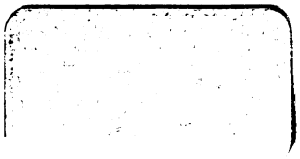

HOURS

OF

WORK AND PLAY.

BY

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CONTENTS.

WORK AND PLAY.

PUBLIC MORALITY AND ITS TEACHERS.

"THIS day, in the afternoon," says the amusing Lutfullah in his Biography, "I found by the mariner's compass that the Kaaba, the criterion point of our prayers, began to incline to the East. I mentioned the fact to my Muslim companions, who, instead of believing me, laughed at me heartily, and said that too much reading in English books had most certainly weakened my religious feelings. 'How is it possible,' said they, 'that the Kaaba, the most sacred House of God, which is the centre of the universe, should change its position?' All these remarks I heard with patience, and established the truth by another proof. The Arab pilot, taken by the captain from Aden, stood to say his afternoon prayers in the direction mentioned by me. 'How is this,' said I to my friends, 'that this Arab turns in the direction I pointed out?' 'We dare say he is a Jew,' said they; 'however, we shall ask him some questions through an interpreter, and satisfy ourselves upon this subject of importance.' They did so, and got a good reward for their folly. In the first place, the interpreter, a young Frenchman, laughed at them for the questions they put; and, secondly, the rough Arab gave them a scolding answer, and told them they would soon see, at Suez and Cairo, all true believers direct their prayers due

East. 'If you Indians,' growled he angrily, 'believe in the same God and the same Prophet as they do, please follow their example. If not, prepare yourselves for hell-fire.' "*

Does it not appear that the facetious Mr Lutfullah recorded this little transaction with a view to its use as an elaborate allegory of the present state of religious opinion in England? Are we not all, in our great voyage, actually altering our position to our Kaaba? Are there not abundance of good people who deny totally that such can be the case, and argue as if the fact implied, not that *we* were moving, but that the "centre of the universe" were altered? Is there not general readiness to assert that anybody who worships in the new direction is a "Jew,"—Turk, infidel, or heretic, as the case may be? Are there not clever Frenchmen who laugh at our difficulties? Finally, when we sail on a little further, and all "true believers" bow in the late-discovered way, shall we not again hear the threat against any who hang back—"Follow our example, or prepare yourselves for Jehanum?"

The question of what *is* a National Church, and what is its true position, is one which forces itself on attention at this moment from a variety of sides—theological, political, scientific. We propose in the following pages to examine it from yet another aspect—the Moral. Great as at all times must be the importance of this side, it claims at present an interest even higher than usual, seeing that the transition which is affecting all our ideas and conditions of life is very visibly and very dangerously affecting our morals also. Who are to be our guides during the next quarter of a century, and what they are to teach us as regards Justice, Purity, and Truth, are problems on which must hinge the welfare of millions yet unborn. It cannot be too often repeated—The

* Lutfullah's Autobiography, p. 384.

mental education of the working-classes, and their elevation in the social scale, which has been the triumph of the last half-century of reformers, has been an achievement of vast magnitude, bringing into existence *not*, as we sometimes imagine, a thing in itself good, but a *power* for good or for evil—a power of immense good or immense evil. An educated man is simply a larger, stronger being than an uneducated one. He has a greater capacity for virtue and greater capacity for vice. The direction of that capacity has yet to be determined. In Victor Hugo's story, Jean Valjean, the illiterate peasant, was a harmless being compared to the well-instructed *forçat* he became after the long training of Toulon. However willing we may be to believe in the ameliorating effects of knowledge, we must admit that it is quite possible for it under certain conditions to do nothing to soften, and very little to elevate. In every sense the aphorism is true, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER; but, to make it a beneficent power, it must either be knowledge well directed, or else knowledge so wide as to embrace surely in its sweep the horizon whereon the great laws of justice and the final ends of human existence may be measured. As Bacon said, "A little knowledge leads to Atheism, but a larger knowledge brings men back to God." So a little knowledge in moral matters leads to short-sighted self-interest and self-indulgence, with all their train of dishonesty and vice; a large and sound knowledge leads to self-sacrifice, to justice, and truth.

The working classes of England have in the last fifty years passed into a new phase, under the influence of schools and other agencies, and inevitably they will soon rise still higher, with added political rights to give weight to their actions. Is the result of all the noble toil which has gone to this end wholly good? Is it such as the philanthropists and statesmen who have accomplished it can look back at with

unmixed satisfaction? Alas, we must all admit it is not so. Vice, in some of its worst forms, seems undiminished. Dishonesty, it is too probable, has largely developed itself in those meaner trickeries and the like, which are morally more poisonous than open theft. The termination of the old patriarchal relations of master and servant has not proved the era of the beginning of any improved probity, or fidelity, or chastity, or disinterestedness for the latter. On every side we have the same complaints; not the mere eternal wail over human sin and error, but special discoveries of new forms of wrong-doing, new devices for dishonesty, new lines of deceit. Our daily journals publish letters revealing the utter incomprehension of the writers that theft is theft, and proving that there are Englishmen now who hold the doctrine of the Jesuits, exposed two centuries ago by Pascal to the ridicule of the world, that a servant may justly rob his master to the amount of the wages he thinks his services deserve.* Each striking event brings out a whole swarm of arguments, arising from crass ignorance of the very principles of morals, and sometimes proceeding quite unconsciously to the point of striking at the root of morality—as, for example, when Constance Kent's crime was explained as the result of the "physiological" peculiarity of young girls to have no feelings whatever between the ages of fourteen and twenty. Descending from the press to daily conversation, what opinions do we hear constantly enunciated on moral topics—not by any means by *bad* men and women, confessed criminals or profligates, but by excellent well-meaning fathers and mothers of families, regular in their attendance at church, and believing themselves bright examples to their servants? What maxims of commerce are current among tradesmen? What outrageous violations of common

* See a letter in the *Times* on the Per Centages in March, 1865.

probity pass muster among our whole mercantile and domestic classes under the names of adulterations, tricks of stock jobbing, per centages, and perquisites? Truly we threaten to become not only a "nation of shopkeepers," but a nation of *dishonest* shopkeepers, a very different taunt.

The increase of the population, the struggle for maintenance, the growth of trade, the desire of swift returns of capital, have all a share in this decadence of public honesty; but the spread of education has undoubtedly rendered it possible to an extent it could never have been otherwise. The *power* of knowledge has proved in a very large and deplorable measure a power for evil, as well as good. Have we, then, been mistaken in our great work? Is education no gain after all? Ought we to retrace our steps and relinquish our efforts? God forbid we should desire it, even if it were possible. What, then, must be done? Surely this:—We must strive vigorously not only to give men this new motive power, but to impel it in the right direction. We must do more than feed the mighty engine with fuel: we must guide it along the straight rails of right and justice, lest, swerving aside, it carry ruin and desolation through the land. It is not the arrest of education which (were it even possible) would be of any avail, but the directing of education to higher purposes and deeper ends. A *moral* education—not in the common cant sense, but in the strangely neglected and forgotten sense of an education in the science of morals—the principles of right and wrong—this is what we need. Here, as we venture to affirm, lies the root of much of the evil we see around us, and complain of vaguely as belonging to the "times"—as if nobody *made* the "times"—nobody were responsible in any measure for what the men and women of the times thought and believed.

Morality and religion are so closely united that it is

hardly either possible or desirable to sever them in education. Thus, we leave morals almost entirely to be taught *with* religion, and we leave religion to be taught by our clergy. The charge of the instruction of the nation in morality lies with the priesthood. If no Churches existed, it is probable that the immense need of such instruction might make it a prominent part of the teaching in all secular schools, high and low, for males and females. As the case stands, it is hardly taught at all as a separate branch of instruction by the laity except in the universities, nor even there made a matter of prominent attention, since exploded systems, like Paley's, were long preserved when equally bygone schemes of physical science would have been scouted. As to the instruction of women, we have never yet heard of a girl's school where any idea on the subject was entertained. Every imaginable subject in heaven or earth is embraced in the curriculum of one or other of our public colleges; every ramification of physics and mathematics, every branch of classics; but the one thing omitted is precisely the everyday Duty of common life—the rules, the grounds, the sanctions of Honesty, Purity, Justice, Truth. *These* things we leave to be gathered at hap-hazard from parents or comrades. These things we treat as matters which will come of course, and whose bewildering distortions from passion or interest the youth will be sure to see through clearly and safely! Nay, rather, we assume (enormous assumption!) that, as religion and morality *ought* to be united, they *will* be united, in all the teaching our children receive; and that, in intrusting the clergy of the National Church with a large share of the direction of the instruction of the young, and the whole instruction of the adults of the working classes, we practically provide for the public teaching of morality.

The question, then, forces itself on us with the whole

weight of the common interest in the virtue of the nation. Do the clergy actually teach this united religion and morality? Do they define clearly to their flocks, whom they are enabled to address with so much advantage Sunday after Sunday, the principles of all those duties which concern the ordinary practice of life? If the metaphysical grounds of ethics, the doubtful points of casuistry, are unfit for them, do they at least secure that each man and woman who attends regularly at church shall at all events *know* what is honest and true in the daily business of life; and do they bring the holy sanctions of religion to make that knowledge the efficient spring of virtuous conduct? It cannot, we think, be doubted by any save the adherents of the extremest sections of one religious party, that this moral teaching is a most important part of the duty of the clergy. Dogmatic theology is at the best *incomplete* without practical ethics, nor can the most correct and exalted notions of the character and dealings of God avail to supply the lack of knowledge of His moral laws applied to human actions. If we follow the practice of Jewish prophets and Christian apostles, we shall find exhortations of the most practical, nay, often most minute, sort occupying a space fully equal to that devoted to what we may term theology. Nay, in the one great sermon which has come to us as the embodiment of Christ's instruction, is not the *whole* a moral discourse, with no theology in it at all? If St Paul was determined to "know nothing but Christ" in one sense, it is quite clear that in another he "reasoned of righteousness," and by so doing only made his judge to tremble. Can we for a moment suppose that if any one of the first teachers of Christianity had known their audience to entertain false and base ideas about honesty, truth, and other daily duties, they would have been content to go on exhorting them vaguely to repentance without ever

telling them *this* and *this* is what you have to repent of and forsake? But what do we actually find done in England in our day? How many sermons are preached, how many books are written, how many private instructions given by the clergy on topics having any definite relation to special duties, or special sins? Of course we all know of the noble teachers who do really send from our pulpits the lessons of justice, and love, and truth. Of course we are aware that there are hundreds, nay, thousands, more who, in remote and quiet parishes, uncheered by public recognition, go on, year after year, preaching true Sermons on Mount, and plain, and village sanctuary. But it is not *some* clergy we need, some few great men, some more good men and true. We have a right to claim the whole priesthood of England as the appointed teachers of public morals; and we ask, What are they doing? What do we hear them preach? What do we find in street, and market, and homestead fireside, as the actual result of their teaching? They have the monopoly, or very nearly so, and they are indignant with all who would invade their monopoly. How are they using it?

