. There could hardly be a more effective way of stressing the intimate connection between the mysteries of religion and sex than by linking together the Christian story with the upsurging energies of spring. Yet it is also 'depraved' May, and suddenly we are aware that it is not simply the Holy Communion that is being eaten and drunk 'among whispers': that last phrase also relates to the empty, slightly sinister cosmopolitan world in which Gerontion's life has been betrayed, his passion and ardour have been divided and lost."

Thou hast nor youth nor age
But as it were an after dinner sleep
Dreaming of both.

Here I am, an old man in a dry month,
Being read to by a boy, waiting for rain.
I was neither at the hot gates
Nor fought in the warm rain
Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass,
Bitten by flies, fought.
My house is a decayed house,
And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner,
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London.
The goat coughs at night in the field overhead;
Rocks, moss, stonecrop, iron, merds.
The woman keeps the kitchen, makes tea,
Sneezes at evening, poking the peevish gutter.
I an old man,
A dull head among windy spaces.

Signs are taken for wonders. 'We would see a sign!'
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger

In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering judas,
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk
Among whispers; by Mr. Silvero
With caressing hands, at Limoges
Who walked all night in the next room;
By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians;
By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room
Shifting the candles; Fraulein von Kulp
Who turned in the hall, one hand on the door. Vacant shuttles
Weave the wind. I have no ghosts,
An old man in a draughty house
Under a windy knob.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
Guides us by vanities. Think now
She gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
What's not believed in, or if still believed,
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon
Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with
Till the refusal propagates a fear. Think
Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.

The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours. Think at last
We have not reached conclusion, when I

Thou . . . both. See **Measure for Measure,** Act III, sc i, ll 32-34 • **2 waiting for rain.** Drought reappears as a recurrent theme in **The Waste Land** • **12 merds,** dung • **17 We . . . sign!** Compare Matthew 12 38-39. "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it " • **18 word . . . word.** Compare John 1 1· "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God " The lost "Word" reappears as a theme in **Ash-Wednesday** • **19 Swaddled . . . darkness.** Compare Job 38 9 "When I made . . thick darkness a swaddling-band for it [the sea] " Mary wrapped the infant Jesus "in swaddling clothes" (Luke 2 7) • **19 juvescence . . . year,** when the year was growing young • **23 Mr. Silvero.** This name and other names of persons in the poem are those of former acquaintances of Gerontion • **33 Think.** The repetition of "think" recalls the similar use of "thinketh" in the monologue of Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos"

Stiffen in a rented house. Think at last
I have not made this show purposelessly
And it is not by any concitation
Of the backward devils.
I would meet you upon this honestly.
I that was near your heart was removed therefrom
To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.
I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated?
I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch:
How should I use them for your closer contact?

These with a thousand small deliberations
Protract the profit of their chilled delirium,
Excite the membrane, when the sense has cooled,
With pungent sauces, multiply variety
In a wilderness of mirrors. What will the spider do,
Suspend its operations, will the weevil
Delay? De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs. Cammel, whirled
Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear
In fractured atoms. Gull against the wind, in the windy straits
Of Belle Isle, or running on the Horn,
White feathers in the snow, the Gulf claims,
And an old man driven by the Trades
To a sleepy corner.

Tenants of the house,
Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season.

1920

Ash-Wednesday

Ash-Wednesday is one of the most important religious poems which have been written in English during the present century. Although Eliot's religious position is specifically Anglo-Catholic, the poem has a broad validity for all religious experience.

The poem describes the progress of the soul from despair to hope, from unbelief to belief. The hopelessness in the early stanzas seems as profound as that expressed in **The Waste Land**, and more apathetic: "Because I do not hope," the poet says—and "I no longer strive to strive." But by means and in ways which defy scientific description, the upward movement of the soul begins in Section 3, where the poet employs the symbol of an ascending stair. At the second and at the third turning of the stair, the soul pauses to look back upon the "twisted shapes" below —its former unhappy states. At length, the soul attains the goal happily epitomized in the phrase from Dante, "Our peace in His will." The poem concludes with a prayer to the "Blessed sister, holy mother." In developing and expressing his thought, Eliot has drawn upon the Bible, Dante, and the liturgies of the Roman and English Churches.

Like much modern poetry of the intellectual school, **Ash-Wednesday** is a difficult poem, even to the sympathetic reader, and gives up its meaning slowly. The student may derive some aid from F. O. Matthiessen's **The Achievement of T. S. Eliot** and Theodore Morrison's "Ash Wednesday: A Religious History," **New England Quarterly**, XI, June 1938.

1

Because I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn
Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope
I no longer strive to strive towards such things
(Why should the agèd eagle stretch its wings?)
Why should I mourn
The vanished power of the usual reign?

Because I do not hope to know again
The infirm glory of the positive hour
Because I do not think
Because I know I shall not know
The one veritable transitory power
Because I cannot drink
There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for there is nothing again

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Gerontion • **52 concitation**, concerted agitation • **70 Belle Isle**, between Labrador and Newfoundland • **72 Trades**, the trade winds

Ash-Wednesday • **Ash-Wednesday**, the first day of Lent; so-called from a custom, observed on that day, in the Roman Catholic Church, of putting ashes upon the head as a symbol of contrition, while the priest says, "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return" • **4 Desiring . . . scope.** Compare "Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope," from Shakespeare's **Sonnets**, number 29

Because I know that time is always time
And place is always and only place
And what is actual is actual only for one time
And only for one place
I rejoice that things are as they are and
I renounce the blessèd face
And renounce the voice
Because I cannot hope to turn again
Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something
Upon which to rejoice

And pray to God to have mercy upon us
And I pray that I may forget
These matters that with myself I too much discuss
Too much explain
Because I do not hope to turn again
Let these words answer
For what is done, not to be done again
May the judgment not be too heavy upon us

Because these wings are no longer wings to fly
But merely vans to beat the air
The air which is now thoroughly small and dry
Smaller and dryer than the will
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still.

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

2

Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper-tree
In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety
On my legs my heart my liver and that which had been contained
In the hollow round of my skull. And God said
Shall these bones live? shall these
Bones live? And that which had been contained
In the bones (which were already dry) said chirping.
Because of the goodness of this Lady
And because of her loveliness, and because
She honours the Virgin in meditation,
We shine with brightness And I who am here dissembled
Proffer my deeds to oblivion, and my love
To the posterity of the desert and the fruit of the gourd.
It is this which recovers
My guts the strings of my eyes and the indigestible portions
Which the leopards reject. The Lady is withdrawn
In a white gown, to contemplation, in a white gown.
Let the whiteness of bones atone to forgetfulness.
There is no life in them. As I am forgotten
And would be forgotten, so I would forget
Thus devoted, concentrated in purpose. And God said
Prophesy to the wind, to the wind only for only
The wind will listen. And the bones sang chirping
With the burden of the grasshopper, saying

Lady of silences
Calm and distressed
Torn and most whole
Rose of memory
Rose of forgetfulness
Exhausted and life-giving
Worried reposeful
The single Rose
Is now in the Garden
Where all loves end
Terminate torment
Of love unsatisfied
The greater torment
Of love satisfied
End of the endless
Journey to no end
Conclusion of all that
Is inconclusible
Speech without word and
Word of no speech
Grace to the Mother
For the Garden
Where all love ends.

Under a juniper-tree the bones sang, scattered and shining
We are glad to be scattered, we did little good to each other,

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42 Lady. The Lady seems a personification of religious faith • **42 leopards.** The three leopards may represent "the world, the flesh, and the devil," but it is not necessary to be so specific • **45 And God . . . live.** Compare Ezekiel 37 3: "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live" • **62 God . . . wind.** Compare Ezekiel 37:9: "Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind . . ."

Under a tree in the cool of the day, with the blessing of sand,
Forgetting themselves and each other, united
In the quiet of the desert. This is the land which ye
Shall divide by lot. And neither division nor unity
Matters. This is the land. We have our inheritance.

3

At the first turning of the second stair
I turned and saw below
The same shape twisted on the banister
Under the vapour in the fetid air
Struggling with the devil of the stairs who wears
The deceitful face of hope and of despair.

At the second turning of the second stair
I left them twisting, turning below;
There were no more faces and the stair was dark,
Damp, jagged, like an old man's mouth drivelling, beyond repair,
Or the toothed gullet of an agèd shark.

At the first turning of the third stair
Was a slotted window bellied like the fig's fruit
And beyond the hawthorn blossom and a pasture scene
The broadbacked figure drest in blue and green
Enchanted the maytime with an antique flute.
Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,
Lilac and brown hair;
Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps of the mind over the third stair,
Fading, fading; strength beyond hope and despair
Climbing the third stair.

Lord, I am not worthy
Lord, I am not worthy

but speak the word only.

4

Who walked between the violet and the violet
Who walked between
The various ranks of varied green
Going in white and blue, in Mary's colour,
Talking of trivial things
In ignorance and in knowledge of eternal dolour
Who moved among the others as they walked,
Who then made strong the fountains and made fresh the springs

Made cool the dry rock and made firm the sand
In blue of larkspur, blue of Mary's colour,
Sovegna vos

Here are the years that walk between, bearing
Away the fiddles and the flutes, restoring
One who moves in the time between sleep and waking, wearing

White light folded, sheathed about her, folded.
The new years walk, restoring
Through a bright cloud of tears, the years, restoring
With a new verse the ancient rhyme. Redeem
The time. Redeem
The unread vision in the higher dream
While jewelled unicorns draw by the gilded hearse.

The silent sister veiled in white and blue
Between the yews, behind the garden god,
Whose flute is breathless, bent her head and signed but spoke no word

But the fountain sprang up and the bird sang down
Redeem the time, redeem the dream
The token of the word unheard, unspoken

Till the wind shake a thousand whispers from the yew

And after this our exile

5

If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
If the unheard, unspoken

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93 **This . . . lot.** Compare Ezekiel 48.29: "This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance . . ." • 130 **Sovegna vos,** remember • 137 **Redeem The time.** Compare Ephesians 5 16: "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" • 148 **after . . . exile,** a phrase from the prayer "Salve Regina," which follows the Catholic Mass. Eliot has said, "The consummation of the drama, the perfect and ideal drama, is to be found in the ceremony of the Mass" • 149 **word,** the revelation of God to man, as in John 1 1. See note, p 1173

Word is unspoken, unheard;
Still is the unspoken word, the Word unheard,
The Word without a Word, the Word within
The world and for the world;
And the light shone in darkness and
Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
About the centre of the silent Word.

O my people, what have I done unto thee.

Where shall the word be found, where will the word
Resound? Not here, there is not enough silence
Not on the sea or on the islands, not
On the mainland, in the desert or the rain land,
For those who walk in darkness
Both in the day time and in the night time
The right time and the right place are not here
No place of grace for those who avoid the face
No time to rejoice for those who walk among noise and deny the voice

Will the veiled sister pray for
Those who walk in darkness, who chose thee and oppose thee,
Those who are torn on the horn between season and season, time and time, between
Hour and hour, word and word, power and power, those who wait
In darkness? Will the veiled sister pray
For children at the gate
Who will not go away and cannot pray:
Pray for those who chose and oppose

O my people, what have I done unto thee.

Will the veiled sister between the slender
Yew trees pray for those who offend her
And are terrified and cannot surrender
And affirm before the world and deny between the rocks
In the last desert between the last blue rocks
The desert in the garden the garden in the desert
Of drouth, spitting from the mouth the withered apple-seed.

O my people.

6

Although I do not hope to turn again
Although I do not hope
Although I do not hope to turn

Wavering between the profit and the loss
In this brief transit where the dreams cross
The dreamcrossed twilight between birth and dying
(Bless me father) though I do not wish to wish these things
From the wide window towards the granite shore
The white sails still fly seaward, seaward flying
Unbroken wings

And the lost heart stiffens and rejoices
In the lost lilac and the lost sea voices
And the weak spirit quickens to rebel
For the bent golden-rod and the lost sea smell
Quickens to recover
The cry of quail and the whirling plover
And the blind eye creates
The empty forms between the ivory gates
And smell renews the salt savour of the sandy earth

This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.

Blessèd sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the garden,
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.

1930

158 **O my people . . . thee,** taken verbatim from Micah 6:3 • 214 **Our peace . . . will. See Dante's Divine Comedy, Bk. III, l. 85**

Allen Tate

1899 •

In the 1920's, Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, was the center of a fruitful and significant literary movement. Headed by John Crowe Ransom, a graduate of Vanderbilt in the class of 1909 and a member of the English department there after 1914, the Nashville group consisted for the most part of men who, as Ransom's students, had caught the sharp contagion of his influence. The chief writers, besides Ransom himself, were Donald Davidson, Allen Tate, Andrew Nelson Lytle, and Robert Penn Warren. The bibliography appended to this sketch will suggest the range of their achievements.

There appear to have been three stages of development. The group began as poets: "The Fugitives"—as they styled themselves—wrote intellectual poetry which may be regarded as a part of the general reaction of the twenties against the nineteenth century. Though continuing to write poetry, the group turned, in 1930, to Southern economic and social questions: *I'll Take My Stand* argued for a return to agrarianism and vigorously combated the "progressive" assumption that the true welfare of the South could be best served by an accelerated program of industrialization. The book provoked for its authors the somewhat misleading label of "neo-Confederates." After 1930 the group became less unified in literary output, if not in spirit. The fugitives and agrarians of former years turned to the novel, and, to an even greater extent, to literary criticism. Many critical essays by members of the group appeared in *The Southern Review* (1935-1944), edited by Warren and Brooks, *The Kenyon Review* (1938—), edited by Ransom, and *The Sewanee Review,* edited by Tate after 1944, as well as *The Virginia Quarterly Review* and other journals. Although this criticism owed something to T. S. Eliot and I. A. Richards, the work of each man bore the stamp of his own originality.

If the poetry of the Nashville writers seems hardly different in kind from the main body of modern intellectual poetry, and if the social-economic thesis of *I'll Take My Stand* seems a beautiful but ineffectual dream, the literary criticism exerted a wide influence. Through emphasis on the close examination of the structure and text of the individual poem, *Understanding Poetry* worked a minor revolution in reading and teaching. The great virtue of the movement was that it redirected attention to the literature itself, which was about to be submerged by historical matter; its dangers were a tendency to regard literature *in vacuo,* to carry analysis to a point of overrefinement, and to employ a terminology too abstruse for the general reader.

Allen Tate, who is selected to represent the Nashville group, was born in Kentucky. He attended Vanderbilt, where he was graduated in 1922. Although engaged almost continuously in writing, he has found time for other employments: in the 1930's he was a member at different times of the English departments of Southwestern University at Memphis, the North Carolina Woman's College at Greensboro, and Princeton; in 1942-

1944, he held the chair of poetry in the Library of Congress. Later he taught at New York University. In 1951, he joined the English faculty of the University of Minnesota. Like most intellectual writers of our time, Tate and his Nashville associates are "reactionary" in the better sense of the word. They have sought to recover certain values of the past: the Southern cultural tradition, the religious point of view, and an intellectual fiber best exemplified in the poets of seventeenth-century England. The student will find in Tate's essay "Narcissus as Narcissus" (one of the collection entitled *Reason in Madness*) the author's own critical commentary on his poem, "Ode to the Confederate Dead."

Mr. Pope and Other Poems, New York, 1928 • **Stonewall Jackson** (biography), New York, 1928 • **Jefferson Davis** (biography), New York, 1929 • **The Fathers** (novel), New York, 1938 • **Reason in Madness** (essays), New York, 1941

The following is a partial bibliography of other members of the Nashville group Donald Davidson, **The Tall Men** (poems), Boston, 1927, **Lee in the Mountains and Other Poems**, Boston, 1938, **The Attack on Leviathan** (essays), Chapel Hill, 1938 • A N Lytle, **The Long Night** (novel), Indianapolis, 1936 • J. C. Ransom, **Poems about God**, New York, 1919, **Chills and Fever** (poems), New York, 1924, **The World's Body** (essays), New York, 1938, **New Criticism**, Norfolk, Connecticut, 1941 • R P Warren, **John Brown** (biography), New York, 1929, **Thirty-six Poems**, New York, 1935, **Understanding Poetry** (with Cleanth Brooks), New York, 1938, **Night Rider** (novel), Boston, 1939, **At Heaven's Gate** (novel), New York, 1943; **All the King's Men** (novel), New York, 1946 • All contributed essays to **I'll Take My Stand**, New York, 1930

Ode to the Confederate Dead

Row after row with strict impunity
The headstones yield their names to the element,
The wind whirrs without recollection;
In the riven troughs the splayed leaves
Pile up, of nature the casual sacrament
To the seasonal eternity of death;
Then driven by the fierce scrutiny
Of heaven to their election in the vast breath,
They sough the rumor of mortality.

Autumn is desolation in the plot
Of a thousand acres where these memories grow
From the inexhaustible bodies that are not
Dead, but feed the grass row after rich row.
Think of the autumns that have come and gone!—
Ambitious November with the humors of the year,
With particular zeal for every slab,
Staining the uncomfortable angels that rot
On the slabs, a wing chipped here, an arm there:
The brute curiosity of an angel's stare
Turns you, like them, to stone,
Transforms the heaving air
Till plunged to a heavier world below
You shift your sea-space blindly
Heaving, turning like the blind crab.

Dazed by the wind, only the wind
The leaves flying, plunge
You know who have waited by the wall
The twilight certainty of an animal,
Those midnight restitutions of the blood
You know—the immitigable pines, the smoky
frieze
Of the sky, the sudden call you know the rage,
The cold pool left by the mounting flood,
Of muted Zeno and Parmenides.
You who have waited for the angry resolution
Of those desires that should be yours tomorrow,
You know the unimportant shrift of death
And praise the vision
And praise the arrogant circumstance
Of those who fall
Rank upon rank, hurried beyond decision—
Here by the sagging gate, stopped by the wall.

Seeing, seeing only the leaves
Flying, plunge and expire

Turn your eyes to the immoderate past,
Turn to the inscrutable infantry rising
Demons out of the earth—they will not last.
Stonewall, Stonewall, and the sunken fields of hemp,
Shiloh, Antietam, Malvern Hill, Bull Run.

From **Selected Poems** by Allen Tate; published by Charles Scribner's Sons; copyright, 1937, by Charles Scribner's Sons • Used by permission of the publishers

Lost in that orient of the thick and fast
You will curse the setting sun.

Cursing only the leaves crying
Like an old man in a storm

You hear the shout, the crazy hemlocks point
With troubled fingers to the silence which
Smothers you, a mummy, in time.

The hound bitch
Toothless and dying, in a musty cellar
Hears the wind only.

Now that the salt of their blood
Stiffens the saltier oblivion of the sea,
Seals the malignant purity of the flood,
What shall we who count our days and bow
Our heads with a commemorial woe
In the ribboned coats of grim felicity,
What shall we say of the bones, unclean,
Whose verdurous anonymity will grow?
The ragged arms, the ragged heads and eyes
Lost in these acres of the insane green?
The gray lean spiders come, they come and go;
In a tangle of willows without light

The singular screech-owl's tight
Invisible lyric seeds the mind
With the furious murmur of their chivalry.

We shall say only the leaves
Flying, plunge and expire

We shall say only the leaves whispering
In the improbable mist of nightfall
That flies on multiple wing:
Night is the beginning and the end
And in between the ends of distraction
Waits mute speculation, the patient curse
That stones the eyes, or like the jaguar leaps
For his own image in a jungle pool, his victim.

What shall we say who have knowledge
Carried to the heart? Shall we take the act
To the grave? Shall we, more hopeful, set up the grave
In the house? The ravenous grave?

Leave now
The shut gate and the decomposing wall:
The gentle serpent, green in the mulberry bush,
Riots with his tongue through the hush—
Sentinel of the grave who counts us all!

1928

PRIMITIVISTS: Hemingway, O'Neill, Faulkner

Ernest Hemingway

1898 •

Ernest Hemingway's favorite American book is *Huckleberry Finn.* It may be that he likes this book partly because it tells of a boy's encounters with cruelty, partly because its author was the master of a style which, though like oral speech, was notable for its poetic overtones. At any rate, Hemingway's own stories and novels, which often show the reactions of the sensitive person to cruelty, are written in a simple style which poetically gives them meaning.

Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1898,



the son of a doctor. He went through high school in the town of his birth, winning some fame in boxing and football, and then became a reporter on the *Kansas City Star.* During World War I, he served on the Italian front. In postwar days, as a newspaper correspondent, he was one of the expatriates who inhabited the Left Bank in Paris. He began to write fiction, and was "discovered" by the critics in the United States. He returned to his homeland to write, going abroad now and then for travel in Europe or for big game hunting in Africa. During the Spanish Revolution and World War II he was a correspondent.

Hemingway transmutes his own experiences in his writings. Those in his first book, *In Our Time* (1925), are based upon his boyhood vacations in Michigan. Those in *Men Without Women* (1927), including the two printed here, treat prewar, war, and postwar experiences at home and abroad.

His first novel, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), depicts the war-disillusioned young people of the Left Bank. His second, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), has for its scene the Italy of World War I, for its plot the story of the disillusionment of a young American in an ambulance unit. Thus, though Hemingway invented many scenes and details, he at least based his narratives upon significant happenings in his own life.

These early works and others established Hemingway as the fictional laureate of "the lost generation." His experiences had been typical of this generation—his youth in America, his service in World War I, his disillusionment, and his stay in Paris. The pattern was completed when, during the Spanish Civil War, while writing of the conflict for the North American Newspaper Alliance, he discovered a more affirmative faith in democratic society and the duty and destiny of the individual.

This faith was announced in a novel, *To Have and Have Not* (1937), and a play, *The Fifth Column* (1938), both of which were far below the standard set by his earlier works. Evidently, the problem of asserting his new beliefs in artistic form was a difficult one for him to solve. In the novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), however, he successfully coped with the problem. The novel won the admiration not only of critics but also of a huge reading public. Like Hemingway, it appeared, the people of the United States in this period had regained faith in an organized society—the sort of faith that the book attributed to its hero, Robert Jordan, in the hours before his death.

During both his earlier and his later periods, Hemingway as a writer is indebted not only to Mark Twain but also to Sherwood Anderson, Gertrude Stein, and Stephen Crane. From Anderson and Miss Stein, whom he knew in Paris, he probably received suggestions for the apparently naïve colloquial style which he has cultivated. From them, too, he may have received instruction in emphasizing basic emotions which led Oscar Cargill to classify him, as well as these two teachers of his, as "Primi-

Panel (l. to r.): William Faulkner • Faulkner's home in Oxford, Mississippi • A Left Bank café in Paris • Italian soldiers • Ernest Hemingway

tivists.' At any rate, whether his narratives depict Midwestern adolescents or Left Bank sophisticates, the relatively uncomplicated drives of passion, hate, hunger, fear, and courage are consistently central in them. From Crane, by contrast, Hemingway perhaps learned something about handling symbolic or connotative details to give prose what he calls "a fourth or fifth dimension." A result is that, in this author's best narratives, there is a unique combination of strength—even at times brutality—with poetic subtlety and depth of sympathy which appeals greatly to modern readers.

Alfred Kazin, **On Native Grounds: An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature,** New York, 1942 • Maxwell Geismar, **Writers in Crisis: The American Novel Between Two Wars,** Boston, 1942 • Malcolm Cowley, "Introduction" to **The Portable Hemingway,** New York, 1944 • Robert Penn Warren, "Hemingway," **Kenyon Review** Winter 1947

The Killers

The door of Henry's lunch-room opened and two men came in. They sat down at the counter.

"What's yours?" George asked them.

"I don't know," one of the men said. "What do you want to eat, Al?"

"I don't know," said Al. "I don't know what I want to eat."

Outside it was getting dark. The street-light came on outside the window. The two men at the counter read the menu. From the other end of the counter Nick Adams watched them. He had been talking to George when they came in.

"I'll have a roast pork tenderloin with apple sauce and mashed potatoes," the first man said.

"It isn't ready yet."

"What the hell do you put it on the card for?"

"That's the dinner," George explained. "You can get that at six o'clock."

George looked at the clock on the wall behind the counter.

"It's five o'clock."

"The clock says twenty minutes past five," the second man said.

"It's twenty minutes fast."

"Oh, to hell with the clock," the first man said. "What have you got to eat?"

"I can give you any kind of sandwiches," George said. "You can have ham and eggs, bacon and eggs, liver and bacon, or a steak."

"Give me chicken croquettes with green peas and cream sauce and mashed potatoes."

"That's the dinner."

"Everything we want's the dinner, eh? That's the way you work it."

"I can give you ham and eggs, bacon and eggs, liver—"

"I'll take ham and eggs," the man called Al said. He wore a derby hat and a black overcoat buttoned across the chest. His face was small and white and he had tight lips He wore a silk muffler and gloves.

"Give me bacon and eggs," said the other man. He was about the same size as Al. Their faces were different, but they were dressed like twins. Both wore overcoats too tight for them. They sat leaning forward, their elbows on the counter.

"Got anything to drink?" Al asked.

"Silver beer, bevo, ginger-ale," George said.

"I mean you got anything to *drink?*"

"Just those I said"

"This is a hot town," said the other. "What do they call it?"

"Summit."

"Ever hear of it?" Al asked his friend.

"No," said the friend.

"What do you do here nights?" Al asked.

"They eat the dinner," his friend said. "They all come here and eat the big dinner."

From **Men Without Women** by Ernest Hemingway, published by **Charles Scribner's Sons;** copyright, 1927, by Charles Scribner's Sons; **used by permission of the publishers**

"That's right," George said.

"So you think that's right?" Al asked George.

"Sure."

"You're a pretty bright boy, aren't you?"

"Sure," said George.

"Well, you're not," said the other little man. "Is he, Al?"

"He's dumb," said Al. He turned to Nick. "What's your name?"

"Adams."

"Another bright boy," Al said. "Ain't he a bright boy, Max?"

"The town's full of bright boys," Max said

George put the two platters, one of ham and eggs, the other of bacon and eggs, on the counter. He set down two side-dishes of fried potatoes and closed the wicket into the kitchen

"Which is yours?" he asked Al.

"Don't you remember?"

"Ham and eggs"

"Just a bright boy," Max said. He leaned forward and took the ham and eggs Both men ate with their gloves on. George watched them eat.

"What are *you* looking at?" Max looked at George.

"Nothing."

"The hell you were. You were looking at me."

"Maybe the boy meant it for a joke, Max," Al said.

George laughed.

"*You* don't have to laugh," Max said to him. "*You* don't have to laugh at all, see?"

"All right," said George.

"So he thinks it's all right." Max turned to Al. "He thinks it's all right. That's a good one."

"Oh, he's a thinker," Al said. They went on eating

"What's the bright boy's name down the counter?" Al asked Max.

"Hey, bright boy," Max said to Nick. "You go around on the other side of the counter with your boy friend."

"What's the idea?" Nick asked.

"There isn't any idea."

"You better go around, bright boy," Al said. Nick went around behind the counter.

"What's the idea?" George asked.

"None of your damn business," Al said. "Who's out in the kitchen?"

"The nigger."

"What do you mean the nigger?"

"The nigger that cooks."

"Tell him to come in."

"What's the idea?"

"Tell him to come in."

"Where do you think you are?"

"We know damn well where we are," the man called Max said. "Do we look silly?"

"You talk silly," Al said to him. "What the hell do you argue with this kid for? Listen," he said to George, "tell the nigger to come out here."

"What are you going to do to him?"

"Nothing. Use your head, bright boy. What would we do to a nigger?"

George opened the slit that opened back into the kitchen. "Sam," he called. "Come in here a minute."

The door to the kitchen opened and the nigger came in. "What was it?" he asked. The two men at the counter took a look at him.

"All right, nigger. You stand right there," Al said.

Sam, the nigger, standing in his apron, looked at the two men sitting at the counter. "Yes, sir," he said. Al got down from his stool.

"I'm going back to the kitchen with the nigger and bright boy," he said "Go on back to the kitchen, nigger. You go with him, bright boy." The little man walked after Nick and Sam, the cook, back into the kitchen. The door shut after them. The man called Max sat at the counter opposite George. He didn't look at George but looked in the mirror that ran along back of the counter Henry's had been made over from a saloon into a lunch-counter.

"Well, bright boy," Max said, looking into the mirror, "why don't you say something?"

"What's it all about?"

"Hey, Al," Max called, "bright boy wants to know what it's all about."

"Why don't you tell him?" Al's voice came from the kitchen.

"What do you think it's all about?"

"I don't know."

"What do you think?"

Max looked into the mirror all the time he was talking.

"I wouldn't say."

"Hey, Al, bright boy says he wouldn't say what he thinks it's all about."

"I can hear you, all right," Al said from the kitchen. He had propped open the slit that dishes passed through into the kitchen with a catsup bottle. "Listen, bright boy," he said from the kitchen to George. "Stand a little further along the bar. You move a little to the left, Max." He was like a photographer arranging for a group picture.

"Talk to me, bright boy," Max said. "What do you think's going to happen?"

George did not say anything.

"I'll tell you," Max said. "We're going to kill a Swede. Do you know a big Swede named Ole Andreson?"

"Yes."

"He comes here to eat every night, don't he?"

"Sometimes he comes here."

"He comes here at six o'clock, don't he?"

"If he comes."

"We know all that, bright boy," Max said. "Talk about something else. Ever go to the movies?"

"Once in a while."

"You ought to go to the movies more. The movies are fine for a bright boy like you."

"What are you going to kill Ole Andreson for? What did he ever do to you?"

"He never had a chance to do anything to us. He never even seen us."

"And he's only going to see us once," Al said from the kitchen.

"What are you going to kill him for, then?" George asked.

"We're killing him for a friend. Just to oblige a friend, bright boy."

"Shut up," said Al from the kitchen. "You talk too goddam much."

"Well, I got to keep bright boy amused. Don't I, bright boy?"

"You talk too damn much," Al said. "The nigger and my bright boy are amused by themselves. I got them tied up like a couple of girl friends in the convent."

"I suppose you were in a convent?"

"You never know."

"You were in a kosher convent. That's where you were."

George looked up at the clock.

"If anybody comes in you tell them the cook is off, and if they keep after it, you tell them you'll go back and cook yourself. Do you get that, bright boy?"

"All right," George said. "What you going to do with us afterward?"

"That'll depend," Max said. "That's one of those things you never know at the time."

George looked up at the clock. It was a quarter past six. The door from the street opened. A street-car motorman came in.

"Hello, George," he said. "Can I get supper?"

"Sam's gone out," George said. "He'll be back in about half an hour."

"I'd better go up the street," the motorman said. George looked at the clock. It was twenty minutes past six.

"That was nice, bright boy," Max said. "You're a regular little gentleman."

"He knew I'd blow his head off," Al said from the kitchen.

"No," said Max. "It ain't that. Bright boy is nice. He's a nice boy. I like him."

At six-fifty-five George said: "He's not coming."

Two other people had been in the lunch-room. Once George had gone out to the kitchen and made a ham-and-egg sandwich "to go" that a man wanted to take with him. Inside the kitchen he saw Al, his derby hat tipped back, sitting on a stool beside the wicket with the muzzle of a sawed off shotgun resting on the ledge. Nick and the cook were back to back in the corner, a towel tied in each of their mouths. George had cooked the sandwich, wrapped it up in oiled paper, put it in a bag, brought it in, and the man had paid for it and gone out.

"Bright boy can do everything," Max said. "He can cook and everything. You'd make some girl a nice wife, bright boy."

"Yes?" George said. "Your friend, Ole Andreson, isn't going to come."

"We'll give him ten minutes," Max said.

Max watched the mirror and the clock. The hands of the clock marked seven o'clock, and then five minutes past seven.

"Come on, Al," said Max. "We better go. He's not coming."

"Better give him five minutes," Al said from the kitchen.

In the five minutes a man came in, and George explained that the cook was sick.

"Why the hell don't you get another cook?" the man

asked. "Aren't you running a lunch-counter?" He went out.

"Come on, Al," Max said.

"What about the two bright boys and the nigger?"

"They're all right."

"You think so?"

"Sure. We're through with it."

"I don't like it," said Al. "It's sloppy. You talk too much."

"Oh, what the hell," said Max. "We got to keep amused, haven't we?"

"You talk too much, all the same," Al said. He came out from the kitchen. The cut-off barrels of the shotgun made a slight bulge under the waist of his too tight-fitting overcoat. He straightened his coat with his gloved hands.

"So long, bright boy," he said to George. "You got a lot of luck."

"That's the truth," Max said. "You ought to play the races, bright boy."

The two of them went out the door. George watched them, through the window, pass under the arc-light and cross the street. In their tight overcoats and derby hats they looked like a vaudeville team. George went back through the swinging-door into the kitchen and untied Nick and the cook.

"I don't want any more of that," said Sam, the cook. "I don't want any more of that."

Nick stood up. He had never had a towel in his mouth before.

"Say," he said. "What the hell?" He was trying to swagger it off.

"They were going to kill Ole Andreson," George said. "They were going to shoot him when he came in to eat."

"Ole Andreson?"

"Sure."

The cook felt the corners of his mouth with his thumbs.

"They all gone?" he asked.

"Yeah," said George. "They're gone now."

"I don't like it," said the cook. "I don't like any of it at all."

"Listen," George said to Nick. "You better go see Ole Andreson."

"All right."

"You better not have anything to do with it at all," Sam, the cook, said. "You better stay way out of it."

"Don't go if you don't want to," George said.

"Mixing up in this ain't going to get you anywhere," the cook said. "You stay out of it."

"I'll go see him," Nick said to George. "Where does he live?"

The cook turned away.

"Little boys always know what they want to do," he said.

"He lives up at Hirsch's rooming-house," George said to Nick.

"I'll go up there."

Outside the arc-light shone through the bare branches of a tree. Nick walked up the street beside the car-tracks and turned at the next arc-light down a side-street. Three houses up the street was Hirsch's rooming-house. Nick walked up the two steps and pushed the bell. A woman came to the door.

"Is Ole Andreson here?"

"Do you want to see him?"

"Yes, if he's in."

Nick followed the woman up a flight of stairs and back to the end of a corridor. She knocked on the door.

"Who is it?"

"It's somebody to see you, Mr. Andreson," the woman said.

"It's Nick Adams."

"Come in."

Nick opened the door and went into the room. Ole Andreson was lying on the bed with all his clothes on. He had been a heavyweight prizefighter and he was too long for the bed. He lay with his head on two pillows. He did not look at Nick.

"What was it?" he asked.

"I was up at Henry's," Nick said, "and two fellows came in and tied up me and the cook, and they said they were going to kill you."

It sounded silly when he said it. Ole Andreson said nothing.

"They put us out in the kitchen," Nick went on. "They were going to shoot you when you came to supper."

Ole Andreson looked at the wall and did not say anything.

"George thought I better come and tell you about it."

"There isn't anything I can do about it," Ole Andreson said.

"I'll tell you what they were like."

"I don't want to know what they were like," Ole Andreson said. He looked at the wall. "Thanks for coming to tell me about it."

"That's all right."

Nick looked at the big man lying on the bed.

"Don't you want me to go and see the police?"

"No," Ole Andreson said. "That wouldn't do any good."

"Isn't there something I could do?"

"No. There isn't anything to do."

"Maybe it was just a bluff."

"No. It ain't just a bluff."

Ole Andreson rolled over toward the wall.

"The only thing is," he said, talking toward the wall, "I just can't make up my mind to go out. I been in here all day."

"Couldn't you get out of town?"

"No," Ole Andreson said. "I'm through with all that running around."

He looked at the wall.

"There ain't anything to do now."

"Couldn't you fix it up some way?"

"No. I got in wrong." He talked in the same flat voice. "There ain't anything to do. After a while I'll make up my mind to go out."

"I better go back and see George," Nick said.

"So long," said Ole Andreson. He did not look toward Nick. "Thanks for coming around."

Nick went out. As he shut the door he saw Ole Andreson with all his clothes on, lying on the bed looking at the wall.

"He's been in his room all day," the landlady said down-stairs. "I guess he don't feel well. I said to him: 'Mr. Andreson, you ought to go out and take a walk on a nice fall day like this,' but he didn't feel like it."

"He doesn't want to go out."

"I'm sorry he don't feel well," the woman said. "He's an awfully nice man. He was in the ring, you know."

"I know it."

"You'd never know it except from the way his face is," the woman said. They stood talking just inside the street door. "He's just as gentle."

"Well, good-night, Mrs. Hirsch," Nick said.

"I'm not Mrs. Hirsch," the woman said. "She owns the place. I just look after it for her. I'm Mrs. Bell."

"Well, good-night, Mrs. Bell," Nick said.

"Good-night," the woman said.

Nick walked up the dark street to the corner under the arc-light, and then along the car-tracks to Henry's eating-house. George was inside, back of the counter.

"Did you see Ole?"

"Yes," said Nick. "He's in his room and he won't go out."

The cook opened the door from the kitchen when he heard Nick's voice.

"I don't even listen to it," he said and shut the door.

"Did you tell him about it?" George asked.

"Sure. I told him but he knows what it's all about."

"What's he going to do?"

"Nothing."

"They'll kill him."

"I guess they will."

"He must have got mixed up in something in Chicago."

"I guess so," said Nick.

"It's a hell of a thing."

"It's an awful thing," Nick said.

They did not say anything. George reached down for a towel and wiped the counter.

"I wonder what he did?" Nick said.

"Double-crossed somebody. That's what they kill them for."

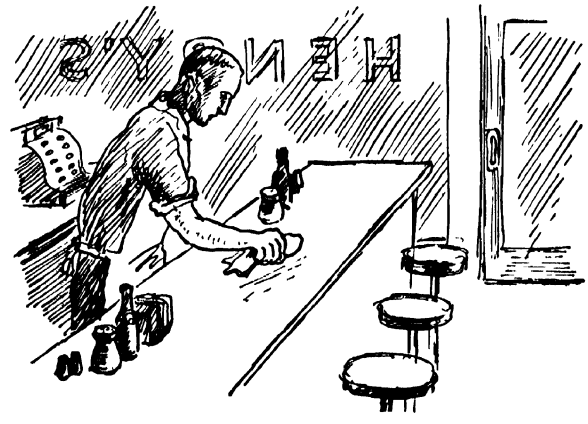
"I'm going to get out of this town," Nick said.

"Yes," said George. "That's a good thing to do."

"I can't stand to think about him waiting in the room and knowing he's going to get it. It's too damned awful."

"Well," said George, "you better not think about it."

1927



In Another Country

In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty, and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers. It was a cold fall and the wind came down from the mountains.

We were all at the hospital every afternoon, and there were different ways of walking across the town through the dusk to the hospital. Two of the ways were alongside canals, but they were long. Always, though, you crossed a bridge across a canal to enter the hospital. There was a choice of three bridges. On one of them a woman sold roasted chestnuts. It was warm, standing in front of her charcoal fire, and the chestnuts were warm afterward in your pocket. The hospital was very old and very beautiful, and you entered through a gate and walked across a courtyard and out a gate on the other side. There were usually funerals starting from the courtyard. Beyond the old hospital were the new brick pavilions, and there we met every afternoon and were all very polite and interested in what was the matter, and sat in the machines that were to make so much difference.

The doctor came up to the machine where I was sitting and said: "What did you like best to do before the war? Did you practice a sport?"

I said: "Yes, football."

"Good," he said. "You will be able to play football again better than ever."

My knee did not bend and the leg dropped straight from the knee to the ankle without a calf, and the machine was to bend the knee and make it move as in riding a tricycle. But it did not bend yet, and instead the machine lurched when it came to the bending part. The doctor said: "That will all pass. You are a fortunate young man. You will play football again like a champion."

In the next machine was a major who had a little hand like a baby's. He winked at me when the doctor examined his hand, which was between two leather straps that bounced up and down and flapped the stiff fingers, and said: "And will I too play football, captain-doctor?" He had been a very great fencer, and before the war the greatest fencer in Italy.

The doctor went to his office in the back room and brought a photograph which showed a hand that had been withered almost as small as the major's, before it had taken a machine course, and after was a little larger. The major held the photograph with his good hand and looked at it very carefully. "A wound?" he asked.

"An industrial accident," the doctor said.

"Very interesting, very interesting," the major said, and handed it back to the doctor.

"You have confidence?"

"No," said the major.

There were three boys who came each day who were about the same age I was. They were all three from Milan, and one of them was to be a lawyer, and one was to be a painter, and one had intended to be a soldier, and after we were finished with the machines, sometimes we walked back together to the Café Cova, which was next door to the Scala. We walked the short way through the communist quarter because we were four together. The people hated us because we were officers, and from a wine-shop some one called out, "A basso gli ufficiali!" as we passed. Another boy who walked with us sometimes and made us five wore a black silk handkerchief across his face because he had no nose then and his face was to be rebuilt. He had gone out to the front from the military academy and been wounded within an hour after he had gone into the front line for the first time. They rebuilt his face, but he came from a very old family and they could never get the nose exactly right. He went to South America and worked in a bank. But this was a long time ago, and then we did not any of us know how it was going to be afterward. We only knew then that

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67 A basso . . . ufficiali! Down with the officers!

there was always the war, but that we were not going to it any more.

We all had the same medals, except the boy with the black silk bandage across his face, and he had not been at the front long enough to get any medals. The tall boy with a very pale face who was to be a lawyer had been a lieutenant of Arditi and had three medals of the sort we each had only one of. He had lived a very long time with death and was a little detached. We were all a little detached, and there was nothing that held us together except that we met every afternoon at the hospital. Although, as we walked to the Cova through the tough part of town, walking in the dark, with light and singing coming out of the wine-shops, and sometimes having to walk into the street when the men and women would crowd together on the sidewalk so that we would have had to jostle them to get by, we felt held together by there being something that had happened that they, the people who disliked us, did not understand.

We ourselves all understood the Cova, where it was rich and warm and not too brightly lighted, and noisy and smoky at certain hours, and there were always girls at the tables and the illustrated papers on a rack on the wall. The girls at the Cova were very patriotic, and I found that the most patriotic people in Italy were the café girls—and I believe they are still patriotic.

The boys at first were very polite about my medals and asked me what I had done to get them. I showed them the papers, which were written in a very beautiful language and full of *fratellanza* and *abnegazione,* but which really said, with the adjectives removed, that I had been given the medals because I was an American. After that their manner changed a little toward me, although I was their friend against outsiders. I was a friend, but I was never really one of them after they had read the citations, because it had been different with them and they had done very different things to get their medals. I had been wounded, it was true; but we all knew that being wounded, after all, was really an accident. I was never ashamed of the ribbons, though, and sometimes, after the cocktail hour, I would imagine myself having done all the things they had done to get their medals; but walking home at night through the empty streets with the cold wind and all the shops closed, trying to keep near the street lights, I knew that I would never have done such things, and I was very much afraid to die, and often lay in bed at night by myself, afraid to die and wondering how I would be when I went back to the front again.

The three with the medals were like hunting-hawks; and I was not a hawk, although I might seem a hawk to those who have never hunted; they, the three, knew better and so we drifted apart. But I stayed good friends with the boy who had been wounded his first day at the front, because he would never know now how he would have turned out; so he could never be accepted either, and I liked him because I thought perhaps he would not have turned out to be a hawk either.

The major, who had been the great fencer, did not believe in bravery, and spent much time while we sat in the machines correcting my grammar. He had complimented me on how I spoke Italian, and we talked together very easily. One day I had said that Italian seemed such an easy language to me that I could not take a great interest in it; everything was so easy to say. "Ah, yes," the major said. "Why, then, do you not take up the use of grammar?" So we took up the use of grammar, and soon Italian was such a different language that I was afraid to talk to him until I had the grammar straight in my mind.

The major came very regularly to the hospital. I do not think he ever missed a day, although I am sure he did not believe in the machines. There was a time when none of us believed in the machines, and one day the major said it was all nonsense. The machines were new then and it was we who were to prove them. It was an idiotic idea, he said, "a theory, like another." I had not learned my grammar, and he said I was a stupid impossible disgrace, and he was a fool to have bothered with me. He was a small man and he sat straight up in his chair with his right hand thrust into the machine and looked straight ahead at the wall while the straps thumped up and down with his fingers in them.

"What will you do when the war is over if it is over?" he asked me. "Speak grammatically!"

"I will go to the States."

"Are you married?"

"No, but I hope to be."

"The more of a fool you are," he said. He seemed very angry. "A man must not marry."

"Why, Signor Maggiore?"

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30 **fratellanza,** brotherhood • 30 **abnegazione,** sacrifice

"Don't call me 'Signor Maggiore.'"

"Why must not a man marry?"

"He cannot marry. He cannot marry," he said angrily. "If he is to lose everything, he should not place himself in a position to lose that. He should not place himself in a position to lose. He should find things he cannot lose."

He spoke very angrily and bitterly, and looked straight ahead while he talked.

"But why should he necessarily lose it?"

"He'll lose it," the major said. He was looking at the wall. Then he looked down at the machine and jerked his little hand out from between the straps and slapped it hard against his thigh. "He'll lose it," he almost shouted. "Don't argue with me!" Then he called to the attendant who ran the machines. "Come and turn this damned thing off."

He went back into the other room for the light treatment and the massage. Then I heard him ask the doctor if he might use his telephone and he shut the door. When he came back into the room, I was sitting in another machine. He was wearing his cape and had his cap on, and he came directly toward my machine and put his arm on my shoulder.

"I am so sorry," he said, and patted me on the shoulder with his good hand. "I would not be rude. My wife has just died. You must forgive me."

"Oh—" I said, feeling sick for him. "I am *so* sorry."

He stood there biting his lower lip. It is very difficult," he said. "I cannot resign myself."

He looked straight past me and out through the window. Then he began to cry. "I am utterly unable to resign myself," he said and choked. And then crying, his head up looking at nothing, carrying himself straight and soldierly, with tears on both his cheeks and biting his lips, he walked past the machines and out the door.

The doctor told me that the major's wife, who was very young and whom he had not married until he was definitely invalided out of the war, had died of pneumonia. She had been sick only a few days. No one expected her to die. The major did not come to the hospital for three days. Then he came at the usual hour, wearing a black band on the sleeve of his uniform. When he came back, there were large framed photographs around the wall, of all sorts of wounds before and after they had been cured by the machines. In front of the machine the major used were three photographs of hands like his that were completely restored. I do not know where the doctor got them. I always understood we were the first to use the machines. The photographs did not make much difference to the major because he only looked out of the window.

1927

Eugene O'Neill

1888 • 1953

The 1920's and early 1930's were the greatest period in the history of the American drama; during those years, a dramatic revival was in full swing. In comedy there were—to select only a few of the more brilliant examples—Philip Barry's *Paris Bound* (1927) and *Holiday* (1929), S. N Behrman's *The Second Man* (1927) and *Biography* (1932), George Kelly's *The Show-Off* (1924) and *Craig's Wife* (1925), George S. Kaufman's *Beggar on Horseback* (with Marc Connelly, 1924) and *The Royal Family* (with Edna Ferber, 1927), and Robert Sherwood's *Road to Rome* (1927) and *Reunion in Vienna* (1931). And in tragedy, there



were the plays of Eugene O'Neill—by common consent the greatest dramatist whom America has yet produced. Among O'Neill's more important works were: *Beyond the Horizon* and *The Emperor Jones* (1920), *Anna Christie* (1921), *The Hairy Ape* (1922), *Desire under the Elms* (1924), *The Great God Brown* (1926), *Strange Interlude* (1928), and *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931).

Drama declined after 1931. Since that date, to be sure, Maxwell Anderson has written creditable tragedies in verse (*Winterset,* 1935; *High Tor,* 1937; and others), and there have been younger writers of promise, such as Clifford Odets (*Waiting for Lefty,* 1935) and Lillian Hellman (*The Children's Hour,* 1935). But O'Neill maintained a twelve-year silence from 1934 until the fall of 1946, when *The Iceman Cometh,* an ambitious work upon which he was long engaged, was produced on Broadway. Other dramatists have hardly fulfilled their early promise.

Son of the famous actor James O'Neill, Eugene O'Neill was born in New York City. After a varied experience which included not only academic study (at Princeton, 1906-1907, and at Harvard, 1914-1915) but also two years at sea, a tour in vaudeville, and a turn at newspaper reporting, he began his career as dramatist in 1916.

His plays are interesting, first of all, for their bold experimentation. Restive under the restraints imposed by the theater, and never satisfied with an achieved form, O'Neill constantly experimented with new techniques. *The Emperor Jones* and *The Hairy Ape* were experiments in monodrama—a type of play whose purpose is the exhibition of a single character. *Desire under the Elms* employed a novel stage set, showing by means of the cross section of a house simultaneous actions in the different rooms. *The Great God Brown* used masks to distinguish between the assumed and the real attitudes of the characters, and *Strange Interlude* used the aside for the same purpose. Many plays (*The Hairy Ape* among them) employed "expressionism"—a technique which sought to convey the meaning symbolically rather than by a literal realism. Even though the auditor sometimes questioned the success of these experiments, he always applauded their brilliance and originality. O'Neill's plays are interesting, in the second place, for their psychological insight. The author achieved his most powerful effects in studies of the disintegration of personality. In *The Emperor Jones,* the theme was the breakdown of a Negro's mentality under the stress of fear; in *The Hairy Ape,* a worker's loss of motivation when he could no longer feel that he "belonged"; in *Strange Interlude,* the mental and moral disintegration of a woman whose fiancé had been killed in war. Although the Freudian psychology was too prominently displayed—a fact which may prove injurious to O'Neill's future reputation—there is no denying the originality and power of his best work.

A. H. Quinn, **A History of the American Drama from the Civil War to the Present Day,** 2 vols., New York, 1927 • S. K. Winther, **Eugene O'Neill,** New York, 1934 • R. D. Skinner, **Eugene O'Neill; A Poet's Quest,** New York, 1935 • B. H. Clark, **Eugene O'Neill,** New York, 1936

Panel (l. to r.): ". . . two years at sea" • Eugene O'Neill at 34 • Scene VII from **The Hairy Ape**

The Hairy Ape

A Comedy of Ancient and Modern Life in Eight Scenes

The Hairy Ape was first produced by the Provincetown Players at their theater, the Provincetown Playhouse, 183 Macdougal Street, New York City, March 9, 1922. Louis Wolheim took the part of "Yank."

The play is significant technically because of its strong emphasis upon a single character and its use of "expressionism." Although it is employed throughout, the expressionistic method—which at intervals substitutes a fantastic kind of symbolism for external realism—is prominent in Scene V, for example, where Yank lunges against the pedestrians on Fifth Avenue without producing any visible effect upon them. The play is important also for its content. Although O'Neill, here as elsewhere, is concerned primarily with psychological processes, he presents in **The Hairy Ape** a psychological problem which is broadly social in its implications—the divorce, in the modern industrial world, of the worker from his work. It is a problem which came into being with the industrial revolution, which goes much deeper than hours and wages, and for which no solution has yet been found.

Characters

Robert Smith, "Yank"
Paddy
Long
Mildred Douglas
Her Aunt
Second Engineer
A Guard
A Secretary of an Organization
Stokers, Ladies, Gentlemen, etc.

Scenes

Scene I: The firemen's forecastle of an ocean liner—an hour after sailing from New York.
Scene II: Section of promenade deck, two days out—morning.
Scene III: The stokehole. A few minutes later.
Scene IV: Same as Scene I. Half an hour later.
Scene V: Fifth Avenue, New York. Three weeks later.
Scene VI: An island near the city. The next night.
Scene VII: In the city. About a month later.
Scene VIII: In the city. Twilight of the next day.

SCENE I

SCENE. The firemen's forecastle of a transatlantic liner an hour after sailing from New York for the voyage across. Tiers of narrow, steel bunks, three deep, on all sides. An entrance in rear. Benches on the floor before the bunks. The room is crowded with men, shouting, cursing, laughing, singing—a confused, inchoate uproar swelling into a sort of unity, a meaning—the bewildered, furious, baffled defiance of a beast in a cage. Nearly all the men are drunk. Many bottles are passed from hand to hand. All are dressed in dungaree pants, heavy ugly shoes. Some wear singlets, but the majority are stripped to the waist.

The treatment of this scene, or of any other scene in the play, should by no means be naturalistic. The effect sought after is a cramped space in the bowels of a ship, imprisoned by white steel. The lines of bunks, the uprights supporting them, cross each other like the steel framework of a cage. The ceiling crushes down upon the men's heads. They cannot stand upright. This accentuates the natural stooping posture which shoveling coal and the resultant over-development of back and shoulder muscles have given them. The men themselves should resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal Man is guessed at. All are hairy-chested, with long arms of tremendous power, and low, receding brows above their small, fierce, resentful eyes. All the civilized white races are represented, but except for the slight differentiation in color of hair, skin, eyes, all these men are alike.

The curtain rises on a tumult of sound. Yank is seated in the foreground. He seems broader, fiercer, more truculent, more powerful, more sure of himself than the rest. They respect his superior strength—the grudging respect of fear.

Then, too, he represents to them a self-expression, the very last word in what they are, their most highly developed individual.

VOICES. Gif me trink dere, you!
'Ave a wet!
Salute!
Gesundheit!
Skoal!
Drunk as a lord, God stiffen you!
Here's how!
Luck!
Pass back that bottle, damn you!
Pourin' it down his neck!
Ho, Froggy! Where the devil have you been?
La Touraine.
I hit him smash in yaw, py Gott!
Jenkins—the First—he's a rotten swine——
And the coppers nabbed him—and I run——
I like peer better. It don't pig head gif you.
A slut, I'm sayin'! She robbed me aslape——
To hell with 'em all!
You're a bloody liar!
Say dot again!

[*Commotion. Two men about to fight are pulled apart.*]

No scrappin' now!
To-night——
See who's the best man!
Bloody Dutchman!
To-night on the for'ard square.
I'll bet on Dutchy.
He packa da wallop, I tella you!
Shut up, Wop!
No fightin', maties. We're all chums, ain't we?

[*A voice starts bawling a song.*]

"Beer, beer, glorious beer!
Fill yourselves right up to here."

YANK. [*For the first time seeming to take notice of the uproar about him, turns around threateningly—in a tone of contemptuous authority.*] Choke off dat noise! Where d'yuh get dat beer stuff? Beer, hell! Beer's for goils—and Dutchmen. Me for somep'n wit a kick to it! Gimme a drink, one of youse guys. [*Several bottles are eagerly offered. He takes a tremendous gulp at one of them; then, keeping the bottle in his hand, glares belligerently at the owner, who hastens to acquiesce in this robbery by saying.*] All righto, Yank. Keep it and have another. [YANK *contemptuously turns his back on the crowd again. For a second there is an embarrassed silence. Then*——]

VOICES. We must be passing the Hook.
She's beginning to roll to it.
Six days in hell—and then Southampton.
Py Yesus, I vish somepody take my first vatch for me!
Gittin' seasick, Square-head?
Drink up and forget it!
What's in your bottle?
Gin.
Dot's nigger trink.
Absinthe? It's doped. You'll go off your chump, Froggy!
Cochon!
Whisky, that's the ticket!
Where's Paddy?
Going asleep.
Sing us that whisky song, Paddy.

[*They all turn to an old, wizened Irishman who is dozing, very drunk, on the benches forward. His face is extremely monkey-like with all the sad, patient pathos of that animal in his small eyes.*]

Singa da song, Caruso Pat!
He's gettin' old. The drink is too much for him.
He's too drunk.

PADDY. [*Blinking about him, starts to his feet resentfully, swaying, holding on to the edge of a bunk.*] I'm never too drunk to sing. 'Tis only when I'm dead to the world I'd be wishful to sing at all. [*With a sort of sad contempt.*] "Whisky Johnny," ye want? A chanty, ye want? Now that's a queer wish from the ugly like of you, God help you. But no matther. [*He starts to sing in a thin, nasal, doleful tone.*]

Oh, whisky is the life of man!
Whisky! O Johnny! [*They all join in on this.*]
Oh, whisky is the life of man!
Whisky for my Johnny! [*Again chorus.*]
Oh, whisky drove my old man mad!
Whisky! O Johnny!
Oh, whisky drove my old man mad!
Whisky for my Johnny!

