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A Book of Golden Deeds

Part II.



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TORONTO

A Book of Golden Deeds

Of all Times and all Lands

Gathered and Narrated by
Charlotte Mary Yonge

*A Selection, Edited with Introductions, Notes,
Glossary, etc, by*

Helen H. Watson

Part II.

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I.

HEROES OF THE PLAGUE.

1576—1665—1721.

THIS pathetic story of heroism and endurance under heavy and prolonged affliction needs no introduction in itself, and yet some of you may like to know something more than is told you in the story concerning the ravages of the fearful disease known as the Plague; and you may like to know also, as a matter not only of interest but also of thankfulness, what reasons can be given for our immunity from such terrific scourges in modern times.

In olden times the word plague seems to have been used in a wide and general sense to indicate any disease of a peculiarly infectious nature. Thus, when we read in the old chronicles that at such and such a time or place 1,000 persons died of the plague, we can never be quite sure that they were cases of true Asiatic plague, or whether the number did not include those who had fallen victims to other infectious disorders, such as, for instance, those which we should now call cholera or typhoid or typhus. But when a qualifying word goes with it—the *Great* Plague, the *Great* Pestilence, the *Black Death*—then we may know that it refers to that extremely virulent form of typhus fever, still a constant inmate of the native quarters in some of our great Indian cities and in Eastern cities generally, and still to be found in modern Europe, following, as a rule, the track of war or famine, in isolated outbreaks or single

cases The plague thrives and flourishes amid the picturesque squalor, the dirt and overcrowding of the East, it would thrive in Europe, we know from past experience, as readily as in Asia, if the conditions of life were the same

In England we owe the first introduction of the plague to the Crusaders who brought it with them on their return from the East, but this was by no means its first appearance in the West In 534 B C there was a great plague in Carthage, and, to appease the anger of the gods who were supposed to have sent it, the Carthaginians, with characteristic brutality, sacrificed their poor little children About 70 years later there was a great plague in Rome, and the Greek historian, Thucydides,¹ tells us of a terrible plague in Athens about 30 years later than the one in Rome Then, after a long interval of comparative freedom, it broke out with renewed strength all along the shores of the Mediterranean The wars known as the Crusades occupy the period from 1099 to 1270, during that time there is evidence that the plague was known in England, but it was not till 1348, 78 years after the last Crusade, that the terrible visitation, known as the Black Death, swept through Europe, and caused such ravages in England that it is roughly estimated that one third of the whole population died from the effects The period that followed the Black Death forms a turning point in the condition of the English labouring classes The mortality, naturally, had been heaviest among the poor The result was that there were fewer labourers to do the work, they were able to demand a higher rate of wages and greater liberty The masters very often declined to give these things, and then followed—as the labourers' reply—rebellions such as that of Wat Tyler and others. Thus the plague helped to free the labouring classes of England, never again

could the old system of serfdom be restored, so that out of a great evil came, at any rate, good for some

In these early times it is not surprising to find that the plague was regarded as a visitation of God, it was God punishing His people for their sins. In a way, though not in the sense intended by those who said it, this was right "Consequences," so a great writer¹ has said, "are un pitying" If, for instance, we disregard the laws of health, disease must follow this is what we mean by the law of consequences

10

But these poor ignorant people who talked of God's anger went quite the wrong way to work to appease the wrath which they thought was roused against them. It is true they did not, like the Carthaginians, sacrifice their children, but they scourged themselves publicly with whips,² or they went on long pilgrimages—spreading the disease as they went—or they broke into a sort of frenzy of religious fervour which generally found vent in the persecution of the Jews or the like

Epidemics of plague continued to break out in England²⁰ at intervals of about ten years from this time onwards until we come to the second great visitation, that which is known as the Great Plague, which began in London at the close of the year 1664, and lasted throughout 1665. If you want to know, at first hand, what the Great Plague of London was really like to one who went through it, you must turn to the Diary of Mr Samuel Pepys,³ whose chance, every-day jottings give us a clearer insight into the horrors of the situation than any more elaborate description written from hearsay. Mr Pepys³⁰ sent his family away to Woolwich, but his own business obliged him to remain in town, at any rate for some part of the time. It is interesting to notice how his early

¹ George Eliot² These fanatics were called the Flagellants³ See Note

indifference to his own danger, and callousness as to the sufferings of his neighbours, change as time goes on and the situation becomes more unpleasant, but his attitude throughout is that of the typical aristocrat of the day. To keep the danger at arm's length and to shut one's eyes to the horrors was the main desire. When a case of plague occurred, the regulations exacted the shutting up of the infected house, together with all that were within, whether sick or well, for a space of 40 days' quarantine. A guard
 10 stood by to watch that no one either entered or left the house marked with a red cross and the words "God have mercy upon us." As a result, very often whole households died—the last victim alone and untended. People were so selfishly terrified lest their houses should become infected areas that servants and hirelings were turned adrift on the streets on the smallest symptom of any ill-health. The hired nurses who, for huge sums, could be found to attend the very rich when they fell a prey to the disease, often killed their patients, even when they might have recovered,
 20 in order to secure the plunder. It is when we read such terrible details as these that we begin to realise the devotion of Mr Mompesson and his wife, and of the good Earl and Countess of Devonshire, all of whom, actuated by a noble sense of responsibility, not only remained at their post (Mr Samuel Pepys did that) but freely gave themselves to the task of saving others.

"It is," says Mr Pepys in his frank way, in one of his Diary notes, "an unpleasant thing, I perceive, to be at Court, everybody being fearful one of another, and all so
 30 sad enquiring after the plague, so that I stole away by my horse to Kingston."

Sept 3rd "Up and put on my coloured silk suit, very fine. My Lord Bouncker, Sir J Minnes and I up to the Vestry in order to the doing something for the keeping of the plague from growing, but, Lord! to consider the madness of people of the town, who will, because

they are forbid, come in crowds along with the dead corpses to see them buried, and we agreed on some orders for the prevention thereof. Among other stories, one was very passionate, methought, of a complaint brought against a man in the town, for taking a child from London from an infected house. Alderman Hooker told us it was the child of a very able citizen in Gracious Street, a saddler, who had buried all the rest of his children of the plague, and himself and wife, now being shut up in despair of escaping, did desire only to save the life of this little child, and so prevailed to have it received stark-naked into the arms of a friend, who brought it, having put it into fresh clothes, to Greenwich¹ "

Sept 6 "To London to pack up more things, and there I saw fires burning in the street, as it is through the whole city, by the Lord Mayor's order. Thence by water to the Duke of Albemarle's, all the way fires on each side of the Thames, and strange to see in broad daylight two or three burials on the bank side, one at the very heels of another "

20

Sept 14 "I did wonder to see the Change so full but not a man or merchant of any fashion, but plain men all. And, Lord! to see how I did endeavour all I could to talk with as few as I could. My meeting dead corpses of the plague, carried to be buried close to me, at noonday through the city in Fenchurch Street. To see a person sick of the plague carried close by me in Grace church in a hackney-coach. My finding the Angel Tavern at the lower end of Tower Hill shut up, and more than that, the ale-house at the Tower Stairs, and more than that, that the person was then dying of the plague when I was last there, a little while ago, at night. To hear that poor Payne, my waiter, hath buried a child,

30

¹ This sad story has been made the subject of a fine picture by Mr F W Topham, R I. It was exhibited in the Academy of 1898

and is dying himself To hear that a labourer I sent but the other day to Dagenhams is dead of the plague, and that one of my own watermen, that carried me daily, fell sick as soon as he had landed me on Friday morning last, when I had been all night upon the water, and is now dead of the plague To hear that Mr Lewis hath another daughter sick And lastly, that both my servants have lost their fathers of the plague this week do put me into great apprehensions of melancholy, and with good reason
 10 But I put off my thoughts of sadness as much as I can, the rather to keep my wife in good heart and family also "

Sept 30 " The great burden we have upon us at this time at the office is the providing for prisoners and sick men that are recovered, they lying before our office doors all night and all day, poor wretches Having been on shore, the captains won't receive them on board, and other ships we have not to put them on, nor money to pay them off, or provide for them Do end this month with
 20 great content, the last three months for joy, health and profit have been much the greatest I ever received "

Dec 31st, 1665 " Thus ends this year, to my great joy, in this manner —I have raised my estate from £1,300 in this year to £4,400 It is true we have gone through great melancholy because of the Great Plague, and I put to great charges by it, by keeping my family long at Woolwich, and myself and another part of my family, my clerks, at my charge, at Greenwich, and a maid at London, but I hope the King will give us some satisfaction
 30 for that But now the plague is abated almost to nothing, and I intending to get to London as fast as I can "

Could anything be more convincing than these few extracts, taken almost at random, from the daily record of this typical, kindly, yet utterly selfish man of the world, who, moved to momentary compassion by the sight of the poverty and misery around him, yet, at the end of

that dreadful year, contemplates, with a thrill of genuine satisfaction, the very respectable improvement in his balance sheet. One wonders whether, when he sent up his claim for compensation for losses, he remembered to mention this interesting fact to the King!

London was saved not by its sensible regulations or the efforts made by its citizens to battle with disease and death, but by the great fire which immediately followed. At the time the great fire was regarded as a national calamity, but it was really a blessing in disguise, for it 10 burnt and destroyed, with its terrible yet purifying flame, all the dens in which fever germs still lurked, ready to burst forth again with renewed violence. The old wood dwellings were all destroyed, and, in their place, rose new buildings of stone, wider streets (though we should call these narrow enough) in place of the narrow passages with their tall houses, whose projecting upper stories had excluded both light and air. This brings us back to our starting point and to the question—how is it that we are spared such visitations in modern times? We are spared 20 because the conditions are no longer favourable to the development of such diseases. We have still in our large towns too great a herding together of masses of human beings, the houses of the poor in the more densely populated parts of our great cities still leave much to be desired. We have still in our midst far too many outcasts, homeless and friendless, for whom no one is responsible. These things are still a source of danger and a matter of disgrace to us as a nation, but every year municipal authorities and those who devote much time and thought to the 30 great social problems of the day are helping to improve matters. We are becoming convinced as a nation that healthy homes tend to make a healthy and contented people, and that to every one, whether rich or poor, belongs the right to claim a sufficient supply of light, of air and of pure water, to keep him sound in body and in mind.

The plague was such an ever-present danger in early times that it is not surprising to find it often referred to in literature

The Italian poet Boccaccio, from whom our own Chaucer borrowed his idea of the *Canterbury Tales*, placed the scene of his poem (*The Decameron*) in a villa-garden near Florence during the time of a great visitation of the plague in 1348. Several ladies and gentlemen were supposed to have retired to this spot in order to try to forget
10 the existence of the plague and to shut their eyes to the sufferings of the friends whom they had left in the city to die. Not unlike the Londoners of Charles II's reign, this. Here, in this beautiful garden, they told frivolous tales to one another to pass away the time, but even here, secluded as they were, they could not really escape from the danger from which they fled, because they had brought it with them.

In the great dining-room at Chatsworth, the seat of the present Duke of Devonshire, are two noble full-length
20 portraits by Van Dyck. They are the 3rd Earl of Devonshire (b. 1617, succeeded 1628, died 1684), and his wife, the Lady Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of the 2nd Earl of Salisbury. These are the two who so nobly of their bounty helped the poor and sick of Eyam during the summer of 1666.

WHEN our Litany entreats that we may be delivered from "plague, pestilence and famine," the first of these words bears a special meaning, which came home with strong and
30 painful force to European minds at the time the Prayer-book was translated, and for the whole following century.

It refers to the deadly sickness emphatically called "the plague," a typhoid fever exceedingly

violent and rapid, and accompanied with a frightful swelling either under the arm or on the corresponding part of the thigh. The East is the usual haunt of this fatal complaint, which some suppose to be bred by the marshy, unwholesome state of Egypt after the subsidence of the waters of the Nile, and which generally prevails in Egypt and Syria until its course is checked either by the cold of winter or the heat in summer. At times this disease has become unusually malignant and 10 infectious, and then has come beyond its usual boundaries, and made its way over all the West. These dreadful visitations were rendered more frequent by total disregard of all precautions, and ignorance of laws for preserving health. People crowded together in towns without means of obtaining sufficient air or cleanliness, and thus were sure to be unhealthy, and whenever war or famine had occasioned more than usual poverty, some frightful epidemic was sure to follow in its train, 20 and sweep away the poor creatures whose frames were already weakened by previous privation. And often this "sole judgment" was that emphatically called the plague, especially during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a time when war had become far more cruel and mischievous in the hands of hired regiments than ever it had been with a feudal army, and when at the same time increasing trade was filling the cities with more closely packed inhabitants, within fortifica- 30 tions that would not allow the city to expand in

proportion to its needs. It has 'been only the establishment of the system of quarantine which has succeeded in cutting off the course of infection by which the plague was wont to set out on its frightful travels from land to land, from city to city.

The desolation of a plague-stricken city was a sort of horrible dream. Every infected house was marked with a red cross, and carefully closed against all persons, except those who were charged
10 to drive carts through the streets to collect the corpses, ringing a bell as they went. These men were generally wretched beings, the lowest and most reckless of the people, who undertook their frightful task for the sake of the plunder of the desolate houses, and wound themselves up by intoxicating drinks to endure the horrors. The bodies were thrown into large trenches, without prayer or funeral rites, and these were hastily closed up. Whole families died together, untended
20 save by one another, with no aid from without, and the last chances of life would be lost for want of a friendly hand to give drink or food, and, in the Roman Catholic cities, the perishing without a priest to administer the last rites of the Church was viewed as more dreadful than death itself.

Such visitations as these did indeed prove whether the pastors of the afflicted flock were shepherds or hirelings. So felt, in 1576, Cardinal Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, the worthiest
30 of all the successors of St. Ambrose, when he learned at Lodi that the plague had made its

appearance in his city, where, remarkably enough, there had lately been such licentious revelry that he had solemnly warned the people that, unless they repented, they would certainly bring on themselves the wrath of Heaven. His council of clergy advised him to remain in some healthy part of his diocese till the sickness should have spent itself, but he replied that a Bishop, whose duty it is to give his life for his sheep, could not rightly abandon them in time of peril. They ¹⁰ owned that to stand by them was the higher course. "Well," he said, "is it not a Bishop's duty to choose the higher course?"

So back into the town of deadly sickness he went, leading the people to repent, and watching over them in their sufferings, visiting the hospitals, and, by his own example, encouraging his clergy in carrying spiritual consolation to the dying. All the time the plague lasted, which was four months, his exertions were fearless and unwearied, ²⁰ and what was remarkable was, that of his whole household only two died, and they were persons who had not been called to go about among the sick. Indeed, some of the rich who had repaired to a villa, where they spent their time in feasting and amusement in the luxurious Italian fashion, were there followed by the pestilence, and all perished, their dainty fare and the excess in which they indulged having no doubt been as bad a preparation as the poverty of the starving people ³⁰ in the city.

The strict and regular life of the Cardinal and his clergy, and their home in the spacious palace, were, no doubt, under Providence, a preservative, but, in the opinions of the time, there was little short of a miracle in the safety of one who daily preached in the cathedral,—bent over the beds of the sick, giving them food and medicine, hearing their confessions, and administering the last rites of the Church,—and then braving the contagion
10 after death, rather than let the corpses go forth unblest to their common grave. Nay, so far was he from seeking to save his own life, that, kneeling before the altar in the cathedral, he solemnly offered himself, like Moses, as a sacrifice for his people. But, like Moses, the sacrifice was passed by—"it cost more to redeem their souls"—and Borromeo remained untouched, as did the twenty-eight priests who voluntarily offered themselves to join in his labours.

20 No wonder that the chief memories that haunt the glorious white marble cathedral of Milan are those of St Ambrose, who taught mercy to an emperor, and of St Carlo Borromeo, who practised mercy on a people.

It was a hundred years later that the greatest and last visitation of the plague took place in London. Doubtless, the scourge called forth—as in Christian lands such judgments always do—many an act of true and blessed self-devotion,
30 but these are not recorded, save where they have their reward. And the tale now to be told is of

one of the small villages to which the infection spread—namely, Eyam, in Derbyshire

This is a lovely place between Buxton and Chatsworth, perched high on a hill-side, and shut in by another higher mountain—extremely beautiful, but exactly one of those that, for want of free air, always become the especial prey of infection. At that time lead works were in operation in the mountains, and the village was thickly inhabited. Great was the dismay of the villagers when the family of a tailor, who had received some patterns of cloth from London, showed symptoms of the plague in its most virulent form, sickening and dying in one day.

The rector of the parish, the Rev William Mompesson, was still a young man, and had been married only a few years. His wife, a beautiful young woman, only twenty-seven years old, was exceedingly terrified at the tidings from the village, and wept bitterly as she implored her husband to take her, and her little George and Elizabeth, who were three and four years old, away to some place of safety. But Mr Mompesson gravely showed her that it was his duty not to forsake his flock in their hour of need, and began at once to make arrangements for sending her and the children away. She saw he was right in remaining, and ceased to urge him to forsake his charge, but she insisted that, if he ought not to desert his flock, his wife ought not to leave him, and she wept and entreated so earnestly, that he

at length consented that she should be with him, and that only the two little ones should be removed while yet there was time

Their father and mother parted with the little ones as treasures that they might never see again. At the same time Mr Mompesson wrote to London for the most approved medicines and prescriptions, and he likewise sent a letter to the Earl of Devonshire, at Chatsworth, to engage that his
10 parishioners should exclude themselves from the whole neighbourhood, and thus confine the contagion within their own boundaries, provided the Earl would undertake that food, medicines, and other necessaries, should be placed at certain appointed spots, at regular times, upon the hills around, where the Eyamites might come, leave payment for them, and take them up, without holding any communication with the bringers, except by letters, which could be placed on a
20 stone, and then fumigated, or passed through vinegar, before they were touched with the hand. To this the Earl consented, and for seven whole months the engagement was kept.

Mr Mompesson represented to his people that, with the plague once among them, it would be so unlikely that they should not carry infection about with them, that it would be selfish cruelty to other places to try to escape amongst them, and thus spread the danger. So rocky and wild was the
30 ground around them, that, had they striven to escape, a regiment of soldiers could not have pre-

vented them But of their own free will they attended to their Rector's remonstrance, and it was not known that one parishioner of Eyam passed the boundary all that time, nor was there a single case of plague in any of the villages around.

The assembling of large congregations in churches had been thought to increase the infection in London, and Mr Mompesson, therefore, thought it best to hold his services out of doors. In the middle of the village is a dell, suddenly ¹⁰ making a cleft in the mountain-side, only five yards wide at the bottom, which is the pebbly bed of a wintry torrent, but is dry in the summer. On the side towards the village, the slope upwards was of soft green turf, scattered with hazel, rowan, and alder bushes, and full of singing birds. On the other side, the ascent was nearly perpendicular, and composed of sharp rocks, partly adorned with bushes and ivy, and here and there rising up in fantastic peaks and archways, through which the ²⁰ sky could be seen from below. One of these rocks was hollow, and could be entered from above—a natural gallery, leading to an archway opening over the precipice, and this Mr Mompesson chose for his reading-desk and pulpit. The dell was so narrow, that his voice could clearly be heard across it, and his congregation arranged themselves upon the green slope opposite, seated or kneeling upon the grass.

On Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays arose ³⁰ the earnest voice of prayer from that rocky glen,

the people's response meeting the pastor's voice , and twice on Sundays he preached to them the words of life and hope . It was a dry hot summer , fain would they have seen thunder and rain to drive away their enemy , and seldom did weather break in on the regularity of these services . But there was another service that the rector had daily to perform , not in his church-yard—that would have perpetuated the infection—
10 but on a heathy hill above the village . There he daily read of " the Resurrection and the Life , " and week by week the company on the grassy slope grew fewer and scantier . His congregation were passing from the dell to the heathy mound

Day and night the rector and his wife were among the sick, nursing, feeding, and tending them with all that care and skill could do , but, in spite of all their endeavours, only a fifth part of the whole of the inhabitants lived to spend the last
20 Sunday in Cucklet Church, as the dell is still called . Mrs Mompesson had persuaded her husband to have a wound made in his leg, fancying that this would lessen the danger of infection, and he yielded in order to satisfy her . His health endured perfectly, but she began to waste under her constant exertions, and her husband feared that he saw symptoms of consumption , but she was full of delight at some appearances in his wound that made her imagine that it had carried
30 off the disease, and that his danger was over

A few days after, she sickened with symptoms

of the plague, and her frame ~~was~~ so weakened that she sank very quickly. She was often delirious, but when she was too much exhausted to endure the exertion of taking cordials, her husband entreated her to try for their children's sake, she lifted herself up and made the endeavour. She lay peacefully, saying, "she was but looking for the good hour to come," and calmly died, making the responses to her husband's prayers even to the last. Her he buried in the church-¹⁰ yard, and fenced the grave in afterwards with iron rails. There are two beautiful letters from him written on her death—one to his little children, to be kept and read when they would be old enough to understand it; the other to his patron, Sir George Saville, afterwards Lord Halifax. "My drooping spirits," he says, "are much refreshed with her joys, which I assure myself are unutterable." He wrote both these letters in the belief that he should soon follow her, speaking of²⁰ himself to Sir George as "his dying chaplain," commending to him his "distressed orphans," and begging that a "humble pious man" might be chosen to succeed him in his parsonage. "Sir, I thank God that I am willing to shake hands in peace with all the world; and I have comfortable assurances that He will accept me for the sake of His Son; and I find God more good than ever I imagined, and wish that His goodness were not so much abused and contemned," writes the widowed³⁰ pastor, left alone among his dying flock. And he

concludes, "and with tears I entreat that when you are praying for fatherless and motherless infants, you would then remember my two pretty babes "

These two letters were written on the last day of August and first of September, 1666 , but on the 20th of November, Mr Mompesson was writing to his uncle, in the lull after the storm " The condition of this place hath been so dreadful, that
10 I persuade myself it exceedeth all history and example. I may truly say our town has become a Golgotha, a place of skulls , and had there not been a small remnant of us left, we had been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah My ears never heard such doleful lamentations, my nose never smelt such noisome smells, and my eyes never beheld such ghastly spectacles Here have been seventy-six families visited within my parish, out of which died 259 persons "

20 However, since the 11th of October there had been no fresh cases, and he was now burning all woollen clothes, lest the infection should linger in them He himself had never been touched by the complaint, nor had his maid-servant, his man had had it but slightly Mr Mompesson lived many more years, was offered the Deanery of Lincoln, but did not accept it, and died in 1708 So virulent was the contagion that, ninety-one years after, in 1757, when five labouring men, who were
30 digging up land near the plague-graves for a potato-garden, came upon what appeared to be

some linen, though they buried it again directly, they all sickened with typhus fever, three of them died, and it was so infectious that no less than seventy persons in the parish were carried off

The last of these remarkable visitations of the plague, properly so called, was at Marseilles, in 1721. It was supposed to have been brought by a vessel which sailed from Seyde, in the Bay of Tunis, on the 31st of January, 1720, which had a clean bill of health when it anchored off the Chateau d'If, at Marseilles, on the 25th of May, but six of the crew were found to have died on the voyage, and the persons who handled the freight also died, though, it was said, without any symptoms of the plague, and the first cases were supposed to be of the fevers caused by excessive poverty and crowding. The unmistakable Oriental plague, however, soon began to spread in the city among the poorer population, and in truth the wars and heavy expenses of Louis XIV had made poverty in France more wretched than ever before, and the whole country was like one deadly sore, festering, and by-and-by to come to a fearful crisis. Precautions were taken, the infected families were removed to the infirmaries and their houses walled up, but all this was done at night in order not to excite alarm. The mystery, however, made things more terrible to the imagination, and this was a period of the utmost selfishness. All the richer inhabitants who had the means of quitting the city, and who were the very people who could

have been useful there, fled with one accord. Suddenly the lazaretto was left without superintendents, the hospitals without stewards, the judges, public officers, notaries, and most of the superior workmen in the most necessary trades were all gone. Only the Provost and four municipal officers remained, with 1,100 livres in their treasury, in the midst of an entirely disorganized city, and an enormous population without work,
10 without restraint, without food, and a prey to the deadliest of diseases

The Parliament which still survived in the ancient kingdom of Provence signalized itself by retreating to a distance, and on the 31st of May putting out a decree that nobody should pass a boundary line round Marseilles on pain of death, but considering what people were trying to escape from, and the utter overthrow of all rule and order, this penalty was not likely to have much effect,
20 and the plague was carried by the fugitives to Arles, Aix, Toulon, and sixty-three lesser towns and villages. What a contrast to Mr Mompesson's moral influence!

Horrible crimes were committed. Malefactors were released from the prisons and convicts from the galleys, and employed for large payment to collect the corpses and carry the sick to the infirmaries. Of course, they could only be wrought up to such work by intoxication and unlimited
30 opportunities of plunder, and their rude treatment both of the dead and of the living sufferers added

unspeakably to the general wretchedness To be carried to the infirmary was certain death,—no one lived in that heap of contagion, and even this shelter was not always to be had,—some of the streets were full of dying creatures who had been turned out of their houses and could crawl no farther

What was done to alleviate all these horrors? It was in the minority of Louis XV and the Regent Duke of Orleans, easy, good-natured man ¹⁶ that he was, sent 22,000 marks to the relief of the city, all in silver, for paper money was found to spread the infection more than anything else He also sent a great quantity of corn, and likewise doctors for the sick, and troops to shut in the infected district. The Pope, Clement XI, sent spiritual blessings to the sufferers, and, moreover, three ship-loads of wheat The Regent's Prime Minister, the Abbé Dubois, the shame of his Church and country, fancied that to send these ²⁰ supplies cast a slight upon his administration, and desired his representative at Rome to prevent the sailing of the ships, but his orders were not for very shame carried out, and the vessels set out On their way they were seized by a Moorish corsair, who was more merciful than Dubois, for he no sooner learnt their destination than he let them go unplundered.

And in the midst of the misery there were bright lights "running to and fro among the ³⁰ stubble" The Provost and his five remaining

officers, and a gentleman called Le Chevalier Rose, did their utmost in the bravest and most unselfish way to help the sufferers, distribute food, provide shelter, restrain the horrors perpetrated by the sick in their ravings, and provide for the burial of the dead. And the clergy were all devoted to the task of mercy. There was only one convent, that of St Victor, where the gates were closed against all comers in the hope of shutting out
10 infection. Every other monastic establishment freely devoted itself. It was a time when party spirit ran high. The Bishop, Henri François Xavier de Belzunce, a nephew of the Duke de Lauzun, was a strong and rigid Jesuit, and had joined so hotly in the persecution of the Jansenists that he had forbidden the brotherhood called Oratorian fathers to hear confessions, because he suspected them of a leaning to Jansenist opinions; but he and they both alike worked earnestly in
20 the one cause of mercy. They were content to obey his prejudiced edict, since he was in lawful authority, and threw themselves heartily into the lower and more disdained services to the sick, as nurses and tenders of the body alone, not of the soul, and in this work their whole community, Superior and all, perished, almost without exception. Perhaps these men, thus laying aside hurt feeling and sense of injustice, were the greatest conquerors of all whose golden deeds we have described.

30 Bishop Belzunce himself, however, stands as the prominent figure in the memory of those

dreadful five months. He was a man of commanding stature, towering above all around him, and his fervent sermons, aided by his example of severe and strict piety, and his great charities, had greatly impressed the people. He now went about among the plague-stricken, attending to their wants, both spiritual and temporal, and sold or mortgaged all his property to obtain relief for them, and he actually went himself in the tumbrils of corpses to give them the rites of Christian 10 burial. His doings closely resembled those of Cardinal Borromeo, and like him he had recourse to constant preachings of repentance, processions, and assemblies for litanies in the Church. It is curiously characteristic that it was the English clergyman, who equally pious, and sensible that only the Almighty could remove the scourge, yet deemed it right to take precautions against the effects of bringing a large number of persons into one building. How Belzunce's clergy seconded 20 him may be gathered from the numbers who died of the disease. Besides the Oratorians, there died eighteen Jesuits, twenty-six of the order called Recollets, and forty-three Capuchins, all of whom had freely given their lives in the endeavour to alleviate the general suffering. In the four chief towns of Provence 80,000 died, and about 8,000 in the lesser places. The winter finally checked the destroyer, and then, sad to say, it appeared how little effect the warning had had on the sur- 30 vivors. Inheritances had fallen together into the

hands of persons who found themselves rich beyond their expectations, and in the glee of having escaped the danger, forgot to be thankful, and spent their wealth in revelry. Never had the cities of Provence been so full of wild, questionable mirth as during the ensuing winter, and it was remarked that the places which had suffered most severely were the most given up to thoughtless gaiety, and even licentiousness.

- 10 Good Bishop Belzunce did his best to protest against the wickedness around him, and refused to leave his flock at Marseilles, when, four years after, a far more distinguished see was offered to him. He died in 1755, in time to escape the sight of the retribution that was soon worked out on the folly and vice of the unhappy country.

II

THE SECOND OF SEPTEMBER

1792

EVERYBODY has heard of the great King Louis XIV of France, that magnificent monarch of whom Thackeray has drawn us such a funny picture,¹ shewing the King in all his majesty, with his wig, his high-heeled shoes, his cloak, his fleurs-de-lis, and then by the side of this grand person, a "little, lean, shivelled old man of five feet two," without any majesty at all—the same man *without* his gorgeous trappings

We may take this picture as a sort of satirical illustration of the condition of France at the time—the king, the court, the nobility, the clergy, gorgeous and resplendent in borrowed plumes for which poor, lean, hungry France, as represented by the lower classes and the peasantry, had to pay

Everything existed not for the people but for the king and those to whom he chose to give—that which did not belong to him. Each province had a sort of vice-roy, who managed for the king, each city was managed by a magistrate who purchased his right to tax from the king, every nobleman's estate had to pay so much to the king in the shape of dues and exactions—dues, not collected from the owners, but from the

¹ *The Paris Sketch Book*

unfortunate peasants, already ground down with "government" taxes which went to cover the expenses of idle and costly wars that the people neither desired nor understood. Still, people will put up with a good deal so long as there is a fine figure-head like le grand monarque, but, when the great king died and was succeeded by a weak and vicious prince, France went rapidly down the hill. The country was plunged into new wars, the court spent and gambled away more money than ever, in vain
10 were the unfortunate peasants ground down to the last limit of taxation, every hen, pigeon, cow, sheep or pig was taxed, everything that could be eaten, down to the very salt on the table, was taxed, no career was open to the sons of the middle classes, every office in the court, the church, the army, was held by the younger sons of the aristocracy, the poor were only fit to be slaves to toil for the benefit of their masters. And still the greater the burden of taxation, the greater the demands of the impoverished court. *Après moi, le déluge*, said Louis XV
20 with a shrug of the shoulders, after all, what did it matter so long as it lasted his time? And it did last his time, and the storm, pent up and gathering fresh force in all directions—through the angry despair of the people, the cruel callousness of the nobility, the want of sympathy on the part of the church, and most of all through the rise of a new and revolutionary literature¹ which taught the people for the first time that such things need not be—at length burst (1789) over the luckless, yet well-meaning head of Louis XVI.

30 The immediate cause of the Revolution was the king's pressing need for money and the consequent summoning, after a lapse of 175 years, of an assembly representing *all* classes of the people in what was called the States General. The king had summoned it to get more money

¹ Particularly the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau

out of it, but among the commonalty, forming what was called the Tiers Etat, were a number of ardent reformers like Mirabeau—himself a noble—who came to make known the will of the people. It was the first time in France that the people had found a will of its own, and we can scarcely wonder that it made itself felt, although we have nothing but pity for those who, like the unfortunate king, his wife Marie Antoinette, and many others, were the victims of other people's sins rather than their own.

"This is a Rev-^{lt}," said Louis XVI when he heard of ¹⁰ the startling measures proposed by the Tiers Etat, and of the almost frenzied excitement of the Paris mob. "Sire," was the significant answer, "it is a Revolution."

Events followed one another in rapid succession. Terrified beyond measure at the attitude of the mob, the royal family took refuge at Louis XIV's magnificent palace at Versailles, only to be brought back again prisoners to their own capital. Everything was swept away, the state, the monarchy, the church, the nobility. Men like Robespierre, Danton and Marat set to work to destroy every- ²⁰ thing and everyone held by them to be "conspiring against the nation." A reign of terror began in which the just and the unjust alike fell. It was first set on foot by the action of a young girl called Charlotte Corday, who assassinated Marat because she believed him to have been the instigator of the death of the King and Queen, and it lasted for the three years between 1790 and 1794. All Europe meanwhile was shaken to its foundations by what was happening in France. Then came the reaction beginning with the death of Robespierre and the rise of ³⁰ Napoleon Bonaparte, first as Consul under the Republic and then as Emperor of France. Napoleon's rise takes us back in thought to the tyranny of Dionysius of Syracuse (Part I, Story IV). France was at war with all the great countries of Europe and Napoleon saved her, out of gratitude she let him usurp an authority greater than

had been dreamed of even in the days of le grand monarque Dazzled by the splendour of arms, France worshipped her hero, he fell, because he aimed at the conquest, not of France merely, but of the whole world We scarcely need to be reminded of the disastrous war with Russia, followed by the retreat from Moscow, the battle of the Nile, of Trafalgar, in which England vindicated her right to put a limit to French conquest, and last of all the great battle of Waterloo in 1815 These
 10 things, like Crecy and Agincourt, are in our blood and we cannot forget them

Carlyle gives us a brilliant but not always quite trustworthy account of the French Revolution In fiction there are two books that everyone should read—Harriet Martineau's story, *The Peasant and the Prince*, and Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*

THE dreadful time of the great French Revolution might be called the reign of the madness of the people The oppression and in-
 20 justice that had for generations past been worked out in France ended in the most fearful reaction that history records, and the horrors that took place in the Revolution pass all thought or description Every institution that had been misused was overthrown at one fell swoop, and the whole accumulated vengeance of generations fell on the heads of the persons who occupied the positions of the former oppressors Many of these were as pure and guiltless as their slaughterers were the
 30 reverse, but the heads of the Revolution imagined that to obtain their ideal vision of perfect justice and liberty, all the remnants of the former state

of things must be swept away, and the ferocious beings who carried out their decrees had become absolutely frantic with delight in bloodshed. The nation seemed delivered up to a delirium of murder. But as

“Even as earth’s wild war cries heighten,
The cross upon the brow will brighten,”

these times of surpassing horror were also times of surpassing devotion and heroism. Without attempting to describe the various stages of the 10 Revolution, and the different committees that under different titles carried on the work of destruction, we will mention some of the deeds that shine out as we look into that abyss of horror, the Paris of 1792 and the following years

Think of the Swiss Guards, who on the 10th of August, 1792, the miserable day when the King, Queen, and children were made the captives of the people, stood resolutely at their posts, till they 20 were massacred almost to a man. Well is their fidelity honoured by the noble sculpture near Lucerne, cut out in the living rock of their own Alps, and representing a lion diving to defend the fleur-de-lis.

A more dreadful day still was in preparation. The mob seemed to have imagined that the king and nobility had some strange dreadful power, and that unless they were all annihilated they would rise up and trample all down before them, 30

and those who had the direction of affairs profited by this delusion to multiply executioners, and clear away all that they supposed to stand in the way of the renewal of the nation. And the attempts of the emigrant nobility and of the German princes to march to the rescue of the royal family added to the fury of their cowardly ferocity. The prisons of Paris were crowded to overflowing with aristocrats, as it was the fashion
10 to call the nobles and gentry, and with the clergy who had refused their adhesion to the new state of things. The whole number is reckoned at not less than 8,000.

Among those at the Abbaye de St Germain were M Jaques Cazotte, an old gentleman of seventy-three, who had been for many years in a government office, and had written various poems. He was living in the country, in Champagne, when on the 18th of August he was arrested. His
20 daughter Elizabeth, a lovely girl of twenty, would not leave him, and together they were taken first to Epernay and then to Paris, where they were thrown into the Abbaye, and found it crowded with prisoners. M Cazotte's bald forehead and grey locks gave him a patriarchal appearance, and his talk, deeply and truly pious, was full of Scripture language, as he strove to persuade his fellow captives to own the true blessings of suffering.

30 Here Elizabeth met the like-minded Marie de Sombreuil, who had clung to her father, Charles

Viscount de Sombreuil, the Governor of the Invalides, or pensioners of the French army, and here, too, had Madame de Fausse Lendry come with her old uncle the Abbé de Rastignac, who had been for three months extremely ill, and was only just recovering when dragged to the prison, and there placed in a room so crowded that it was not possible to turn round, and the air in the end of August was fearfully close and heated. Not once while there was the poor old man able to sleep. His niece spent the nights in a room belonging to the jailer, with the Princess de Tarente, and Mademoiselle de Sombreuil. 10

On the 2nd of September these slaughter-houses were as full as they could hold, and about a hundred ruffians armed with axes and guns were sent round to all the jails to do the bloody work. It was a Sunday, and some of the victims had tried to observe it religiously, though little divining that it was to be their last. They first 20 took alarm on perceiving that their jailer had removed his family, and then that he sent up their dinner earlier than usual, and removed all the knives and forks. By and by howls and shouts were heard, and the tocsin was heard ringing, alarm guns firing, and reports came in to the prisoners of the Abbaye that the populace were breaking into the prisons. 21

The clergy were all penned up together in the cloisters of the Abbaye, whither they had been brought in carriages that morning. Among them 30

was the Abbé Sicard, an admirable priest who had spent his whole life-time in instructing the deaf and dumb in his own house, where—

“ The cunning finger finely twined
The subtle thread that knitteth mind to mind,
There that strange bridge of signs was built where roll
The sunless waves that sever soul from soul,
And by the arch, no bigger than a hand,
Truth travell'd over to the silent land ”

10 He had been arrested, while teaching his pupils, on the 26th of August, 1792, and shut up among other clergy in the prison of the Mayoralty; but the lads whom he had educated came in a body to ask leave to claim him at the bar of the National Assembly. Massieu, his best scholar, had drawn up a most touching address, saying, that in him the deaf and dumb were deprived of their teacher, nurse, and father. “ It is he who has taught us what we know, without him we
20 should be as the beasts of the field.” This petition, and the gestures of the poor silent beings, went to the heart of the National Assembly. One young man, named Duhamel, neither deaf nor dumb, from pure admiration of the good work, went and offered to be imprisoned in the Abbé’s place. There was great applause, and a decree was passed that the cause of the arrest should be inquired into, but this took no effect, and on that dreadful afternoon, M. Sicard was put into one of
30 a procession of carriages, which drove slowly

through the streets full of priests, who were reviled, pelted, and wounded by the populace till they reached the Abbaye

In the turnkey's rooms sat a horrible committee, who acted as a sort of tribunal, but very few of the priests reached it. They were for the most part cut down as they stepped out into the throng in the court—consisting of red-capped ruffians, with their shirt sleeves turned up, and still more fiendish women, who hounded them on to the 10 butchery, and brought them wine and food. Sicard and another priest contrived, while their companions fell, to rush into the committee-room, exclaiming, "Messieurs, preserve an unfortunate!"

"Go along," they said, "do you wish us to get ourselves massacred?"

But one, recognising him, was surprised, knowing that his life was to be spared, and took him into the room, promising to save him as long as possible. Here the two priests would have been 20 safe but for a wretched woman, who shrieked out to the murderers that they had been admitted, and loud knocks and demands for them came from without. Sicard thought all lost, and taking out his watch, begged one of the committee to give it to the first deaf mute who should come and ask for him, sure that it would be the faithful Massieu. At first the man replied that the danger was not imminent enough, but on hearing a more furious noise at the door, as if the mob were going to 30 break in, he took the watch, and Sicard falling

on his knees, commended his soul to God, and embraced his brother priest

In rushed the assassins, they paused for a moment, unable to distinguish the priests from the committee, but the two pikemen found them out, and his companion was instantly murdered. The weapons were lifted against Sicard, when a man pushed through the crowd, and throwing himself before the pike, displayed his Breast, and cried,
10 "Behold the bosom through which you must pass to reach that of this good citizen. You do not know him. He is the Abbé Sicard, one of the most benevolent of men, the most useful to his country, the father of the deaf and dumb!"

The murderer dropped his pike, but Sicard perceiving that it was the populace who were the real dispensers of life or death, sprang to the window, and shouted, "Friends, behold an innocent man. Am I to die without being heard?"

20 "You were among the rest," the mob shouted, "therefore you are as bad as the others"

But when he told his name, the cry changed "He is the father of the deaf and dumb! he is too useful to perish, his life is spent in doing good, he must be saved" And the murderers behind took him up in their arms, and carried him out into the court, where he was obliged to submit to be embraced by the whole gang of ruffians, who wanted to carry him home in triumph, but he did
30 not choose to go without being legally released, and returning into the committee-room, he learnt

for the first time the name of his preserver, one Monnot, a watchmaker, who, though knowing him only by character, and learning that he was among the clergy who were being driven to the slaughter, had rushed in to save him

Sicard remained in the committee-room while further horrors were perpetrated all round, and at night was taken to the little room called Le Violon, with two other prisoners. A horrible night ensued, the murders on the outside varied with drinking ¹⁰ and dancing, and at three o'clock the murderers tried to break into Le Violon. There was a loft far overhead, and the other two prisoners tried to persuade Sicard to climb on their shoulders to reach it, saying that his life was more useful than theirs. However, some fresh prey was brought in, which drew off the attention of the murderers, and two days afterwards Sicard was released to resume his life of charity

At the beginning of the night, all the ladies who ²⁰ had accompanied their relatives were separated from them, and put into the women's room, but when morning came they entreated earnestly to return to them, but Madame de Fausse Lendry was assured that her uncle was safe, and they were told soon after that all who remained were pardoned. About twenty-two ladies were together, and were called to leave the prison, but the two who went first were at once butchered, and the sentry called out to the others, "It is a ³⁰ snare, go back, do not show yourselves" They

retreated, but Marie de Sombreuil had made her way to her father, and when he was called down into the court, she came with him. She hung round him, beseeching the murderers to have pity on his grey hairs, and declaring that they must strike him only through her. One of the ruffians, touched by her resolution, called out that they should be allowed to pass if the girl would drink to the health of the nation. The whole court was
10 swimming with blood, and the glass he held out to her was full of something red. Marie would not shudder. She drank, and with the applause of the assassins ringing in her ears, she passed with her father over the threshold of the fatal gates, into such freedom and safety as Paris could then afford. Never again could she see a glass of red wine without a shudder, and it was generally believed that it was actually a glass of blood that she had swallowed, though she always averred that this was
20 an exaggeration, and that it had been only her impression before tasting it that so horrible a draught was offered to her.