The last century is often stigmatized as the "Age of Moral Discourses." Perhaps our age will come to be known as the age of discourses emptied of morality. Undoubtedly there were two great mistakes in the old teaching. First it was a low and false happiness-seeking morality which was taught; *teste* the still extant abominable sermons of Waterland and Rutherford, and the scarcely less base moral philosophy of Paley. Such morals as these, taught from the pulpits of the land, could not, and ought not, to have stirred one noble impulse in any human heart. Secondly, even if the moral system had been sounder, there was total lack of that great inspiring force, that impetus of love to God, that "Enthusiasm of Humanity," which make of the

dead mechanism a living virtue. Divines have caught at a great truth when they understand that to breathe this inspiration, to give this impetus to the righteous will in each human being, is the very highest part of their task, without which all the rest would be practically useless, and with which everything else may follow. But they err enormously in supposing that a sound and healthy view of duty is not a needful preparative, both to love the Lord of Duty, and also to love our neighbour in that wide and perfect manner which those laws define. A true and worthy statement of the whole moral law, could we but obtain it, would move our souls to their very depths with admiration and awe, and cause us to vow to it an allegiance of will and deed such as we never pay to the imperfect conceptions of it we now possess. Is this a strange doctrine? Are we so ignorant of the nature of this highest science as to suppose that no exposition of its principles, no definition of its subordinate propositions, is needful, but that every man, woman, and child in a Christian land is a born moralist, qualified to answer every question of Morals which may arise? Is it supposed that all which is needed is to inspire people with a vague wish to be "good," and that, this accomplished, they will instantly know how to act in all the dilemmas of practical life, so as to adjust all conflicting claims, and perceive in a moment the fallacy of a hundred of the received pernicious maxims of trade and society? If these things are really seriously imagined by any one, we can only say it affords curious evidence how completely the whole subject of ethics has been ignored in our generation. Of the three current schemes of morality,—the traditional, which derives our knowledge of duty from Scripture; the utilitarian, which derives it from the observed results of actions on the happiness of mankind; and the intuitive, which derives it from

conscience,—not one has ever pretended to be able to dispense with the aid of study and reflection to apply the precepts of the Bible, the general rules of utilitarianism, or the great canons of intuitive law, to the practical duties of human life. It is no more possible to guess at just solutions of moral problems on the strength of the possession of first principles, than to guess at a system of geometry by the aid of Euclid's axioms, or tell the result of a complicated sum in the rule of three by knowing the numeration table. The applications of the great principles to the details of practice need to be made with the utmost care and caution, and these applications, or subordinate propositions, of the science must be learned by every one who does not intend to reconstruct the whole science for his own special use. Each must verify the propositions, so learned, making them no less certain to his mind than if he had worked out every step for himself; but very few need, or could, or would undergo the labour of composing afresh a system of morality.

Of this needful instruction in morals how much do we receive from our clergy? How large a share of their weekly preaching is devoted thereto, especially their preaching to the masses, who, if untaught by schoolmaster or pastor, have no chance of being taught at all? Alas! it must be admitted it is not often we hear any allusion to the subject. While obscure theological dogmas are harped upon, and every minute heresy dragged up for condemnation, how rarely, how very rarely, by comparison, is any one clear lesson given! "It is honest to do *this*. It is dishonest to do *that*. Truth means *this*. Falsehood means *that*." It must be mournfully confessed, that, with some noble exceptions, these are not the instructions we hear from our pulpits; or, if we hear them at all, it is not once for twenty times we hear of mysterious doctrines, or vague exhortations to a

"holy" life, which the hearers so little understand as to imagine that they might lead it while committing every hour acts of selfishness, dishonesty, and deceit. It is of little avail to talk of the depravity of human nature, or the immorality of the "times." The clergy may not be able, with their utmost endeavours, to make one man *do* one single right action. But if they would teach Morals, they might make every man, woman, and child in the land *know* what is right evermore; they might prevent the hideous sight, now so common, of people living their whole lives through in the practice of selfishness, spite, dishonesty, and every base maxim which they have become besotted enough to accept as right—men who are habitual cheats in trade, habitual tyrants at home, and yet who go on attending their churches, partaking of sacraments, and seriously believing that the profession of orthodox opinions, and luxurious excitement of feeling, constitute religion, and make them well-pleasing in God's sight now, and sure of acceptance hereafter.

It would appear that there must lie some great mistake at the bottom of this great and crying evil—the evil, namely, that the moral instruction of the nation is left to the clergy, and that the clergy afford very little and very inadequate moral instruction to stem the tide of commercial dishonesty creeping every day higher. Let us not be mistaken. We do not ask that the clergy should cease to preach Religion, and turn to preaching secular Morality. But we do ask that they shall not be so engrossed in teaching *Theology*, that they leave little room for Religion and none for Morality. Let them teach us as much Religion as possible. We can never have too much of that bread of life. Let them also (as needs must be) teach such theology as may supply a basis of ideas whereon the religious sentiment may work.

But let them not leave out as the very last thing to be taught those laws of daily life and duty which are for each of us "the Will of the Father," and in whose fulfilment, and not in any cry of Lord! Lord! lies our Kingdom of Heaven.

The great mistake appears to lie deeper than the surface. It consists, if we mistake not, in an erroneous view of the nature of a National Church, and consequently of the proper office and duty of a clergyman. Whatever may be the errors of certain parties among our clergy, no one can doubt that, on the whole, they greatly desire to fulfil the duties they have undertaken, often with much self-sacrifice. The theory of what those duties are—of why their Church exists, is a thing which, understood in one way, must keep them for ever on a false tack; understood in another, might surely lead them to fill up whatever is now wanting in their practice. We can but throw out questions on this large topic, not attempt to decide them; but we shall devote the remaining pages of this essay to endeavour to clear the ground for at least a comprehension of the terms of such questions.

What is a CHURCH; that—real or ideal—thing about which we speak so easily, and think with so much confusion? What does each of us mean when he attacks or defends "the Church"? Are the attacking and defending parties thinking of the *same* thing, or commonly of quite different things? Truly it would often seem as if we were like a company of disputants who might all clamour about the good and evil, the position and use, of some word having a dozen meanings, and talk all the time of "Mercury"—while one means thereby the heathen god, and another the planet, a third the metal, and a fourth, perhaps, a mercurial temperament!

Let us endeavour for a moment to define a "Church."

"The visible Church of Christ," says the Nineteenth Article, "is a congregation of faithful men, in which the

pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered." Several great Churches, however, albeit, enjoying the preaching of the "pure" word, and "due" administration of Sacraments, have (it is added) "erred both as to ceremonies and matters of faith." This is the view of a Church laid down by authority. Few persons, however, seem to carry the definition very clearly in their minds.

A Church, thinks the Anglican, is a vast body, divinely constituted in various orders, and made the exclusive receptacle of all religious privileges. The Church determines authoritatively matters of belief, and administers Sacraments having supernatural efficacy. There is no salvation for those who quit this Church, and are therefore guilty of schism.

"A Church" (says the Evangelical Christian) "is not an external organization at all. Visible Churches are at best only types of the inner or true Church, the unseen congregation of regenerated souls. This true Church may exist without any hierarchy, and without the use of sacraments. There is no salvation except in *this* Church.

"A Church," says the unbelieving man of the world, "is simply a religious guild or corporation, formed to secure the real or supposed interests of men's souls, as secular corporations are formed to secure those of their property. Large religious corporations are called Churches, and small religious corporations are called (by their enemies) Sects. But they were alike in purpose, and only differ as to method."

Such are three different views of the nature of a Church —all commonly held among us, and all needing to be borne in mind if we would not make our controversies endless duels in the dark. The case is complicated still further when the simple idea, a "Church," is converted into the complex idea, a "*National* Church." Here we have abundance of

variety in the views presented for our acceptance:—"A National Church *is* the existing Established Church (where such a thing is found) in each nation." So far may be conceded on all sides. But what *ought* to be a nation's Church? By what right is any Church national? Here is the difficulty. No doubt each such Church, if its witness could be accepted, would certify that it held its place in its particular nation, in right of its Truth. Probably many of us, born in the communion of England, can remember the complacency with which we reflected, in youth, on the happy coincidence whereby the one pure creed in the world should have been adopted and established by our particular State. Unfortunately this theory being met by the rival claims to truth of rival national Churches, the resort to Veracity as the foundation of rights to Nationality, leaves each to renew the original contest of all. We must first find the true Church, and then grant its claims to nationality.

If "Truth" be not the test, will Antiquity suffice? Alas! if we have to ascend through the ages in search of authority, we shall lack all excuse to stop climbing till we are landed in the worship of Odin, or the re-establishment of the still earlier faith of the Druids.

Shall the will of the Sovereign, or the decree of a Legislative assembly, or the vote of the Majority, decide the question? Practically, of course, each of these does so in the countries whose form of government makes it the ultimate power. Theoretically, however, it would be very difficult in our day, to draw arguments for the divine right of a National Church from the divine right of kings, or the still less imposing Act of a Parliament, or *plebiscite* of a people.* The sanctity of the Church's authority would in such case be the

* As a matter of fact, England supports (and is bound by the Act of Union for ever to support) the Westminster Confession in Scotland,

sanctity of a poor-law or a railway-act, or of such a national vote as that which annexed Savoy to France. The next royal decree, ordering a "golden image" to be set up, and all "kingdoms, nations, and languages" to worship it, would have the same sacredness as the ukase of Henry VIII.; and a new Act of Parliament, or popular vote by universal suffrage, to "amend the law concerning Church property, and transfer the national endowment to Brigham Young," would be equally valid with the existing State patronage.

Thus it seems as if it must remain an open question:—"What ought to constitute a National Church?"

And not only is it an open question what *ought* to constitute a Church "National," but we find it also a doubtful matter what is the nature and purpose of the National Church which we find (rightfully or wrongfully) established in our country.

Is it an independent corporate body recognized by the State?

Is it an endowment of a priesthood for the perpetual maintenance of a certain system of dogmas, or for the perpetual distribution of certain sacramental benefits?

Is it a great foundation of Professorships of Theology for the instruction of the nation in that highest science, as other professorships afford instruction in physics or mathematics?

Is it, lastly, a vast Home Mission and apostolate of Religion and Morality simply considered *as* Religion and as Morality.

In a word, Is our National Church the highest and noblest of our institutions—the eternal temple dedicated by our

while she also supports the Episcopal Church in Ireland. In the one case she admits the right of the majority against what her own State Church affirms to be truth; in the other the right of truth against the majority.

fathers with blood and tears to Piety and to Faith,—a temple whose foundations are on the holy hills of human nature itself, and therefore strong to endure while the structure lasts; or is that Church merely a subordinate wing of our national edifice, with purpose and meaning scarcely higher or more durable than that of many humbler State-endowments, and (in the famous phrase of Lord Houghton) "ONLY A BRANCH OF THE CIVIL SERVICE?" Truly, it is not very wonderful if men who hold views as different as these as to what a thing *is*, should differ also not a little when they come to argue what ought to be done therewith!