YANK. [*Again turning around scornfully.*] Aw hell!

Nix on dat old sailing ship stuff! All dat bull's dead, see? And you're dead, too, yuh damned old Harp, on'y yuh don't know it. Take it easy, see. Give us a rest. Nix on de loud noise. [*With a cynical grin.*] Can't youse see I'm tryin' to t'ink?

ALL. [*Repeating the word after him as one with the same cynical amused mockery.*] Think! [*The chorused word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a general uproar of hard, barking laughter.*]

VOICES. Don't be cracking your head wit ut, Yank.

You gat headache, py yingo!

One thing about it—it rhymes with drink!

Ha, ha, ha!

Drink, don't think!

Drink, don't think!

Drink, don't think!

[*A whole chorus of voices has taken up this refrain, stamping on the floor, pounding on the benches with fists.*]

YANK. [*Taking a gulp from his bottle—goodnaturedly.*] Aw right. Can de noise. I got yuh de foist time.

[*The uproar subsides. A very drunken sentimental tenor begins to sing.*]

"Far away in Canada,
Far across the sea,
There's a lass who fondly waits
Making a home for me——"

YANK. [*Fiercely contemptuous.*] Shut up, yuh lousy boob! Where d'yuh yet dat tripe? Home? Home, hell! I'll make a home for yuh! I'll knock yuh dead. Home! T'hell wit home! Where d'yuh get dat tripe? Dis is home, see? What d'yuh want wit home? [*Proudly.*] I runned away from mine when I was a kid. On'y too glad to beat it, dat was me. Home was lickings for me, dat's all. But yuh can bet your shoit no one ain't never licked me since! Wanter try it, any of youse? Huh! I guess not. [*In a more placated but still contemptuous tone.*] Goils waitin' for yuh, huh? Aw, hell! Dat's all tripe. Dey don't wait for no one. Dey'd double-cross yuh for a nickel. Dey're all tarts, get me? Treat 'em rough, dat's me. To hell wit 'em. Tarts, dat's what, de whole bunch of 'em.

LONG. [*Very drunk, jumps on a bench excitedly, gesticulating with a bottle in his hand.*] Listen 'ere, Comrades! Yank 'ere is right. 'E says this 'ere stinkin' ship is our 'ome. And 'e says as 'ome is 'ell. And 'e's right! This is 'ell. We lives in 'ell, Comrades—and right enough we'll die in it. [*Raging.*] And who's ter blame, I arsks yer? We ain't. We wasn't born this rotten way. All men is born free and ekal. That's in the bleedin' Bible, maties. But what d'they care for the Bible—them lazy, bloated swine what travels first cabin? Them's the ones. They dragged us down 'til we're on'y wage slaves in the bowels of a bloody ship, sweatin', burnin' up, eatin' coal dust! Hit's them's ter blame—the damned Capitalist clarss!

[*There had been a gradual murmur of contemptuous resentment rising among the men until now he is interrupted by a storm of catcalls, hisses, boos, hard laughter.*]

VOICES. Turn it off!

Shut up!

Sit down!

Closa da face!

Tamn fool! [*Etc.*]

YANK. [*Standing up and glaring at* LONG.] Sit down before I knock yuh down! [LONG *makes haste to efface himself.* YANK *goes on contemptuously.*] De Bible, huh? De Cap'tlist class, huh? Aw nix on dat Salvation Army-Socialist bull. Git a soapbox! Hire a hall! Come and be saved, huh? Jerk us to Jesus, huh? Aw g'wan! I've listened to lots of guys like you, see. Yuh're all wrong. Wanter know what I t'ink? Yuh ain't no good for no one. Yuh're de bunk. Yuh ain't got no noive, get me? Yuh're yellow, dat's what. Yellow, dat's you. Say! What's dem slobs in de foist cabin got to do wit us? We're better men dan dey are, ain't we? Sure! One of us guys could clean up de whole mob wit one mit. Put one of 'em down here for one watch in de stokehole, what'd happen? Dey'd carry him off on a stretcher. Dem boids don't amount to nothin'. Dey're just baggage. Who makes dis old tub run? Ain't it us guys? Well den, we belong, don't we? We belong and dey don't. Dat's all. [*A loud chorus of approval.* YANK *goes on.*] As for dis bein' hell—aw, nuts! Yuh lost your noive, dat's what. Dis is a man's job, get me? It belongs. It runs dis tub. No stiffs need apply. But yuh're a stiff, see? Yuh're yellow, dat's you.

VOICES. [*With a great hard pride in them.*]

Righto!

A man's job!

Talk is cheap, Long.

He never could hold up his end.
Divil take him!
Yank's right. We make it go.
Py Gott, Yank say right ting!
We don't need no one cryin' over us.
Makin' speeches.
Throw him out!
Yellow!
Chuck him overboard!
I'll break his jaw for him!

[*They crowd around* LONG *threateningly.*]

YANK. [*Half good-natured again—contemptuously.*] Aw, take it easy. Leave him alone. He ain't woith a punch. Drink up. Here's how, whoever owns dis. [*He takes a long swallow from his bottle. All drink with him. In a flash all is hilarious amiability again, back-slapping, loud talk, etc.*]

PADDY. [*Who has been sitting in a blinking, melancholy daze—suddenly cries out in a voice full of old sorrow.*] We belong to this, you're saying? We make the ship to go, you're saying? Yerra then, that Almighty God have pity on us! [*His voice runs into the wail of a keen, he rocks back and forth on his bench. The men stare at him, startled and impressed in spite of themselves.*] Oh, to be back in the fine days of my youth, ochone! Oh, there was fine beautiful ships them days—clippers wid tall masts touching the sky—fine strong men in them—men that was sons of the sea as if 'twas the mother that bore them. Oh, the clean skins of them, and the clear eyes, the straight backs and full chests of them! Brave men they was, and bold men surely! We'd be sailing out, bound down round the Horn maybe. We'd be making sail in the dawn, with a fair breeze, singing a chanty song wid no care to it. And astern the land would be sinking low and dying out, but we'd give it no heed but a laugh, and never a look behind. For the day that was, was enough, for we was free men—and I'm thinking 'tis only slaves do be giving heed to the day that's gone or the day to come—until they're old like me. [*With a sort of religious exaltation.*] Oh, to be scudding south again wid the power of the Trade Wind driving her on steady through the nights and the days! Full sail on her! Nights and days! Nights when the foam of the wake would be flaming wid fire, when the sky'd be blazing and winking wid stars. Or the full of the moon maybe. Then you'd see her driving through the gray night, her sails stretching aloft all silver and white, not a sound on the deck, the lot of us dreaming dreams, till you'd believe 'twas no real ship at all you was on but a ghost ship like the *Flying Dutchman* they say does be roaming the seas forevermore without touching a port. And there was the days, too. A warm sun on the clean decks. Sun warming the blood of you, and wind over the miles of shiny green ocean like strong drink to your lungs. Work—aye, hard work—but who'd mind that at all? Sure, you worked under the sky and 'twas work wid skill and daring to it. And wid the day done, in the dog watch, smoking me pipe at ease, the lookout would be raising land maybe, and we'd see the mountains of South Americy wid the red fire of the setting sun painting their white tops and the clouds floating by them! [*His tone of exaltation ceases. He goes on mournfully.*] Yerra, what's the use of talking? 'Tis a dead man's whisper. [*To* YANK *resentfully.*] 'Twas them days men belonged to ships, not now. 'Twas them days a ship was part of the sea, and a man was part of a ship, and the sea joined all together and made it one. [*Scornfully.*] Is it one wid this you'd be, Yank—black smoke from the funnels smudging the sea, smudging the decks—the bloody engines pounding and throbbing and shaking—wid divil a sight of sun or a breath of clean air—choking our lungs wid coal dust—breaking our backs and hearts in the hell of the stokehole—feeding the bloody furnace—feeding our lives along wid the coal, I'm thinking—caged in by steel from a sight of the sky like bloody apes in the Zoo! [*With a harsh laugh.*] Ho-ho, divil mend you! Is it to belong to that you're wishing? Is it a flesh and blood wheel of the engines you'd be?

YANK. [*Who has been listening with a contemptuous sneer, barks out the answer.*] Sure ting! Dat's me. What about it?

PADDY. [*As if to himself—with great sorrow.*] Me time is past due. That a great wave wid sun in the heart of it may sweep me over the side sometime I'd be dreaming of the days that's gone!

YANK. Aw, yuh crazy Mick! [*He springs to his feet and advances on* PADDY *threateningly—then stops, fighting some queer struggle within himself—lets his hands*

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22 **keen,** a lamentation or dirge • 25 **ochone,** alas

fall to his sides—contemptuously.] Aw, take it easy. Yuh're aw right at dat. Yuh're bugs, dat's all—nutty as a cuckoo. All dat tripe yuh been pullin'——Aw, dat's all right. On'y it's dead, get me? Yuh don't belong no more, see. Yuh don't get de stuff. Yuh're too old. [*Disgustedly.*] But aw say, come up for air onct in a while, can't yuh? See what's happened since yuh croaked. [*He suddenly bursts forth vehemently, growing more and more excited.*] Say! Sure! Sure I meant it! What de hell—— Say, lemme talk! Hey! Hey, you old Harp! Hey, youse guys! Say, listen to me—wait a moment—I gotter talk, see. I belong and he don't. He's dead but I'm livin'. Listen to me! Sure I'm part of de engines! Why de hell not! Dey move, don't dey? Dey're speed, ain't dey! Dey smash trou, don't dey? Twenty-five knots a hour! Dat's goin' some! Dat's new stuff! Dat belongs! But him, he's too old. He gets dizzy. Say, listen. All dat crazy tripe about nights and days; all dat crazy tripe about stars and moons; all dat crazy tripe about suns and winds, fresh air and de rest of it—— Aw hell, dat's all a dope dream! Hittin' de pipe of de past, dat's what he's doin'. He's old and don't belong no more. But me, I'm young! I'm in de pink! I move wit it! It, get me! I mean de ting dat's de guts of all dis. It ploughs trou all de tripe he's been sayin'. It blows dat up! It knocks dat dead! It slams dat offen de face of de oith! It, get me! De engines and de coal and de smoke and all de rest of it! He can't breathe and swallow coal dust, but I kin, see? Dat's fresh air for me! Dat's food for me! I'm new, get me? Hell in de stokehole? Sure! It takes a man to work in hell. Hell, sure, dat's my fav'rite climate. I eat it up! I git fat on it! It's me makes it hot! It's me makes it roar! It's me makes it move! Sure, on'y for me everyting stops. It all goes dead, get me? De noise and smoke and all de engines movin' de woild, dey stop. Dere ain't nothin' no more! Dat's what I'm sayin'. Everyting else dat makes de woild move, somep'n makes it move. It can't move witout somep'n else, see? Den yuh get down to me. I'm at de bottom, get me! Dere ain't nothin' foither. I'm de end! I'm de start! I start somep'n and de woild moves! It—dat's me!—de new dat's moiderin' de old! I'm de ting in coal dat makes it boin; I'm steam and oil for de engines; I'm de ting in noise dat makes yuh hear it; I'm smoke and express trains and steamers and factory whistles; I'm de ting in gold dat makes it money! And I'm what makes iron into steel! Steel, dat stands for de whole ting! And I'm steel—steel—steel! I'm de muscles in steel, de punch behind it! [*As he says this he pounds with his first against the steel bunks. All the men, roused to a pitch of frenzied self-glorification by his speech, do likewise. There is a deafening metallic roar, through which* YANK'S *voice can be heard bellowing.*] Slaves, hell! We run de whole woiks. All de rich guys dat tink dey're somep'n, dey ain't nothin'! Dey don't belong. But us guys, we're in de move, we're at de bottom, de whole ting is us! [PADDY *from the start of* YANK'S *speech has been taking one gulp after another from his bottle, at first frightenedly, as if he were afraid to listen, then desperately, as if to drown his senses, but finally has achieved complete indifferent, even amused, drunkenness.* YANK *sees his lips moving. He quells the uproar with a shout.*] Hey, youse guys, take it easy! Wait a moment! De nutty Harp is sayin' somep'n.

PADDY. [*Is heard now—throws his head back with a mocking burst of laughter.*] Ho-ho-ho-ho-ho——

YANK. [*Drawing back his fist, with a snarl.*] Aw! Look out who yuh're givin' the bark!

PADDY. [*Begins to sing the "Miller of Dee" with enormous good nature.*]

"I care for nobody, no, not I,
And nobody cares for me."

YANK. [*Good-natured himself in a flash, interrupts* PADDY *with a slap on the bare back like a report.*] Dat's de stuff! Now yuh're gettin' wise to somep'n. Care for nobody, dat's de dope! To hell wit 'em all! And nix on nobody else carin'. I kin care for myself, get me! [*Eight bells sound, muffled, vibrating through the steel walls as if some enormous brazen gong were imbedded in the heart of the ship. All the men jump up mechanically, file through the door silently close upon each other's heels in what is very like a prisoners' lockstep.* YANK *slaps* PADDY *on the back.*] Our watch, yuh old Harp! [*Mockingly.*] Come on down in hell. Eat up de coal dust. Drink in de heat. It's it, see! Act like yuh liked it, yuh better—or croak yuhself.

PADDY. [*With jovial defiance.*] To the divil wid it! I'll not report this watch. Let thim log me and be damned. I'm no slave the like of you. I'll be sittin' here at me ease, and drinking, and thinking, and dreaming dreams.

YANK. [*Contemptuously.*] Tinkin' and dreamin', what'll that get yuh? What's tinkin' got to do wit it?

We move, don't we? Speed, ain't it? Fog, dat's all you stand for. But we drive trou dat, don't we? We split dat up and smash trou—twenty-five knots a hour! [*Turns his back on* PADDY *scornfully.*] Aw, yuh make me sick! Yuh don't belong! [*He strides out the door in rear.* PADDY *hums to himself, blinking drowsily.*]

[*Curtain*]

SCENE II

SCENE. Two days out. A section of the promenade deck. Mildred Douglas and her aunt are discovered reclining in deck chairs. The former is a girl of twenty, slender, delicate, with a pale, pretty face marred by a self-conscious expression of disdainful superiority. She looks fretful, nervous, and discontented, bored by her own anemia. Her aunt is a pompous and proud—and fat—old lady. She is a type even to the point of a double chin and lorgnettes. She is dressed pretentiously, as if afraid her face alone would never indicate her position in life. Mildred is dressed all in white.

The impression to be conveyed by this scene is one of the beautiful, vivid life of the sea all about—sunshine on the deck in a great flood, the fresh sea wind blowing across it. In the midst of this, these two incongruous, artificial figures, inert and disharmonious, the elder like a gray lump of dough touched up with rouge, the younger looking as if the vitality of her stock had been sapped before she was conceived, so that she is the expression not of its life energy but merely of the artificialities that energy had won for itself in the spending.

MILDRED. [*Looking up with affected dreaminess.*] How the black smoke swirls back against the sky! Is it not beautiful?

AUNT. [*Without looking up.*] I dislike smoke of any kind.

MILDRED. My great-grandmother smoked a pipe—a clay pipe.

AUNT. [*Ruffling.*] Vulgar.

MILDRED. She was too distant a relative to be vulgar. Time mellows pipes.

AUNT. [*Pretending boredom but irritated.*] Did the sociology you took up at college teach you that—to play the ghoul on every possible occasion, excavating old bones? Why not let your great-grandmother rest in her grave?

MILDRED. [*Dreamily.*] With her pipe beside her—puffing in Paradise.

AUNT. [*With spite.*] Yes, you are a natural born ghoul. You are even getting to look like one, my dear.

MILDRED. [*In a passionless tone.*] I detest you, Aunt. [*Looking at her critically.*] Do you know what you remind me of? Of a cold pork pudding against a background of linoleum tablecloth in the kitchen of a—but the possibilities are wearisome. [*She closes her eyes.*]

AUNT. [*With a bitter laugh.*] Merci for your candor. But since I am and must be your chaperon—in appearance, at least—let us patch up some sort of armed truce. For my part you are quite free to indulge any pose of eccentricity that beguiles you—as long as you observe the amenities——

MILDRED. [*Drawling.*] The inanities?

AUNT. [*Going on as if she hadn't heard.*] After exhausting the morbid thrills of social service work on New York's East Side—how they must have hated you, by the way, the poor that you made so much poorer in their own eyes!—you are now bent on making your slumming international. Well, I hope Whitechapel will provide the needed nerve tonic. Do not ask me to chaperon you there, however. I told your father I would not. I loathe deformity. We will hire an army of detectives and you may investigate everything—they allow you to see.

MILDRED. [*Protesting with a trace of genuine earnestness.*] Please do not mock at my attempts to discover how the other half lives. Give me credit for some sort of groping sincerity in that at least. I would like to help them. I would like to be some use in the world. Is it my fault I don't know how? I would like to be sincere, to touch life somewhere. [*With weary bitterness.*] But I'm afraid I have neither the vitality nor integrity. All that was burnt out in our stock before I was born. Grandfather's blast furnaces, flaming to the sky, melting steel, making millions—then father keeping those home fires burning, making more millions—and little me at the tail-end of it all. I'm a waste product in the Bessemer process—like the millions. Or rather, I inherit the acquired trait of the by-product, wealth, but none of the energy, none of the strength of the steel

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42 Whitechapel, a quarter of London just east of the city

that made it. I am sired by gold and damned by it, as they say at the race track—damned in more ways than one. [*She laughs mirthlessly.*]

AUNT. [*Unimpressed—superciliously.*] You seem to be going in for sincerity to-day. It isn't becoming to you, really—except as an obvious pose. Be as artificial as you are, I advise. There's a sort of sincerity in that, you know. And, after all, you must confess you like that better.

MILDRED. [*Again affected and bored.*] Yes, I suppose I do. Pardon me for my outburst. When a leopard complains of its spots, it must sound rather grotesque. [*In a mocking tone.*] Purr, little leopard. Purr, scratch, tear, kill, gorge yourself and be happy—only stay in the jungle where your spots are camouflage. In a cage they make you conspicuous.

AUNT. I don't know what you are talking about.

MILDRED. It would be rude to talk about anything to you. Let's just talk. [*She looks at her wrist watch.*] Well, thank goodness, it's about time for them to come for me. That ought to give me a new thrill, Aunt.

AUNT. [*Affectedly troubled.*] You don't mean to say you're really going? The dirt—the heat must be frightful——

MILDRED. Grandfather started as a puddler. I should have inherited an immunity to heat that would make a salamander shiver. It will be fun to put it to the test.

AUNT. But don't you have to have the captain's—or someone's—permission to visit the stokehole?

MILDRED. [*With a triumphant smile.*] I have it—both his and the chief engineer's. Oh, they didn't want to at first, in spite of my social service credentials. They didn't seem a bit anxious that I should investigate how the other half lives and works on a ship. So I had to tell them that my father, the president of Nazareth Steel, chairman of the board of directors of this line, had told me it would be all right.

AUNT. He didn't.

MILDRED. How naïve age makes one! But I said he did, Aunt. I even said he had given me a letter to them—which I had lost. And they were afraid to take the chance that I might be lying. [*Excitedly.*] So it's ho! for the stokehole. The second engineer is to escort me. [*Looking at her watch again.*] It's time. And here he comes, I think.

[*The* SECOND ENGINEER *enters. He is a husky, fine-looking man of thirty-five or so. He stops before the two and tips his cap, visibly embarrassed and ill-at-ease.*]

SECOND ENGINEER. Miss Douglas?

MILDRED. Yes. [*Throwing off her rugs and getting to her feet.*] Are we all ready to start?

SECOND ENGINEER. In just a second, ma'am. I'm waiting for the Fourth. He's coming along.

MILDRED. [*With a scornful smile.*] You don't care to shoulder this responsibility alone, is that it?

SECOND ENGINEER. [*Forcing a smile.*] Two are better than one. [*Disturbed by her eyes, glances out to sea—blurts out.*] A fine day we're having.

MILDRED. Is it?

SECOND ENGINEER. A nice warm breeze——

MILDRED. It feels cold to me.

SECOND ENGINEER. But it's hot enough in the sun——

MILDRED. Not hot enough for me. I don't like Nature. I was never athletic.

SECOND ENGINEER. [*Forcing a smile.*] Well, you'll find it hot enough where you're going.

MILDRED. Do you mean hell?

SECOND ENGINEER. [*Flabbergasted, decides to laugh.*] Ho-ho! No, I mean the stokehole.

MILDRED. My grandfather was a puddler. He played with boiling steel.

SECOND ENGINEER. [*All at sea—uneasily.*] Is that so? Hum, you'll excuse me, ma'am, but are you intending to wear that dress?

MILDRED. Why not?

SECOND ENGINEER. You'll likely rub against oil and dirt. It can't be helped.

MILDRED. It doesn't matter. I have lots of white dresses.

SECOND ENGINEER. I have an old coat you might throw over——

MILDRED. I have fifty dresses like this. I will throw this one into the sea when I come back. That ought to wash it clean, don't you think?

SECOND ENGINEER. [*Doggedly.*] There's ladders to climb down that are none too clean—and dark alleyways——

MILDRED. I will wear this very dress and none other.

SECOND ENGINEER. No offense meant. It's none of my business. I was only warning you——

MILDRED. Warning? That sounds thrilling.

SECOND ENGINEER. [*Looking down the deck—with a sigh of relief.*] There's the Fourth now. He's waiting for us. If you'll come——

MILDRED. Go on. I'll follow you. [*He goes.* MILDRED *turns a mocking smile on her aunt.*] An oaf—but a handsome, virile oaf.

AUNT. [*Scornfully.*] Poser!

MILDRED. Take care. He said there were dark alleyways——

AUNT. [*In the same tone.*] Poser!

MILDRED. [*Biting her lips angrily.*] You are right. But would that my millions were not so anemically chaste!

AUNT. Yes, for a fresh pose I have no doubt you would drag the name of Douglas in the gutter!

MILDRED. From which it sprang. Goodby, Aunt. Don't pray too hard that I may fall into the fiery furnace.

AUNT. Poser!

MILDRED. [*Viciously.*] Old hag! [*She slaps her aunt insultingly across the face and walks off, laughing gayly.*]

AUNT. [*Screams after her.*] I said poser!

[*Curtain*]

SCENE III

SCENE. The stokehole. In the rear, the dimly-outlined bulks of the furnaces and boilers. High overhead one hanging electric bulb sheds just enough light through the murky air laden with coal dust to pile up masses of shadows everywhere. A line of men, stripped to the waist, is before the furnace doors. They bend over, looking neither to right nor left, handling their shovels as if they were part of their bodies, with a strange, awkward, swinging rhythm. They use the shovels to throw open the furnace doors. Then from these fiery round holes in the black a flood of terrific light and heat pours full upon the men who are outlined in silhouette in the crouching, inhuman attitudes of chained gorillas. The men shovel with a rhythmic motion, swinging as on a pivot from the coal which lies in heaps on the floor behind to hurl it into the flaming mouths before them. There is a tumult of noise—the brazen clang of the furnace doors as they are flung open or slammed shut, the grating, teeth-gritting grind of steel against steel, of crunching coal. This clash of sounds stuns one's ears with its rending dissonance. But there is order in it, rhythm, a mechanical regulated recurrence, a tempo. And rising above all, making the air hum with the quiver of liberated energy, the roar of leaping flames in the furnaces, the monotonous throbbing beat of the engines.

As the curtain rises, the furnace doors are shut. The men are taking a breathing spell. One or two are arranging the coal behind them, pulling it into more accessible heaps. The others can be dimly made out leaning on their shovels in relaxed attitudes of exhaustion.

PADDY. [*From somewhere in the line—plaintively.*] Yerra, will this divil's own watch nivir end? Me back is broke. I'm destroyed entirely.

YANK. [*From the center of the line—with exuberant scorn.*] Aw, yuh make me sick! Lie down and croak, why don't yuh? Always beefin', dat's you! Say, dis is a cinch! Dis was made for me! It's my meat, get me! [*A whistle is blown—a thin, shrill note from somewhere overhead in the darkness.* YANK *curses without resentment.*] Dere's de damn engineer crackin' de whip. He tinks we're loafin'.

PADDY. [*Vindictively.*] God stiffen him!

YANK. [*In an exultant tone of command.*] Come on, youse guys! Git into de game! She's gittin hungry! Pile some grub in her. Trow it into her belly! Come on now, all of youse! Open her up!

[*At this last all the men, who have followed his movements of getting into position, throw open their furnace doors with a deafening clang. The fiery light floods over their shoulders as they bend round for the coal. Rivulets of sooty sweat have traced maps on their backs. The enlarged muscles form bunches of high light and shadow.*]

YANK. [*Chanting a count as he shovels without seeming effort.*] One—two—tree—— [*His voice rising exultantly in the joy of battle.*] Dat's de stuff! Let her have it! All togedder now! Sling it into her! Let her ride! Shoot de piece now! Call de toin on her! Drive her into it! Feel her move! Watch her smoke! Speed, dat's her middle name! Give her coal, youse guys! Coal, dat's her booze! Drink it up, baby! Let's see yuh sprint! Dig in and gain a lap! Dere she go-o-es. [*This last in the chanting formula of the gallery gods at the six-day bike race. He slams his furnace door shut. The others do likewise with as much unison as their wearied bodies will permit. The effect is of one fiery eye after another being blotted out with a series of accompanying bangs.*]

PADDY. [*Groaning.*] Me back is broke. I'm bate out—bate——

[*There is a pause. Then the inexorable whistle sounds*

again from the dim regions above the electric light. There is a growl of cursing rage from all sides.]

YANK. [*Shaking his fist upward—contemptuously.*] Take it easy dere, you! Who d'yuh tinks runnin' dis game, me or you? When I git ready, we move. Not before! When I git ready, get me!

VOICES. [*Approvingly.*] That's the stuff!

Yank tal him, py golly!

Yank ain't afeerd.

Goot poy, Yank!

Give him hell!

Tell 'im 'e's a bloody swine!

Bloody slave-driver!

YANK. [*Contemptuously.*] He ain't got no noive. He's yellow, get me? All de engineers is yellow. Dey got streaks a mile wide. Aw, to hell wit him! Let's move, youse guys. We had a rest. Come on, she needs it! Give her pep! It ain't for him. Him and his whistle, dey don't belong. But we belong, see! We gotter feed de baby! Come on! [*He turns and flings his furnace door open. They all follow his lead. At this instant the* SECOND *and* FOURTH ENGINEERS *enter from the darkness on the left with* MILDRED *between them. She starts, turns paler, her pose is crumbling, she shivers with fright in spite of the blazing heat, but forces herself to leave the* ENGINEERS *and take a few steps nearer the men. She is right behind* YANK. *All this happens quickly while the men have their backs turned.*]

YANK. Come on, youse guys! [*He is turning to get coal when the whistle sounds again in a peremptory, irritating note. This drives* YANK *into a sudden fury. While the other men have turned full around and stopped dumfounded by the spectacle of* MILDRED *standing there in her white dress,* YANK *does not turn far enough to see her. Besides, his head is thrown back, he blinks upward through the murk trying to find the owner of the whistle, he brandishes his shovel murderously over his head in one hand, pounding on his chest, gorilla-like, with the other, shouting.*] Toin off dat whistle! Come down outa dere, yuh yellow, brass-buttoned, Belfast bum, yuh! Come down and I'll knock yer brains out! Yuh lousy, stinkin', yellow mut of a Catholic-moiderin' bastard! Come down and I'll moider yuh! Pullin' dat whistle on me, huh? I'll show yuh! I'll crash yer skull in! I'll drive yer teet' down yer troat! I'll slam yer nose trou de back of yer head! I'll cut yer guts out for a nickel, yuh lousy boob, yuh dirty, crummy, muck-eatin' son of a——[*Suddenly he becomes conscious of all the other men staring at something directly behind his back. He whirls defensively with a snarling, murderous growl, crouching to spring, his lips drawn back over his teeth, his small eyes gleaming ferociously. He sees* MILDRED, *like a white apparition in the full light from the open furnace doors. He glares into her eyes, turned to stone. As for her, during his speech she has listened, paralyzed with horror, terror, her whole personality crushed, beaten in, collapsed, by the terrific impact of this unknown, abysmal brutality, naked and shameless. As she looks at his gorilla face, as his eyes bore into hers, she utters a low, choking cry and shrinks away from him, putting both hands up before her eyes to shut out the sight of his face, to protect her own. This startles* YANK *to a reaction. His mouth falls open, his eyes grow bewildered.*]

MILDRED. [*About to faint—to the* ENGINEERS, *who now have her one by each arm—whimperingly.*] Take me away! Oh, the filthy beast! [*She faints. They carry her quickly back, disappearing in the darkness at the left, rear. An iron door clangs shut. Rage and bewildered fury rush back on* YANK. *He feels himself insulted in some unknown fashion in the very heart of his pride. He roars.*] God damn yuh! [*And hurls his shovel after them at the door which has just closed. It hits the steel bulkhead with a clang and falls clattering on the steel floor. From overhead the whistle sounds again in a long, angry, insistent command.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE IV

SCENE. The firemen's forecastle. Yank's watch has just come off duty and had dinner. Their faces and bodies shine from a soap and water scrubbing but around their eyes, where a hasty dousing does not touch, the coal dust sticks like black make-up, giving them a queer, sinister expression. Yank has not washed either face or body. He stands out in contrast to them, a blackened, brooding figure. He is seated forward on a bench in the exact attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker." The others, most of them smoking pipes, are staring at Yank half-apprehensively, as if fearing an outburst; half-amusedly, as if they saw a joke somewhere that tickled them.

VOICES. He ain't ate nothin'.

Py golly, a fallar gat to gat grub in him.

Divil a lie.

Yank feeda da fire, no feeda da face.

Ha-ha.

He ain't even washed hisself.

He's forgot.

Hey, Yank, you forgot to wash.

YANK. [*Sullenly.*] Forgot nothin'! To hell wit washin'.

VOICES. It'll stick to you.

It'll get under your skin.

Give yer the bleedin' itch, that's wot.

It makes spots on you—like a leopard.

Like a piebald nigger, you mean.

Better wash up, Yank.

You sleep better.

Wash up, Yank.

Wash up! Wash up!

YANK. [*Resentfully.*] Aw say, youse guys. Lemme alone. Can't youse see I'm tryin' to tink?

ALL. [*Repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery.*] Think! [*The word has a brazen, metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*]

YANK. [*Springing to his feet and glaring at them belligerently.*] Yes, tink! Tink, dat's what I said. What about it? [*They are silent, puzzled by his sudden resentment at what used to be one of his jokes.* YANK *sits down again in the same attitude of "The Thinker."*]

VOICES. Leave him alone.

He's got a grouch on.

Why wouldn't he?

PADDY. [*With a wink at the others.*] Sure I know what's the matther. 'Tis aisy to see. He's fallen in love, I'm telling you.

ALL. [*Repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery.*] Love! [*The word has a brazen, metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*]

YANK. [*With a contemptuous snort.*] Love, hell! Hate, dat's what. I've fallen in hate, get me?

PADDY [*Philosophically.*] 'Twould take a wise man to tell one from the other. [*With a bitter, ironical scorn, increasing as he goes on.*] But I'm telling you it's love that's in it. Sure what else but love for us poor bastes in the stokehole would be bringing a fine lady, dressed like a white quane, down a mile of ladders and steps to be havin' a look at us?

[*A growl of anger goes up from all sides.*]

LONG. [*Jumping on a bench—hectically.*] Hinsultin' us! Hinsultin' us, the bloody cow! And them bloody engineers! What right 'as they got to be exhibitin' us 's if we was bleedin' monkeys in a menagerie? Did we sign for hinsults to our dignity as 'onest workers? Is that in the ship's articles? You kin bloody well bet it ain't! But I knows why they done it. I arsked a deck steward 'o she was and 'e told me. 'Er old man's a bleedin' millionaire, a bloody Capitalist! 'E's got enuf bloody gold to sink this bleedin' ship! 'E makes arf the bloody steel in the world! 'E owns this bloody boat! And you and me, Comrades, we're 'is slaves! And the skipper and mates and engineers, they're 'is slaves! And she's 'is bloody daughter and we're all 'er slaves, too! And she gives 'er orders as 'ow she wants to see the bloody animals below decks and down they takes 'er!

[*There is a roar of rage from all sides.*]

YANK. [*Blinking at him bewilderedly.*] Say! Wait a moment! Is all dat straight goods?

LONG. Straight as string! The bleedin' steward as waits on 'em, 'e told me about 'er. And what're we goin' ter do, I arsks yer? 'Ave we got ter swaller 'er hinsults like dogs? It ain't in the ship's articles. I tell yer we got a case. We kin go to law——

YANK. [*With abysmal contempt.*] Hell! Law!

ALL. [*Repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery.*] Law! [*The word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*]

LONG. [*Feeling the ground slipping from under his feet—desperately.*] As voters and citizens we kin force the bloody governments——

YANK. [*With abysmal contempt.*] Hell! Governments!

ALL. [*Repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery.*] Governments! [*The word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*]

LONG. [*Hysterically.*] We're free and equal in the sight of God——

YANK. [*With abysmal contempt.*] Hell! God!

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28 The Thinker, the famous statue by Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), a French sculptor

ALL. [*Repeating the word after him as one with cynical mockery.*] God! [*The word has a brazen metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns. It is followed by a chorus of hard, barking laughter.*]

YANK. [*Witheringly.*] Aw, join de Salvation Army!

ALL. Sit down! Shut up! Damn fool! Sea-lawyer!

[LONG *slinks back out of sight.*]

PADDY. [*Continuing the trend of his thoughts as if he had never been interrupted—bitterly.*] And there she was standing behind us, and the Second pointing at us like a man you'd hear in a circus would be saying: In this cage is a queerer kind of baboon than ever you'd find in darkest Africy. We roast them in their own sweat —and be damned if you won't hear some of thim saying they like it! [*He glances scornfully at* YANK.]

YANK. [*With a bewildered uncertain growl.*] Aw!

PADDY. And there was Yank roarin' curses and turning round wid his shovel to brain her—and she looked at him, and him at her——

YANK. [*Slowly.*] She was all white. I tought she was a ghost. Sure.

PADDY. [*With heavy, biting sarcasm.*] 'Twas love at first sight, divil a doubt of it! If you'd seen the endearin' look on her pale mug when she shriveled away with her hands over her eyes to shut out the sight of him! Sure, 'twas as if she'd seen a great hairy ape escaped from the Zoo!

YANK. [*Stung—with a growl of rage.*] Aw!

PADDY. And the loving way Yank heaved his shovel at the skull of her, only she was out the door! [*A grin breaking over his face.*] 'Twas touching, I'm telling you! It put the touch of home, swate home in the stokehole.

[*There is a roar of laughter from all.*]

YANK. [*Glaring at* PADDY *menacingly.*] Aw, choke dat off, see!

PADDY. [*Not heeding him—to the others.*] And her grabbin' at the Second's arm for protection. [*With a grotesque imitation of a woman's voice.*] Kiss me, Engineer dear, for it's dark down here and me old man's in Wall Street making money! Hug me tight, darlin', for I'm afeerd in the dark and me mother's on deck makin' eyes at the skipper!

[*Another roar of laughter.*]

YANK. [*Threateningly.*] Say! What yuh tryin' to do, kid me, yuh old Harp?

PADDY. Divil a bit! Ain't I wishin' myself you'd brained her?

YANK. [*Fiercely.*] I'll brain her! I'll brain her yet, wait 'n' see! [*Coming over to* PADDY—*slowly.*] Say, is dat what she called me—a hairy ape?

PADDY. She looked it at you if she didn't say the word itself.

YANK. [*Grinning horribly.*] Hairy ape, huh? Sure! Dat's de way she looked at me, aw right. Hairy ape! So dat's me, huh? [*Bursting into rage—as if she were still in front of him.*] Yuh skinny tart! Yuh whitefaced bum, yuh! I'll show yuh who's a ape! [*Turning to the others, bewilderment seizing him again.*] Say, youse guys. I was bawlin' him out for pullin' de whistle on us. You heard me. And den I seen youse lookin' at somep'n and I tought he'd sneaked down to come up in back of me, and I hopped round to knock him dead wit de shovel. And dere she was wit de light on her! Christ, yuh coulda pushed me over with a finger! I was scared, get me? Sure! I tought she was a ghost, see? She was all in white like dey wrap around stiffs. You seen her. Kin yuh blame me? She didn't belong, dat's what. And den when I come to and seen it was a real skoit and seen de way she was lookin' at me—like Paddy said—Christ, I was sore, get me? I don't stand for dat stuff from nobody. And I flung de shovel—on'y she'd beat it. [*Furiously.*] I wished it'd banged her! I wished it'd knocked her block off!

LONG. And be 'anged for murder or 'lectrocuted? She ain't bleedin' well worth it.

YANK. I don't give a damn what! I'd be square wit her, wouldn't I? Tink I wanter let her put somep'n over on me? Tink I'm goin' to let her git away wit dat stuff? Yuh don't know me! No one ain't never put nothin' over on me and got away wit it, see!—not dat kind of stuff—no guy and no skoit neither! I'll fix her! Maybe she'll come down again——

VOICE. No chance, Yank. You scared her out of a year's growth.

YANK. I scared her? Why de hell should I scare her? Who de hell is she? Ain't she de same as me? Hairy ape, huh? [*With his old confident bravado.*] I'll show her I'm better'n her, if she on'y knew it. I belong and she don't, see! I move and she's dead! Twenty-five knots a hour, dat's me! Dat carries her but I make dat. She's on'y baggage. Sure! [*Again bewilderedly.*] But, Christ, she was funny lookin'! Did yuh pipe her hands? White and skinny. Yuh could see de bones trough 'em. And her

mush, dat was dead white, too. And her eyes, dey was like dey'd seen a ghost. Me, dat was! Sure! Hairy ape! Ghost, huh? Look at dat arm! [*He extends his right arm, swelling out the great muscles.*] I coulda took her wit dat, wit just my little finger even, and broke her in two. [*Again bewilderedly.*] Say, who is dat skoit, huh? What is she? What's she come from? Who made her? Who give her de noive to look at me like dat? Dis ting's got my goat right. I don't get her. She's new to me. What does a skoit like her mean, huh? She don't belong, get me! I can't see her. [*With growing anger.*] But one ting I'm wise to, aw right, aw right! Youse all kin bet your shoits I'll get even wit her. I'll show her if she tinks she—— She grinds de organ and I'm on de string, huh? I'll fix her! Let her come down again and I'll fling her in de furnace! She'll move den! She won't shiver at nothin', den! Speed, dat'll be her! She'll belong den! [*He grins horribly.*]

PADDY. She'll never come. She's had her belly-full, I'm telling you. She'll be in bed now, I'm thinking, wid ten doctors and nurses feedin' her salts to clean the fear out of her.

YANK. [*Enraged.*] Yuh tink I made her sick, too, do yuh? Just lookin' at me, huh? Hairy ape, huh? [*In a frenzy of rage.*] I'll fix her! I'll tell her where to git off! She'll git down on her knees and take it back or I'll bust de face offen her! [*Shaking one fist upward and beating on his chest with the other.*] I'll find yuh! I'm comin', d'yuh hear? I'll fix yuh, God damn yuh! [*He makes a rush for the door.*]

VOICES. Stop him!
He'll get shot!
He'll murder her!
Trip him up!
Hold him!
He's gone crazy!
Gott, he's strong!
Hold him down!
Look out for a kick!
Pin his arms!

[*They have all piled on him and, after a fierce struggle, by sheer weight of numbers have borne him to the floor just inside the door.*]

PADDY. [*Who has remained detached.*] Kape him down till he's cooled off. [*Scornfully.*] Yerra, Yank, you're a great fool. Is it payin' attention at all you are to the like of that skinny sow widout one drop of rale blood in her?

YANK. [*Frenziedly, from the bottom of the heap.*] She done me doit! She done me doit, didn't she? I'll git square wit her! I'll get her some way! Git offen me, youse guys! Lemme up! I'll show her who's a ape!

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE V

SCENE. Three weeks later. A corner of Fifth Avenue in the Fifties on a fine Sunday morning. A general atmosphere of clean, well-tidied, wide street; a flood of mellow, tempered sunshine; gentle, genteel breezes. In the rear, the show windows of two shops, a jewelry establishment on the corner, a furrier's next to it. Here the adornments of extreme wealth are tantalizingly displayed. The jeweler's window is gaudy with glittering diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls, etc., fashioned in ornate tiaras, crowns, necklaces, collars, etc. From each piece hangs an enormous tag from which a dollar sign and numerals in intermittent electric lights wink out the incredible prices. The same in the furrier's. Rich furs of all varieties hang there bathed in a downpour of artificial light. The general effect is of a background of magnificence cheapened and made grotesque by commercialism, a background in tawdry disharmony with the clear light and sunshine on the street itself.

Up the side street Yank and Long come swaggering. Long is dressed in shore clothes, wears a black Windsor tie, cloth cap. Yank is in his dirty dungarees. A fireman's cap with black peak is cocked defiantly on the side of his head. He has not shaved for days and around his fierce, resentful eyes—as around those of Long to a lesser degree —the black smudge of coal dust still sticks like make-up. They hesitate and stand together at the corner, swaggering, looking about them with a forced, defiant contempt.

LONG. [*Indicating it all with an oratorical gesture.*] Well, 'ere we are. Fif' Avenoo. This 'ere's their bleedin' private lane, as yer might say. [*Bitterly.*] We're trespassers 'ere. Proletarians keep orf the grass!

YANK. [*Dully.*] I don't see no grass, yuh boob. [*Staring at the sidewalk.*] Clean, ain't it? Yuh could eat a fried egg offen it. The white wings got some job sweepin' dis up. [*Looking up and down the avenue—*

surlily.] Where's all de white-collar stiffs yuh said was here—and de skoits—*her* kind?

LONG. In church, blarst 'em! Arskin' Jesus to give 'em more money.

YANK. Choich, huh? I useter go to choich onct—sure—when I was a kid. Me old man and woman, dey made me. Dey never went demselves, dough. Always got too big a head on Sunday mornin', dat was dem. [*With a grin.*] Dey was scrappers for fair, bot' of dem. On Satiday nights when dey bot' got a skinful dey could put up a bout oughter been staged at de Garden. When dey got trough dere wasn't a chair or table wit a leg under it. Or else dey bot' jumped on me for somep'n. Dat was where I loined to take punishment. [*With a grin and a swagger.*] I'm a chip offen de old block, get me?

LONG. Did yer old man follow the sea?

YANK. Naw. Worked along shore. I runned away when me old lady croaked wit de tremens. I helped at truckin' and in de market. Den I shipped in de stokehole. Sure. Dat belongs. De rest was nothin'. [*Looking around him.*] I ain't never seen dis before. De Brooklyn waterfront, dat was where I was dragged up. [*Taking a deep breath.*] Dis ain't so bad at dat, huh?

LONG. Not bad? Well, we pays for it wiv our bloody sweat, if yer wants to know!

YANK. [*With sudden angry disgust.*] Aw, hell! I don't see no one, see—like her. All dis gives me a pain. It don't belong. Say, ain't dere a back room around dis dump? Let's go shoot a ball. All dis is too clean and quiet and dolled-up, get me! It gives me a pain.

LONG. Wait and yer'll bloody well see——

YANK. I don't wait for no one. I keep on de move. Say, what yuh drag me up here for, anyway? Tryin' to kid me, yuh simp, yuh?

LONG. Yer wants to get back at 'er, don't yer? That's what yer been sayin' every bloomin' hour since she hinsulted yer.

YANK. [*Vehemently.*] Sure ting I do! Didn't I try to get even with her in Southampton? Didn't I sneak on de dock and wait for her by de gangplank? I was goin' to spit in her pale mug, see! Sure, right in her pop-eyes! Dat woulda made me even, see? But no chanct. Dere was a whole army of plain-clothes bulls around. Dey spotted me and gimme de bum's rush. I never seen her. But I'll git square wit her yet, you watch! [*Furiously.*] De lousy tart! She tinks she kin get away wit moider—but not wit me! I'll fix her! I'll tink of a way!

LONG. [*As disgusted as he dares to be.*] Ain't that why I brought yer up 'ere—to show yer? Yer been lookin' at this 'ere 'ole affair wrong. Yer been actin' an' talkin' 's if it was all a bleedin' personal matter between yer and that bloody cow. I wants to convince yer she was on'y a representative of 'er clarss. I wants to awaken yer bloody clarss consciousness. Then yer'll see it's 'er clarss yer've got to fight, not 'er alone. There's a 'ole mob of 'em like 'er, Gawd blind 'em!

YANK. [*Spitting on his hands—belligerently.*] De more de merrier when I gits started. Bring on de gang!

LONG. Yer'll see 'em in arf a mo', when that church lets out. [*He turns and sees the window display in the two stores for the first time.*] Blimey! Look at that, will yer? [*They both walk back and stand looking in the jeweler's.* LONG *flies into a fury.*] Just look at this 'ere bloomin' mess! Just look at it! Look at the bleedin' prices on 'em—more'n our 'ole bloody stokehole makes in ten voyages sweatin' in 'ell! And they—'er and 'er bloody clarss—buys 'em for toys to dangle on 'em! One of these 'ere would buy scoff for a starvin' family for a year!

YANK. Aw, cut de sob stuff! T' hell wit de starvin' family! Yuh'll be passin' de hat to me next. [*With naïve admiration.*] Say, dem tings is pretty, huh? Bet yuh dey'd hock for a piece of change aw right. [*Then turning away, bored.*] But, aw hell, what good are dey? Let her have 'em. Dey don't belong no more'n she does. [*With a gesture of sweeping the jewelers into oblivion.*] All dat don't count, get me?

LONG. [*Who has moved to the furrier's—indignantly.*] And I s'pose this 'ere don't count neither—skins of poor, 'armless animals slaughtered so as 'er and 'ers can keep their bleedin' noses warm!

YANK. [*Who has been staring at something inside—with queer excitement.*] Take a slant at dat! Give it de once-over! Monkey fur—two t'ousand bucks! [*Bewilderedly.*] Is dat straight goods—monkey fur? What de hell——?

LONG. [*Bitterly.*] It's straight enuf. [*With grim humor.*] They wouldn't bloody well pay that for a 'airy ape's skin—no, nor for the 'ole livin' ape with all 'is 'ead, and body, and soul thrown in!

YANK. [*Clenching his fists, his face growing pale with rage as if the skin in the window were a personal insult.*] Trowin' it up in my face! Christ! I'll fix her!

LONG. [*Excitedly.*] Church is out. 'Ere they come, the bleedin' swine. [*After a glance at* YANK'S *lowering face—uneasily.*] Easy goes, Comrade. Keep yer bloomin' temper. Remember force defeats itself. It ain't our weapon. We must impress our demands through peaceful means—the votes of the on-marching proletarians of the bloody world!

YANK. [*With abysmal contempt.*] Votes, hell! Votes is a joke, see. Votes for women! Let dem do it!

LONG. [*Still more uneasily.*] Calm, now. Treat 'em wiv the proper contempt. Observe the bleedin' parasites but 'old yer 'orses.

YANK. [*Angrily.*] Git away from me! Yuh're yellow, dat's what. Force, dat's me! De punch, dat's me every time, see!

[*The crowd from church enter from the right, sauntering slowly and affectedly, their heads held stiffly up, looking neither to right nor left, talking in toneless, simpering voices. The women are rouged, calcimined, dyed, over-dressed to the nth degree. The men are in Prince Alberts, high hats, spats, canes, etc. A procession of gaudy marionettes, yet with something of the relentless horror of Frankensteins in their detached, mechanical unawareness.*]

VOICES. Dear Doctor Caiaphas! He is so sincere!

What was the sermon? I dozed off.

About the radicals, my dear—and the false doctrines that are being preached.

We must organize a hundred per cent American bazaar.

And let everyone contribute one one-hundredth per cent of their income tax.

What an original idea!

We can devote the proceeds to rehabilitating the veil of the temple.

But that has been done so many times.

YANK. [*Glaring from one to the other of them—with an insulting snort of scorn.*] Huh! Huh!

[*Without seeming to see him, they make wide detours to avoid the spot where he stands in the middle of the sidewalk.*]

LONG. [*Frightenedly.*] Keep yer bloomin' mouth shut, I tells yer.

YANK. [*Viciously.*] G'wan! Tell it to Sweeney! [*He swaggers away and deliberately lurches into a top-hatted gentleman, then glares at him pugnaciously.*] Say, who d'yuh tink yuh're bumpin'? Tink yuh own de oith?

GENTLEMAN. [*Coldly and affectedly.*] I beg your pardon. [*He has not looked at* YANK *and passes on without a glance, leaving him bewildered.*]

LONG. [*Rushing up and grabbing* YANK'S *arm.*] 'Ere! Come away! This wasn't what I meant. Yer'll 'ave the bloody coppers down on us.

YANK. [*Savagely—giving him a push that sends him sprawling.*] G'wan!

LONG. [*Picks himself up—hysterically.*] I'll pop orf then. This ain't what I meant. And whatever 'appens, yer can't blame me. [*He slinks off left.*]

YANK. T' hell wit youse! [*He approaches a lady—with a vicious grin and a smirking wink.*] Hello, Kiddo. How's every little ting? Got anyting on for to-night? I know an old boiler down to de docks we kin crawl into. [*The lady stalks by without a look, without a change of pace.* YANK *turns to others—insultingly.*] Holy smokes, what a mug! Go hide yuhself before de horses shy at yuh. Gee, pipe de heine on dat one! Say, youse, yuh look like de stoin of a ferry-boat. Paint and powder! All dolled up to kill! Yuh look like stiffs laid out for de boneyard! Aw, g'wan, de lot of youse! Yuh give me de eye-ache. Yuh don't belong, get me! Look at me, why don't youse dare? I belong, dat's me! [*Pointing to a skyscraper across the street which is in process of construction—with bravado.*] See dat building goin' up dere? See de steel work? Steel, dat's me! Youse guys live on it and tink yuh're somep'n. But I'm *in* it, see! I'm de hoistin' engine dat makes it go up! I'm it—de inside and bottom of it! Sure! I'm steel and steam and smoke and de rest of it! It moves—speed—twenty-five stories up—and me at de top and bottom—movin'! Youse simps don't move. Yuh're on'y dolls I winds up to see 'm spin. Yuh're de garbage, get me—de leavins—de ashes we dump over de side! Now, what 'a' yuh gotta say? [*But as they seem neither to see nor hear him, he flies into a fury.*] Bums! Pigs! Tarts!

Frankensteins. The author means "Frankenstein's monsters," from the monster created by Frankenstein in Mrs. Shelley's novel of that name. "The blunder," says H. W. Fowler in Modern English Usage, "is very common indeed, almost, but surely not quite, sanctioned by custom"

Bitches! [*He turns in a rage on the men, bumping viciously into them but not jarring them the least bit. Rather it is he who recoils after each collision. He keeps growling.*] Git off de oith! G'wan, yuh bum! Look where yuh're goin', can't yuh? Git outa here! Fight, why don't yuh? Put up yer mits! Don't be a dog! Fight or I'll knock yuh dead! [*But, without seeming to see him, they all answer with mechanical affected politeness.*] I beg your pardon. [*Then at a cry from one of the women, they all scurry to the furrier's window.*]

THE WOMAN. [*Ecstatically, with a gasp of delight.*] Monkey fur! [*The whole crowd of men and women chorus after her in the same tone of affected delight.*] Monkey fur!

YANK. [*With a jerk of his head back on his shoulders, as if he had received a punch full in the face—raging.*] I see yuh, all in white! I see yuh, yuh white-faced tart, yuh! Hairy ape, huh? I'll hairy ape yuh! [*He bends down and grips at the street curbing as if to pluck it out and hurl it. Foiled in this, snarling with passion, he leaps to the lamp-post on the corner and tries to pull it up for a club. Just at that moment a bus is heard rumbling up. A fat, high-hatted, spatted gentleman runs out from the side street. He calls out plaintively.*] Bus! Bus! Stop there! [*And runs full tilt into the bending, straining* YANK, *who is bowled off his balance.*]

YANK. [*Seeing a fight—with a roar of joy as he springs to his feet.*] At last! Bus, huh? I'll bust yuh! [*He lets drive a terrific swing, his fist landing full on the fat gentleman's face. But the gentleman stands unmoved as if nothing had happened.*]

GENTLEMAN. I beg your pardon. [*Then irritably.*] You have made me lose my bus. [*He claps his hands and begins to scream:*] Officer! Officer!

[*Many police whistles shrill out on the instant and a whole platoon of policemen rush in on* YANK *from all sides. He tries to fight but is clubbed to the pavement and fallen upon. The crowd at the window have not moved or noticed this disturbance. The clanging gong of the patrol wagon approaches with a clamoring din.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE VI

SCENE. Night of the following day. A row of cells in the prison on Blackwell's Island. The cells extend back diagonally from right front to left rear. They do not stop, but disappear in the dark background as if they ran on, numberless, into infinity. One electric bulb from the low ceiling of the narrow corridor sheds its light through the heavy steel bars of the cell at the extreme front and reveals part of the interior. Yank can be seen within, crouched on the edge of his cot in the attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker." His face is spotted with black and blue bruises. A blood-stained bandage is wrapped around his head.

YANK. [*Suddenly starting as if awakening from a dream, reaches out and shakes the bars—aloud to himself, wonderingly.*] Steel. Dis is the Zoo, huh? [*A burst of hard, barking laughter comes from the unseen occupants of the cells, runs back down the tier, and abruptly ceases.*]

VOICES. [*Mockingly.*] The Zoo. That's a new name for this coop—a damn good name!

Steel, eh? You said a mouthful. This is the old iron house.

Who is that boob talkin'?

He's the bloke they brung in out of his head. The bulls had beat him up fierce

YANK. [*Dully.*] I musta been dreamin'. I tought I was in a cage at de Zoo—but de apes don't talk, do dey?

VOICES. [*With mocking laughter.*] You're in a cage aw right.

A coop!

A pen!

A sty!

A kennel! [*Hard laughter—a pause.*]

Say, guy! Who are you? No, never mind lying. What are you?

Yes, tell us your sad story. What's your game?

What did they jug yuh for?

YANK. [*Dully.*] I was a fireman—stokin' on de liners [*Then with sudden rage, rattling his cell bars.*] I'm a hairy ape, get me? And I'll bust youse all in de jaw if yuh don't lay off kiddin' me.

VOICES. Huh! You're a hard boiled duck, ain't you!

When you spit, it bounces! [*Laughter.*]

Aw, can it. He's a regular guy. Ain't you?

What did he say he was—a ape?

YANK. [*Defiantly.*] Sure ting! Ain't dat what youse all are—apes? [*A silence. Then a furious rattling of bars from down the corridor.*]

A VOICE. [*Thick with rage.*] I'll show yuh who's a ape, yuh bum!

VOICES. Ssshh! Nix!

Can de noise!

Piano!

You'll have the guard down on us!

YANK. [*Scornfully.*] De guard? Yuh mean de keeper, don't yuh? [*Angry exclamations from all the cells.*]

VOICE. [*Placatingly.*] Aw, don't pay no attention to him. He's off his nut from the beatin'-up he got. Say, you guy! We're waitin' to hear what they landed you for—or ain't yuh tellin'?

YANK. Sure, I'll tell youse. Sure! Why de hell not? On'y—youse won't get me. Nobody gets me but me, see? I started to tell de Judge and all he says was: "Toity days to tink it over." Tink it over! Christ, dat's all I been doin' for weeks! [*After a pause.*] I was tryin' to git even wit someone, see?—someone dat done me doit.