The tidings that Mademoiselle de Sombreuil had saved her father came to encourage the rest of the ladies, and when calls were heard for "Cazotte," Elizabeth flew out and joined her father, and in like manner stood between him and the butchers, till her devotion made the crowd cry "Pardon!" and one of the men employed about the prison
30 opened a passage for her, by which she, too, led her father away.

Madame de Fausse Lendry was not so happy. Her uncle was killed early in the day, before she was aware that he had been sent for, but she survived to relate the history of that most horrible night and day. The same work was going on at all the other prisons, and chief among the victims of La Force was the beautiful Marie Louise of Savoy, the Princess de Lamballe, and one of the most intimate friends of the Queen. A young widow without children, she had been the ornament of the court, and clever learned ladies thought her frivolous, but the depth of her nature was shown in the time of trial. Her old father-in-law had taken her abroad with him when the danger first became apparent, but as soon as she saw that the Queen herself was aimed at, she went immediately back to France to comfort her and share her fate.

Since the terrible 10th of August, the friends had been separated, and Madame de Lamballe had been in the prison of La Force. There, on the evening of the 2nd of September, she was brought down to the tribunal, and told to swear liberty, equality, and hatred to the king and queen.

"I will readily swear the two former—I cannot swear the latter. It is not in my heart."

"Swear! If not, you are dead."

She raised her eyes, lifted her hands, and made a step to the door. Murderers closed her in, and pike thrusts in a few moments were the last "stage

that carried from earth to heaven" the gentle woman who had loved her queenly friend to the death) Little mattered it to her that her corpse was soon torn limb from limb, and that her fair ringlets were floating round the pike on which her head was borne past her friend's prison window. Little matters it now even to Marie Antoinette The worst that the murderers could do for such as these, could only work for them a more
10 exceeding weight of glory.

M Cazotte was imprisoned again on the 12th of September, and all his daughter's efforts failed to save him. She was taken from him, and he died on the guillotine, exclaiming, "I die as I have lived, faithful to my God and to my King" And the same winter, M de Sombreuil was also imprisoned again. When he entered the prison with his daughter, all the inmates rose to do her honour. In the ensuing June, after a mock trial,
20 her father and brother were put to death, and she remained for many years alone with only the memory of her past days..

III

CASAL NOVO

1811

YOU will remember that in the introduction to Story II we explained how it came to pass that Napoleon Bonaparte became supreme ruler of France, we compared his rise with that of Dionysius, the Tyrant of Syracuse (see Part I) Both had owed their supremacy to their power and ability in saving their country at a moment of extreme danger. France was just emerging from the horrors of the reign of Terror, torn and racked within and without, all social organization uprooted and destroyed, at war with all the great powers of Europe, who clamoured for vengeance after the murder of Louis XVI and the destruction of the nobility by the Revolutionists. Napoleon, as we saw, stepped into the breach, made the arms of France victorious, established law in the place of disorder, and saved his country. Gratitude, at first, and then blind adoration, coupled with fear, gave him a power such as no man before or since has ever had. His ambition rose to giddy heights, and where he climbed, there he dragged the willing, yet captive spirit of the French nation with him. Nothing seemed too great for him to aspire to; the whole world appeared to lie at his feet. He made kingdoms and destroyed them at his will, Austria was overthrown at *Austerlitz*, Prussia, and with it the whole of Germany, at *Jena*. Kings were dethroned, and princelings of his own creation were put up in their stead, he became in

truth the arbiter of European politics, he aimed at becoming the Dictator of the World

Let us consider for a moment the effect of this condition of affairs on our own country England, from the very first, had never ceased to resist Napoleon, the usurper and tyrant, although in heart she sympathized, as a nation, with France's effort (till that effort carried her into wild excesses) to throw off the yoke of absolute monarchy. But with Napoleon himself England would have nothing
 10 to do. She was always the enemy at the gate, threatening his newest plans of conquest. With her free institutions she was an ever significant object-lesson to France, fettered as soon as freed by the very liberator whom she adored, with her wide empire, wide in spite of the loss of her American colonies in 1783, and her command of the seas—assured beyond dispute by the great battle of Trafalgar in 1805—she was an ever present menace.

Wherever, therefore, France conquered or commanded—Denmark, Sweden, Naples, Prussia—England was, by
 20 decree of the Emperor, shut out. She was forced accordingly—though the policy brought her to the verge of commercial ruin—into a system of retaliation that drew her indirectly into a state of war with nearly the whole world. For instance, in 1807, by a series of Orders in Council, all ports from which the flag of England was excluded were to be regarded as in a state of blockade, and ships sailing from them were held to be contraband of war, liable to capture. Napoleon was held at bay, but the tension abroad, and the commercial misery at home—for English merchants had no
 30 longer any outlet for their manufactures—lasted till the fall of Napoleon's power on the field of Waterloo, in 1815. But strive as she might, there secured no relief for England from the iron grip of Napoleon. Trafalgar had been won on October 21st, 1805, but by the end of the same year Napoleon had crushed Austria at Austerlitz, the next year (1806) saw his victory over Prussia, at Jena, followed, in 1807, by

the dismemberment of Germany by the Treaty of Tilsit. The year 1806 saw also the establishment of Joseph Bonaparte, the Emperor's brother, as king of Naples, and in 1810—although without the Emperor's sanction or approval—one of his own former generals, Bernadotte, was elected to the throne of Sweden ¹

Nor was this all. After subduing the German States, Napoleon turned his gaze southward, to the Pyrenees mountains, those bristling ridges, stretching from sea to sea, whose serried ranks had always been an eye-sore to ambitious French monarchs, chafing at the limit to the Kingdom of France 10

Once, long before, a dispute had arisen over the succession to the throne of Spain, and a French King ² had dispatched his grandson to take possession with the grandiloquent words, "Go, my son, there are no longer any Pyrenees." Why should not a greater even than he turn the idle boast into fact? Seizing as a pretext for interference the miserable intrigues of the Spanish Royal family, Napoleon allied himself first of all secretly with the Spanish heir, the Prince of the Asturias, in a scheme for the joint conquest and partition of Portugal. This gave him an excuse for entering Portugal, the next step was to enter Spain in support of his "friend and ally" Prince Ferdinand. The old king was deposed and Ferdinand VII placed on the throne. For three months Ferdinand was left to enjoy his new dignities, and then Napoleon relieved his "friend and ally" of the weight of so heavy a responsibility, and placed the crown on the head of his brother Joseph, who, you remember, had already been made King of Naples. But Napoleon had made a miscal- 30

¹ The House of Bernadotte, thanks to the wisdom of its rule, still holds the throne of Sweden, and has lately allied itself by marriage to our own Royal family in the person of Princess Margaret of Connaught.

² Louis XIV. The dispute caused the war of the Spanish succession, into which England was dragged partly through the ambition of Marlborough.

culatation, the effects of which he was never able to undo. The Spanish rulers might be poor-spirited and treacherous, but there still lingered in Spain traditions of former greatness. Spain rebelled, and found a ready champion in England, always biding her chance. And so, in 1808, began the Peninsular War, which was the beginning of Napoleon's downfall, although at first and for a long time it did not appear that it would be so.

It was a long and weary war, it exacted great patience 10 from those who took part in it, for the English fought better for the Spanish than the Spanish did for themselves, but it was the making of many a great man, and, but for the training received in the trenches of Torres Vedras and in the battle of Corunna (fought to cover a masterly retreat, better than many a victory) and in great battles like that of Talavera and Vittoria, it is possible that the result of Waterloo might have been other than it was. Creasy gives the battle of Waterloo as the last of his *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*. Together with Waterloo, we might 20 include the battles of Talavera (1809) and of Vittoria (1813) for it was they that *showed the way* to Waterloo. It was in the Peninsular War that Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington, learnt the art of war, with him were associated many other great men—Sir John Moore, whose death at Corunna, in the moment of victory, inspired Wolfe to write his well-known ditty ¹

“Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note

As his corpse to the rampart we hurried

Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot

30 O'er the grave where our hero we buried”,

and the Napier brothers, members of a family already distinguished for military genius,—Sir Charles, whose services both in Spain and in India place him among the greatest of English soldiers, Sir William, his younger brother, a great

¹See *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics*—Book IV

general also, but perhaps more generally remembered now as the historian of the Peninsular War

And so, after a long struggle, beginning¹ with the Peninsular war (1808-14), extending thence to Napoleon's disastrous invasion of Russia (1812), which we may regard as the central point in the conflict, and ending with the field of Waterloo (1815), Napoleon was conquered and Europe was freed. We are glad to think that it was so, and yet, looking back at him now, from a more distant standpoint, with less prejudiced eyes, we cannot but feel a good deal of sadness at the contemplation of so great a fall. We think of him as he is depicted in Orchardson's great painting, standing in proud isolation on the deck of the *Bellerophon*, coming to sue for grace at the hands of his bitterest foe, and we feel how the iron must have entered into his soul at such a moment, or, again, we think of him cooped up in that miserable little island in the Atlantic Ocean, his haughty spirit broken, all his proud conquests shrunk to so poor a measure, neglected, forlorn, the prey to party strife and spite, sick and dying, and we trust that England has, since that time, learnt the gracious art of greater magnanimity towards a fallen foe. We cannot wonder, indeed, that France still passionately worships the memory of the great Napoleon. She has forgotten his vanity, his selfishness, his over-weening ambition, the impossibility of his aim (one man might make himself tyrant of a petty kingdom, but no man could be autocrat of the whole world), she remembers him only as "le petit caporal" who could inspire men to conquer or die for him, or as the founder of those institutions which in their main outline make up modern France. Above all, she remembers him as the man who lifted her out of the ashes of sorrow and despair and placed her once more among the nations of the world.

The books that may with advantage be read on this great period of history are so many that it is difficult to know

¹ We are speaking of land battles now, not of the struggle for naval supremacy, *that* had been settled at the Nile and Trafalgar

where to begin or where to end Outside the region of what may be called pure history we have Sir William Napier's life of his brother Charles, Professor Seeley's *Short History of Napoleon*, Lord Rosebery's *Last Phase of Napoleon*, and for Waterloo, from a woman's point of view, the latter part of Madame D'Arblay's¹ delightful *Diary and Letters*. It is quite possible that Thackeray dipped into this last book when he was writing his brilliant description of the Eve of Waterloo in *Vanity Fair*. Those who love fiction and history combined cannot do better than read, for Napoleon's march to Moscow and the subsequent retreat, Merriman's powerful story, *Barlasch of the Guard*.²

We must not forget also Byron's noble lines in *Childe Harold* on the Eve of Waterloo —

' There was a sound of revelry by night

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life
Last eve in beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms —the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!'

20

THERE is something exceedingly interesting in knowing what a brave and generous man, who had never flinched from any danger, looked back upon in his last days as the one Golden Deed of his life; and therefore among the many noble and spirited actions during the war by which the British arms chased the usurping French out of the Peninsula, that one is selected of which the doer spoke thus, forty-seven years later, when he
30 thought himself upon his deathbed

¹ Better known as Fanny Burney, the author of *Fvelina*

² And, in French, the Erckmann Chatrian thrilling romances—*Le conscrit*, *Histoire d'un Paysan*, *Waterloo*, and many others

"As I lie here and think of my past life," said Sir William Napier, "I feel small—very small indeed I try to remember if I have done any good, but the evil far overbalances it (We shall all be weighed in the balance, and found wanting. In the eye of the great good God, earthly goodness can have no positive existence, yet He sees and makes allowances for us all, giving more credit for good and less blame for evil than our fellow-creatures' harsh judging would have done.)¹⁰ Men should strive after those priceless virtues of patience, wisdom, charity, self-sacrifice. In looking back on my life, it would be a comfort to me now if I could remember to have done a perfectly self-sacrificing act—if I could think I had been ready and willing at any moment to lay down my life for another person's good. I try to remember, but I can't remember that I ever did. I have often run into danger, and exposed myself to pain sometimes, to save others. Yes, I have done.²⁰ that! but there was always a springing hope, a sort of conviction that I should escape, and that being so away flies the merit. The nearest thing I ever did to absolute self-sacrifice was at Casal Novo, when I received in my back the ball that lies there still"

The old soldier's deliberate judgment of all the noblest deeds of a long life was the realizing of the truth that "all our righteousness are as filthy rags," and no eye but his own would have looked³⁰ at them so critically.) But let us see the manner

of the one thing that "came nearest to self-sacrifice"

It was in the year 1811, when Wellington had entrenched his army on the slopes of Torres Vedras, in Portugal, and there by his patience and sagacity, had repulsed the French army under Marshal Masséna, and was following up his retreat out of the kingdom of Portugal. The English and Portuguese troops used to rise at three in the
10 morning, and march at four, and on the 14th of March, when the army was setting out in the morning twilight, there was a heavy fog covering all the valley in front. Sir William Erskine, the general in command of the Light Division, consisting of the 52d and 43d Regiments and the Rifles, all the very flower of the army, was an incompetent man, and fancying the French were in full retreat, ordered his troops to move forward on their march. Some of the officers objected to
20 the rashness of plunging into the mist without precaution, but they were not heeded, and the order to advance was given.

The 52d moved forward first, in a column of sections, and were to be followed by the Rifles. Down the hill-side they went, then across a narrow ravine at the bottom, and were mounting the steep road on the other side when there was a sudden hail of round shot and bullets close upon them. The fog cut off their view, but the bugles
30 continued to sound the advance, and they pushed on through walled fields, the enemy giving way

before them, till they gained the ridge of the hill, though with loss of men, and with three captains wounded—one of them George Napier, and another, "Jack Jones," afterwards the hero of the powder-magazine at Ciudad Rodrigo.

The mist suddenly drew up, and displayed to the English troops the hill-side covered with dark masses of the blue-clad French soldiers, and in the midst what looked like a red pimple on the ridge, being, in fact, the 52d in the very middle of Marshal Ney's division—so near the Marshal himself, the bravest of the brave, that if they had only been able to see him, they might have made him prisoner by his own bivouac fire.

The rest of the Light Division were put in motion to support them, and Captain William Napier were sent forward, with six companies of his regiment, the 43d, to aid them on the left. When he came to a round hill, he halted, and left four companies to watch, while with the other two, he descended into one of the narrow ravines to join the left of the 52d, whom he heard, though he could not see over the ridge of the hill. Part of the regiment had charged, but not the whole, and thus Napier, coming up into a walled field where he expected to join the left side of the 52d, found only Captain Dobbs and two men of the 52d cut off from the rest of their regiment.

The French came gathering fast about them, and cutting off their retreat. The two officers agreed that the boldest course would be the safest.

so they called to the two companies behind them to follow, and sprang over the wall in front, meaning to force their way on to the 52d in front. But only the two 52d men followed, both the companies of the 43d held back, and when the two captains had reached a second wall, they found merely this pair of men with them, and a great body of the enemy in front, closing upon them and firing.

- 10 The wall gave a moment's protection, and Napier declared he would either save Dobbs or lose his own life by bringing up his two companies. Dobbs entreated him not to attempt it, saying that it was impossible to make two steps from the wall and live. Still, however, Napier, who was stung by the backwardness of his men, dashed back unhurt. His men were crouching under the wall, they had perhaps failed before from being out of breath, from their charge up
20 the hill with their heavy knapsacks on their backs, and still more from the mismanagement of the two lieutenants in command of them, both dull, rude men, tyrannical in their behaviour. One, who was noted for fighting duels, was lying down with his face to the ground, and when the captain called—shouted to him, and bade him remember his uniform, and come on with the men—he did not stir, till, in extremity of provocation, Napier threw a stone at his head. This made
30 him get up, and scramble over the wall with the men. but on the other side he was wild with

terror—eyes staring and hands spread out—and when Napier ordered the men on to where Dobbs was, and ran forward himself, they, under their lieutenant's cowardly leading, all edged away to the right, out of the fire, and again Napier reached his friend alone

Maddened at the failure, he again sprang back to lead them, but ere he could reach them was struck by a bullet in the spine, and fell. The French most ungenerously continued to fire at him as he lay, and his legs had been paralyzed by the effect of his wound, so that he could only drag himself by his hands towards a heap of stones, behind which he sheltered his head and shoulders. No less than twenty shots struck the heap in the moment before Captain Lloyd with his own company of the 43d, and some of the 52d, came up, and drove off the enemy. Napier was carried away from this spot, and laid for a time under an olive-tree, while the fight lasted, and the French were driven on from ridge to ridge

While he was lying there, helpless and exhausted, the grenadier company of Royal Scots were hastening forward, and their captain seeing the wounded man, ran up, and said, "I hope you are not dangerously wounded." He could not speak, but only shook his head, and being asked again, "Can I be of any service to you?" made the same sign, but when Captain Wilson offered him some cold tea and brandy from his flask, he raised his head with a sudden flash of pleasure,

and gladly drank two tumblerfuls*, then thanked with his eyes and hands "Heaven protect you," the captain said, and hurried on to overtake his men. Napier was a singularly handsome, noble-looking man, with perfect features, jet-black hair and dark grey eyes, and though now deadly pale, the remarkably beautiful outline of his features, and the sweet and noble expression of his countenance made a great impression on Captain
10 Wilson, but among the numbers of the army, they were never again thrown together, and did not know each other's names.

Napier was thought to be mortally wounded, and his brother Charles, who, half-recovered from a wound, had ridden ninety miles to join the army, met a litter of branches, covered by a blanket, and borne by soldiers. He asked who it was? "Captain Napier, of the 52d—broken arm." Then came another litter—"Captain Napier, of the
20 43d—mortally wounded." Charles Napier looked at his brothers, and passed on to the battle.

The brothers were placed in a house at Condeixa, but, besides their wounds, they, like all the army, suffered terribly from famine, for the French had destroyed everything before them, and the villagers themselves were absolutely starving. A tallow candle that the brothers found in the house was eaten up with the utmost relish! By some chance a loaf of bread came into the hands of
30 Captain Light, a cavalry officer, at the end of a long day's march. Hungry as he was, he would

not look at it, but mounted again, and rode twenty miles to Comdeixa, over the mountains, and there, fearing a refusal, he flung the loaf into the room where the brothers lay, and rode back to his regiment

William Napier soon partially recovered, but the bullet could never be extracted, and caused him agonies at intervals throughout the rest of his life. The story of the combat, which he felt as that of his greatest deed, was told by him in his ¹⁰ great history of the Peninsular war, but without a hint of his own concern in the matter. Sixteen years after the battle, he met at a dinner party a gentleman, who *à propos* to some mention of handsome men, said that the very handsomest he had ever seen, was one whom he had found lying speechless under an olive-tree at Casal Novo, and had succoured as above described. Sir William Napier sprang from his chair, exclaiming, "My dear Wilson! that was you—that ²⁰ glass of tea and brandy saved my life." He had already become acquainted with Sir John Morillon Wilson, but till that moment neither had known that the other was his partner in the adventure of the olive tree

Assuredly that stony field was a scene to look back on from old age with thankful satisfaction. And no less worthy of honour was, it seems to us, that twenty miles ride by the hungry, weary officer, to bring his wounded comrades the loaf of ³⁰ bread.

IV

THE PETITIONERS FOR PARDON.

1720 AND ABOUT 1805

ANY one who has made a *habit* of self control, discipline, and unselfishness in the petty affairs of every day life is capable, if the occasion arises, of performing a Golden Deed. This fact is shewn more clearly perhaps in the stories that are selected for this book than in those you have already read in Part I. Alcestis, Antigone, Leonidas, Camillus and Marcus Manlius, Eustache de S. Pierre, Sir Thomas More, are some of the world's heroes, they are historic characters, they are among the immortals—those
10 whom we can never forget—but it is well to remember that there are others, best described, perhaps, as heroes or heroines of domestic life, whose golden deeds have never been recorded by the world's historians, but which are none the less worth remembering, if only as an encouragement to all who strive to do what is right, even in the face of danger.

There are many heroes of this kind, we are sure, whose stories have been completely forgotten or never even known. It is well that this should be so. If all the
20 brave deeds done in the quiet seclusion of everyday life were to be blazoned forth and trumpeted abroad, it would indeed make all the world a stage in which every little performer would be acting his small part with a view to obtain the admiration of his little world. This would create a morally unhealthy condition both in the indi-

vidual and in society at large. It is a point worth noticing that the greatest people are the simplest and most natural in all their actions, their greatness is part of their nature, not assumed nor put on. They say very little about their own achievements. "Swagger means boasting," writes Leonard to his mother in Mrs Ewing's *Story of a Short Life*. "If you're a soldier, swagger is the next worse thing to running away." Still, it sometimes happens that some great person—an author, we will say—hears by chance the story of this or that brave deed, done either in the seclusion of home or out of family affection, and he gives it to the world, sometimes as it really happened, sometimes in a fictitious setting, sometimes in prose, sometimes in verse.

Thus, the story of the brave child of Blentain Ghyll (Story V) owes its preservation to the fact that it interested two great writers who happened to be on the spot and to hear of it—De Quincey, the essayist, and Wordsworth, the poet.

Again, but for Sir Walter Scott,¹ the story of the brave girl, Jeanie Deans,² who walked all the way from Edinburgh to London to plead for the life of a sister³ who had been condemned to death, would have been lost to the world, and it is quite probable that the fame of Prascovia Lopouloff, who went from Siberia to Moscow on a similar errand, would soon have passed away had not the French writer, Madame Cottin, kept it alive in her pretty story *The Exiles of Siberia*.