Accepting for a moment the theory of each party, the conclusions to be drawn are obvious. Is the Church an institution having existence separate from the State and independent thereof? Then it may negotiate with it as one Power with another,—there may be, according to the Italian dictum, a "*Chiesa Libera in Libero Stato.*" On the other hand, if this theory be false, and the Church of England neither historically nor actually an Entity, having existence independently of the State—then there can be no Free Church in a Free State—no recognition as from Power to Power. The marriage is so complete that, *unless the wife choose to seek a divorce* (and renounce name and title, if not *alimony* also!) there can be no proceedings.

Again. Is the Church of England a vast State endowment for the maintenance and propagation of the Creeds and the Thirty-nine Articles for ever? If this be so, then those who conscientiously adhere to those Articles have a perfect right to do their utmost to eject from the Church and deprive of its emoluments all who betray their dereliction from the smallest fragments of doctrine laid down in these Articles. On the other hand, if the Church be something else than an endowment of a creed, it is an abuse to make differ-

ences of creed a ground of dissension and motive of prosecution. Similarly, if the perpetual administration of sacraments be the purpose of the Church, then any failure in such administration, or in the Church discipline assumed to be needful thereto, is a fit motive of ejection or suspension. But if the celebration of the Christian Mysteries were not the primary office intended for the National Church, then, again, it is monstrous to make questions of ritual and discipline determine the position of her ministers, or to subject infractors thereof to any serious penalties.

Again. Is the Church a great collegiate foundation for the perpetual maintenance of Professorships of Theology, having a similar, though higher purpose, than the professorships of physical and mathematical science? If this be so, then like all other professors, the professors of theology—i. e. the clergy throughout the land—are bound to teach the most highly perfected science, the most advanced results of inquiry. The Thirty-nine Articles, in such a case, must be held to represent interesting monuments for the *history* of theology, showing the exact stage of progress the science had reached in 1562, when the chairs of these professors were established on the new foundation. To use such Articles as manuals for present courses of instruction would be as incongruous, under such circumstances, as for a Professor of Astronomy similarly to employ the work of Descartes, or a Professor of History that of Raleigh. On the other hand, if this view be false, then the dilemma must be confronted that either theology is a science incapable of progress, and all the imaginary discoveries of critics, archæologists, geologists, &c., have thrown no light on it whatever; or that while theology advances, the Church of England stops, and is for ever chained to the imperfections and errors of the past.

Finally. Can the theory be maintained that the Church

of England is neither an endowment of a Creed, nor an institution of sacred Mysteries, nor a foundation of Professorships of Theology, but a National Apostolate—a vast *Home Mission* for the spread of Religion and Virtue? Can we believe that our forefathers, full of faith in the unseen world, and yet warm with the reflected glow of the martyrs' fires, in founding our Church *meant* to found an institution which should for evermore keep alive in our land the love and service of God and the principles of duty and devotion? Surely it is not hard to believe this of them. They have indeed bequeathed to us a great difficulty, which hampers us now at every step. They lived in an age when the idea had not dawned on men that theology was a progressive science —they thought that the whole materials on which theologic opinions could ever be formed lay open before them, and that they had read the last word God would utter before the Judgment Day. Inevitably then they framed their institutions on the hypothesis of an immoveable foundation. Engagements were exacted from the ministers of religion, endowments made, rituals established, all "for ever;" all to last while the world lasted. Time has proved their hypothesis a mistake, and the result is that the inheritors of the system constructed upon it find themselves in an essentially false position, in which the utmost rectitude of purpose and readiness of self-sacrifice can hardly avail to keep them clear in all respects—even now, when the leaven has worked in few minds comparatively to what it may do hereafter. Still, with even the great difficulty of this immoveable Church in an age of progress, we may look back on the work of the fathers of the Reformation and bless them for it; believing that had they who so nobly broke the tenfold chain of Romanism lived in our day, they would have been the foremost amongst us to make their Church all that we

would fain have it to be now—the great Home Mission of all good and holy things.

Let us but embrace the theory that the Church of England is a National Apostolate—*not* of the special system of divinity which happened to be paramount in the sixteenth century; *not* even of the most advanced science of Theology of any age—but of RELIGION itself. Let us admit this, and a train of consequences of incalculable importance will follow. We must then leave alike our squabblings over dogmas, and our disputes as to matters of mere criticism, as in both cases utterly secondary and subordinate to the question of real piety and virtue, and cease thenceforth to contend on principles which (had they existed in the Primitive Church) would assuredly have "suspended" St Peter or "deprived" St Paul. We must then fairly face the problem—*not*, How are men to be kept within our pale, or taught our doctrines, or subjected to our discipline?—but, How are they best to be helped to love God and obey His laws? Assuredly if viewed from this point the whole work of the Church would assume a different aspect, and among the changes which would ensue would be a new and ardent effort to teach the nation to apply those divine eternal laws to the details of human life, and to drive out, with the righteous scorn and indignation hitherto reserved for theological mistakes, those base maxims, those poisonous moral heresies, which now spread unchecked through the land.

THE INDIGENT CLASS.

[*Fraser, February*, 1866.]

THE INDIGENT CLASS—THEIR SCHOOLS AND DWELLINGS.

THE old fable, common to many lands, of a giant lying crushed and groaning underneath a mountain, affords no inapt simile of the condition of a vast class of our fellow-creatures. The mountain of our social system presses with overwhelming weight on the masses who lie at its base, and ever and anon half-smothered moans and despairing cries reach our ears to remind us it is living, suffering flesh over which we raise the structure of our national glory and luxury. Ever and anon we ask how may this great woe be relieved? But the years roll on, and the weight only grows heavier and heavier; and if the giant stir not to lift himself up—and whelm us all in ruin by so doing—it appears not how or from what quarter any help is to come.

Of the present condition of this suffering class, of the special causes affecting it at this time, and of a few of the many schemes in action or suggested for its amelioration, we propose briefly to speak. Especially is it hoped that one plan to be described—suggested by a man of much experience, and bearing with it vast promise of good—may meet with favourable consideration; and, even if it be found in its entirety impracticable, be yet accepted as pointing the way towards some scheme of similar advantage and greater efficiency.

A distinction of an useful kind has been frequently drawn between the "perishing" and the "dangerous" classes of society. For our present purpose it will be needful to sub-

stitute a somewhat closer analysis of the lower strata of our pyramid. Beginning at the very base, we find three classes, into one or other of which character and circumstance range those who are utterly without this world's goods, and without either the power or the will to earn them honestly. These three classes are those of *Pauperism*, *Regular Crime*, and *Venal Vice*. We have no concern to speak of any of them in this paper. Next above these we find the class whose condition we purpose to discuss, and which, for want of a better word, we shall call the *Indigent* class. Could we conveniently use such a name, perhaps the *Hand-to-mouth* class would better convey to the reader the distinguishing feature of the lives of the men and women of whom we speak, since the irregularity and uncertainty of their means of subsistence is that which distinguishes them (and by a very wide gulf) from the regular labouring class above them. This is the class of the "City Arabs," the crossing-sweepers, the hawkers, the costermongers, the tramps, the mendicants, the innumerable petty trades by which it is possible to gain a living outside of any of the regular recognized branches of labour.

Of the numbers of which this Indigent class is composed it is hard to form a calculation. In different towns, at different seasons of the year, and in different years of cheapness or scarcity, the number of persons who fall into indigence, or rise out of it, varies so immensely, that whatever figures we might use of one case would inevitably fail to hold good of another. It may be asserted, however, with confidence, that in every great city there are thousands, in every town hundreds, and well-nigh in every village some individuals who are *not* paupers, not criminals, but whose daily bread is a matter of chance and hazard. The causes which conduce to place men in this condition are, of course, various as the

ills and misfortunes of humanity. A few of them claim a moment's attention, to enable us better to understand the matter with which we are concerned.

Probably no men and women in England are more thoroughly easy in their circumstances, or have on the whole a more pleasant lot in life, than the skilful artisan and his wife in their times of prosperity. The wages obtained in the regular trades constitute affluence according to the standard of living of the class to which they belong, and, relatively speaking, they have more to spend beyond their wants than one gentleman and lady in a thousand. The wages of the iron-puddlers published last year, and those of bricklayers, carpenters, glaziers, painters, and a dozen more, surpass the salaries of many men and women who rank as gentlemen and ladies. The teacher is fortunate whose day spent in teaching Greek or Algebra, German or the pianoforte, is as well paid as that of the hatter who in the meantime has constructed a covering for the heads so instructed. To beat iron bars, or put together a chair, is more remunerative than to treat medically a large number of pauper patients, or minister as a curate to many dozens of souls. The quantity of bricks whose laying with hod and trowel would be equivalent to even the best paid intellectual labour—to an article in the *Quarterly* or a leader in the *Times*—would be found surprisingly moderate. But this prosperity of the artisan has its dark side in a general view of the working classes. We do not profess to understand the subject sufficiently to be able to say how or where the wrong lies; but the most superficial glance shows us thousands of men in England, able-bodied and sufficiently bright-witted, who are all their lives condemned to idleness—mendicancy, or futile street-trades, little better than mendicancy—for no other reason than that those who had charge of them in

youth were unable to pay the heavy fees for their entrance into the regular trades; and without such fees, even if a man chance to *learn* the trade, he has small chance of being allowed to practise it.*

Few things seem more cruel than this, that a man must not only know his work, but pay to be allowed to work. If the State were to exercise such tyranny, we should hear loud outcries; but "Free Trade" is apparently a principle more easy to boast of in magniloquent speeches than to apply to the simple relations of buyer and seller, employer and employed. Thousands are left in idleness and pauperism, and the community is defrauded of so much good labour, that the rewards of half the trades may be kept beyond their proper level, and each be paid not only for the work it does, but for kindly permitting certain others to work. How many thousands now belonging to the indigent class would not be indigent at all, but prosperous and industrious artisans, were the trades suited to them thrown open to fair competition, it is hard to calculate. As long as heavy fees, or years of underpaid apprenticeship equivalent to such fees, are demanded of every one who enters certain trades, so long we must continue to have thousands of men pursuing wretched little mendicant arts for a living, who ought to be well-to-do artisans, supporting their families and keeping the prices of labour at their natural level, to the benefit of the whole community.

Of course, Nemesis comes in many shapes to the trade monopolists; and among the most miserable of the Indigent are to be found numbers who once indulged in all the gross

* In Italy, where no such practice exists, we have been assured by the gentleman who superintends the magnificent workhouse of Monte Domini, that nothing is easier than to place out in excellent trades, in Florence, the boys and girls trained freely in that institution.

luxuries of the puddlers, but who have been thrown out of employment, partly by the calamities affecting their own health, or the prosperity of their trade, and partly by the agency of a regular economic law, of which perhaps somewhat too little notice is commonly taken. Change of fashion, and the invention of machinery to diminish labour, are not occasional accidents (as workmen seem always to consider them), but events which must constantly and inevitably occur; and the sight is no less deplorable than familiar of a man once able to support his family in comfort, left stranded by the change of the tide, and utterly unable, or stolidly reluctant, to apply himself to any other branch of trade, even one most nearly approaching that from which he has been cut off. Such men are among the recruits most hopeless in the ranks of the indigent.