VOICES. [*Cynically.*] De old stuff, I bet. Your goil, huh?

Give yuh the double-cross, huh?

That's them every time!

Did yuh beat up de odder guy?

YANK. [*Disgustedly.*] Aw, yuh're all wrong! Sure dere was a skoit in it—but not what youse mean, not dat old tripe. Dis was a new kind of skoit. She was dolled up all in white—in de stokehole. I tought she was a ghost. Sure. [*A pause.*]

VOICES. [*Whispering.*] Gee, he's still nutty.

Let him rave. It's fun listenin'.

YANK. [*Unheeding—groping in his thoughts.*] Her hands—dey was skinny and white like dey wasn't real but painted on somep'n. Dere was a million miles from me to her—twenty-five knots a hour. She was like some dead ting de cat brung in. Sure, dat's what. She didn't belong. She belonged in de window of a toy store, or on de top of a garbage can, see! Sure! [*He breaks out angrily.*] But would yuh believe it, she had de noive to do me doit. She lamped me like she was seein' somep'n broke loose from de menagerie. Christ, yuh'd oughter seen her eyes! [*He rattles the bars of his cell furiously.*] But I'll get back at her yet, you watch! And if I can't find her I'll take it out on de gang she runs wit. I'm wise to where dey hangs out now. I'll show her who belongs! I'll show her who's in de move and who ain't. You watch my smoke!

VOICES. [*Serious and joking.*] Dat's de talkin'!

Take her for all she's got!

What was this dame, anyway? Who was she, eh?

YANK. I dunno. First cabin stiff. Her old man's a millionaire, dey says—name of Douglas.

VOICES. Douglas? That's the president of the Steel Trust, I bet.

Sure. I seen his mug in de papers.

He's filthy with dough.

VOICE. Hey, feller, take a tip from me. If you want to get back at that dame, you better join the Wobblies. You'll get some action then.

YANK. Wobblies? What de hell's dat?

VOICE. Ain't you ever heard of the I. W. W.?

YANK. Naw. What is it?

VOICE. A gang of blokes—a tough gang. I been readin' about 'em to-day in the paper. The guard give me the *Sunday Times*. There's a long spiel about 'em. It's from a speech made in the Senate by a guy named Senator Queen. [*He is in the cell next to* YANK'S. *There is a rustling of paper.*] Wait'll I see if I got light enough and I'll read you. Listen. [*He reads:*] "There is a menace existing in this country to-day which threatens the vitals of our fair Republic—as foul a menace against the very life-blood of the American Eagle as was the foul conspiracy of Catiline against the eagles of ancient Rome!"

VOICE. [*Disgustedly.*] Aw, hell! Tell him to salt de tail of dat eagle!

VOICE. [*Reading.*] "I refer to that devil's brew of rascals, jailbirds, murderers and cut-throats who libel all honest workingmen by calling themselves the Industrial Workers of the World; but in the light of their nefarious plots, I call them the Industrious *Wreckers* of the World!"

YANK. [*With vengeful satisfaction.*] Wreckers, dat's de right dope! Dat belongs! Me for dem!

VOICE. Ssshh! [*Reading.*] "This fiendish organization is a foul ulcer on the fair body of our Democracy——"

VOICE. Democracy, hell! Give him the boid, fellers—the raspberry! [*They do.*]

VOICE. Ssshh! [*Reading:*] "Like Cato I say to this Senate, the I. W. W. must be destroyed! For they repre-

72 Catiline, Lucius Sergius Catilina (108?-62 B.C.), a Roman conspirator against whom Cicero delivered his famous orations • 87 Cato, Marcus Porcius Cato, the Elder (234-149 B.C.), whose famous saying, "Carthage must be destroyed," is referred to

sent an ever-present dagger pointed at the heart of the greatest nation the world has ever known, where all men are born free and equal, with equal opportunities to all, where the Founding Fathers have guaranteed to each one happiness, where Truth, Honor, Liberty, Justice, and the Brotherhood of Man are a religion absorbed with one's mother's milk, taught at our father's knee, sealed, signed, and stamped upon in the glorious Constitution of these United States!" [*A perfect storm of hisses, catcalls, boos, and hard laughter.*]

VOICES. [*Scornfully.*] Hurrah for de Fort' of July!

Pass de hat!

Liberty!

Justice!

Honor!

Opportunity!

Brotherhood!

ALL. [*With abysmal scorn.*] Aw, hell!

VOICE. Give that Queen Senator guy the bark! All togedder now—one—two—tree—— [*A terrific chorus of barking and yapping.*]

GUARD. [*From a distance.*] Quiet there, youse—or I'll git the hose. [*The noise subsides.*]

YANK. [*With growling rage.*] I'd like to catch dat Senator guy alone for a second. I'd loin him some trute!

VOICE. Ssshh! Here's where he gits down to cases on the Wobblies. [*Reads:*] "They plot with fire in one hand and dynamite in the other. They stop not before murder to gain their ends, nor at the outraging of defenseless womanhood. They would tear down society, put the lowest scum in the seats of the mighty, turn Almighty God's revealed plan for the world topsy-turvy, and make of our sweet and lovely civilization a shambles, a desolation where man, God's masterpiece, would soon degenerate back to the ape!"

VOICE. [*To* YANK.] Hey, you guy. There's your ape stuff again.

YANK. [*With a growl of fury.*] I got him. So dey blow up tings, do dey? Dey turn tings round, do dey? Hey, lend me dat paper, will yuh?

VOICE. Sure. Give it to him. On'y keep it to yourself, see. We don't wanter listen to no more of that slop.

VOICE. Here you are. Hide it under your mattress.

YANK. [*Reaching out.*] Tanks. I can't read much but I kin manage. [*He sits, the paper in the hand at his side, in the attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker." A pause. Several snores from down the corridor. Suddenly* YANK *jumps to his feet with a furious groan as if some appalling thought had crashed on him—bewilderedly.*] Sure—her old man—president of de Steel Trust—makes half de steel in de world—steel—where I tought I belonged—drivin' trou—movin'—in dat—to make *her*—and cage me in for her to spit on! Christ! [*He shakes the bars of his cell door till the whole tier trembles. Irritated, protesting exclamations from those awakened or trying to get to sleep.*] He made dis—dis cage! Steel! *It* don't belong, dat's what! Cages, cells, locks, bolts, bars—dat's what it means!—holdin' me down wit him at de top! But I'll drive trou! Fire, dat melts it! I'll be fire—under de heap—fire dat never goes out—hot as hell—breakin' out in de night—— [*While he has been saying this last he has shaken his cell door to a clanging accompaniment. As he comes to the "breakin' out" he seizes one bar with both hands and, putting his two feet up against the others so that his position is parallel to the floor like a monkey's, he gives a great wrench backwards. The bar bends like a licorice stick under his tremendous strength. Just at this moment the* PRISON GUARD *rushes in, dragging a hose behind him.*]

GUARD. [*Angrily.*] I'll loin youse bums to wake me up! [*Sees* YANK.] Hello, it's you, huh? Got the D. Ts., hey? Well, I'll cure 'em. I'll drown your snakes for yuh! [*Noticing the bar.*] Hell, look at dat bar bended! On'y a bug is strong enough for dat!

YANK. [*Glaring at him.*] Or a hairy ape, yuh big yellow bum! Look out! Here I come! [*He grabs another bar.*]

GUARD. [*Scared now—yelling off left.*] Toin de hose on, Ben!—full pressure! And call de others—and a straitjacket! [*The curtain is falling. As it hides* YANK *from view, there is a splattering smash as the stream of water hits the steel of* YANK'S *cell.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE VII

SCENE. Nearly a month later. An I. W. W. local near the waterfront, showing the interior of a front room on the ground floor, and the street outside. Moonlight on the narrow street, buildings massed in black shadow. The interior of the room, which is general assembly room, office, and reading-room, resembles some dingy settlement boys' club. A desk and high stool are in one corner. A table with papers, stacks of pamphlets, chairs about it,

is at center. The whole is decidedly cheap, banal, commonplace, and unmysterious as a room could well be. The secretary is perched on the stool making entries in a large ledger. An eye shade casts his face into shadows. Eight or ten men, longshoremen, iron workers, and the like, are grouped about the table. Two are playing checkers. One is writing a letter. Most of them are smoking pipes. A big signboard is on the wall at the rear, "Industrial Workers of the World—Local No. 57."

[YANK *comes down the street outside. He is dressed as in Scene Five. He moves cautiously, mysteriously. He comes to a point opposite the door; tiptoes softly up to it, listens, is impressed by the silence within, knocks carefully, as if he were guessing at the password to some secret rite. Listens. No answer. Knocks again a bit louder. No answer. Knocks impatiently, much louder.*]

SECRETARY. [*Turning around on his stool.*] What the hell is that—someone knocking? [*Shouts.*] Come in, why don't you? [*All the men in the room look up.* YANK *opens the door slowly, gingerly, as if afraid of an ambush. He looks around for secret doors, mystery, is taken aback by the commonplaceness of the room and the men in it, thinks he may have gotten in the wrong place, then sees the signboard on the wall and is reassured.*]

YANK. [*Blurts out.*] Hello.

MEN. [*Reservedly.*] Hello.

YANK. [*More easily.*] I tought I'd bumped into de wrong dump.

SECRETARY. [*Scrutinizing him carefully.*] Maybe you have. Are you a member?

YANK. Naw, not yet. Dat's what I come for—to join.

SECRETARY. That's easy. What's your job—longshore?

YANK. Naw. Fireman—stoker on de liners.

SECRETARY. [*With satisfaction.*] Welcome to our city. Glad to know you people are waking up at last. We haven't got many members in your line.

YANK. Naw. Dey're all dead to de woild.

SECRETARY. Well, you can help to wake 'em. What's your name? I'll make out your card.

YANK. [*Confused.*] Name? Lemme tink.

SECRETARY. [*Sharply.*] Don't you know your own name?

YANK. Sure; but I been just Yank for so long—Bob, dat's it—Bob Smith.

SECRETARY. [*Writing.*] Robert Smith. [*Fills out the rest of card.*] Here you are. Cost you half a dollar.

YANK. Is dat all—four bits? Dat's easy. [*Gives the Secretary the money.*]

SECRETARY. [*Throwing it in drawer.*] Thanks. Well, make yourself at home. No introductions needed. There's literature on the table. Take some of those pamphlets with you to distribute aboard ship. They may bring results. Sow the seed, only go about it right. Don't get caught and fired. We got plenty out of work. What we need is men who can hold their jobs—and work for us at the same time.

YANK. Sure. [*But he still stands, embarrassed and uneasy.*]

SECRETARY. [*Looking at him—curiously.*] What did you knock for? Think we had a coon in uniform to open doors?

YANK. Naw. I tought it was locked—and dat yuh'd wanter give me the once-over trou a peep-hole or somep'n to see if I was right.

SECRETARY. [*Alert and suspicious but with an easy laugh.*] Think we were running a crap game? That door is never locked. What put that in your nut?

YANK. [*With a knowing grin, convinced that this is all camouflage, a part of the secrecy.*] Dis burg is full of bulls, ain't it?

SECRETARY. [*Sharply.*] What have the cops got to do with us? We're breaking no laws.

YANK. [*With a knowing wink.*] Sure. Youse wouldn't for woilds. Sure. I'm wise to dat.

SECRETARY. You seem to be wise to a lot of stuff none of us knows about.

YANK. [*With another wink.*] Aw, dat's aw right, see. [*Then made a bit resentful by the suspicious glances from all sides.*] Aw, can it! Youse needn't put me trou de toid degree. Can't youse see I belong? Sure! I'm reg'lar. I'll stick, get me? I'll shoot de woiks for youse. Dat's why I wanted to join in.

SECRETARY. [*Breezily, feeling him out.*] That's the right spirit. Only are you sure you understand what you've joined? It's all plain and above board; still, some guys get a wrong slant on us. [*Sharply.*] What's your notion of the purpose of the I. W. W.?

YANK. Aw, I know all about it.

SECRETARY. [*Sarcastically.*] Well, give us some of your valuable information.

YANK. [*Cunningly.*] I know enough not to speak outa my toin. [*Then, resentfully again.*] Aw, say! I'm reg'lar. I'm wise to de game. I know yuh got to watch your step

wit a stranger. For all youse know, I might be a plain-clothes dick, or somep'n, dat's what yuh're tinkin', huh? Aw, forget it! I belong, see? Ask any guy down to de docks if I don't.

SECRETARY. Who said you didn't?

YANK. After I'm 'nitiated, I'll show yuh.

SECRETARY. [*Astounded.*] Initiated? There's no initiation.

YANK. [*Disappointed.*] Ain't there no password—no grip nor nothin'?

SECRETARY. What'd you think this is—the Elks—or the Black Hand?

YANK. De Elks, hell! De Black Hand, dey're a lot of yellow backstickin' Ginees. Naw. Dis is a man's gang, ain't it?

SECRETARY. You said it! That's why we stand on our two feet in the open. We got no secrets.

YANK. [*Surprised but admiringly.*] Yuh mean to say yuh always run wide open—like dis?

SECRETARY. Exactly.

YANK. Den yuh sure got your noive wit youse!

SECRETARY. [*Sharply.*] Just what was it made you want to join us? Come out with that straight.

YANK. Yuh call me? Well, I got noive, too! Here's my hand. Yuh wanter blow tings up, don't yuh? Well, dat's me! I belong!

SECRETARY. [*With pretended carelessness.*] You mean change the unequal conditions of society by legitimate direct action—or with dynamite?

YANK. Dynamite! Blow it offen de oith—steel—all de cages—all de factories, steamers, buildings, jails—de Steel Trust and all dat makes it go.

SECRETARY. So—that's your idea, eh? And did you have any special job in that line you wanted to propose to us? [*He makes a sign to the men, who get up cautiously one by one and group behind* YANK.]

YANK. [*Boldly.*] Sure, I'll come out wit it. I'll show youse I'm one of de gang. Dere's dat millionaire guy, Douglas——

SECRETARY. President of the Steel Trust, you mean? Do you want to assassinate him?

YANK. Naw, dat don't get you nothin'. I mean blow up de factory, de woiks, where he makes de steel. Dat's what I'm after—to blow up de steel, knock all de steel in de woild up to de moon. Dat'll fix tings! [*Eagerly, with a touch of bravado.*] I'll do it by me lonesome! I'll show yuh! Tell me where his woiks is, how to git there, all de dope. Gimme de stuff, de old butter—and watch me do de rest! Watch de smoke and see it move! I don't give a damn if dey nab me—long as it's done! I'll soive life for it—and give 'em de laugh! [*Half to himself.*] And I'll write her a letter and tell her de hairy ape done it. Dat'll square tings.

SECRETARY. [*Stepping away from* YANK.] Very interesting. [*He gives a signal. The men, huskies all, throw themselves on* YANK *and before he knows it they have his legs and arms pinioned. But he is too flabbergasted to make a struggle, anyway. They feel him over for weapons.*]

MAN. No gat, no knife. Shall we give him what's what and put the boots to him?

SECRETARY. No. He isn't worth the trouble we'd get into. He's too stupid. [*He comes closer and laughs mockingly in* YANK'S *face.*] Ho-ho! By God, this is the biggest joke they've put up on us yet. Hey, you Joke! Who sent you—Burns or Pinkerton? No, by God, you're such a bonehead I'll bet you're in the Secret Service! Well, you dirty spy, you rotten agent provocator, you can go back and tell whatever skunk is paying you blood-money for betraying your brothers that he's wasting his coin. You couldn't catch a cold. And tell him that all he'll ever get on us, or ever has got, is just his own sneaking plots that he's framed up to put us in jail. We are what our manifesto says we are, neither more nor less— and we'll give him a copy of that any time he calls. And as for you—— [*He glares scornfully at* YANK, *who is sunk in an oblivious stupor.*] Oh, hell, what's the use of talking? You're a brainless ape.

YANK. [*Aroused by the word to fierce but futile struggles.*] What's dat, yuh Sheeny bum, yuh!

SECRETARY. Throw him out, boys. [*In spite of his struggles, this is done with gusto and éclat. Propelled by several parting kicks,* YANK *lands sprawling in the middle of the narrow cobbled street. With a growl he starts to get up and storm the closed door, but stops bewildered by the confusion in his brain, pathetically impotent. He sits there, brooding, in as near to the attitude of Rodin's "Thinker" as he can get in his position.*]

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12 Black Hand, an Italian criminal society, originating about 1868, members of which formed the nucleus of a blackmailing society in the United States • 14 Ginees, derisive slang for Italians • 66 Burns or Pinkerton, detective agencies

YANK. [*Bitterly.*] So dem boids don't tink I belong, neider. Aw, to hell wit 'em! Dey're in de wrong pew—de same old bull—soapboxes and Salvation Army—no guts! Cut out an hour offen de job a day and make me happy! Gimme a dollar more a day and make me happy! Tree square a day, and cauliflowers in de front yard—ekal rights—a woman and kids—a lousy vote—and I'm all fixed for Jesus, huh? Aw, hell! What does dat get yuh? Dis ting's in your inside, but it ain't your belly. Feedin' your face—sinkers and coffee—dat don't touch it. It's way down—at de bottom. Yuh can't grab it, and yuh can't stop it. It moves, and everything moves. It stops and de whole woild stops. Dat's me now—I don't tick, see?—I'm a busted Ingersoll, dat's what Steel was me, and I owned de woild. Now I ain't steel, and de woild owns me. Aw, hell! I can't see—it's all dark, get me? It's all wrong! [*He turns a bitter mocking face up like an ape gibbering at the moon.*] Say, youse up dere, Man in de Moon, yuh look so wise, gimme de answer, huh? Slip me de inside dope, de information right from de stable—where do I get off at, huh?

A POLICEMAN. [*Who has come up the street in time to hear this last—with grim humor.*] You'll get off at the station, you boob, if you don't get up out of that and keep movin'.

YANK. [*Looking up at him—with a hard, bitter laugh.*] Sure! Lock me up! Put me in a cage! Dat's de on'y answer yuh know. G'wan, lock me up!

POLICEMAN. What you been doin'?

YANK. Enuf to gimme life for! I was born, see? Sure, dat's de charge. Write it in de blotter. I was born, get me!

POLICEMAN. [*Jocosely.*] God pity your old woman! [*Then matter-of-fact.*] But I've no time for kidding. You're soused. I'd run you in but it's too long a walk to the station. Come on now, get up, or I'll fan your ears with this club. Beat it now! [*He hauls* YANK *to his feet.*]

YANK. [*In a vague mocking tone.*] Say, where do I go from here?

POLICEMAN. [*Giving him a push—with a grin, indifferently.*] Go to hell.

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE VIII

SCENE. Twilight of the next day. The monkey house at the Zoo. One spot of clear gray light falls on the front of one cage so that the interior can be seen. The other cages are vague, shrouded in shadow from which chatterings pitched in a conversational tone can be heard. On the one cage a sign from which the word "Gorilla" stands out. The gigantic animal himself is seen squatting on his haunches on a bench in much the same attitude as Rodin's "Thinker." Yank enters from the left. Immediately a chorus of angry chattering and screeching breaks out. The gorilla turns his eyes but makes no sound or move.

YANK. [*With a hard, bitter laugh.*] Welcome to your city, huh? Hail, hail, de gang's all here! [*At the sound of his voice the chattering dies away into an attentive silence.* YANK *walks up to the gorilla's cage and, leaning over the railing, stares in at its occupant, who stares back at him, silent and motionless. There is a pause of dead stillness. Then* YANK *begins to talk in a friendly confidential tone, half-mockingly, but with a deep undercurrent of sympathy.*] Say, yuh're some hard-lookin' guy, ain't yuh? I seen lots of tough nuts dat de gang called gorillas, but yuh're de foist real one I ever seen. Some chest yuh got, and shoulders, and dem arms and mits! I bet yuh got a punch in eider fist dat'd knock 'em all silly! [*This with genuine admiration. The gorilla, as if he understood, stands upright, swelling out his chest and pounding on it with his fist.* YANK *grins sympathetically.*] Sure, I get yuh. Yuh challenge de whole woild, huh? Yuh got what I was sayin' even if yuh muffed de woids. [*Then bitterness creeping in.*] And why wouldn't yuh get me? Ain't we both members of de same club—de Hairy Apes? [*They stare at each other—a pause— then* YANK *goes on slowly and bitterly.*] So yuh're what she seen when she looked at me, de white-faced tart! I was you to her, get me? On'y outa de cage—broke out—free to moider her, see? Sure! Dat's what she tought. She wasn't wise dat I was in a cage, too—worser'n yours—sure—a damn sight—'cause you got some chanct to bust loose—but me—— [*He grows confused.*] Aw, hell! It's all wrong, ain't it? [*A pause.*] I s'pose yuh wanter know what I'm doin' here, huh? I been warmin' a bench down to de Battery—ever since last night. Sure. I seen de sun come up. Dat was pretty, too—all red and pink and green. I was lookin' at de skyscrapers—steel—and all de ships comin' in, sailin' out, all over de oith—and dey was steel, too. De sun was warm, dey wasn't no clouds, and dere was a breeze blowin'. Sure, it was great

stuff. I got it aw right—what Paddy said about dat bein' de right dope—on'y I couldn't get *in* it, see? I couldn't belong in dat. It was over my head. And I kept tinkin'—and den I beat it up here to see what youse was like. And I waited till dey was all gone to git yuh alone. Say, how d'yuh feel sittin' in dat pen all de time, havin' to stand for 'em comin' and starin' at yuh—de white-faced, skinny tarts and de boobs what marry 'em —makin' fun of yuh, laughin' at yuh, gittin' scared of yuh—damn 'em! [*He pounds on the rail with his fist. The gorilla rattles the bars of his cage and snarls. All the other monkeys set up an angry chattering in the darkness.* YANK *goes on excitedly.*] Sure! Dat's de way it hits me, too. On'y yuh're lucky, see? Yuh don't belong wit 'em and yuh know it. But me, I belong wit 'em —but I don't, see? Dey don't belong wit me, dat's what. Get me? Tinkin' is hard—[*He passes one hand across his forehead with a painful gesture. The gorilla growls impatiently.* YANK *goes on gropingly.*] It's dis way, what I'm drivin' at. Youse can sit and dope dream in de past, green woods, de jungle and de rest of it. Den yuh belong and dey don't. Den yuh kin laugh at 'em, see? Yuh're de champ of de woild. But me—I ain't got no past to tink in, nor nothin' dat's comin', on'y what's now—and dat don't belong. Sure, you're de best off! Yuh can't tink, can yuh? Yuh can't talk neider. But I kin make a bluff at talkin' and tinkin'—a'most git away wit it—a'most!—and dat's where de joker comes in. [*He laughs.*] I ain't on oith and I ain't in heaven, get me? I'm in de middle tryin' to separate 'em, takin' all de woist punches from bot' of 'em. Maybe dat's what dey call hell, huh? But you, yuh're at de bottom. You belong! Sure! Yuh're de on'y one in de woild dat does, yuh lucky stiff! [*The gorilla growls proudly.*] And dat's why dey gotter put yuh in a cage, see? [*The gorilla roars angrily.*] Sure! Yuh get me. It beats it when you try to tink it or talk it—it's way down—deep—behind—you 'n' me we feel it. Sure! Bot' members of dis club! [*He laughs—then in a savage tone.*] What de hell! T' hell wit it! A little action, dat's our meat! Dat belongs! Knock 'em down and keep bustin' 'em till dey croaks yuh wit a gat—wit steel! Sure! Are yuh game? Dey've looked at youse, ain't dey—in a cage? Wanter git even? Wanter wind up like a sport 'stead of croakin' slow in dere? [*The gorilla roars an emphatic affirmative.* YANK *goes on with a sort of furious exaltation.*] Sure! Yuh're reg'lar! Yuh'll stick to de finish! Me 'n' you, huh?—bot' members of this club! We'll put up one last star bout dat'll knock 'em offen deir seats! Dey'll have to make de cages stronger after we're trou! [*The gorilla is straining at his bars, growling, hopping from one foot to the other.* YANK *takes a jimmy from under his coat and forces the lock on the cage door. He throws this open.*] Pardon from de governor! Step out and shake hands! I'll take yuh for a walk down Fif' Avenoo. We'll knock 'em offen de oith and croak wit de band playin'. Come on, Brother. [*The gorilla scrambles gingerly out of his cage. Goes to* YANK *and stands looking at him.* YANK *keeps his mocking tone—holds out his hand.*] Shake—de secret grip of our order. [*Something, the tone of mockery, perhaps, suddenly enrages the animal. With a spring he wraps his huge arms around* YANK *in a murderous hug. There is a crackling snap of crushed ribs—a gasping cry, still mocking, from* YANK.] Hey, I didn't say kiss me! [*The gorilla lets the crushed body slip to the floor; stands over it uncertainly, considering; then picks it up, throws it in the cage, shuts the door, and shuffles off menacingly into the darkness at left. A great uproar of frightened chattering and whimpering comes from the other cages. Then* YANK *moves, groaning, opening his eyes, and there is silence. He mutters painfully.*] Say—dey oughter match him—wit Zybszko. He got me, aw right. I'm trou. Even him didn't tink I belonged. [*Then, with sudden passionate despair.*] Christ, where do I get off at? Where do I fit in? [*Checking himself as suddenly.*] Aw, what de hell! No squawkin', see! No quittin', get me! Croak wit your boots on! [*He grabs hold of the bars of the cage and hauls himself painfully to his feet—looks around him bewilderedly—forces a mocking laugh.*] In de cage, huh? [*In the strident tones of a circus barker.*] Ladies and gents, step forward and take a slant at de one and only—[*His voice weakening.*]—one and original—Hairy Ape from de wilds of—— [*He slips in a heap on the floor and dies. The monkeys set up a chattering, whimpering wail. And, perhaps, the Hairy Ape at last belongs.*]

[*Curtain.*]

1922

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73 **Zybszko,** Stanislaus Zbyszko, a famous wrestler of the twenties

William Faulkner

1897 •

The fiction of William Faulkner has as many different planes of interest as that of any contemporary American writer. On one level much of it is sheer horror, a twentieth-century throwback to the Gothic romance. On another it is Hawthornesque for its exploration of the methods and effects of symbolism and allegory. On still another it is a vast and intricate legend of the disintegration of the Old South, epiclike in conception and not unworthy of comparison with James Joyce's portrayal of Dublin in *Ulysses*. To the student of technique it is notable for its bold experimentation with narrative point of view, while the reader with an eye for style finds it full of some of the lushest rhetoric of our time. All in all, Faulkner's stories are almost incredibly subtle. They make such great demands of their readers that the surprising thing is that they have been as popular as they have.

Faulkner's work is almost all localized in the northern part of Mississippi. There he was born, in 1897, at New Albany, and there he has lived for most of his life in the neighboring county seat, Oxford, where the University of Mississippi is situated. The Faulkner (or Falkner) family has long been prominent in politics, railroad building, and planting; one great-grandfather of William's was the author of a popular ante-bellum romance, *The White Rose of Memphis*. The Sartoris family, prominent in a number of Faulkner's novels, appears to be in part a projection of his own clan.

Early in World War I, Faulkner, just out of high school, ran off to Canada to join the British air force. He was sent to England for training and saw about a year of service in France before he was wounded in a crash. Back in Mississippi, he was for a time a student in the university; he then worked at such odd jobs as clerking in the college postal station and house-painting. Encouragement for his writing apparently came from various friends, among them Phil Stone, an Oxford lawyer; Stark Young, then teaching at Amherst; and Sherwood Anderson, with whom he lived in New Orleans in 1922. All shared with Faulkner the fascination of the South, with its biracial pattern of life and its extremes of illiteracy and cultivation.

Faulkner's first published work was a poem in *The New Republic* for August 6, 1919. In the middle twenties a number of poems and critical articles appeared in *The Double Dealer*, a New Orleans magazine, and in 1924 a thin sheaf of poems was collected as *The Marble Faun*. Faulkner's reputation among those interested in new writers was built, however, upon a series of five novels and some of his short stories. The novels were: *Soldier's Pay* (1926), a story of the return of an aviator who had been presumed dead; *Mosquitoes* (1927), which contains some discussion of writers and their aims; *Sartoris* (1929), a key volume in the saga of the town of Jefferson in Yocknapatawpha County, the fictional counterpart of Oxford and its surrounding countryside; *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), a stream-of-consciousness novel in which one of the central

characters is an idiot; and *As I Lay Dying* (1930), a tour de force in the use of a multiple point of view. All are technically original, and it is not surprising that Faulkner's merits were quickly recognized.

He was not really well known, however, until the appearance of *Sanctuary* in 1931. A story of sexual perversion constructed like a detective story and denying anything approaching poetic justice, it established Faulkner as one of the leaders of the "cult of violence," and, thanks to its reprinting in an inexpensive edition, it remains his most widely read novel. Although Faulkner avowedly designed it as a "shocker," it is not uncharacteristic in method or matter, for it embeds in a carefully worked-out pattern of objective indirectness some most stomach-turning crimes and abnormalities. Since its appearance Faulkner has commanded a ready market for his short stories and has made his mark even in Hollywood, where his peculiar techniques have been adapted to certain motion pictures. Some of his work has been potboiling, but no other writer, with the possible exception of Erskine Caldwell, has provided such penetrating analyses of pathological specimens of degeneracy. The important later books include seven novels: *(Light in August,* 1932; *Pylon,* 1935; *Absalom, Absalom!* 1936; *The Wild Palms,* 1939; *The Hamlet,* 1940; *Intruder in the Dust,* 1948; and *Requiem for a Nun,* 1951) and five volumes of short stories *(These 13,* 1931; *Doctor Martino and Other Stories,* 1934; *The Unvanquished,* 1938; *Go Down, Moses,* 1942; and *Knight's Gambit,* 1949). This production was given the recognition of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950.

Readers vary widely in what they find in Faulkner's fiction—and, by the way, in what they look for—but few who are willing to give it patient attention will miss the ingenuity and freshness of its construction and the sincerity of its attempt to catch the essence of experience in a region at once desperately proud and desperately impoverished. The undercurrents of life in Jefferson, county seat and market town of a sharecropping region overwhelmingly Negro, are seldom pleasant to contemplate. In the best of the Yocknapatawpha County series the Sartorises, representative of the old order in the South, are set off against the Snopeses, poor-white opportunists without the vestiges of moral responsibility which the Sartorises retain, despite the inbred decay of the society which produced them. It is hard in such a milieu to see what is honest and what is decent, and it is not Faulkner's intent to expound his personal position. Yet there is a sense in which, for all his worrying of sexual relationships and inexplicable cruelty, he is a moralist. Life, he seems to imply, ought to be better than it is

G. M. O'Donnell, "Faulkner's Mythology," **Kenyon Review,** Summer 1939, I, 288-299 • R W. Daniel, **A Catalogue of the Writings of William Faulkner,** New Haven, 1942 • Delmore Schwartz, "The Fiction of William Faulkner," **Southern Review,** Summer 1941, VII, 145-160 • Malcolm Cowley, "William Faulkner's Legend of the South," **Sewanee Review,** Summer 1945, LIII, 343-361

From • These 13

A Rose for Emily

This story first appeared in **The Forum** for July 1930, with illustrations by Weldon Bailey. It was collected in **These 13** (1931). It belongs, as will appear, to the Sartoris cycle, and in a minor way reflects the conflict between the old and the new order which is central to so much of Faulkner's fiction. Told more directly than most of his stories, it shows his characteristic mastery of structure in the manner in which all details fit together, once the conclusion is reached. A careless reader is likely to miss the importance of the time sequence described at the beginning of the second section.

I

When Miss Emily Grierson died, our whole town went to her funeral: the men through a sort of respectful affection for a fallen monument, the women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one

save an old manservant—a combined gardener and cook —had seen in at least ten years.

It was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street. But garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighborhood, only Miss Emily's house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps— an eyesore among eyesores. And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of Jefferson.

Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town, dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the mayor—he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron—remitted her taxes, the dispensation dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity. Not that Miss Emily would have accepted charity. Colonel Sartoris invented an involved tale to the effect that Miss Emily's father had loaned money to the town, which the town, as a matter of business, preferred this way of repaying. Only a man of Colonel Sartoris' generation and thought could have invented it, and only a woman could have believed it.

When the next generation, with its more modern ideas, became mayors and aldermen, this arrangement created some little dissatisfaction. On the first of the year they mailed her a tax notice. February came, and there was no reply. They wrote her a formal letter, asking her to call at the sheriff's office at her convenience. A week later the mayor wrote her himself, offering to call or to send his car for her, and received in reply a note on paper of an archaic shape, in a thin flowing calligraphy in faded ink, to the effect that she no longer went out at all. The tax notice was also enclosed, without comment.

They called a special meeting of the Board of Aldermen. A deputation waited upon her, knocked at the door through which no visitor had passed since she ceased giving china-painting lessons eight or ten years earlier. They were admitted by the old Negro into a dim hall from which a stairway mounted into still more shadow. It smelled of dust and disuse—a close, dank smell. The Negro led them into the parlor. It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture. When the Negro opened the blinds of one window, they could see that the leather was cracked; and when they sat down, a faint dust rose sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single sun-ray. On a tarnished gilt easel before the fireplace stood a crayon portrait of Miss Emily's father.

They rose when she entered—a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold head. Her skeleton was small and spare; perhaps that was why what would have been merely plumpness in another was obesity in her. She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough as they moved from one face to another while the visitors stated their errand.

She did not ask them to sit She just stood in the door and listened quietly until the spokesman came to a stumbling halt. Then they could hear the invisible watch ticking at the end of the gold chain.

Her voice was dry and cold. "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Colonel Sartoris explained it to me. Perhaps one of you can gain access to the city records and satisfy yourselves."

"But we have. We are the city authorities, Miss Emily. Didn't you get a notice from the sheriff, signed by him?"

"I received a paper, yes," Miss Emily said. "Perhaps he considers himself the sheriff . . . I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But there is nothing on the books to show that, you see. We must go by the—"

"See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But, Miss Emily—"

"See Colonel Sartoris." (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.) "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Tobe!" The Negro appeared. "Show these gentlemen out."

II

So she vanquished them, horse and foot, just as she had vanquished their fathers thirty years before about the smell. That was two years after her father's death and a short time after her sweetheart—the one we be-

lieved would marry her—had deserted her. After her father's death she went out very little; after her sweetheart went away, people hardly saw her at all. A few of the ladies had the temerity to call, but were not received, and the only sign of life about the place was the Negro man—a young man then—going in and out with a market basket.

"Just as if a man—any man—could keep a kitchen properly," the ladies said; so they were not surprised when the smell developed. It was another link between the gross, teeming world and the high and mighty Griersons.

A neighbor, a woman, complained to the mayor, Judge Stevens, eighty years old.

"But what will you have me do about it, madam?" he said.

"Why, send her word to stop it," the woman said. "Isn't there a law?"

"I'm sure that won't be necessary," Judge Stevens said. "It's probably just a snake or a rat that nigger of hers killed in the yard. I'll speak to him about it."

The next day he received two more complaints, one from a man who came in diffident deprecation. "We really must do something about it, Judge. I'd be the last one in the world to bother Miss Emily, but we've got to do something." That night the Board of Aldermen met —three graybeards and one younger man, a member of the rising generation.

"It's simple enough," he said. "Send her word to have her place cleaned up. Give her a certain time to do it in, and if she dont . . ."

"Dammit, sir," Judge Stevens said, "will you accuse a lady to her face of smelling bad?"

So the next night, after midnight, four men crossed Miss Emily's lawn and slunk about the house like burglars, sniffing along the base of the brickwork and at the cellar openings while one of them performed a regular sowing motion with his hand out of a sack slung from his shoulder. They broke open the cellar door and sprinkled lime there, and in all the outbuildings. As they recrossed the lawn, a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, the light behind her, and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol. They crept quietly across the lawn and into the shadow of the locusts that lined the street. After a week or two the smell went away.

That was when people had begun to feel really sorry for her. People in our town, remembering how old lady Wyatt, her great-aunt, had gone completely crazy at last, believed that the Griersons held themselves a little too high for what they really were. None of the young men were quite good enough to Miss Emily and such. We had long thought of them as a tableau; Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horse-whip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door. So when she got to be thirty and was still single, we were not pleased exactly, but vindicated; even with insanity in the family she wouldn't have turned down all of her chances if they had really materialized.

When her father died, it got about that the house was all that was left to her; and in a way, people were glad. At last they could pity Miss Emily. Being left alone, and a pauper, she had become humanized. Now she too would know the old thrill and the old despair of a penny more or less.

The day after his death all the ladies prepared to call at the house and offer condolence and aid, as is our custom. Miss Emily met them at the door, dressed as usual and with no trace of grief on her face. She told them that her father was not dead. She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body. Just as they were about to resort to law and force, she broke down, and they buried her father quickly.

We did not say she was crazy then. We believed she had to do that. We remembered all the young men her father had driven away, and we knew that with nothing left, she would have to cling to that which had robbed her, as people will.

III

She was sick for a long time. When we saw her again, her hair was cut short, making her look like a girl, with a vague resemblance to those angels in colored church windows—sort of tragic and serene.

The town had just let the contracts for paving the sidewalks, and in the summer after her father's death they began the work. The construction company came with niggers and mules and machinery, and a foreman named Homer Barron, a Yankee—a big, dark, ready man, with

a big voice and eyes lighter than his face. The little boys would follow in groups to hear him cuss the niggers, and the niggers singing in time to the rise and fall of picks. Pretty soon he knew everybody in town. Whenever you heard a lot of laughing anywhere about the square, Homer Barron would be in the center of the group. Presently we began to see him and Miss Emily on Sunday afternoons driving in the yellow-wheeled buggy and the matched team of bays from the livery stable.

At first we were glad that Miss Emily would have an interest, because the ladies all said, "Of course a Grierson would not think seriously of a Northerner, a day laborer." But there were still others, older people, who said that even grief could not cause a real lady to forget *noblesse oblige*—without calling it *noblesse oblige*. They just said, "Poor Emily. Her kinsfolk should come to her." She had some kin in Alabama; but years ago her father had fallen out with them over the estate of old lady Wyatt, the crazy woman, and there was no communication between the two families. They had not even been represented at the funeral.

And as soon as the old people said, "Poor Emily," the whispering began. "Do you suppose it's really so?" they said to one another. "Of course it is. What else could . . ." This behind their hands; rustling of craned silk and satin behind jalousies closed upon the sun of Sunday afternoon as the thin, swift clop-clop-clop of the matched team passed: "Poor Emily."

She carried her head high enough—even when we believed that she was fallen. It was as if she demanded more than ever the recognition of her dignity as the last Grierson; as if it had wanted that touch of earthiness to reaffirm her imperviousness. Like when she bought the rat poison, the arsenic. That was over a year after they had begun to say "Poor Emily," and while the two female cousins were visiting her.

"I want some poison," she said to the druggist. She was over thirty then, still a slight woman, though thinner than usual, with cold, haughty black eyes in a face the flesh of which was strained across the temples and about the eye-sockets as you imagine a lighthouse-keeper's face ought to look. "I want some poison," she said.

"Yes, Miss Emily. What kind? For rats and such? I'd recom—"

"I want the best you have. I don't care what kind."

The druggist named several. "They'll kill anything up to an elephant. But what you want is—"

"Arsenic," Miss Emily said. "Is that a good one?"

"Is . . . arsenic? Yes, ma'am. But what you want—"

"I want arsenic."

The druggist looked down at her. She looked back at him, erect, her face like a strained flag. "Why, of course," the druggist said. "If that's what you want. But the law requires you to tell what you are going to use it for."

Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up. The Negro delivery boy brought her the package; the druggist didn't come back. When she opened the package at home there was written on the box, under the skull and bones: "For rats."

IV

So the next day we all said, "She will kill herself"; and we said it would be the best thing. When she had first begun to be seen with Homer Barron, we had said, "She will marry him." Then we said, "She will persuade him yet," because Homer himself had remarked—he liked men, and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elks' Club—that he was not a marrying man. Later we said, "Poor Emily" behind the jalousies as they passed on Sunday afternoon in the glittering buggy, Miss Emily with her head high and Homer Barron with his hat cocked and a cigar in his teeth, reins and whip in a yellow glove.

Then some of the ladies began to say that it was a disgrace to the town and a bad example to the young people. The men did not want to interfere, but at last the ladies forced the Baptist minister—Miss Emily's people were Episcopal—to call upon her. He would never divulge what happened during that interview, but he refused to go back again. The next Sunday they again drove about the streets, and the following day the minister's wife wrote to Miss Emily's relations in Alabama.

So she had blood-kin under her roof again and we sat back to watch developments. At first nothing happened. Then we were sure that they were to be married. We learned that Miss Emily had been to the jeweler's and ordered a man's toilet set in silver, with

the letters H. B. on each piece. Two days later we learned that she had bought a complete outfit of men's clothing, including a nightshirt, and we said, "They are married." We were really glad. We were glad because the two female cousins were even more Grierson than Miss Emily had ever been.

So we were not surprised when Homer Barron—the streets had been finished some time since—was gone. We were a little disappointed that there was not a public blowing-off, but we believed that he had gone on to prepare for Miss Emily's coming, or to give her a chance to get rid of the cousins. (By that time it was a cabal, and we were all Miss Emily's allies to help circumvent the cousins.) Sure enough, after another week they departed. And, as we had expected all along, within three days Homer Barron was back in town. A neighbor saw the Negro man admit him at the kitchen door at dusk one evening.

And that was the last we saw of Homer Barron. And of Miss Emily for some time. The Negro man went in and out with the market basket, but the front door remained closed. Now and then we would see her at a window for a moment, as the men did that night when they sprinkled the lime, but for almost six months she did not appear on the streets. Then we knew that this was to be expected too; as if that quality of her father which had thwarted her woman's life so many times had been too virulent and too furious to die.

When we next saw Miss Emily, she had grown fat and her hair was turning gray. During the next few years it grew grayer and grayer until it attained an even pepper-and-salt iron-gray, when it ceased turning. Up to the day of her death at seventy-four it was still that vigorous iron-gray, like the hair of an active man.

From that time on her front door remained closed, save for a period of six or seven years, when she was about forty, during which she gave lessons in china-painting. She fitted up a studio in one of the downstairs rooms, where the daughters and granddaughters of Colonel Sartoris' contemporaries were sent to her with the same regularity and in the same spirit that they were sent to church on Sundays with a twenty-five cent piece for the collection plate. Meanwhile her taxes had been remitted.

Then the newer generation became the backbone and the spirit of the town, and the painting pupils grew up and fell away and did not send their children to her with boxes of color and tedious brushes and pictures cut from the ladies' magazines. The front door closed upon the last one and remained closed for good. When the town got free postal delivery, Miss Emily alone refused to let them fasten the metal numbers above her door and attach a mailbox to it. She would not listen to them.

Daily, monthly, yearly we watched the Negro grow grayer and more stooped, going in and out with the market basket. Each December we sent her a tax notice, which would be returned by the post office a week later, unclaimed. Now and then we would see her in one of the downstairs windows—she had evidently shut up the top floor of the house—like the carven torso of an idol in a niche, looking or not looking at us, we could never tell which. Thus she passed from generation to generation—dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse.

And so she died. Fell ill in the house filled with dust and shadows, with only a doddering Negro man to wait on her. We did not even know she was sick; we had long since given up trying to get any information from the Negro. He talked to no one, probably not even to her, for his voice had grown harsh and rusty, as if from disuse.

She died in one of the downstairs rooms, in a heavy walnut bed with a curtain, her gray head propped on a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight.

V

The Negro met the first of the ladies at the front door and let them in, with their hushed, sibilant voices and their quick, curious glances, and then he disappeared. He walked right through the house and out the back and was not seen again.

The two female cousins came at once. They held the funeral on the second day, with the town coming to look at Miss Emily beneath a mass of bought flowers, with the crayon face of her father musing profoundly above the bier and the ladies sibilant and macabre; and the very old men—some in their brushed Confederate uniforms—on the porch and the lawn, talking of Miss Emily as if she had been a contemporary of theirs, believing that they had danced with her and courted her perhaps, confusing time with its mathematical progression, as the old do, to whom all the past is not a dimin-

ishing road but, instead, a huge meadow which no winter ever quite touches, divided from them now by the narrow bottle-neck of the most recent decade of years.

Already we knew that there was one room in that region above stairs which no one had seen in forty years, and which would have to be forced. They waited until Miss Emily was decently in the ground before they opened it.

The violence of breaking down the door seemed to fill this room with pervading dust. A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the valence curtains of faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights, upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man's toilet things backed with tarnished silver, silver so tarnished that the monogram was obscured. Among them lay a collar and tie, as if they had just been removed, which, lifted, left upon the surface a pale crescent in the dust. Upon a chair hung the suit, carefully folded; beneath it the two mute shoes and the discarded socks.

The man himself lay in the bed.

For a long while we just stood there, looking down at the profound and fleshless grin. The body had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace, but now the long sleep that outlasts love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him. What was left of him, rotted beneath what was left of the nightshirt, had become inextricable from the bed in which he lay; and upon him and upon the pillow beside him lay that even coating of the patient and biding dust.

Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron-gray hair.

1930?•1930

NOVELISTS WITH SOCIAL THEMES: Cather, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Wolfe

Willa Sibert Cather

1876 • 1947

The secure position of Willa Cather among present-day American writers was the result of her allegiance to the belief that fiction is a form of art worth practicing with the utmost seriousness. To her it was not merely a business, the providing of entertainment to a magazine-reading public, or a means to the improvement of society. Like Henry James and Sarah Orne Jewett, to whom she acknowledged her indebtedness, she always thought of storytelling in qualitative terms and her work was a constant striving for perfection. In "The Novel Démeublé," first published in *The New Republic* for April 12, 1922, she expounded her doctrine that literary art is primarily a matter of selection and simplification, the learning of when to subordinate detail to the desired effect. The effects which she chiefly sought have been in the realm of subtleties of character and situation. Willa Cather was akin to Henry James in the goals for which she worked, but perhaps more aware than he was of the importance of setting and of physical action; she was, in short, somewhat closer to tradition and has been more popular. Seldom if ever, however, did she compromise with her artistic conscience. It is easy to complain of her limited range and to question the ethical and social



bases of her thinking, but no one is likely to deny her integrity.

Miss Cather was born in 1876 near Winchester, in the northern tip of Virginia. From her ninth to her nineteenth year, she was a Nebraskan, growing up in what was then a pioneer rural community, settled largely by Norwegian and Bohemian immigrants. After some tutoring at home she went to high school at Red Cloud, and then to the University of Nebraska, where she was graduated in 1895. By that time she had acquired a deep interest in good music, an enthusiasm for the work of Henry James, and a desire to write, heightened by some experience with newspaper work and a few appearances in the college magazine. Only gradually did she find her power as a writer. Her first published stories and poems appeared in 1900. She had then worked for five years on the Pittsburgh *Daily Leader.* Her first book, *April Twilights* (1903), a volume of poems, came out while she was teaching English in Allegheny High School. Her mood in these years was chiefly the familiar one of rebellion against the cultural bleakness of the small town and the small-town mind, later so fully exploited by Sinclair Lewis in *Main Street* and *Babbitt.* Her best-known short stories, "The Sculptor's Funeral," "A Wagner Matinée," and "Paul's Case," all collected in *The Troll Garden* (1905), utilize this mood. In 1906 she moved to New York City to work on *McClure's Magazine,* of which she was managing editor from 1908 until 1911.

It seems likely that the most important event of Miss Cather's years as editor was her connection with Sarah Orne Jewett, who advised her late in 1908 to find time and quiet to perfect her work if she wished her gifts to mature. Following this advice, Miss Cather resigned her editorship to write a novel. *Alexander's Bridge* (1912; previously serialized in *McClure's* as "Alexander's Masquerade") was imitative of Henry James in its London setting and mild ethical theme, but it was followed a year later by *O Pioneers!* in which Miss Cather returned to the immigrant folk she had known as a child. It and *My Ántonia* (1918) must be ranked with the finest of Middlewestern novels for their unforgettable central characters and their rich detail of pioneer life in Nebraska. With them and *The Song of the Lark* (1915), the story of a girl whose voice carried her from Colorado to the Metropolitan Opera Company, Miss Cather's reputation was firmly established. It has never since been in danger.

The rest of her work consists of short-story collections (*Youth and the Bright Medusa,* 1920; *Obscure Destinies,* 1932; and *The Old Beauty and Others,* 1948), one volume of critical and reminiscent essays (*Not under Forty,* 1936), and eight relatively short novels (*One of Ours,* 1922, which won the Pulitzer Prize; *A Lost Lady,* 1923; *The Professor's House,* 1925; *My Mortal*

Panel (l. to r.): New Mexican setting of **Death Comes for the Archbishop** • Willa Sibert Cather • Miss Cather's family home at Red Cloud, Nebraska

Enemy, 1926; *Death Comes for the Archbishop,* 1927; *Shadows on the Rock,* 1931; *Lucy Gayheart,* 1935; and *Sapphira and the Slave Girl,* 1940). Each of the novels has its partisans; a number of them have been best sellers. As a whole they show admirable mastery of the novel form for the purposes which Miss Cather avowed, together with an increasing preoccupation with the lack of meaningful orderliness in the contemporary world. The ethical and social values which Miss Cather cherished appear to grow harder and harder to hang on to. She stood essentially for tradition and refinement, for art in life as well as in fiction, and it is not surprising that she turned more and more to the past and found Roman Catholicism the best of possible faiths. Sometimes, in her troublous times, Miss Cather was more than a trifle sad that the simplicity of the old days had passed.

The Novels and Stories of Willa Cather, Library Edition, 11 vols., Boston, 1937-1941 • T. K. Whipple, **Spokesmen: Modern Writers and American Life,** New York, 1928 • Carl Van Doren, **The American Novel, 1789-1939,** Revised and Enlarged Edition, New York, 1940 • Granville Hicks, "The Case Against Willa Cather," **English Journal,** November 1933, XXII, 703-710 • Lionel Trilling, "Willa Cather," **The New Republic,** February 10, 1937, XC, 10-13 • **Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett,** ed. Annie Fields, Boston, 1911

From • Obscure Destinies

Neighbour Rosicky

In "Neighbour Rosicky," the longest of the three stories in **Obscure Destinies** (1932), Miss Cather returned to the immigrant folk who had been her neighbors in her girlhood in Nebraska, of whom she has also written in **My Ántonia** and **O Pioneers!** Her respect for the basic values of rural life—security and humaneness and family solidarity—will be evident to any reader. The story is in her mature style, marked by restraint and a careful subordination of detail to the achievement of a mood. Like most of her later work this story makes clear her belief that the good life is well worth the living and that it can be achieved most readily by simplification. "Neighbour Rosicky" was written in New York in 1928.

I

When Doctor Burleigh told neighbour Rosicky he had a bad heart, Rosicky protested.

"So? No, I guess my heart was always pretty good. I got a little asthma, maybe. Just a awful short breath when I was pitchin' hay last summer, dat's all."

"Well now, Rosicky, if you know more about it than I do, what did you come to me for? It's your heart that makes you short of breath, I tell you. You're sixty-five years old, and you've always worked hard, and your heart's tired. You've got to be careful from now on, and you can't do heavy work any more. You've got five boys at home to do it for you."

The old farmer looked up at the Doctor with a gleam of amusement in his queer, triangular-shaped eyes. His eyes were large and lively, but the lids were caught up in the middle in a curious way, so that they formed a triangle. He did not look like a sick man. His brown face was creased but not wrinkled, he had a ruddy colour in his smooth-shaven cheeks and in his lips, under his long brown moustache. His hair was thin and ragged around his ears, but very little grey. His forehead, naturally high and crossed by deep parallel lines, now ran all the way up to his pointed crown. Rosicky's face had the habit of looking interested, —suggested a contented disposition and a reflective quality that was gay rather than grave. This gave him a certain detachment, the easy manner of an onlooker and observer.

"Well, I guess you ain't got no pills for a bad heart, Doctor Ed. I guess the only thing is fur me to git me a new one."

Doctor Burleigh swung round in his desk-chair and frowned at the old farmer. "I think if I were you I'd take a little care of the old one, Rosicky."

Rosicky shrugged. "Maybe I don't know how. I expect you mean fur me not to drink my coffee no more."

"I wouldn't, in your place. But you'll do as you choose about that. I've never yet been able to separate a Bohemian from his coffee or his pipe. I've quit trying. But the sure thing is you've got to cut out farm work. You can feed the stock and do chores about the barn, but you can't do anything in the fields that makes you short of breath."

"How about shelling corn?"

"Of course not!"

Rosicky considered with puckered brows.

"I can't make my heart go no longer'n it wants to, can I, Doctor Ed?"

"I think it's good for five or six years yet, maybe more, if you'll take the strain off it. Sit around the house and help Mary. If I had a good wife like yours, I'd want to stay around the house."

His patient chuckled. "It ain't no place fur a man. I don't like no old man hanging round the kitchen too much. An' my wife, she's a awful hard worker her own self."

"That's it; you can help her a little. My Lord, Rosicky, you are one of the few men I know who has a family he can get some comfort out of; happy dispositions, never quarrel among themselves, and they treat you right. I want to see you live a few years and enjoy them."

"Oh, they're good kids, all right," Rosicky assented.

The Doctor wrote him a prescription and asked him how his oldest son, Rudolph, who had married in the spring, was getting on. Rudolph had struck out for himself, on rented land. "And how's Polly? I was afraid Mary mightn't like an American daughter-in-law, but it seems to be working out all right."

"Yes, she's a fine girl. Dat widder woman bring her daughters up very nice. Polly got lots of spunk, an' she got some style, too. Da's nice, for young folks to have some style." Rosicky inclined his head gallantly. His voice and his twinkly smile were an affectionate compliment to his daughter-in-law.

"It looks like a storm, and you'd better be getting home before it comes. In town in the car?" Doctor Burleigh rose.

"No, I'm in de wagon. When you got five boys, you ain't got much chance to ride round in de Ford. I ain't much for cars, noway."

"Well, it's a good road out to your place; but I don't want you bumping around in a wagon much. And never again on a hay-rake, remember!"

Rosicky placed the Doctor's fee delicately behind the desk-telephone, looking the other way, as if this were an absent-minded gesture. He put on his plush cap and his corduroy jacket with a sheepskin collar, and went out.

The Doctor picked up his stethoscope and frowned at it as if he were seriously annoyed with the instrument. He wished it had been telling tales about some other man's heart, some old man who didn't look the Doctor in the eye so knowingly, or hold out such a warm brown hand when he said good-bye. Doctor Burleigh had been a poor boy in the country before he went away to medical school; he had known Rosicky almost ever since he could remember, and he had a deep affection for Mrs. Rosicky.

Only last winter he had had such a good breakfast at Rosicky's, and that when he needed it. He had been out all night on a long, hard confinement case at Tom Marshall's,—a big rich farm where there was plenty of stock and plenty of feed and a great deal of expensive farm machinery of the newest model, and no comfort whatever. The woman had too many children and too much work, and she was no manager. When the baby was born at last, and handed over to the assisting neighbour woman, and the mother was properly attended to, Burleigh refused any breakfast in that slovenly house, and drove his buggy—the snow was too deep for a car—eight miles to Anton Rosicky's place. He didn't know another farm-house where a man could get such a warm welcome, and such good strong coffee with rich cream. No wonder the old chap didn't want to give up his coffee!

He had driven in just when the boys had come back from the barn and were washing up for breakfast The long table, covered with a bright oilcloth, was set out with dishes waiting for them, and the warm kitchen was full of the smell of coffee and hot biscuit and sausage. Five big handsome boys, running from twenty to twelve, all with what Burleigh called natural good manners,— they hadn't a bit of the painful self-consciousness he himself had to struggle with when he

was a lad. One ran to put his horse away, another helped him off with his fur coat and hung it up, and Josephine, the youngest child and the only daughter, quickly set another place under her mother's direction.