Macaulay compares the story of the wonderful journey of Prascovia from the heart of Siberia to Moscow, and of Jeanie Deans from Edinburgh to London with that, told by the great John Bunyan, of Pilgrim's Progress from this world to the next.

In these days of easy travelling it is difficult to realise

¹ *Heart of Midlothian*

² Really Helen Walker

³ Called in the story, Effie. She is the subject of one of Sir John Millais' finest pictures

that Jeanie Deans' was an act of wonderful heroism To understand it we must throw ourselves back in imagination to the time of George II and to an England more nearly akin, socially, to the England of James II's reign, as described in Chapter III of Macaulay's *History of England*, than to the England of to-day

But even Jeanie Deans' heroism sinks into insignificance when compared with that of the Russian maiden A pilgrimage alone and on foot through modern Siberia
10 would present difficulties and dangers, quite sufficient to alarm the heart of the bravest girl, what then must it have been like in the early part of the 18th century? One thought, worth dwelling upon, suggests itself in connexion with these two stories

England, since the days of Jeanie Deans, has advanced socially and politically

Although our sovereign still nominally holds the prerogative of deciding in criminal cases the questions of life and death, in reality his decisions depend almost
20 entirely on the will of his people, acting through their chosen representatives, in other words, ours is a limited, not an absolute monarchy It would no longer be necessary or even wise for a modern Jeanie Deans to sue for mercy in person at her sovereign's feet So free from prejudice or corruption is the administration of justice in England that the poorest subject of the realm can rest secure in the fact that no claim, however humble, will be disregarded or lightly set aside by those responsible alike to the sovereign and to his people But the Russia of
30 to day is politically where it was in the days of the Emperor Paul I, although there are signs of better things in store in the near future Meanwhile the Czar still remains the autocrat to whom alone all political power belongs While England, under her limited monarchy, has developed a democracy,¹ freer, in many respects, than

¹ See Glossary

Republicanism itself, Russia is still the land bristling with officialism. Every official in the state is appointed by the Czar, and is responsible for his conduct to the Czar alone. There are no Courts of Justice such as we have in England, can we be surprised, therefore, that in such circumstances there are often grave blunders resulting in the miscarriage of justice, especially when one remembers that in Russia a man may be apprehended for political offences on suspicion only, and transported to Siberia without even knowing the nature of the charge brought 10 against him?

The maxim that the Czar is the father of his people and can therefore do no wrong, was a very good one in the early periods of the history of Russia, when the dangers that beset her on all sides of her vast empire needed the continual vigilance and prompt action of a dictator,¹ but in these later days the people have grown in knowledge and aspirations while their autocratic rulers have remained stationary. In a vast empire there can be no such thing as a single autocrat. It would be a physical impossibility 20 for any one man to know all that goes on in the remote corners of the Russian Empire. It follows, therefore, that every official appointed by the Czar is, in his turn, an autocrat, nominally responsible to his master, in reality responsible to no one but himself. Such a position of unlimited power must be a terrible temptation to a man not gifted by nature or trained by education in those finer feelings that help him to overcome prejudices of race, religion or politics.

NO one in our own country has deserved warmer 30 or more loving esteem than Helen Walker, the Scottish maiden, who, though she would not

¹Cf Story of Dionysius in Part I, and of Napoleon, Stories II, and III

utter a word of untruth to save her sister from being sentenced to death, yet came on foot from Edinburgh to London, made her way to the Duke of Argyle, and being introduced by him, by her entreaties obtained that sister's pardon from Queen Caroline, who was acting as Regent in the absence of George II. It is hard to say which was the most glorious, the God-fearing truth that strengthened this peasant-girl to risk a life so dear to her, or
10 the trustful courage and perseverance that carried her through a journey, which in the early part of the eighteenth century was both tedious and full of danger, and it is satisfactory to know that her after-life, though simple and homely, by no means was unworthy of the high excellence of her youth. Her sister, Tibbie, for whom she had done so much, married and left her, and she lived on to be remembered by her neighbours as a religious, quiet old woman, gaining her living by knitting new
20 feet to old stockings, teaching little children, and keeping chickens. Her neighbours respected her, and called her a "lofty body". They used to tell that in a thunderstorm, she used to move herself with her work and her Bible to the front of the house, saying that the Almighty could smite as well in the city as in the field. Sir Walter Scott made her the model of the most beautiful character he ever drew, and afterwards placed a monument to her honour in her own village church.

30 In the beginning of this century, a girl younger than Helen Walker was impelled to a journey

beside which that from Edinburgh to London seems only like a summer stroll, and her motive was in like manner deep affection, love truly stronger than death. As Helen Walker served to suggest the Jeanie Deans of the "Heart of Mid-Lothian," so Prascovia Lopoulloff was the origin of Elizabeth, the heroine of Madame Cottin's "Exiles of Siberia," but in both cases the real facts have been a good deal altered in the tales, and we may doubt whether the Russian lady appears to so ¹⁰ much advantage, when dressed up by the French authoress, as does the Scottish lassie in the hands of her countryman.

Prascovia was the daughter of a captain in the Russian army, who for some unknown reason had undergone the sentence of exile to Siberia, from the capricious and insane Czar Paul I. The Russian government, being despotic, is naturally inclined to be suspicious, and it has long been the custom to send off persons supposed to be ²⁰ dangerous to the state, to live in the intensely cold and remote district of Siberia. Actual criminals are marched off in chains, and kept working in the mines, but political offenders are permitted to live with their families, have a weekly sum allowed for their support, and when it is insufficient, can eke it out by any form of labour they prefer, whether by hunting, or by such farming as the climate will allow

The miseries of the exiles have been much ³⁰ mitigated in these later times, many more comforts

are permitted them, and though closely watched, and suffering from many annoying regulations, those of higher rank receive a sufficient sum out of their own revenues to enable them to live in tolerable ease, and without actual drudgery; and at Tobolsk, the capital of Siberia, there is a highly educated and accomplished society of banished Poles and of Russians who have incurred suspicion

- 10 Under the Czars who reigned before the kind-hearted Alexander I, the banishment was far more terrible It was not only the being absent from home and friends, but it was a fall from all the luxuries of civilized life to the utmost poverty, and that in a climate of fearful severity, with a winter lasting nine months, and the sun unseen for many weeks of that time Captain Lopouloff was condemned for life, was placed in the village of Ischim, far to the north of Tobolsk, and only
- 20 obtained an allowance of ten kopeks a day His wife, and their little girl of about three years old, accompanied him, and the former adapted herself patiently to her situation, working hard at the common domestic cares for which she had been used to trust to servants, and as the little Prascovia grew older, she not only helped her mother, but gained employment in the village, going out to assist in the late and scanty rye harvest, and obtaining a small bundle of the rye as her wages
- 30 She was very happy, even in this wild dreary home, amid all the deep snows, iron frosts, and

long darkness, until she was nearly fifteen, when she began to understand how wretched her father was in his banishment. He had sent a petition to the Governor of Siberia, in the charge of an officer, who had promised to represent his case strongly, and the watching for the answer, and continued disappointment, whenever a courier arrived from Tobolsk, rendered him so restless, that he no longer tried to put on a cheerful countenance before his daughter, but openly lamented his hard fate, in seeing her growing up untaught and working with her hands like the meanest serf

His despair awoke Prascovia from her childish enjoyments. She daily prayed that he might be brought home and comforted, and, as she said herself, it one day darted into her mind like a flash of lightning, just as she finished saying her prayers, that she might go to Petersburg and obtain his pardon. Long did she dwell upon the thought, going alone among the pine-trees to dream over it, and to pray that grace and strength might be given her for this great work—this exceeding bliss of restoring her father to his home. Still she durst not mention the project, it seemed so impossible, that it died away upon her lips whenever she tried to ask her father's permission, till at last she set herself a time, at which nothing should prevent her from speaking. The day came, she went out among the whispering pines, and again prayed for strength to make her proposal,

and that her father might be led to listen to it favourably. But prayers are not always soon answered. Her father listened to her plan in silence, then called out to his wife "Here is a fine patroness! Our daughter is going off to Petersburg to speak for us to the Emperor," and he related all the scheme that had been laid before him, with such a throbbing heart, in a tone of amusement

- 10 "She ought to be attending to her work instead of talking nonsense," said the wife, and when poor Prascovia, more mortified at derision than by anger, began to cry bitterly, her mother held out a cloth to her, saying in a kind, half-coaxing tone, "Here, my dear, dust the table for dinner, and then you may set off to Petersburg at your ease"

- Still day after day Prascovia returned to the charge, entreating that her scheme might at least
20 be considered, till her father grew displeased, and severely forbade her to mention it again. She abstained, but for three whole years she never failed to add to her daily prayers a petition that his consent might be gained. During this time her mother had a long and serious illness, and Prascovia's care, as both nurse and housewife, gave her father and mother such confidence in her, that they no longer regarded her as a child, and when she again ventured to bring her plan before
30 them, they did not laugh at her, but besought her not to leave them in their declining years to ex-

pose herself to danger on so wild a project She answered by tears, but she could not lay it aside

Another difficulty was, that without a passport she would have been immediately sent back to Ischim, and so many petitions from her father had been disregarded, that there was little chance that any paper sent by him to Tobolsk would be attended to* However, she found one of their fellow-exiles who drew up a request in due form for a passport for her, and after six months more 10 of waiting the answer arrived She was not herself a prisoner, she could leave Siberia whenever she pleased, and the passport was inclosed for her Her father, however, seized upon it, and locked it up, declaring that he had only allowed the application to go in the certainty that it would be refused, and that nothing should induce him to let a girl of eighteen depart alone for such a journey

Prascovia still persevered, and her disappoint- 20 ment worked upon her mother to promise not to prevent her from going, provided her father consented, and at last he yielded "What shall we do with this child?" he said "we shall have to let her go" Still he said, "Do you think, poor child, that you can speak to the Emperor as you speak to your father in Siberia? Sentinels guard every entrance to his palace, and you will never pass the threshold. Poor even to beggary, without clothes or introductions, how could you ap- 30 pear, and who will deign to present you?"

However, Prascovia trusted that the same Providence that had brought her the passport would smooth other difficulties, she had boundless confidence in the Power to whom she had committed herself, and her own earnest will made obstacles seem as nothing. That her undertaking should not be disobedient was all she desired. And at length the consent was won, and the 8th of September fixed for her day of departure.

10 At dawn she was dressed, with a little bag over her shoulder, and her father was trying to make her take the whole family store of wealth, one silver rouble, though, as she truly said, this was not enough to take her to Petersburg, and might do some good at home, and she only took it at last when he laid his strict commands on her. Two of the poorest of the exiles tried to force on her all the money they had—thirty copper kopeks and a silver twenty-kopek piece, and though she
20 refused these, she affectionately promised that the kind givers should share in any favour she should obtain.

(When the first sunbeam shone into the room, there was, according to the beautiful old Russian custom, a short, solemn silence, for private prayer for the traveller. Then, after a few words, also customary, of indifferent conversation, there was a last embrace, and Prascovia, kneeling down, received her parents' blessing, rose up, and set her
30 face upon her way—a girl of nineteen, with a single rouble in her pocket, to walk through vast

expanses of forest, and make her way to the presence of her sovereign.)

The two poor exiles did their utmost for her by escorting her as far as they were allowed to go from Ischim, and they did not leave her till she had joined a party of girls on their way to one of the villages she had to pass. Once they had a fright from some half-tipsy lads, but they shook them off, and reached the village, where Prascovia was known and hospitably lodged for the night. 10 She was much tired in the morning, and when she first set forth on her way, the sense of terror at her loneliness was almost too much for her, till she thought of the angel who succoured Hagar, and took courage, but she had mistaken the road, and by-and-by found herself at the last village she had passed the night before. Indeed, she often lost her way, and when she asked the road to Petersburg, she was only laughed at. She knew the names of no nearer places in the way, but fancied 20 that the sacred town of Kiev, where the Russian power had first begun, was on the route, so, if people did not know which was the road to Petersburg, she would ask for Kiev. One day, when she came to a place where three roads branched off, she asked some travellers in a carriage that passed her, which of them led to Kiev. "Whichever you please," they answered laughing, "one leads as much as the other either to Kiev, Paris, or Rome." She chose the middle 30 one, which was fortunately the right, but she was

never able to give any exact account of the course she had taken, for she confused the names of the villages she passed, and only remembered certain incidents that had impressed themselves on her memory. In the lesser hamlets she was usually kindly received in the first cottage where she asked for shelter, but in larger places, with houses of a superior order, she was often treated as a suspicious-looking vagabond. For instance, when not far
10 from a place called Kamouicheff, she was caught in a furious storm at the end of a long day's march. She hurried on in hopes of reaching the nearest houses, but a tree was blown down just before her, and she thought it safer to hasten into a thicket, the close bushes of which sheltered her a little against the wind. Darkness came on before the storm abated enough for her to venture out, and there she stayed, without daring to move, though the rain at length made its way through
20 the branches, and soaked her to the skin. At dawn, she dragged herself to the road, and was there offered a place in a cart driven by a peasant, who set her down in the middle of the village at about eight o'clock in the morning. She fell down while getting out, and her clothes were not only wet through with the night's drenching, but covered with mire, she was spent with cold and hunger, and felt herself such a deplorable object, that the neatness of the houses filled her with
30 alarm. She, however, ventured to approach an open window, where she saw a woman shelling

peas, and begged to be allowed to rest and dry herself, but the woman surveyed her scornfully, and ordered her off, and she met with no better welcome at any other house. At one, where she sat down at the door, the mistress drove her off, saying that she harboured neither thieves nor vagabonds. "At least," thought the poor wanderer, "they cannot hunt me from the church," but she found the door locked, and when she sat down on its stone steps, the village boys came round her, hooting at her, and calling her a thief and runaway, and thus she remained for two whole hours, ready to die with cold and hunger, but inwardly praying for strength to bear this terrible trial 10

At last, however, a kinder woman came up through the rude little mob, and spoke to her in a gentle manner. Prascovia told what a terrible night she had spent in the wood, and the starost, or village magistrate, examined her passport, and found that it answered for her character. The good woman offered to take her home, but on trying to rise, she found her limbs so stiff that she could not move, she had lost one of her shoes, and her feet were terribly swollen, indeed, she never entirely recovered the effects of that dreadful night of exposure. The villagers were shocked at their own inhospitality, they fetched a cart and lodged her safely with the good woman, with whom she remained several days, and when she was again able to proceed, one of the villagers 30

gave her a pair of boots. She was often obliged to rest for a day or two, according to the state of her strength, the weather, or the reception she met with, and she always endeavoured to requite the hospitality she received by little services, such as sweeping, washing, or sewing for her hosts. She found it wiser not to begin by telling her story, or people took her for an impostor, she generally began by begging for a morsel of food, 10 then, if she met with a kind answer, she would talk of her weariness and obtain leave to rest, and when she was a little more at home with the people of the house, would tell them her story, and when, if nothing else would do, she was in urgent need, the sight of her passport secured attention to her from the petty authorities, since she was there described as the daughter of a captain in the army. But she always said that she did not, comparatively, often meet with rebuffs, 20 whilst the acts of kindness she had received were beyond counting. "People fancy," she used afterwards to say, "that my journey was most disastrous, because I tell the troubles and adventures that befell me, and pass over the kind welcomes I received, because nobody cares to hear them."

Once she had a terrible fright. She had been refused an entrance at all the houses in a village street, when an old man, who had been very short and sharp in his rejection, came and called her 30 back. She did not like his looks, but there was no help for it, and she turned back with him

His wife looked even more repulsive than himself, and no sooner had they entered the miserable one-roomed cottage, than she shut the door and fastened it with strong bolts, so that the only light in the place came from oak slips which were set on fire and stuck into a hole in the wall. By their flicker Prascovia thought she saw the old people staring at her most unpleasantly, and presently they asked her where she came from.

"From Ischim I am going to Petersburg" 10

"And you have plenty of money for the journey?"

"Only eighty copper-kopeks now," said Prascovia, very glad just then to have no more

"That's a lie," shouted the old woman, "people don't go that distance without money"

She vainly declared it was all she had, they did not believe her, and she could hardly keep back her tears of indignation and terror. At last they gave her a few potatoes to eat, and told her 20 to lie down on the great brick stove, the wide ledges of which are the favourite sleeping places of the poorer Russians. She laid aside her upper garments, and with them her pockets and her pack, hoping within herself that the smallness of the sum might at least make her not worth murdering, then praying with all her might, she lay down. As soon as they thought her asleep, they began whispering

"She must have more money," they said, "she 30 certainly has notes"

"I saw a string round her neck," said the old woman, "and a little bag hanging to it. The money must be there".

Then after some lower murmurs, they said, "No one saw her come in here. She is not known to be still in the village."

And next the horrified girl saw the old woman climbing up the stove. She again declared that she had no money, and entreated for her life, but
10 the woman made no answer, only pulled the bag from off her neck, and felt her clothes all over, even taking off her boots, and opening her hands, while the man held the light, but, at last, finding nothing in the bag but the passport, they left her alone, and lay down themselves. She lay trembling for a good while, but at last she knew by their breathing that they were both asleep, and she, too, fell into a slumber, from which she did not waken till the old woman roused her at broad
20 daylight. There was a plentiful breakfast of peasant fare prepared for her, and both spoke to her much more kindly, asking her questions, in reply to which she told them part of her story. They seemed interested, and assured her that they had only searched her because they thought she might be a dishonest wanderer, but that she would find that they were far from being robbers themselves. Prascovia was heartily glad to leave their house, but when she ventured to look into her
30 little store, she found that her eighty kopeks had become 120. She always fully believed that these

people had had the worst intentions, and thanked God for having turned their hearts. Her other greatest alarm was one morning, when she had set out from her night's lodging before any one was up, and all the village dogs flew at her. Running and striking with her stick only made them more furious, and one of them was tearing at the bottom of her gown, when she flung herself on her face, recommending her soul to God, as she felt a cold nose upon her neck, but the beast was only smelling her, she was not even once bitten, and a peasant passing by drove them off.

Winter began to come on, and an eight days' snow-storm forced her to stop till it was over, but when she wanted to set off again, the peasants declared that to travel on foot alone in the snow would be certain death even to the strongest men, for the wind raises the drifts, and makes the way undistinguishable, and they detained her till the arrival of a convoy of sledges, which were taking provisions to Ekatherinenburg for the Christmas feasts. The drivers, on learning her story, offered her a seat in a sledge, but her garments were not adapted for winter travelling, and though they covered her with one of the wrappers of their goods, on the fourth day, when they arrived at the kharstina, or solitary posting-station, the intense cold had so affected her, that she was obliged to be lifted from the sledge, with one cheek frost-bitten. The good carriers rubbed it with snow, and took every possible care of her, but they said it was

impossible to take her on without a sheepskin pelisse, since otherwise her death from the increasing cold was certain. She cried bitterly at the thought of missing this excellent escort, and on the other hand, the people of the kharstina would not keep her. The carriers then agreed to club together to buy her a sheepskin, but none could be had, no one at the station would spare theirs, as they were in a lonely place, and could not easily
10 get another. Though the carriers even offered a sum beyond the cost to the maid of the inn, if she would part with hers, she still refused, but at last an expedient was found, "Let us lend her our pelisses by turns," said one of the carriers. "Or rather, let her always wear mine, and we will change about every verst." To this all agreed, Prascovia was well wrapped up in one of the sheepskin pelisses, whose owner rolled himself in the wrapper, curled his feet under him, and sung
20 at the top of his lungs. Every verst-stone there was a shifting of sheepskins, and there was much merriment over the changes, while all the way Prascovia's silent prayers arose, that these kind men's health might suffer no injury from the cold to which they thus exposed themselves.

At the inn at which they put up at Ekatherinenburg, the hostess told Prascovia the names of the most charitable persons in the town, and so especially praised a certain Madame Milin, that
30 Prascovia resolved to apply to her the next day for advice how to proceed further. First, as it

was Sunday, however, she went to church Her worn travelling dress, as well as her fervent devotion, attracted attention, and as she came out, a lady asked her who she was Prascovia gave her name, and further requested to be directed where to find Madame Milin, whose benevolence was everywhere talked of "I am afraid," said the lady, "that this Madame Milin's beneficence is a good deal exaggerated, but come with me, and I will take care of you" 10

Prascovia did not much like this way of speaking, but the stranger pointed to Madame Milin's door, saying that if she were rejected there, she must return to her Without answering, Prascovia asked the servants whether Madame Milin were at home, and only when they looked at their mistress in amazement, did she discover that she had been talking to Madame Milin herself all the time

This good lady kept her as a guest all the rest 20 of the winter, and strove to remedy the effects of the severe cold she had caught on the night of the tempest At the same time, she taught Prascovia many of the common matters of education becoming her station Captain Lopouloff and his wife had been either afraid to teach their daughter anything that would recall their former condition in life, or else had become too dispirited and indifferent for the exertion, and Prascovia had so entirely forgotten all she had known before her 30 father's banishment, that she had to learn to read

and write over again. She could never speak of Madame Milin's kindness without tears, but the comfort and ease in which she now lived, made her all the more distressed at the thought of her parents toiling alone among the privations of their snowy wilderness. Madame Milin, however, would not allow her to leave Ekatherinenburg till the spring, and then took a place for her in a barge upon the river Khama, a confluent of the Volga, and put her under the care of a man who was going to Nizhni Novgorod, with a cargo of iron and salt.