Again: there are, of course, labourers, servants, tradesmen, who in one way or another have sunk into poverty. Above all, there are women (and by thousands they may be counted) for whom the accepted theory that they are supported by their male relations has been a cruel mockery, and who struggle with penury, for which they have no one preparation of knowledge, skill, or hardihood. Lastly, there is the enormous class of the Incapables—the men and women not actually idiotic or stupid, but just so much slower and weaker-witted than their neighbours, that in the dread "struggle for existence" (far worse among mankind than ever Darwin told of bird or beast of prey) they immediately succumb, fall amid the hurrying, jostling crowd, and are trodden under foot less from cruelty than the necessity of the case. All these—broken-down artisans, labourers, servants, helpless women, incapables—lapse, as a matter of course, in their troubles into the Indigent class, which also contains in itself an hereditary population which has lived by shift and

hazard, in penury and difficulty, from father to son and mother to daughter for many generations.*

The physical and moral condition of a class thus constituted has necessarily formed a subject of anxiety to every statesman and philanthropist who has had the interests of the community at heart. The abodes of these indigent persons, from many causes hereafter to be touched on, have, in nearly all large towns, become crowded and unhealthy beyond description; and the hapless inhabitants, in their poverty, and the recklessness born of poverty, so far from amending their own condition, seem year by year to become more and more wretched and degraded. In the miserable "slums" occupied by hawkers and costermongers, the rag and bone sellers, marine-store keepers, vendors of old clothes, collectors of hare-skins and purloined kitchen-stuff, the organ-grinders, "niggers," mendicants, street-sweepers; here, amid overcrowded lodging-houses, low gin-shops, and houses of still worse employ—here is the very focus of fever and nursery of cholera, which, if a demon had planned it, could not be more aptly fitted for the production of vice and crime. Rooms where whole families sleep together, and where men and women who are *not* united by any tie save that of chance-herding in the same shelter, are huddled in disgusting proximity; rooms swarming with vermin; odious with intolerable stench; undrained, unventilated, uncleaned from year to year, as one troop after another of miserable squalid creatures pass through them;—these are the *homes* (oh, cruel mockery of that proud English word!) of thousands around us. We all know this familiarly, and deplore it as if it

* The proportion which the class we have defined as Indigent bears to the regular Labouring class, in such a district, for example, as that of the New Law Courts, has been found to be as 1093 indigent to 3082 labourers.

were a matter no more in our hands than the sufferings of the birds in the snow.

It is a mere platitude to refer to the evils which have their perennial spring in these hapless localities. The marvel is, not that disease and wickedness result from such conditions of life as are here to be found, but that children ever grow up under them, and arrive at manhood and womanhood with some modicum of health and strength, some residue of modesty and uprightness. The notion that they can attain to natural vigour, or preserve complete purity, is the delusion of novelists and poets. "Marian Erles" as often grow up with Marian Erle's training as orange-trees spring on northern moorlands. There are, indeed, some forms of virtue which flourish even in the shadows of these hideous lanes. Such goodness as that depicted in *De Profundis*—the goodness of the poor laundress to the deserted infant, the goodness of the fierce virago to the old man dying of cancer—are true to life and nature. There are also, as all who know them can testify, touching instances of sustained decency and self-respect among those who have fallen into uttermost indigence, and who yet struggle on to support themselves, and retain the cleanliness and respectable exterior of better days. But these last are exceptions, and not very numerous exceptions, to the rule of degradation and disorder naturally engendered by the miserable conditions of life in a pauper lodging-house; and on *them* falls with double weight the wretchedness of the companionship of the vicious and the brutalized. As a general law, all experience proves that the resisting power of moral and physical health in human nature, to overcome evil conditions, is always very limited, and never in any way to be calculated on. We have no *right* to expect any result from filth than disease, or from corrupting influences than sin.

Solomon's terrible apophthegm, "The destruction of the poor is his poverty," was doubtless true in Judea three thousand years ago; but it is much more true in England to-day. While wealth grows hourly in the rich man's hand, almost without any care on his part, the poor man finds it difficult to embark in the humblest industry for want of needful capital, and in a thousand cases is defrauded of his rights without being able to afford legal counsel or redress. He needs more than others the knowledge of various laws against which he is liable to transgress unwittingly, or from which he may grievously suffer (e.g., the laws of traffic and laws of pauper settlement); but, except by undergoing the penalty of ignorance, it is hard to see how he is to gain information; the gentlemen, competent to do so, who would patiently instruct him might be hard to find. It is needless to refer to the adulterations of the food, the exorbitant prices of the shops where the poor have once allowed themselves to contract debts, the dreadful "sweating systems," and similar snares with which they find themselves beset. The abominable drugs wherewith the only drinks they can obtain are rendered poisonous, and a diseased craving thus established, is alone an evil of cruel magnitude; one which we cannot but think the true friends of Temperance would do well to take in hand. All these are miseries and wrongs which may well crush down even a sturdy spirit; but there is behind a want which we know is often felt in the poor man's lodging, which must throw everything else in the shade, but of which we are often strangely forgetful when we estimate his condition. That great want which Providence has made the mainspring of action for the whole animated creation—namely, the want of Food—must needs reduce every other element of human life to insignificance when once it has made itself felt. When "to EAT or not to

eat" is "the question," very little attention can assuredly be vouchsafed to other contingencies. To be clean or dirty—to live in a romantic dell or amid the hideous chimneys of the Black Country—to be as learned as Humboldt, or utterly ignorant of the rudiments of knowledge—all must be alternatives undeserving a thought under pressure of the far more urgent problem—To be fed? or to starve? Strange is it how little the never-hungry class reflect on this simple fact of nature, and forget that at any moment the poor may come under pressure of a feeling which must instantly throw out of gear all the machinery of motives, hope, fear, decency, prudence, on which we are accustomed to rely for their guidance. Let us for a moment reflect how some of the highest of these motives (those presented to us by religion or parental affection) would appeal to us, under the simple change produced in our state by Hunger. How would the finest sermon we ever heard have affected us had we tasted no food for twenty-four hours before listening to it? How far should we care to send our children to school were the chances of giving them any dinner on their return to be essentially diminished thereby? The truth is, that a man whose daily toil affords him insufficient and precarious nourishment, whether he hunts the forest for game or the streets for halfpence, leads the life of a beast of prey rather than of a man. It is not till he has got a step higher, till he can gain enough food, and gain it regularly, that he comes into the region of purely human sentiments, and that beyond hunger and thirst, and the need of warmth and sleep, and the love of his mate and his offspring, he has space for the love of order, beauty, knowledge, and the esteem of his fellows.

We often complain that the poor do not think of the morrow. But it is almost (we might rather say) a merciful

dispensation of Providence that those for whom the morrow can but bring fresh wants are often as thoughtless as the fowls of the air, which have as great chance of "gathering into barns" as they. Care and anxiety, which plough such furrows on many faces which never yet looked on an empty board, would drive to madness and despair those who rarely behold a well-plenished one. Is there, then, it is asked, no religion for the comfort of these hapless beings; no "gospel for the poor?" Are we not to teach them to trust in Him who feeds the ravens? Can we not aid them to look up even through the dim vista of their smoke-filled lanes, to

> That great world of light which lies
> Behind all human destinies?

God forbid we should say that religion has no consolations for the famishing and the wretched, or that any human heart is beyond the limits of its golden sceptre. But this must be accepted as a matter of every-day experience. Those who frequent churches and prayer-meetings, those who can be easily stirred to take an interest in eternal things, are very rarely those of whom we have been writing, whose life is of necessity one anxious search after "the meat which perisheth." There may be religion in the decent home, however poor. There may be religion again in the hospital and the workhouse, the penitentiary and the prison. But in the only dwelling of the indigent, in the over-crowded filthy lodging-house, resonant with evil words, polluted with evil sights and smells, jostling, sordid, peaceless—there is probably the minimum of religion on which human souls of Caucasian race well may live. Again we repeat it; on a large scale human nature is always to be found following the conditions in which it is placed. The worst condition conceivable for becoming religious must be to live in an atmosphere tainted with vice, to be never for an hour able

to follow the counsel to "enter thy closet," to meet that Being who (it is so hard to feel!) seeth in a *crowd* as well as "in secret"—to be for ever goaded by gnawing appetite, degraded by squalor, stupified by fatigue. Nay, we can hardly hope that the difficulties of the poor stop with these physical impediments. Must it not happen that faith in the Supreme Goodness must be sorely tried by wants such as theirs, and that the belief in justice and holiness reigning over all must be sometimes hard to retain, where evil seems the rule and good the exception—where age is dishonoured and childhood corrupted from the cradle? A thoughtful man brought thus hourly face to face with the darkest problems of existence, and never beholding the brighter side of happy innocent life, might well be forgiven if to lack of opportunity for religious exercises he added a woeful distrust of religion itself. The old idea that poverty and piety bear a natural affinity to one another may hold good in a simple state of society, where poverty means dwelling in a tent in the wilderness, or a cottage in a sequestered vale. But in London, in the nineteenth century, where poverty means living in the slums of St Giles or Bethnal Green, it must needs be the rich man for whom (so far as this world is concerned) it is easiest to enter into the kingdom of devout feelings and untroubled faith.

We confess, then, without in the least undervaluing the religious instruction of the indigent classes—nay, while heartily wishing it might be carried much further, and in healthier channels of thought—we cannot look for the elevation of those classes primarily from any such agency. Many excellent clergymen, many philanthropic gentlemen and ladies, many useful Bible-women and city missionaries, have long worked in the field, and are working more vigorously year by year. The Bishop of London's Fund alone

has contributed since its commencement to the erection of thirty-seven new churches, and has given an immense impetus to a work which before presented a ghastly contrast to the missions sent and the treasures lavished to Christianize cannibals at the antipodes. But though doubtless many human souls have thus been aided on the heavenly way, and many lives reclaimed from vice and sin, we believe the most sanguine of the teachers themselves would be ready to admit that the improvement of the indigent class, *as a class*, is a thing not to be hoped for even from the building of streets of churches or the patrol of an army of clergymen. Though neither they nor we are likely to hold that

> Washing seven times in the people's baths
> Is sovereign for the people's leprosy,

both will admit that the "godliness" which is not able to neighbour itself with "cleanliness,"—the moral purity forced to grow in a dunghill,—is but a half-developed plant after all.

Turning from Religious to Secular Education, we find that for several years back an effort has been made by philanthropists to provide training of a special kind for the children of the class we are considering—namely, in the Ragged Schools. The subject is one of much importance; and the value of these schools has been disputed in such high quarters that we must ask leave to treat the subject at some length.

The children above the Indigent class have abundance of National, British, and other schools, where excellent education is given them on payment of the penny a week which serves to secure regular attendance. The class below again, the enormous Pauper class,* has for itself the Workhouse

* It is an awful fact that one in every twenty-two of the population of England and Wales belong to this class, and receive relief indoor or outdoor.