With Mary, to feed creatures was the natural expression of affection,—her chickens, the calves, her big hungry boys. It was a rare pleasure to feed a young man whom she seldom saw and of whom she was as proud as if he belonged to her. Some country housekeepers would have stopped to spread a white cloth over the oilcloth, to change the thick cups and plates for their best china, and the wooden-handled knives for plated ones. But not Mary.

"You must take us as you find us, Doctor Ed. I'd be glad to put out my good things for you if you was expected, but I'm glad to get you any way at all."

He knew she was glad,—she threw back her head and spoke out as if she were announcing him to the whole prairie. Rosicky hadn't said anything at all; he merely smiled his twinkling smile, put some more coal on the fire, and went into his own room to pour the Doctor a little drink in a medicine glass. When they were all seated, he watched his wife's face from his end of the table and spoke to her in Czech. Then, with the instinct of politeness which seldom failed him, he turned to the Doctor and said slyly, "I was just tellin' her not to ask you no questions about Mrs. Marshall till you eat some breakfast. My wife, she's terrible fur to ask questions."

The boys laughed, and so did Mary. She watched the doctor devour her biscuit and sausage, too much excited to eat anything herself. She drank her coffee and sat taking in everything about her visitor. She had known him when he was a poor country boy, and was boastfully proud of his success, always saying: "What do people go to Omaha for, to see a doctor, when we got the best one in the State right here?" If Mary liked people at all, she felt physical pleasure in the sight of them, personal exultation in any good fortune that came to them. Burleigh didn't know many women like that, but he knew she was like that.

When his hunger was satisfied, he did, of course, have to tell them about Mrs. Marshall, and he noticed what a friendly interest the boys took in the matter.

Rudolph, the oldest one (he was still living at home then), said: "The last time I was over there, she was lifting them big heavy milk-cans, and I knew she ought not to be doing it."

"Yes, Rudolph told me about that when he come home, and I said it wasn't right," Mary put in warmly. "It was all right for me to do them things up to the last, for I was terrible strong, but that woman's weakly. And do you think she'll be able to nurse it, Ed?" She sometimes forgot to give him the title she was so proud of. "And to think of your being up all night and then not able to get a decent breakfast! I don't know what's the matter with such people."

"Why, mother," said one of the boys, "if Doctor Ed had got breakfast there, we wouldn't have him here. So you ought to be glad."

"He knows I'm glad to have him, John, any time. But I'm sorry for that poor woman, how bad she'll feel the Doctor had to go away in the cold without his breakfast."

"I wish I'd been in practice when these were getting born." The doctor looked down the row of close-clipped heads. "I missed some good breakfasts by not being."

The boys began to laugh at their mother because she flushed so red, but she stood her ground and threw up her head. "I don't care, you wouldn't have got away from this house without breakfast. No doctor ever did. I'd have had something ready fixed that Anton could warm up for you."

The boys laughed harder than ever, and exclaimed at her: "I'll bet you would!" "She would, that!"

"Father, did you get breakfast for the doctor when we were born?"

"Yes, and he used to bring me my breakfast, too, mighty nice. I was always awful hungry!" Mary admitted with a guilty laugh.

While the boys were getting the Doctor's horse, he went to the window to examine the house plants. "What do you do to your geraniums to keep them blooming all winter, Mary? I never pass this house that from the road I don't see your windows full of flowers."

She snapped off a dark red one, and a ruffled new green leaf, and put them in his buttonhole. "There, that looks better. You look too solemn for a young man, Ed. Why don't you git married? I'm worried about you. Settin' at breakfast, I looked at you real hard, and I seen you've got some grey hairs already."

"Oh, yes! They're coming. Maybe they'd come faster if I married."

"Don't talk so. You'll ruin your health eating at the hotel. I could send your wife a nice loaf of nut bread, if you only had one. I don't like to see a young man getting grey. I'll tell you something, Ed; you make some strong black tea and keep it handy in a bowl, and every morning just brush it into your hair, an' it'll keep the grey from showin' much. That's the way I do!"

Sometimes the Doctor heard the gossipers in the drugstore wondering why Rosicky didn't get on faster. He was industrious, and so were his boys, but they were rather free and easy, weren't pushers, and they didn't always show good judgment. They were comfortable, they were out of debt, but they didn't get much ahead. Maybe, Doctor Burleigh reflected, people as generous and warmhearted and affectionate as the Rosickys never got ahead much; maybe you could not enjoy your life and put it into the bank, too.

II

When Rosicky left Doctor Burleigh's office, he went into the farm-implement store to light his pipe and put on his glasses and read over the list Mary had given him. Then he went into the general merchandise place next door and stood about until the pretty girl with the plucked eyebrows, who always waited on him, was free. Those eyebrows, two thin India-ink strokes, amused him, because he remembered how they used to be. Rosicky always prolonged his shopping by a little joking; the girl knew the old fellow admired her, and she liked to chaff with him.

"Seems to me about every other week you buy ticking, Mr. Rosicky, and always the best quality," she remarked as she measured off the heavy bolt with red stripes.

"You see, my wife is always makin' goose-fedder pillows, an de' thin stuff don't hold in dem little down-fedders."

"You must have lots of pillows at your house."

"Sure. She makes quilts of dem, too. We sleeps easy. Now she's makin' a fedder quilt for my son's wife. You know Polly, that married my Rudolph. How much my bill, Miss Pearl?"

"Eight eighty-five."

"Chust make it nine, and put in some candy fur de women."

"As usual. I never did see a man buy so much candy for his wife. First thing you know, she'll be getting too fat."

"I'd like dat. I ain't much fur all dem slim women like what de style is now."

"That's one for me, I suppose, Mr. Bohunk!" Pearl sniffed and elevated her India-ink strokes.

When Rosicky went out to his wagon, it was beginning to snow,—the first snow of the season, and he was glad to see it. He rattled out of town and along the highway through a wonderfully rich stretch of country, the finest farms in the county. He admired this High Prairie, as it was called, and always liked to drive through it. His own place lay in a rougher territory, where there was some clay in the soil and it was not so productive. When he bought his land, he hadn't the money to buy on High Prairie; so he told his boys, when they grumbled, that if their land hadn't some clay in it, they wouldn't own it at all. All the same, he enjoyed looking at these fine farms, as he enjoyed looking at a prize bull.

After he had gone eight miles, he came to the graveyard, which lay just at the edge of his own hay-land. There he stopped his horses and sat still on his wagon seat, looking about at the snowfall. Over yonder on the hill he could see his own house, crouching low, with the clump of orchard behind and the windmill before, and all down the gentle hill-slope the rows of pale gold cornstalks stood out against the white field. The snow was falling over the cornfield and the pasture and the hay-land, steadily, with very little wind,—a nice dry snow. The graveyard had only a light wire fence about it and was all overgrown with long red grass. The fine snow, settling into this red grass and upon the few little evergreens and the headstones, looked very pretty.

It was a nice graveyard, Rosicky reflected, sort of snug and homelike, not cramped or mournful,—a big sweep all round it. A man could lie down in the long grass and see the complete arch of the sky over him, hear the wagons go by; in summer the mowing-machine rattled right up to the wire fence. And it was so near home. Over there across the cornstalks his own roof and windmill looked so good to him that he promised himself to mind the Doctor and take care of himself.

He was awful fond of his place, he admitted. He wasn't anxious to leave it. And it was a comfort to think that he would never have to go farther than the edge of his own hayfield. The snow, falling over his barnyard and the graveyard, seemed to draw things together like. And they were all old neighbours in the graveyard, most of them friends; there was nothing to feel awkward or embarrassed about. Embarrassment was the most disagreeable feeling Rosicky knew. He didn't often have it,—only with certain people whom he didn't understand at all.

Well, it was a nice snowstorm; a fine sight to see the snow falling so quietly and graciously over so much open country. On his cap and shoulders, on the horses' backs and manes, light, delicate, mysterious it fell; and with it a dry cool fragrance was released into the air. It meant rest for vegetation and men and beasts, for the ground itself; a season of long nights for sleep, leisurely breakfasts, peace by the fire. This and much more went through Rosicky's mind, but he merely told himself that winter was coming, clucked to his horses, and drove on.

When he reached home, John, the youngest boy, ran out to put away his team for him, and he met Mary coming up from the outside cellar with her apron full of carrots. They went into the house together. On the table, covered with oilcloth figured with clusters of blue grapes, a place was set, and he smelled hot coffee-cake of some kind. Anton never lunched in town; he thought that extravagant, and anyhow he didn't like the food. So Mary always had something ready for him when he got home.

After he was settled in his chair, stirring his coffee in a big cup, Mary took out of the oven a pan of *kolache* stuffed with apricots, examined them anxiously to see whether they had got too dry, put them beside his plate, and then sat down opposite him.

Rosicky asked her in Czech if she wasn't going to have any coffee.

She replied in English, as being somehow the right language for transacting business: "Now what did Doctor Ed say, Anton? You tell me just what."

"He said I was to tell you some compliments, but I forgot 'em." Rosicky's eyes twinkled.

"About you, I mean. What did he say about your asthma?"

"He says I ain't got no asthma." Rosicky took one of the little rolls in his broad brown fingers. The thickened nail of his right thumb told the story of his past.

"Well, what is the matter? And don't try to put me off."

"He don't say nothing much, only I'm a little older, and my heart ain't so good like it used to be."

Mary started and brushed her hair back from her temples with both hands as if she were a little out of her mind. From the way she glared, she might have been in a rage with him.

"He says there's something the matter with your heart? Doctor Ed says so?"

"Now don't yell at me like I was a hog in de garden, Mary. You know I always did like to hear a woman talk soft. He didn't say anything de matter wid my heart, only it ain't so young like it used to be, an' he tell me not to pitch hay or run de corn-sheller."

Mary wanted to jump up, but she sat still. She admired the way he never under any circumstances raised his voice or spoke roughly. He was city-bred, and she was country-bred; she often said she wanted her boys to have their papa's nice ways.

"You never have no pain there, do you? It's your breathing and your stomach that's been wrong. I wouldn't believe nobody but Doctor Ed about it. I guess I'll go see him myself. Didn't he give you no advice?"

"Chust to take it easy like, an' stay round de house dis winter. I guess you got some carpenter work for me to do. I kin make some new shelves for you, and I want dis long time to build a closet in de boys' room and make dem two little fellers keep dere clo'es hung up."

Rosicky drank his coffee from time to time, while he considered. His moustache was of the soft long variety and came down over his mouth like the teeth of a buggy-rake over a bundle of hay. Each time he put down his cup, he ran his blue handkerchief over his lips. When he took a drink of water, he managed very neatly with the back of his hand.

Mary sat watching him intently, trying to find any change in his face. It is hard to see anyone who has become like your own body to you. Yes, his hair had got thin, and his high forehead had deep lines running from left to right. But his neck, always clean-shaved except in the busiest seasons, was not loose or baggy. It was burned a dark reddish brown, and there

were deep creases in it, but it looked firm and full of blood. His cheeks had a good colour. On either side of his mouth there was a half-moon down the length of his cheek, not wrinkles, but two lines that had come there from his habitual expression. He was shorter and broader than when she married him; his back had grown broad and curved, a good deal like the shell of an old turtle, and his arms and legs were short.

He was fifteen years older than Mary, but she had hardly ever thought about it before. He was her man, and the kind of man she liked. She was rough, and he was gentle,—city-bred, as she always said. They had been shipmates on a rough voyage and had stood by each other in trying times. Life had gone well with them because, at bottom, they had the same ideas about life. They agreed, without discussion, as to what was most important and what was secondary. They didn't often exchange opinions, even in Czech,—it was as if they had thought the same thought together. A good deal had to be sacrificed and thrown overboard in a hard life like theirs, and they had never disagreed as to the things that could go. It had been a hard life, and a soft life, too. There wasn't anything brutal in the short, broad-backed man with the three-cornered eyes and the forehead that went on to the top of his skull. He was a city man, a gentle man, and though he had married a rough farm girl, he had never touched her without gentleness.

They had been at one accord not to hurry through life, not to be always skimping and saving. They saw their neighbours buy more land and feed more stock than they did, without discontent. Once when the creamery agent came to the Rosickys to persuade them to sell him their cream, he told them how much money the Fasslers, their nearest neighbours, had made on their cream last year.

"Yes," said Mary, "and look at them Fassler children! Pale, pinched little things, they look like skimmed milk. I had rather put some colour into my children's faces than put money into the bank."

The agent shrugged and turned to Anton.

"I guess we'll do like she says," said Rosicky.

III

Mary very soon got into town to see Doctor Ed, and then she had a talk with her boys and set a guard over Rosicky. Even John, the youngest, had his father on his mind. If Rosicky went to throw hay down from the loft, one of the boys ran up the ladder and took the fork from him. He sometimes complained that though he was getting to be an old man, he wasn't an old woman yet.

That winter he stayed in the house in the afternoons and carpentered, or sat in the chair between the window full of plants and the wooden bench where the two pails of drinking-water stood. This spot was called "Father's corner," though it was not a corner at all. He had a shelf there, where he kept his Bohemian papers and his pipes and tobacco, and his shears and needles and thread and tailor's thimble. Having been a tailor in his youth, he couldn't bear to see a woman patching at his clothes, or at the boys'. He liked tailoring, and always patched all the overalls and jackets and work shirts. Occasionally he made over a pair of pants one of the older boys had outgrown, for the little fellow.

While he sewed, he let his mind run back over his life. He had a good deal to remember, really; life in three countries. The only part of his youth he didn't like to remember was the two years he had spent in London, in Cheapside, working for a German tailor who was wretchedly poor. Those days, when he was nearly always hungry, when his clothes were dropping off him for dirt, and the sound of a strange language kept him in continual bewilderment, had left a sore spot in his mind that wouldn't bear touching.

He was twenty when he landed at Castle Garden in New York, and he had a protector who got him work in a tailor shop in Vesey Street, down near the Washington Market. He looked upon that part of his life as very happy. He became a good workman, he was industrious, and his wages were increased from time to time. He minded his own business and envied nobody's good fortune. He went to night school and learned to read English. He often did overtime work and was well paid for it, but somehow he never saved anything. He couldn't refuse a loan to a friend, and he was self-indulgent. He liked a good dinner, and a little went for beer, a little for tobacco; a good deal went to the girls. He often stood through an opera on Saturday nights; he could get standing-room for a dollar. Those were the great days of opera in New York, and it gave a fellow something to think about for the rest of the week. Rosicky had a quick ear, and a childish love of all the stage splendour; the scenery, the costumes, the ballet. He usually went with a chum, and after the

performance they had beer and maybe some oysters somewhere. It was a fine life; for the first five years or so it satisfied him completely. He was never hungry or cold or dirty, and everything amused him: a fire, a dog fight, a parade, a storm, a ferry ride. He thought New York the finest, richest, friendliest city in the world.

Moreover, he had what he called a happy home life. Very near the tailor shop was a small furniture-factory, where an old Austrian, Loeffler, employed a few skilled men and made unusual furniture, most of it to order, for the rich German housewives uptown. The top floor of Loeffler's five-story factory was a loft, where he kept his choice lumber and stored the odd pieces of furniture left on his hands. One of the young workmen he employed was a Czech, and he and Rosicky became fast friends. They persuaded Loeffler to let them have a sleeping-room in one corner of the loft. They bought good beds and bedding and had their pick of the furniture kept up there. The loft was low-pitched, but light and airy, full of windows, and good-smelling by reason of the fine lumber put up there to season. Old Loeffler used to go down to the docks and buy wood from South America and the East from the sea captains. The young men were as foolish about their house as a bridal pair. Zichec, the young cabinet-maker, devised every sort of convenience, and Rosicky kept their clothes in order. At night and on Sundays, when the quiver of machinery underneath was still, it was the quietest place in the world, and on summer nights all the sea winds blew in. Zichec often practiced on his flute in the evening. They were both fond of music and went to the opera together. Rosicky thought he wanted to live like that forever.

But as the years passed, all alike, he began to get a little restless. When spring came round, he would begin to feel fretted, and he got to drinking. He was likely to drink too much of a Saturday night. On Sunday he was languid and heavy, getting over his spree. On Monday he plunged into work again. So he never had time to figure out what ailed him, though he knew something did. When the grass turned green in Park Place, and the lilac hedge at the back of Trinity churchyard put out its blossoms, he was tormented by a longing to run away. That was why he drank too much; to get a temporary illusion of freedom and wide horizons.

Rosicky, the old Rosicky, could remember as if it were yesterday the day when the young Rosicky found out what was the matter with him. It was on a Fourth of July afternoon, and he was sitting in Park Place in the sun. The lower part of New York was empty. Wall Street, Liberty Street, Broadway, all empty. So much stone and asphalt with nothing going on, so many empty windows. The emptiness was intense, like the stillness in a great factory when the machinery stops and the belts and bands cease running. It was too great a change, it took all the strength out of one. Those blank buildings, without the stream of life pouring through them, were like empty jails It struck young Rosicky that this was the trouble with big cities; they built you in from the earth itself, cemented you away from any contact with the ground. You lived in an unnatural world, like the fish in an aquarium, who were probably much more comfortable than they ever were in the sea.

On that very day he began to think seriously about the articles he had read in the Bohemian papers, describing prosperous Czech farming communities in the West. He believed he would like to go out there as a farmhand; it was hardly possible that he could ever have land of his own. His people had always been workmen; his father and grandfather had worked in shops. His mother's parents had lived in the country, but they rented their farm and had a hard time to get along. Nobody in his family had ever owned any land,—that belonged to a different station of life altogether. Anton's mother died when he was little, and he was sent into the country to her parents. He stayed with them until he was twelve, and formed those ties with the earth and the farm animals and growing things which are never made at all unless they are made early. After his grandfather died, he went back to live with his father and stepmother, but she was very hard on him, and his father helped him to get passage to London.

After that Fourth of July day in Park Place, the desire to return to the country never left him. To work on another man's farm would be all he asked; to see the sun rise and set and to plant things and watch them grow. He was a very simple man. He was like a tree that has not many roots, but one tap-root that goes down deep He subscribed for a Bohemian paper printed in Chicago, then for one printed in Omaha. His mind got farther and farther west. He began to save a little money to buy his liberty. When he was thirty-five there was a great meeting in New York of Bohemian

athletic societies, and Rosicky left the tailor shop and went home with the Omaha delegates to try his fortune in another part of the world.

IV

Perhaps the fact that his own youth was well over before he began to have a family was one reason why Rosicky was so fond of his boys. He had almost a grandfather's indulgence for them. He had never had to worry about any of them—except, just now, a little about Rudolph.

On Saturday night the boys always piled into the Ford, took little Josephine, and went to town to the moving-picture show. One Saturday morning they were talking at the breakfast table about starting early that evening, so that they would have an hour or so to see the Christmas things in the stores before the show began. Rosicky looked down the table.

"I hope you boys ain't disappointed, but I want you to let me have de car tonight. Maybe some of you can go in with de neighbours."

Their faces fell. They worked hard all week, and they were still like children. A new jack-knife or a box of candy pleased the older ones as much as the little fellow.

"If you and Mother are going to town," Frank said, "maybe you could take a couple of us along with you, anyway."

"No, I want to take de car down to Rudolph's, and let him an' Polly go in to de show. She don't git into town enough, an' I'm afraid she's gittin' lonesome, an' he can't afford no car yet."

That settled it. The boys were a good deal dashed. Their father took another piece of apple-cake and went on: "Maybe next Saturday night de two little fellers can go along wid dem."

"Oh, is Rudolph going to have the car every Saturday night?"

Rosicky did not reply at once; then he began to speak seriously: "Listen, boys; Polly ain't lookin' so good. I don't like to see nobody lookin' sad. It comes hard fur a town girl to be a farmer's wife. I don't want no trouble to start in Rudolph's family. When it starts, it ain't so easy to stop. An American girl don't git used to our ways all at once. I like to tell Polly she and Rudolph can have the car every Saturday night till after New Year's, if it's all right with you boys."

"Sure it's all right, Papa," Mary cut in. "And it's good you thought about that. Town girls is used to more than country girls. I lay awake nights, scared she'll make Rudolph discontented with the farm."

The boys put as good a face on it as they could. They surely looked forward to their Saturday nights in town. That evening Rosicky drove the car the half-mile down the road to Rudolph's new, bare little house.

Polly was in a short-sleeved gingham dress, clearing away the supper dishes. She was a trim, slim little thing, with blue eyes and shingled yellow hair, and her eyebrows were reduced to a mere brush-stroke, like Miss Pearl's.

"Good-evening, Mr. Rosicky. Rudolph's at the barn, I guess." She never called him father, or Mary mother. She was sensitive about having married a foreigner. She never in the world would have done it if Rudolph hadn't been such a handsome, persuasive fellow and such a gallant lover. He had graduated in her class in the high school in town, and their friendship began in the ninth grade.

Rosicky went in, though he wasn't exactly asked. "My boys ain't goin' to town to-night, an' I brought de car over fur you two to go in to de picture show."

Polly, carrying dishes to the sink, looked over her shoulder at him. "Thank you. But I'm late with my work tonight, and pretty tired. Maybe Rudolph would like to go in with you."

"Oh, I don't go to de shows! I'm too old-fashioned. You won't feel so tired after you ride in de air a ways. It's a nice clear night, an' it ain't cold. You go an' fix yourself up, Polly, an' I'll wash de dishes an' leave everything nice fur you."

Polly blushed and tossed her bob. "I couldn't let you do that, Mr. Rosicky. I wouldn't think of it."

Rosicky said nothing. He found a bib apron on a nail behind the kitchen door. He slipped it over his head and then took Polly by her two elbows and pushed her gently toward the door of her own room. "I washed up de kitchen many times for my wife, when de babies was sick or somethin'. You go an' make yourself look nice. I like you to look prettier'n any of dem town girls when you go in. De young folks must have some fun, an' I'm goin' to look out fur you, Polly."

That kind, reassuring grip on her elbows, the old man's funny bright eyes, made Polly want to drop her head on his shoulder for a second. She restrained herself, but she lingered in his grasp at the door of her room, murmuring tearfully: "You always lived in the city when you were young, didn't you? Don't you ever get lonesome out here?"

As she turned round to him, her hand fell naturally into his, and he stood holding it and smiling into her face with his peculiar, knowing, indulgent smile without a shadow of reproach in it. "Dem big cities is all right fur de rich, but dey is terrible hard fur de poor."

"I don't know. Sometimes I think I'd like to take a chance. You lived in New York, didn't you?"

"An' London. Da's bigger still. I learned my trade dere. Here's Rudolph comin', you better hurry."

"Will you tell me about London sometime?"

"Maybe. Only I ain't no talker, Polly. Run an' dress yourself up."

The bedroom door closed behind her, and Rudolph came in from the outside, looking anxious. He had seen the car and was sorry any of his family should come just then. Supper hadn't been a very pleasant occasion. Halting in the doorway, he saw his father in a kitchen apron, carrying dishes to the sink. He flushed crimson and something flashed in his eye. Rosicky held up a warning finger.

"I brought de car over fur you an' Polly to go to de picture show, an' I made her let me finish here so you won't be late. You go put on a clean shirt, quick!"

"But don't the boys want the car, father?"

"Not tonight dey don't." Rosicky fumbled under his apron and found his pants pocket. He took out a silver dollar and said in a hurried whisper: "You go an' buy dat girl some ice cream an' candy tonight, like you was courtin'. She's awful good friends wid me."

Rudolph was very short of cash, but he took the money as if it hurt him. There had been a crop failure all over the county. He had more than once been sorry he'd married this year.

In a few minutes the young people came out, looking clean and a little stiff. Rosicky hurried them off, and then he took his own time with the dishes. He scoured the pots and pans and put away the milk and swept the kitchen. He put some coal in the stove and shut off the draughts, so the place would be warm for them when they got home late at night. Then he sat down and had a pipe and listened to the clock tick.

Generally speaking, marrying an American girl was certainly a risk. A Czech should marry a Czech. It was lucky that Polly was the daughter of a poor widow woman; Rudolph was proud, and if she had a prosperous family to throw up at him, they could never make it go. Polly was one of four sisters, and they all worked; one was book-keeper in the bank, one taught music, and Polly and her younger sister had been clerks, like Miss Pearl. All four of them were musical, had pretty voices, and sang in the Methodist choir, which the eldest sister directed.

Polly missed the sociability of a store position. She missed the choir, and the company of her sisters. She didn't dislike housework, but she disliked so much of it. Rosicky was a little anxious about this pair. He was afraid Polly would grow so discontented that Rudy would quit the farm and take a factory job in Omaha. He had worked for a winter up there, two years ago, to get money to marry on. He had done very well, and they would always take him back at the stockyards. But to Rosicky that meant the end of everything for his son. To be a landless man was to be a wage-earner, a slave, all your life; to have nothing, to be nothing.

Rosicky thought he would come over and do a little carpentering for Polly after the New Year. He guessed she needed jollying. Rudolph was a serious sort of chap, serious in love and serious about his work.

Rosicky shook out his pipe and walked home across the fields. Ahead of him the lamplight shone from his kitchen windows. Suppose he were still in a tailor shop on Vesey Street, with a bunch of pale, narrow-chested sons working on machines, all coming home tired and sullen to eat supper in a kitchen that was a parlour also; with another crowded, angry family quarrelling just across the dumb-waiter shaft, and squeaking pulleys at the windows where dirty washings hung on dirty lines above a court full of old brooms and mops and ash-cans. . . .

He stopped by the windmill to look up at the frosty winter stars and draw a long breath before he went inside. That kitchen with the shining windows was dear to him; but the sleeping fields and bright stars and the noble darkness were dearer still.

V

On the day before Christmas the weather set in very cold; no snow, but a bitter, biting wind that whistled and sang over the flat land and lashed one's face like fine wires. There was baking going on in the Rosicky kitchen all day, and Rosicky sat inside, making over a coat that Albert had outgrown into an overcoat for John. Mary had a big red geranium in bloom for Christmas, and a row of Jerusalem cherry trees, full of berries. It was the first year she had ever grown these; Doctor Ed brought her the seeds from Omaha when he went to some medical convention. They reminded Rosicky of plants he had seen in England; and all afternoon, as he stitched, he sat thinking about those two years in London, which his mind usually shrank from even after all this while.

He was a lad of eighteen when he dropped down into London, with no money and no connexions except the address of a cousin who was supposed to be working at a confectioner's. When he went to the pastry shop, however, he found that the cousin had gone to America. Anton tramped the streets for several days, sleeping in doorways and on the Embankment, until he was in utter despair. He knew no English, and the sound of the strange language all about him confused him. By chance he met a poor German tailor who had learned his trade in Vienna, and could speak a little Czech. This tailor, Lifschnitz, kept a repair shop in a Cheapside basement, underneath a cobbler. He didn't much need an apprentice, but he was sorry for the boy and took him in for no wages but his keep and what he could pick up. The pickings were supposed to be coppers given you when you took work home to a customer. But most of the customers called for their clothes themselves, and the coppers that came Anton's way were very few. He had, however, a place to sleep. The tailor's family lived upstairs in three rooms; a kitchen, a bedroom, where Lifschnitz and his wife and five children slept, and a living-room. Two corners of this living-room were curtained off for lodgers; in one Rosicky slept on an old horsehair sofa, with a feather quilt to wrap himself in. The other corner was rented to a wretched, dirty boy, who was studying the violin He actually practised there. Rosicky was dirty, too. There was no way to be anything else. Mrs. Lifschnitz got the water she cooked and washed with from a pump in a brick court, four flights down. There were bugs in the place, and multitudes of fleas, though the poor woman did the best she could. Rosicky knew she often went empty to give another potato or a spoonful of dripping to the two hungry, sad-eyed boys who lodged with her. He used to think he would never get out of there, never get a clean shirt to his back again. What would he do, he wondered, when his clothes actually dropped to pieces and the worn cloth wouldn't hold patches any longer?

It was still early when the old farmer put aside his sewing and his recollections. The sky had been a dark grey all day, with not a gleam of sun, and the light failed at four o'clock. He went to shave and change his shirt while the turkey was roasting. Rudolph and Polly were coming over for supper.

After supper they sat round in the kitchen, and the younger boys were saying how sorry they were it hadn't snowed. Everybody was sorry. They wanted a deep snow that would lie long and keep the wheat warm, and leave the ground soaked when it melted.

"Yes, sir!" Rudolph broke out fiercely; "if we have another dry year like last year, there's going to be hard times in this country."

Rosicky filled his pipe. "You boys don't know what hard times is. You don't owe nobody, you got plenty to eat an' keep warm, an' plenty water to keep clean. When you got them, you can't have it very hard."

Rudolph frowned, opened and shut his big right hand, and dropped it clenched upon his knee. "I've got to have a good deal more than that, Father, or I'll quit this farming gamble. I can always make good wages railroading, or at the packing house, and be sure of my money."

"Maybe so," his father answered dryly.

Mary, who had just come in from the pantry and was wiping her hands on the roller towel, thought Rudy and his father were getting too serious. She brought her darning-basket and sat down in the middle of the group.

"I ain't much afraid of hard times, Rudy," she said heartily. "We've had a plenty, but we've always come through. Your father wouldn't never take nothing very hard, not even hard times. I got a mind to tell you

a story on him. Maybe you boys can't hardly remember the year we had that terrible hot wind, that burned everything up on the Fourth of July? All the corn an' the gardens. An' that was in the days when we didn't have alfalfa yet,—I guess it wasn't invented.

"Well, that very day your father was out cultivatin' corn, and I was here in the kitchen makin' plum preserves. We had bushels of plums that year. I noticed it was terrible hot, but it's always hot in the kitchen when you're preservin', an' I was too busy with my plums to mind. Anton come in from the field about three o'clock, an' I asked him what was the matter.

"'Nothin',' he says, 'but it's pretty hot, an' I think I won't work no more today.' He stood round for a few minutes, an' then he says: 'Ain't you near through? I want you should git up a nice supper for us tonight. It's Fourth of July.'

"I told him to git along, that I was right in the middle of preservin', but the plums would taste good on hot biscuit. 'I'm goin' to have fried chicken, too,' he says, and he went off an' killed a couple. You three oldest boys was little fellers, playin' round outside, real hot an' sweaty, an' your father took you to the horse tank down by the windmill an' took off your clothes an' put you in. Them two box-elder trees was little then, but they made shade over the tank. Then he took off all his own clothes, an' got in with you. While he was playin' in the water with you, the Methodist preacher drove into our place to say how all the neighbours was goin' to meet at the schoolhouse that night, to pray for rain. He drove right to the windmill, of course, and there was your father and you three with no clothes on. I was in the kitchen door, an' I had to laugh, for the preacher acted like he ain't never seen a naked man before. He surely was embarrassed, an' your father couldn't git to his clothes; they was all hangin' up on the windmill to let the sweat dry out of 'em. So he laid in the tank where he was, an' put one of you boys on top of him to cover him up a little, an' talked to the preacher.

"When you got through playin' in the water, he put clean clothes on you and a clean shirt on himself, and by that time I'd begun to get supper. He says: 'It's too hot in here to eat comfortable. Let's have a picnic in the orchard. We'll eat our supper behind the mulberry hedge, under them linden trees.'

"So he carried our supper down, an' a bottle of my wild-grape wine, an' everything tasted good, I can tell you. The wind got cooler as the sun was goin' down, and it turned out pleasant, only I noticed how the leaves was curled up on the linden trees. That made me think, an' I asked your father if that hot wind all day hadn't been terrible hard on the gardens an' the corn.

"'Corn,' he says, 'there ain't no corn.'

"'What you talkin' about?' I said. 'Ain't we got forty acres?'

"'We ain't got an ear,' he says, 'nor nobody else ain't got none. All the corn in this country was cooked by three o'clock today, like you'd roasted it in an oven.'

"'You mean you won't get no crop at all?' I asked him. I couldn't believe it, after he'd worked so hard.

"'No crop this year,' he says. 'That's why we're havin' a picnic. We might as well enjoy what we got.'

"An' that's how your father behaved, when all the neighbours was so discouraged they couldn't look you in the face. An' we enjoyed ourselves that year, poor as we was, an' our neighbours wasn't a bit better off for bein' miserable. Some of 'em grieved till they got poor digestions and couldn't relish what they did have."

The younger boys said they thought their father had the best of it. But Rudolph was thinking that, all the same, the neighbours had managed to get ahead more, in the fifteen years since that time. There must be something wrong about his father's way of doing things. He wished he knew what was going on in the back of Polly's mind. He knew she liked his father, but he knew, too, that she was afraid of something. When his mother sent over coffee-cake or prune tarts or a loaf of fresh bread, Polly seemed to regard them with a certain suspicion. When she observed to him that his brothers had nice manners, her tone implied that it was remarkable they should have. With his mother she was stiff and on her guard. Mary's hearty frankness and gusts of good humour irritated her. Polly was afraid of being unusual or conspicuous in any way, of being "ordinary," as she said!

When Mary had finished her story, Rosicky laid aside his pipe.

"You boys like me to tell you about some of dem hard times I been through in London?" Warmly encouraged, he sat rubbing his forehead along the deep

creases. It was bothersome to tell a long story in English (he nearly always talked to the boys in Czech), but he wanted Polly to hear this one.

"Well, you know about dat tailor shop I worked in in London? I had one Christmas dere I ain't never forgot. Times was awful bad before Christmas; de boss ain't got much work, an' have it awful hard to pay his rent. It ain't so much fun, bein' poor in a big city like London, I'll say! All de windows is full of good t'ings to eat, an' all de pushcarts in de streets is full, an' you smell 'em all de time, an' you ain't got no money,—not a damn bit. I didn't mind de cold so much, though I didn't have no overcoat, chust a short jacket I'd outgrowed so it wouldn't meet on me, an' my hands was chapped raw. But I always had a good appetite, like you all know, an' de sight of dem pork pies in de windows was awful fur me!

"Day before Christmas was terrible foggy dat year, an' dat fog gits into your bones and makes you all damp like. Mrs. Lifschnitz didn't give us nothin' but a little bread an' drippin' for supper, because she was savin' to try for to give us a good dinner on Christmas Day. After supper de boss say I can go an' enjoy myself, so I went into de streets to listen to de Christmas singers. Dey sing old songs an' make very nice music, an' I run round after dem a good ways, till I got awful hungry. I t'ink maybe if I go home, I can sleep till morning an' forgit my belly.

"I went into my corner real quiet, and roll up in my fedder quilt. But I ain't got my head down, till I smell somet'ing good. Seem like it git stronger an' stronger, an' I can't git to sleep noway. I can't understand dat smell. Dere was a gas light in a hall across de court, dat always shine in at my window a little. I got up an' look round. I got a little wooden box in my corner fur a stool, 'cause I ain't got no chair. I picks up dat box, and under it dere is a roast goose on a platter! I can't believe my eyes. I carry it to de window where de light comes in, an' touch it and smell it to find out, an' den I taste it to be sure. I say, I will eat chust one little bite of dat goose, so I can go to sleep, and tomorrow I won't eat none at all. But I tell you, boys, when I stop, one half of dat goose was gone!"

The narrator bowed his head, and the boys shouted. But little Josephine slipped behind his chair and kissed him on the neck beneath his ear.

"Poor little Papa, I don't want him to be hungry!"

"Da's long ago, child. I ain't never been hungry since I had your mudder to cook fur me."

"Go on and tell us the rest, please," said Polly.

"Well, when I come to realize what I done, of course, I felt terrible. I felt better in de stomach, but very bad in de heart. I set on my bed wid dat platter on my knees, an' it all come to me; how hard dat poor woman save to buy dat goose, and how she get some neighbour to cook it dat got more fire, an' how she put it in my corner to keep it away from dem hungry children. Dey was an old carpet hung up to shut my corner off, an' de children wasn't allowed to go in dere. An' I know she put it in my corner because she trust me more'n she did de violin boy. I can't stand it to face her after I spoil de Christmas. So I put on my shoes and go out into de city. I tell myself I better throw myself in de river; but I guess I ain't dat kind of a boy.

"It was after twelve o'clock, an' terrible cold, an' I start out to walk about London all night. I walk along de river awhile, but dey was lots of drunks all along; men, and women too. I chust move along to keep away from the police. I git onto de Strand, an' den over to New Oxford Street, where dere was a big German restaurant on de ground floor, wid big windows all fixed up fine, an' I could see de people havin' parties inside. While I was lookin' in, two men and two ladies come out, laughin' and talkin' and feelin' happy about all dey been eatin' an' drinkin', and dey was speakin' Czech,—not like de Austrians, but like de home folks talk it.

"I guess I went crazy, an' I done what I ain't never done before nor since. I went right up to dem gay people an' begun to beg dem· 'Fellow countrymen, for God's sake give me money enough to buy a goose!'

"Dey laugh, of course, but de ladies speak awful kind to me, an' dey take me back into de restaurant and give me hot coffee and cakes, an' make me tell all about how I happened to come to London, an' what I was doin' dere. Dey take my name and where I work down on paper, an' both of dem ladies give me ten shillings.

"De big market at Covent Garden ain't very far away, an' by dat time it was open. I go dere an' buy a big goose an' some pork pies, an' potatoes and onions, an' cakes an' oranges fur de children,—all I could carry!

When I git home, everybody is still asleep. I pile all I bought on de kitchen table, an' go in an' lay down on my bed, an' I ain't waken up till I hear dat woman scream when she come out into her kitchen. My goodness, but she was surprise! She laugh an' cry at de same time, an' hug me and waken all de children. She ain't stop fur no breakfast; she git de Christmas dinner ready dat morning, and we all sit down an' eat all we can hold. I ain't never seen dat violin boy have all he can hold before.

"Two three days after dat, de two men come to hunt me up, an' dey ask my boss, and he give me a good report an' tell dem I was a steady boy all right. One of dem Bohemians was very smart an' run a Bohemian newspaper in New York, an' de odder was a rich man, in de importing business, an' dey bèen travelling togedder. Dey told me how t'ings was easier in New York, an' offered to pay my passage when dey was goin' home soon on a boat. My boss say to me: 'You go. You ain't got no chance here, an' I like to see you git ahead, fur you always been a good boy to my woman, and fur dat fine Christmas dinner you give us all.' An' da's how I got to New York."

That night when Rudolph and Polly, arm in arm, were running home across the fields with the bitter wind at their backs, his heart leaped for joy when she said she thought they might have his family come over for supper on New Year's Eve. "Let's get up a nice supper, and not let your mother help at all; make her be company for once."

"That would be lovely of you, Polly," he said humbly. He was a very simple, modest boy, and he, too, felt vaguely that Polly and her sisters were more experienced and worldly than his people.

VI

The winter turned out badly for farmers. It was bitterly cold, and after the first light snows before Christmas there was no snow at all,—and no rain. March was as bitter as February. On those days when the wind fairly punished the country, Rosicky sat by his window. In the fall he and the boys had put in a big wheat planting, and now the seed had frozen in the ground. All that land would have to be ploughed up and planted over again, planted in corn. It had happened before, but he was younger then, and he never worried about what had to be. He was sure of himself and of Mary; he knew they could bear what they had to bear, that they would always pull through somehow. But he was not so sure about the young ones, and he felt troubled because Rudolph and Polly were having such a hard start.

Sitting beside his flowering window while the panes rattled and the wind blew in under the door, Rosicky gave himself to reflection as he had not done since those Sundays in the loft of the furniture-factory in New York, long ago. Then he was trying to find what he wanted in life for himself; now he was trying to find what he wanted for his boys, and why it was he so hungered to feel sure they would be here, working this very land, after he was gone.

They would have to work hard on the farm, and probably they would never do much more than make a living. But if he could think of them as staying here on the land, he wouldn't have to fear any great unkindness for them. Hardships, certainly; it was a hardship to have the wheat freeze in the ground when seed was so high; and to have to sell your stock because you had no feed. But there would be other years when everything came along right, and you caught up. And what you had was your own. You didn't have to choose between bosses and strikers, and go wrong either way. You didn't have to do with dishonest and cruel people. They were the only things in his experience he had found terrifying and horrible; the look in the eyes of a dishonest and crafty man, of a scheming and rapacious woman.

In the country, if you had a mean neighbour, you could keep off his land and make him keep off yours. But in the city, all the foulness and misery and brutality of your neighbours was part of your life. The worst things he had come upon in his journey through the world were human,—depraved and poisonous specimens of man. To this day he could recall certain terrible faces in the London streets. There were mean people everywhere, to be sure, even in their own country town here. But they weren't tempered, hardened, sharpened, like the treacherous people in cities who live by grinding or cheating or poisoning their fellow-men. He had helped to bury two of his fellow-workmen in the tailoring trade, and he was distrustful of the organized industries that see one out of the world in big

cities. Here, if you were sick, you had Doctor Ed to look after you; and if you died, fat Mr. Haycock, the kindest man in the world, buried you.

It seemed to Rosicky that for good, honest boys like his, the worst they could do on the farm was better than the best they would be likely to do in the city. If he'd had a mean boy, now, one who was crooked and sharp and tried to put anything over on his brothers, then town would be the place for him. But he had no such boy. As for Rudolph, the discontented one, he would give the shirt off his back to anyone who touched his heart. What Rosicky really hoped for his boys was that they could get through the world without ever knowing much about the cruelty of human beings. "Their mother an' me ain't prepared them for that," he sometimes said to himself.

These thoughts brought him back to a grateful consideration of his own case. What an escape he had had, to be sure! He, too, in his time, had had to take money for repair work from the hand of a hungry child who let it go so wistfully, because it was money due his boss. And now, in all these years, he had never had to take a cent from anyone in bitter need,—never had to look at the face of a woman become like a wolf's from struggle and famine When he thought of these things, Rosicky would put on his cap and jacket and slip down to the barn and give his work-horses a little extra oats, letting them eat it out of his hand in their slobbery fashion. It was his way of expressing what he felt, and made him chuckle with pleasure.

The spring came warm, with blue skies,—but dry, dry as a bone. The boys began ploughing up the wheat-fields to plant them over in corn. Rosicky would stand at the fence corner and watch them, and the earth was so dry it blew up in clouds of brown dust that hid the horses and the sulky plough and the driver. It was a bad outlook.

The big alfalfa-field that lay between the home place and Rudolph's came up green, but Rosicky was worried because during that open windy winter a great many Russian thistle plants had blown in there and lodged. He kept asking the boys to rake them out; he was afraid that their seed would root and "take the alfalfa." Rudolph said that was nonsense. The boys were working so hard planting corn, their father felt he couldn't insist about the thistles, but he set great store by that big alfalfa field. It was a feed you could depend on,—and there was some deeper reason, vague, but strong. The peculiar green of that clover woke early memories in old Rosicky, went back to something in his childhood in the old world. When he was a little boy, he had played in fields of that strong blue-green colour.

One morning, when Rudolph had gone to town in the car, leaving a work-team idle in his barn, Rosicky went over to his son's place, put the horses to the buggy rake, and set about quietly raking up those thistles. He behaved with guilty caution, and rather enjoyed stealing a march on Doctor Ed, who was just then taking his first vacation in seven years of practice and was attending a clinic in Chicago. Rosicky got the thistles raked up, but did not stop to burn them. That would take some time, and his breath was pretty short, so he thought he had better get the horses back to the barn.

He got them into the barn and to their stalls, but the pain had come on so sharp in his chest that he didn't try to take the harness off. He started for the house, bending lower with every step. The cramp in his chest was shutting him up like a jack-knife. When he reached the windmill, he swayed and caught at the ladder. He saw Polly coming down the hill, running with the swiftness of a slim greyhound. In a flash she had her shoulder under his armpit.

"Lean on me, Father, hard! Don't be afraid. We can get to the house all right."

Somehow they did, though Rosicky became blind with pain; he could keep on his legs, but he couldn't steer his course. The next thing he was conscious of was lying on Polly's bed, and Polly bending over him wringing out bath towels in hot water and putting them on his chest. She stopped only to throw coal into the stove, and she kept the tea-kettle and the black pot going. She put these hot applications on him for nearly an hour, she told him afterwards, and all that time he was drawn up stiff and blue, with the sweat pouring off him.

As the pain gradually loosed its grip, the stiffness went out of his jaws, the black circles round his eyes disappeared, and a little of his natural colour came back. When his daughter-in-law buttoned his shirt over his chest at last, he sighed.

"Da's fine, de way I feel now, Polly. It was a awful bad spell, an' I was so sorry it all come on you like it did."

Polly was flushed and excited. "Is the pain really

gone? Can I leave you long enough to telephone over to your place?"

Rosicky's eyelids fluttered. "Don't telephone, Polly. It ain't no use to scare my wife. It's nice and quiet here, an' if I ain't too much trouble to you, just let me lay still till I feel like myself. I ain't got no pain now. It's nice here."

Polly bent over him and wiped the moisture from his face. "Oh, I'm so glad it's over!" she broke out impulsively. "It just broke my heart to see you suffer so, Father."

Rosicky motioned her to sit down on the chair where the tea-kettle had been, and looked up at her with that lively affectionate gleam in his eyes. "You was awful good to me, I won't ever forgit dat. I hate it to be sick on you like dis. Down at de barn I say to myself, dat young girl ain't had much experience in sickness, I don't want to scare her, an' maybe she's got a baby comin' or somet'ing."

Polly took his hand. He was looking at her so intently and affectionately and confidingly; his eyes seemed to caress her face, to regard it with pleasure. She frowned with her funny streaks of eyebrows, and then smiled back at him.

"I guess maybe there is something of that kind going to happen. But I haven't told anyone yet, not my mother or Rudolph. You'll be the first to know."

His hand pressed hers. She noticed that it was warm again. The twinkle in his yellow-brown eyes seemed to come nearer.

"I like mighty well to see dat little child, Polly," was all he said. Then he closed his eyes and lay half-smiling. But Polly sat still, thinking hard. She had a sudden feeling that nobody in the world, not her mother, not Rudolph, or anyone, really loved her as much as old Rosicky did. It perplexed her. She sat frowning and trying to puzzle it out. It was as if Rosicky had a special gift for loving people, something that was like an ear for music or an eye for colour. It was quiet, unobtrusive; it was merely there. You saw it in his eyes,—perhaps that was why they were merry. You felt it in his hands, too. After he dropped off to sleep, she sat holding his warm, broad, flexible brown hand. She had never seen another in the least like it. She wondered if it wasn't a kind of gypsy hand, it was so alive and quick and light in its communications,—very strange in a farmer. Nearly all the farmers she knew had huge lumps of fists, like mauls, or they were knotty and bony and uncomfortable-looking, with stiff fingers. But Rosicky's hand was like quicksilver, flexible, muscular, about the colour of a pale cigar, with deep, deep creases across the palm. It wasn't nervous, it wasn't a stupid lump; it was a warm brown human hand, with some cleverness in it, a great deal of generosity, and something else which Polly could only call "gypsy-like,"—something nimble and lively and sure, in the way that animals are.

Polly remembered that hour long afterward; it had been like an awakening to her. It seemed to her that she had never learned so much about life from anything as from old Rosicky's hand. It brought her to herself; it communicated some direct and untranslatable message.

When she heard Rudolph coming in the car, she ran out to meet him.

"Oh, Rudy, your father's been awful sick! He raked up those thistles he's been worrying about, and afterwards he could hardly get to the house. He suffered so I was afraid he was going to die."

Rudolph jumped to the ground. "Where is he now?"

"On the bed. He's asleep. I was terribly scared, because, you know, I'm so fond of your father." She slipped her arm through his and they went into the house. That afternoon they took Rosicky home and put him to bed, though he protested that he was quite well again.

The next morning he got up and dressed and sat down to breakfast with his family. He told Mary that his coffee tasted better than usual to him, and he warned the boys not to bear any tales to Doctor Ed when he got home. After breakfast he sat down by his window to do some patching and asked Mary to thread several needles for him before she went to feed her chickens,—her eyes were better than his, and her hands steadier. He lit his pipe and took up John's overalls. Mary had been watching him anxiously all morning, and as she went out of the door with her bucket of scraps, she saw that he was smiling. He was thinking, indeed, about Polly, and how he might never have known what a tender heart she had if he hadn't got sick over there. Girls nowadays didn't wear their heart on their sleeve. But now he knew Polly would make a fine woman after the foolishness wore off. Either a woman had that sweetness at her heart or she hadn't. You couldn't

always tell by the look of them; but if they had that, everything came out right in the end.

After he had taken a few stitches, the cramp began in his chest, like yesterday. He put his pipe cautiously down on the window-sill and bent over to ease the pull. No use,—he had better try to get to his bed if he could. He rose and groped his way across the familiar floor, which was rising and falling like the deck of a ship. At the door he fell. When Mary came in, she found him lying there, and the moment she touched him she knew that he was gone.

Doctor Ed was away when Rosicky died, and for the first few weeks after he got home he was hard driven. Every day he said to himself that he must get out to see the family that had lost their father. One soft, warm moonlight night in early summer he started for the farm. His mind was on other things, and not until his road ran by the graveyard did he realize that Rosicky wasn't over there on the hill where the red lamplight shone, but here, in the moonlight. He stopped his car, shut off the engine, and sat there for a while.

A sudden hush had fallen on his soul. Everything here seemed strangely moving and significant, though signifying what, he did not know. Close by the wire fence stood Rosicky's mowing-machine, where one of the boys had been cutting hay that afternoon; his own work-horses had been going up and down there. The new-cut hay perfumed all the night air. The moonlight silvered the long, billowy grass that grew over the graves and hid the fence, the few little evergreens stood out black in it, like shadows in a pool. The sky was very blue and soft, the stars rather faint because the moon was full.

For the first time it struck Doctor Ed that this was really a beautiful graveyard. He thought of city cemeteries; acres of shrubbery and heavy stone, so arranged and lonely and unlike anything in the living world. Cities of the dead, indeed; cities of the forgotten, of the "put away." But this was open and free, this little square of long grass which the wind for ever stirred. Nothing but the sky overhead, and the many-coloured fields running on until they met that sky. The horses worked here in summer; the neighbours passed on their way to town; and over yonder, in the cornfield, Rosicky's own cattle would be eating fodder as winter came on. Nothing could be more undeathlike than this place; nothing could be more right for a man who had helped to do the work of great cities and had always longed for the open country and had got to it at last. Rosicky's life seemed to him complete and beautiful.

1928·1932

John Dos Passos

1896 ·

John Dos Passos' father was a New York lawyer, the son of a Portuguese immigrant; his mother's family lived in Maryland and Virginia. Born in Chicago, Dos Passos (as he has put it) was "carted around a good deal as a child"—to Mexico, England, Europe, Washington City, tidewater Virginia. He prepared for college at Choate School in Wallingford, Connecticut, and was graduated from Harvard, *cum laude,* in 1916. During World War I he served first with a French ambulance unit and later in the United States Medical Corps as a private. After



the war, he went to various parts of Europe and America as a newspaper correspondent.

Dos Passos' literary reputation dates from the publication of *Three Soldiers* in 1921. His importance in modern American literature has steadily grown with the appearance of his subsequent works, the most important of which have been *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), *The 42nd Parallel* (1930), *1919* (1932), and *The Big Money* (1936). The last three works were published as one volume in 1937 with the title *U. S. A.*

Dos Passos began as an aesthete but soon developed an all-embracing social consciousness. *Three Soldiers,* one of the best of American novels dealing with World War I, presented the case of an artist to whom army life was intolerably repugnant. In this work, the author was largely concerned with the sympathetic portrayal of the emotional states and problems of an individual. In the later works, however, he became concerned primarily with the social pattern. *Manhattan Transfer* was an attempt to give a cross section of New York City, in the portrayal of which he employed a bewilderingly large number of characters and scenes. The technique was so kaleidoscopic that the attention of the reader could not rest for an appreciable length of time upon a single character or situation. The author's aim was a total picture of the social organism in which many individuals were obscurely merged.

In the novels which make up *U.S.A.,* Dos Passos retained the social point of view of *Manhattan Transfer,* but made two significant changes: he enlarged his canvas to include the whole of the United States and those parts of Europe where Americans went during the first World War, and he reduced the number of characters so as to give fuller and more intelligible accounts of their lives. Despite the altered treatment, however, his characters still have little individuality and awaken in the reader only a slight interest in them as persons. Their life-stories sometimes read like sociological case histories. In addition to the stories of a dozen or more fictional characters, *U.S.A.* contains three original features interpolated throughout the work: the Newsreel, which consists of headlines from the contemporary press; the Camera Eye, which is a kind of stream-of-consciousness or interior monologue giving the narrator's relationship to passing events; and the biographical sketch, which portrays prominent contemporary Americans, sometimes in the spirit of eulogy and sometimes, of bitter irony.

U.S.A. is the most impressive social novel which has been written thus far in America. Although the author's sympathies are decidedly "leftist," he is not a professing Communist. His aim is to expose folly, corruption, and injustice wherever he finds them. *U.S.A.* presents an unflattering picture of twentieth-century Americans. One recalls Emerson's judgment on the populations of large cities a century ago, "These are not men, but hungers,

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Panel (l. to r.): John Steinbeck • Migratory workers • Thomas Wolfe • The hills of North Carolina • John Dos Passos • Manhattan

thirsts, fevers, and appetites walking." Above all in *U.S.A.* is the impression of the domination of individual lives by social and economic forces. Dos Passos offers no constructive solution, but he implies a radical criticism of the society which produces such unfortunate results. His style, which Kazin well calls "a hard, lean, mocking prose," is an efficient instrument for the portrayal of the modern machine age.

Two books which followed *U.S.A.* indicate that Dos Passos, like other modern authors, has been moving away from, instead of toward, the Communistic position. *Adventures of a Young Man* (1939) shows a character vainly seeking in radical groups a social philosophy in which he can believe. *The Ground We Stand On* (1941) is a series of historical studies of American leaders of the past and their contributions to American thought—for example, Roger Williams and freedom of conscience, Jefferson and civil rights, Franklin and economic opportunity. Evidently, in his search for new bases for a belief to replace his shattered faith in radicalism, Dos Passos has turned to the older American traditions. The works in which his newer, more constructive attitude has been presented, however, have not equaled *U.S.A.* in literary interest.

J. W. Beach, American Fiction, 1920-1940, New York, 1941 • Alfred Kazin, On Native Grounds: An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature, New York, 1942

From

U. S. A.

The following selections from U. S. A. illustrate the various kinds of elements which make up the work. "Newsreel I" is an impressionistic blending of headlines taken from the newspapers at the beginning of the present century, with special emphasis upon the American conquest of the Philippines. The method of "The Camera Eye" is that known in modern literature as the "stream of consciousness"—an attempt to reproduce realistically a sequence of private thoughts. In this case, it is the consciousness of a small child—possibly the author himself. The place is Holland at the time of the war between England and the Boers of South Africa, who were of Dutch extraction. The child's mother, who is really an American but is mistaken for an Englishwoman, is threatened with violence on a street in Holland. "Lover of Mankind" and "Tin Lizzie" illustrate the biographical sketches which are scattered through U. S. A.: the former is an eloquent tribute to Eugene V. Debs, the latter an unsympathetic portrait of Henry Ford done with sharp-edged irony.