Unfortunately this person fell sick, and was obliged to be left behind at a little village on the banks of the Khama, and Prascovia was again left unprotected. In ascending the Volga, the barge was towed along by horses on the bank, and in a short sharp storm, the boatmen, in endeavouring to keep the barge from running against the bank, pushed Prascovia and two other passengers overboard with a heavy oar. They were instantly rescued, but there was no privacy in the barge, and as Prascovia could not bear to undress herself in public, her wet clothes increased the former injury to her health. Madame Milin, trusting to the person to whom she had confided her young friend, to forward her on from Novgorod, had given her no introductions to any one there, nor any directions how to proceed, and the poor girl was thus again cast upon the world alone, though, thanks to her kind friend, with rather more both

in her purse and in her bundle than when she had left Ischim, but, on the other hand, with a far clearer knowledge of the difficulties that lay before her, and a much greater dread of cities

The bargemen set her ashore at the foot of a bridge at the usual landing-place. She saw a church on a rising ground before her, and, according to her usual custom, she went up to pray there before going to seek a lodging. The building was empty, but behind a grating she heard ¹⁰ the voices of women at their evening devotions. It was a nunnery, and these female tones refreshed and encouraged her. "If God grants my prayers," she thought, "I shall hide myself under such a veil as theirs, for I shall have nothing to do but to thank and praise him." After the service, she lingered near the convent, dreading to expose herself to the rude remarks she might meet at an inn, and at last, reproaching herself for this failure in her trust, she returned into the church to renew ²⁰ her prayers for faith and courage. One of the nuns who had remained there told her it was time to close the doors, and Prascovia ventured to tell her of her repugnance to enter an inn alone, and to beg for a night's shelter in the convent. The sister replied that they did not receive travellers, but that the abbess might give her some assistance. Prascovia showed her purse, and explained that the kind friends at Ekatherinenburg had placed her above want, and that all she needed ³⁰ was a night's lodging, and the nun, pleased with

her manner, took her to the abbess. Her artless story, supported by her passport, and by Madame Milin's letters, filled the good sisterhood with excitement and delight, the abbess made her sleep in her own room, and finding how severely she was suffering from the effects of her fall into the Volga, insisted on her remaining a few days to rest. Before those few days were over, Prascovia was seized with so dangerous an illness that the
10 physicians themselves despaired of her life, but even at the worst she never gave herself up, "I do not believe my hour is come," she said. "I hope God will allow me to finish my work." And she did recover, though so slowly that all the summer passed by before she could continue her journey, and then she was too weak for rough posting vehicles, and could only wait among the nuns for the roads to be fit for sledges.

At last she set off again for Moscow in a covered
20 sledge, with a letter from the abbess to a lady, who sent her on again to Petersburg, under the care of a merchant, with a letter to the Princess de T——, and thus at length she arrived at the end of her journey, eighteen months after she had set off from Ischim with her rouble and her staff. The merchant took her to his own house, but before he had found out the Princess, he was obliged to go to Riga, and his wife, though courteous and hospitable, did not exert herself to forward the cause of
30 her guest. She tried to find one of the ladies to whom she had been recommended, but the house

was on the other side of the Neva, and as it was now February, the ice was in so unsafe a state that no one was allowed to pass. A visitor at the merchant's advised her to get a petition to the Senate drawn up, begging for a revision of her father's trial, and offered to get it drawn up for her. Accordingly, day after day, for a whole fortnight, did the poor girl stand on the steps of the Senate-house, holding out her petition to every one whom she fancied to be a senator, and being 10 sometimes roughly spoken to, sometimes waved aside, sometimes offered a small coin as a beggar, but never attended to. Holy Week came on, and Prascovia's devotions and supplications were addressed entirely to her God. On Easter-day, that day of universal joy, she was unusually hopeful, she went out with her hostess in the carriage, and told her that she felt a certainty that another time she should meet with success.

"I would trouble myself no more with senates 20 and senators," said the lady. "It is just as well worth while as it would be to offer your petition to yonder iron man," pointing to the famous statue of Peter the Great.

"Well," said Prascovia, "God is Almighty, and if He would, He could make that iron man stoop and take my petition"

The lady laughed carelessly, but as they were looking at the statue, she observed that the bridge of boats over the Neva was restored, and offered to 30 take Prascovia at once to leave her letter with

Mde de L—— They found this lady at home, and already prepared to expect her, she received her most kindly, and looked at the petition, which she found so ignorantly framed and addressed, that it was no wonder that it had not been attended to. She said that she had a relation high in office in the Senate who could have helped Prascovia, but that unfortunately they were not on good terms.

10 Easter-day, however, is the happy occasion when, in the Greek Church, all reconciliations are made. Families make a point of meeting with the glorious greeting, "Christ is risen," and the response, "He is risen indeed;" and the kiss exchanged at these glad tidings seals general pardon for all the bickerings of the year. And while Prascovia was at dinner with her friends, this very gentleman came in, with the accustomed words, and, without further delay, she was introduced to him, and her circumstances explained. He took great interest in her, but assured her that applications to the Senate were useless, for even if she should prevail to have the trial revised, it would be a tedious and protracted affair, and very uncertain, so that it would be far better to trust to the kind disposition of the Czar Alexander himself.

Prascovia went back to the merchant's greatly encouraged, and declaring that, after all, she owed something to the statue of Peter the Great, for but
30 for him they might not have observed that the Neva was open. The merchant himself now re-

turned from Riga, and was concerned at finding her affairs no forwarder. He took her at once to the Princess de T——, a very old lady, who received her kindly, and let her remain in her house, but it was full of grand company and card-playing, and the Princess herself was so aged and infirm, that she, as well as all her guests, forgot all about the young stranger, who, with a heart pining with hope deferred, meekly moved about the house—finding that every opening of ¹⁰ promise led only to disappointment. Still she recollected that she had been advised to present a request to M V——, one of the Secretaries of the Empress Mary, widow of the last, and mother of the present Czar. With this, she went to his house. He had heard of her, but fancying hers a common case of poverty, had put out fifty roubles to be given to her. He was not at home when she called, but his wife saw her, was delighted with her, drew from her the whole history of her ²⁰ perseverance in her father's cause, and kept her to see M V——. He, too, was warmly interested, and going at once to the Empress-mother, who was one of the most gentle and charitable women in the world, he brought back her orders that she should be presented to the Empress that very evening.

Poor child, she turned pale, and her eyes filled with tears at this sudden brightening of hope. Instead of thanking M. V——, her first exclama- ³⁰ tion was, "My God, not in vain have I put my

trust in Thee" Then kissing •Mme V——'s hands, she cried, "You, you alone can make my thanks acceptable to the good man who is saving my father!"

She never disturbed herself as to her dress, or any matter of court etiquette her simple heart was wrapped up in its one strong purpose Mme V—— merely arranged the dress she had on, and sent her off with the Secretary When she really
10 saw the palace before her, she said, "Oh, if my father could see me, how glad he would be. My God, finish Thy work!"

The Empress Mary was a tender-hearted woman of the simplest manners She received Prascovia in her private room, and listened most kindly to her story, then praised her self-devotion and filial love, and promised to speak in her behalf to the Emperor—giving her 300 roubles for her present needs Prascovia was so much overcome
20 by her kindness, that when afterwards Mme. V—— asked how she had sped in her interview, she could only weep for gladness

Two days after, the Empress-mother herself took her to a private audience of the Emperor himself and his wife, the Empress Elizabeth No particulars are given of this meeting, except that Prascovia was most graciously received, and that she came away with a gift of 5,000 roubles, and the promise that her father's trial should be at once revised
30 And now all the persons who had scarcely attended to Prascovia vied with each other in

making much of her they admired her face, found out that she had the stamp of high birth, and invited her to their drawing-rooms. She was as quiet and unmoved as ever, she never thought of herself, nor of the effect she produced, but went on in her simplicity, enjoying all that was kindly meant. Two ladies took her to see the state apartments of the Imperial palace. When they pointed to the throne, she stopped short, exclaiming, "Is that the throne? Then that is ¹⁰ what I dreaded so much in Siberia!" And as all her past hopes and fears, her dangers and terrors, rushed on her, she clasped her hands, and exclaiming, "The Emperor's ^{Throne}!" she almost fainted. Then she begged leave to draw near, and, kneeling down, she kissed the steps, of which she had so often dreamt as the term of her labours, and she exclaimed aloud, "Father, father! see whither the Divine Power has led me! My God, bless this throne—bless him who sits on it—make him as ²⁰ happy as he is making me!" The ladies could hardly get her away from it, and she was so much exhausted by the strength of her feelings, that she could not continue her course of sight-seeing all that day.

She did not forget the two fellow-exiles who had been so kind to her, she mentioned them to every one, but was always advised not to encumber her suit for her father by mentioning them. However, when, after some delay, she received notice ³⁰ that a ukase had been issued for her father's

pardon, and was further told that His Majesty wished to know if she had anything to ask for herself, she replied, that he would overwhelm her with his favours if he would extend the same mercy that he had granted to her father to these two poor old banished gentlemen, and the Emperor, struck by this absence of all selfishness, readily pardoned them for their offence, which had been of a political nature, and many years old

10 Prascovia had always intended to dedicate herself as a nun, believing that this would be her fullest thank-offering for her father's pardon, and her heart was drawn towards the convent at Nizhni, where she had been so tenderly nursed during her illness. First, however, she went to Kiev, the place where the first Christian teaching in Russia had begun, and where the tombs of St Olga, the pious queen, and Vladimir, the destroyer of idols, were objects of pilgrimage. There she

20 took the monastic vows, a step which seems surprising in so dutiful a daughter, without her parents' consent, but she seems to have thought that only thus could her thankfulness be evinced, and to have supposed herself fulfilling the vows she had made in her distress. From Kiev, she returned to Nizhni, where she hoped to meet her parents. She had reckoned that about the time of her arrival they might be on their way back from Siberia, and as soon as she met the

30 abbess, she eagerly asked if there were no tidings of them. "Excellent tidings," said the abbess.

"I will tell you in my rooms" Prascovia followed her in silence, until they reached the reception-room, and there stood her father and mother! Their first impulse on seeing the daughter who had done so much for them, was to fall on their knees, but she cried out with dismay, and herself kneeling, exclaimed, "What are you doing? It is God, God only, who worked for us. Thanks be to His prov- lence for the wonders He has wrought in our favour" 10

For one week the parents and child were happy together, but then Captain Lopouloff and his wife were forced to proceed on their journey. The rest of Prascovia's life was one long decline, her health had been fatally injured by the sufferings that she had undergone, and though she lived some years, and saw her parents again, she was gently fading away all the time. She made one visit to Petersburg, and one of those who saw her there described her as having a fine oval face, 20 extremely black eyes, an open brow, and a remarkable calmness of expression, though with a melancholy smile. It is curious that Scott has made this open-browed serenity of expression a characteristic of his Jeanie Deans.

Prascovia's illness ended suddenly on the 9th of December, 1809. She had been in church on that same morning, and was lying on her bed, with the sisters talking round her, when they observed that they were tiring her. They went away for 30 one of their hours of prayer, leaving one, who

began to chant the devotions aloud, but Prascovia begged her to read instead of singing, as the voice disturbed her prayers. Still she did not complain, and they left her at night without alarm, but in the morning they found her in her last long sleep, her hands forming the sign of the cross.

V.

THE CHILDREN OF BLENTARN GHYLL

1807

THOSE of you who know the English Lake District, know it probably (unless you have the good fortune to live in it) from the holiday-visitor's point of view, that is, in all the glory of spring, summer, or early autumn

The mere visitor who has seen the feathery tassels of the larch waving, like tiny red pennons, in the breeze, or the yellow daffodils dancing in the shade¹ on a bright spring morning by the reedy banks of Rydal water, or who has passed by the cottage-gardens, on the road to Skelwith Force, in all the rich beauty of summer bloom,² 10

¹ " I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze —WORDSWORTH

² " By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers
And flowering shrubs, protected and adorned
Profusion bright! and every flower assuming
A more than natural vividness of hue,
From unaffected contrast with the gloom
Of sober cypress and the darker foil
Of yew " —WORDSWORTH (*Excursion*)

or watched the light blue August haze¹ softening the rugged outlines of the Langdale Pikes, and hiding the treacherous descent of Striding Edge, finds it difficult to realise the awful and bitter cold of those same mountain slopes when plunged in the depths of a snow-bound winter time

We get some faint idea of what it must mean to those whose lives are spent among the mountains when we read Wordsworth's simple poem—*Lucy Gray*

- 10 “Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray—
 And, when I crossed the wild
 I chanced to see at break of day,
 The solitary child
- No mate, no comrade Lucy knew,
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a cottage door
- You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green,
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 20 Will never more be seen

If you do not know what happened to sweet Lucy Gray, take down from its shelf your Wordsworth, and read the end of the poem for yourself. When you have read it, you will understand better the nature of the disaster that happened to the parents of poor little Agnes Green, the heroine of Blentarn Ghyll. Both are true stories, and that of Agnes Green has been immortalised in what we may call a prose-poem¹ written by De Quincey, the friend to whom Wordsworth told the story

- 30 Some of you, when you have finished reading the story, may perhaps wish to ask what became of Agnes Green and her brothers and sisters in later life. Of Agnes Green herself very little is known: you see she never knew, brave little lass, that she was a heroine, and that a great

¹ See *Early Memorials of Grasmere* in De Quincey's *Essays*.

author was going to trouble himself to write an account of what she had done, and we like and respect her all the more for not knowing

When she was grown up she left Grasmere and was not heard of again. Whether she married and had children as brave at heart as herself we do not know. There is still (1905) a descendant of the Greens living at Grasmere—Mr James Green, whose grandfather, John Green, who died in 1892 and is buried in Grasmere church-yard, was one of the children of Blentarn Ghyll—a brother of the 10 very Agnes Green whose story is told here, and a son of George and Sarah Green, the two who perished in the snow storm of March 19, 1808. Hannah, the youngest child of George and Sarah Green, lived and died at Grasmere, her death taking place in 1897 when she was 90 years old. At the time of her parents' death she was only 16 months old.

A funny story is told in Grasmere about Hannah Green. When she was about 22 years old she married a shoemaker, Turner by name, and on his death, a few years later, she 20 became engaged to a Mr Thomas Stead.

The banns were put up and the wedding day was fixed. A few days before the day Hannah came to her future husband, who was milking the cows at the time, and said to him "Whom mun we ax to t' wedding?" He did not even trouble to look up from his milking. "Ax whom thou pleases," he replied in a surly voice, "for Ise not be theer!" And in good truth, when the day came, he was not "theer." Poor Hannah consoled herself with someone else, and married a mole catcher called Anthony Hall 30 "Old Anthony" and she spent 41 years of their life together, and then, on his death, she passed to the care of her son, William, and died at his house, Score Crag, within a stone's throw almost of her childhood's home, and of the scene of Agnes' exploit. She was blind for the last 18 years of her life, but beyond that ailed nothing. She was tenderly

cared for by her son, and when at length she died, she literally fell asleep, worn out with length of years. One cannot help wishing that one knew as much about Agnes Green as one does of the baby she rocked to sleep so tenderly all through those long and terrible nights of the great snow storm of 1808.

Notice that the courage shown by Agnes Green is of the kind we call moral rather than physical.

10 **B**LENTARN GHYLL is the name of a little narrow gorge in those Westmoreland mountains, called Langdale Pikes, at whose feet lie the lovely green vale and lake of Grasmere. The lake is fed by mountain streamlets, called in the north becks. One of these becks comes down another beautiful valley called Easedale, sheltered by mountains and green with grass, as smooth and soft as on a lawn, from being cropped short by the sheep, which can be turned out here earlier in the spring than on
20 the other mountain-sides. At one end, Easedale opens on the village of Grasmere, at the other is a steep ascent, leading to a bare stony ravine, shut in on all sides by high mountains, and with no outlet except the rough descent into Easedale, and likewise a dangerous winding path about six miles over the mountains to Langdale Head. This lonely ravine is called Far Easedale, and at the upper end there formerly stood a cottage named Blentarn Ghyll. Ghyll means a cleft worn in the
30 rock by water, and just above the cottage there is such a cleft, opening from a basin in the rock

that must once have been a tarn, or mountain lakelet, but the pool is now dry, and for want of the living eye of sparkling water, it is termed Blentarn or Blind pool

The cottage was the dwelling of an honest old soldier named George Green, who had taken the little mountain farm, and married an active, bustling woman, who kept her home in great order, and regularly sent her children, tidily dressed, to school at Grasmere whenever the weather did ^{not} make the long wild mountain walk impossible for them 10

It was in the winter of the year 1807 that there was an auction of furniture at a farm-house at Langdale Head. These sales are great occasions among the people of these hills; every one attends them for a considerable distance round, and there is much friendly hospitality, much business of all sorts transacted, and many meetings of old friends, who scarcely ever see each other at other times, 20 To this gathering George and Sarah Green set off early in the forenoon of a bright winter day, leaving their cottage and six little ones in the charge of the eldest sister, a girl of nine years old, named Agnes, for they had neither indoor nor outdoor servant, and no neighbour nearer than Grasmere

Little Agnes was, however, a remarkably steady and careful child, and all went well through the day, but towards night the mist settled down 30 heavily upon the hills, and the heavy sighing in

the air told that a storm was working up, the children watched anxiously for their parents, but the fog cut off their view, flakes of snow began to fall, and darkness closed in early on them

Agnes gave the others their supper of milk and oatmeal porridge, and they sat down waiting and watching, and fancying they heard sounds in the hills, but the clock struck one hour after another, and no step was on the threshold, no hand at the
10 latch, no voice at the door, only the white silent flakes fell thicker and thicker, and began to close up the door, and come in white clinging wreaths through the crevices of the windows. Agnes tried to cheer the others up, but there was a dread on them all, and they could not bear to move away from the peat fire on the hearth, round which they were nestled. She put the two youngest, who were twins, to bed in their cradle, and sat on with the others, two boys and another girl, named
20 Catherine, till the clock struck twelve, when she heard them one by one say their prayers, and doing the same herself, lay down to rest, trusting to her Heavenly Father's care.

The morning came, and no father and mother, only the snow falling thicker than ever, and almost blocking them in, but still Agnes did not lose hope, she thought her father and mother might have taken shelter at night in some *bield*, as she would have termed a sheepfold, or that the
30 snow might have prevented them from setting out at all, and they might come home by Grasmere in

the morning. She cheered herself up, and dressed the others, made them say their prayers, and gave them their breakfast, recollecting as she saw the lessening stores that her mother must know how little was provided for them, and be as anxious to get home as they were to see her there. She longed to go down to Grasmere to inquire; but the communication was entirely cut off by the snow, for the beck was, in the winter, too wide for a child to leap, and too rapid to be waded, and 10 the crazy wooden bridge that crossed it had so large a hole in it, that, when concealed with snow, it was not safe to attempt the passage. She said afterwards that she could not help being terrified at the loneliness and desolateness, but that she recollected that at least if she could not get out, no bad men could get in to hurt them, and she set herself resolutely to comfort and help the lesser creatures who depended on her. She thought over all that could be done for the present, and 20 first wound up the clock, a friend that she could not allow to be silent; next she took all the remaining milk and scalded it, to prevent it turning sour, then she looked into the meal chest, and made some porridge for breakfast, but the store was so low that she was forced to put all except the babies upon short allowance, but to reconcile the others to this, she made cakes of a small hoard of flour, and baked them on the hearth. It was snowing so fast that she feared that the way to 30 the peat stack would be blocked up, and therefore

her next work was, with the help of the two boys, to pull down as much fuel as would last for a week, and carry it in-doors, and she examined the potatoes laid up in bracken leaves, but fancying that if she brought them in, the warmth of the cottage would spoil them, she only took enough for a single meal. Milking the cow was the next office performed by this orderly little maid, but the poor thing was half starved and had little to
10 give. Agnes saw that more hay must be given to her, and calling the boys, crambled with them into the loft, and began to pull down the hay; but this was severe work for such young children, and darkness came on in the midst, frightening the two little fellows, so that it required all the sister's steady resolution and perseverance to finish supplying the poor cow with even that night's supper and bed. Supper-time came, and after it the motherly child undressed the twins and found
20 voice to sing them to sleep, after which she joined the huddle of the other three, nestled on the hearth, and hour after hour they listened for the dear voices, till they fancied they heard sounds on the howling blast, held their breath, and then as it died away, were conscious of the silence of the hull. So fierce was the snow-drift that Agnes had to guard the door and window from admitting long wreaths of it, and protect the fire from being put out as it came hissing down the chimney.
30 Again her watch lasted till midnight, and no parents, no help came, again she went to bed,

and awoke to find the snow falling thicker than ever, and hope failing within her. Her fond, active mother, her strong, brave father, a noted climber, would surely long ago have found the way home to their children had all been well with them. Agnes described herself as getting through this third lonely day by keeping her little flock together on the hearth, and making them say their prayers aloud by turns.

By the following morning the snow was over, 10 and the wind had changed, so sweeping away the drifts, that though the treacherous bridge might not be attempted, a low stone wall had been exposed, which these little mountaineers knew would serve as a guide into Grasmere, by a circuit, which would avoid crossing the brook. It would be needful to force some gaps, that is, to push down the loose stones of the uncemented stone walls that divided the fields, and the little boys came with Agnes to help her in this as far 20 as the ridge of the hill, but the way was long and unsafe for small children, and Agnes sent them back, while she made her way alone, a frail little being in the vast slopes of snow, to the house nearest in Grasmere.