Schools, wherein the mere literary part of education is carried on with the special advantage of regularity. But between the labourer who easily pays his penny for each child's schooling per week, and the pauper whose subsistence is secure, and who pays nothing for anything, the indigent parent comes to find himself in a difficulty. He can neither put his children into the workhouse schools while he remains outside, nor pay two or three or four pence a week without being often called upon to make a sacrifice for which (as we have remarked) his hungry, shifty, haphazard life leaves him no sort of resolution. Over and over this fact has been disputed by able men, and the Ragged-school system (designed to meet this want by free day-schools for the indigent) has been denounced as superfluous and even mischievous. It is asserted that the intermediate class, which we have named the "Indigent," hardly exists in numbers sufficient to require any provision for its wants; or that, if it be even numerous in any locality, it ought not to be recognized, but rather compelled by every means to amalgamate with a better class, and send its children to the same schools for instruction. It is asserted that a little assistance to indigent parents, to aid them to pay for their children's education at the national schools, would be far better bestowed than the sums needful to support Ragged schools, where much less good teaching is supplied.

To these assertions, with all respect for the judgment of those who make them, we must urge two opposing assertions—namely, 1st, That the indigent class is too great and numerous to be overlooked, and cannot be amalgamated with the class above it, so far as paying schools are concerned; the effort to induce the indigent to send their children to such schools inevitably ending in such broken and irregular attendance as is practically worthless. 2nd, That even if the

children of the indigent—of street-sweepers, costermongers, hawkers, and the like—were by any means brought into the full use of the national and other pay schools, yet that, even in such case, those schools would be less useful to them than those same Ragged schools which contemptuous inspectors describe as "grovelling" in all sorts of irregularities and laxities. Such children need *civilizing* before teaching to read and write, and in the Ragged schools this civilizing process is given its needful priority; and the children who at first can hardly apply steadily to anything, or behave with common decency or order, are gradually reclaimed like so many little wild colts from the mountains—first *tamed,* and then taught. The teaching without the taming (for which alone attention can be spared in other schools) is of singularly little value.

It may, perhaps, be needful to say that the first of the above statements—namely, that the indigent class cannot be made to send their children to the pay schools with any regularity—is not advanced without good grounds. Anxious to ascertain the real facts of the case, a visitation was made in one of our large towns, for some months, of the families who sent their children to a certain Ragged school. Among seventy families, there were found only two (who, of course, were immediately struck off the list of pupils) who were not too poor to afford regular schooling.

Let the reader judge what were the chances of the children in such cases as these, extracted at random from the writer's note-book. Be it noticed that every one was in some filthy den of a court or back street, and that nearly always a single room served for the whole family:—

"C., in T—— Court; a carpenter, disabled; six children.

"C., E—— Street; a tailor, cracked, bad health, eight children; wife ill.

"C., M—— Street; husband and wife slop-workers; receive 2*s.* 9*d.* for making an office coat; four children.

"C., N—— Street; father with internal disease; six children—two with impediments in speech.

"D., G—— Court; day labourer; six small children.

"D., L—— Lane; family of ten; mother ill.

"G., H—— Court; a painter, out of work; children utterly ragged—one sitting by the fire, entirely without clothing."

And so on, and so on, through fifty more. One family consisted of eight children; the father earned ten shillings a week; the mother, who had been lady's-maid in a family noted in its county for the exorbitant luxuries permitted to its servants, had married a farmer's son and set up an hotel. Change of traffic ruined the unfortunate couple, and a handful of pawnbrokers' certificates alone represented the plate, linen, and clothes they once possessed. The poor woman, recently confined, sat up in bed feverishly working at some wretched slop-work, and the two eldest of the *eight* children in the room were trying to do their little share to increase her earnings. Was it within the bounds of reason to expect this woman not only to send away her children every day, but to pay *eightpence* a week for their schooling?

We must be forgiven for quoting another case still more curiously illustrative of that sad problem—How the poor manage to exist. In a single room in a lane at B. lived two young women—an Irish girl and her friend, a soldier's wife. The soldier's wife had three children; her husband was in India. She received a few loaves weekly; the rest of the expenditure of the little party (of course, all living in one room) was supplied thus: The two women had only one

bonnet and one shawl between them. Each day one stayed at home with the baby, the other dressed herself and went to a neighbour, who lent her for the day a pair of linen sheets. These sheets she took to the pawnbroker's, and, with the price, filled her basket with oranges, apples, or thread and needles, as the season might suggest. After a day spent in hawking these wares, she returned home, took the sheets out of pawn, paying a halfpenny to the pawnbroker on the loan, restored them to the owner for the night, and then shared with her friend such proceeds as might be derived from the day's sale of fruit. This life (to our own personal knowledge) went on with little change through a whole winter. Who will say that these women, or that the poor reduced lady's-maid with her eight children, could spare threepence or sixpence a week for feeding the *minds* of their children, when with such toil they could hardly keep their bodies from starvation?

Doubtless the proportion in which such a class as this is to be found in different localities varies very considerably. A little knowledge of the people of any district will suffice to prove whether they are to be found there in numbers sufficient to justify the opening of a school. All we maintain is, that where they exist their condition demands our earnest attention. Admirably does Miss Carpenter—the best friend these poor neglected children have ever had—say in her paper read this year at Sheffield—

"These children are *ours*. They cannot help themselves; they form a part of our society; they will become the people of our land. It is not their fault that they exist in this state of degradation; ignorance cannot heal itself. For our own sakes as well as theirs we ought to take measures to prevent their growing up thus uncared for. If we neglect the duty,

they will unconsciously inflict on us a dreadful revenge—a constantly increasing supply of pauperism and crime."

We have heard this lady relate an anecdote pitifully exemplifying the sort of chance some of these children have of good training from their parents.

Teaching one day in her own Ragged school, she was addressed by a boy of ten years old with a request to be allowed to go home. "Why did he wish to go home; it was only one o'clock?" After some shy demur, the child confided to her in a whisper that he had locked up his mother, dead drunk, and thought that about this time, as usual, she would be returning to her senses, and wanting to be released!

Again, the free Night Schools commonly attached to these Ragged Schools are agencies of good of no mean value. The young "City Arabs," lured into them by warmth and light, are caught as in a benevolent trap, and ere they are turned out again are often impressed with ideas guiding their future course in a very opposite direction from the one previously before them. It is a common experience for a teacher in such a school to find many a little scamp, long running ragged after carriages, and picking up pence by any miscellaneous process *not* to be termed industry, turning out a well-to-do artisan, soldier, carter, or seaman, and coming back in after years to revisit his school with every token of gratitude. A strange state they are in, poor lads, when they first enter a night school. Hands which might have acted as dust shovels for weeks; hair which resists all intervention of the public comb; clothes saturated with everything except soap and water; and ideas of scholastic discipline which include leaping from form to form, shooting marbles at obnoxious instructors, singing uproarious songs, and joining

occasionally, when study becomes too tedious, in a general hunt-the-hare and helter-skelter round the room. The notions they possess of the world at large are most amazing —not foolish and stupid, like those of children in a village, or shut up in factories. The streets awaken many faculties and suggest many ideas; but a night school of City Arabs presents the study of a set of intelligent lads and young men who have seen all the evil of life, and been taught little or nothing of the good. Of the religion of the country in which they have been brought up they know about as much as the horses and dogs. Often have we been touched to see the delighted surprise with which they received such ideas as those conveyed by the story of the Prodigal, or the last pages of Bunyan; as if the notion of a *Friend* above, and not an omnipotent Policeman, were absolutely new to them. It would be easy to multiply stories illustrative of the curious mental state of these poor lads. One lady teaching in London, and reading in the Bible about "wheat and chaff," found that not one of her scholars had an idea of what *wheat* was; but on asking them what "chaff" might be, there was an immediate holding up of hands in signal of comprehension, and an unanimous reply of—

"Impidence, ma'm!"

The dreadful punishment allotted to such "chaff" seemed to follow quite unquestioned.

Another lady (as we have told elsewhere) asked her class, in the course of a lecture on "Gratitude," what pleasure in the course of the year they most thoroughly enjoyed. After a thoughtful pause, the last boy in the class looked up and said, with simple candour—

"Cock-fighting, ma'am."

"Oh, no, B.," said the lady, "I'm sure you cannot like that cruel sport?"

"Yes, I do, ma'am, though! there's a pit up by the Black Boy as is worth anything in B——."

A similar story is to be found in an admirable little tract in the series *Odds and Ends*, on *Penitentiaries*, p. 30:—"There was (at the Ragged school) a boy who invariably interrupted all histories of heroes and saints recorded in Scripture by disparaging comparisons with Tom Sayers. 'Moses and Joshua was all very well,' he would say, 'but what was they to that little chap a-standin' up as game as a bantam cock before that great thunderin' Yankee, and a knockin' of him down like a ninepin? Bless you, Noah and Abraham and all that lot weren't fit to hold a candle to him. He war a hero, he war.' . . . A small boy, to whom some one had tried to teach the catechism, obstinately refused to believe in anything but the articles of the *Christmas Feast;* and being asked for some further explanation, said, 'A jolly plum-puddin' was the best on 'em.'"

On another occasion the writer proposed to a class of lads of about sixteen, the question, "What was conscience?" Immense difficulty was found in giving an answer, but eventually the following ingenious definition was supplied: "Conscience is a thing which a gem'man arn't got, who, when a boy finds his handkercher and gives it him back, doesn't give the boy sixpence." When the teacher asked whether, even under the aggravated wrong of getting no sixpence, each boy did not feel rather glad to have returned the lost article—and whether, again, under the contingency (suggested by the sight of a white handkerchief in the hands of a young gentleman unprovided with shoes) of a boy not restoring what he found, he did not dislike to think of the transaction—there was in each case a chorus of agreement. Of course the lesson ended: "Well, boys, that which makes you feel comfortable when you have done right and got nothing, and

very uncomfortable when you have done wrong and gained your end—*that* is conscience." Perhaps few lads who could have given a correct definition of the *word* were as much alive as they were to the reality of the *thing*. Its relation to the great Author of Conscience had, apparently, never once entered their heads. Such religion as they had picked up had nothing to do with anything of the kind.

It will be seen that, as an agency of good to the Indigent class, we are disposed to give a very high place to the Ragged Schools. If we might be permitted to offer an opinion on the subject to those who have the regulation of public education, we should say—Let there be free industrial day schools, infant schools, and night schools, certified by the Secretary of State; such Ragged schools as now exist being certified when found worthy. Let there be an inspector of these schools, whose office it shall be to visit them without warning, and ascertain whether they are properly conducted, and whether the right class of children alone are permitted to benefit by them. Then let such a capitation grant be made (say £1 a year for day scholars, and less for infants and night scholars) as shall permit the managers to secure the maintenance of the schools, with the aid of the private funds —now very inadequate for the purpose—at their disposal.

Besides churches and schools, however, there are many hundreds of miscellaneous institutions to be found throughout England, aiming at the improvement of the indigent as well as working class. There are the excellent Working Men's Clubs, the Working Man's College and Working Woman's College, Mechanics' Institutes, Baths and Washhouses, Penny Banks, Temperance Societies, Mothers' Meetings, Soup Kitchens, Refuges, Asylums for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, Insane, Idiotic, Incurable; and Hospitals where every fleshly

ill receives at least care if not relief. We lack space and information to treat of these institutions properly, or discriminate those among them which really elevate the poor from those which only foster pauperism and dependance. The aggregate cost of the institutions of one kind or another, in London, which may be counted under the head of charitable, has been estimated at an *annual* income of £2,441,967.* Of this enormous sum, we must suppose the proportion which passes to the use of the Indigent, in one way or another, to be at the least £1,000,000 per annum in London. Yet with all this treasure, with the labour and the ingenuity of hundreds of philanthropists, the indigent are only falling into deeper distress and greater degradation. As well might the army of Lilliput lift up Gulliver, as all these philanthropic schemes succeed in getting the crushed giant of Poverty on his feet.