"Mac" begins the fictional story of Mac McCreary, son of a Connecticut factory worker. Mac later joins the Industrial Workers of the World in the Northwest and winds up in Mexico running a radical bookstore. Interwoven with Mac's story in U. S. A. are the stories of J. Ward Moorehouse, who attains prosperity and prominence as a New York public relations expert and as publicity director for the Red Cross during World War I; Janey Williams, Moorehouse's secretary; Eleanor Stoddard, who cultivates art at the Chicago Art Institute and in Europe; Charley Anderson, who begins life as an automobile mechanic, makes "big money" in the airplane industry, and dies in an automobile accident; Richard Ellsworth Savage, who serves on important military staffs in Europe during the war and afterward becomes a Washington lobbyist; and several others. These fictional life-histories aim to present the experiences of representative Americans during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

PREFACE

The young man walks fast by himself through the crowd that thins into the night streets; feet are tired from hours of walking; eyes greedy for warm curve of faces, answering flicker of eyes, the set of a head, the lift of a shoulder, the way hands spread and clench; blood tingles with wants; mind is a beehive of hopes buzzing and stinging; muscles ache for the knowledge



of jobs, for the roadmender's pick and shovel work, the fisherman's knack with a hook when he hauls on the slithery net from the rail of the lurching trawler, the swing of the bridgeman's arm as he slings down the whitehot rivet, the engineer's slow grip wise on the throttle, the dirtfarmer's use of his whole body when, whoaing the mules, he yanks the plow from the furrow. The young man walks by himself searching through the crowd with greedy eyes, greedy ears taut to hear, by himself, alone.

The streets are empty. People have packed into subways, climbed into streetcars and buses; in the stations they've scampered for suburban trains; they've filtered into lodgings and tenements, gone up in elevators into apartmenthouses. In a showwindow two sallow windowdressers in their shirtsleeves are bringing out a dummy girl in a red evening dress, at a corner welders in masks lean into sheets of blue flame repairing a cartrack, a few drunk bums shamble along, a sad streetwalker fidgets under an arclight. From the river comes the deep rumbling whistle of a steamboat leaving dock. A tug hoots far away.

The young man walks by himself, fast but not fast enough, far but not far enough (faces slide out of sight, talk trails into tattered scraps, footsteps tap fainter in alleys); he must catch the last subway, the streetcar, the bus, run up the gangplanks of all the steamboats, register at all the hotels, work in the cities, answer the want ads, learn the trades, take up the jobs, live in all the boardinghouses, sleep in all the beds. One bed is not enough, one job is not enough, one life is not enough. At night, head swimming with wants, he walks by himself alone.

No job, no woman, no house, no city.

Only the ears busy to catch the speech are not alone; the ears are caught tight, linked tight by the tendrils of phrased words, the turn of a joke, the singsong fade of a story, the gruff fall of a sentence; linking tendrils of speech twine through the city blocks, spread over pavements, grow out along broad parked avenues, speed with the trucks leaving on their long night runs over roaring highways, whisper down sandy byroads past wornout farms, joining up cities and fillingstations, roundhouses, steamboats, planes groping along airways; words call out on mountain pastures, drift slow down rivers widening to the sea and the hushed beaches.

It was not in the long walks through jostling crowds at night that he was less alone, or in the training camp at Allentown, or in the day on the docks at Seattle, or in the empty reek of Washington City hot boyhood summer nights, or in the meal on Market Street, or in the swim off the red rocks at San Diego, or in the bed full of fleas in New Orleans, or in the cold razorwind off the lake, or in the gray faces trembling in the grind of gears in the street under Michigan Avenue, or in the smokers of limited expresstrains, or walking across country, or riding up the dry mountain canyons, or the night without a sleepingbag among frozen beartracks in the Yellowstone, or canoeing Sundays on the Quinnipiac;

but in his mother's words telling about longago, in his father's telling about when I was a boy, in the kidding stories of uncles, in the lies the kids told at school, the hired man's yarns, the tall tales the doughboys told after taps;

it was the speech that clung to the ears, the link that tingled in the blood; U. S. A.

U. S. A. is the slice of a continent. U. S. A. is a group of holding companies, some aggregations of trade unions, a set of laws bound in calf, a radio network, a chain of moving picture theatres, a column of stockquotations rubbed out and written in by a Western Union boy on a blackboard, a publiclibrary full of old newspapers and dogeared historybooks with protests scrawled on the margins in pencil. U. S. A. is the world's greatest rivervalley fringed with mountains and hills, U. S. A. is a set of bigmouthed officials with too many bankaccounts. U. S. A. is a lot of men buried in their uniforms in Arlington Cemetery. U. S. A. is the letters at the end of an address when you are away from home. But mostly U. S. A. is the speech of the people.

1937

From

U.S.A.: The 42nd Parallel

NEWSREEL I

It was that emancipated race
That was chargin up the hill
Up to where them insurrectos
Was afightin fit to kill

CAPITAL CITY'S CENTURY CLOSED

General Miles with his gaudy uniform and spirited charger was the center for all eyes especially as his steed was extremely restless. Just as the band passed the Commanding General his horse stood upon his hind legs and was almost erect. General Miles instantly reined in the frightened animal and dug in his spurs in an endeavor to control the horse which to the horror of the spectators, fell over backwards and landed squarely on the Commanding General. Much to the gratification of the people General Miles was not injured but considerable skin was scraped off the flank of the horse. Almost every inch of General Miles's overcoat was covered with the dust of the street and between the shoulders a hole about an inch in diameter was punctured Without waiting for anyone to brush the dust from his garments General Miles remounted his horse and reviewed the parade as if it were an everyday occurrence.

The incident naturally attracted the attention of the crowd, and this brought to notice the fact that the Commanding General never permits a flag to be carried past him without uncovering and remaining so until the colors have past

And the Captain bold of Company B
Was afightin in the lead
Just like a trueborn soldier he
Of them bullets took no heed

OFFICIALS KNOW NOTHING OF VICE

Sanitary trustees turn water of Chicago River into drainage canal LAKE MICHIGAN SHAKES HANDS WITH THE FATHER OF THE WATERS German zuchter-verein singing contest for canary-birds opens the fight for bimetallism at the ratio of 16 to 1 has not been lost says Bryan

BRITISH BEATEN AT MAFEKING

For there's many a man been murdered in Luzon

CLAIMS ISLANDS FOR ALL TIME

Hamilton Club Listens to Oratory by Ex-Congressman Posey of Indiana

NOISE GREETS NEW CENTURY

LABOR GREETS NEW CENTURY

CHURCHES GREET NEW CENTURY

Mr. McKinley is hard at work in his office when the new year begins

NATION GREETS CENTURY'S DAWN

Responding to a toast, Hail Columbia! at the Columbia Club banquet in Indianapolis, Ind., ex-President Benjamin Harrison said in part. I have no argument to make here or anywhere against territorial expansion; but I do not, as some do, look upon territorial expansion as the safest and most attractive avenue of national development. By the advantages of abundant and cheap coal and iron, of an enormous overproduction of food products and of invention and economy in production, we are now leading by the nose the original and the greatest of the colonizing nations.

Society Girls Shocked: Danced with Detectives

For there's many a man been murdered in Luzon and Mindanao

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6 **General Miles.** General Nelson A. Miles (1839-1925) was in command of the American forces which took possession of the Philippines in 1900 • **36 zuchter-verein,** breeders' association • **38 Bryan.** William Jennings Bryan as Democratic candidate for the Presidency in 1896 led the fight for the coinage of silver in the ratio of 16 to 1 to that of gold • **39 Mafeking,** in South Africa, where the Boer War was in progress at the turn of the century • **47 McKinley,** William McKinley (1843-1901), President of the United States, 1897-1901

GAIETY GIRLS MOBBED IN NEW JERSEY

One of the lithographs of the leading lady represented her in less than Atlantic City bathing costume, sitting on a red-hot stove; in one hand she held a brimming glass of wine, in the other ribbons drawn over a pair of rampant lobsters.

For there's many a man been murdered in Luzon
and Mindanao
and in Samar

In responding to the toast, "The Twentieth Century," Senator Albert J. Beveridge said in part: *The twentieth century will be American. American thought will dominate it. American progress will give it color and direction. American deeds will make it illustrious.*

Civilization will never lose its hold on Shanghai. Civilization will never depart from Hongkong. The gates of Peking will never again be closed to the methods of modern man. The regeneration of the world, physical as well as moral, has begun, and revolutions never move backwards.

There's been many a good man murdered in the Philippines
Lies sleeping in some lonesome grave.

THE CAMERA EYE (I)

when you walk along the street you have to step carefully always on the cobbles so as not to step on the bright anxious grassblades easier if you hold Mother's hand and hang on it that way you can kick up your toes but walking fast you have to tread on too many grassblades the poor hurt green tongues shrink under your feet maybe thats why those people are so angry and follow us shaking their fists they're throwing stones grownup people throwing stones She's walking fast and we're running her pointed toes sticking out sharp among the poor trodden grassblades under the shaking folds of the brown cloth dress Englander a pebble tinkles along the cobbles

Quick darling quick in the postcard shop its quiet the angry people are outside and cant come in non nein nicht englander amerikanisch americain Hoch Amerika Vive l'Amerique She laughs My dear they had me right frightened

war on the veldt Kruger Bloemfontein Ladysmith and Queen Victoria an old lady in a pointed lace cap sent chocolate to the soldiers at Christmas

under the counter it's dark and the lady the nice Dutch lady who loves Americans and has relations in Trenton shows you postcards that shine in the dark pretty hotels and palaces O que c'est beau schon prittie prittie and the moonlight ripple ripple under a bridge and the little reverbères are alight in the dark under the counter and the little windows of hotels around the harbor O que c'est beau la lune

and the big moon

MAC

When the wind set from the silver factories across the river the air of the gray fourfamily frame house where Fainy McCreary was born was choking all day with the smell of whaleoil soap. Other days it smelt of cabbage and babies and Mrs. McCreary's washboilers. Fainy could never play at home because Pop, a lame cavechested man with a whispy blondegray mustache, was nightwatchman at the Chadwick Mills and slept all day. It was only round five o'clock that a curling whiff of tobacco smoke would seep through from the front room into the kitchen. That was a sign that Pop was up and in good spirits, and would soon be wanting his supper.

Then Fainy would be sent running out to one of two corners of the short muddy street of identical frame houses where they lived.

To the right it was half a block to Finley's where he would have to wait at the bar in a forest of mudsplattered trouserlegs until all the rank brawling mouths of grownups had been stopped with beers and whiskeys. Then he would walk home, making each step very carefully, with the handle of the pail of suds cutting into his hand.

To the left it was half a block to Maginnis's Fancy Groceries, Home and Imported Products. Fainy liked the

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42 veldt, the plains of South Africa • 42 Kruger. S. J. P. Kruger (1825-1904) was president of the South African Republic • 42 Bloemfontein, in South Africa, where the British defeated the Boers • 42 Ladysmith, in South Africa, where the British were besieged by the Boers

cardboard Cream of Wheat darkey in the window, the glass case with different kinds of salami in it, the barrels of potatoes and cabbages, the brown smell of sugar, sawdust, ginger, kippered herring, ham, vinegar, bread, pepper, lard.

"A loaf of bread, please, mister, a half pound of butter and a box of ginger snaps"

Some evenings when Mom felt poorly, Fainy had to go further; round the corner past Maginnis's, down Riverside Avenue where the trolley ran, and across the red bridge over the little river that flowed black between icy undercut snowbanks in winter, yellow and spuming in the spring thaws, brown and oily in summer. Across the river all the way to the corner of Riverside and Main, where the drugstore was, lived Bohunks and Polaks. Their kids were always fighting with the kids of the Murphys and O'Haras and O'Flanagans who lived on Orchard Street.

Fainy would walk along with his knees quaking, the medicine bottle in its white paper tight in one mittened hand. At the corner of Quince was a group of boys he'd have to pass. Passing wasn't so bad; it was when he was about twenty yards from them that the first snowball would hum by his ear. There was no comeback. If he broke into a run, they'd chase him. If he dropped the medicine bottle he'd be beaten up when he got home. A soft one would plunk on the back of his head and the snow began to trickle down his neck. When he was a half a block from the bridge he'd take a chance and run for it.

"Scared cat . . . Shanty Irish . . . Bowlegged Murphy . . . Running home to tell the cop" . . . would yell the Polak and Bohunk kids between snowballs. They made their snowballs hard by pouring water on them and leaving them to freeze overnight; if one of those hit him it drew blood.

The backyard was the only place you could really feel safe to play in. There were brokendown fences, dented garbage cans, old pots and pans too nearly sieves to mend, a vacant chickencoop that still had feathers and droppings on the floor, hogweed in summer, mud in winter; but the glory of the McCreary's backyard was Tony Harriman's rabbit hutch, where he kept Belgian hares. Tony Harriman was a consumptive and lived with his mother on the ground floor left. He wanted to raise all sorts of other small animals too, raccoons, otter, even silver fox, he'd get rich that way. The day he died nobody could find the key to the big padlock on the door of the rabbit hutch. Fainy fed the hares for several days by pushing in cabbage and lettuce leaves through the double thickness of chickenwire. Then came a week of sleet and rain when he didn't go out in the yard. The first fine day, when he went to look, one of the hares was dead. Fainy turned white; he tried to tell himself the hare was asleep, but it lay gawkily stiff, not asleep. The other hares were huddled in a corner looking about with twitching noses, their big ears flopping helpless over their backs. Poor hares; Fainy wanted to cry. He ran upstairs to his mother's kitchen, ducked under the ironing board and got the hammer out of the drawer in the kitchen table. The first time he tried he mashed his finger, but the second time he managed to jump the padlock. Inside the cage there was a funny, sour smell. Fainy picked the dead hare up by its ears. Its soft white belly was beginning to puff up, one dead eye was scaringly open. Something suddenly got hold of Fainy and made him drop the hare in the nearest garbage can and run upstairs. Still cold and trembling, he tiptoed out onto the back porch and looked down. Breathlessly he watched the other hares. By cautious hops they were getting near the door of the hutch into the yard. One of them was out. It sat up on its hind legs, limp ears suddenly stiff. Mom called him to bring her a flatiron from the stove. When he got back to the porch the hares were all gone.

That winter there was a strike in the Chadwick Mills and Pop lost his job. He would sit all day in the front room smoking and cursing:

"Ablebodied man by Jesus, if I couldn't lick any one of those damn Polaks with my crutch tied behind my back . . . I says so to Mr. Barry; I ain't goin' to join no strike. Mr. Barry, a sensible quiet man, a bit of an invalid, with a wife an' kiddies to think for. Eight years I've been watchman, an' now you give me the sack to take on a bunch of thugs from a detective agency. The dirty pug-nosed son of a bitch."

"If those damn lousy furreners hadn't a walked out," somebody would answer soothingly.

The strike was not popular on Orchard Street. It meant that Mom had to work harder and harder, doing bigger and bigger bollersful of wash, and that Fainy and his older sister Milly had to help when they came home from school. And then one day Mom got sick and had to go back to bed instead of starting in on the ironing, and lay with her round white creased face whiter than the pil-

low and her watercreased hands in a knot under her chin. The doctor came and the district nurse, and all three rooms of the flat smelt of doctors and nurses and drugs, and the only place Fainy and Milly could find to sit was on the stairs. There they sat and cried quietly together. Then Mom's face on the pillow shrank into a little creased white thing like a rumpled up handkerchief and they said that she was dead and took her away.

The funeral was from the undertaking parlors on Riverside Avenue on the next block. Fainy felt very proud and important because everybody kissed him and patted his head and said he was behaving like a little man. He had a new black suit on, too, like a grownup suit with pockets and everything, except that it had short pants. There were all sorts of people at the undertaking parlors he had never been close to before, Mr. Russell, the butcher and Father O'Donnell and Uncle Tim O'Hara who'd come on from Chicago, and it smelt of whisky and beer like at Finley's. Uncle Tim was a skinny man with a knobbed red face and blurry blue eyes. He wore a loose black silk tie that worried Fainy, and kept leaning down suddenly, bending from the waist as if he was going to close up like a jackknife, and whispering in a thick voice in Fainy's ear.

"Don't you mind 'em, old sport, they're a bunch o' bums and hypocrytes, stewed to the ears most of 'em already. Look at Father O'Donnell the fat swine already figurin' up the burial fees. But don't you mind 'em, remember you're an O'Hara on your mother's side. I don't mind 'em, old sport, and she was my own sister by birth and blood."

When they got home he was terribly sleepy and his feet were cold and wet. Nobody paid any attention to him. He sat whimpering on the edge of the bed in the dark. In the front room there were voices and a sound of knives and forks, but he didn't dare go in there. He curled up against the wall and went to sleep Light in his eyes woke him up. Uncle Tim and Pop were standing over him talking loud. They looked funny and didn't seem to be standing very steady. Uncle Tim held the lamp.

"Well, Fainy, old sport," said Uncle Tim giving the lamp a perilous wave over Fainy's head "Fenian O'Hara McCreary, sit up and take notice and tell us what you think of our proposed removal to the great and growing city of Chicago. Middletown's a terrible bitch of a dump if you ask me . . . Meanin' no offense, John . . . But Chicago . . . Jesus God, man, when you get there you'll think you've been dead and nailed up in a coffin all these years."

Fainy was scared. He drew his knees up to his chin and looked tremblingly at the two big swaying figures of men lit by the swaying lamp. He tried to speak but the words dried up on his lips.

"The kid's asleep, Tim, for all your speechifyin' . . . Take your clothes off, Fainy, and get into bed and get a good night's sleep. We're leavin' in the mornin'."

And late on a rainy morning, without any breakfast, with a big old swelltop trunk tied up with rope joggling perilously on the roof of the cab that Fainy had been sent to order from Hodgeson's Livery Stable, they set out. Milly was crying Pop didn't say a word but sucked on an unlit pipe. Uncle Tim handled everything, making little jokes all the time that nobody laughed at, pulling a roll of bills out of his pocket at every juncture, or taking great gurgling sips out of the flask he had in his pocket. Milly cried and cried. Fainy looked out with big dry eyes at the familiar streets, all suddenly odd and lopsided, that rolled past the cab; the red bridge, the scabshingled houses where the Polaks lived, Smith's and Smith's corner drug store . . . there was Billy Hogan just coming out with a package of chewing gum in his hand. Playing hookey again. Fainy had an impulse to yell at him, but something froze it . . . Main with its elms and street cars, blocks of stores round the corner of Church, and then the fire department. Fainy looked for the last time into the dark cave where shone entrancingly the brass and copper curves of the engine, then past the cardboard fronts of the First Congregational Church, The Carmel Baptist Church, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church built of brick and set catercornered on its lot instead of straight with a stern face to the street like the other churches, then the three castiron stags on the lawn in front of the Commercial House, and the residences, each with its lawn, each with its scrollsaw porch, each with its hydrangea bush. Then the houses got smaller, and the lawns disappeared; the cab trundled round past Simpson's Grain and Feed Warehouse, along a row of barbershops, saloons and lunchrooms, and they were all getting out at the station.

At the station lunchcounter Uncle Tim set everybody up to breakfast. He dried Milly's tears and blew Fainy's nose in a big new pockethandkerchief that still had the tag on the corner and set them to work on bacon and eggs

and coffee. Fainy hadn't had coffee before, so the idea of sitting up like a man and drinking coffee made him feel pretty good. Milly didn't like hers, said it was bitter. They were left all alone in the lunchroom for sometime with the empty plates and empty coffee cups under the beady eyes of a woman with the long neck and pointed face of a hen who looked at them disapprovingly from behind the counter. Then with an enormous, shattering rumble, sludgepuff sludge . . . puff, the train came into the station. They were scooped up and dragged across the platform and through a pipesmoky car and before they knew it the train was moving and the wintry russet Connecticut landscape was clattering by.

LOVER OF MANKIND

Debs was a railroad man, born in a weather-boarded shack at Terre Haute.

He was one of ten children.

His father had come to America in a sailingship in '49,

an Alsatian from Colmar, not much of a money-maker, fond of music and reading,

he gave his children a chance to finish public school and that was about all he could do.

At fifteen Gene Debs was already working as a machinist on the Indianapolis and Terre Haute Railway.

He worked as locomotive fireman,

clerked in a store

joined the local of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, was elected secretary, traveled all over the country as organizer.

He was a tall shamblefooted man, had a sort of gusty rhetoric that set on fire the railroad workers in their pineboarded halls

made them want the world he wanted,

a world brothers might own

where everybody would split even:

I am not a labor leader. I don't want you to follow me or anyone else. If you are looking for a Moses to lead you out of the capitalist wilderness you will stay right where you are. I would not lead you into this promised land if I could, because if I could lead you in, someone else would lead you out.

That was how he talked to freighthandlers and gandywalkers, to firemen and switchmen and engineers, telling them it wasn't enough to organize the railroadmen, that all workers must be organized, that all workers must be organized in the workers' cooperative commonwealth.

Locomotive fireman on many a long night's run,

under the smoke a fire burned him up, burned in gusty words that beat in pineboarded halls; he wanted his brothers to be free men.

That was what he saw in the crowd that met him at the Old Wells Street Depot when he came out of jail after the Pullman strike,

those were the men that chalked up nine hundred thousand votes for him in nineteen twelve and scared the frockcoats and the tophats and diamonded hostesses at Saratoga Springs, Bar Harbor, Lake Geneva with the bogy of a socialist president.

But where were Gene Debs' brothers in nineteen eighteen when Woodrow Wilson had him locked up in Atlanta for speaking against war,

where were the big men fond of whisky and fond of each other, gentle rambling tellers of stories over bars in small towns in the Middle West,

quiet men who wanted a house with a porch to putter around and a fat wife to cook for them, a few drinks and cigars, a garden to dig in, cronies to chew the rag with

and wanted to work for it

and others to work for it;

where were the locomotive firemen and engineers when they hustled him off to Atlanta Penitentiary?

And they brought him back to die in Terre Haute

to sit on his porch in a rocker with a cigar in his mouth,

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14 Debs. Eugene V. Debs (1855-1926) was the chief leader of the Socialist movement in the United States during the last thirty years of his life • 42 gandywalkers, more correctly, gandy dancers, workers who repair the roadbeds of railroads • 53 Pullman strike. The Pullman strike paralyzed transportation throughout the Northern states in the summer of 1894. The strike was put down by President Cleveland; and Debs, who was president of the American Railway Union, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for contempt of court when he refused to obey an injunction • 55 nineteen twelve. Debs was four times Socialist candidate for the Presidency • 72 Atlanta Penitentiary. In 1918, Debs was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment under the Espionage Act, but was released in 1921 by President Harding

beside him American Beauty roses his wife fixed in a bowl;

and the people of Terre Haute and the people in Indiana and the people of the Middle West were fond of him and afraid of him and thought of him as an old kindly uncle who loved them, and wanted to be with him and to have him give them candy,

but they were afraid of him as if he had contracted a social disease, syphilis or leprosy, and thought it was too bad,

but on account of the flag
and prosperity
and making the world safe for democracy,
they were afraid to be with him,
or to think much about him for fear they might believe him;

for he said:

While there is a lower class I am of it, while there is a criminal class I am of it, while there is a soul in prison I am not free.

1930

From

U.S.A.: The Big Money

TIN LIZZIE

Mr. Ford *the automobileer,*" the featurewriter wrote in 1900,

"Mr. Ford the automobileer began by giving his steed three or four sharp jerks with the lever at the righthand side of the seat; that is, he pulled the lever up and down sharply in order, as he said, to mix air with gasoline and drive the charge into the exploding cylinder. . . . Mr. Ford slipped a small electric switch handle and there followed a puff, puff, puff. . . . The puffing of the machine assumed a higher key. She was flying along about eight miles an hour. The ruts in the road were deep, but the machine certainly went with a dreamlike smoothness. There was none of the bumping common even to a streetcar. . . . By this time the boulevard had been reached, and the automobileer, letting a lever fall a little, let her out. Whiz! She picked up speed with infinite rapidity. As she ran on there was a clattering behind, the new noise of the automobile.

For twenty years or more,

ever since he'd left his father's farm when he was sixteen to get a job in a Detroit machineshop, Henry Ford had been nuts about machinery. First it was watches, then he designed a steamtractor, then he built a horseless carriage with an engine adapted from the Otto gasengine he'd read about in *The World of Science,* then a mechanical buggy with a onecylinder fourcycle motor, that would run forward but not back;

at last, in ninetyeight, he felt he was far enough along to risk throwing up his job with the Detroit Edison Company, where he'd worked his way up from night fireman to chief engineer, to put all his time into working on a new gasoline engine,

(in the late eighties he'd met Edison at a meeting of electriclight employees in Atlantic City. He'd gone up to Edison after Edison had delivered an address and asked him if he thought gasoline was practical as a motor fuel. Edison had said yes. If Edison said it, it was true. Edison was the great admiration of Henry Ford's life);

and in driving his mechanical buggy, sitting there at the lever jauntily dressed in a tightbuttoned jacket and a high collar and a derby hat, back and forth over the level illpaved streets of Detroit,

scaring the big brewery horses and the skinny trotting horses and the sleekrumped pacers with the motor's loud explosions,

looking for men scatterbrained enough to invest money in a factory for building automobiles.

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1 Mr. Ford. Henry Ford was born in 1863 • 33 Edison, Thomas A. Edison (1847-1931), the electrical wizard

He was the eldest son of an Irish immigrant who during the Civil War had married the daughter of a prosperous Pennsylvania Dutch farmer and settled down to farming near Dearborn in Wayne County, Michigan;

like plenty of other Americans, young Henry grew up hating the endless sogging through the mud about the chores, the hauling and pitching manure, the kerosene lamps to clean, the irk and sweat and solitude of the farm.

He was a slender, active youngster, a good skater, clever with his hands; what he liked was to tend the machinery and let the others do the heavy work. His mother had told him not to drink, smoke, gamble or go into debt, and he never did.

When he was in his early twenties his father tried to get him back from Detroit, where he was working as mechanic and repairman for the Drydock Engine Company that built the engines for steamboats, by giving him forty acres of land.

Young Henry built himself an uptodate square white dwellinghouse with a false mansard roof and married and settled down on the farm,

but he let the hired men do the farming;

he bought himself a buzzsaw and rented a stationary engine and cut the timber off the woodlots.

He was a thrifty young man who never drank or smoked or gambled or coveted his neighbor's wife, but he couldn't stand living on the farm.

He moved to Detroit, and in the brick barn behind his house tinkered for years in his spare time with a mechanical buggy that would be light enough to run over the clayey wagonroads of Wayne County, Michigan.

By 1900 he had a practicable car to promote.

He was forty years old before the Ford Motor Company was started and production began to move.

Speed was the first thing the early automobile manufacturers went after. Races advertised the makes of cars.

Henry Ford himself hung up several records at the track at Grosse Pointe and on the ice on Lake St. Clair. In his 999 he did the mile in thirtynine and fourfifths seconds.

But it had always been his custom to hire others to do the heavy work. The speed he was busy with was speed in production, the records records in efficient output. He hired Barney Oldfield, a stunt bicyclerider from Salt Lake City, to do the racing for him.

Henry Ford had ideas about other things than the designing of motors, carburetors, magnetos, jigs and fixtures, punches and dies; he had ideas about sales,

that the big money was in economical quantity production, quick turnover, cheap interchangeable easily-replaced standardized parts;

it wasn't until 1909, after years of arguing with his partners, that Ford put out the first Model T.

Henry Ford was right.

That season he sold more than ten thousand tin lizzies, ten years later he was selling almost a million a year.

In these years the Taylor Plan was stirring up plant-managers and manufacturers all over the country. Efficiency was the word. The same ingenuity that went into improving the performance of a machine could go into improving the performance of the workmen producing the machine.

In 1913 they established the assemblyline at Ford's. That season the profits were something like twentyfive million dollars, but they had trouble keeping the men on the job, machinists didn't seem to like it at Ford's.

Henry Ford had ideas about other things than production.

He was the largest automobile manufacturer in the world; he paid high wages; maybe if the steady workers thought they were getting a cut (a very small cut) in the profits, it would give trained men an inducement to stick to their jobs,

wellpaid workers might save enough money to buy a tin lizzie; the first day Ford's announced that cleancut properlymarried American workers who wanted jobs had a chance to make five bucks a day (of course it turned out that there were strings to it; always there were strings to it)

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60 Taylor Plan, the science of industrial management founded by Frederick W. Taylor (1856-1915)

such an enormous crowd waited outside the Highland Park plant

all through the zero January night

that there was a riot when the gates were opened; cops broke heads, jobhunters threw bricks; property, Henry Ford's own property, was destroyed. The company dicks had to turn on the firehose to beat back the crowd.

The American Plan; automotive prosperity seeping down from above; it turned out there were strings to it.

But that five dollars a day

paid to good, clean American workmen

who didn't drink or smoke cigarettes or read or think,

and who didn't commit adultery

and whose wives didn't take in boarders,

made America once more the Yukon of the sweated workers of the world;

made all the tin lizzies and the automotive age, and incidentally,

made Henry Ford the automobileer, the admirer of Edison, the birdlover,

the great American of his time.

But Henry Ford had ideas about other things besides assemblylines and the livinghabits of his employees. He was full of ideas. Instead of going to the city to make his fortune, here was a country boy who'd made his fortune by bringing the city out to the farm. The precepts he'd learned out of McGuffey's Reader, his mother's prejudices and preconceptions, he had preserved clean and unworn as freshprinted bills in the safe in a bank.

He wanted people to know about his ideas, so he bought the *Dearborn Independent* and started a campaign against cigarettesmoking.

When war broke out in Europe, he had ideas about that too. (Suspicion of armymen and soldiering were part of the midwest farm tradition, like thrift, stickativeness, temperance and sharp practice in money matters.) Any intelligent American mechanic could see that if the Europeans hadn't been a lot of ignorant underpaid foreigners who drank, smoked, were loose about women and wasteful in their methods of production, the war could never have happened.

When Rosika Schwimmer broke through the stockade of secretaries and servicemen who surrounded Henry Ford and suggested to him that he could stop the war,

he said sure they'd hire a ship and go over and get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas.

He hired a steamboat, the *Oscar II,* and filled it up with pacifists and socialworkers,

to go over to explain to the princelings of Europe that what they were doing was vicious and silly.

It wasn't his fault that Poor Richard's commonsense no longer rules the world and that most of the pacifists were nuts,

goofy with headlines.

When William Jennings Bryan went over to Hoboken to see him off, somebody handed William Jennings Bryan a squirrel in a cage; William Jennings Bryan made a speech with the squirrel under his arm. Henry Ford threw American Beauty roses to the crowd. The band played *I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier.* Practical jokers let loose more squirrels. An eloping couple was married by a platoon of ministers in the saloon, and Mr. Zero, the flophouse humanitarian, who reached the dock too late to sail,

dove into the North River and swam after the boat.

The *Oscar II* was described as a floating Chautauqua; Henry Ford said it felt like a middlewestern village, but by the time they reached Christiansand in Norway, the reporters had kidded him so that he had gotten cold feet and gone to bed. The world was too crazy outside of Wayne County, Michigan. Mrs. Ford and the management sent an Episcopal dean after him who brought him home under wraps,

and the pacifists had to speechify without him.

Two years later Ford's was manufacturing munitions, Eagle boats; Henry Ford was planning oneman tanks, and oneman submarines like the one tried out in the Revolutionary War. He announced to the press that he'd turn over his war profits to the government,

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28 **McGuffey's Reader,** the most popular of all schoolbooks in the United States during the nineteenth century • 44 **Rosika Schwimmer,** a Hungarian feminist and pacifist, largely responsible for the idea of the "peace ship" • 47 **ship.** Ford's "peace ship" sailed from Hoboken, December 4, 1915

but there's no record that he ever did.

One thing he brought back from his trip
was the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.
He started a campaign to enlighten the world in the *Dearborn Independent;* the Jews were why the world wasn't like Wayne County, Michigan, in the old horse and buggy days;
the Jews had started the war, Bolshevism, Darwinism, Marxism, Nietzsche, short skirts and lipstick. They were behind Wall Street and the international bankers, and the whiteslave traffic and the movies and the Supreme Court and ragtime and the illegal liquor business.
Henry Ford denounced the Jews and ran for senator and sued the *Chicago Tribune* for libel,
and was the laughingstock of the kept metropolitan press;
but when the metropolitan bankers tried to horn in on his business
he thoroughly outsmarted them.

In 1918 he had borrowed on notes to buy out his minority stockholders for the picayune sum of seventy-five million dollars.
In February, 1920, he needed cash to pay off some of these notes that were coming due. A banker is supposed to have called on him and offered him every facility if the bankers' representative could be made a member of the board of directors. Henry Ford handed the banker his hat,
and went about raising the money in his own way: he shipped every car and part he had in his plant to his dealers and demanded immediate cash payment. Let the other fellow do the borrowing had always been a cardinal principle He shut down production and canceled all orders from the supplyfirms. Many dealers were ruined, many supplyfirms failed, but when he reopened his plant,
he owned it absolutely,
the way a man owns an unmortgaged farm with the taxes paid up.
In 1922 there started the Ford boom for President (high wages, waterpower, industry scattered to the small towns) that was skillfully pricked behind the scenes by another crackerbarrel philosopher,
Calvin Coolidge;
but in 1922 Henry Ford sold one million three hundred and thirtytwo thousand two hundred and nine tin lizzies; he was the richest man in the world.
Good roads had followed the narrow ruts made in the mud by the Model T. The great automotive boom was on At Ford's production was improving all the time, less waste, more spotters, strawbosses, stool pigeons (fifteen minutes for lunch, three minutes to go to the toilet, the Taylorized speedup everywhere, reach under, adjust washer, screw down bolt, shove in cotterpin, reachunder adjustwasher, screwdown bolt, reachunder-adjustscrewdownreachunderadjust until every ounce of life was sucked off into production and at night the workmen went home grey shaking husks).
Ford owned every detail of the process from the ore in the hills until the car rolled off the end of the assemblyline under its own power, the plants were rationalized to the last tenthousandth of an inch as measured by the Johansen scale;
in 1926 the production cycle was reduced to eightyone hours from the ore in the mine to the finished salable car proceeding under its own power,
but the Model T was obsolete.

New Era prosperity and the American Plan
(there were strings to it, always there were strings to it)
had killed Tin Lizzie.
Ford's was just one of many automobile plants.
When the stockmarket bubble burst,
Mr. Ford the crackerbarrel philosopher said jubilantly,
"I told you so.
Serves you right for gambling and getting in debt.
The country is sound."
But when the country on cracked shoes, in frayed trousers, belts tightened over hollow bellies,
idle hands cracked and chapped with the cold of that coldest March day of 1932,

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9 Nietzsche. See note, p. 1064 • **51 strawbosses,** assistant foremen • **63 Johansen scale,** a technique for the minute measurement of parts devised for the Ford Company by C E Johansson (see H W. Barclay, **Ford Production Methods**) • **73 stockmarket . . . burst,** in the autumn of 1929

started marching from Detroit to Dearborn, asking for work and the American Plan, all they could think of at Ford's was machineguns.

The country was sound, but they mowed the marchers down.

They shot four of them dead.

Henry Ford as an old man

is a passionate antiquarian,

(lives besieged on his father's farm embedded in an estate of thousands of millionaire acres, protected by an army of servicemen, secretaries, secret agents, dicks under orders of an English exprizefighter,

always afraid of the feet in broken shoes on the roads, afraid the gangs will kidnap his grandchildren,

that a crank will shoot him,

that Change and the idle hands out of work will break through the gates and the high fences;

protected by a private army against

the new America of starved children and hollow bellies and cracked shoes stamping on souplines,

that has swallowed up the old thrifty farmlands

of Wayne County, Michigan,

as if they had never been).

Henry Ford as an old man

is a passionate antiquarian.

He rebuilt his father's farmhouse and put it back exactly in the state he remembered it in as a boy. He built a village of museums for buggies, sleighs, coaches, old plows, waterwheels, obsolete models of motorcars. He scoured the country for fiddlers to play old-fashioned squaredances.

Even old taverns he bought and put back into their original shape, as well as Thomas Edison's early laboratories.

When he bought the Wayside Inn near Sudbury, Massachusetts, he had the new highway where the newmodel cars roared and slithered and hissed oilily past *(the new noise of the automobile),*

moved away from the door,

put back the old bad road,

so that everything might be

the way it used to be.

in the days of horses and buggies.

1936

John Steinbeck

1902 •

The foremost young American novelist of the Great Depression, which is to say of the decade between 1930 and 1940, was a Californian, John Steinbeck. What he had to say, basically, was that life goes on, is indestructible, although its forms may change and vast numbers of individual lives may be snuffed out by the catastrophic and inscrutable forces of nature. The world of Steinbeck, like that of Robinson Jeffers, is cruelly impersonal, but the conclusions of the two writers are almost diametrically opposed. Jeffers finds the human race little short of contemptible; Steinbeck, fully aware of the meanness and impotence of humanity, is temperamentally hopeful, an admirer of the infinite manifestations of adaptability in living organisms. It is not surprising that Steinbeck found an eager audience in an era everywhere darkened by bankruptcy, unemployment, and a sense of possible failure in the struggle for survival. He was called "Communist" and "left-wing visionary" by men angered by his tenderness for the victims of change and his broad hint of social revolution, but time has made it clear that Steinbeck is something more than a "proletarian" novelist.

Steinbeck was born at Salinas, California, in 1902. He grew up in a rich but strike-tormented valley where

he learned at first hand of the life of the agricultural and factory workers. From 1919 through 1925 he attended Stanford University, taking the courses that attracted him without worrying about degree requirements and dropping out now and then to work as a common laborer. Already determined to be a writer, he contributed to the university magazines and, after leaving Stanford, worked briefly as a reporter in New York City. Illness helped send him back to California and a job as caretaker on a mountain estate. His first published book, *Cup of Gold,* is said to be the fourth that he wrote. It appeared in August 1929, the month before the collapse of the stock market.

Cup of Gold is a fictionized biography of Sir Henry Morgan, a seventeenth-century buccaneer; it is chiefly noteworthy for its foreshadowing of Steinbeck's fondness for symbolic and poetic techniques. It was followed by *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932), a series of short stories about the folk of a California valley, and by *To a God Unknown* (1933), a mystical novel about a man's passion for the land which he was determined to make his permanent home.

Steinbeck's popularity began with *Tortilla Flat* (1935). A series of stories about the *paisano* of the Monterey peninsula, it remains a favorite with many of his readers. *In Dubious Battle,* a strike novel which is Steinbeck's most clearly "proletarian" story, appeared in 1936; *Of Mice and Men,* a novelette, in 1937; *The Long Valley,* a collection of short stories, in 1938. *Of Mice and Men* was selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club for distribution in February 1937 and was soon a best seller, by the end of the year a dramatic version was packing in the customers in a New York theater. Steinbeck's most widely known work, however, is *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), a novel on the migration of agricultural workers from the Oklahoma dust bowl to California. It roused the wrath of Oklahomans and owning-class Californians, awakened the rest of the country to the economic plight of dispossessed farmers, and was in due course awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

In some ways the best introduction to the mature Steinbeck are two books which appeared in 1941. *The Forgotten Village* is a book of photographs with brief accompanying captions. Based upon a documentary film on the clash betwen magic and medical science in a small Mexican village, it is a vivid exemplification of Steinbeck's abiding confidence that man can be improved by patience and genuine affection. *Sea of Cortez,* written in collaboration with Edward T. Ricketts, a marine biologist, is an account of an expedition to the Gulf of California and perhaps the fullest revelation of Steinbeck's preoccupation with the philosophy of science.

Other and more popular works in the last few years are *The Moon Is Down* (1942), a short novel on the Nazi occupation of Norway which was made into a successful play and (like several of the earlier stories) a moving picture, *Bombs Away* (1942), an account of the life of a British-based air squadron; *Cannery Row* (1945), a series of stories of Monterey, similar in many ways to *Tortilla Flat, The Wayward Bus* (1946), and *The Pearl* (1947). At the present time there is probably no American writer more "established" than John Steinbeck. He had his years of discouragement, but he was fortunate in never cultivating the somewhat meretricious fluency which often succeeds in the popular magazines. Now, well free of the economic pressure which produces potboilers, he can write what he wishes to write with assurance that he will be read with respect.

Because he deals often in symbols and abstract ideas, he is sometimes a puzzle to the critics. Most often, perhaps, Steinbeck has been called a primitivist, and it is true that he tends to glorify rudimentary folk, people who, as he said in 1937 in a Foreword to *Tortilla Flat,* "merge successfully with their habitat." Yet Steinbeck combines, as Frederick Ives Carpenter has pointed out, several of the great skeins of American thought: the mystical monism which gave Emerson his trust in the essential goodness of the common man, the sense of the mass or the social democracy with which Whitman tempered Emersonian individualism, and that recognition of the necessity of effective action which is the core of pragmatism, sometimes called the most characteristic of American philosophical positions. A sensitive and intelligent man, fully aware of the enormity of human failure, Steinbeck still finds a core of goodness in men and women, a zest in living which is perhaps more essential for survival than an understanding of life.

H T Moore, **The Novels of John Steinbeck: A First Critical Study,** Chicago, 1939 • Edmund Wilson, **The Boys in the Back Room: Notes on California Novelists,** San Francisco, 1941 • F. I. Carpenter, "The Philosophical Joads," **College English,** January 1941, II, 315-325 • J. W. Beach, **American Fiction, 1920-1940,** New York, 1941 • Maxwell Geismar, **Writers in Crisis: The American Novel Between Two Wars,** Boston, 1942

From

The Grapes of Wrath

The Grapes of Wrath is both a tract and a story. As a tract, it studies the still unsettled problem of the migrant agricultural workers—the men, women, and children who may be seen crowded into trucks and rattletrap cars in all sections of the country, on their way to pick fruit or cotton or vegetables or to weed onions or sugar beets. Often desperately needed for farm production, they are nearly everywhere feared. The landowners and managers worry lest they organize and demand high wages; local officials regard them as possible public charges or vagrants; settled and prosperous citizens thoughtlessly dismiss them as mere riffraff. Steinbeck's position is that they have a right to work without being exploited, a right to self-respect and a just share of the means of subsistence. Land, he says, must not be allowed to be accumulated in the hands of the few and kept out of production while the many starve. He attacks, in short, the "economy of scarcity" in a land where scientific agriculture has made possible the production of ample food for all. In Chapter Twenty-five he presents the picture of the destruction of grapes and cotton and coffee and pigs because overproduction has depressed the price below the margin of profit, although there are hungry, despairing people to be fed and clothed. This is, he says, the path to revolution. "In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage." His title is an echo of Julia Ward Howe's Civil War poem, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic": "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord: / He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored . . . ."

The Grapes of Wrath differs from late nineteenth-century novels on the same theme (Bellamy's **Looking Backward** and Howells' **A Traveler from Altruria**, for example) in that it emphasizes the class struggle. Its story is typical of the 1930's, when the effects of the depression were aggravated by the years of drought and dust storms which impoverished large areas in Oklahoma and neighboring states. Specifically, it is the story of the Joads, native Americans who have lived for years near Sallisaw, in east central Oklahoma. Although they are poor people, concerned with little more than their animal wants, they are a family, a unit, with the pride and the generosity and the humanity, the pleasures and the courage, that make life meaningful. Ma is their balance wheel, although she ordinarily leaves the dignity of making decisions to her husband. Her charges include Grampa and Granma; Uncle John, who is given to melancholia; Tom, on parole after a stretch in state prison for killing a man in the anger of a fight; Noah, gentle but feeble-minded; Al, a cocksure adolescent; Rose of Sharon, who is married to a weak youth named Connie; and two half-grown children, Ruthie and Winfield.

The novel begins with a dust storm. The reader then meets Tom Joad, on his way home from prison. Tom encounters Jim Casy, a former preacher with a penchant for philosophizing, and they go together to the Joad farm. They find the house deserted, but learn from Muley Bates that the family is at Uncle John's. Going there next day they find Ma and the rest preparing to go to California, where they have been told that there is plenty of work and the chance for a fresh start. They have been dispossessed of their marginal land by the drought and the foreclosure of mortgages; only by large-scale mechanization can such land now be farmed profitably.

Three chapters of the novel are reprinted in the following pages. Chapter Thirteen describes the first stages of the trip, with the succession of sudden tragedies which foreshadow the later disillusion and disintegration of the family. Chapter Fourteen, with its use of biological terminology, typifies the generalizations inserted by Steinbeck at intervals throughout the novel to alternate with the Joad story. Chapter Fifteen, frequently reprinted as a separate unit, exemplifies Steinbeck's keen observation of the surface details of contemporary life and his sure grasp of the idiom of the common people. The entire section is representative of the peculiar juxtaposition of realism and sentiment which is Steinbeck's talent.

Throughout the remainder of the novel the Joads are beset by one catastrophe after another, with infrequent interludes of hope that somehow something can be worked out. Before they reach the farmlands of California, Noah

wanders off and Granma dies. The promised work does not often materialize and when it does the rate of pay is determined by the number of workers available. Only in a government camp are the Joads momentarily free from the brutality and suspicion of sheriffs and deputies, and they cannot afford to stay there and starve. Connie runs away from his pregnant wife. Casy is killed when he tries, none too expertly, to lead a strike, and Tom kills the man who struck down Casy. Since Tom has broken his parole by leaving Oklahoma, he becomes a fugitive, although it is suggested that he will carry on the work of organizing the wandering workers. In the final scene Rose of Sharon is delivered of a stillborn baby in a flooded boxcar but, since life must go on, gives her milk to a starving man.

Some readers will be offended by Steinbeck's social philosophy; others are likely to object to the animality of the life of the Joads and their friends and feel that Steinbeck has given a distorted picture of migrant workers' conditions in California at that time; still others will dislike the somewhat melodramatic incidents by which the story advances. Few, however, will deny that life is too often like this, that the improvement of the social and economic system should be the constant concern of those who live in a democracy. The Joads are not to be lightly dismissed as foreigners or poor whites; they are Americans, and their condition may readily determine the quality of life in these United States.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The ancient overloaded Hudson creaked and grunted to the highway at Sallisaw and turned west, and the sun was blinding. But on the concrete road Al built up his speed because the flattened springs were not in danger any more. From Sallisaw to Gore is twenty-one miles and the Hudson was doing thirty-five miles an hour. From Gore to Warner thirteen miles; Warner to Checotah fourteen miles; Checotah a long jump to Henrietta—thirty-four miles, but a real town at the end of it. Henrietta to Castle nineteen miles, and the sun was overhead, and the red fields, heated by the high sun, vibrated the air.

Al, at the wheel, his face purposeful, his whole body listening to the car, his restless eyes jumping from the road to the instrument panel. Al was one with his engine, every nerve listening for weaknesses, for the thumps or squeals, hums and chattering that indicate a change that may cause a breakdown. He had become the soul of the car.

Granma, beside him on the seat, half slept, and whimpered in her sleep, opened her eyes to peer ahead, and then dozed again. And Ma sat beside Granma, one elbow out the window, and the skin reddening under the fierce sun. Ma looked ahead too, but her eyes were flat and did not see the road or the fields, the gas stations, the little eating sheds. She did not glance at them as the Hudson went by.

Al shifted himself on the broken seat and changed his grip on the steering wheel. And he sighed, "Makes a racket, but I think she's awright. God knows what she'll do if we got to climb a hill with the load we got. Got any hills 'tween here an' California, Ma?"

Ma turned her head slowly and her eyes came to life. "Seems to me they's hills," she said. "'Course I dunno. But seems to me I heard they's hills an' even mountains. Big ones."

Granma drew a long whining sigh in her sleep.

Al said, "We'll burn right up if we got climbin' to do. Have to throw out some a' this stuff. Maybe we shouldn' a brang that preacher."

"You'll be glad a that preacher 'fore we're through," said Ma. "That preacher'll help us." She looked ahead at the gleaming road again.

Al steered with one hand and put the other on the vibrating gear-shift lever. He had difficulty in speaking. His mouth formed the words silently before he said them aloud. "Ma—" She looked slowly around at him, her head swaying a little with the car's motion. "Ma, you scared a goin'? You scared a goin' to a new place?"

Her eyes grew thoughtful and soft. "A little," she said. "Only it ain't like scared so much. I'm jus' a settin' here waitin'. When somepin happens that I got to do somepin—I'll do it."

"Ain't you thinkin' what's it gonna be like when we get there? Ain't you scared it wont be nice like we thought?"

"No," she said quickly. "No, I ain't. You can't do that. I can't do that. It's too much—livin' too many lives. Up ahead they's a thousan' lives we might live, but when it comes, it'll on'y be one. If I go ahead on

all of 'em, it's too much. You got to live ahead 'cause you're so young, but—it's jus' the road goin' by for me. An' it's jus' how soon they gonna wanta eat some more pork bones." Her face tightened. "That's all I can do. I can't do no more. All the rest'd get upset if I done any more'n that. They all depen' on me jus' thinkin' about that."

Granma yawned shrilly and opened her eyes. She looked wildly about. "I got to get out, praise Gawd," she said.

"First clump a brush," said Al. "They's one up ahead."

"Brush or no brush, I got to git out, I tell ya." And she began to whine, "I got to git out. I got to git out."

Al speeded up, and when he came to the low brush he pulled up short. Ma threw the door open and half pulled the struggling old lady out beside the road and into the bushes. And Ma held her so Granma would not fall when she squatted.

On top of the truck the others stirred to life. Their faces were shining with sunburn they could not escape. Tom and Casy and Noah and Uncle John let themselves wearily down. Ruthie and Winfield swarmed down the side-boards and went off into the bushes. Connie helped Rose of Sharon gently down. Under the canvas, Grampa was awake, his head sticking out, but his eyes were drugged and watery and still senseless. He watched the others, but there was little recognition in his watching.

Tom called to him, "Want to come down, Grampa?"

The old eyes turned listlessly to him. "No," said Grampa. For a moment the fierceness came into his eyes. "I ain't a-goin', I tell you. Gonna stay like Muley." And then he lost interest again. Ma came back, helping Granma up the bank to the highway.

"Tom," she said. "Get that pan a bones, under the canvas in back. We got to eat somepin." Tom got the pan and passed it around, and the family stood by the roadside, gnawing the crisp particles from the pork bones.

"Sure lucky we brang these along," said Pa. "Git so stiff up there can't hardly move. Where's the water?"

"Ain't it up with you?" Ma asked. "I set out that gallon jug."

Pa climbed the sides and looked under the canvas. "It ain't here. We must a forgot it."

Thirst set in instantly. Winfield moaned, "I wanta drink. I wanta drink." The men licked their lips, suddenly conscious of their thirst. And a little panic started.

Al felt the fear growing. "We'll get water first service station we come to. We need some gas too." The family swarmed up the truck sides; Ma helped Granma in and got in beside her. Al started the motor and they moved on.

Castle to Paden twenty-five miles and the sun passed the zenith and started down. And the radiator cap began to jiggle up and down and steam started to whish out. Near Paden there was a shack beside the road and two gas pumps in front of it; and beside a fence, a water faucet and a hose. Al drove in and nosed the Hudson up to the hose. As they pulled in, a stout man, red of face and arms, got up from a chair behind the gas pumps and moved toward them. He wore brown corduroys, and suspenders and a polo shirt; and he had a cardboard sun helmet, painted silver, on his head. The sweat beaded on his nose and under his eyes and formed streams in the wrinkles of his neck. He strolled toward the truck, looking truculent and stern.

"You folks aim to buy anything? Gasoline or stuff?" he asked.

Al was out already, unscrewing the steaming radiator cap with the tips of his fingers, jerking his hand away to escape the spurt when the cap should come loose. "Need some gas, mister."

"Got any money?"

"Sure. Think we're beggin'?"

The truculence left the fat man's face. "Well, that's all right, folks. He'p yourself to water." And he hastened to explain. "Road is full a people, come in, use water, dirty up the toilet, an' then, by God, they'll steal stuff an' don't buy nothin'. Got no money to buy with. Come beggin' a gallon gas to move on."

Tom dropped angrily to the ground and moved toward the fat man. "We're payin' our way," he said fiercely. "You got no call to give us a goin'-over. We ain't asked you for nothin'."

"I ain't," the fat man said quickly. The sweat began to soak through his short-sleeved polo shirt. "Jus' he'p yourself to water, and go use the toilet if you want."

Winfield had got the hose. He drank from the end and then turned the stream over his head and face and emerged dripping. "It ain't cool," he said.

"I don't know what the country's comin' to," the fat man continued. His complaint had shifted now and

he was no longer talking to or about the Joads. "Fifty-sixty cars a folks go by ever' day, folks all movin' west with kids an' househol' stuff. Where they goin'? What they gonna do?"

"Doin' the same as us," said Tom. "Goin' someplace to live. Tryin' to get along. That's all."

"Well, I don't know what the country's comin' to. I jus' don' know. Here's me tryin' to get along, too Think any them big new cars stops here? No, sir! They go on to them yella-painted company stations in town. They don't stop no place like this. Most folks stops here ain't got nothin'."

Al flipped the radiator cap and it jumped into the air with a head of steam behind it, and a hollow bubbling sound came out of the radiator. On top of the truck, the suffering hound dog crawled timidly to the edge of the load and looked over, whimpering, toward the water. Uncle John climbed up and lifted him down by the scruff of the neck. For a moment the dog staggered on stiff legs, and then he went to lap the mud under the faucet. In the highway the cars whizzed by, glistening in the heat, and the hot wind of their going fanned into the service-station yard. Al filled the radiator with the hose.

"It ain't that I'm tryin' to git trade outa rich folks," the fat man went on. "I'm jus' tryin' to git trade. Why, the folks that stops here begs gasoline an' they trades for gasoline. I could show you in my back room the stuff they'll trade for gas an' oil: beds an' baby buggies an' pots an' pans. One family traded a doll their kid had for a gallon. An' what'm I gonna do with the stuff, open a junk shop? Why, one fella wanted to gimme his shoes for a gallon. An' if I was that kinda fella I bet I could git—" He glanced at Ma and stopped.

Jim Casy had wet his head, and the drops still coursed down his high forehead, and his muscled neck was wet, and his shirt was wet. He moved over beside Tom. "It ain't the people's fault," he said. "How'd you like to sell the bed you sleep on for a tankful a gas?"

"I know it ain't their fault. Ever' person I talked to is on the move for a damn good reason. But what's the country comin' to? That's what I wanta know. What's it comin to? Fella can't make a livin' no more. Folks can't make a livin' farmin'. I ask you, what's it comin' to? I can't figure her out. Ever'body I ask, they can't figure her out. Fella wants to trade his shoes so he can git a hunderd miles on. I can't figure her out." He took off his silver hat and wiped his forehead with his palm. And Tom took off his cap and wiped his forehead with it. He went to the hose and wet the cap through and squeezed it and put it on again. Ma worked a tin cup out through the side bars of the truck, and she took water to Granma and to Grampa on top of the load. She stood on the bars and handed the cup to Grampa, and he wet his lips, and then shook his head and refused more. The old eyes looked up at Ma in pain and bewilderment for a moment before the awareness receded again.

Al started the motor and backed the truck to the gas pump. "Fill her up. She'll take about seven," said Al. "We'll give her six so she don't spill none."

The fat man put the hose in the tank "No, sir," he said. "I jus' don't know what the country's comin' to. Relief an' all."

Casy said, "I been walkin' aroun' in the country. Ever'body's askin' that. What we comin' to? Seems to me we don't never come to nothin'. Always on the way. Always goin' and goin'. Why don't folks think about that? They's movement now. People moving. We know why, an' we know how. Movin' 'cause they got to. That's why folks always move. Movin' 'cause they want somepin better'n what they got. An' that's the on'y way they'll ever git it. Wantin' it an' needin' it, they'll go out an' git it. It's bein' hurt that makes folks mad to fightin'. I been walkin' aroun' the country, an' hearin' folks talk like you."

The fat man pumped the gasoline and the needle turned on the pump dial, recording the amount. "Yeah, but what's it comin' to? That's what I want ta know."