She knocked at the door and was made kindly welcome, but no sooner did she ask for her father and mother than smiles turned to looks of pity and dismay. In half an hour the news that George and Sarah Green were missing had spread 30 through the valley, and sixty strong men had met

at Kirktown, the hamlet close to the parish church, to seek for them. The last that was known of them was, that after the auction, some of their friends had advised them not to try the dangerous path so late, but when they had gone no one knew. Some of the people of Langdale likewise had heard wild shrieks at midnight on the night after the sale, but had fancied them merely the moans of the wind.

- 10 One day after another the search continued, but still in vain. The neighbours patiently gave up their work day after day to turn over the deep snow around the path from Langdale, but for three—or some say five—days no trace of them was found. At last dogs were used, and guided the seekers far away from the path, until a loud shout from the top of a steep precipice told that the lost was found. There lay Sarah Green, wrapped in her husband's great-coat, of course
20 quite dead, and at the foot of the rock his body was found, in a posture that seemed to show that he had been killed by the fall without a struggle. The neighbours thought that the mist and snow must have bewildered them till they had wandered thus far in the darkness, and that George had been making a few steps forward to make out the road when the fall took place, but that his wife had very possibly been unconscious of his fall, and stood still where he had left her, uttering
30 those sad cries that had been so little regarded at Langdale, until she was unable to move and was

benumbed by the sleep of cold. Those who knew them best, thought that the poor woman's grief and terror for her lonely little ones had probably so overpowered her as to disturb her husband's coolness and presence of mind, and that if he had been alone, he would probably have easily saved himself. The brave little girl keeping her patient watch and guard over the five younger ones, and setting out on her lonely way through the snow, must have had more of the spirit of her soldier-father than of her mother. 10 It was to Dorothy Wordsworth, the sister of the poet, that little Agnes was persuaded to tell the history of this calm, resolute, trustful waiting time, which, simple as it is, we think our readers will own as truly worthy to be counted among Golden Deeds. The father and mother were buried on a lovely spring day at St Oswald's Churchyard at Kirk-town and Wordsworth wrote—

“ Now do these sternly featured hills 20
 Look gently on this grave,
 And quiet now the depths of air
 As sea without a wave

But deeper lies the heart of peace,
 In quiet more profound ,
 The heart of quietness is here,
 Within this church-yard bound

And from all agony of mind
 It keeps them safe, and far
 From fear, and grief, and from all need 30
 Of sun or guiding star ”

After the funeral, the farm folk of the neighbourhood were all pressing forward to beg to adopt one or other of the little orphans. The twins were kept together, Catherine was taken by the Wordsworth family, Agnes and her brothers found separate but comfortable homes among their parents' friends. Help came pouring in. Queen Charlotte and her daughters were greatly touched by the mountain child's tender motherliness, and
10 sent a handsome donation for the benefit of the orphans, and so many subscriptions were offered, that at last Miss Wordsworth declined receiving any more, lest the children should be injured by having too much wealth for the station to which they were growing up

VI

DISCIPLINE.

THE story of the wreck of the *Birkenhead* is a wonderful instance of fine discipline and splendid moral courage—a whole company of men acting with a heroism that would excite our admiration even if it were displayed by one man alone.

The *Birkenhead* left Queenstown, January 1852, with troops for the Cape. She was wrecked on a needle rock in Simon's Bay, South Africa, 454 of the crew and soldiers perished. The men who went down in her included, besides her crew, detachments of the 12th Lancers, 2nd, 6th, 12th, 10 43rd, 45th, and 60th Rifles, 73rd, 74th and 91st regiments. There were 638 persons on board of whom 184 only—mainly women and children—were saved by the boats, the rest perished in order that these might be saved.

PERHAPS there have never been occasions when the habit of instantaneous obedience to the voice of duty has produced more touching instances of forbearance and unselfishness, than in the confusion and despair of a shipwreck. What a wreck can be without such qualities, has been but 20 too well proved by the horrible scenes that took place after the loss of the French ship *Meduse*, when brutal selfishness was followed by savage violence.

and cannibalism too shocking to be dwelt upon ; though memorable as an example, that "every man for himself," is the most fatal of all policies, even were self-preservation the primary object.

In British ships of war, unshrinking obedience, heeding nothing but the one matter in hand, is the rule "As a landsman," says Colonel Fisher, an engineer-officer who was on board the *Plover* gun-boat in the hottest fire on the Peiho river, "I was
10 much struck with the coolness with which the navigation of the vessel was attended to, the man in the chains cries the soundings, the master gives his orders to the man at the helm and the engineers below, the helmsman has no eyes or ears but for the master's directions and signals All seem intent on what is their duty at the time being, and utterly unmindful of the struggle raging round them" And this when not only were they being shot down every moment, but when each com-
20 paratively harmless ball rocked the gun-boat, sent splinters flying, or brought the yards down upon their heads Where such conduct is regarded as a mere matter of course, from the grey-headed admiral down to the cadet and the cabin-boy, no wonder that multitudes of deeds have been done, glorious because they placed duty far above self, and proved that Nelson's signal is indeed true to the strongest instinct of the English sailor

The only difficulty is to choose among the
30 instances of patient obedience on record, and how many more are there, unknown to all but to Him

who treasures up the record, until the day when "the sea shall give up her dead!" Let us cast a glance at the *Atalante*, bewildered in a fog upon the coast of Nova Scotia, and deceived by the signal-guns of another ship in distress, till she struck upon the formidable reefs, known by the name of the Sisters Rocks, off Sambro Island. The wreck was complete and hopeless, and a number of men scrambled at once into the pinnace, but the captain, seeing that she could never float so loaded, ordered twenty of them out, and was implicitly obeyed, so entirely without a murmur, that as the men hung clinging to the weather-gunwale of the ship, they drowned the crashing of the falling masts with their cheers.

As soon as the pinnace was lightened, she floated off, but immediately turned bottom upwards. Still the crew never lost their self-possession for one moment, but succeeded in righting her, and resuming their places, without the loss of a man. They then waited beyond the dash of the breakers on the reef, for Captain Hickey and their companions, who were still clinging to the remains of the ship. There were two other boats, but too small to hold the whole number, and an attempt was made to construct a raft, but the beating of the waves rendered this impossible, so the men already in the pinnace were directed to lie down in the bottom, and pack themselves like herrings in a barrel, while the lesser boats returned through the surf to pick off the rest—a most diffi-

cult matter, and indeed some had to be dragged off on ropes, and others to swim, but not one was lost. The captain was of course the last man to quit the wreck, though several of the officers were most unwilling to precede him even for a moment, and by the time he reached the boat, the last timbers had almost entirely disappeared, amid the loud cheers of the brave-hearted crew.

Nothing was saved but the admiral's despatches, 10 which the captain had secured at the first moment, and the chronometer. This last was the special charge of the captain's clerk, who had been directed always to hold it in his hand when the guns were fired, or the ship underwent any shock, so as to prevent the works from being injured. On the first alarm he had caught up the chronometer and run on deck, but being unable to swim, was forced to cling to the mizen-mast. When the ship fell over, and the mast became nearly horizontal, he 20 crawled out to the mizen-top, and sat there till the spar gave way and plunged him into the waves, whence he was dragged into one of the boats, half-drowned, but grasping tight his precious trust. A poor merry negro, who held fast to his fiddle to the last moment, as he clung to the main-chains, was obliged to let his instrument go, amid the laughter and fun of his messmates, who seem to have found food for merriment in every occurrence. No one had a full suit of clothes but 30 an old quarter-master, named Samuel Shanks, who had comported himself throughout as com-

posedly as if shipwrecks befell him every day, and did not even take off his hat, except for a last cheer to the *Atalante* as she sank. He recollected that he had a small compass seal hanging to his watch, and this being handed to the captain, in his gig, and placed on the top of the chronometer, it proved steady enough to steer by, as the three boats crept carefully along in the dense fog. They landed, after a few hours, on the coast, about twenty miles from Halifax, at a fishing station, where they were warmed and fed.

Thence the captain took the most exhausted and least clothed of the party in the boats to Halifax, leaving the others to march through the half-cleared country. Before night the whole ship's company assembled, without one man missing, in as complete order as if nothing had happened.

Here perfect discipline had proved the means of safety, and hope had never failed for a moment; but we have still fresh in our memories an occasion ²⁰ where such forbearing obedience led to a willing self-sacrifice, when safety might have been possible to the strong at the expense of certain destruction to the weak.

The *Birkenhead*, a war steamer used as a transport, was on her way to Algoa Bay with about 630 persons on board, 132 being her own crew, the rest being detachments from the 12th, 74th, and 91st regiments, and the wives and children of the soldiers. In the dead of the night between ³⁰ the 25th and 28th of February, the vessel struck

on a reef of sunken rocks on the African coast, and from the rapidity with which she was moving, and the violence of the waves, became rapidly a hopeless wreck. On the shock, the whole of the men and officers hurried on deck, and the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Seton, calling the other officers about him, impressed on them the necessity of preserving order and silence among the men, and placed them at the disposal of the
10 commander of the vessel.

Sixty were placed at the pumps, others to disengage the boats, and others to throw the poor horses overboard, so as to lighten the ship, while the rest were sent to the poop to ease the fore part of the ship. Every one did as directed, and not a murmur nor cry was heard. They were as steady as if on parade, as ready as though embarking in
a British harbour.

The largest boat was unhappily too much en-
20 cumbered, to be got at quickly enough, but the cutter was filled with the women and children, and pushed off, as did two other small boats. The other two large ones were, one capsized, the other stove in by the fall of the funnel, which took place immediately after the cutter was clear of the ship, only twelve or fifteen minutes after the ship had struck. At the same time the whole vessel broke in two parts, crosswise, and the stern part began to sink and fill with water. The commander called
30 out, "All those that can swim jump overboard and swim for the boats"

But Colonel Seton and the officers with him besought their men to forbear, showing them that if they did so, the boats with the women must be swamped. And they stood still. Not more than three made the attempt. Officers and men alike waited to face almost certain death rather than endanger the women and children. Young soldiers, mostly but a short time in the service, were as patiently resolute as their elders. In a few moments the whole of these brave men were 10 washed into the sea, some sinking, some swimming, some clinging to spars. The boats picked up as many as was possible without overloading them, and then made for the shore, which was only two miles off, hoping to land these and return for more, but the surf ran so high that landing was impossible, and after seeking till daylight for a safe landing-place, they were at last picked up by a schooner, which then made for the wreck, where thirty or forty were still hanging to the masts in a 20 dreadful state of exhaustion.

A few, both of men and horses, had succeeded in swimming to the shore, but some were devoured by the sharks on the way, and out of the whole number in the ship, only 192 were saved. But those who were lost, both sailors and soldiers, have left behind them a memory of calm, self-denying courage as heroic as ever was shown on battle-field.

VII

THE RESCUE PARTY

1853

THERE has always been something strangely fascinating to Englishmen in the idea of Polar Exploration. The element of excitement and danger seems to suit the temperament of the Anglo-Saxon race, always at its best when putting forth its full powers in some scheme calling for activity and daring. It is perhaps for this reason that Englishmen were among the very earliest pioneers of Arctic exploration, and scoured the Northern Seas in their frail barks as long ago, so it is said, as the days of King Alfred, long before the
10 introduction into Europe of the mariner's compass.¹

Whether, now that other nations have joined in the race to the North Pole, the English will in the end be the first to reach the goal is another matter. It would almost seem as though England was dropping behind. The point farthest North yet attained has been reached by the Norwegian explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, and an expedition, more complete than anything yet undertaken, under Lieutenant Peary, an officer of the United States Navy, has just started (1905) with the idea of reaching the North Pole.
20 The latest English effort (that of the *Discovery*) has been in the direction of the South Pole. That expedition has returned in safety, thanks to timely assistance from the relief

¹ Known to the Chinese in very remote ages, brought into Europe by the great Venetian explorer Marco Polo, in 1260

ship, bearing the beautiful name of the *Morning*, and Captain Scott and his officers have brought back a mass of valuable information concerning the South Polar regions. This seems to point to a change of destination rather than a filling off of interest, but it will be a matter of deep regret to many people if England, who has borne the loss of so many precious lives in days gone by, should now, when the goal is nearly reached, be content to leave the honour of successful accomplishment to others.

Nevertheless, it is only fair to bear in mind the fact that 10 the early English explorations were undertaken not so much for the sake of adding to the sum of geographical knowledge as for the attainment of an object distinctly commercial in its character. Those who set the expeditions on foot were, almost without exception, merchants and traders, anxious to widen their commercial bounds. It is the men who *undertook* the expeditions that give the wonderful air of romance to the story.

And what, you will naturally ask, could these good, honest merchants of London have expected to find in the Arctic 20 circle? It is a difficult thing to realise now, but they expected to get to the Indies or to fair Cathay (China) by way of the Pole! It was thought that it would be a short and convenient route to the East, and they hoped, by taking it, to cut out—in the race for the wealth of the East—the Spaniards and the Portuguese, then the great trading nations of the world, who held the monopoly of this rich and splendid trade in silks and spices, ebony and ivory. Some bold adventurers talked of a short cut across the pole itself, others suggested a route which should creep round the northern shores of Europe, 30 ascend some great river (to be presently discovered) and thus pass into the heart of Asia. This was called the North-East Passage, the search for which lost many valuable lives, still more were lost over the search for a North-West Passage, round the coast of America, and so into the Pacific. It was discovered before very long that, even if these passages

existed at all, they were, through the nature of those ice-bound regions, useless for practical purposes. But the search for them still continued, down even to the time of Franklin's expedition, though the character of the search changed in the interval, modern exploration is of the nature of scientific research, it is not a commercial venture.

It would take a whole volume, or more, to give only a very brief account of those who, from the time of Edward VI onward, have sailed those seas so wonderfully described by
 10 Coleridge in the *Ancient Mariner*

“And now there came both mist and snow
 And it grew wondrous cold,
 And ice-mast high came floating by,
 As green as emerald
 And through the drifts the snowy clifts
 Did send a dismal sheen,
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
 The ice was all between.”

We can only mention a few names here. Those who wish
 20 to lay themselves under the spell of Arctic exploration must borrow from the nearest library *Hakluyt's Voyages*, and *Purchas his Pilgrimage*,¹ and there read the quaint and fascinating descriptions of these early voyages for themselves. They are stories which make the heart beat more quickly, and the blood race more swiftly through the veins, some of them dim the eye and bring a lump to the throat as we try to read them, and with all of them the thought comes: What a race of heroes, to be sure, how little they cared for their own safety, how greatly for the honour and glory of
 30 England! Let us then pick out a few names to serve as links in the story of Arctic exploration. First of all there were the Cabots—father and sons—John, the fine old Bristol merchant, so greatly beloved because he was so good to the

¹ Hakluyt lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and Purchas in the reign of James I.

poor, who followed close on the heels of the Spanish explorer, Columbus—who was the first to land on the mainland of America, and who discovered Newfoundland—and Sebastian, called in his day the “Grand Pilot of England,” who made many explorations in person and gave his wealth to fit out others

It was Sebastian Cabot and some London merchants of “great wisdom and gravity” who set on foot the expedition under Sir Hugh Willoughby, which came to so sad an end

10

Willoughby's may be considered the first attempt to discover the North-West Passage. It started in May (that month regarded by sailors as unlucky), 1553. Three ships, “the like of which was never in any realm seen, used or known,” were equipped, and set sail that 10th of May, under command of “the very noble knight,” Sir Hugh Willoughby, they were the *Bona Speranza* (Willoughby's own ship), the *Bona Venture* (“Master Pilot” Richard Chancellor), the *Confidentia* (Cornelius Dürfurth). The young king, Edward VI, was prevented by illness from coming in person to witness their departure, but there was such a crowd of courtiers, great ladies, and mariners to bid them God-speed that “the sky rang with their shouts”

The first misfortune was a great storm which took them at the North Cape. The ships were driven hither and thither by the wind. During a lull in the storm Chancellor heard the voice of the Admiral calling to them to try to keep together, but it was impossible to do so. The three ships lost sight of one another as the darkness came on, and when, in the morning light, Chancellor looked out over the stormy waters, the other two vessels had disappeared, and he saw them no more. Chancellor and his brave crew decided to continue the voyage alone, the men bore themselves, we are told, “with great patience and cheerfulness” through many perils, and finally they

came safely to land in a country called Muscovy,¹ at a point where the modern town of Archangel now stands. Chancellor made friends with the natives, who were very kind to him and his men, and he got them to give him a sledge on which he penetrated this unknown land as far as Moscow. Here he had an interview with the Czar, and actually established, unaided and alone, trading rights between his own country and Muscovy. Laden with Russian goods, he returned to England where he hoped
10 to find Willoughby and his men. The English traders were delighted with his account of the new country, and very soon he set out for Russia again with trading commissions from home. But, alas, on the homeward voyage his ships were wrecked and he himself perished.

Two years later some Russian sailors found the brave Admiral, Sir Hugh Willoughby, together with his Captain, Cornelius Dierfurth, and their two ships. The two ships, the Admiral and his Commander and their crews—70 men in all—were all together in one place, but they were all
20 dead men, frozen to death in the icy seas off the coast of Lapland.

Next in order of time comes (1576) Martin Frobisher's attempt to find the North-West Passage, but he and his men were lured away by the sight of "glittering stone" which they took to be gold.

Then followed (1585-7) the attempts in the same direction of Master John Davis (who gives his name to the Strait) in a miserable little ship "that moved through the water like a cart drawn by oxen."

30 Next, passing over a splendid but disastrous Dutch Expedition under Barentz in 1594, we come to one of the men most deeply loved of all—Henry Hudson. It would be impossible here to give an account of all Hudson's many voyages, we can only say a few words about the

¹ Russia

expedition of 1610 which gave to the world Hudson Bay, and which lost Hudson his life

He started with one vessel provisioned for six months only His crew from the first grumbled and complained, and it took all Hudson's energy and decision to keep order But his eager, hopeful, dauntless spirit carried everything before it They had left England in April, by June they had explored the narrow strait, called after Hudson, and had entered that wide expanse of water now known as Hudson Bay Can you not picture the joy of Henry Hudson 10 when he first looked out over those blue and sparkling waters? He must have felt as felt

“—Stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent upon a peak in Darien”¹

“A passage perillus,” so says the old chronicler, “makyth a port pleasant” Not for one moment did Hudson doubt that his errand was accomplished, and the great North-West Passage found To press on, while summer still 20 lasted, through this beautiful open water, round—as he thought—the North Coast of America into the Pacific Ocean, and, so, triumphantly home, this was Hudson's one thought But his sulky crew thought otherwise, they had been angry with him for hurrying, without stopping, past a fair island on whose green slopes they had seen herds of deer grazing, they clamoured to go back, but Hudson refused For three months he went on, following the line of the coast, his heart failing within him as he gradually discovered that it curved outwards and eastwards 30 once more, that in short his open sea was but a huge bay, leading nowhere

They wintered in the ice-bound waters, from which indeed there was no chance of escape, but “Providence

¹ Keats

dealt mercifully" with them and sent them birds and fish to eat, and in the summer of the next year the ship was once more afloat

We cannot tell what prompted his men to do the evil deed that followed, perhaps, knowing the indomitable spirit of their leader, they feared that even now he would again steer northward

As he stepped on deck from his cabin one day, three of the crew rushed upon him and pinioned his arms behind
10 Thus bound they lowered him into a small boat, and with him for crew, all the sick and dying men on board. One brave, strong man, King, the ship's carpenter, refused to leave him, and, with his carpenter's bag in hand, he jumped into the boat, just as she was being shoved off. All honour to him, for he knew he was going to certain death

The mutineers cast off the boat, and then, with their own sails full set, they sped away as fast as the quickening breeze would allow—homeward bound, leaving their leader and those poor feeble creatures, whom they had cast adrift
20 with him, to suffer a death more cruel than any we can imagine

One is struck, in reading these old stories of the sea, with the simplicity, piety, and touching faith in God's providence of these old explorers. "Be of good cheer, friends," said Sir Humphrey Gilbert, another of the great Elizabethan band of adventurers, as he too went down in the darkness, "we are as near Heaven by sea as by land." We are not sorry to know that the ringleaders, after all, did not escape. Death overtook them too before they
30 reached the shores of England. Of those who remained, one at least was so stricken with remorse that, like the Ancient Mariner, until his ghastly tale was told, his heart within him burnt

But the work begun by Henry Hudson was not allowed to fall. The very next year Sir Thomas Button started off to complete the exploration of Hudson Bay, and to find

if possible the outlet northward, from him the task passed on to Baffin, to Fox, to Behring, to Middleton, Smith and others, whose work is registered on the map of North America, like the torch in the Grecian race, which was handed on burning from one runner to another, the work of exploration continued. Sometimes we find a gap rather longer than usual, like that in the middle of the 18th century when nothing of importance was discovered, but that serves only to emphasize later achievements. It was a sort of breathing space, a standing back to take a wider leap 10

In 1773 the work began again in good earnest with an expedition (Phipps) which we must not forget, if only because there sailed with the captain a young officer called Horatio Nelson. What, one wonders, would have been the later naval history of England had that expedition come to grief like so many others? Then followed Cooke, Ross, Parry, and finally another of the world's well-beloved—the great Sir John Franklin, to whom with the men under him belongs the honour of the discovery 20 of the North-West Passage.