The simple fact forces itself upon us, that religious instruction and secular education, churches, schools, clubs, institutes, asylums, hospitals, are all inadequate to cure the dreadful evil in question. Other forces must be brought to bear; the conditions of a decent and orderly life must be supplied; and then churches and schools, colleges and clubs, may accomplish their good work. While the dwellings of the indigent remain what they are, overcrowded lodging-houses, where cleanliness and modesty are excluded, so long it is impossible that any real reformation of their condition can take place. It is a mere truism to repeat this observation. Statesmen and philanthropists, who differ about everything else, are unanimous on this one point. The question is not, Does the root of the evil lie here? but How can we get at this root and remove it? The reader must forgive us for

* *Charities of London*, by Sampson Low, p. 160.

going over some well-beaten ground to state the case quite clearly.

The supply of lodgings for the indigent classes in the great towns has long failed to equal the demand. Each year the case becomes worse, as population increases, and no tendency arises for capital to be invested in meeting the want.

The cause of this apparent anomaly is not hard to find. While the population is doubling, the space on which stood the old houses of the poor, when the poor were far less numerous, has been continually infringed upon for public and private works; and instead of building new quarters for the poor, capitalists find every other investment of their money more profitable. In London in particular, as we all know, the new works of various kinds have actually taken away the homes of thousands. In some districts, the erection of streets of handsome mansions has tended so effectually to banish the poor, that the whole population has diminished, in the face of the vast increase elsewhere, e. g. in one district in Westminster, where (excluding some public institutions) the number of inhabitants in 1851 was 23,433, and in 1861, 21,235. In the last session, Lord Shaftesbury stated in Parliament that there were then before the House bills involving the possible demolition of 3500 houses, and eviction of their 20,000 tenants. In the present session, applications are made for eleven new railway projects, all requiring extensive grounds in the poorer districts of the metropolis. The new Law Courts alone, according to the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons (Minutes, p. 8), will displace 4175 persons, leaving them to find new abodes as best they may. Of the hardships and sufferings thus created we cannot pause to speak. How many humble little trades are ruined and employments lost; how many

sick, who might have been allowed by old landlords to live on in their lodgings, find it impossible to procure new ones on the same terms, it is impossible to say. One thing is clear: such losses and sufferings to the Indigent class inevitably swell the lists of Pauperism, and leave, for those who escape, the problem of improvement of condition doubly difficult. Nor are all these changes and evictions to be looked on as a temporary difficulty for the present year and a few years more. While the nation retains its prosperity, improvements of various kinds must perpetually go forward —railways, hotels, embankments, widening of streets, opening out spaces, building warehouses, churches, dwellings for the wealthier classes. The making of such things is not an accidental contingency, but a regular process, which must go on at even an increasingly rapid ratio. But where do the designers of such improvements lay their ground plans? Certainly *not* in the spaces already covered by the palaces of May Fair and Belgravia—not in the parks—not in the priceless acres whereon stand St Paul's and the Exchange. It is inevitable that every great new edifice or railway must encroach on the districts hitherto belonging to the poor, and covered only with their comparatively cheaply built tenements. Thus we are bound to confront the fact that the dwellings of the poor (long ago too scanty and overcrowded) *must* continue to be curtailed and encroached upon year after year; while, in addition to the natural increase of population, the crowded districts have to bear wave after wave of emigrants driven out of their abodes by each new work in succession. From Victoria Street and the Westminster Chambers last year—from St Clement Danes, Holborn, this summer—from somewhere else a twelvemonth hence—the accumulation must go on, not as an accident, but an economic law.

But, it is asked, why does not capital come in here, as

everywhere else, and supply a want as soon as it exists? The reason is simple—property in poor lodgings is very undesirable for large capitalists. It can be made to pay a high interest only on three conditions—1st, That the labour of collecting the rents (which is always excessive) shall not be deducted from the returns by agents; 2nd, That very little mercy shall be shown to tenants in distress; 3rd, That small expense be incurred in attempting to keep in repair, paint, or otherwise refresh the houses, which being inhabited by the roughest of the community, would require double outlay to preserve in anything better than a squalid and rack-rent condition.

The low class of landlords who commonly hold this kind of property fulfil these conditions only too well, and are known to make large gains. The overcrowded state of the town and paucity of such lodgings relieves them from all competition, and, without any fear of losing their miserable tenants, they may grind them as they please, while leaving their rooms without any of the needful repairs or facilities for decency and cleanliness. But it is obvious that property like this can have no attractions for capitalists. Where the undertaking has been attempted, as by the Metropolitan Association, a return in three years of £4,000 on an outlay of £50,000 sufficiently proved the matter, in a pecuniary sense, unprofitable; and (as Mr Hare remarks) it is obvious that "here the economic doctrine of supply and demand is inapplicable, and hundreds of thousands of our people, for generation after generation, must be victims of the evil before the principle of demand and supply could work out a remedy."

Convinced long ago of this fact, philanthropists have for years attempted to mitigate the evil by building, in London and other great towns, model lodging-houses for the Work-

ing Classes, and after long remaining a doubtful experiment, a success has been achieved in the case of Mr Peabody's, Alderman Waterlow's, and perhaps some others. But as regards the two great objects we are considering,—the elevation of the Indigent, and the prevention of pestilence,—these schemes only point the way to an enterprise too large for any private funds. All the existing model lodging-houses not only fix their rents above the means of the Indigent class, but actually make it a rule not to admit the persons of whom the class chiefly consists—namely, those who get their living upon the streets. Thus, for the elevation of the indigent and the purifying of those cesspools of wretchedness, wherein cholera and fever have their source, these model lodging-houses are even professedly unavailing.*

Again, another plan is urged and in a certain measure carried out—the building of suburban villages for the working classes, accessible by railway. A great number of such houses have been built by the railway companies and other speculators outside London, and artisans and labourers seem glad to use them. The movement is one of blended good and evil to those who can avail themselves of it—good, inasmuch as it allows children to grow up in comparatively fresh air, and the workmen themselves to partake of it at night and on Sundays; bad, inasmuch as it robs the workman of the time which is his money, and tends to foster the immense evils consequent on a separation of social classes. In a brief period, if not properly guarded, these new buildings will become as overcrowded as the old, with the additional disadvantage of being isolated from all civilizing influences—so many Pauper Towns. With regard, however, to the larger

* Miss Adeline Cooper's new lodging-houses and club in Duck Lane is built expressly for the use of this class—namely, hawkers, costermongers, &c.

number of the class with whom we are concerned, the suburban villages are neither good nor bad, being wholly inaccessible to them. The trades of the hawkers, costermongers, &c., carried on in the streets, and frequently aided by the man's children or wife, could never be managed by families sleeping out of town, even if the cost of the railway were not a sufficient deterrent.

But beside the existing model lodging-houses and suburban villages, other schemes have been suggested. Passing over those for the formation of large companies for the erection of lodgings (companies hard to form, with the prospect of 5 per cent. interest at the outside), and which at best can but repeat on a larger scale the experiment of the existing model lodgings,—we find Mr Thomas Hare has set forth a plan more vast and original. He would (if we understand rightly his letters to the *Times*) empower a Board, to be elected by all parties locally interested, to raise money, partly from Government, partly from rates, to build splendid rows of lodging-houses, whereby the city would be greatly embellished and the health of the community improved. The houses so built would be sold under special provisions to poor tenants and others, according to a plan destined to elevate the working men into freehold proprietors each of his own apartment.

Into the details of this scheme we shall not presume to enter. Possibly new forms of tenure, good and useful in themselves, might add future complications to a scheme already involving great changes, and render it still more difficult, first of acceptance and then of execution. We shall present to our readers' consideration another plan, differing from that of Mr Hare only (as it seems to us) in being more simple, and in introducing two important points of which we shall speak presently—namely, the parliamentary

grant of *compulsory* powers of purchase, and the inclusion of *all* districts to be deemed "pestilential." Thomas Territ Taylor, Esq., of Bristol, the originator of the plan, has favoured us with the following sketch of it:—

Scheme for Providing suitable Dwellings for the Working Classes.

"An Act of Parliament must be obtained to enable Town Councils and Local Boards of Health [or other Boards, as may hereafter be thought best] to purchase, under compulsory powers, the property in overcrowded and pestilential districts within their jurisdiction, and build thereon suitable dwellings for the labouring classes.

"The usual powers must be given to borrow money of the Government at a low rate of interest, on condition of repayment within a specified time, say from 15 to 20 years, as in the case of the County Lunatic Asylums.

"Plans and specifications to be furnished by the Government; and the buildings to be erected under the superintendence of their officers, if deemed more desirable than the officers of the Local Board.

"The property to be sold within a specified time, say not exceeding fifteen or twenty years, either by public auction or tender, subject to certain conditions as to inspection by officers of the Board of Health, so as to prevent overcrowding and other contingencies detrimental to the public health.

"In case loss should be incurred by the sale of the property, it would be necessary to provide whether that loss should fall on the town or district in which it is situated, or on the Government, or partly on both, according to certain proportions."

A few comments on this scheme will be sufficient to explain the reason for its chief provisions.

1. The grant of *compulsory* powers of purchasing the existing ground and tenements is obvious. A few landlords refusing to sell their ground would nullify the benefit of the whole scheme in a sanitary point of view; and the price which others would put on theirs, in the case of such a purchaser as a Board commanding national resources, would be doubtless exorbitant, and sufficient to take away every chance of obtaining a fair rate of interest on the houses to be erected. As to the invasion of the rights of private property involved in such an Act, it is needless to remark that the principle of the right of the State so to invade it for public benefit has never been disputed, and that the benefit here contemplated is equally unquestionable and universal. The extent, indeed, to which the rights of landlords have lately been set aside for all sorts of projects of public convenience (as, for example, for the construction of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway alone, to mention but one among twenty cases), is notorious. To the sufferings of the indigent lodgers under these compulsory evictions we have already adverted. But if landlords' rights may be invaded, and the poor sacrificed for public *convenience,* surely it is superfluous to prove that those rights may also be invaded, to the benefit of the poor —for public *health?* Travelling to Chatham a little slower or quicker is a very small matter of national concern compared with saving the country from epidemics. To find ground for the legal invasion we contemplate, there is no need to introduce arguments (however true and cogent) drawn from such larger policy as should aim at the moral good of the masses as one of the great ends of statecraft. Selfishness may protest and idle scepticism may sneer at such philanthropy; but, as Carlyle says, the thief proves himself to be our fellow-creature in one irrefragable way—he gives us the fever. We are all liable to disease and death from

the nuisances engendered in these slums, and spread by their wretched inhabitants over the city. Therefore, by the simple law of self-preservation, and on the same principle as every sanitary regulation of modern times, we have a right to interfere and force the proprietors to sell to us their nursery-grounds of pestilence.