Tom broke in irritably, "Well, you ain't never gonna know. Casy tries to tell ya an' you jest ast the same thing over. I seen fellas like you before. You ain't askin' nothin'; you're jus' singin' a kinda song. 'What we comin' to?' You don' wanta know. Country's movin' aroun', goin' places. They's folks dyin' all aroun'. Maybe you'll die pretty soon, but you won't know nothin'. I seen too many fellas like you. You don't want to know nothin'. Just sing yourself to sleep with a song—'What we comin' to?'" He looked at the gas pump, rusted and old, and at the shack behind it, built of old lumber, the nail holes of its first use still showing through the paint that had been brave, the brave yellow paint that

had tried to imitate the big company stations in town. But the paint couldn't cover the old nail holes and the old cracks in the lumber, and the paint could not be renewed. The imitation was a failure and the owner had known it was a failure. And inside the open door of the shack Tom saw the oil barrels, only two of them, and the candy counter with stale candies and licorice whips turning brown with age, and cigarettes. He saw the broken chair and the fly screen with a rusted hole in it. And the littered yard that should have been graveled, and behind, the corn field drying and dying in the sun. Beside the house the little stock of used tires and retreaded tires. And he saw for the first time the fat man's cheap washed pants and his cheap polo shirt and his paper hat. He said, "I didn' mean to sound off at ya, mister. It's the heat. You ain't got nothin'. Pretty soon you'll be on the road yourse'f. And it ain't tractors'll put you there. It's them pretty yella stations in town. Folks is movin'," he said ashamedly. "An' you'll be movin', mister."

The fat man's hand slowed on the pump and stopped while Tom spoke. He looked worriedly at Tom. "How'd you know?" he asked helplessly. "How'd you know we was already talkin' about packin' up an' movin' west?"

Casy answered him. "It's ever'body," he said. "Here's me that used to give all my fight against the devil 'cause I figured the devil was the enemy. But they's somepin worse'n the devil got hold a the country, an' it ain't gonna let go till it's chopped loose. Ever see one a them Gila monsters take hold, mister? Grabs hold, an' you chop him in two an' his head hangs on. Chop him at the neck an' his head hangs on. Got to take a screw-driver an' pry his head apart to git him loose. An' while he's layin' there, poison is drippin' an' drippin' into the hole he's made with his teeth." He stopped and looked sideways at Tom.

The fat man stared hopelessly straight ahead. His hand started turning the crank slowly. "I dunno what we're comin' to," he said softly.

Over by the water hose, Connie and Rose of Sharon stood together, talking secretly. Connie washed the tin cup and felt the water with his finger before he filled the cup again. Rose of Sharon watched the cars go by on the highway. Connie held out the cup to her. "This water ain't cool, but it's wet," he said.

She looked at him and smiled secretly. She was all secrets now she was pregnant, secrets and little silences that seemed to have meanings. She was pleased with herself, and she complained about things that didn't really matter. And she demanded services of Connie that were silly, and both of them knew they were silly. Connie was pleased with her too, and filled with wonder that she was pregnant. He liked to think he was in on the secrets she had. When she smiled slyly, he smiled slyly too, and they exchanged confidences in whispers. The world had drawn close around them, and they were in the center of it, or rather Rose of Sharon was in the center of it with Connie making a small orbit about her Everything they said was a kind of secret.

She drew her eyes from the highway. "I ain't very thirsty," she said daintily. "But maybe I *ought* to drink."

And he nodded, for he knew well what she meant. She took the cup and rinsed her mouth and spat and then drank the cupful of tepid water. "Want another?" he asked.

"Jus' a half." And so he filled the cup just half, and gave it to her. A Lincoln Zephyr, silvery and low, whisked by. She turned to see where the others were and saw them clustered about the truck. Reassured, she said, "How'd you like to be goin' along in that?"

Connie sighed, "Maybe—after." They both knew what he meant. "An' if they's plenty work in California, we'll git our own car. But them"—he indicated the disappearing Zephyr—"them kind costs as much as a good size house. I ruther have the house."

"I like to have the house *an'* one a them," she said. "But 'course the house would be first because—" And they both knew what she meant. They were terribly excited about the pregnancy.

"You feel awright?" he asked.

"Tar'd. Jus' tar'd ridin' in the sun."

"We *got* to do that or we won't never get to California."

"I know," she said.

The dog wandered, sniffing, past the truck, trotted to the puddle under the hose again and lapped at the muddy water And then he moved away, nose down and ears hanging. He sniffed his way among the dusty weeds beside the road, to the edge of the pavement. He raised his head and looked across, and then started over. Rose of Sharon screamed shrilly. A big swift car

whisked near, tires squealed. The dog dodged helplessly, and with a shriek, cut off in the middle, went under the wheels. The big car slowed for a moment and faces looked back, and then it gathered greater speed and disappeared. And the dog, a blot of blood and tangled, burst intestines, kicked slowly in the road.

Rose of Sharon's eyes were wide. "D'you think it'll hurt?" she begged. "Think it'll hurt?"

Connie put his arm around her. "Come set down," he said. "It wasn't nothin'."

"But I felt it hurt. I felt it kinda jar when I yelled."

"Come set down. It wasn't nothin'. It won't hurt." He led her to the side of the truck away from the dying dog and sat her down on the running board.

Tom and Uncle John walked out to the mess. The last quiver was going out of the crushed body. Tom took it by the legs and dragged it to the side of the road. Uncle John looked embarrassed, as though it were his fault. "I ought ta tied him up," he said.

Pa looked down at the dog for a moment and then he turned away. "Le's get outa here," he said, "I don' know how we was gonna feed 'im anyways. Just as well, maybe."

The fat man came from behind the truck. "I'm sorry, folks," he said. "A dog jus' don' last no time near a highway. I had three dogs run over in a year. Don't keep none, no more." And he said, "Don't you folks worry none about it. I'll take care of 'im. Bury 'im out in the corn field."

Ma walked over to Rose of Sharon, where she sat, still shuddering, on the running board. "You all right, Rosasharn?" she asked. "You feelin' poorly?"

"I seen that. Give me a start."

"I heard ya yip," said Ma. "Git yourself laced up now."

"You suppose it might of hurt?"

"No," said Ma. "'F you go to greasin' yourself an' feelin' sorry, an' tuckin' yourself in a swalla's nest, it might. Rise up now, an he'p me get Granma comf'table. Forget that baby for a minute. He'll take care a hisself."

"Where is Granma?" Rose of Sharon asked.

"I dunno. She's aroun' here somewheres. Maybe in the outhouse."

The girl went toward the toilet, and in a moment she came out, helping Granma along. "She went to sleep in there," said Rose of Sharon.

Granma grinned. "It's nice in there," she said. "They got a patent toilet in there an' the water comes down. I like it in there," she said contentedly. "Would of took a good nap if I wasn't woke up."

"It ain't a nice place to sleep," said Rose of Sharon, and she helped Granma into the car. Granma settled herself happily. "Maybe it ain't nice for purty, but it's nice for nice," she said.

Tom said, "Le's go. We got to make miles."

Pa whistled shrilly "Now where'd them kids go?" He whistled again, putting his fingers in his mouth.

In a moment they broke from the corn field, Ruthie ahead and Winfield trailing her. "Eggs!" Ruthie cried. "Look!" A dozen soft, grayish-white eggs were in her grubby hand. And as she held up her hand, her eyes fell upon the dead dog beside the road. "Oh!" she said. Ruthie and Winfield walked slowly toward the dog. They inspected him.

Pa called to them, "Come on, you, 'less you want to git left."

They turned solemnly and walked to the truck. Ruthie looked once more at the gray reptile eggs in her hand, and then she threw them away. They climbed up the side of the truck. "His eyes was still open," said Ruthie in a hushed tone.

But Winfield gloried in the scene. He said boldly, "His guts was just strowed all over—all over"—he was silent for a moment—"strowed—all—over," he said, and then he rolled over quickly and vomited down the side of the truck. When he sat up again his eyes were watery and his nose running. "It ain't like killin' pigs," he said in explanation.

Al had the hood of the Hudson up, and he checked the oil level. He brought a gallon can from the floor of the front seat and poured a quantity of cheap black oil into the pipe and checked the level again.

Tom came beside him. "Want I should take her a piece?" he asked.

"I ain't tired," said Al.

"Well, you didn't get no sleep las' night. I took a snooze this morning. Get up there on top. I'll take her."

"Awright," Al said reluctantly. "But watch the oil gauge pretty close. Take her slow. An' I been watchin' for a short. Take a look a the needle now an' then. 'F she jumps to discharge it's a short. An' take her slow, Tom. She's overloaded."

Tom laughed. "I'll watch her," he said. "You can res' easy."

The family piled on top of the truck again. Ma settled herself beside Granma in the seat, and Tom took his place and started the motor. "Sure is loose," he said, and he put it in gear and pulled away down the highway.

The motor droned along steadily and the sun receded down the sky in front of them. Granma slept steadily, and even Ma dropped her head forward and dozed. Tom pulled his cap over his eyes to shut out the blinding sun.

Paden to Meeker is thirteen miles; Meeker to Harrah is fourteen miles; and then Oklahoma City—the big city. Tom drove straight on. Ma waked up and looked at the streets as they went through the city. And the family, on top of the truck, stared about at the stores, at the big houses, at the office buildings. And then the buildings grew smaller and the stores smaller. The wrecking yards and hot-dog stands, the out-city dance halls.

Ruthie and Winfield saw it all, and it embarrassed them with its bigness and its strangeness, and it frightened them with the fine-clothed people they saw. They did not speak of it to each other. Later—they would, but not now. They saw the oil derricks in the town, on the edge of the town; oil derricks black, and the smell of oil and gas in the air. But they didn't exclaim. It was so big and so strange it frightened them.

In the street Rose of Sharon saw a man in a light suit. He wore white shoes and a flat straw hat. She touched Connie and indicated the man with her eyes, and then Connie and Rose of Sharon giggled softly to themselves, and the giggles got the best of them. They covered their mouths. And it felt so good that they looked for other people to giggle at. Ruthie and Winfield saw them giggling and it looked such fun that they tried to do it too—but they couldn't. The giggles wouldn't come. But Connie and Rose of Sharon were breathless and red with stifling laughter before they could stop. It got so bad that they had only to look at each other to start over again.

The outskirts were wide spread. Tom drove slowly and carefully in the traffic, and then they were on 66—the great western road, and the sun was sinking on the line of the road. The windshield was bright with dust. Tom pulled his cap lower over his eyes, so low that he had to tilt his head back to see out at all. Granma slept on, the sun on her closed eyelids, and the veins on her temples were blue, and the little bright veins on her cheeks were wine-colored, and the old brown marks on her face turned darker.

Tom said, "We stay on this road right straight through."

Ma had been silent for a long time. "Maybe we better fin' a place to stop 'fore sunset," she said. "I got to get some pork a-boilin' an' some bread made. That takes time."

"Sure," Tom agreed. "We ain't gonna make this trip in one jump. Might's well stretch ourselves."

Oklahoma City to Bethany is fourteen miles.

Tom said, "I think we better stop 'fore the sun goes down. Al got to build that thing on the top. Sun'll kill the folks up there."

Ma had been dozing again. Her head jerked upright. "Got to get some supper a-cookin'," she said. And she said, "Tom, your pa tol' me about you crossin' the State line——"

He was a long time answering. "Yeah? What about it, Ma?"

"Well, I'm scairt about it. It'll make you kinda runnin' away. Maybe they'll catch ya."

Tom held his hand over his eyes to protect himself from the lowering sun. "Don't you worry," he said. "I figgered her out. They's lots a fellas out on parole an' they's more goin' in all the time. If I get caught for anything else out west, well, then they got my pitcher an' my prints in Washington. They'll sen' me back. But if I don't do no crimes, they won't give a damn."

"Well, I'm a-scairt about it. Sometimes you do a crime, an' you don't even know it's bad. Maybe they got crimes in California we don't even know about. Maybe you gonna do somepin an' it's all right, an' in California it ain't all right."

"Be jus' the same if I wasn't on parole," he said. "On'y if I get caught I get a bigger jolt'n other folks. Now you quit a-worryin'," he said. "We got plenty to worry about 'thout you figgerin' out things to worry about."

"I can't he'p it," she said. "Minute you cross the line you done a crime."

"Well, that's better'n stickin' aroun' Sallisaw an' starvin' to death," he said. "We better look out for a place to stop."

They went through Bethany and out on the other side. In a ditch, where a culvert went under the road, an old touring car was pulled off the highway and a little tent was pitched beside it, and smoke came out of a stove pipe through the tent. Tom pointed ahead. "There's some folks campin'. Looks like as good a place as we seen." He slowed his motor and pulled to a stop beside the road. The hood of the old touring car was up, and a middle-aged man stood looking down at the motor. He wore a cheap straw sombrero, a blue shirt, and a black, spotted vest, and his jeans were stiff and shiny with dirt. His face was lean, the deep cheek-lines great furrows down his face so that his cheek bones and chin stood out sharply. He looked up at the Joad truck and his eyes were puzzled and angry.

Tom leaned out of the window. "Any law 'gainst folks stoppin' here for the night?"

The man had seen only the truck. His eyes focused down on Tom. "I dunno," he said. "We on'y stopped here 'cause we couldn't git no further."

"Any water here?"

The man pointed to a service-station shack about a quarter of a mile ahead. "They's water there they'll let ya take a bucket of."

Tom hesitated. "Well, ya s'pose we could camp down 'longside?"

The lean man looked puzzled. "We don't own it," he said. "We on'y stopped here 'cause this goddamn ol' trap wouldn' go no further."

Tom insisted. "Anyways you're here an' we ain't. You got a right to say if you wan' neighbors or not."

The appeal to hospitality had an instant effect. The lean face broke into a smile. "Why, sure, come on off the road. Proud to have ya." And he called, "Sairy, there's some folks goin' ta stay with us. Come on out an' say how d'ya do. Sairy ain't well," he added. The tent flaps opened and a wizened woman came out—a face wrinkled as a dried leaf and eyes that seemed to flame in her face, black eyes that seemed to look out of a well of horror. She was small and shuddering. She held herself upright by a tent flap, and the hand holding onto the canvas was a skeleton covered with wrinkled skin.

When she spoke her voice had a beautiful low timbre, soft and modulated, and yet with ringing overtones. "Tell 'em welcome," she said. "Tell 'em good an' welcome."

Tom drove off the road and brought his truck into the field and lined it up with the touring car. And people boiled down from the truck, Ruthie and Winfield too quickly, so that their legs gave way and they shrieked at the pins and needles that ran through their limbs. Ma went quickly to work. She untied the three-gallon bucket from the back of the truck and approached the squealing children. "Now you go git water—right down there. Ask nice. Say, 'Please, kin we git a bucket of water?' and say, 'Thank you.' An' carry it back together helpin', an' don't spill none. An' if you see stick wood to burn, bring it on." The children stamped away toward the shack.

By the tent a little embarrassment had set in, and social intercourse had paused before it started. Pa said, "You ain't Oklahomy folks?"

And Al, who stood near the car, looked at the license plates. "Kansas," he said.

The lean man said, "Galena, or right about there. Wilson, Ivy Wilson."

"We're Joads," said Pa. "We come from right near Sallisaw."

"Well, we're proud to meet you folks," said Ivy Wilson. "Sairy, these is Joads."

"I knowed you wasn't Oklahomy folks. You talk queer kinda—that ain't no blame, you understan'."

"Ever'body says words different," said Ivy. "Arkansas folks says 'em different, and Oklahomy folks says 'em different. And we seen a lady from Massachusetts, an' she said 'em differentest of all. Couldn' hardly make out what she was sayin'."

Noah and Uncle John and the preacher began to unload the truck. They helped Grampa down and sat him on the ground and he sat limply, staring ahead of him. "You sick, Grampa?" Noah asked.

"You goddamn right," said Grampa weakly. "Sicker'n hell."

Sairy Wilson walked slowly and carefully toward him. "How'd you like ta come in our tent?" she asked. "You kin lay down on our mattress an' rest."

He looked up at her, drawn by her soft voice. "Come on now," she said. "You'll git some rest. We'll he'p you over."

Without warning Grampa began to cry. His chin wavered and his old lips tightened over his mouth and he sobbed hoarsely. Ma rushed over to him and put her arms around him. She lifted him to his feet, her broad back straining, and she half lifted, half helped him into the tent.

Uncle John said, "He must be good an' sick. He ain't never done that before. Never seen him blubberin' in my life." He jumped up on the truck and tossed a mattress down.

Ma came out of the tent and went to Casy. "You been aroun' sick people," she said. "Grampa's sick. Won't you go take a look at him?"

Casy walked quickly to the tent and went inside. A double mattress was on the ground, the blankets spread neatly; and a little tin stove stood on iron legs, and the fire in it burned unevenly. A bucket of water, a wooden box of supplies, and a box for a table, that was all. The light of the setting sun came pinkly through the tent walls. Sairy Wilson knelt on the ground, beside the mattress, and Grampa lay on his back. His eyes were open, staring upward, and his cheeks were flushed. He breathed heavily.

Casy took the skinny old wrist in his fingers. "Feeling kinda tired, Grampa?" he asked. The staring eyes moved toward his voice but did not find him. The lips practiced a speech but did not speak it. Casy felt the pulse and he dropped the wrist and put his hand on Grampa's forehead. A struggle began in the old man's body, his legs moved restlessly and his hands stirred. He said a whole string of blurred sounds that were not words, and his face was red under the spiky white whiskers.

Sairy Wilson spoke softly to Casy. "Know what's wrong?"

He looked up at the wrinkled face and the burning eyes. "Do you?"

"I—think so."

"What?" Casy asked.

"Might be wrong. I wouldn' like to say."

Casy looked back at the twitching red face. "Would you say—maybe—he's workin' up a stroke?"

"I'd say that," said Sairy. "I seen it three times before."

From outside came the sounds of camp-making, wood chopping, and the rattle of pans. Ma looked through the flaps. "Granma wants to come in. Would she better?"

The preacher said, "She'll just fret if she don't."

"Think he's awright?" Ma asked.

Casy shook his head slowly. Ma looked quickly down at the struggling old face with blood pounding through it. She drew outside and her voice came through. "He's awright, Granma. He's jus' takin' a little res'."

And Granma answered sulkily, "Well, I want ta see him. He's a tricky devil. He wouldn't never let ya know." And she came scurrying through the flaps. She stood over the mattresses and looked down. "What's the matter'th you?" she demanded of Grampa. And again his eyes reached toward her voice and his lips writhed. "He's sulkin'," said Granma. "I tol' you he was tricky. He was gonna sneak away this mornin' so he wouldn't have to come. An' then his hip got a-hurtin'," she said disgustedly. "He's jus' sulkin'. I seen him when he wouldn' talk to nobody before."

Casy said gently, "He ain't sulkin', Granma. He's sick."

"Oh!" She looked down at the old man again. "Sick bad, you think?"

"Purty bad, Granma."

For a moment she hesitated uncertainly. "Well," she said quickly, "why ain't you prayin'? You're a preacher, ain't you?"

Casy's strong fingers blundered over to Grampa's wrist and clasped around it. "I tol' you, Granma. I ain't a preacher no more."

"Pray anyway," she ordered. "You know all the stuff by heart."

"I can't," said Casy. "I don't know what to pray for or who to pray to."

Granma's eyes wandered away and came to rest on Sairy. "He won't pray," she said. "D'I ever tell ya how Ruthie prayed when she was a little skinner? Says, 'Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. An' when she got there the cupboard was bare, an' so the poor dog got none. Amen.' That's jus' what she done." The shadow of someone walking between the tent and the sun crossed the canvas.

Grampa seemed to be struggling; all his muscles twitched. And suddenly he jarred as though under a heavy blow. He lay still and his breath was stopped.

Casy looked down at the old man's face and saw that it was turning a blackish purple. Sairy touched Casy's shoulder. She whispered, "His tongue, his tongue, his tongue."

Casy nodded. "Get in front a Granma." He pried the tight jaws apart and reached into the old man's throat for the tongue. And as he lifted it clear, a rattling breath came out, and a sobbing breath was indrawn. Casy found a stick on the ground and held down the tongue with it, and the uneven breath rattled in and out.

Granma hopped about like a chicken. "Pray," she said. "Pray, you. Pray, I tell ya." Sairy tried to hold her back. "Pray, goddamn you!" Granma cried.

Casy looked up at her for a moment. The rasping breath came louder and more unevenly. "Our Father which are in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name——"

"Glory!" shouted Granma.

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done—on earth—as it is in Heaven."

"Amen."

A long gasping sigh came from the open mouth, and then a crying release of air.

"Give us this day—our daily bread—and forgive us—" The breathing had stopped. Casy looked down into Grampa's eyes and they were clear and deep and penetrating, and there was a knowing serene look in them.

"Hallelujah!" said Granma. "Go on."

"Amen," said Casy

Granma was still then. And outside the tent all the noise had stopped. A car whished by on the highway. Casy still knelt on the floor beside the mattress. The people outside were listening, standing quietly intent on the sounds of dying. Sairy took Granma by the arm and led her outside, and Granma moved with dignity and held her head high. She walked for the family and held her head straight for the family. Sairy took her to a mattress lying on the ground and sat her down on it. And Granma looked straight ahead, proudly, for she was on show now. The tent was still, and at last Casy spread the tent flaps with his hands and stepped out.

Pa asked softly, "What was it?"

"Stroke," said Casy. "A good quick stroke."

Life began to move again. The sun touched the horizon and flattened over it. And along the highway there came a long line of huge freight trucks with red sides. They rumbled along, putting a little earthquake in the ground, and the standing exhaust pipes sputtered blue smoke from the Diesel oil. One man drove each truck, and his relief man slept in a bunk high up against the ceiling. But the trucks never stopped, they thundered day and night and the ground shook under their heavy march.

The family became a unit. Pa squatted down on the ground, and Uncle John beside him Pa was the head of the family now. Ma stood behind him. Noah and Tom and Al squatted, and the preacher sat down, and then reclined on his elbow. Connie and Rose of Sharon walked at a distance. Now Ruthie and Winfield, clattering up with a bucket of water held between them, felt the change, and they slowed up and set down the bucket and moved quietly to stand with Ma.

Granma sat proudly, coldly, until the group was formed, until no one looked at her, and then she lay down and covered her face with her arm. The red sun set and left a shining twilight on the land, so that faces were bright in the evening and eyes shone in reflection of the sky. The evening picked up light where it could.

Pa said, "It was in Mr. Wilson's tent."

Uncle John nodded. "He loaned his tent."

"Fine friendly folks," Pa said softly.

Wilson stood by his broken car, and Sairy had gone to the mattress to sit beside Granma, but Sairy was careful not to touch her.

Pa called, "Mr. Wilson!" The man scuffed near and squatted down, and Sairy came and stood beside him. Pa said, "We're thankful to you folks."

"We're proud to help," said Wilson.

"We're beholden to you," said Pa.

"There's no beholden in a time of dying," said Wilson, and Sairy echoed him, "Never no beholden."

Al said, "I'll fix your car—me an' Tom will." And Al looked proud that he could return the family's obligation.

"We could use some help." Wilson admitted the retiring of the obligation.

Pa said, "We got to figger what to do. They's laws. You got to report a death, an' when you do that, they either take forty dollars for the undertaker or they take him for a pauper."

Uncle John broke in, "We never did have no paupers."

Tom said, "Maybe we got to learn. We never got booted off no land before, neither."

"We done it clean," said Pa. "There can't no blame be laid on us. We never took nothin' we couldn' pay; we never suffered no man's charity. When Tom here got in trouble we could hold up our heads. He only done what any man would a done."

"Then what'll we do?" Uncle John asked.

"We go in like the laws says an' they'll come out for him. We on'y got a hundred an' fifty dollars. They take forty to bury Grampa an' we won't get to California—or else they'll bury him a pauper." The men stirred restively, and they studied the darkening ground in front of their knees.

Pa said softly, "Grampa buried his pa with his own hand, done it in dignity, an' shaped the grave nice with his own shovel. That was a time when a man had the right to be buried by his own son an' a son had the right to bury his own father."

"The law says different now," said Uncle John.

"Sometimes the law can't be foller'd no way," said Pa. "Not in decency, anyways. They's lots a times you can't. When Floyd was loose an' goin' wild, law said we got to give him up—an' nobody give him up. Sometimes a fella got to sift the law. I'm sayin' now I got the right to bury my own pa. Anybody got somepin to say?"

The preacher rose high on his elbow. "Law changes," he said, "but 'got to's' go on. You got the right to do what you got to do."

Pa turned to Uncle John. "It's your right too, John. You got any word against?"

"No word against," said Uncle John. "On'y it's like hidin' him in the night. Grampa's way was t'come out a-shootin'."

Pa said ashamedly, "We can't do like Grampa done. We got to get to California 'fore our money gives out."

Tom broke in, "Sometimes fellas workin' dig up a man an' then they raise hell an' figger he been killed. The gov'ment's got more interest in a dead man than a live one. They'll go hell-scrapin' tryin' to fin' out who he was and how he died. I offer we put a note of writin' in a bottle an' lay it with Grampa, tellin' who he is an' how he died, an' why he's buried here."

Pa nodded agreement. "That's good. Wrote out in a nice han'. Be not so lonesome too, knowin' his name is there with 'im, not jus' a old fella lonesome underground. Any more stuff to say?" The circle was silent.

Pa turned his head to Ma. "You'll lay 'im out?"

"I'll lay 'im out," said Ma. "But who's to get supper?"

Sairy Wilson said, "I'll get supper. You go right ahead. Me an' that big girl of yourn."

"We sure thank you," said Ma. "Noah, you get into them kegs an' bring out some nice pork. Salt won't be deep in it yet, but it'll be right nice eatin'."

"We got a half sack a potatoes," said Sairy.

Ma said, "Gimme two half-dollars." Pa dug in his pocket and gave her the silver. She found the basin, filled it full of water, and went into the tent. It was nearly dark in there. Sairy came in and lighted a candle and stuck it upright on a box and then she went out. For a moment Ma looked down at the dead old man. And then in pity she tore a strip from her own apron and tied up his jaw. She straightened his limbs, folded his hands over his chest. She held his eyelids down and laid a silver piece on each one. She buttoned his shirt and washed his face.

Sairy looked in, saying, "Can I give you any help?"

Ma looked slowly up. "Come in," she said. "I like to talk to ya."

"That's a good big girl you got," said Sairy. "She's right in peelin' potatoes. What can I do to help?"

"I was gonna wash Grampa all over," said Ma, "but he got no other clo'es to put on. An' 'course your quilt's spoilt. Can't never get the smell a death from a quilt. I seen a dog growl an' shake at a mattress my ma died on, an' that was two years later. We'll wrop 'im in your quilt. We'll make it up to you. We got a quilt for you."

Sairy said, "You shouldn' talk like that. We're proud to help. I ain't felt so—safe in a long time. People needs—to help."

Ma nodded. "They do," she said. She looked long into the old whiskery face, with its bound jaw and silver eyes shining in the candlelight. "He ain't gonna look natural. We'll wrop him up."

"The ol' lady took it good."

"Why, she's so old," said Ma, "maybe she don't even rightly know what happened. Maybe she won't really know for quite a while. Besides, us folks takes a pride holdin' in. My pa used to say, 'Anybody can break down. It takes a man not to.' We always try to hold

in." She folded the quilt neatly about Grampa's legs and around his shoulders. She brought the corner of the quilt over his head like a cowl and pulled it down over his face. Sairy handed her half-a-dozen big safety pins, and she pinned the quilt neatly and tightly about the long package. And at last she stood up. "It won't be a bad burying," she said. "We got a preacher to see him in, an' his folks is all aroun'." Suddenly she swayed a little, and Sairy went to her and steadied her. "It's sleep—" Ma said in a shamed tone. "No, I'm awright. We been so busy gettin' ready, you see."

"Come out in the air," Sairy said.

"Yeah, I'm all done here." Sairy blew out the candle and the two went out.

A bright fire burned in the bottom of the little gulch. And Tom, with sticks and wire, had made supports from which two kettles hung and bubbled furiously, and good steam poured out under the lids. Rose of Sharon knelt on the ground out of range of the burning heat, and she had a long spoon in her hand. She saw Ma come out of the tent, and she stood up and went to her.

"Ma," she said, "I got to ask."

"Scared again?" Ma asked "Why, you can't get through nine months without sorrow."

"But will it—hurt the baby?"

Ma said, "They used to be a sayin', 'A chile born outa sorrow'll be a happy chile.' Isn't that so, Mis' Wilson?"

"I heard it like that," said Sairy. "An' I heard the other: 'Born outa too much joy'll be a doleful boy.'"

"I'm all jumpy inside," said Rose of Sharon.

"Well, we ain't none of us jumpin' for fun," said Ma. "You jes' keep watchin' the pots."

On the edge of the ring of firelight the men had gathered. For tools they had a shovel and a mattock. Pa marked out the ground—eight feet long and three feet wide. The work went on in relays. Pa chopped the earth with the mattock and then Uncle John shoveled it out. Al chopped and Tom shoveled. Noah chopped and Connie shoveled. And the hole drove down, for the work never diminished in speed. The shovels of dirt flew out of the hole in quick spurts. When Tom was shoulder deep in the rectangular pit, he said, "How deep, Pa?"

"Good an' deep. A couple feet more. You get out now, Tom, and get that paper wrote."

Tom boosted himself out of the hole and Noah took his place. Tom went to Ma, where she tended the fire. "We got any paper an' pen, Ma?"

Ma shook her head slowly, "No-o. That's one thing we didn' bring." She looked toward Sairy. And the little woman walked quickly to her tent. She brought back a Bible and a half pencil. "Here," she said. "They's a clear page in front. Use that an' tear it out." She handed book and pencil to Tom.

Tom sat down in the firelight. He squinted his eyes in concentration, and at last wrote slowly and carefully on the end paper in big clear letters: "This here is William James Joad, dyed of a stroke, old old man. His fokes bured him becaws they got no money to pay for funerls. Nobody kilt him. Jus a stroke an he dyed." He stopped. "Ma, listen to this here." He read it slowly to her.

"Why, that soun's nice," she said. "Can't you stick on somepin from Scripture so it'll be religious? Open up an' git a sayin', somepin outa Scripture."

"Got to be short," said Tom. "I ain't got much room lef' on the page."

Sairy said, "How 'bout 'God have mercy on his soul'?"

"No," said Tom. "Sounds too much like he was hung. I'll copy somepin." He turned the pages and read, mumbling his lips, saying the words under his breath. "Here's a good short one," he said. "'An' Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord.'"

"Don't mean nothin'," said Ma. "Long's you're gonna put one down, it might's well mean somepin."

Sairy said, "Turn to Psalms, over further. You kin always get somepin outa Psalms."

Tom flipped the pages and looked down the verses. "Now here *is* one," he said. "This here's a nice one, just blowed full a religion: 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.' How's that?"

"That's real nice," said Ma. "Put that one in."

Tom wrote it carefully. Ma rinsed and wiped a fruit jar and Tom screwed the lid down tight on it. "Maybe the preacher ought to wrote it," he said.

Ma said, "No, the preacher wan't no kin." She took the jar from him and went into the dark tent. She unpinned the covering and slipped the fruit jar in under the thin cold hands and pinned the comforter tight again. And then she went back to the fire.

The men came from the grave, their faces shining

with perspiration. "Awright," said Pa. He and John and Noah and Al went into the tent, and they came out carrying the long, pinned bundle between them. They carried it to the grave. Pa leaped into the hole and received the bundle in his arms and laid it gently down. Uncle John put out a hand and helped Pa out of the hole. Pa asked, "How about Granma?"

"I'll see," Ma said. She walked to the mattress and looked down at the old woman for a moment. Then she went back to the grave. "Sleepin'," she said. "Maybe she'd hold it against me, but I ain't a-gonna wake her up. She's tar'd."

Pa said, "Where at's the preacher? We oughta have a prayer."

Tom said, "I seen him walkin' down the road. He don't like to pray no more."

"Don't like to pray?"

"No," said Tom. "He ain't a preacher no more. He figgers it ain't right to fool people actin' like a preacher when he ain't a preacher. I bet he went away so nobody wouldn' ast him."

Casy had come quietly near, and he heard Tom speaking. "I didn' run away," he said. "I'll he'p you folks, but I won't fool ya."

Pa said, "Won't you say a few words? Ain't none of our folks ever been buried without a few words."

"I'll say 'em," said the preacher.

Connie led Rose of Sharon to the graveside, she reluctant. "You got to," Connie said. "It ain't decent not to. It'll jus' be a little."

The firelight fell on the grouped people, showing their faces and their eyes, dwindling on their dark clothes. All the hats were off now. The light danced, jerking over the people.

Casy said, "It'll be a short one." He bowed his head, and the others followed his lead. Casy said solemnly, "This here ol' man jus' lived a life an' jus' died out of it. I don't know whether he was good or bad, but that don't matter much. He was alive, an' that's what matters. An' now he's dead, an' that don't matter. Heard a fella tell a poem one time, an' he says, 'All that lives is holy.' Got to thinkin', an' purty soon it means more than the words says. An' I wouldn' pray for a ol' fella that's dead. He's awright. He got a job to do, but it's all laid out for 'im an' there's on'y one way to do it. But us, we got a job to do, an' they's a thousan' ways, an' we don't know which one to take. An' if I was to pray, it'd be for the folks that don' know which way to turn. Grampa here, he got the easy straight. An' now cover 'im up and let 'im get to his work." He raised his head.

Pa said, "Amen," and the others muttered, "A-men." Then Pa took the shovel, half filled it with dirt, and spread it gently into the black hole. He handed the shovel to Uncle John, and John dropped in a shovelful. Then the shovel went from hand to hand until every man had his turn. When all had taken their duty and their right, Pa attacked the mound of loose dirt and hurriedly filled the hole. The women moved back to the fire to see to supper. Ruthie and Winfield watched, absorbed.

Ruthie said solemnly, "Grampa's down under there." And Winfield looked at her with horrified eyes. And then he ran away to the fire and sat on the ground and sobbed to himself.

Pa half filled the hole, and then he stood panting with the effort while Uncle John finished it. And John was shaping up the mound when Tom stopped him. "Listen," Tom said. "'F we leave a grave, they'll have it open in no time. We got to hide it. Level her off an' we'll strew dry grass. We got to do that."

Pa said, "I didn' think a that. It ain't right to leave a grave unmounded."

"Can't he'p it," said Tom. "They'd dig 'im right up, an' we'd get it for breakin' the law. You know what I get if I break the law."

"Yeah," Pa said. "I forgot that." He took the shovel from John and leveled the grave. "She'll sink, come winter," he said.

"Can't he'p that," said Tom. "We'll be a long ways off by winter. Tromp her in good, an' we'll strew stuff over her."

When the pork and potatoes were done the families sat about on the ground and ate, and they were quiet, staring into the fire. Wilson, tearing a slab of meat with his teeth, sighed with contentment. "Nice eatin' pig," he said.

"Well," Pa explained, "we had a couple shoats, an' we thought we might's well eat 'em. Can't get nothin' for them. When we get kinda use' ta movin' an' Ma can set up bread, why, it'll be pretty nice, seein' the

country an' two kags a' pork right in the truck. How long you folks been on the road?"

Wilson cleared his teeth with his tongue and swallowed. "We ain't been lucky," he said. "We been three weeks from home."

"Why, God Awmighty, we aim to be in California in ten days or less."

Al broke in, "I dunno, Pa. With that load we're packin', we maybe ain't never gonna get there. Not if they's mountains to go over."

They were silent about the fire. Their faces were turned downward and their hair and foreheads showed in the firelight. Above the little dome of the firelight the summer stars shone thinly, and the heat of the day was gradually withdrawing. On her mattress, away from the fire, Granma whimpered softly like a puppy. The heads of all turned in her direction.

Ma said, "Rosasharn, like a good girl go lay down with Granma. She needs somebody now. She's knowin', now."

Rose of Sharon got to her feet and walked to the mattress and lay beside the old woman, and the murmur of their soft voices drifted to the fire. Rose of Sharon and Granma whispered together on the mattress.

Noah said, "Funny thing is—losin' Grampa ain't made me feel no different than I done before. I ain't no sadder than I was."

"It's just the same thing," Casy said. "Grampa an' the old place, they was jus' the same thing."

Al said, "It's a goddamn shame. He been talkin' what he's gonna do, how he gonna squeeze grapes over his head an' let the juice run in his whiskers, an' all stuff like that."

Casy said, "He was foolin', all the time. I think he knowed it. An' Grampa didn' die tonight. He died the minute you took 'im off the place."

"You sure a that?" Pa cried.

"Why, no. Oh, he was breathin'," Casy went on, "but he was dead. He was that place, an' he knowed it."

Uncle John said, "Did you know he was a-dyin'?"

"Yeah," said Casy. "I knowed it."

John gazed at him, and a horror grew in his face. "An' you didn' tell nobody?"

"What good?" Casy asked.

"We—we might of did somepin."

"What?"

"I don' know, but——"

"No," Casy said, "you couldn' a done nothin'. Your way was fixed an' Grampa didn' have no part in it. He didn' suffer none. Not after fust thing this mornin'. He's jus' stayin' with the lan'. He couldn' leave it."

Uncle John sighed deeply.

Wilson said, "We hadda leave my brother Will." The heads turned toward him. "Him an' me had forties side by side. He's older'n me. Neither one ever drove a car. Well, we went in an' we sol' ever'thing. Will, he bought a car, an' they give him a kid to show 'im how to use it. So the afternoon 'fore we're gonna start, Will an' Aunt Minnie go a-practicin'. Will, he comes to a bend in the road an' he yells 'Whoa' an' yanks back, an' he goes through a fence. An' he yells 'Whoa, you bastard' an' tromps down on the gas an' goes over into a gulch. An' there he was. Didn't have nothin' more to sell an' didn't have no car. But it were his own damn fault, praise God. He's so damn mad he won't come along with us, jus' set there a-cussin' an' a-cussin'."

"What's he gonna do?"

"I dunno. He's too mad to figger. An' we couldn't wait. On'y had eighty-five dollars to go on. We couldn' set an' cut it up, but we et it up anyways. Didn' go a hundred mile when a tooth in the rear end bust, an' cost thirty dollars to get her fix', an' then we got to get a tire, an' then a spark plug cracked, an' Sairy got sick. Had ta stop ten days. An' now the goddamn car is bust again, an' money's gettin' low. I dunno when we'll ever get to California. 'F I could on'y fix a car, but I don't know nothin' about cars."

Al asked importantly, "What's the matter?"

"Well, she jus' won't run. Starts an' farts an' stops. In a minute she'll start again, an' then 'fore you can git her goin', she peters out again."

"Runs a minute an' then dies?"

"Yes, sir. An I can't keep her a-goin' no matter how much gas I give her. Got worse an' worse, an' now I cain't get her a-movin' a-tall."

Al was very proud and very mature, then. "I think you got a plugged gas line. I'll blow her out for ya."

And Pa was proud too. "He's a good hand with a car," Pa said.

"Well, I'll sure thank ya for a han'. I sure will. Makes a fella kinda feel—like a little kid, when he can't fix

nothin'. When we get to California I aim to get me a nice car. Maybe she won't break down."

Pa said, "When we get there. Gettin' there's the trouble."

"Oh, but she's worth it," said Wilson. "Why, I seen han' bills how they need folks to pick fruit, an' good wages. Why, jus' think how it's gonna be, under them shady trees a-pickin' fruit an' takin' a bite ever' once in a while. Why, hell, they don't care how much you eat 'cause they got so much. An' with them good wages, maybe a fella can get hisself a little piece a land an' work out for extra cash. Why, hell, in a couple years I bet a fella could have a place of his own."

Pa said, "We seen them han'bills. I got one right here." He took out his purse and from it took a folded orange handbill. In black type it said, "Pea Pickers Wanted in California. Good Wages All Season. 800 Pickers Wanted."

Wilson looked at it curiously. "Why, that's the one I seen. The very same one. You s'pose—maybe they got all eight hunderd awready?"

Pa said, "This is jus' one little part a California. Why, that's the secon' biggest State we got. S'pose they did get all them eight hundred. They's plenty places else. I rather pick fruit anyways. Like you says, under them trees an' pickin' fruit—why, even the kids'd like to do that."

Suddenly Al got up and walked to the Wilsons' touring car. He looked in for a moment and then came back and sat down.

"You can't fix her tonight," Wilson said.

"I know. I'll get to her in the morning."

Tom had watched his young brother carefully. "I was thinkin' somepin like that myself," he said.

Noah asked, "What you two fellas talkin' about?"

Tom and Al went silent, each waiting for the other. "You tell 'em," Al said finally.

"Well, maybe it's no good, an' maybe it ain't the same thing Al's thinking. Here she is, anyways. We got a overload, but Mr. and Mis' Wilson ain't. If some of us folks could ride with them an' take some a their light stuff in the truck, we wouldn't break no springs an' we could git up hills. An' me an' Al both knows about a car, so we could keep that car a-rollin'. We'd keep together on the road an' it'd be good for ever'body."

Wilson jumped up. "Why, sure. Why, we'd be proud. We certain'y would. You hear that, Sairy?"

"It's a nice thing," said Sairy. "Wouldn' be a burden on you folks?"

"No, by God," said Pa. "Wouldn't be no burden at all. You'd be helpin' us."

Wilson settled back uneasily. "Well, I dunno."

"What's a matter, don' you wanta?"

"Well, ya see—I on'y got 'bout thirty dollars lef', an' I won't be no burden."

Ma said, "You won't be no burden. Each'll help each, an' we'll all git to California. Sairy Wilson he'ped lay Grampa out," and she stopped. The relationship was plain.

Al cried, "That car'll take six easy. Say me to drive, an' Rosasharn an' Connie and Granma. Then we take the big light stuff an' pile her on the truck. An' we'll trade off ever' so often." He spoke loudly, for a load of worry was lifted from him.

They smiled shyly and looked down at the ground. Pa fingered the dusty earth with his fingertips. He said, "Ma favors a white house with oranges growin' around. They's a big pitcher on a calendar she seen."

Sairy said, "If I get sick again, you got to go on an' get there. We ain't a goin' to burden."

Ma looked carefully at Sairy, and she seemed to see for the first time the pain-tormented eyes and the face that was haunted and shrinking with pain. And Ma said, "We gonna see you get through. You said yourself, you can't let help go unwanted."

Sairy studied her wrinkled hands in the firelight. "We got to get some sleep tonight." She stood up.

"Grampa—it's like he's dead a year," Ma said.

The families moved lazily to their sleep, yawning luxuriously. Ma sloshed the tin plates off a little and rubbed the grease free with a flour sack. The fire died down and the stars descended. Few passenger cars went by on the highway now, but the transport trucks thundered by at intervals and put little earthquakes in the ground. In the ditch the cars were hardly visible under the starlight. A tied dog howled at the service station down the road. The families were quiet and sleeping, and the field mice grew bold and scampered about among the mattresses. Only Sairy Wilson was awake. She stared into the sky and braced her body firmly against pain.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The western land, nervous under the beginning change. The Western States, nervous as horses before a thunder storm. The great owners, nervous, sensing a change, knowing nothing of the nature of the change. The great owners, striking at the immediate thing, the widening government, the growing labor unity; striking at new taxes, at plans; not knowing these things are results, not causes. Results, not causes; results, not causes. The causes lie deep and simple—the causes are a hunger in a stomach, multiplied a million times; a hunger in a single soul, hunger for joy and some security, multiplied a million times; muscles and mind aching to grow, to work, to create, multiplied a million times. The last clear definite function of man—muscles aching to work, minds aching to create beyond the single need—this is man. To build a wall, to build a house, a dam, and in the wall and house and dam to put something of Manself, and to Manself take back something of the wall, the house, the dam; to take hard muscles from the lifting, to take the clear lines and form from conceiving. For man, unlike any other thing organic or inorganic in the universe, grows beyond his work, walks up the stairs of his concepts, emerges ahead of his accomplishments. This you may say of man—when theories change and crash, when schools, philosophies, when narrow dark alleys of thought, national, religious, economic, grow and disintegrate, man reaches, stumbles forward, painfully, mistakenly sometimes. Having stepped forward, he may slip back, but only half a step, never the full step back. This you may say and know it and know it. This you may know when the bombs plummet out of the black planes on the market place, when prisoners are stuck like pigs, when the crushed bodies drain filthily in the dust. You may know it in this way. If the step were not being taken, if the stumbling-forward ache were not alive, the bombs would not fall, the throats would not be cut. Fear the time when the bombs stop falling while the bombers live—for every bomb is proof that the spirit has not died. And fear the time when the strikes stop while the great owners live—for every little beaten strike is proof that the step is being taken. And this you can know—fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept, for this one quality is the foundation of Manself, and this one quality is man, distinctive in the universe.

The Western States nervous under the beginning change. Texas and Oklahoma, Kansas and Arkansas, New Mexico, Arizona, California. A single family moved from the land. Pa borrowed money from the bank, and now the bank wants the land. The land company—that's the bank when it has land—wants tractors, not families on the land. Is a tractor bad? Is the power that turns the long furrows wrong? If this tractor were ours it would be good—not mine, but ours. If our tractor turned the long furrows of our land, it would be good. Not my land, but ours. We could love that tractor then as we have loved this land when it was ours. But this tractor does two things—it turns the land and turns us off the land. There is little difference between this tractor and a tank. The people are driven, intimidated, hurt by both. We must think about this.

One man, one family driven from the land; this rusty car creaking along the highway to the west. I lost my land, a single tractor took my land. I am alone and I am bewildered. And in the night one family camps in a ditch and another family pulls in and the tents come out. The two men squat on their hams and the women and children listen. Here is the node, you who hate change and fear revolution. Keep these two squatting men apart; make them hate, fear, suspect each other Here is the anlage of the thing you fear. This is the zygote. For here "I lost my land" is changed; a cell is split and from its splitting grows the thing you hate—"We lost *our* land." The danger is here, for two men are not as lonely and perplexed as one. And from this first "we" there grows a still more dangerous thing: "I have a little food" plus "I have none." If from this problem the sum is "We have a little food," the thing is on its way, the movement has direction. Only a little multiplication now, and this land, this tractor are ours. The two men squatting in a ditch, the little fire, the side-meat stewing in a single pot, the silent, stone-eyed women; behind, the children listening with their souls to words their minds do not understand. The night draws down. The baby has a cold. Here, take this blanket. It's wool. It was my mother's blanket—take it for the baby. This is the thing to bomb. This is the beginning—from "I" to "we."

If you who own the things people must have could understand this, you might preserve yourself. If you could separate causes from results, if you could know that Paine, Marx, Jefferson, Lenin, were results, not causes,

you might survive. But that you cannot know. For the quality of owning freezes you forever into "I," and cuts you off forever from the "we."

The Western States are nervous under the beginning change. Need is the stimulus to concept, concept to action. A half-million people moving over the country; a million more restive, ready to move; ten million more feeling the first nervousness.

And tractors turning the multiple furrows in the vacant land.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Along 66 the hamburger stands—Al & Susy's Place—Carl's Lunch—Joe & Minnie—Will's Eats. Board-and-bat shacks. Two gasoline pumps in front, a screen door, a long bar, stools, and a foot rail. Near the door three slot machines, showing through glass the wealth of nickels three bars will bring. And beside them, the nickel phonograph with records piled up like pies, ready to swing out to the turntable and play dance music, "Ti-pi-ti-pi-tin," "Thanks for the Memory," Bing Crosby, Benny Goodman. At one end of the counter a covered case; candy cough drops, caffeine sulphate called Sleepless, No-Doze; candy, cigarettes, razor blades, aspirin, Bromo-Seltzer, Alka-Seltzer. The walls decorated with posters, bathing girls, blondes with big breasts and slender hips and waxen faces, in white bathing suits, and holding a bottle of Coca-Cola and smiling—see what you get with a Coca-Cola. Long bar, and salts, peppers, mustard pots, and paper napkins. Beer taps behind the counter, and in back the coffee urns, shiny and steaming, with glass gauges showing the coffee level. And pies in wire cages and oranges in pyramids of four. And little piles of Post Toasties, corn flakes, stacked up in designs.

The signs on cards, picked out with shining mica: Pies Like Mother Used to Make. Credit Makes Enemies. Let's Be Friends. Ladies May Smoke But Be Careful Where You Lay Your Butts. Eat Here and Keep Your Wife for a Pet. IITYWYBAD?

Down at one end the cooking plates, pots of stew, potatoes, pot roast, roast beef, gray roast pork waiting to be sliced.

Minnie or Susy or Mae, middle-aging behind the counter, hair curled and rouge and powder on a sweating face. Taking orders in a soft low voice, calling them to the cook with a screech like a peacock. Mopping the counter with circular strokes, polishing the big shining coffee urns. The cook is Joe or Carl or Al, hot in a white coat and apron, beady sweat on white forehead, below the white cook's cap; moody, rarely speaking, looking up for a moment at each new entry. Wiping the griddle, slapping down the hamburger. He repeats Mae's orders gently, scrapes the griddle, wipes it down with burlap. Moody and silent.

Mae is the contact, smiling, irritated, near to outbreak; smiling while her eyes look on past—unless for truck drivers. There's the backbone of the joint. Where the trucks stop, that's where the customers come. Can't fool truck drivers, they know. They bring the custom. They know. Give 'em a stale cup of coffee an' they're off the joint. Treat 'em right an' they come back. Mae really smiles with all her might at truck drivers. She bridles a little, fixes her back hair so that her breasts will lift with her raised arms, passes the time of day and indicates great things, great times, great jokes. Al never speaks. He is no contact. Sometimes he smiles a little at a joke, but he never laughs. Sometimes he looks up at the vivaciousness in Mae's voice, and then he scrapes the griddle with a spatula, scrapes the grease into an iron trough around the plate. He presses down a hissing hamburger with his spatula. He lays the split buns on the plate to toast and heat. He gathers up stray onions from the plate and heaps them on the meat and presses them in with the spatula. He puts half the bun on top of the meat, paints the other half with melted butter, with thin pickle relish. Holding the bun on the meat, he slips the spatula under the thin pad of meat, flips it over, lays the buttered half on top, and drops the hamburger on a small plate. Quarter of a dill pickle, two black olives beside the sandwich. Al skims the plate down the counter like a quoit. And he scrapes his griddle with the spatula and looks moodily at the stew kettle.

Cars whisking by on 66. License plates. Mass., Tenn., R.I., N.Y., Vt., Ohio. Going west. Fine cars, cruising at sixty-five.

There goes one of them Cords. Looks like a coffin on wheels.

But, Jesus, how they travel!

See that La Salle? Me for that. I ain't a hog. I go for a La Salle.

'F ya goin' big, what's a matter with a Cad'? Jus' a little bigger, little faster.

I'd take a Zephyr myself. You ain't ridin' no fortune, but you got class an' speed. Give me a Zephyr.

Well, sir, you may get a laugh outa this—I'll take a Buick-Puick. That's good enough.

But, hell, that costs in the Zephyr class an' it ain't got the sap.

I don't care. I don't want nothin' to do with nothing of Henry Ford's. I don't like 'im. Never did. Got a brother worked in the plant. Oughta hear him tell.

Well, a Zephyr got sap.

The big cars on the highway. Languid, heat-raddled ladies, small nucleuses about whom revolve a thousand accouterments: creams, ointments to grease themselves, coloring matter in phials—black, pink, red, white, green, silver—to change the color of hair, eyes, lips, nails, brows, lashes, lids. Oils, seeds, and pills to make the bowels move. A bag of bottles, syringes, pills, powders, fluids, jellies to make their sexual intercourse safe, odorless, and unproductive. And this apart from clothes. What a hell of a nuisance!

Lines of weariness around the eyes, lines of discontent down from the mouth, breasts lying heavily in little hammocks, stomach and thighs straining against cases of rubber. And the mouths panting, the eyes sullen, disliking sun and wind and earth, resenting food and weariness, hating time that rarely makes them beautiful and always makes them old.

Beside them, little pot-bellied men in light suits and panama hats; clean, pink men with puzzled, worried eyes, with restless eyes. Worried because formulas do not work out; hungry for security and yet sensing its disappearance from the earth. In their lapels the insignia of lodges and service clubs, places where they can go and, by a weight of numbers of little worried men, reassure themselves that business is noble and not the curious ritualized thievery they know it is; that business men are intelligent in spite of the records of their stupidity; that they are kind and charitable in spite of the principles of sound business; that their lives are rich instead of the thin tiresome routines they know; and that a time is coming when they will not be afraid any more.

And these two, going to California; going to sit in the lobby of the Beverly-Wilshire Hotel and watch people they envy go by, to look at mountains—mountains, mind you, and great trees—he with his worried eyes and she thinking how the sun will dry her skin. Going to look at the Pacific Ocean, and I'll bet a hundred thousand dollars to nothing at all, he will say, "It isn't as big as I thought it would be." And she will envy plump young bodies on the beach. Going to California really to go home again. To say, "So-and-So was at the table next to us at the Trocadero. She's really a mess, but she does wear nice clothes." And he, "I talked to good sound business men out there. They don't see a chance till we get rid of that fellow in the White House." And, "I got it from a man in the know—she has syphilis, you know. She was in that Warner picture. Man said she's slept her way into pictures. Well, she got what she was looking for." But the worried eyes are never calm, and the pouting mouth is never glad. The big car cruising along at sixty.

I want a cold drink.

Well, there's something up ahead. Want to stop?

Do you think it would be clean?

Clean as you're going to find in this God-forsaken country.

Well, maybe the bottled soda will be all right.

The great car squeals and pulls to a stop. The fat worried man helps his wife out.

Mae looks at and past them as they enter. Al looks up from his griddle, and down again. Mae knows. They'll drink a five-cent soda and crab that it ain't cold enough. The woman will use six paper napkins and drop them on the floor. The man will choke and try to put the blame on Mae. The woman will sniff as though she smelled rotting meat and they will go out again and tell forever afterward that the people in the West are sullen. And Mae, when she is alone with Al, has a name for them. She calls them shitheels.

Truck drivers. That's the stuff.

Here's a big transport comin'. Hope they stop; take away the taste of them shitheels. When I worked in that hotel in Albuquerque, Al, the way they steal—ever' darn thing. An' the bigger the car they got, the more they steal—towels, silver, soap dishes, I can't figger it.

And Al, morosely. Where ya think they get them big cars and stuff? Born with 'em? You won't never have nothin'.

The transport truck, a driver and relief. How 'bout stoppin' for a cup a Java? I know this dump.

How's the schedule?

Oh, we're ahead.

Pull up, then. They's a ol' war horse in here that's a kick. Good Java, too.

The truck pulls up. Two men in khaki riding trousers,

boots, short jackets, and shiny-visored military caps. Screen door—slam.

H'ya, Mae?

Well, if it ain't Big Bill the Rat! When'd you get back on this run?

Week ago.

The other man puts a nickel in the phonograph, watches the disk slip free and the turntable rise up under it. Bing Crosby's voice—golden. "Thanks for the memory, of sunburn at the shore—You might have been a headache, but you never were a bore—" And the truck driver sings for Mae's ears, you might have been a haddock but you never was a whore—

Mae laughs. Who's ya frien', Bill? New on this run, ain't he?

The other puts a nickel in the slot machine, wins four slugs, and puts them back. Walks to the counter.

Well, what's it gonna be?

Oh, cup a Java. Kinda pie ya got?

Banana cream, pineapple cream, chocolate cream—an' apple.

Make it apple. Wait—Kind is that big thick one?

Mae lifts it out and sniffs it. Banana cream.

Cut off a hunk; make it a big hunk.

Man at the slot machine says, Two all around.

Two it is. Seen any new etchin's lately, Bill?

Well, here's one.

Now, you be careful front of a lady.

Oh, this ain't bad. Little kid comes in late ta school. Teacher says, "Why ya late?" Kid says, "Had a take a heifer down—get 'er bred." Teacher says, "Couldn't your ol' man do it?" Kid says, "Sure he could, but not as good as the bull."