The fatal expedition of May, 1845, was Franklin's third attempt to discover the passage. He took with him two ships, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, carrying in all 138 persons. The last letters from the party reached England in July, 1845, and then came a great and awful silence, not broken till the discovery of Franklin's journal and other relics, by Captain M'Clintock, when he found the whitened bones of the party in the neighbourhood of Cape Victoria in May, 1859—after a lapse of fourteen years! 30

Expedition after expedition had meanwhile set out in search of Franklin, some organised by Government, others, like Lady Franklin's, private ventures, some were English, others, like Kane's, were set on foot by friendly foreign powers. Brave men, brave as Franklin himself, risked their lives in the mere hope of at length discovering his

body Captains M'Clure, Ross, Kane, M'Clintock, all joined, and many others as well, in the search. They made many discoveries and gained much valuable information by the way, and in the end they found—though, alas, far too late—what they sought. Buried under the cairn, found by M'Clintock, was a tin box containing a document which set all speculation at rest. Sir John Franklin had died just two years after leaving England, in June, 1847. The following year the ships had been
10 deserted, and one by one the poor survivors had dropped, killed by cold and starvation. Many touching records of the life they had led in these inhospitable regions were discovered, all telling of a brave and trusting spirit. M'Clintock gathered the relics reverently together, and brought them back to England in his little ship, the *Fox*, they were deposited in the Greenwich Museum, to be kept there in trust for the nation. On the monument to Franklin in Waterloo Place, London, are inscribed the following words —“To Franklin and his brave companions who
20 sacrificed their lives in completing the discovery of the North-West Passage, A.D. 1847-8”

It was not till 1879 that the actual passage by the North-West route was performed. In that year a Norwegian expedition, after wintering in the ice, passed through Behring Strait, entered the Bay of St. Lawrence in the Pacific Ocean, and reached port at Yokohama in safety.

Thus ends the history of the discovery of these two famous passages, so greatly desired, so little worth. Since
30 then—starting with Captain Nares' expedition of 1875, the first important one (if we except the search for Franklin) definitely supported by Government—polar exploration has become a matter of scientific research, it is no longer a trading venture.

NB—This story should be read with a map

THE Arctic seas have been the scene of some of the most noted instances of daring and patience shown by mariners. Ever since the reign of Edward VI, when the brave Sir Hugh Willoughby and his crew all perished frozen at their posts among the rocks of Spitzbergen, the relentless ice, and soft though fatal snows of those dreary realms, have formed the grave of many a gallant sailor. Many a life has been lost in the attempt to discover the North-west passage, between Davis's 10 and Behring's Straits, and to trace the outline of the northern coast of America. Whether those lives were wasted, or whether their brave example was not worth more to the world than a few years more of continuance, is not the question here to be asked. The later Arctic voyagers had a nobler purpose than that of completing the survey of the barren coast, namely, the search for Sir John Franklin, who, in 1845, had gone forth with two 20 tried vessels, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, on his second polar expedition, and had been seen and heard of no more.

Voyage after voyage was undertaken, in the hope at first of relieving and rescuing the lost ships' companies, and then of ascertaining their fate, until the Admiralty decided that to send forth more exploring parties was a vain risking of valuable lives, and it was only the earnest perseverance of Sir John Franklin's wife and the chivalrous adventure of individuals that carried on 30

the search, until, at the end of fourteen years, Captain, now Sir Leopold M'Clintock, in the *Fox* yacht, discovered the last records, which placed it beyond all doubt that the gentle and courageous Franklin had died peacefully, before evil days had come on his party, and that the rest had more gradually perished under cold and hunger, in the fearful prison of icebergs

Gallant and resolute as were all these northern
10 travellers, there are two names that perhaps
deserve, above the others, to be recorded, because
their free offer of themselves was not prompted by
the common tie of country One was the French
Lieutenant Bellot, who sailed in the *Albert* in
1851, and after most manful exertions, which
gained the respect and love of all who sailed with
him, was drowned by the breaking of the ice in
Wellington Sound The other was Dr Elisha
Kane, an American naval surgeon, who in 1853
20 volunteered to command an American expedition
in search of the lost vessels, which some supposed
to be shut up by the ice in a basin of clearer,
warmer water, such as it was thought might exist
round the North Pole, and the way to which
might be opened or closed, according to the shift-
ing of the icebergs

His vessel was the brig *Advance*, and his course
was directed through Davis's Straits, and on the
way past the Danish settlements in Greenland,
30 they provided themselves with a partially educated
young Esquimaux as a hunter, and with a team

of dogs, which were to be used in drawing sledges over the ice in explorations

The whole expedition was one Golden Deed, but there is not space to describe it in all its details we must confine ourselves to the most striking episode in their adventures, hoping that it may send our readers to the book itself. The ship was brought to a standstill in Renfaelner Bay, on the west side of Smith's Strait, between the 79th and 80th degrees of latitude. It was only the 10th¹⁰ of September when the ice closed in so as to render further progress of the ship impossible. On the 7th of November the sun was seen for the last time, and darkness set in for 141 days—such darkness at times as was misery even to the dogs, who used to contend with one another for the power of lying within sight of the crack of light under the cabin door.

Before the light failed, however, Dr Kane had sent out parties to make caches, or stores of provisions, at various intervals. These were to be used by the exploring companies whom he proposed to send out in sledges, while the ice was still unbroken, in hopes of thus discovering the way to the Polynia, or polar basin, in which he thought Franklin might be shut up. The same work was resumed with the first gleams of returning light in early spring, and on the 18th of March a sledge was despatched with eight men to arrange one of these depôts for future use.³⁰ Towards midnight on the 29th, Dr Kane and

those who had remained in the ship, were sewing moccasins in their warm cabin by lamplight, when steps were heard above, and down came three of the absent ones, staggering, swollen, haggard, and scarcely able to speak. Four of their companions were lying under their tent frozen and disabled, "somewhere among the hummocks, to the north and east, it was drifting heavily." A brave Irishman, Thomas Hickey, had remained at the
10 peril of his life to feed them, and these three had set out to try to obtain aid, but they were so utterly exhausted and bewildered, that they could hardly be restored sufficiently to explain themselves.

Instantly to set out to the rescue, was of course Dr Kane's first thought, and as soon as the facts had been ascertained, a sledge, a small tent, and some pemmican, or pounded and spiced meat, were packed up, Mr Ohlsen, who was the least
20 disabled of the sufferers, was put into a fur bag, with his legs rolled up in dog skins and eider-down, and strapped upon the sledge, in the hope that he would serve as a guide, and nine men, with Dr Kane, set forth across the ice in cold seventy eight degrees below the freezing-point.

Mr Ohlsen, who had not slept for fifty hours, dropped asleep as soon as the sledge began to move, and thus he continued for sixteen hours, during which the ten proceeded with some know-
30 ledge of their course, since huge icebergs of noted forms, stretching in "long beaded lines" across

the bay, served as a sort of guide-posts. But just when they had come beyond their knowledge, except that their missing comrades must be somewhere within forty miles round, he awoke, evidently delirious and perfectly useless. Presently, they came to a long, level floe, or field of ice, and Dr Kane thinking it might have been attractive to weary men unable to stagger over the wild hummocks and rugged surface of the other parts, he decided to search it thoroughly. ¹⁰ He left the sledge, raised the tent, buried the pemmican, and took poor Ohlsen out of his bag, as he was just able to keep his legs, and the thermometer had sunk three degrees lower, so that to halt would have been certain death. The thirst was dreadful, for there was no waiting to melt the snow, and in such a temperature, if it be not thawed before touching the mouth, it burns like caustic, and leaves the lips and tongue bleeding. The men were ordered to spread themselves, so as ²⁰ to search completely, but though they readily obeyed, they could not help continually closing up together, either, Dr. Kane thought, from getting bewildered by the forms of the ice, or from the invincible awe and dread of solitude, acting on their shattered nerves in that vast field of intense lonely whiteness, and in the atmosphere of deadly cold. The two strongest were seized with shortness of breath and trembling fits, and Dr Kane himself fainted twice on the snow. Thus they ³⁰ had spent two hours, having been nearly eighteen

without water or food, when Hans, their Esquimaux hunter, thought he saw a sledge track in the snow, and though there was still a doubt whether it were not a mere rift made by the wind, they followed it for another hour, till at length they beheld the stars and stripes of the American flag fluttering on a hummock of snow, and close behind it was the tent of the lost

Dr Kane was among the last to come up, his
10 men were all standing in file beside the tent, waiting in a sort of awe for him to be the first to enter it and see whether their messmates still lived. He crawled into the darkness, and heard a burst of welcome from four poor helpless figures lying stretched on their backs. "We expected you! We were sure you would come!" and then burst out a hearty cheer outside, and for the first time Dr Kane was well-nigh overcome by strong feeling

20 Here were fifteen souls in all to be brought back to the ship. The new comers had travelled without rest for twenty-one hours, and the tent would barely hold eight men, while outside, motion was the only means of sustaining life. By turns, then, the rescue party took two hours of sleep each, while those who remained awake paced the snow outside, and food having been taken, the homeward journey began, but not till all the sick had been undressed, rubbed, and newly packed in
30 double buffalo skins, in which—having had each limb swathed in reindeer skins—they were laid on

THE RESCUE PARTY

their own sledge, and sewn up in one huge with an opening over each mouth for breath. This took four hours, and gave almost all the rescuers frost-bitten fingers, and then, all hands standing round, a prayer was said, and the ten set out to drag the four in their sledge over ice and snow, now in ridges, now in hummocks, up and down, hard and wild beyond conception. Ohlsen was sufficiently restored to walk, and all went cheerfully for about six hours, when every one became 10 sensible of a sudden failure of their powers.

"Bonsall and Morton, two of our stoutest men, came to me, begging permission to sleep, they were not cold, the wind did not enter them now, a little sleep was all that they wanted. Presently Hans was found nearly stiff under a drift, and Thomas, bolt upright, had his eyes closed, and could hardly articulate. At last John Blake threw himself on the snow, and refused to rise. They did not complain of feeling cold, but it was in 20 vain that I wrestled, boxed, ran, argued, jeered, or reprimanded, an immediate halt could not be avoided." So the tent was pitched again with much difficulty, for their hands were too powerless to strike a light, and even the whisky, which had been put under all the coverings of the sledge at the men's feet, was frozen. Into the tent all the sick and failing were put, and James M'Gary was left in charge of them, with orders to come on after a halt of four hours, while Dr Kane and 30 William Godfrey pushed on ahead, meaning to

A BOOK OF GOLDEN DEEDS

the tent that had been left halfway, and thaw the food by the time the rest came up

Happily, they were on a level tract of ice, for they could hardly have contended with difficulties in the nine miles they had still to go to this tent. They were neither of them in their right senses, but had resolution enough to keep moving, and imposing on one another a continued utterance of words, but they lost all count of time, and
10 could only remember having seen a bear walking leisurely along, and tearing up a fur garment that had been dropped the day before. The beast rolled it into a ball, but took no notice of them, and they proceeded steadily, so "drunken with cold," that they hardly had power to care for the sight of their half-way tent undergoing the same fate. However, their approach frightened away the bear, after it had done no worse than overthrowing the tent. The exhausted pair raised it
20 with much difficulty, crawled in, and slept for three hours. When they awoke, Dr Kane's beard was frozen so fast to the buffalo-skin over him, that Godfrey had to cut him out with his jack-knife, but they had recovered their faculties, and had time to make a fire, thaw some ice, and make some soup with the pemmican, before the rest of the party arrived.

After having given them this refreshment, the last stage of the journey began, and the most severe,
30 for the ice was wild and rough, and exhaustion was leading to the most grievous of losses—that

of self-control. In their thirst, some could no longer abstain from eating snow—their mouths swelled, and they became speechless, and all were overpowered by the deadly sleep of cold, dropping torpid upon the snow. But Dr Kane found that, when roused by force at the end of three minutes, these snatches of sleep did them good, and each in turn was allowed to sit on the runners of the sledge, watched, and awakened. The day was without wind and sunshiny, otherwise they must ¹⁰ have perished, for the whole became so nearly delirious, that they retained no recollection of their proceedings, they only traced their course afterwards by their footmarks. But when perception and memory were lost, obedience and self-devotion lived on—still these hungry, frost-bitten, senseless men tugged at the sledge that bore their comrades—still held together, and obeyed their leader, who afterwards continued the soundest of the party. One was sent staggering forward, ²⁰ and was proved by the marks in the snow to have repeatedly fallen, but he reached the brig safely, and was capable of repeating with perfect accuracy the messages Dr Kane had charged him with for the surgeon.

A dog-team, with a sledge and some restoratives, was at once sent out to meet the others, with the surgeon, Dr Hayes, who was shocked at the condition in which he encountered them—four lying, sewn up in furs, on the sledge, which the ³⁰ other ten were drawing. These ten, three days

since, hardy, vigorous men, were covered with frost, feeble, and bent They gave not a glance of recognition, but only a mere vacant, wild stare, and still staggered on, every one of them delirious It was one o'clock in the afternoon of the third day that they arrived, after sixty-six hours' exposure, during which they had been almost constantly on foot Most of those who still kept their footing stumbled straight on, as if they saw
10 and heard nothing, till they came to the ship's side, where, on Dr Kane giving the word to halt, they dropped the lines, mounted the ship's side, and each made straight for his own bed, where he rolled in, just as he was, in all his icy furs, and fell into a heavy sleep

There were only the seven who had been left with the ship (five of them being invalids), to carry up the four helpless ones, and attend to all the rest Dr Kane, indeed, retained his faculties,
20 assisted in carrying them in, and saw them attended to, after which he lay down in his cot, but, after an hour or two, he shouted, "Halloo, on deck there!" and when Dr Hayes came to him, he gave orders "to call all hands to lay aft, and take two reefs in the stove-pipe!" In like manner, each of the party, as he awoke, began to rave, and for two days the ship was an absolute mad-house, the greater part of its inmates fiantic in their several cots Dr Kane was the first to
30 recover—Ohlsen the last, his mind constantly running upon the search for his comrades in the

tent, which he thought himself the only person able to discover. Of those whom the party had gone to assist, good "Irish Tom" soon recovered, but two died in the course of a few days, and the rest suffered very severely.

The rest of Dr. Kane's adventures cannot here be told, suffice it to say, that his ship remained immovable, and, after a second winter of terrible suffering from the diseases induced by the want of fresh meat and vegetables—the place of which ¹⁰ was ill-supplied by rats, puppies, and scurvy-grass—it was decided to take to the boats, and, between these and sledges, the ship's company of the *Advance*, at last, found their way to Greenland, after so long a seclusion from all European news, that, when first they heard of the Crimean war, they thought an alliance between England and France a mere hallucination of their ignorant informant. Dr. Kane—always an unhealthy man—did not live long after his return, but he sur- ²⁰ vived long enough to put on record one of the most striking and beautiful histories of patience and unselfishness that form part of the best treasury this world has to show.

EPILOGUE

SINCE the introduction to Story VII was written, both Poles have been discovered. Commander Peary¹ was the first man actually to reach the North Pole (April 6, 1909) thus the honour, though it cannot be claimed by England, still belongs to the Anglo-Saxon race.

The discovery of the South Pole by Captain Scott and his companions is the story of one of those splendid failures more inspiring than a brilliant success.

The Scott Expedition, sent out by the British Government for purposes of scientific as well as geographical discovery, left England in Nov. 1910 in a ship called the *Terra Nova*.

The first year was spent in the thorough survey of the regions through which they passed. In 1912 the *Terra Nova*, bringing with her the record of this work, returned to New Zealand. Captain Scott and some of his companions remained behind in the Antarctic for another year in order to crown their work by reaching the South Pole.

Only five of the party set out to make the last stage of the journey, the others went with them up to a certain point, and then returned to the base to await their return. You will like to remember the names of the immortal five: there was Scott himself, a commanding figure, a man of a brave yet gentle heart, of an undying devotion to duty, worthy the Devonshire stock from which he sprang; Dr. Wilson, known among them as "The Peacemaker"; Lieutenant Bowers, "Little Bowers," as they fondly called him—the wit of the party; Captain Oates, a physically strong man, and as gallant a gentleman as ever breathed; Seaman Evans, a good all round man.

They reached the Pole—yes, they reached the Pole—brav-

¹See p. 102

ing untold privations by the way, but buoyed up by the hope of success they reached it—to find that (through no fault of theirs) they had been forestalled in the race by the Norwegian, Captain Amundsen, who, unhampered by other necessities, had made a dash for the goal and won it, as he deserved to do

There is no doubt that the hearts of the five were filled with a sense of bitter disappointment, though they took the blow in the right spirit. They turned back, bringing with them many fossils and photographic records, none of which 10 they abandoned in the disasters that followed

The return journey was a long series of terrible misfortunes. Evans died, Oates, cruelly frost-bitten in hands and feet, lost his great strength. He slogged along as well as he could, but he knew that his slowness was imperilling the lives of his companions, for food had almost run out, and, if they did not reach the next depôt quickly, death by starvation stared them in the face. So, one night, Oates quietly slipped out of the tent into the blizzard and never came back. It was, as Scott wrote, the act of a brave man and an English 20 gentleman

Oates' sacrifice saved them for a space, and then came an appalling blizzard which kept them fast in their tent for days. One by one they died, Scott being the last to succumb. He covered up the bodies of his friends and fuiled the little flags of which they had been so proud beside them, and then he too, unattended and alone, passed into the Valley

Eight months later, the Relief Party found the little tent almost buried in the snow—it was only eleven miles from the depôt! They found the mortal remains of the five, their 30 diaries, their letters from home, their photographs of polar regions, even the fossils they had collected at the Pole, and they found the last glorious message, penned by Scott on the eve of his death, addressed to the English-speaking race

“The greatness of England—my Nation”

NOTES

P 3, l 28 **Samuel Pepys**, the son of a London tailor, who rose by his diligence and industry to an important post in the State. At the time of the Great Plague he was Secretary to the Admiralty. He is chiefly remembered now for his famous Diary, which gives a minute and faithful description of the social life of the time of Charles II. His library, which he left by will to Magdalene College, Cambridge, is preserved in the condition in which it was found at his death.

P 8, l 31 **Prayer Book**, translated in its completed form, by order of Edward VI, in 1549. It was a translation, or rather a shortened form of the various services contained in the old Latin Service Book or Breviary. The work was done chiefly by Archbishop Cranmer, the same Cranmer who was afterwards burnt at the stake in the reign of Queen Mary.

P 9, l 28 **The Feudal System**, as it existed in England, was not in all points like the feudal system established in Normandy and France. Learning by experience acquired in Normandy, William I kept his barons more in check and gave the people on the whole greater freedom. His army consisted of armed retainers who, following the general feudal rule, were obliged, as a condition of holding land, to swear fealty to their overlord, but in England they were obliged, in addition, to swear fealty to the king, as supreme overlord of all. These retainers could be called upon in cases of emergency to perform two duties among others: (i) To serve their lord in the field a certain number of days in the year, (ii) To follow the king to battle, if necessary, to go with him for this purpose overseas. But, as time went on, this latter obligation came to be regarded as irksome, especially when English kings engaged themselves more and more in foreign warfare. In the reign of Henry II, therefore, a new arrangement was made. The king agreed to hire his own troops, provided that his barons would give him the means to do so. They paid him a sum of money (called scutage, or shield money), and with this the king hired

foreign troops for his wars, and his barons were at liberty to stay at home. These mercenaries, as they were called, were, of course, not actuated by any feelings of patriotism, they simply fought for the man who could pay them best, they changed sides to suit their own convenience, and set on foot all kinds of mischief when they were disbanded.

P 10, l 29 **Cardinal Borromeo**, 1538 1584. A magnificent bronze statue marks the place of his birth at Maggiore.

30 **Ambrose** was bishop of Milan in the fourth century, and is now regarded as its patron saint.

P 10, l 31 **Lodi**, about 18 miles from Milan.

P 11, l 26 cf. Boccaccio's description, referred to in the Introduction, p 8.

P 12, l 23 **The Emperor Theodosius**, to whom Ambrose refused leave to enter the Cathedral because he had permitted a cruel massacre (390 A.D.) of the people of Thessalonica (a city in the north of Greece) for sedition.

P 13, l 2 **Eyam**, pronounced locally Ecm.

4 **Chatsworth**, see Introduction I, p 8.

13 **Mr Mompesson** was helped in his work of mercy by Thomas Stanley, a former rector of Eyam, who had been ejected under the Episcopal Ordination Act of 1662, by which 350 clergymen were deprived of their livings.

P 14, l 20 The money was placed in a trough of running water.

Vinegar, especially in that stronger form known as aromatic vinegar, which contains essences such as camphor, cloves, lavender and rosemary, was once regarded as a valuable disinfectant, but the modern treatment of disease, which aims at destroying the germ that causes the disease, has upset all these old-fashioned notions. The reason why carbolic in its various forms is so largely used now is because it has this germ-killing property.

P 17, l 16 There are two statesmen of the name of Halifax who played an important part in this period of history: one is the George Saville (1630 1695), created *Marquis of Halifax*, who is mentioned here, the other is Charles Montague (1661 1715), *Earl of Halifax*, who is remembered as a poet, and more particularly as the author of the scheme that brought the Bank of England into existence in the reign of William III. George Saville has often been condemned as a statesman because he changed sides so often, for instance, he was one of the three commissioners appointed by James II to treat with William of Orange when he landed, and he went over to William's side, but he seems to have been quite honest in his views, and called himself a "Trimmer," i.e. one who trimmed the ship of the State and so preserved the Constitution, at that time in great danger.