2. The necessity for buying up *all* the pestilential districts is yet more evident, albeit the vastness of the project is startling. So long as badly-drained streets and lanes are left untouched, so long the same diseases will be engendered, the same vice perpetuated, and the whole circle of evil gone through again. Were a Company or Government Board to take half such a district and build a street of noble lodging-houses, leaving the next street a row of rotting hovels, can it be supposed the sanitary and moral condition of the *whole* would be essentially improved? Nay, rather the dwellers in the bad street, deserted by the more respectable lodgers who once shared it with them, would become more brutal, lawless, and degraded than ever, and their street more thoroughly a hot-bed of fever and cholera. Nay, more. While any thoroughly low and filthy lanes and courts are left, the very population whom most anxiously we seek to improve will always choose them by preference. According to the evidence given to the Committee on the New Law Courts (Minutes, p. 13), and according to everybody's experience who knows anything of the indigent class, there are hundreds who, when the choice is formally before them, to live in a clean, lightsome house or a dark and dirty one, prefer darkness and dirt, for the very same old reason that men of old "loved darkness rather than light," because their deeds, or at least their habits, "are evil." To leave this class any choice at all is to prolong the mischief of the slums for ever. If sanitary arguments are to have force, no single acre or rood of ground really coming under

the definition of "Pestilential" must be left in any of our cities. So long as *one* is left, there will be a perpetual Fever Nursery and Cholera Garden for all England.

For these two reasons, then—compulsion and comprehension—we are inclined to advocate Mr Taylor's plan in preference to that of Mr Hare.

3. It is obvious that, to prevent such a scheme causing in the first beginning an addition to the very evil of evictions and overcrowdings which it is designed to remedy, it will be needful to proceed step by step in executing it. No more houses should at any time be pulled down than those which are to be immediately and rapidly rebuilt. The scale of the new houses being vastly greater than the old, from the moment one block is built in each locality, the further evictions would only involve removal from the old dens to the new and healthy lodgings, or to the houses of a better sort vacated by the new tenants elsewhere.

4. Both from the nature of the tenure contemplated for the houses, and as a matter of justice to the lodgers, no rules of a vexatious kind should be made regarding their hours or habits. The spirit which makes an Englishman dislike to live in a good clean house, where his door is to be shut at a certain hour, may be a spirit compounded of good and bad elements, but it is one with which no one has a right to quarrel. No "Paternal Government" lodgings can, we believe, ever flourish in England—*nor do we wish they should.* The day in which they may do so, English nature will have changed, and not for the better. The contracts of sale of the lodging-houses contemplated in this scheme must provide for their being kept in repair by the buyer and his successors, and must, of course, leave them subject to the existing sanitary Acts. But beyond these terms, and such occasional inspection as shall secure their maintenance, no further check upon

the entire freedom of landlord and tenant should be attempted. The Act against overcrowding would be particularly easy to administer, from the regularity of the buildings. Each family ought to have an allotment of two rooms (if possible, opening in opposite directions on each side of the central gallery, thereby admitting thorough airing and separation), and these rooms would be licensed, according to their cubic contents of air, to hold so many tenants only. To prevent dispute, the number might, as in an omnibus, be marked on the door, and the exceeding of such number constituted into a small offence.

5. The lodging-houses would need to be lofty—four or five stories at all events. By this means only can the space available be made to hold its present population, while widening the streets and leaving open spaces in the manner absolutely needful for health. We are assured by those most experienced in such matters, that the poor have no objection to lofty houses, being glad of the improved clearness of air. Washing and bath-rooms should be placed in the attics of each block of houses and club-rooms at proper intervals.

6. Shops are a necessity in every neighbourhood. In contemplating so large a change as the above scheme involves, it would be needful to lay out the basement of many houses with a view to the trades of the occupants. Such shop property in the poorer districts now lets at exorbitant rents, and might be made in the new houses to add considerably to the profits of the undertaking.

To conclude. The Act of Parliament which shall sanction this great scheme will by no means be of so novel a kind, or depart so far from precedent, as may by some be imagined. The sanction of the loan of public money for the purpose of similar improvements, and even especially for the

particular purpose of building lodging-houses for the working classes, has been given by Parliament several years ago. We quote the Report of the Committee of the Society of Arts on the dwellings of the working classes, p. 4:—

"Numerous Acts have been passed, commencing with the 57 Geo. III. c. 34, for enabling the Public Loan Commissioners to advance money at a low rate of interest for public works and the employment of the poor. The 9 & 10 Vict. c. 79, is the Act which regulates the present practice. By the 23 and 24 Vict. c. 19, the Public Works Acts (Ireland) were extended to authorize the advance of money for building cottages in that country. In England, the Public Loan Commissioners have never been authorized to advance money for that purpose, but by the 9 & 10 Vict. c. 74, they are enabled to lend money to vestries, on the security of the rates, for building public baths and washhouses. By the 14 & 15 Vict. c. 34, the same commissioners are also empowered *to lend to Boards of Health and other local authorities in like manner money for building lodging-houses for the poor.* This Act, however, is encumbered with so many conditions that it has been practically inoperative."

To sum up the argument. It is obvious that the effectual clearance of the pestilential districts of the great towns is a work altogether beyond the resources of private philanthropy, and that capital has been proved to have no tendency to flow into any such channel; yet of all the needs of the country it is probably the greatest and most imperative. Railways, to bring the ends of the earth together; Atlantic telegraphs; expeditions to the Pole; discoveries of the source of the Nile; commerce with Japan; renewal of cotton trade; Jamaica massacres; iron monitors; Armstrong guns; nay, even hospitals and schools, are surely questions less nearly

concerning the happiness and welfare of England than the purification of these centres of crime and disease. The cost must, of course, be enormous; and it will be well for those able to do so to sit down and count it beforehand; but vast as it may be, and moderate as must be, at the best, the return of pecuniary interest on the outlay,—is it, after all, a short-sighted policy which would spend the nation's treasure to make the social fabric sound at the core and improve for ages the health and morals of the people? England spends many millions annually on workhouses, gaols, and hospitals. Would it be bad economy to cut off one of the main sources of poverty, crime, and disease? We do not grudge the price of an iron-clad ship to be ready to defend us in case of a war, which in all probability will never arise till she has rusted away. Should we grudge a similar sum to build a whole street of healthful dwellings, and so defeat an enemy who is sure to invade us ere long—a more cruel enemy than all the battalions of France—even Cholera?

On these grounds only (to proceed no further), of the safety of the public health, there is justification for every outlay of public money and every infringement of private rights which any scheme really qualified to remedy the evil can involve. But physical health itself, the removal of a great cause of disease, and the purification of the pestilence-centres for the land at large, albeit the cogent and sufficient argument for obtaining the legal sanction of so great a reform, need not, to our own hearts, be the only motives we recognize for the work. There are thousands of our fellow-creatures now living—tens of thousands to be born in coming time—whose happiness and virtue, humanly speaking, depend on the fact whether they are to dwell in the wretched dens we now behold, or be lifted out of them into decent

and healthy houses. It is *their* souls as well as *our* bodies which are to be saved; it is the incentives to drunkenness and profligacy which are to be banished, no less than the infection of cholera and fever. Assuredly no task would so richly repay even millions of expenditure as one which would thus give to England that which, with all her grandeur and power, she sorely lacks—a healthy and virtuous population at the base of her mighty pyramid.*

* Since the above article was first published a Bill for the Improvement of the Dwellings of the Working Classes was presented to Parliament by Messrs Torrens and Locke. After being considerably remodelled in Committee, this Bill embodied almost precisely the scheme of Mr Territ Taylor, as above advocated. Both the Governments of Lord Russell and Lord Derby were known to be friendly to the Bill, and hopes were entertained that it might have been passed this summer, when the presence of cholera rendered its urgency doubly apparent. The Session, however, had advanced too far at the close of the careful labours of the Committee to permit the supporters of the Bill to carry it in the face of the threatened opposition to some of its clauses. The amended Bill will again be presented as soon as possible after the meeting of Parliament.

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.

[*Fraser, August,* 1866.]

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.

FEW positions can well involve greater anomalies than that of a modern educated Hindoo. Brightest light and deepest darkness, the oldest of the old world and the newest of the new, meet around him and produce contrasts which would be hard to parallel in any other time or place. On the one hand he has been instructed in the discoveries of recent physical science, and views the universe in their light as a great field of order and law. With the philosophies of our time, the systems of Kant and Hegel, of Hamilton and Mill, his subtle brain deals with an ease and readiness shared by few of English race. Accustomed to read our language with ease, he supplies the lack of modern Indian literature by the free use of the same books which fill our libraries. The pictures of European domestic and social life presented by our newspapers and works of fiction are familiar to him almost as to ourselves. Our moral ideas, however widely divergent from his own, must be known to him hardly less well than to us. Our religious system he is obliged to recognize as a vital part of that mysterious Western energy before which the thrones and towers of India have crumbled into dust. Thus, on one side of his life, the educated Hindoo basks in the fullest light of the nineteenth century.

But, on the other side, by what Egyptian night is he surrounded! His father, mother, wife, perhaps the grandparents and uncles to whom, in Oriental fashion, he pays

patriarchal homage—are, by profession, *idolaters*, worshippers of a whole pantheon of deities, whom it would honour too much to compare with the gods and goddesses of Olympus, or the wild comrades of Odin and of Thor. Depicted in glaring paintings, sculptured in all their monstrosity in gold and silver, brass and stone, they meet his eye at every turn. "These be thy gods, O Hindoo!"—these chimæras, with a dozen heads and a hundred arms; these creatures, with heads of elephants and tails of fishes; abortions and nightmares, whose fabled histories are even more disgusting and grotesque than their forms. These are the beings which the man who reads Mill, and Macaulay, and Tennyson, finds worshipped around him, served in a thousand tedious ceremonies by those whom nature and duty alike call on him to love and honour. His family live, as it were, in a network of observances, the infraction of which involves the terrible social outlawry of loss of caste; observances for rising, for rest, for ablutions, food, birth, marriage, death,—whose sole sense and meaning depends on the veracity of Hindoo theology. They believe death to be transmigration to the body of an eagle or a rat. How shall this reader of Darwin treat their belief? They deem the world a plain, resting on an elephant and a tortoise. How shall this student of Humboldt and Herschel answer them when (as one of them has told us he has been addressed) he is called to recognize in an earthquake the motion of the tortoise? In gravest moral matters, in the obligations of marriage and the relative importance of ceremonial and natural laws, all is variance and contradiction.