Mae squeaks with laughter, harsh screeching laughter. Al, slicing onions carefully on a board, looks up and smiles, and then looks down again. Truck drivers, that's the stuff. Gonna leave a quarter each for Mae. Fifteen cents for pie an' coffee an' a dime for Mae. An' they ain't tryin' to make her, neither.

Sitting together on the stools, spoons sticking up out of the coffee mugs. Passing the time of day. And Al, rubbing down his griddle, listening but making no comment. Bing Crosby's voice stops. The turntable drops down and the record swings into its place in the pile. The purple light goes off. The nickel, which has caused all this mechanism to work, has caused Crosby to sing and an orchestra to play—this nickel drops from between the contact points into the box where the profits go. The nickel, unlike most money, has actually done a job of work, has been physically responsible for a reaction.

Steam spurts from the valve of the coffee urn. The compressor of the ice machine chugs softly for a time and then stops. The electric fan in the corner waves its head slowly back and forth, sweeping the room with a warm breeze. On the highway, on 66, the cars whiz by.

"They was a Massachusetts car stopped a while ago," said Mae.

Big Bill grasped his cup around the top so that the spoon stuck up between his first and second fingers. He drew in a snort of air with the coffee, to cool it. "You ought to be out on 66. Cars from all over the country. All headin' west. Never seen so many before. Sure some honeys on the road."

"We seen a wreck this mornin'," his companion said. "Big car. Big Cad', a special job and a honey, low, cream-color, special job. Hit a truck. Folded the radiator right back into the driver. Must a been doin' ninety. Steerin' wheel went right on through the guy an' lef' him a-wigglin' like a frog on a hook. Peach of a car. A honey. You can have her for peanuts now. Drivin' alone, the guy was."

Al looked up from his work. "Hurt the truck?"

"Oh, Jesus Christ! Wasn't a truck. One of them cut-down cars full a stoves an' pans an' mattresses an' kids an' chickens. Goin' west, you know. This guy come by us doin' ninety—r'ared up on two wheels just to pass us, an' a car's comin' so he cuts in an' whangs this here truck. Drove like he's blin' drunk. Jesus, the air was full a bed clothes an' chickens an' kids. Killed one kid. Never seen such a mess. We pulled up. Ol' man that's drivin' the truck, he jus' stan's there lookin' at that dead kid. Can't get a word out of 'im. Jus' rum-dumb. God Almighty, the road is full a them families goin' west. Never seen so many. Gets worse all a time. Wonder where the hell they all come from?"

"Wonder where they all go to," said Mae. "Come here for gas sometimes, but they don't hardly never buy nothin' else. People says they steal. We ain't got nothin' layin' around. They never stole nothin' from us."

Big Bill, munching his pie, looked up the road through the screened window. "Better tie your stuff down. I think you got some of 'em comin' now."

A 1926 Nash sedan pulled wearily off the highway.

The back seat was piled nearly to the ceiling with sacks, with pots and pans, and on the very top, right up against the ceiling, two boys rode. On the top of the car, a mattress and a folded tent; tent poles tied along the running board. The car pulled up to the gas pumps. A dark-haired, hatchet-faced man got slowly out. And the two boys slid down from the load and hit the ground.

Mae walked around the counter and stood in the door. The man was dressed in gray wool trousers and a blue shirt, dark blue with sweat on the back and under the arms. The boys in overalls and nothing else, ragged patched overalls. Their hair was light, and it stood up evenly all over their heads, for it had been roached. Their faces were streaked with dust. They went directly to the mud puddle under the hose and dug their toes into the mud.

The man asked, "Can we git some water, ma'am?"

A look of annoyance crossed Mae's face. "Sure, go ahead." She said softly over her shoulder, "I'll keep my eye on the hose." She watched while the man slowly unscrewed the radiator cap and ran the hose in.

A woman in the car, a flaxen-haired woman, said, "See if you can't git it here."

The man turned off the hose and screwed on the cap again. The little boys took the hose from him and they up-ended it and drank thirstily. The man took off his dark, stained hat and stood with a curious humility in front of the screen. "Could you see your way to sell us a loaf of bread, ma'am?"

Mae said, "This ain't a grocery store. We got bread to make san'widges."

"I know, ma'm." His humility was insistent. "We need bread and there ain't nothin' for quite a piece, they say."

"'F we sell bread we gonna run out." Mae's tone was faltering.

"We're hungry," the man said.

"Whyn't you buy a san'widge? We got nice san'widges, hamburgs."

"We'd sure admire to do that, ma'am. But we can't. We got to make a dime do all of us." And he said embarrassedly, "We ain't got but a little."

Mae said, "You can't get no loaf of bread for a dime. We only got fifteen-cent loafs."

From behind her Al growled, "God Almighty, Mae, give 'em bread."

"We'll run out 'fore the bread truck comes."

"Run out, then, goddamn it," said Al. And he looked sullenly down at the potato salad he was mixing.

Mae shrugged her plump shoulders and looked to the truck drivers to show them what she was up against.

She held the screen door open and the man came in, bringing a smell of sweat with him. The boys edged in behind him and they went immediately to the candy case and stared in—not with craving or with hope or even with desire, but just with a kind of wonder that such things could be. They were alike in size and their faces were alike. One scratched his dusty ankle with the toe nails of his other foot. The other whispered some soft message and then they straightened their arms so that their clenched fists in the overall pockets showed through the thin blue cloth.

Mae opened a drawer and took out a long waxpaper-wrapped loaf. "This here is a fifteen-cent loaf."

The man put his hat back on his head. He answered with inflexible humility, "Won't you—can't you see your way to cut off ten cents' worth?"

Al said snarlingly, "Goddamn it, Mae. Give 'em the loaf."

The man turned toward Al. "No, we want ta buy ten cents' worth of it. We got it figgered awful close, mister, to get to California."

Mae said resignedly, "You can have this for ten cents."

"That'd be robbin' you ma'am."

"Go ahead—Al says to take it." She pushed the waxpapered loaf across the counter. The man took a deep leather pouch from his rear pocket, untied the strings, and spread it open. It was heavy with silver and with greasy bills.

"May soun' funny to be so tight," he apologized. "We got a thousan' miles to go, an' we don't know if we'll make it." He dug in the pouch with a forefinger, located a dime, and pinched in for it. When he put it down on the counter he had a penny with it. He was about to drop the penny back into the pouch when his eye fell on the boys frozen before the candy counter. He moved slowly down to them. He pointed in the case at big long sticks of striped peppermint. "Is them penny candy, ma'am?"

Mae moved down and looked in. "Which ones?"

"There, them stripy ones."

The little boys raised their eyes to her face and they stopped breathing; their mouths were partly opened, their half-naked bodies were rigid.

"Oh—them. Well, no—them's two for a penny."

"Well, gimme two then, ma'am." He placed the copper cent carefully on the counter. The boys expelled their held breath softly. Mae held the big sticks out.

"Take 'em," said the man.

They reached timidly, each took a stick, and they held them down at their sides and did not look at them. But they looked at each other, and their mouth corners smiled rigidly with embarrassment.

"Thank you, ma'am." The man picked up the bread and went out the door, and the little boys marched stiffly behind him, the red-striped sticks held tightly against their legs. They leaped like chipmunks over the front seat and onto the top of the load, and they burrowed back out of sight like chipmunks.

The man got in and started his car, and with a roaring motor and a cloud of blue oily smoke the ancient Nash climbed up on the highway and went on its way to the west.

From inside the restaurant the truck drivers and Mae and Al stared after them.

Big Bill wheeled back. "Them wasn't two-for-a-cent candy," he said.

"What's that to you?" Mae said fiercely.

"Them was a nickel apiece candy," said Bill.

"We got to get goin'," said the other man. "We're droppin' time." They reached in their pockets. Bill put a coin on the counter and the other man looked at it and reached again and put down a coin. They swung around and walked to the door.

"So long," said Bill.

Mae called, "Hey! Wait a minute. You got change."

"You go to hell," said Bill, and the screen door slammed.

Mae watched them get into the great truck, watched it lumber off in low gear, and heard the shift up the whining gears to cruising ratio. "Al—" she said softly.

He looked up from the hamburger he was patting thin and stacking between waxed papers. "What ya want?"

"Look there." She pointed at the coins beside the cups —two half-dollars. Al walked near and looked, and then he went back to his work.

"Truck drivers," Mae said reverently, "an' after them shitheels."

Flies struck the screen with little bumps and droned away. The compressor chugged for a time and then stopped. On 66 the traffic whizzed by, trucks and fine streamlined cars and jalopies; and they went by with a vicious whiz. Mae took down the plates and scraped the pie crusts into a bucket. She found her damp cloth and wiped the counter with circular sweeps. And her eyes were on the highway, where life whizzed by.

Al wiped his hands on his apron. He looked at a paper pinned to the wall over the griddle. Three lines of marks in columns on the paper. Al counted the longest line. He walked along the counter to the cash register, rang "No Sale," and took out a handful of nickels.

"What ya doin'?" Mae asked.

"Number three's ready to pay off," said Al. He went to the third slot machine and played his nickels in, and on the fifth spin of the wheels the three bars came up and the jackpot dumped out into the cup. Al gathered up the big handful of coins and went back of the counter. He dropped them in the drawer and slammed the cash register. Then he went back to his place and crossed out the line of dots. "Number three gets more play'n the others," he said. "Maybe I ought to shift 'em around." He lifted a lid and stirred the slowly simmering stew.

"I wonder what they'll do in California?" said Mae.

"Who?"

"Them folks that was just in."

"Christ knows," said Al.

"S'pose they'll get work?"

"How the hell would I know?" said Al.

She stared eastward along the highway. "Here comes a transport, double. Wonder if they stop? Hope they do." And as the huge truck came heavily down from the highway and parked, Mae seized her cloth and wiped the whole length of the counter. And she took a few swipes at the gleaming coffee urn too, and turned up the bottle-gas under the urn. Al brought out a handful of little turnips and started to peel them. Mae's face was gay when the door opened and the two uniformed truck drivers entered.

"Hi, sister!"

"I won't be a sister to no man," said Mae. They laughed and Mae laughed. "What'll it be, boys?"

"Oh, a cup of Java. What kinda pie ya got?"

"Pineapple cream an' banana cream an' chocolate cream an' apple."

"Give me apple. No, wait—what's that big thick one?"

Mae picked up the pie and smelled it. "Pineapple cream," she said.

"Well, chop out a hunk a that."

The cars whizzed viciously by on 66.

1939

Thomas Wolfe

1900 • 1938

Thomas Wolfe was born and grew up in Asheville, North Carolina, which is situated high in the Smokies and is described with remarkable completeness in his *Look Homeward, Angel.* After graduating from the University of North Carolina, Wolfe studied at Harvard, taught at New York University, and traveled in England and France. His *Of Time and the River* is the best account in literature of a Southerner's discovery of the world outside the South and his loneliness, his feeling of strangeness, in alien places.

Wolfe's reputation rests securely upon four powerful books. *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929) and *Of Time and the River* (1935) tell the story of Eugene Gant; *The Web and the Rock* (1939) and *You Can't Go Home Again* (1940) tell the story of George Webber. Both Gant and Webber are obviously the author himself. If the third and fourth volumes show a growing maturity of thought and style, they have less of the poetic fire, the romantic abandon, which made the first and second volumes such remarkable works. It is doubtful if a romantic genius is ever improved by sobriety. For Wolfe was a great romantic genius with all of the vitality, the exuberance, the undisciplined ardor which the name implies. He was Wordsworth's "creature moving about in worlds not realized." His closest affinities were with Coleridge, whom he often quoted, and with Whitman, whom he obviously emulated. His prose at its best has a lyrical exaltation; at its worst, it is so unpruned as to verge on the bombastic. His books have the vices as well as the virtues of great romantic writing.

Wolfe attempted a synthesis of America. His aim, like Whitman's, was to absorb America into himself and to express America subjectively and emotionally through his own life-experience. He possessed enormous capacities for feeling and passionate living. "It was not his quality as a romantic," he declared of Eugene Gant, "to escape out of life, but into it. Men do not escape from life because life is dull, but life escapes from men because men are little." Wolfe was not concerned with political and social reform. Of Gant, he said, "He had no greater need for rebellion than have most Americans, which is none at all." Except toward the end of his last book (where he spoke, somewhat vaguely, of the need for "the complete revision of the structure of society as we know it"), Wolfe's great concern was to crowd into every moment the maximum of vital experience. He was convinced that the world—and preeminently America, which, unlike the expatriates of his generation, he was never tempted to renounce—"was full of pleasant places, enchanted places." More eloquently than any other writer since Whitman, Wolfe restated the American dream: the right of every man "to live, to work, to be himself, to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him."

Thomas Wolfe's Letters to His Mother, ed. J. S. Terry, New York, 1943 • J. P. Bishop, "The Sorrows of Thomas Wolfe," The Kenyon Review, Gambier, Ohio, Winter 1939

From

Of Time and the River

The following selection shows the marked influence of Whitman in tone and detail. Notable, among other things, are the rich sense impressions, the passionate attachment to the South ("the hills of home"), and the great fondness for trains, which were important to Wolfe as a means of exploration and adventure and as a symbol not only of these but of American achievement and of American unity.

YOUNG FAUSTUS

We are so lost, so naked and so lonely in America. Immense and cruel skies bend over us, and all of us are driven on forever and we have no home. Therefore, it is not the slow, the punctual sanded dip of the unnumbered days that we remember best, the ash of time; nor is it the huge monotone of the lost years, the unswerving schedules of the lost life and the well-known faces, that we remember best. It is a face seen once and lost forever in a crowd, an eye that looked, a face that smiled and vanished on a passing train, it is a prescience of snow upon a certain night, the laughter of a woman in a summer street long years ago, it is the memory of a single moon seen at the pine's dark edge in old October—and all of our lives is written in the twisting of a leaf upon a bough, a door that opened, and a stone.

For America has a thousand lights and weathers and we walk the streets, we walk the streets forever, we walk the streets of life alone.

It is the place of the howling winds, the hurrying of the leaves in old October, the hard clean falling to the earth of acorns. The place of the storm-tossed moaning of the wintry mountainside, where the young men cry out in their throats and feel the savage vigor, the rude strong energies; the place also where the trains cross rivers.

It is a fabulous country, the only fabulous country; it is the one place where miracles not only happen, but where they happen all the time.

It is the place of exultancy and strong joy, the place of the darkened brooding air, the smell of snow; it is the place of all the fierce, the bitten colors in October, when all of the wild, sweet woods flame up; it is also the place of the cider press and the last brown oozings of the York Imperials. It is the place of the lovely girls with good jobs and the husky voices, who will buy a round of drinks; it is the place where the women with fine legs and silken underwear lie in the pullman berth below you, it is the place of the dark-green snore of the pullman cars, and the voices in the night-time in Virginia.

It is the place where great boats are baying at the harbor's mouth, where great ships are putting out to sea; it is the place where great boats are blowing in the gulf of night, and where the river, the dark and secret river, full of strange time, is forever flowing by us to the sea.

The tugs keep baying in the river; at twelve o'clock the Berengaria *moans, her lights slide gently past the piers beyond Eleventh Street; and in the night a tall tree falls in Old Catawba, there in the hills of home.*

It is the place of autumnal moons hung low and orange at the frosty edges of the pines; it is the place of frost and silence, of the clean dry shocks and the opulence of enormous pumpkins that yellow on hard clotted earth; it is the place of the stir and feathery stumble of the hens upon their roost, the frosty, broken barking of the dogs, the great barnshapes and solid shadows in the running sweep of the moon-whited countryside, the wailing whistle of the fast express. It is the place of flares and steamings on the tracks, and the swing and bob and tottering dance of lanterns in the yards; it is the place of dings and knellings and the sudden glare of mighty engines over sleeping faces in the night; it is the place of the terrific web and spread and smouldering, the distant glare of Philadelphia and the solid rumble of the sleepers; it is also the place where the Transcontinental Limited is stroking eighty miles an hour across the continent and the small dark towns whip by like bullets, and there is only the fanlike stroke of the secret, immense and lonely earth again.

I have foreseen this picture many times: I will buy passage on the Fast Express.

From **Of Time and the River** by Thomas Wolfe; published by Charles Scribner's Sons; copyright 1935 by Charles Scribner's Sons • Used by permission of the publishers

48 **Catawba,** a county in western North Carolina

It is the place of the wild and exultant winter's morning and the wind, with the powdery snow, that has been howling all night long; it is the place of solitude and the branches of the spruce and hemlock piled with snow; it is the place where the Fall River boats are tethered to the wharf, and the wild gray snow of furious, secret, and storm-whited morning whips across them. It is the place of the lodge by the frozen lake and the sweet breath and amorous flesh of sinful woman; it is the place of the tragic and lonely beauty of New England; it is the place of the red barn and the sound of the stabled hooves and of bright tatters of old circus posters; it is the place of the immense and pungent smell of breakfast, the country sausages and the ham and eggs, the smoking wheat cakes and the fragrant coffee, and of lone hunters in the frosty thickets who whistle to their lop-eared hounds.

Where is old Doctor Ballard now with all his dogs? He held that they were sacred, that the souls of all the dear lost dead went into them. His youngest sister's soul sat on the seat beside him; she had long ears and her eyes were sad. Two dozen of his other cherished dead trotted around the buggy as he went up the hill past home. And that was eleven years ago, and I was nine years old; and I stared gravely out the window of my father's house at old Doctor Ballard.

It is the place of the straight stare, the cold white bellies and the buried lust of the lovely Boston girls; it is the place of ripe brainless blondes with tender lips and a flowery smell, and of the girls with shapely arms who stand on ladders picking oranges; it is also the place where large slow-bodied girls from Kansas City, with big legs and milky flesh, are sent East to school by their rich fathers, and there are also immense and lovely girls, with the grip of a passionate bear, who have such names as Neilson, Lundquist, Jorgenson and Brandt.

I will go up and down the country, and back and forth across the country on the great trains that thunder over America. I will go out West where States are square; Oh, I will go to Boise, and Helena and Albuquerque. I will go to Montana and the two Dakotas and the unknown places.

It is the place of violence and sudden death; of the fast shots in the night, the club of the Irish cop, and the smell of brains and blood upon the pavement; it is the place of the small-town killings, and the men who shoot the lovers of their wives; it is the place where the Negroes slash with razors and the hillmen kill in the mountain meadows; it is the place of the ugly drunks and the snarling voices and of foul-mouthed men who want to fight; it is the place of the loud word and the foolish boast and the violent threat; it is also the place of the deadly little men with white faces and the eyes of reptiles, who kill quickly and casually in the dark; it is the lawless land that feeds on murder.

"Did you know the two Lipe girls?" he asked. "Yes," I said. "They lived in Biltburn by the river, and one of them was drowned in the flood. She was a cripple, and she wheeled herself along in a chair. She was strong as a bull." "That's the girl," he said.

It is the place of the crack athletes and of the runners who limber up in March; it is the place of the ten-second men and the great jumpers and vaulters; it is the place where Spring comes, and the young birch trees have white and tender barks, of the thaw of the earth, and the feathery smoke of the trees; it is the place of the burst of grass and bud, the wild and sudden tenderness of the wilderness, and of the crews out on the river and the coaches coming down behind them in the motorboats, the surges rolling out behind when they are gone with heavy sudden wash. It is the place of the baseball players, and the easy lob, the soft spring smackings of the glove and mit, the crack of the bat; it is the place of the great batters, fielders, and pitchers, of the nigger boys and the white, drawling, shirt-sleeved men, the bleachers and the resinous smell of old worn wood; it is the place of Rube Waddell, the mighty untamed and ill-fated pitcher when his left arm is swinging like a lash. It is the place of the fighters, the crafty Jewish lightweights and the mauling Italians, Leonard, Tendler, Rocky Kansas, and Dundee; it is the place where the champion looks over his rival's shoulder with a bored expression.

I shall wake at morning in a foreign land thinking I heard a horse in one of the streets of home.

It is the place where they like to win always, and boast about their victories; it is the place of quick money and sudden loss; it is the place of the mile-long freights with their strong, solid, clanking, heavy loneliness at night, and of the silent freight of cars that

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78 Rube Waddell, a great, though eccentric, southpaw for Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics

curve away among raw piney desolations with their promise of new lands and unknown distances—the huge attentive gape of emptiness. It is the place where the bums come singly from the woods at sunset, the huge stillness of the watertower, the fading light, the rails, secret and alive, and trembling with the oncoming train; it is the place of the great tramps, Oklahoma Red, Fargo Pete, and the Jersey Dutchman, who grab fast rattlers for the Western shore; it is the place of old blown bums who come up in October skirls of dust and wind and crumpled newspapers and beg, with canned heat on their breaths: "Help Old McGuire: McGuire's a good guy, kid. You're not so tough, kid: McGuire's your pal, kid: How about McGuire, McGuire——?"

It is the place of the poolroom players and the drugstore boys; of the town whore and her paramour, the tough town driver; it is the place where they go to the woods on Sunday and get up among the laurel and dogwood bushes and the rhododendron blossoms; it is the place of the cheap hotels and the kids who wait with chattering lips while the nigger goes to get them their first woman; it is the place of the drunken college boys who spend the old man's money and wear fur coats to the football games; it is the place of the lovely girls up North who have rich fathers, of the beautiful wives of business men.

The train broke down somewhere beyond Manassas, and I went forward along the tracks with all the other passengers. "What's the matter?" I said to the engineer. "The eccentric strap is broken, son," he said. It was a very cold day, windy and full of sparkling sun. This was the farthest north I'd ever been, and I was twelve years old and on my way to Washington to see Woodrow Wilson inaugurated. Later I could not forget the face of the engineer and the words "eccentric strap."

It is the place of the immense and lonely earth, the place of fat ears and abundance where they grow cotton, corn, and wheat, the wine-red apples of October, and the good tobacco.

It is the place that is savage and cruel, but it is also the innocent place; it is the wild lawless place, the vital earth that is soaked with the blood of the murdered men, with the blood of the countless murdered men, with the blood of the unavenged and unremembered murdered men; but it is also the place of the child and laughter, where the young men are torn apart with ecstasy, and cry out in their throats with joy, where they hear the howl of the wind and the rain and smell the thunder and the soft numb spitting of the snow, where they are drunk with the bite and sparkle of the air and mad with the solar energy, where they believe in love and victory and think that they can never die.

It is the place where you come up through Virginia on the great trains in the night-time, and rumble slowly across the wide Potomac and see the morning sunlight on the nation's dome at Washington, and where the fat man shaving in the pullman washroom grunts, "What's this? What's this we're coming to—Washington?"—And the thin man glancing out the window says, "Yep, this is Washington. That's what it is, all right. You gettin' off here?"—And where the fat man grunts, "Who—me? Naw—I'm goin' on to Baltimore." It is the place where you get off at Baltimore and find your brother waiting.

Where is my father sleeping on the land? Buried? Dead these seven years? Forgotten, rotten in the ground? Held by his own great stone? No, no! Will I say, "Father" when I come to him? And will he call me, "Son"? Oh, no, he'll never see my face: we'll never speak except to say——

It is the place of the fast approach, the hot blind smoky passage, the tragic lonely beauty of New England, and the web of Boston; the place of the mighty station there, and engines passive as great cats, the straight dense plumes of engine smoke, the acrid and exciting smell of trains and stations, and of the man-swarm passing ever in its million-footed weft, the smell of the sea in harbors and the thought of voyages—and the place of the goat cry, the strong joy of our youth, the magic city, when we knew the most fortunate life on earth would certainly be ours, that we were twenty and could never die.

And always America is the place of the deathless and enraptured moments, the eye that looked, the mouth that smiled and vanished, and the word; the stone, the leaf, the door we never found and never have forgotten. And these are the things that we remember of America, for we have known all her thousand lights and weathers, and we walk the streets, we walk the streets forever, we walk the streets of life alone.

1935

From

You Can't Go Home Again

In an age which was becoming more and more collectivistic in its political and social thinking, Wolfe argued for the prerogatives of the individual. He feared that collectivism would reduce the individual to anonymity. To him as to Milton, "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise." Deprived of "that last infirmity," he thought, man would no longer be capable of the highest aspirations and achievements.

THE PROMISE OF AMERICA

For four years George Webber lived and wrote in Brooklyn, and during all this time his life was about as solitary as any that a modern man can know. Loneliness, far from being a rare and curious circumstance, is and always has been the central and inevitable experience of every man. Not only has this been true of the greatest poets, as evidenced by the huge unhappiness of their published grief, but now it seemed to George to apply with equal force to all the nameless ciphers who swarmed about him in the streets. As he saw them in their strident encounters with each other, and overheard their never-varying exchanges of abuse, contempt, distrust, and hatred, it became increasingly clear to him that one of the contributing causes of their complaint was loneliness.

To live alone as George was living, a man should have the confidence of God, the tranquil faith of a monastic saint, the stern impregnability of Gibraltar. Lacking these, he finds that there are times when anything, everything, all and nothing, the most trivial incidents, the most casual words, can in an instant strip him of his armor, palsy his hand, constrict his heart with frozen horror, and fill his bowels with the grey substance of shuddering impotence and desolation. Sometimes it would be a sly remark dropped by some all-knowing literary soothsayer in the columns of one of the more leftish reviews, such as:

"Whatever has become of our autobiographical and volcanic friend, George Webber? Remember him? Remember the splash he made with that so-called 'novel' of his a few years back? Some of our esteemed colleagues thought they detected signs of promise there. We ourselves should have welcomed another book from him, just to prove that the first was not an accident. But *tempus fugit,* and where is Webber? Calling Mr. Webber! No answer? Well, a pity, perhaps; but then, who can count the number of one-book authors? They shoot their bolt, and after that they go into the silence and no more is heard from them. Some of us who were more than a little doubtful about that book of Webber's, but whose voices were drowned out by the Oh's and Ah's of those who rushed headlong to proclaim a new star rising in the literary firmament, could now come forward, if we weren't too kindly disposed toward our more emotional brethren of the critical fraternity, and modestly say, 'We told you so!' "

Sometimes it would be nothing but a shadow passing on the sun, sometimes nothing but the gelid light of March falling on the limitless, naked, sprawling ugliness and squalid decencies of Brooklyn streets. Whatever it was, at such a time all joy and singing would go instantly out of day, Webber's heart would drop out of him like a leaden plummet, hope, confidence, and conviction would seem lost forever to him, and all the high and shining truth that he had ever found and lived and known would now turn false to mock him. Then he would feel like one who walked among the dead, and it would be as if the only things that were not false on earth were the creatures of the death-in-life who moved forever in the changeless lights and weathers of red, waning, weary March and Sunday afternoon.

These hideous doubts, despairs, and dark confusions of the soul would come and go, and George knew them as every lonely man must know them. For he was united to no image save that image which he himself created. He was bolstered by no knowledge save that which he gathered for himself out of his own life. He saw life with no other vision save the vision of his own eyes and brain and senses. He was sustained and cheered and aided by no party, was given comfort by no creed, and had no faith in him except his own.

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29 so-called 'novel.' The reference is to Look Homeward, Angel

That faith, though it was made up of many articles, was at bottom a faith in himself, a faith that if he could only succeed in capturing a fragment of the truth about the life he knew, and make it known and felt by others, it would be a more glorious accomplishment than anything else he could imagine. And through it all, animating this faith and sustaining it with a promise of rewards to come, was a belief—be it now confessed—that if he could only do this, the world would thank him for it, and would crown him with the laurel of its fame.

The desire for fame is rooted in the hearts of men. It is one of the most powerful of all human desires, and perhaps for that very reason, and because it is so deep and secret, it is the desire that men are most unwilling to admit, particularly those who feel most sharply its keen and piercing spur.

The politician, for example, would never have us think that it is love of office, the desire for the notorious elevation of public place, that drives him on. No, the thing that governs him is his pure devotion to the common weal, his selfless and high-minded statesmanship, his love of his fellow man, and his burning idealism to turn out the rascal who usurps the office and betrays the public trust which he himself, as he assures us, would so gloriously and devotedly maintain.

So, too, the soldier. It is never love of glory that inspires him to his profession. It is never love of battle, love of war, love of all the resounding titles and the proud emoluments of the heroic conqueror. Oh, no. It is devotion to duty that makes him a soldier. There is no personal motive in it. He is inspired simply by the selfless ardor of his patriotic abnegation. He regrets that he has but one life to give for his country.

So it goes through every walk of life. The lawyer assures us that he is the defender of the weak, the guardian of the oppressed, the champion of the rights of defrauded widows and beleaguered orphans, the upholder of justice, the unrelenting enemy, at no matter what cost to himself, of all forms of chicanery, fraud, theft, violence, and crime. Even the business man will not admit a selfish motive in his money-getting. On the contrary, he is the developer of the nation's resources. He is the benevolent employer of thousands of working men who would be lost and on the dole without the organizing genius of his great intelligence. He is the defender of the American ideal of rugged individualism, the shining exemplar to youth of what a poor country boy may achieve in this nation through a devotion to the national virtues of thrift, industry, obedience to duty, and business integrity. He is, he assures us, the backbone of the country, the man who makes the wheels go round, the leading citizen, Public Friend No. 1.

All these people lie, of course. They know they lie, and everyone who hears them also knows they lie. The lie, however, has become a part of the convention of American life. People listen to it patiently, and if they smile at it, the smile is weary, touched with resignation and the indifferent dismissals of fatigue.

Curiously enough, the lie has also invaded the world of creation—the one place where it has no right at all to exist. There was a time when the poet, the painter, the musician, the artist of whatever sort, was not ashamed to confess that the desire for fame was one of the driving forces of his life and labor. But what a transformation from that time to this! Nowadays one will travel far and come back fruitless if he hopes to find an artist who will admit that he is devoted to anything except the service of some ideal—political, social, economic, religious, or æsthetic—which is outside himself, and to which his own humble fameforsaking person is reverently and selflessly consigned.

Striplings of twenty assure us that the desire for fame is naïvely childish, the fruit of an outworn cult of "romantic individualism." From all the falseness and self-deception of this cult these young gentlemen tell us they are free—without troubling to explain, however, by what process of miraculous purgation they achieved their freedom. It took Goethe, the strongest soul of modern times, some three and eighty years to free his mighty spirit of this last infirmity. Milton, old and blind, forsaken, and past fifty, is said to have won free of it by the end of Cromwell's revolution, in whose employment he destroyed his sight. And yet, can we be sure that even he was ever wholly clear, for what is the tremendous edifice of *Paradise Lost* except a man's final and triumphant suit against eternity?

Poor, blind Milton!

> Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
> (That last infirmity of Noble mind)

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88 **Fame . . . meed,** from Milton's "Lycidas," ll. 70-84. **The title Look Homeward, Angel** is from the same poem, l. 163

To scorn delights, and live laborious dayes;
But the fair Guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th'abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
Phœbus repli'd, and touch'd my trembling ears;
Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to th'world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreds aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfet witnes of all judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.

Deluded man! Poor vassal of corrupted time! How fair a thing for us to know that we are not such men as he and Goethe were! We live in more stirring times, and our very striplings are secure in their collective selflessness. We have freed ourselves of all degrading vanities, choked off the ravening desire for individual immortality, and now, having risen out of the ashes of our father's earth into the untainted ethers of collective consecration, we are clear at last of all that vexed, corrupted earth—clear of the sweat and blood and sorrow, clear of the grief and joy, clear of the hope and fear and human agony of which our father's flesh and that of every other man alive before us was ever wrought.

And yet, having achieved this glorious emancipation; having laid all petty dreams aside, having learned to think of life, not in terms of ourselves, but in terms of the whole mass; having learned to think of life, not as it is today, but as it is going to be five hundred years from now, when all the revolutions have been made, and all the blood has been shed, and all the hundreds of millions of vain and selfish little lives, each concerned with its own individual and romantic breath, have been ruthlessly wiped out in order to usher in the collective glory that will be—having become marvelously and, as it were, overnight such paragons of collective selflessness and such scorners of the vanity of personal fame, is it not strange that though we have new phrases, yet their meaning is still the same? Is it not strange that, feeling only an amused and pitying contempt for those who are still naïve enough to long for glory, we should yet lacerate our souls, poison our minds and hearts, and crucify our spirits with bitter and rancorous hatred against those who are fortunate enough to achieve fame?

Or do we err? Are we mistaken in assuming that these words we read so often are really words of hatred, malice, envy, ridicule, and jeering mockery? Are we mistaken in assuming that the whole vocabulary of abuse which is exhausted every week in the journals of our red and pink-complexioned comrades—the sneers against a man's talent, the bitter denials that his work has any substance, sincerity, truth, or reality whatever—is really what it seems to be? No doubt we *are* mistaken. It would be more charitable to believe that these pure spirits of the present day are what they say they are—collective, selfless, consecrated—and that the words they use do not mean what they seem to mean, and do not betray the romantic and deluded passions that seem to animate them, but are really words used coldly, without passion, for the purposes of collective propaganda—in operations completely surgical, whereby the language of the present day, with all its overtones of superstition, prejudice, and false knowledge, is employed clinically, scientifically, simply to further the Idea of the Future State!

No more, no more! Of what avail to crush these vermin beneath our heavy boot? The locusts have no king, and lice will multiply forever. The poet must be born, and live, and sweat, and suffer, and change, and grow, yet somehow maintain the changeless selfhood of his soul's integrity among all the crawling fashions of this world of lice. The poet lives, and dies, and is immortal; but the eternal trifler of all complexions never dies. The eternal trifler comes and goes, sucks blood of living men, is filled and emptied with the surfeit of each changing fashion. He gorges and disgorges, and is never fed. There is no nurture in him, and he draws no nurture from the food he feeds on. There is no heart, no soul, no blood, no living faith in him: the eternal trifler simply swallows and remains.

And we? Made of our father's earth, blood of his blood, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh—born like our father here to live and strive, here to win through or be defeated—here, like all the other men who went before us, not too nice or dainty for the uses of this earth —here to live, to suffer, and to die—O brothers, like our fathers in their time, we are burning, burning, burning in the night.

Go, seeker, if you will, throughout the land and you will find us burning in the night.

There where the hackles of the Rocky Mountains

blaze in the blank and naked radiance of the moon, go make your resting stool upon the highest peak. Can you not see us now? The continental wall juts sheer and flat, its huge black shadow on the plain, and the plain sweeps out against the East, two thousand miles away. The great snake that you see there is the Mississippi River.

Behold the gem-strung towns and cities of the good, green East, flung like star-dust through the field of night. That spreading constellation to the north is called Chicago, and that giant wink that blazes in the moon is the pendant lake that it is built upon. Beyond, close-set and dense as a clenched fist, are all the jeweled cities of the eastern seaboard. There's Boston, ringed with the bracelet of its shining little towns, and all the lights that sparkle on the rocky indentations of New England. Here, southward and a little to the west, and yet still coasted to the sea, is our intensest ray, the splintered firmament of the towered island of Manhattan. Round about her, sown thick as grain, is the glitter of a hundred towns and cities. The long chain of lights there is the necklace of Long Island and the Jersey shore. Southward and inland, by a foot or two, behold the duller glare of Philadelphia. Southward further still, the twin constellations—Baltimore and Washington. Westward, but still within the borders of the good, green East, that nighttime glow and smolder of hell-fire is Pittsburgh. Here, St. Louis, hot and humid in the cornfield belly of the land, and bedded on the mid-length coil and fringes of the snake. There at the snake's mouth, southward six hundred miles or so, you see the jeweled crescent of old New Orleans. Here, west and south again, you see the gemmy glitter of the cities on the Texas border.

Turn now, seeker, on your resting stool atop the Rocky Mountains, and look another thousand miles or so across moon-blazing fiend-worlds of the Painted Desert and beyond Sierras' ridge. That magic congeries of lights there to the west, ringed like a studded belt around the magic setting of its lovely harbor, is the fabled town of San Francisco. Below it, Los Angeles and all the cities of the California shore. A thousand miles to north and west, the sparkling towns of Oregon and Washington.

Observe the whole of it, survey it as you might survey a field. Make it your garden, seeker, or your backyard patch. Be at ease in it. It's your oyster—yours to open if you will. Don't be frightened, it's not so big now, when your footstool is the Rocky Mountains. Reach out and dip a hatful of cold water from Lake Michigan. Drink it—we've tried it—you'll not find it bad. Take your shoes off and work your toes down in the river oozes of the Mississippi bottom—it's very refreshing on a hot night in the summertime. Help yourself to a bunch of Concord grapes up there in northern New York State—they're getting good now. Or raid that watermelon patch down there in Georgia. Or, if you like, you can try the Rockyfords here at your elbow, in Colorado. Just make yourself at home, refresh yourself, get the feel of things, adjust your sights, and get the scale. It's your pasture now, and it's not so big—only three thousand miles from east to west, only two thousand miles from north to south—but all between, where ten thousand points of light prick out the cities, towns, and villages, there, seeker, you will find us burning in the night.

Here, as you pass through the brutal sprawl, the twenty miles of rails and rickets, of the South Chicago slums—here, in an unpainted shack, is a Negro boy, and, seeker, he is burning in the night. Behind him is a memory of the cotton fields, the flat and mournful pineland barrens of the lost and buried South, and at the fringes of the pine another nigger shack, with mammy and eleven little niggers. Farther still behind, the slave-driver's whip, the slave ship, and, far off, the jungle dirge of Africa. And before him, what? A roped-in ring, a blaze of lights, across from him a white champion; the bell, the opening, and all around the vast sea-roaring of the crowd. Then the lightning feint and stroke, the black panther's paw—the hot, rotating presses, and the rivers of sheeted print! O seeker, where is the slave ship now?

Or there, in the clay-baked piedmont of the South, that lean and tan-faced boy who sprawls there in the creaking chair among admiring cronies before the open doorways of the fire department, and tells them how he pitched the team to shut-out victory today. What visions burn, what dreams possess him, seeker of the night? The packed stands of the stadium, the bleachers sweltering with their unshaded hordes, the faultless velvet of the diamond, unlike the clay-baked outfields down in Georgia. The mounting roar of eighty thousand voices and Gehrig coming up to bat, the boy himself upon the pitching mound, the lean face steady as a hound's; then the nod, the signal, and the wind-up, the rawhide arm

55 **Rockyfords,** a cantaloupe grown in Colorado • 88 **Gehrig,** Lou Gehrig, famous home-run hitter for the New York Yankees

that snaps and crackles like a whip, the small white bullet of the blazing ball, its loud report in the oiled pocket of the catcher's mitt, the umpire's thumb jerked upward, the clean strike.

Or there again, in the East-Side Ghetto of Manhattan, two blocks away from the East River, a block away from the gas-house district and its thuggery, there in the swarming tenement, shut in his sweltering cell, breathing the sun-baked air through opened window at the fire escape, celled there away into a little semblance of privacy and solitude from all the brawling and vociferous life and argument of his family and the seething hive around him, the Jew boy sits and pores upon his book. In shirt-sleeves, bent above his table to meet the hard glare of a naked bulb, he sits with gaunt, starved face converging to his huge beaked nose, the weak eyes squinting painfully through his thick-lens glasses, his greasy hair roached back in oily scrolls above the slanting cage of his painful and constricted brow. And for what? For what this agony of concentration? For what this hell of effort? For what this intense withdrawal from the poverty and squalor of dirty brick and rusty fire escapes, from the raucous cries and violence and never-ending noise? For what? Because, brother, he is burning in the night. He sees the class, the lecture room, the shining apparatus of gigantic laboratories, the open field of scholarship and pure research, certain knowledge, and the world distinction of an Einstein name.

So, then, to every man his chance—to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden opportunity— to every man the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him—this, seeker, is the promise of America.

1940

CRITICS OF LIFE AND LETTERS: Mencken, Babbitt, Eliot

Henry Louis Mencken

See page 1090 for a biographical account of Mencken

1880 •

From • Prejudices: Fourth Series

The American Novel

In "The American Novel," Mencken preaches a doctrine which is highly characteristic not only of his own thinking, but also of the thinking of the period. In a period of revolt against established standards, he and others, naturally enough, tended to rate fiction according to its success in attacking traditions. American novelists, Mencken alleges, have learned to be free and frank; therefore they are bound to be great. The piece comes from a volume called **Prejudices,** and true to his title, Mencken reveals along the way a number of his personal distastes—for Anglicized American writers, the Victorians, professorial critics, literary censors, commercialized authors, Greenwich Village modern poets, and others. The prediction about the future course of American literature contained in the final paragraphs has not, in the long run, proved to be very accurate.

It is an ancient platitude of historical criticism that great wars and their sequelæ are inimical to the fine arts, and particularly to the art of letters. The kernel of

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truth in it lies in the obvious fact that a people engaged in a bitter struggle for existence have no time for such concerns, which demand not only leisure but also a certain assured feeling of security, well-being and self-sufficiency—in brief, the thing often called aristocratic (or sometimes intellectual) detachment. No man ever wrote good poetry with his wife in parturition in the next room, or the police preparing to raid his house, or his shirt-tail afire. He needs to be comfortable to do it, and if not actually comfortable, then at all events safe. Wars tend to make life uncomfortable and unsafe —but not, it must be observed, inevitably and necessarily, not always and invariably. A bitter and demoralizing struggle goes with wars that are lost, and the same struggle goes with wars that are won only by dint of stupendous and ruinous effort, but it certainly does not go with wars that are won easily. These last do not palsy and asphyxiate the artist, as he is palsied and asphyxiated by cholera morbus, suits for damages or marriage. On the contrary, they pump him full of ozone, and he is never more alive and lively than following them.

I point to a few familiar examples. The Civil War, as everyone knows, bankrupted the South and made life a harsh and bitter struggle for its people, and especially for the gentler and more civilized minority of its people. In consequence, the South became as sterile artistically, after Lee's surrender, as Mexico or Portugal, and even today it lags far behind the North in beautiful letters, and even further behind in music, painting and architecture. But the war, though it went on for four years, strained the resources of the North very little, either in men or in money, and so its conclusion found the Northerners very rich and cocky, and full of a yearning to astonish the world, and that yearning, in a few decades set up a new and extremely vigorous American literature, created an American architecture of a revolutionary character, and even laid the first courses of American schools of music and painting. Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Henry James and William Dean Howells, all of them draft dodgers in the war itself, were in a very real sense products of the war, for they emerged as phenomena of the great outburst of creative energy that followed it, and all of them, including even James, were as thoroughly American as Jay Gould, P. T. Barnum or Jim Fisk. The stars of the national letters in the years before the war had been Americans only by geographical accident. About Emerson there hung a smell of Königsberg and Weimar; Irving was simply a New York Englishman; Poe was a citizen of No Man's Land; even Hawthorne and Cooper, despite their concern with American themes, showed not the slightest evidence of an American point of view. But Mark Twain, Howells and Whitman belonged to the Republic as palpably as Niagara Falls or Tammany Hall belonged to it, and so did James, though the thought horrified him and we must look at him through his brother William to get the proof. Turn now to Europe. France, harshly used in the war of 1870-71, was sterile for a decade, but the wounds were not deep, and recovery was in full swing by 1880. Germany, injured scarcely at all, produced Nietzsche almost before the troops got home, and was presently offering an asylum and an inspiration to Ibsen, preparing the way for the reform and modernization of the theatre, and making contributions of the utmost value to practically all of the arts and sciences. Spain, after the Armada, gave the world Cervantes and then expired; England produced Shakespeare and founded a literature that is not surpassed in history.

What has thus happened over and over again in the past—and I might pile up examples for pages—may be in process of repetition today, and under our very noses. All Europe, plainly enough, is in a state of exhaustion and depression, and in no department of human activity is the fact more visible than in that of the arts. Not only are the defeated nations, Russia, Germany and Austria, producing nothing save a few extravagant eccentricities; there is also a great lowness of spirit in the so-called victorious nations, for their victory was almost as ruinous as defeat. France, as after 1870, is running to a pretentious and artificial morbidity in letters, and marking time in music and painting; Italy is producing little save psychopathological absurdities by such mountebanks as D'Annunzio and Papini; even England shows all the signs of profound fatigue. The great English

45 **Jay Gould** (1836-1892), American financier • 45 **P. T. Barnum** (1810-1891), American showman • 45 **Jim Fisk** (1834-1872), American financier • 48 **Königsberg and Weimar**, cities in Germany, famous in philosophical history • 62 **Nietzsche**, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche. See note, p 1064 • 67 **Cervantes**, Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616), Spanish author who wrote **Don Quixote** • 84 **D'Annunzio**, Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938), Italian author • 84 **Papini**, Giovanni Papini (1881-), Italian philosopher and author

writers of the age before the war are passing. Meredith is gone; Hardy has put up his shutters; Kipling went to wreck in the war itself; Conrad is dead; Shaw, once so agile and diverting, becomes a seer and prophet. Nor is there any sign of sound progress among the younger men. Arnold Bennett, a star of brilliant promise in 1913, is today a smoking smudge. Wells has ceased to be an artist and become a prophet in the Sunday supplements. Masefield has got no further than he was on August 2, 1914. The rest of the novelists are simply chasing their own tails. The Georgian poets, having emerged gloriously during the war, now disappear behind their manners. Only a few women, led by May Sinclair, and a few iconoclastic young men, led by Aldous Huxley, are still indubitably alive.

It seems to me that, in the face of this dark depression across the water, the literary spectacle on this side takes on an aspect that is extremely reassuring, and even a bit exhilarating. For the first time in history, there begins to show itself the faint shadow of a hope that, if all goes well, leadership in the arts, and especially in all the art of letters, may eventually transfer itself from the eastern shore of the Atlantic to the western shore. Our literature, as I have more than once pointed out in the past, is still oppressed by various heavy handicaps, chiefly resident in the failure of the new aristocracy of money to function as an aristocracy of taste. The artist among us is still a sort of pariah, beset by public contempt on the one hand and by academic enmity on the other; he still lacks the public position that his brothers enjoy in older and more civilized countries. Nevertheless, it must be obvious to everyone that his condition tends to improve materially—that, in our own time, it *has* improved materially—that though his rewards remain meagre, save in mere money, his freedom grows steadily greater. And it must be obvious, too, that he begins to show that that increasing freedom is not wholly wasted upon him—that he knows how to use it, and is disposed to do so with some gusto. What all the younger American writers have in common is a sort of new-found elasticity or goatishness, a somewhat exaggerated sense of aliveness, a glowing delight in the spectacle before them, a vigorous and naïve self-consciousness. The schoolmaster critics belabor them for it, and call it a disrespect for tradition, and try to put it down by denouncing it as due to corrupt foreign influences. But it is really a proof of the rise of nationalism—perhaps of the first dawn of a genuine sense of nationality. No longer imitative and timorous, as most of their predecessors were, these youngsters are attempting a first-hand examination of the national scene, and making an effort to represent it in terms that are wholly American. They are the pioneers of a literature that, whatever its defects in the abstract, will at least be a faithful reflection of the national life, that will be more faithful, indeed, in its defects than in its merits. In England the novel subsides into formulæ, the drama is submerged in artificialities, and even poetry, despite occasional revolts, moves toward scholarliness and emptiness. But in America, since the war, all three show the artless and superabundant energy of little children. They lack, only too often, manner and urbanity; it is no wonder that they are often shocking to pedants. But there is the breath of life in them, and that life is far nearer its beginning than its end.

The causes of all this are not far to seek. The American Legion is right: we won the war. It cost us nothing in men; it brought us a huge profit in money; as Europe has gone down, we have gone up. Moreover, it produced a vast discharge of spiritual electricity, otherwise and more injuriously dissipated in the countries more harshly beset. The war was fought ignobly; its first and most obvious effect was to raise up a horde of cads, and set them in authority as spokesmen of the nation. But out of that swinishness there was bound to come reaction, and out of the reaction there was bound to flow a desire to re-examine the whole national pretension—to turn on the light, to reject old formulæ, to think things out anew and in terms of reality. Suddenly the old houses of cards came tumbling down, and the professors inhabiting them ran about in their nightshirts, bawling for the police. The war, first and last, produced a great deal more than John Dos Passos' "Three Soldiers." It also produced Lewis' "Babbitt," and Cabell's "Jurgen," and Fergusson's "Capitol Hill," and O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones." And, producing them, it ended an epoch of sweetness and light.

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85 Jurgen, a sexy novel by James Branch Cabell (1879-) which, following its appearance in 1919, was the object of much discussion by critics • 85 Capitol Hill, a realistic portrayal of life in Washington, D. C., by Harvey Fergusson (1890-)

II

The young American literatus of today, with publishers ready and eager to give him a hearing, can scarcely imagine the difficulties which beset his predecessor of twenty years ago; he is, indeed, far too little appreciative of the freedom he has, and far too prone to flee from hard work to the solace of the martyr's shroud. When I first began practise as a critic, in 1908, there was yet plenty of excuse for putting it on. It was a time of almost inconceivable complacency and conformity. Hamilton Wright Mabie was still alive and still taken seriously, and all the young pedagogues who aspired to the critical gown imitated him in his watchful stupidity. This camorra had delivered a violent wallop to Theodore Dreiser eight years before, and he was yet suffering from his bruises; it was not until 1911 that he printed "Jennie Gerhardt." Miss Harriet Monroe and her gang of new poets were still dispersed and inarticulate; Miss Amy Lowell, as yet unaware of Imagism, was writing polite doggerel in the manner of a New England schoolmarm; the reigning dramatists of the nation were Augustus Thomas, David Belasco and Clyde Fitch; Miss Cather was imitating Mrs. Wharton; Hergesheimer had six years to go before he'd come to "The Lay Anthony"; Cabell was known only as one who provided the text for illustrated gift-books; the American novelists most admired by most publishers, by most readers and by all practising critics were Richard Harding Davis, Robert W. Chambers and James Lane Allen. It is hard indeed, in retrospect, to picture those remote days just as they were. They seem almost fabulous. The chief critical organ of the Republic was actually the Literary Supplement of the New York *Times*. The *Dial* was down with diabetes in Chicago; the *Nation* was made dreadful by the gloomy humors of Paul Elmer More; the *Bookman* was even more saccharine and sophomoric than it is today. When the mild and *pianissimo* revolt of the middle 90's—a feeble echo of the English revolt—had spent itself, the Presbyterians marched in and took possession of the works. Most of the erstwhile revoltés boldly took the veil—notably Hamlin Garland. No novel that told the truth about life as Americans were living it, no poem that departed from the old patterns, no play that had the merest ghost of an idea in it had a chance. When, in 1908, Mrs. Mary Roberts Rinehart printed a conventional mystery story which yet managed to have a trace of sense in it, it caused a sensation. And when, two years later, Dr. William Lyon Phelps printed a book of criticism in which he actually ranked Mark Twain alongside Emerson and Hawthorne, there was as great a stirring beneath the college elms as if a naked fancy woman had run across the campus. If Hergesheimer had come into New York in 1908 with "Cytherea" under his arm, he would have worn out his pantaloons on publishers' benches without getting so much as a polite kick. If Eugene O'Neill had come to Broadway with "The Hairy Ape," he would have been sent to Edward E. Rose to learn the elements of his trade. The devilish and advanced thing, in those days, was for the fat lady star to give a couple of matinees of Ibsen's "A Doll's House."

A great many men and a few women addressed themselves to the dispersal of this fog. Some of them were imaginative writers who found it simply impossible to bring themselves within the prevailing rules; some were critics; others were young publishers. As I look back, I can't find any sign of concerted effort; it was, in the main, a case of each on his own. The more contumacious of the younger critics, true enough, tended to rally 'round Huneker, who, as a matter of fact, was very little interested in American letters, and the young

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10 **Hamilton Wright Mabie** (1846-1916), American critic and editor • 18 **Amy Lowell** (1874-1925) was a leader in the poetic renaissance • 18 **Imagism**, a movement in poetry (1909-1917) which emphasized terseness, clarity, and sharpness of imagery. Miss Lowell was one of the most famous of the imagists • 22 **Mrs. Wharton**, Edith Wharton (1862-1937), a novelist in the tradition of Henry James • 23 **Hergesheimer**, Joseph Hergesheimer (1880-), author of novels, some of which exploited picturesque details in American history, others of which limned the society of the day • 27 **Richard Harding Davis** (1864-1916), newspaper correspondent as well as a facile novelist and playwright. In his fiction he wrote romantically of New York dandies and of soldiers of fortune • 28 **Robert W. Chambers** (1865-1933) wrote popular fictional works about the past and his own day • 28 **James Lane Allen** (1849-1925), a Kentuckian, was the author of romantic novels about his region • 45 **Mary Roberts Rinehart** (1876-), prolific author of mystery novels • 48 **William Lyon Phelps** (1865-1943), popular Yale professor who was one of the first academic men to give serious attention to contemporary literature • 54 **Cytherea** (1922) was a somewhat melodramatic psychological novel about the search of a middle-aged businessman for ideal love • 70 **Huneker**, James Gibbons Huneker (1860-1921), a distinguished critic of music, art, and literature

novelists had a leader in Dreiser, who, I suspect, was quite unaware of most of them. However, it was probably Dreiser who chiefly gave form to the movement, despite the fact that for eleven long years he was silent. Not only was there a useful rallying-point in the idiotic suppression of "Sister Carrie"; there was also the encouraging fact of the man's massive immovability. Physically and mentally he loomed up like a sort of headland—a great crag of basalt that no conceivable assault seemed able to touch. His predecessor, Frank Norris, was of much softer stuff. Norris, had he lived longer, would have been wooed and ruined, I fear, by the Mabies, Boyntons and other such Christian critics, as Garland had been wooed and ruined before him. Dreiser, fortunately for American letters, never had to face any such seduction. The critical schoolmarms, young and old, fell upon him with violence the moment he appeared above the horizon of his native steppe, and soon he was the storm center of a battle-royal that lasted nearly twenty years. The man himself was solid, granitic, without nerves. Very little cunning was in him and not much bellicose enterprise, but he showed a truly appalling tenacity. The pedagogues tried to scare him to death, they tried to stampede his partisans and they tried to put him into Coventry and get him forgotten, but they failed every time. The more he was reviled, sneered at, neglected, the more resolutely he stuck to his formula. That formula is now every serious American novelist's formula. They all try to write better than Dreiser, and not a few of them succeed, but they all follow him in his fundamental purpose—to make the novel true. Dreiser added something, and here following him is harder: he tried to make the novel poignant—to add sympathy, feeling, imagination to understanding. It will be a long while before that enterprise is better managed than he managed it in "Jennie Gerhardt."

Today, it seems to me, the American imaginative writer, whether he be novelist, poet or dramatist, is quite as free as he deserves to be. He is free to depict the life about him precisely as he sees it, and to interpret it in any manner he pleases. The publishers of the land, once so fearful of novelty, are now so hospitable to it that they constantly fail to distinguish the novelty that has hard thought behind it from that which has only some Village mountebank's desire to stagger the wives of Rotarians. Our stage is perhaps the freest in the world—not only to sensations, but also to ideas. Our poets get into print regularly with stuff so bizarre and unearthly that only Christian Scientists can understand it. The extent of this new freedom, indeed, is so great that large numbers of persons appear to be unable to believe in it; they are constantly getting into sweats about the taboos and inhibitions that remain, for example, those nourished by comstockery. But the importance and puissance of comstockery, I believe, is quite as much overestimated as the importance and puissance of the objurgations still hurled at sense and honesty by the provincial professors of American Idealism, the Genius of America, and other such phantasms. The Comstocks, true enough, still raid an occasional book, particularly when their funds are running low and there is need to inflame Christian men, but that their monkeyshines ever actually *suppress* a book of any consequence I very much doubt. The flood is too vast for them. Chasing a minnow with desperate passion, they let a whole school of whales go by. In any case, they confine their operations to the single field of sex, and it must be plain that it is not in the field of sex that the hottest battles against the old American manner have been fought and won. "Three Soldiers" was far more subversive of that manner than all the stories of sex ever written in America—and yet "Three Soldiers" came out with the imprint of one of the most respectable of American publishers, and was scarcely challenged. "Babbitt" scored a victory that was still easier, and yet more significant, for its target was the double one of American business and American Christianity; it set the whole world to laughing at two things that are far more venerated in the United States than the bodily chastity of women. Nevertheless, "Babbitt" went down so easily that even the alfalfa *Gelehrten* joined in whooping for it, apparently on the theory that praising Lewis would make the young of the national species forget Dreiser. Victimized by their own craft, the *Gelehrten* thus made a foul attack upon their own principles, for if their principles did not stand against just such anarchistic and sacrilegious books,

13 Boynton, Percy H. Boynton (1875-1946), a professor at the University of Chicago and author of several books about contemporary literature • 54 comstockery, a noun honoring Anthony Comstock (1844-1915), famous in a battle against what he considered obscenity in literature • 81 Gelehrten, learned folk

then they were without any sense whatever, as was and is, indeed, the case.