Those who wish to know more about Lord Halifax should read the account given of him in Macaulay's *History of England*, chapter 11

P 19, l 6 **Marseilles**, chief port of France on the Mediterranean. It stands at the mouth of the Rhone. It was founded in ancient times by Greek colonists.

11 **Chateau d'If**, a castle on a rocky island off Marseilles. *If* is the French word for yew. The castle was built by Francis I, and was afterwards used as a prison. Mirabeau, of whom you will read in Story II, was once shut up there by his own father. It is the scene of one of the most thrilling adventures in Dumas' *Monte Cristo*.

20 **Louis XIV**, see Introduction to Story II

P 20, l 13 **Provence**. The name originally implied one of the many Roman settlements, or provinces, in Gaul. It included that part of the country lying to the east of the river Rhone, and along the shores of the Mediterranean. Circumstances tended to keep this region distinct and apart for a long period of time. The Roman province became the Kingdom of Provence, with a people, a dialect, a literature (that of the minstrels, called *Troubadours*), and a government of its own. Its rulers were called counts, and it had an assembly, representing all classes of the people, which perhaps suggested to Simon de Montfort our own English Parliament. In the days when Provence was a kingdom, France was merely a long narrow strip of country, bounded on all sides by independent States. You will understand this better if you look at the map in your history book which illustrates the dominions of Henry II.

21 **Arles and Aix** on either side of the mouth of the Rhone
Toulon, S E of Marseilles

P 21, l 10 See Introduction to Story II

26 **Corsair**, see glossary

P 22, l 14 **Jesuits**, or Society of Jesus, an order of the Roman Church which at one time exerted a great political as well as religious influence in the world. The order was established in Spain by Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, and four other priests. The men who belonged to the order were very learned, and also very strongly imbued with the missionary spirit. They established themselves all over the world, and these two features in their organisation—their enormous power of work, and their great learning—gave them an extraordinary influence. Unfortunately, like many great religious orders before them—notably the Knights Templars—they began to use their power for political purposes, and established secret agencies wherever they wished to further their own ends. It was this mixing of politics with religion, by means not always scrupulous, that led to their downfall as a political body, though they still survive as a religious order in the Roman Church.

Those of you who have read *Westward Ho!* will remember the part played by the two Jesuits, Parsons and Campion—"Mr Morgan Evans and Mr Evan Morgans"

15 **The Jansenists**, so called from their Dutch founder, Jansen, were another sect opposed to the Jesuits. They held much stricter views, and their doctrine was more austere than that of the Jesuits. This led to a great controversy between them, the whole Church ranged itself on one side or the other in the quarrel, and, at last, Pope Clement XI, in consequence of a book written by a Jansenist, which was held to be heretical, put down the order in 1705. It remained for a later Pope, Clement XIV, to disband the Jesuits in 1773.

17 **Oratorian fathers**, so called from their long devotions

P 23, l 24 **Capuchins**, a branch of the Franciscans, distinguished by their pointed cowl or capuce

P 28, l 31 The principles of the Revolution were summed up in the Republic in motto—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. To Madame Roland, one of the Moderate Republicans, known as Girondists, is ascribed the famous saying, uttered as she went to execution, "O Liberty, Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!" The meaning of this is made very clear in the story of the second of September.

P 29, l 17 **Swiss Guards**, originally a corps or regiment of mercenaries, which formed part of the old French army. Unlike most mercenaries, they showed an unswerving devotion and fidelity to their master, and were, in consequence, made a bodyguard of the King (1616), known henceforth as the Swiss Guards. The instance quoted here is only one of many that might be mentioned in which they showed their devotion to the Royal Family during the period of the Revolution. Most of the 800 who composed the corps were either killed on the 10th of August, 1792, while defending the King against the mob which had attacked the Tuileries palace, or were put to death in the massacres that followed during September.

22 **Thorwaldsen**, the great Danish sculptor, made the model from which the group was taken.

22 **Fleur de lis**, or *de lys*. This is an interesting word, because it has a disputed origin. The old idea was that the emblem represented three flowers of the white lily (*lilium*) joined together to symbolise the Trinity, hence its use, not only as the French national emblem, but as a religious emblem also. But in later times it has been suggested that the flower is not the lily at all, but flower of Louis (*fleur de luce*) another name for the white iris, which was used as a badge by Louis VII of France. Another suggestion is that the emblem is that of a bee with outspread wings.

P 30, l 5 The French noble families fled from France if they were lucky enough to be able to get away, and their estates were

confiscated. These *émigrés* were rather what we should call fugitives or exiles than emigrants. When they left France first of all, they intended to return as soon as things should be more secure, they had no intention of settling, like emigrants, in the land of their adoption. Many did return under the Empire, but many died in exile, some of them in great poverty and distress.

P 30, l 14 **Abbaye de S Germain des Prés**, in Paris, a famous monastery in its time, and the oldest church in Paris. During the Revolution the church was turned into a saltpetre manufactory. This S Germain must not be confused with S Germain en Laye, which is about 13 miles from Paris. It was at this latter place that the French kings resided till Louis XIV built the palace at Versailles.

18 **Champagne**, a district in the N E of France, once forming part of a Roman province.

22 **Epernay**, in the department Marne, once included in Champagne.

P 31, l 2 **The Invalides** were disabled soldiers, for whom a home called the Hôtel des Invalides was established in Paris. It has a chapel, in the crypt of which is a tomb containing the remains of the great Napoleon. They were brought back from S Helena by Napoleon III.

25 **Tocsin**, alarm bell. The word means literally that which is struck at a given sign. Old French, *toquer* (*toucher*) and *sein*, Lat *signum*, a sign.

P 32, l 22 **The National Assembly** was an off shoot of the States General, which met at Versailles in May, 1789. Its separation from the main body was the first act of the Revolution. It sat, first of all, at Versailles, where the king was in residence. But when the Paris mob, marching to Versailles, insisted on the return of the Court to Paris (October 5th), the Assembly followed and set up its seat of government in Paris. At first it contented itself with the work of reasonable reform, and it was still so comparatively moderate in spirit that the king fled to the Assembly for refuge when the mob attacked the palace of the Tuileries (August 10th, 1792). But by degrees it changed in character, becoming more and more revolutionary and violent. A section of it split off, and became the Constituent Assembly, this was, in its turn, replaced for a time by the Legislative Assembly, and then by a new body calling itself the National Convention. It was the National Convention that declared France a Republic, that ordered the execution of the king and queen, and drove France into the Reign of Terror. When the reaction came, the National Convention was swept away, and a Directory, acting for a Senate, was established in its stead. This brings us to the rise of Napoleon, as First Consul under the Directory, and then finally as Emperor of the French.

P 33, 1 8 A red cap, a blouse, and a scarf or girdle for the waist of red, white, and blue, marked the Red Republican

P 37, 1 8 The **Princesse de Lamballe**, an Austrian by birth, and therefore hated by the French. She was the superintendent of the royal household. When the Revolution broke out, she escaped to England, but hearing that the king and queen had failed to escape, she nobly returned to France to share their captivity. She was one of the first victims of the September massacres, and so great was the fury of the mob at the remembrance of her devotion to the queen that they literally cut her to pieces as she stepped out of the court where sentence of death had just been pronounced against her.

P 38, 1 14 **Guillotine**, an instrument for beheading, called after its inventor, Dr Guillotin, who claimed that it was a most merciful instrument of death. An earlier form, called the Maiden, had already been in use in Scotland.

P 46, 1 4 **Torres Vedras**, about 25 miles N of Lisbon. Sir Arthur Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) wintered in the trenches during the winter 1810-11, and defended himself against the French general, Masséna.

P 45, 1 2 **Sir William Napier**. See Introduction.

24 **Casal Novo**, corresponding to our Newtown.

P 47, 1 3 **George Napier**, brother of Charles and William.

4 Napier (*History of the Peninsular War*) gives the incident of the powder magazine as happening at Burgos.

5 **Ciudad Rodrigo**, one of the northern frontier fortresses between Portugal and Spain which Wellington determined to seize in 1811, on quitting his entrenchments at Torres Vedras. There were four fortresses altogether, and of these all but one were in the hands of the French. Ciudad Rodrigo was the second to fall, it was quickly followed by a third, Badajos, and thus the way into Spain was opened up.

11 **Marshal Ney**, one of Napoleon's greatest generals, and one of the bravest soldiers that ever lived. It was fortunate for Wellington that Masséna and Ney quarrelled over the plan of campaign in the Peninsula. Ney retired to France, leaving Masséna to oppose Wellington. He gained many brilliant victories for France under Napoleon, and when the Emperor abdicated and retired to Elba, Ney's services were still retained under the new Bourbon King of France. But Napoleon, ignoring his promises, returned from Elba, and prepared to meet his enemy. Ney could not resist the enthusiasm inspired by his old master, with nearly all his men he went over to Napoleon. The last battle in which he fought for Napoleon was Waterloo, when he did all in his power to break through the English lines. Five horses were shot under him. It

would have been better for him had he died gloriously on the field. he survived only to be shot (December, 1815) as a traitor, after the capitulation of Paris

P 50, l 18 **Captain Napier** of the 52nd George Napier

19 **Captain Napier** of the 43rd William Napier

P 56, l 29 **Her own village**, Ilongray, about six miles from Dumfries

P 57, l 5 **Midlothian** is another name for the county of Edinburgh Scott's story, *The Heart of Midlothian*, has to do with the exciting times of the Porteous riots (1736)

P 57, l 7 **Madame Cottin** died in 1807 *Les Exilés de Sibérie* has been translated into almost every European language it is a charming story

17 **Paul I**, Czar of Russia from 1796 to 1801 He had a most unhappy childhood, for his father, Peter III, was murdered, and his mother, the regent Catherine, ill treated and neglected him This affected his temper and understanding to such an extent that he became one of the worst rulers Russia ever had Influenced by a secret arrangement with Napoleon, he joined in a coalition with Sweden and Denmark against England, and it was in order to break up this coalition that Nelson sent his fleet into the Baltic in 1801 Fortunately for England, the Czar was assassinated just as he was going to begin hostilities against her His successor, Alexander I, broke off the alliance with France, whereupon Napoleon found a pretext for provoking hostilities, and made his celebrated descent on Moscow, which he found deserted and in flames (1812)

P 58, l 20 **Ten kopeks**, rather less than fourpence

P 61, l 3 **Passport**, literally leave to pass through the *gates* of a city, a written warrant, giving a person permission to travel in a foreign country, or to remain for any length of time in it Most European countries, with the exception of Russia and Turkey, have ceased to require passports from travellers in times of peace Russia required them even within the confines of her own country

P 62, l 13 **rouble**, worth about 3s in modern times

18, 19, about 1s 8d altogether

P 63, l 21 **Kiev**, one of the oldest towns in Russia, on the Dnieper It was the first capital of Russia, and the first place to receive Christianity It is therefore still regarded with peculiar reverence

24 Petersburg, the town of Peter the Great, the name has nothing to do with Saint Peter

P 69, l 21 **Ekatherinenburg**, on the eastern slope of the Ural Mountains After all this travelling, she had not yet quitted Siberia

P 70, l 16 **verst**, about two thirds of an English mile

P 72, l 11 **Nizhni Novgorod**, on the Volga If she had been taken to this point in the barge, she would still have been nearly 300 miles from Moscow and about 700 from Petersburg

P 75, l 5 **Senate**, a body of state officials, chosen by the Czar, to see his edicts carried into effect A special committee of the senate sat for the trial of political offences

P 79, l 31 **Ukase**, a decree of the Czar having the force of law

P 80, l 18 **Olga**, wife of the Scandinavian ruler of Kiev in the 10th century After her husband's death, she acted as regent till her son came of age She became a Christian, and was canonized after her death To her grandson **Vladimir** is traditionally ascribed the conversion of Russia to Christianity He was ruler of Kiev (970 1015) The Christianity embraced by Russia was that of the Eastern or Greek Church of Constantinople This fact helps to explain Russia's desire to free Constantinople from the Moslem yoke Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1453 From that time onwards Russia has done her best to limit the Sultan's power See note, P 121, l 16

P 96, l 9 In the war with China, 1857 60

27 "England expects every man will do his duty"

P 97, l 3 **Atalante**, wrecked November 10, 1813

P 112, l 31 **Esquimaux** (Eskimo), the aborigines of the northern coast of America They are supposed by some people to be of Mongolian origin They are of roaming habits, and live by hunting

P 118, l 23 **Jack knife**, a sailor's knife Jacques is the name used in France for any one belonging to the people, because it is the most common name in France, and the word was introduced into England as a substitute for John, once the most common English name, it is really, however, a diminutive of James (Lat *Jacobus*) not of John There are many instances of its use, *e.g.* Jack tar, Jack of all trades, Cheap Jack, Jack Frost, Jack Sprat, Jack a napes

P 121, l 16 **Crimean War**, 1854, France and England allied against Russia The object was to prevent Russia from over-powering the Turks and taking Constantinople

QUESTIONS

i Give a short account of the plague at Fyam. Show that, in his efforts to combat the disease, Mr Mompesson was, in many respects, in advance of the times in which he lived.

ii What reasons can be given for our greater freedom from visitations such as the plague in modern times?

iii What post did the Princess de Lamballe fill at the Court of Marie Antoinette? Explain how it was that she lost her life in the September massacres of 1792. Give a short account of the manner in which the Abbé Sicard escaped death at the same time.

iv What event in the French Revolution is associated with the 10th of August, 1792?

v Explain the rise of the body known as the National Assembly.

vi Where are Ciudad Rodrigo and Torres Vedras? Explain clearly what brought an English army there in 1811-12. By whom was it commanded?

vii "The nearest thing I ever did to absolute self sacrifice was at Casal Novo." From whom are those words quoted, what was the particular act of self sacrifice referred to?

viii What authors have made use of the stories of Helen Walker and Prascovia Lopouloff? What is the name of the story in which each appears, and under what name is each known in fiction? What writers have preserved for us the story of Agnes Green?

ix What were some of the difficulties that Prascovia had to contend with on her journey through Russia?

x What light does the story of Prascovia's adventures throw on the characteristics of

(a) the Russian Church,

(b) the Russian government?

xi Give a brief account of the wreck of the *Atalante*.

xii What are the special points to be noted with regard to the conduct of the men both in the wreck of the *Atalante* and that of the *Birkenhead*?

xiii Write the story of Sir Hugh Willoughby's last expedition

xiv What gives the story of Kane's Polar expedition its name of "The Rescue Party"? To what extent did he succeed in the object for which he set out?

xv Trace, by means of a chart, the course taken by the *Advance* in 1853

xvi Explain what is meant by the North East and North West passages. What was expected to be gained by their discovery? Were the expectations ever fulfilled?

xvii Say in a few words what you know of the following people

Mademoiselle de Sombreuil (II)

George Saville, Lord Halifax (I)

Bishop Belzunce (I)

Marshal Ney (III)

Sir Leopold M'Clintock (VII)

xviii What is the difference between

(i) a brig and a schooner,

(ii) a pinnace and a cutter?

What is meant by gunwale, weatherside, poop, yard, spar, mizen mast?

xix Explain the meaning of Lazaretto, tumbrel, oriental, cardinal, fleur de lis

xx What do you know of the ancient kingdom of Provence? Describe its geographical position with respect to the old kingdom of France

xxi Give some account of the rise of the order of the Jesuits, what were the chief points of difference between the Jesuits and the Jansenists?

xxii Of the three stories, that of Mr Mompesson, of Colonel Seton, and of the Princess de Lamballe, which strikes you as being the noblest example of a Golden Deed? Why?

xxiii Where are Nova Scotia, Greenland, Behring Strait, Kiev, Nizhni Novgorod, Midlothian, Blentarn Ghyll? Mention, in a few words, some fact of interest connected with your stories, in respect to any *three* of them

SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

i Write a short story from your own imagination of the time of the Great Plague in London, taking, if you like, as your subject, the further adventures that may possibly have happened to the people who saved the child of the saddler in Gracious Street

ii The causes that produced the great French Revolution of 1789

iii Napoleon the Great

iv Different kinds of courage, as illustrated by these stories

v A comparison between naval warfare in the time of Nelson and at the present time

vi In praise of sailing ships

vii Write either a narrative poem, after the model of Lucy Gray, on the children of Blentarn Ghyll, or

viii Write, in your own words, the story of the children of Blentarn Ghyll

ix Describe the places of interest you would pass on your way in a journey from Petersburg to Odessa *via* Moscow and Kiev

x The Elizabethan adventurers

xi Hudson's last voyage

xii The search for Franklin

GLOSSARY

(The first number gives the page, the second the line in which the word occurs)

abstain, to hold or keep from
(60 22)

abyss, a bottomless gulf (29 14)

adhesion, attachment, support
(20 11)

annihilated put out of existence (29 29)

auction, sale in which each would be buyer increases the price on another, and the article falls finally to the highest bidder (87 14)

beck, a stream, cf Ger *bach*
(89 9)

beneference, kindness in doing good *deeds* (71 8)

benevolence, kindness in showing good *will* (71 6)

bracken, coarse bushy fern, growing on rough ground, same as *brake* (90 4)

brig, or brigantine, a two masted, square rigged vessel
(119 22)

contagion, the passing of a disease by *contact* (12 9)

contemned, despised, neglected
(17 30)

conviction, strong belief (45 22)

convoy, a company going to gether for protection (69 20)

cordial, something to revive the *heart*, a medicine (17 4)

corsair, a pirate (21 26), a French word, lit one who *runs over*, or *scours*, the ocean

courier, a messenger (59 7)

cutter, a sailing boat with one mast, and sharp bows that *cut* the water (100 21)

cache, a hiding place (113 20)

cannibalism, the eating of human flesh (96 1)

cardinal, the dignitary who comes next to the Pope in the Roman church (26 24)

chronometer, a specially made watch, very delicately adjusted for use at sea (98 11)

cleft, a split or crack (15 11)

cloister, a covered arcade in a monastery (31 30)

dedicate, to set apart or consecrate (80 10)

deign, condescend, think worthy
(61 31)

delirium, a madness of excitement that leads a person to wander from his proper course (29 3)

derision, mockery (60 12)

despot, one who rules like a tyrant (57 18)

divine, to guess or foretell (31 20)

eke, to increase or augment (see auction) (57 27)

encumber, hinder (79 28)

engage, to pledge or promise (14 9)

epidemic, a disease affecting a whole people (9 20),

episode, an interesting incident (113 6)

expanse, a wide extent of space (63 1)

expedient, a contrivance (70 13)

fain, gladly (16 4)

fell, cruel, fierce (28 25)

fictitious, imaginary, not real (53 13)

galley, a long, narrow boat propelled by oars, worked by slaves or convicts, who sat chained together on benches below the main deck. Each bench held four or five men, and there were usually about fifty benches (20 26)

gig, a long, light, rowing boat (99 6)

hallucination, a delusion, a wandering in the mind (121 18)

hospitality, kindness to a guest or stranger (87 18)

hummock, an ice hillock (114 7)

imminent, close at hand, threatening (33 29)

incompetent, wanting in power (46. 17)

lazaretto, a hospital for diseased persons, so called from Lazarus, the beggar (St Luke, xvi) (20 2)

licentious, giving way to excess of self indulgence (11 2)

litany, a supplication or prayer, repeated many times (8 26)

litter, a bed which can be carried about (50 16)

malefactor, an *evil doer*, a criminal (20 24)

malignant, likely to destroy life (9 10)

mitigate, to soften in severity (57 31)

mizen mast, the mast that carries the mizzen or sail nearest the stern in a three masted vessel (98 18)

moccasins, shoes made of soft leather (114 2)

mortally, at the point of death (50 20)

mortgage, giving property as a security for debt (23 8)

noisome, injurious to health (18 16)

notary, a lawyer (20 4)

oriental, eastern, lit the part where the sun *rises* (19 17)

peat, turf cut from boggy places, and used as fuel (88 16)

pelisse, originally a fur coat or dress (70 2)

perpetuate, to make never ending (16 9)

pinnacle, an eight oared boat, also fitted to sail (97 9)

poop, the hinder part of the ship, fitted with a small upper deck (100 14)

prerogative, sole or exclusive right (54 17)

prejudice, judging beforehand, therefore not always justly (22 21)

provost, the head officer of a town, college, or cathedral, in Scotland the provost answers to the English mayor (20 6)

quarantine, period of time, (originally forty days) when infected persons are cut off from the rest of the world (10 2)

quarter master, a petty or subordinate officer in a ship (98 30)

sagacity, quick judgment (44 6)

schooner, a vessel with (generally) two masts, carrying square sails on the foremast only (compare with brig), (101 19)

seclusion, retirement (52 20)

spar, a general term standing for masts, yards, rigging, etc (98 21)

torpid, stiff, numb (119 5)

transport, a troop ship (99 25)

tumbril, a two wheeled cart, generally used for carrying artillery stores, so called because the body of the cart can be let fall (*F. tomber*) without being unyoked (23 9)

usurp, take possession of by force without the right to do so (27 36)

vagabond, a wanderer (65 7)

virulent, full of poison (13 13)

yards, the beams across a ship's mast, used for spreading square sails (96 21)

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