I shall not rehearse the steps in the advance from "Sister Carrie," suppressed and proscribed, to "Babbitt," swallowed and hailed. The important thing is that, despite the caterwauling of the Comstocks and the pedagogues, a reasonable freedom for the serious artist now prevails—that publishers stand ready to print him, that critics exist who are competent to recognize him and willing to do battle for him, and that there is a large public eager to read him. What use is he making of his opportunity? Certainly not the worst use possible, but also certainly not the best. He is free, but he is not yet, perhaps, worthy of freedom. He lets the popular magazine, the movie and the cheap-John publisher pull him too hard in one direction; he lets the vagaries of his politics pull him too hard in another. Back in 1908 I predicted the destruction of Upton Sinclair the artist by Upton Sinclair the visionary and reformer. Sinclair's bones now bleach upon the beach. Beside them repose those of many another man and woman of great promise—for example, Winston Churchill. Floyd Dell is on his way—one novel and two doses of Greenwich Village psychology. Hergesheimer writes novelettes for the *Saturday Evening Post.* Willa Cather has won the Pulitzer Prize—a transaction comparable to the election of Charles W. Eliot to the Elks. Masters turns to prose that somehow fails to come off. Dreiser, forgetting his trilogy, experiments rather futilely with the drama, the essay, free verse. Fuller renounces the novel for book reviewing. Tarkington is another Pulitzer prizeman, always on the verge of first-rate work but always falling short by an inch. Many of the White Hopes of ten or fifteen years ago perished in the war, as surely victims of its slaughter as Rupert Brooke or Otto Braun; it is, indeed, curious to note that practically every American author who moaned and sobbed for democracy between the years 1914 and 1919 is now extinct. The rest have gone down the chute of the movies.

But all this, after all, may signify little. The shock troops have been piled up in great masses, but the ground is cleared for those that follow. Well, then, what of the youngsters? Do they show any sign of seizing their chance? The answer is yes and no. On the one hand there is a group which, revolving 'round the *Bookman,* talks a great deal and accomplishes nothing. On the other hand there is a group which, revolving 'round the *Dial* and the *Little Review,* talks even more and does even less. But on the third hand, as it were, there is a group which says little and saws wood. There seems to be little in common between its members, no sign of a formal movement, with its *blague* and its bombast, but all of them have this in common: that they owe both their opportunity and their method to the revolution that followed "Sister Carrie." Most of them are from the Middle West, but they are distinct from the Chicago crowd, now degenerated to posturing and worse. They are sophisticated, disillusioned, free from cant, and yet they have imagination. The raucous protests of the evangelists of American Idealism seem to have no more effect upon them than the advances of the Expressionists, Dadaists and other such cafe-table prophets. Out of this dispersed and ill-defined group, I believe, something will come. Its members are those who are free from the two great delusions which, from the beginning, have always cursed American letters: the delusion that a work of art is primarily a moral document, that its purpose is to make men better Christians and more docile cannon-fodder, and the delusion that it is an exercise in logic, that its purpose is to prove something. These delusions, lingering beyond their time, are responsible for most of the disasters visible in the national literature today—the disasters of the radicals as well as those of the 100 per cent. dunderheads. The writers of the future, I hope and believe, will carefully avoid both of them.

1924

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22 **Winston Churchill** (1871-1947), American author who wrote a number of historical novels of distinction • 22 **Floyd Dell** (1887-) was noted in the twenties as a psychological novelist. Some of his writings concerned the revolt against convention sponsored in Greenwich Village • 27 **Charles W. Eliot** (1834-1926), president of Harvard (1869-1909), sponsored the elective system of undergraduate courses • 27 **Masters,** Edgar Lee Masters (1869-1950), author of **Spoon River Anthology** (1915) • 30 **Fuller.** Henry Blake Fuller (1857-1929), Chicago novelist whose promising career began in 1890, had not written a novel since **Bertram Cope's Year** (1919). His next novel did not appear until 1929 • 31 **Tarkington,** Booth Tarkington (1869-1946), creator of Penrod among others. His career as a novelist began in 1899 and continued into the 1940's • 34 **White Hopes.** When Jack Johnson, Negro, was heavyweight champion, rising white prizefighters were called "White Hopes" • 53 **blague, humbug** • 63 **Dadaists,** a radical French literary group

Irving Babbitt

1865 • 1933

During the late 1920's and early 1930's, rebellion against what was called "Victorianism"—that is, against any kind of established standards—was pretty general. Opposed to this rebellion was a group called "the New Humanists," a group which sturdily reaffirmed certain older faiths. The members of this learned critical school (most of them were professors) asserted kinship with the sixteenth-century European Humanists. Like their predecessors (John Colet, Thomas More, Desiderius Erasmus, and others), the modern group tried to revitalize interest in the classics. Like their predecessors, too, the modern group urged that life should be lived for its opportunities of individual development through discipline.

Outstanding were Paul Elmer More, Robert Shafer, Norman Foerster, Frank Mather, Stuart Sherman, Sherlock Bronson Gass, Harry Hayden Clark, and others; but their acknowledged leader was Professor Irving Babbitt. Babbitt was the most militant and the most formidable member of the group, and it was he who leveled and received the most ferocious blows in the battle which raged concerning the proper nature of criticism and the merits of contemporary literature.

Paradoxically, the undisciplined childhood of Irving Babbitt in his native Dayton, Ohio, stimulated instead of discouraging a faith in self-discipline which he was to preach throughout most of his life. His reading of the classics in high school enlarged that faith. Study at Harvard and abroad—more of it out of classes than in classes—gave him great learning which he felt bolstered his initial belief in self-discipline. His wide study, too, evidently only confirmed his early tendency toward dualism—a belief that two forces, one good, one evil, ruled the universe. Such, at least, was the impression of Paul Elmer More when, in 1934, he recalled the big man as a fellow student at Harvard in the 1890's, pacing back and forth in a dormitory room and vehemently arguing in behalf of his beliefs. "Not only had Babbitt at an early age—how early I do not know—reached . . . settled convictions," said More, "but at least from the beginning of our acquaintance they were knit together into a system by logical bonds which were perfectly clear to his mind. . . ."

Babbitt taught a year at Williams College (1892-1893), then returned to Harvard, to teach there in the romance languages department the rest of his life (1894-1933). Hoffman Nickerson, in 1934, tried to suggest how, as a teacher, Babbitt appeared to the enthusiastic students in his classes: "After a quarter of a century, one still vividly recalls the absorbing interest, almost the excitement, of his lectures. Into the austere and bare Harvard lecture room there would walk powerfully a strongly-built, slightly awkward, six-foot man, his hair brown turning to grey, his eyes a light grey-blue—always brilliant, usually tranquil, but capable of blazing. . . . Hardly had his clear, carefully-controlled, but vibrant voice made itself heard than one sat bolt upright in the realization that here was a master-anatomist of the whole modernist menagerie. . . . To hear him was to understand the modern world."

Babbitt's first book, *Literature and the American College* (1908), had as its motto a quotation from Emerson which summarized the basis of Babbitt's particular brand of Humanistic philosophy:

There are two laws discrete
Not reconciled,
Law for man, and law for thing;
The last builds town and fleet,
But it runs wild,
And doth the man unking.

"The first article of Babbitt's humanist creed," writes Nickerson, "was the dual nature of man. He saw clearly that all men are born with a desire for beauty, truth, and goodness, which if perfectly combined would result in perfect order; and at the same time with a tendency to evil, which tendency, if not grasped by the intellect and opposed by the will, results in intolerable disorder. He taught that this basic fact of man's dual nature has been obscured by the naturalistic school of thought. . . ." In later books as well as his first, Babbitt preached this doctrine—*The New Laokoön* (1910), *The Masters of French Criticism* (1912), *Rousseau and Romanticism* (1919), *Democracy and Leadership* (1924), and *On Being Creative* (1932).

He not only supported his thesis; he also vigorously opposed forces in literature which he saw working against it. The subtitle of *The New Laokoön,* for instance, was "An Essay on the Confusion of the Arts," and after arguing that there was confusion, Babbitt ascribed the lack of "dignity, centrality, repose" to the fact that "the men of the present have no centre, no sense of anything fixed or permanent either within or without themselves." In *Rousseau and Romanticism,* Babbitt traced the blame for much modern confusion to the romantic, undisciplined trend which had been initiated by the French philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Following that trend, he claimed, "those who call themselves modern have come to adopt a purely exploratory attitude towards life. 'On desperate seas long wont to roam,' they have lost more and more the sense of what is normal and central in human experience. But to get away from what is normal and central is to get away from wisdom." With such views of the faults of modern society and of the necessary remedies for those faults, Babbitt necessarily condemned much of the writing of the day. Creative writing, he held, lacked philosophical depth of the sort needed for greatness; critical writing was impressionistic and superficial. Although they differed from him about some matters, most of Babbitt's fellow Humanists agreed with his diagnosis and offered similar antidotes for the modern "disease." For a time, Babbitt and his associates were in the spotlight; but a few years after Babbitt's death, the general impression was that Humanism, as a movement, had pretty well ended. Nevertheless the Humanists had a real impact upon modern thought. And in the late 1930's and the 1940's, when social changes and World War II stimulated affirmative thinking, an increasing number of American writers were echoing Babbitt's plea for firmly held critical and ethical standards.

F. E. McMahon, **The Humanism of Irving Babbitt,** Washington, D. C., 1931 • P. E. More, "Irving Babbitt," **University of Toronto Quarterly,** January 1934 • Hoffman Nickerson, "Irving Babbitt," **American Review,** February 1934

The Critic and American Life

"The Critic and American Life," an essay by Professor Babbitt published in Forum, February 1928, came as close as any document to constituting a "manifesto" of Babbitt's group. It provoked much general discussion, and was answered and interpreted by a number of critics in both parties. Not only does it summarize the Humanist's dissatisfaction with contemporary writers in general and in particular, in addition it admirably states the philosophy of the leader of the group.

A frequent remark of the French about Americans is: "They're children"; which, interpreted, means that from the French point of view Americans are childishly uncritical. The remark is relevant only in so far as it refers to general critical intelligence. In dealing with the spe-

cial problems of a commercial and industrial society Americans have shown that they can be abundantly critical. Certain Americans, for example, have developed a critical keenness in estimating the value of stocks and bonds that is nothing short of uncanny. The very persons, however, who are thus keen in some particular field are when confronted with questions that call for general critical intelligence, often puerile. Yet in an age like the present, which is being subjected to a constant stream of propaganda in everything from the choice of its religion to its cigarettes, general critical intelligence would seem desirable.

As a matter of fact, most persons nowadays aspire to be not critical but creative. We have not merely creative poets and novelists, but creative readers and listeners and dancers. Lately a form of creativeness has appeared that may in time swallow up all the others—creative salesmanship. The critic himself has caught the contagion and also aspires to be creative. He is supposed to become so when he receives from the creation of another, conceived as pure temperamental overflow, so vivid an impression that, when passed through his temperament, it issues forth as a fresh creation. What is eliminated in both critic and creator is any standard that is set above temperament and that therefore might interfere with their eagerness to get themselves expressed.

This notion of criticism as self-expression is important for our present subject, for it has been adopted by the writer who is, according to the last edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* "the greatest critical force in America"—Mr. H. L. Mencken. "The critic is first and last," says Mr. Mencken, "simply trying to express himself; he is trying to achieve thereby for his own inner ego the grateful feeling of a function performed, a tension relieved, a katharsis attained which Wagner achieved when he wrote *Die Walküre,* and a hen achieves every time she lays an egg." This creative self-expression, as practiced by himself and others, has, according to Mr. Mencken, led to a salutary stirring up of the stagnant pool of American letters: "To-day for the first time in years there is strife in American criticism. . . . Heretics lay on boldly and the professors are forced to make some defence. Often going further they attempt counter-attacks. Ears are bitten off, noses are bloodied. There are wallops both above and below the belt."

But it may be that criticism is something more than Mr. Mencken would have us believe, more in short than a squabble between Bohemians, each eager to capture the attention of the public for his brand of self-expression. To reduce criticism indeed to the satisfaction of a temperamental urge, to the uttering of one's gustos and disgustos (in Mr. Mencken's case chiefly the latter) is to run counter to the very etymology of the word which implies discrimination and judgment. The best one would anticipate from a writer like Mr. Mencken, possessing an unusual verbal virtuosity and at the same time temperamentally irresponsible, is superior intellectual vaudeville. One must grant him, however, certain genuine critical virtues—for example, a power of shrewd observation within rather narrow limits. Yet the total effect of his writing is nearer to intellectual vaudeville than to serious criticism.

The serious critic is more concerned with achieving a correct scale of values and so seeing things proportionately than with self-expression. His essential virtue is poise. The specific benefit he confers is to act as a moderating influence on the opposite insanities between which mankind in the lump is constantly tending to oscillate—oscillations that Luther compares to the reelings of a drunken peasant on horseback. The critic's survey of any particular situation may very well seem satirical. The complaint that Mr. Mencken is too uniformly disgruntled in his survey of the American situation rather misses the point. Behind the pleas for more constructiveness it is usually easy to detect the voice of the booster. A critic who did not get beyond a correct diagnosis of existing evils might be very helpful. If Mr. Mencken has fallen short of being such a diagnostician, the failure is due not to his excess of severity but to his lack of discrimination.

The standards with reference to which men have discriminated in the past have been largely traditional. The outstanding fact of the present period, on the other hand, has been the weakening of traditional standards. An emergency has arisen not unlike that with which Socrates sought to cope in ancient Athens. Anyone who is untraditional and seeks at the same time to be discriminating must almost necessarily own Socrates as his mas-

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29 **last edition,** the thirteenth edition • 35 **Wagner,** Richard Wagner (1813-1883), German composer of the opera **Die Walküre** • 69 **Luther,** Martin Luther. See note, p 1063

ter. As is well known, Socrates sought above all to be discriminating in his use of general terms. The importance of the art of inductive defining that he devised may perhaps best be made clear by bringing together two sayings, one of Napoleon—"Imagination governs mankind"—and one of John Selden—"Syllables govern mankind." Before allowing one's imagination and finally one's conduct to be controlled by a general term, it would seem wise to submit it to a Socratic scrutiny.

It is, therefore, unfortunate that at a time like the present, which plainly calls for a Socrates, we should instead have got a Mencken. One may take as an example of Mr. Mencken's failure to discriminate adequately, his attitude toward the term that for several generations past has been governing the imagination of multitudes—democracy. His view of democracy is simply that of Rousseau turned upside down, and nothing, as has been remarked, resembles a hollow so much as a swelling. A distinction of which he has failed to recognize the importance is that between a direct or unlimited and a constitutional democracy. In the latter we probably have the best thing in the world. The former, on the other hand, as all thinkers of any penetration from Plato and Aristotle down have perceived, leads to the loss of liberty and finally to the rise of some form of despotism. The two conceptions of democracy involve not merely incompatible views of government but ultimately of human nature. The desire of the constitutional democrat for institutions that act as checks on the immediate will of the people implies a similar dualism in the individual —a higher self that acts restrictively on his ordinary and impulsive self. The partisan of unlimited democracy on the other hand is an idealist in the sense of that the term assumed in connection with the so-called romantic movement. His faith in the people is closely related to the doctrine of natural goodness proclaimed by the sentimentalists of the eighteenth century and itself marking an extreme recoil from the dogma of total depravity. The doctrine of natural goodness favors the free temperamental expansion that I have already noticed in speaking of the creative critic.

It is of the utmost importance, however, if one is to understand Mr. Mencken, to discriminate between two types of temperamentalist—the soft and sentimental type, who cherishes various "ideals," and the hard, or Nietzschean type, who piques himself on being realistic. As a matter of fact, if one sees in the escape from traditional controls merely an opportunity to live temperamentally, it would seem advantageous to pass promptly from the idealistic to the Nietzschean phase, sparing oneself as many as possible of the intermediary disillusions. It is at all events undeniable that the rise of Menckenism has been marked by a certain collapse of romantic idealism in the political field and elsewhere. The numerous disillusions that have supervened upon the War have provided a favoring atmosphere.

The symptoms of Menckenism are familiar: a certain hardness and smartness and disposition to rail at everything that, rightly or wrongly, is established and respected; a tendency to identify the real with what Mr. Mencken terms "the cold and clammy facts" and to assume that the only alternative to facing these facts is to fade away into sheer romantic unreality. These and similar traits are becoming so widely diffused that, whatever one's opinion of Mr. Mencken as a writer and thinker, one must grant him representativeness. He is a chief prophet at present of those who deem themselves emancipated but who are, according to Mr. Brownell, merely unbuttoned.

The crucial point in any case is one's attitude toward the principle of control. Those who stand for this principle in any form or degree are dismissed by the emancipated as reactionaries or, still graver reproach, as Puritans. Mr. Mencken would have us believe that the historical Puritan was not even sincere in his moral rigorism, but was given to "lamentable transactions with loose women and fiery jugs." This may serve as a sample of the assertions, picturesquely indiscriminate, by which a writer wins immediate notoriety at the expense of his permanent reputation. The facts about the Puritan happen to be complex and need to be dealt with very Socratically. It has been affirmed that the point of view of the Puritan was Stoical rather than truly Christian, and the affirmation is not wholly false. The present discussion of the relationship between Puritanism and the rise of capitalism with its glorification of the acquisitive life also has its justification. It is likewise a fact that the Puritan was

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6 **John Selden** (1584-1654), British jurist, scholar, and author • 46 **Nietzschean, based upon the philosophy of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche.** See note, p. 1064 • 68 **Brownell,** William Crary Brownell (1851-1928), American literary critic associated with the New Humanists

from the outset unduly concerned with reforming others as well as himself, and this trait relates him to the humanitarian meddler or "wowser" of the present day, who is Mr. Mencken's pet aversion.

Yet it remains true that awe and reverence and humility are Christian virtues and that there was some survival of these virtues in the Puritan. For a representative Puritan like Jonathan Edwards they were inseparable from the illumination of grace, from what he terms "a divine and supernatural light." In the passage from the love and fear of God of an Edwards to the love and service of man professed by the humanitarian, something has plainly dropped out, something that is very near the centre. What has tended to disappear is the inner life with the special type of control it imposes. With the decline of this inner control there has been an increasing resort to outer control. Instead of the genuine Puritan we then have the humanitarian legalist who passes innumerable laws for the control of people who refuse to control themselves. The activity of our uplifters is scarcely suggestive of any "divine and supernatural light." Here is a discrimination of the first importance that has been obscured by the muddy thinking of our half-baked intelligentsia. One is thus kept from perceiving the real problem, which is to retain the inner life, even though one refuse to accept the theological nightmare with which the Puritan associated it. More is involved in the failure to solve this problem than the Puritan tradition. It is the failure of our contemporary life in general. Yet, unless some solution is reached by a full and free exercise of the critical spirit, one remains a mere modernist and not a thoroughgoing and complete modern; for the modern spirit and the critical spirit are in their essence one.

What happens, when one sets out to deal with questions of this order without sufficient depth of reflection and critical maturity, may be seen in Mr. Sinclair Lewis's last novel. He has been lured from art into the writing of a wild diatribe which, considered even as such, is largely beside the mark. If the Protestant Church is at present threatened with bankruptcy, it is not because it has produced an occasional Elmer Gantry. The true reproach it has incurred is that, in its drift toward modernism, it has lost its grip not merely on certain dogmas but, simultaneously, on the facts of human nature. It has failed above all to carry over in some modern and critical form the truth of a dogma that unfortunately receives much support from these facts—the dogma of original sin. At first sight Mr. Mencken would appear to have a conviction of evil—when, for example, he reduces democracy in its essential aspect to a "combat between jackals and jackasses"—that establishes at least one bond between him and the austere Christian.

The appearance, however, is deceptive. The Christian is conscious above all of the "old Adam" in himself: hence his humility. The effect of Mr. Mencken's writing, on the other hand, is to produce pride rather than humility, a pride ultimately based on flattery. The reader, especially the young and callow reader, identifies himself imaginatively with Mr. Mencken and conceives of himself as a sort of morose and sardonic divinity surveying from some superior altitude an immeasurable expanse of "boobs." This attitude will not seem especially novel to anyone who has traced the modern movement. One is reminded in particular of Flaubert, who showed a diligence in collecting bourgeois imbecilities comparable to that displayed by Mr. Mencken in his *Americana.* Flaubert's discovery that one does not add to one's happiness in this way would no doubt be dismissed by Mr. Mencken as irrelevant, for he has told us that he does not believe in happiness. Another discovery of Flaubert's may seem to him more worthy of consideration. "By dint of railing at idiots," Flaubert reports, "one runs the risk of becoming idiotic oneself."

It may be that the only way to escape from the unduly complacent cynicism of Mr. Mencken and his school is to reaffirm once more the truths of the inner life. In that case it would seem desirable to disengage, so far as possible, the principle of control on which the inner life finally depends from mere creeds and traditions and assert it as a psychological fact; a fact, moreover, that is neither "cold" nor "clammy." The coldness and clamminess of much so called realism arises from its failure to give this fact due recognition. A chief task, indeed, of the Socratic critic would be to rescue the noble term "realist" from its present degradation. A view of reality that overlooks the element in man that moves in an op-

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36 Lewis's last novel. Babbitt refers to Elmer Gantry (1927), which satirized religious shams and the ministers who allegedly perpetrated them • 66 Americana, a department in the American Mercury wherein Mencken and a fellow editor, George Jean Nathan, offered excerpts from newspapers and magazines purportedly typical of the asinine features of American life

posite direction from mere temperament, the specifically human factor in short, may prove to be singularly one-sided. Is the Puritan, John Milton, when he declares that "he who reigns within himself and rules passions, desires, and fears is more than a king," less real than Mr. Theodore Dreiser when he discourses in his peculiar dialect of "those rearranging chemisms upon which all the morality or immorality of the world is based?"

As a matter of fact, according to the degree and nature of the exercise of the principle of control, one may distinguish two main types of realism which may be denominated respectively religious and humanistic: as the principle of control falls into abeyance, a third type tends to emerge, which may be termed naturalistic realism. That the decline of the traditional controls has been followed by a lapse to the naturalistic level is indubitable. The characteristic evils of the present age arise from unrestraint and violation of the law of measure and not, as our modernists would have us believe, from the tyranny of taboos and traditional inhibitions. The facts cry to heaven. The delicate adjustment that is required between the craving for emancipation and the need of control has been pointed out once for all by Goethe, speaking not as a Puritan but as a clear-eyed man of the world. Everything, he says, that liberates the spirit without a corresponding growth in self-mastery is pernicious. This one sentence would seem to cover the case of our "flaming youth" rather completely.

The movement in the midst of which we are still living was from its inception unsound in its dealing with the principle of control. It is vain to expect from the dregs of this movement what its "first sprightly running failed to give." Mr. Carl Sandburg speaks of the "marvelous rebellion of man at all signs reading 'Keep off.'" An objection to this purely insurrectional attitude is that, as a result of its endless iteration during the past century and more, it has come to savor too strongly of what has been called "the humdrum of revolt." A more serious objection to the attitude is that it encourages an unrestricted and merely temperamental liberty which, paradoxically enough at first sight, affords the modern man no avenue of escape from the web that is being woven about him by the scientific determinist.

Realists of the current type are in point of fact intimately allied with the psychologists,—glandular, behavioristic, and psychoanalytical,—who, whatever their divergences among themselves, unite in their deterministic trend and therefore clash fundamentally with both religious and humanistic realists. The proper method of procedure in defending the freedom of the will would seem to be to insist upon it as a fact of experience, a fact so primary that the position of the determinist involves an evasion of one of the immediate data of consciousness in favor of a metaphysical dream. What is genuinely experimental in naturalistic psychology should of course be received with respect; but the facts of which it takes account in its experiments are unimportant compared with the facts it either neglects or denies. Practically it is running into grotesque extremes of pseudo-science that make of it a shining mark for the Socratic critic.

Here at all events is the issue on which all other issues finally hinge; for until the question of moral freedom—the question whether man is a responsible agent or only the plaything of his impulses and impressions—is decided, nothing is decided; and to decide the question under existing circumstances calls for the keenest critical discrimination. Creation that is not sufficiently supported by such discrimination is likely to prove premature.

One may illustrate from Mr. Dreiser's *American Tragedy,* hailed in certain quarters as the "Mt. Everest" of recent fiction. He has succeeded in producing in this work something genuinely harrowing; but one is harrowed to no purpose. One has in more than full measure the tragic qualm but without the final relief and enlargement of spirit that true tragedy succeeds somehow in giving, and that without resort to explicit moralizing. It is hardly worth while to struggle through eight hundred and more very pedestrian pages to be left at the end with a feeling of sheer oppression. The explanation of this oppression is that Mr. Dreiser does not rise sufficiently above the level of "rearranging chemisms," in other words, of animal behavior. Tragedy may admit fate—Greek tragedy admits it—but not of the naturalistic variety. Confusion on this point may compromise in the long run the reputation of writers more eminent than Mr. Dreiser—for example, of Thomas Hardy. Fatalism of the naturalistic type is responsible in large measure for the atmosphere of futility and frustration that hangs heavily over so much contemporary writing. One finally

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28 flaming youth, a term used in the 1920's to designate the thrill-seeking younger generation

comes to feel with a recent poet that "dust" is the common source from which

stream
The cricket's cry and Dante's dream.

Anyone who admits reality only in what derives from the dust, whether in a cricket or a Dante, must, from the point of view of the religious or the humanistic realist, be prepared to make substantial sacrifices. In the first place, he must sacrifice the depth and subtlety that arise from the recognition in some form of the duality of man's nature. For the interest that may arise from the portrayal of the conflict between a law of the spirit and a law of the members, the inordinate interest in sex for its own sake promoted by most of the so-called realists is a rather shabby substitute. A merely naturalistic realism also involves the sacrifice of beauty in almost any sense of that elusive term. Closely related to this sacrifice is the sacrifice of delicacy, elevation, and distinction. The very word realism has come to connote the opposite of these qualities. When we learn, for example, that someone has written a realistic study of a great man, we are sure in advance that he has devoted his main effort to proving that "Plutarch lied." The more the great man is reduced to the level of commonplace or worse, the more we feel he has been "humanized."

Mr. Sherwood Anderson has argued ingeniously that, in as much as we ourselves are crude, our literature, if it is not to be unreal and factitious, should be crude likewise. But the writer who hopes to achieve work of importance cannot afford to be too deeply immersed in the atmosphere of the special place and passing moment. Still less can he afford to make us feel, as writers like Mr. Anderson and Mr. Dreiser and Mr. Sinclair Lewis do, that, if there were any lack of vulgarity in what they are depicting they would be capable of supplying the defect from their own abundance. More is involved here than mere loss of distinction. We have come, indeed, to the supreme sacrifice that every writer must make who does not transcend a naturalistic realism. He must forego the hope of the enduring appeal—the hope that every writer worthy of his salt cherishes in some degree. In the absence of humanistic or religious standards, he is prone to confound the real with the welter of the actual, and so to miss what Dr. Johnson terms the "grandeur of generality."

Certain books in the current mode are so taken up with the evanescent surfaces of life that they will survive, if at all, not as literature but as sociological documents. The very language in which they are written will, in a generation or two, require a glossary. So far from imposing an orderly pattern on the raw material of experience, they rather emphasize the lack of pattern. The resulting effect, to borrow a phrase from the late Stephen Crane, who has had a marked influence on the recent movement, is that of a "cluttered incoherency." As an extreme example of the tendency one may cite *Manhattan Transfer* by John Dos Passos. In the name of reality, Mr. Dos Passos has perpetrated a literary nightmare. Such a work would seem to have slight value even as a sociological document; unless, indeed, one is prepared to admit that contemporary Manhattan is inhabited chiefly by epileptic Bohemians.

"It is as much a trade," says La Bruyère, "to make a book as it is to make a clock"; in short, literature is largely a matter of technique. The technique of *Manhattan Transfer* is as dubious as its underlying philosophy. Neither can be justified save on the assumption that the aim of art is to exaggerate the clutter and incoherency of the mundane spectacle instead of eliciting its deeper meaning. Technique counts for even more in poetry than in prose. It would be possible to base on technical grounds alone a valid protest against the present preposterous overestimate of Walt Whitman. Fundamental questions need, in these very untraditional days, to be critically elucidated with a view to right definition if the poet is not to lack technique or still worse, if he is not, like certain recent practitioners of free verse, to be hagridden by a false technique. It evidently concerns both the form and substance of poetry, whether one define it with Aristotle as the portrayal of representative human action, or whether one define it with Mr. Carl Sandburg as a "mystic, sensuous mathematics of fire, smokestacks, waffles, pansies, people, and purple sunsets."

There is no doubt much in the America of to-day that suggests a jazzy impressionism. Still our naturalistic deliquescence has probably not gone so far as one might

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23 Plutarch (46?-120?), Greek biographer who wrote early studies of the great men of antiquity • 44 Dr. Johnson, Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), British author • 63 La Bruyère, Jean de La Bruyère (1645-1696), French novelist and essayist

infer from poetry like that of Mr. Sandburg or fiction like that of Mr. Dos Passos. The public response to some of the realistic novels has been considerable: allowance must be made however for the *succès de scandale,* also for the skill attained by the modern publisher in the art of merchandising. The reputation of certain books one might mention may be regarded as a triumph of "creative" advertising. What has been created is a mirage of masterpieces where no masterpieces are. It is well also to remember in regard to some of the works that have been most discussed that, so far from being an authentic reflection of the American scene, they are rather a belated echo of certain European movements. For it is as certain that in our literary and artistic modes we follow Europe —usually at an interval of from five to forty years—as it is that we lead Europe in our bathtubs and sanitary plumbing. Any one who resided in Paris in the nineties and later in America, will, as I can testify from personal experience, have the sense of having lived through the same literary fads twice. Mr. Dreiser reminds one of Zola and his school. The technique of Mr. Dos Passos recalls that of the Goncourts. Our experimenters in free verse have followed in the wake not merely of Walt Whitman but of the French symbolists, and so on.

We shall presently begin to hear of certain new developments in French literature and critical thought that point, though indecisively as yet, to a radical departure from what has been the main current since the eighteenth century and in some respects since the Renaissance. It is well that we should become familiar with the writers who reveal in different ways this latest trend,—notably with Maritain, Maurras, Lasserre, Seillière, and Benda; for they give evidence of a quality of cerebration that is rare in our own literati. At the same time we should not adopt with our usual docility the total outlook of any of these writers: for no one of them has worked out a point of view exactly adapted to our requirements. In general, it is not fitting that a great nation at the very height of its power should go on indefinitely trailing after Europe. It is time for us to initiate something of our own. This does not mean that we should proceed forthwith to inbreed our own "originality." It means almost the exact opposite. The most original thing one could do nowadays would be to question the whole theory of originality as mere temperamental overflow and self-expression that has prevailed from the "geniuses" of the eighteenth century down to one of our youthful and very minor bards who aspires to "spill his bright illimitable soul."

A genuinely critical survey would make manifest that the unsatisfactoriness of our creative effort is due to a lack of the standards that culture alone can supply. Our cultural crudity and insignificance can be traced in turn to the inadequacy of our education, especially our higher education. Mr. Mencken's attack on the "professors" is therefore largely justified; for if the professors were performing their function properly Mr. Mencken himself would not be possible. One must add in common justice that the professors themselves, or at least some of them, are becoming aware that all is not well with existing conditions. One could not ask anything more perspicacious than the following paragraph from a recent report of Committee G to the American Association of University Professors:

> American education has suffered from the domination, conscious or unconscious, direct or indirect, of political and sentimental, as well as educational, theories that are demonstrably false. If the views of some men are to prevail the intellectual life of the country is doomed; everybody except the sheer idiot is to go to college and pursue chiefly sociology, nature study, child study, and community service —and we shall have a society unique only in its mediocrity, ignorance and vulgarity. It will not do to dismiss lightly even so extreme a view as this; it is too indicative. Such influences are very strong, their pressure is constant; and if education has largely failed in America it has been due primarily to them.

In short, as a result of the encroachments of an equalitarian democracy, the standards of our higher education have suffered in two distinct particulars: first, as regards the quality of students; second, as regards the quality of the studies these students pursue. The first of these evils

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4 **succès de scandale,** a work which is popular because it includes racy material • 22 **the Goncourts.** Edmond de Goncourt (1822-1896) and Jules de Goncourt (1830-1870), brothers, were French fiction writers • 32 **Maritain . . . Benda,** French critics of recent times who championed attitudes similar to those of Babbit. Jacques Maritain, for instance, urged Thomism as a basis for modern criticism; Maurras attacked romanticism and urged a return to classical standards; Benda attacked the prevalent "social sensibility" of the twentieth century and indicated a preference for the ways and the works of the Old Regime

is generally recognized. There is even some prospect of remedial measures. Certain institutions, Harvard, for example, without being as yet severely selective, are becoming more critical of the incompetent student. On the other hand, there seems to be less hope than ever of any righting of the second and more serious evil—the failure to distinguish qualitatively between studies. The main drift is still toward what one may term the blanket degree. (Dartmouth, for example, has just merged its bachelor of arts and bachelor of science.) Yet rather than blur certain distinctions it would have been better, one might suppose, to use up all the letters of the alphabet devising new degrees to meet the real or supposed educational needs of the modern man. To bestow the A. B. degree indiscriminately on a student for whom education has meant primarily a specialization in chemistry and on one for whom it has meant primarily an assimilation of the masterpieces of Greek literature is to empty it of any effective meaning. At the present rate, indeed, the time may come when the A. B. will not throw much more light on the cultural quality of its recipient than it would, if, as has been suggested, it were bestowed on every American child at birth.

It goes without saying that those who have been lowering and confusing educational standards have been profuse in their professions of "service." A critical examination, not merely of American education but of American life at the present time will almost necessarily hinge on this term. The attitude of the Socratic critic toward it is not to be confounded with that of Mr. Mencken and the "hard-boiled" contingent. "When a gang of real estate agents," says Mr. Mencken, "bond salesmen, and automobile dealers gets together to sob for Service, it takes no Freudian to surmise that someone is about to be swindled." But if one entertain doubts about this current American gospel, why waste one's ammunition on any such small fry? Other and more exalted personages than the members of the Rotary Club at Zenith have, in Mr. Sinclair Lewis's elegant phrase, been "yipping for Service." If one is to deal with this idea of service Socratically, one needs to consider it in its relation to the two figures who have rightly been taken to be the most representative in our cultural background—Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards. Franklin's idea of service is already humanitarian. Edwards' idea is still traditionally Christian service not of man but of God. What Franklin stood for is flourishing prodigiously at the present moment, so much so that he may perhaps be defined in his chief line of influence as the great superrotarian. What Edwards stood for is, on the other hand, largely obsolete or survives only in the form of habits, which, lacking doctrinal support, are steadily declining along with the whole Puritan culture.

Intermediary types are possible. One may in one's character reflect the Puritan background and at the same time in one's idea of service derive rather from Franklin. Precisely that combination is found in the most influential of our recent educational leaders—the late President Eliot. A legitimate admiration for his personal qualities should not interfere with the keenest critical scrutiny of his views about education, for the two things stand in no necessary connection. Practically this means to scrutinize the humanitarian idealism that he probably did more than any other man of his generation to promote. In this respect most of the heads of our institutions of learning have been and still are understudies of President Eliot.

In an address on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday President Eliot warned his hearers against introspection, lest it divert them from a whole-hearted devotion to service. Between this attitude and a religious or humanistic attitude there is a clash of first principles. Both humanism and religion require introspection as a prerequisite of the inner life and its appropriate activity. With the disappearance of this activity what is left is the outer activity of the utilitarian, and this leads straight to the one-sided cult of material efficiency and finally to the standardization that is, according to nearly all foreign critics and many of our own, a chief American danger. We cannot return to the introspection of the Puritan. We shudder at the theology an Edwards would impose as the condition of his "divine and supernatural light." Yet it does not follow, as I have already suggested, that we should reject the inner life itself along with this theology. One may recognize innumerable incidental advantages in the gospel of service and yet harbor an uneasy suspicion withal that in the passage from the older religion to the modern humanitarian dispensation something vital has disappeared, something of which neither the outer working of the utilitarian nor again the expan-

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38 Rotary . . . Zenith, portrayed in Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt (1922) • 58 President Eliot. See note, p. 1284

sive sympathy of the sentimentalist can offer an equivalent.

The problem of the inner life is very much bound up with two other problems that are now pressing for solution in our higher education and have as yet found none: the problem of the specialist and the problem of leisure. The man of leisure is engaged in an inner and specifically human form of activity, a form that is, according to Aristotle, needful if he is to compass the end of ends—his own happiness. The question is whether one should consent like the specialist to forego this activity and to live partially and as a mere instrument for the attainment of some outer end—even though this end be the progress of humanity. We are beginning to hear a great deal nowadays about the "menace" of leisure. It has been estimated that with the perfecting of mechanical devices the man of the future will be able to satisfy his material wants by working not more than four hours a day. It is vain to anticipate that the rank and file will use this release from outer activity intelligently unless the leaders, notably those in high academic station, show the way. The notion of true leisure is the ultimate source of the standards of any education that deserves to be called liberal. When even a few of our college and university presidents show that they are thinking to some purpose on the nature of leisure it will be time enough to talk of "America's coming of age."

As it is, our institutions of learning seem to be becoming more and more hotbeds of "idealism." Their failure, on the whole, to achieve standards as something quite distinct from ideals on the one hand, and standardization on the other, may prove a fact of sinister import for the future of American civilization. The warfare that is being waged at the present time by Mr. Sinclair Lewis and others against a standardized Philistinism continues in the main the protest that has been made for several generations past by the temperamentalists, hard or soft, against the mechanizing of life by the utilitarian. This protest has been, and is likely to continue to be, ineffectual. The fruitful opposite of the standardized Philistine is not the Bohemian, nor again the hard temperamentalist or superman, as Mr. Mencken conceives him, but the man of leisure. Leisure involves an inner effort with reference to standards that is opposed to the sheer expansion of temperament, as it is to every other form of sheer expansion.

Perhaps a reason why the standards of the humanist are less popular in this country than the ideals of the humanitarian is that these standards set bounds to the acquisitive life; whereas it seems possible to combine a perfect idealism with an orgy of unrestricted commercialism. It is well for us to try to realize how we appear to others in this matter. Our growing unpopularity abroad is due no doubt in part to envy of our material success, but it also arises from the proneness of the rest of the world to judge us, not by the way we feel about ourselves, but by our actual performance. If we are in our own eyes a nation of idealists, we are, according to our most recent French critic, M. André Siegfried, a "nation of Pharisees." The European, M. Siegfried would have us believe, still has a concern for the higher values of civilization, whereas the American is prepared to sacrifice these values ruthlessly to mass production and material efficiency.

It is easy to detect under this assumption the latest form of a "certain condescension in foreigners." The breakdown of cultural standards is European as well as American. It is not clear that M. Siegfried himself has an adequate notion of the form of effort that can alone serve as a counterpoise to the one-sided activity of the utilitarian. His assertion that Europe, appalled at the American excess of standardization, is inclined to turn from Henry Ford to Gandhi is more picturesque than convincing. At the same time his anatomy of our favorite ideal of service is not without interest. This ideal opposes no effective barrier to our expansiveness. An unchecked expansiveness on the national scale is always imperialistic. Among the ingredients of a possible American imperialism M. Siegfried enumerates the American's "great self-satisfaction, his rather brutal sense of his own interests, and *the consciousness, still more dangerous, of his 'duties' towards humanity.*" M. Siegfried admits however that our imperialism is likely to be of a new and subtle essence, not concerned primarily with territorial aggrandizement.

A proper discussion of Mr. Siegfried's position as well as of other issues I have been raising would transcend the limits of an article. My end has been accomplished if I have justified in some measure the statement with which I started as to the importance of cultivating a gen-

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59 André Siegfried (1875-), French interpreter of American life. "See his volume Les États-Unis d'aujourd'hui (1927) translated under the title America Comes of Age."—Babbitt

eral critical intelligence. James Russell Lowell's dictum that before having an American literature we must have an American criticism was never truer than it is to-day. The obvious reply to those who call for more creation and less criticism is that one needs to be critical above all in examining what now passes for creation. A scrutiny of this kind would, I have tried to show, extend beyond the bounds of literature to various aspects of our national life and would converge finally on our higher education. We cannot afford to accept as a substitute for this true criticism the self-expression of Mr. Mencken and his school, unless indeed we are to merit the comment that is, I am told, made on us by South Americans: "They are not a very serious people!" To be sure, the reader may reflect that I am myself a critic, or would-be critic. I can only express the hope that, in my magnifying of the critical function, I do not offer too close a parallel to the dancing-master in Molière who averred, it will be remembered, that "all the mistakes of men, the fatal reverses that fill the world's annals, the shortcomings of statesmen, and the blunders of great captains arise from not knowing how to dance."

1928

18 **Molière,** pseudonym of Jean Baptiste Poquelin (1622-1673), French dramatist

Thomas Stearns Eliot

1888 •

See page 1168 for a biographical account of Eliot.

Literature and the Modern World

"Literature and the Modern World" is a good example of Eliot's later philosophical essays. Here he points out the dangers of an all-absorbing social consciousness. Religion and poetry, Eliot believes, languish in the completely socialized state; they are of great importance in the modern world both as expressions of, and as aids to, a proper balance between the individual person and society.

People may be conscious of their age without knowing very much about it. I believe that most of us are influenced, more than we realize, by a kind of deterministic conception of history. That may be all right for the Marxian, who has a reasoned theory about it; but it has no advantage as an unconscious assumption. The assumption of the inevitability of progress has, we all know, been discarded in its nineteenth century form: it is the butt of popular philosophers like Dean Inge. But actually, what we have discarded is a particular variety of the theory of progress: that which is associated with Darwin, Tennyson, free-trade, and the industrial development of the latter part of the last century: in short, with Liberalism. Our beliefs have been shaken in detail: for instance, no one now is convinced of the automatic beneficence of scientific invention. Invention may be applied to destructive, rather than to creative activity; and it throws people out of work and it stimulates production while it diminishes consumption: these are com-

9 **Dean Inge,** William R. Inge (1860-), for many years dean of St. Paul's in London and popularly known as the "gloomy dean"

monplaces. Nevertheless, we retain the essential of the doctrine of progress: we have no faith in the present.

In popularizing the belief in the future in a crude form we have, I think, a good deal for which to thank Mr. H. G. Wells. His superficial philosophy has had an extensive influence. Whatever Mr. Wells may explicitly disclaim, I think that the effect of his writing has been something like this: to propagate a belief that the value of the present resides in its service to the future, and nowhere else. Morality consists in working to forward the happiness of future generations, "happiness" of a not remarkably spiritualized kind. We are to find our happiness in scientific work which will benefit future humanity, and for the rest get anything out of life that we can. I do not want to let my words be twisted to suggest that we should take no concern with the lives of future generations. It is very much our business. What I object to is the complete dislocation of values. It is important not only that we should try to want the right things for the future. It is important also that we should have just as much respect for ourselves; and remember that we, as human beings, are individually just as valuable as the men of the future. Mr. Wells seems to propagate a strange false humility of evolutionism: as the higher apes are to us, he says in effect, so are we to the men of the future; and as we regard our animal ancestors, whether apes, lemurs or opossums, so will they of the future regard us. This is, of course, the quite natural corollary of a naïf faith in perpetual evolution, combined with a denial of any sharp dividing line between the human and the animal: that is, a denial of the human soul.

Now, one effect of this is to justify a contempt for humanity as we find it today, and the admission of any means, at whatever cost to human dignity, which will bring about the kind of future which Mr. Wells contemplates with such rapture. I confess that I cannot see why we should take such pains to produce a race of men, millennia hence, who will only look down upon *us* as apes, lemurs, or opossums. It seems a thankless labor. We must affirm that there is no more value in the future than there is in the present. That is to say, we must affirm the eternal against the transient; the eternal which has been realized in the past, can be realized in the present; and it is our business to try to bring about a future in which the obstacles to this realization will be less, for the mass of humanity, than they are today. And these obstacles are not all of a material kind; they are in ourselves too. Our attitude may seem less ambitious than that of Mr. Wells; but it is more definite. It is simply that of the humble parent who wants his child to have a better chance in life than he had, and to lead a better life than he has led.

I said at the beginning that this modern eschatology begins in optimism and easily ends in despair. But I do not draw the moral of the proprietor whose granary was full. We are obviously at the end of an age, oppressed by the sense of corruption and decay, and fearful of the kinds of change which may come, since some change must. And since our minds must needs be filled with thought about the future, thought affecting our own action tomorrow perhaps, and our consciences disturbed by what we find about us and within us, it is all the more important to keep our heads, our sense of values; all the more important that we should hold fast to the things which were, and are, and shall be, world without end.

My immediate occupation, however, is with the effect upon modern literature of this dislocation of values and this moral subservience of the present to the future. As a kind of consultant, as well as a potential impresario, I have to see a good deal of what is being written, in some forms, by those much younger than myself. In the better writers there is strongly developed a kind of social conscience, a notion that literature ought to be useful to society. In the inferior writers this conscience may, of course, take the form merely of a determination not to miss the boat; but I confidently assure you of the existence of a fair proportion of sincerity. Now this devotion to society may involve precisely the same dislocation of values as the devotion to the future; and I propose to try to come to a conclusion about the proper relation of the poet today to himself and to society. The preoccupation of which I speak is inevitable, it is right; but how is it to be adjusted to the permanent values which literature is supposed to realize?

Here we get to the point. Should a literary artist have this acute sense of a social duty obliging him to convey

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5 H. G. Wells (1866-1946), English novelist, historian, and popular scientist, famous for such works as Tono-Bungay, The Outline of History, and The War of the Worlds • 56 moral . . . full, possibly an allusion to the story of Joseph, whose storehouses had been well stocked with grain against the famine years (see Genesis 41). The "moral" may be that, unlike Joseph, the modern "liberal" is ill-prepared for reversals

a message; and if so, when is the "message" beneficial and when detrimental to the "art"?

I believe that the man of letters at the present day ought to have this sense. But the great danger for the artist is always that of conscientiously trying to feel what he does not feel. I will venture the following formulation: What is desirable is a harmony between the individual and sub-individual passions of the artist, and the social ideas and feelings which he wishes to propagate. In this harmony, he neither exploits the conscious doctrine as a vehicle for his personality, nor cramps or distorts his personality to adapt it to a social doctrine. This requires some little amplification.

A man is both an individual and a member. Instead of "individual" I shall use the word "person." His *personality* is unique and not to be violated; but he is equally created to be a *member* of society. When society is conceived as merely a sum of individuals, you get the chaos of liberal democracy. When the person is wholly subordinated to society, you get the dehumanization of fascism or communism. The extremes, however, may meet. For what liberal democracy really recognizes is a sum, not of persons, but of individuals: that is to say, not the variety and uniqueness of persons, but the purely material individuation of the old-fashioned or Democritean atom. And this is a disrespect to the person. For the person is no longer a person if wholly isolated from the community; and the community is no longer a community if it does not consist of persons. A man is not himself unless he is a member; and he cannot be a member unless he is also something alone. Man's membership and his solitude must be taken together. There are moments, perhaps not known to everyone, when a man may be nearly crushed by the terrible awareness of his isolation from every other human being; and I pity him if he finds himself only alone with himself and his meanness and futility, alone without God. It is after these moments, alone *with* God and aware of our worthiness, but for Grace, of nothing but damnation, that we turn with most thankfulness and appreciation to the awareness of our *membership:* for we appreciate and are thankful for nothing fully until we see where it begins and where it ends. All that I have been saying is recognized by the Church, and the balance is maintained only by the Church: it is not recognized, but is made manifest by, the endless seesaw of political tendency between anarchy and tyranny: a seesaw which, in the secular world, I believe has no end.

Now all this may sound perfectly irrelevant to my subject; but it is not so. This same balance ought to exist, on its plane, in the activity of the artist. For the artist cannot devote himself truly to any cause unless by that devotion he is also most truly being, and becoming, himself. The artist may, as Remy de Gourmont profoundly says, "in writing himself, write his age"; but I think that we should add that he may sometimes in writing his age, write himself: which will come to the same thing. But it is from himself that he must start. It is sometimes helpful to put things in an extreme, and therefore dangerous way. So I may say that in one aspect the true artist may be said to be simply *exploiting* the things he believes in for the purpose of making art:—only if he does this *consciously* is he a false artist.

Whereas a man like D. H. Lawrence is in danger of manipulating his philosophy to fit his private needs and to justify his private weaknesses, the adherent of an objective creed is in danger of denying, or distorting himself to fit his beliefs; and the opposite insincerity becomes possible. This is equally a danger for the Christian and for the communist, and especially at those moments when personal inspiration fails. How far can one go in identifying a creed with oneself, or oneself with a creed? The development of the person may be twisted, or the purity of the creed may be polluted. I believe, naturally, that the Christian, if he understands his Christianity, has safeguards which the mere social revolutionist cannot have: safeguards of the personal emotion. For instance: social enthusiasm alone, however intense, does not seem to have the substance needed to make poetry. What is the difference between Dante's denunciation of the vices of his time, and Shelley's denunciation of kings, tyrants, and priests? Shelley's excitement is in his head, and therefore emits rather shrill and inapplicable head noises; whereas Dante's is involved with all his own sufferings—definite grievances and definite humiliations at the hands of particular people, of all of which he is conscious: self-interested grudges and deprivations, earthly if you like, but primarily *real,* and that is the first thing. Only the

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25 **Democritean atom.** The atoms of Democritus, Greek philosopher of the fourth century B.C., were identical in chemical quality but differed in size and form • **53 Remy de Gourmont.** See note, p. 1095 • **63 D. H. Lawrence** (1885-1930), English writer famous for such novels as **Sons and Lovers** and **Lady Chatterley's Lover** and for such critical works as **Studies in Classic American Literature**

greatest, the Hebrew Prophets, seem to be utterly caught up and possessed by God as mouthpieces; in ordinary human poets the human personal loss, the private grievance and bitterness and loneliness, must be present. Even when the poet is aware of nothing, interested in nothing, beyond his personal feelings, these may have, by their intensity, a representative value, so that we envisage him, like Villon, not as wrapped up in his private griefs, but reliving them, holding nothing back, in a passionate cry to God—and there is, in the end, no one else to cry to. But in the greatest poets these private passions are completed in a passionate belief in objective moral values, in a striving towards justice and the life of the spirit among men.

Now the tendency of secular revolution today seems to me to be to diminish the value of the person. Of what importance, we may say currently, is all this expression of personal feeling and private suffering, in a world of so much general injustice and oppression? and this is the secular point of view: of what importance one man, when the life of society is at stake! We are back with the modern eschatology of which Mr. Wells is the popular preacher. The present order is damned, let us snatch what satisfaction we can, say some; and, the present order is damned, let us sacrifice—not our pleasure, but our *selves*—to the future, say others; and one may perhaps maintain both conclusions at once. And behind is the master idea which has been working unobtrusively throughout our time, an idea which in the forms of heresy has always been waiting for us: the idea of the *"group consciousness"*—modest, and scientific and certain it sounds under that name.

In a recent article called "The Real Issue," which I have read with interest and approval, Mr. Christopher Dawson makes some pertinent remarks about the position of the individual in the classless society:

> . . . the orthodox Communist will deny that this total subordination and sacrifice of humanity to the State machine is of the essence of Communism, for did not Marx and Lenin expressly teach that the dictatorship of the proletariat is only a temporary phase, and that the State itself will eventually wither away and give place to a classless and Stateless society? But how will this end be attained? Only when the individual is so completely socialized that he will instinctively devote all his energies to working for society and will be unable to conceive of any other end than that of the economic organism of which he forms part. In such an order there will be no need for a State any more than it is necessary for ants or bees to have a State. But is it a human order, and is it possible for humanity to rise or sink to such a level?

I do not, any more than Mr. Dawson, think such a consummation likely; but if I did not think it possible I should not take the trouble of attacking the idea of it. It would be brought about, not by the diabolic cleverness of scheming philosophers and politicians, but by the natural aversion of human beings to the responsibility and strain of being *human*. For we must remember that it *is* a great strain for the erect animal to persist in being erect, a physical and still more a moral strain. With or without mechanical aids of movement and noise, most people spend a good deal of their time avoiding the human responsibility; and we only remain human because of the continual vicarious sacrifice of a few dedicated lives. And the "group consciousness," the heresy bred within the antithetical heresy of liberalism, has a great seductive charm; for it helps to release us from the burden of responsibility. It would more likely, I think, be a reversion to a lower kind of consciousness, than an ascent to a higher one; it is largely, in fact, to the speculations, which profess to be based on the study of primitive races, of such writers as Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl, that we owe the conceptions. That such a state of humanity would be unfavorable to poetry follows from what I have said earlier. That is not perhaps of the utmost importance in itself; there are matters more important than the perpetual production of new poetry, though we must remember that a people which ceases to create the new will also lose the power to appreciate the *old*. What is important is that the creation of poetry depends upon the maintenance of the person, of the person in relation to other individuals, to God, and to society.

There is much, however, in the aspirations of poetry today with which I am in full sympathy. When we

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8 **Villon**, François Villon, French lyric poet of the fifteenth century • 75 **Durkheim**, Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), French sociologist and philosopher • 75 **Lévy-Bruhl**, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857-1939), French philosopher and ethnologist

compare the state of poetry now with that of forty years ago, towards the end of the last century, I think we may see, without drawing any comparison between the merits of individual poets (and even if that comparison were to result to our disadvantage), that the social earnestness and dissatisfaction which have been lately expressing themselves have been all to the good; and poetry has taken on a new seriousness and a new social importance. It is perhaps not insignificant that the one great poet we have who belongs to both periods, Mr. William Butler Yeats, has been writing his finest poetry within recent years. With all we owe him, I find it difficult to regard Mr. Yeats as anything but a *contemporary;* and if anyone said that of me, when I arrive at his present age, I should consider it the highest of compliments. What I think we have missed, and have been struggling for, is the recognition of poetry as something other than exquisite pleasure for a small number of people who have the taste for it—as something having a function of social value. The poet must assume his rôle of moralist, and thus manifest his relation to society.

I think however that the passion for social righteousness will prove in the end not enough in itself. The danger of what I have called the modern eschatology, the danger of neglecting the permanent for the transitory, the personal for the social, is one to which the poet is exposed in common with everyone else: but he has a peculiar responsibility not to be deluded. Yet I would ask you to have some sympathy with his difficulties. An age of change, and a period of incessant apprehension of war, do not form a favorable environment. There is a temptation to welcome change for its own sake, to sink our minds in some desperate philosophy of *action;* and several such philosophies are being urged upon us. Contempt for the past, and even ignorance of it, is on the increase, and many are ready for the unlimited experiment. We cannot effect intelligent change, unless we hold fast to the permanent essentials; and a clear understanding of what we should hold fast to, and what abandon, should make us all the better prepared to carry out the changes that are needed Thus we can look back upon the past without regret, and to the future without fear.

1935

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