That a position such as this should be beset with difficulties and bewilderment there can be no doubt. Here in England hundreds of conscientious young men and women are wearying their souls to solve the problem how to conciliate the convictions to which the tendencies of the age have borne

them with respect for time-honoured institutions and tenderness for the faith of those whom they most love and honour. But what are our English difficulties compared to those of the Hindoo? However far it may seem to us that we have wandered from the ideas of our parents, the difference between us and them is trivial compared to the difference between the young Bengalese educated in the schools of Calcutta, and his father, instructed only in Vedas and Vedantas—absurd commentaries on unintelligible texts. We may think our parents have believed in some erroneous narratives—embraced doctrines crudely conceived—formed ideas of things upon so narrow a basis of science as to require remodelling from the vantage-ground of later discoveries; but the Hindoo has no choice but to believe his father almost a dotard, a believer in the most senseless of conceivable fables, a follower of a religion not only absurd, but impure, immoral, wholly bad and base. If he have the heart to confess to himself that such is the case, where shall he find the courage to act upon the discovery? The Eastern idea of parental dignity and authority still rules the community to which he belongs. In manhood, and perhaps himself a father, he still resides under his father's roof in a condition of puerile dependence. To offend his father is equivalent to domestic banishment and pecuniary ruin; while to forfeit caste is social excommunication.* When we remember that it is no dull and stupid race with Bœotian brains and talk of oxen, still less a race essentially secular like the Chinese (constitutional indifferentists in religion, and materialists in philosophy), to whom so singular a dilemma has been presented; but on the contrary, a race whose subtlety of brain and love of metaphysical re-

* "A society is elaborately organized," says the *Indian Mirror*, Dec. 15, 1865, "by the oldest and most respectable Hindoos for excommunicating the young members of the Brahmo Samaj."

search far exceed our own, and among whom in all ages the wildest religious devotion has been common, it becomes doubly a matter of interest to see what the outcome of the struggle may be. To continue for more than a generation in the midst of such outrageous contradictions of belief and life must assuredly be impossible; the question is, How will they escape from them? In what direction are the minds of the youth of India tending? Is there any chance of the revival of the old polytheism? Or will Hindooism be abolished and the religion of the conquering race in one or other of its forms frankly adopted? Or, lastly, will another faith arise indigenously, attaching itself perhaps, by some slender tendrils, to the great fallen tree which henceforth lies prostrate, but bearing flowers and fruit after its kind, all having natural affinity to the new "climate of opinion," the new science and new philosophy, new ethics, and new social and political life, in which it has sprung?

The first hypothesis may be answered very safely in the negative. No Julian, nor a tenfold mightier Julian, could renew the altars of Seeva and Krishna in a land over which the banners of England are floating. Nay, there has been no tendency for centuries past to anything like such a revival of Brahminism. Buddhism, two thousand years ago, was already a schism, not a revival; and the peaceful invasion of the Parsees, the warlike conquest of the Moslems, the strange fantastic efforts at the construction of a new creed by Acbar, were all inimical to the old religion, never attempts to revive it. Ages after ages have gone by, the old Vedic religion and its simpler nature-worship has been corrupted step by step; Indra, the "Lord of Heaven," has been neglected for "Agni," the Fire, his incarnate representative; and Agni again forgotten for the sacramental Soma adored in his place. The Trimurti, of which the Vedas only speak once, became

the great object of worship; then Brahma was forsaken, and Seeva under many forms, Vishnu in his nine avatars, their wives and sons, and an endless train of deities, good and evil, filled the Hindoo heaven with its three million gods. Darker and more abominable became the myths of god and goddess—more atrocious the characters attributed to them—more cruel the rites with which some were propitiated—more unutterably polluted the deeds which were done to gain the favour of others. Never elsewhere has the earth beheld, among all its dreary and hideous superstitions, such sights as those of India: the *Yogi* devotee sitting motionless for years, till he loses the semblance of humanity, and his limbs wither and his nails grow through his clenched and dried-up hand; and on the other hand, the debauched worshipper of Krishna* making this world foul with impurity, and aspiring to a heaven which shall be but an orgy through eternity.

There is tendency enough downward in Brahminism, but no tendency to reform, albeit wealthy fanatics, like Roychund in his recent pilgrimage, may expend five lacs of rupees in rebuilding its ruined pagodas.

If Brahminism be surely though slowly sinking, and no chance exists for its revival, is there a chance of acceptance for Christianity in India, whether in Protestant or Catholic form? Very small as yet seem the indications that such a thing may be. The progress of the missionaries is at all events dilatory. Since Sydney Smith turned them into ridicule twenty years ago, the world outside of Exeter Hall has heard little of them, and at all events has not been called on to recognize any result of their labours assuming the rank of a political event. Perhaps the Hindoos have been bewildered by the seeming incongruity between the message and the messengers who have brought it—the Sermon on the

* See *History of the Sect of Maharajahs.* Trübner, 1865.

Mount and the scarlet-coated Evangelists who are so little wont to turn the cheek to the smiter, or give an additional province to him who would rob them of one already acquired. Perhaps (as a Brahmin is averred to have said) the Christian theology has appeared to them too like a partial reproduction of their own vast and antique scheme; and instead of standing awe-struck before the Mystery of Bethlehem, they are all too ready to concede that the West may have had its avatars no less than the East, whose records might even be found in their own sacred books (were they diligently searched,) amid the more stupendous histories of Krishna and of Rama. On these matters we shall offer no opinion. Certain it seems that from one cause or other the common tendency of conquered nations to adopt the religion of the victorious race exists very slightly, if at all, among the educated Hindoos.* Though the number of those competent by knowledge of our language and general instruction to form a fair judgment is very great indeed, there are no symptoms of any tide of thought setting in the direction of a Protestant reformation. There is, on the contrary, a very remarkable current, which for the last few years has constantly gained in strength and

* On the contrary, there is a well-known tendency among Englishmen in India to lose hold of Christianity. In the *Contemporary Review*, No. 1, p. 125, the writer observes: "There are increasing signs of the growing, silent alienation of these men (the younger generation) from Christian worship and communion. It may be explained as a passing fashion, or as the result of a certain phase of opinion, but it is a fact. And its gravity is heightened by the circumstance that we meet it in men whose lives are pure, who exhibit least of the worldly self-seeking spirit, who are amongst the most thoughtful and cultivated. The conventional formulæ of the indifference of the corrupt heart, or of the love of earthly things, are wholly insufficient to explain the fact referred to, than which none is fraught with greater danger to the spread of Christianity in India."

volume, whose tendency is to carry the educated Bengalese towards quite another quarter of the theological compass. It is of this mental tide and of the body of men who have been borne by it to the formation of a new Church that we propose to speak in this paper. For more reasons than need be cited, this *Brahmo Samaj*,* or CHURCH OF THE ONE GOD, deserves our attention and that of those to whom the social and political welfare of India is consigned. The degree of assistance and support which England ought to give to British missionaries may be differently determined as we view the results of such interference with native idolatry from the political side, or the religious. It may be very unwise to peril our empire by forcing on the population a religion they detest. It may, on the other hand, be a terrible delinquency in national religious duty to leave hundreds of millions of our subjects to grope in the darkness of Hindooism, and the pollutions of such sects as that of the Maharajahs, while we have the power to hold up to them the purest light of Christianity. The reformer of the sixteenth century would probably feel the latter argument as forcibly as the statesman of the nineteenth feels the prudential one.

* An accomplished Hindoo gentleman has favoured us with the following note :—"The Sanscrit word *Brahmâ* (supposed to be derived from a root signifying 'to increase') originally meant the Supreme Cause of the Universe, but during the later period of Sanscrit literature the word was applied to the chief of the Hindoo triad (Brahma, the Creator). . . . The word *Brâhma*, not to be confounded with *Brahmâ*, means 'belonging to Brahmâ.' This word is generally written in Bengal *Brahmo*, according to the popular but incorrect Bengalese pronunciation. The word *Brâhmana* means the same etymologically as *Brâhma*, but as the word *Brâhmana* is always applied to Hindoo priests, the founders of the new church adopted the name *Brâhma* as a distinction for themselves.

"*Samâja*, or *Samaj*, means 'an Assembly—a Church.'"

But when we find that natives of India *themselves* are the reformers, and that the changes they aim at are of the highest moral character, conducive beyond all doubt to the welfare of the community, there can be little cause to question the propriety of affording to them our countenance and sympathy, and if they need it, our practical assistance.

The Brahmo Samaj owes its origin to a man who created some degree of interest in England in the last generation, the Rajah Rammohun Roy. Of no very remarkable genius, and devoid of the enthusiasm which would have made him break with the traditions of caste, or assume the tone of a prophetic teacher, he yet seems to have been a man singularly qualified to receive the purer part of Western faith, and convey to his countrymen that definiteness and simplicity of belief, above all that healthy, active *moral* spirit in which Indian religion has been so grossly deficient. The seed he sowed remained dormant a few years, and has now sprung up in a goodly crop of righteous reforms, extending much farther than the sower ever expected. But we must review his life and antecedents somewhat more at length.

Rammohun Roy was born about 1780. His grandfather filled an office of some importance under the Mogul emperors at Moorshedabad.

"My ancestors" [he said in a letter to Mr Arnot] "were Brahmans of a high order, and from time immemorial were devoted to religious duties, down to my fifth progenitor, who, about 140 years ago, gave up spiritual exercises for worldly pursuits. My maternal ancestors were of the sacerdotal order by profession as well as by birth; and have up to the present day uniformly adhered to a life of religious observances and devotion."

An excellent education, after Hindoo fashion, including the

acquirement of Arabic, Persian, and Sanscrit, prepared him for his future career. At fifteen, he is said to have travelled into Thibet, and to have been much horrified at the worship of the Lama. His father and two brothers dying, and bequeathing to him considerable property, he found himself independent, and almost immediately undertook the great work of his life: the religious reformation of his country. His first book, published at this time, struck the key-note of what was to follow, an essay in Persian, *Against the Idolatry of all Religions.* His idea—like that of Luther, and perhaps of all the world's reformers before our day—was to go *backward* to the past in search of purity of faith and truth of doctrine. The notion was accepted without demur that there was once a time in which men possessed an absolutely pure religion, and that it was by returning to their position, and recovering their relics of doctrine, that alone we would likewise attain to the truth. Undoubtedly that strange law of human progress whereby all races, and mayhap all individual minds, ascend as it were in *spiral* lines, coming round again in each revolving period somewhere near, yet above the past, has held good with unusual force in the history of Hindooism. The earlier and simpler religion of the Vedas may be interpreted with no great violence (like the Orphic fragments), to point to a Theism much more nearly related to modern belief than the idolatrous polytheism which gradually usurped its place. More impartial critics than Rammohun Roy have found in these Vedas an uncultured nature-worship approaching to Fetichism on one hand, and a vague Pantheism on the other. But enough ground existed for this one Prophet more to call to his countrymen to "stand on the old paths, and ask for the old ways," and to publish, in his *Essay on the Veds*, a collection of passages wherein the simple and moral faith he desired to inculcate

was countenanced by words bearing the sanction of an authority adored for three millenniums.* Writing these books, discussing and arguing with men of all opinions, founding and aiding native schools, and opposing the suttee and other barbarous practices, Rammohun Roy raised up many enemies and a few friends and converts, among the latter of whom he had the happiness to number his mother.

The relation which all these efforts at reform bore to Christianity is exceedingly obscure. Undoubtedly European ideas had the greatest share in forming the mind of the Brahmin teacher, and giving to him a tone of thought strikingly at variance with that of other Oriental writers. The moral excellence of Christ's teaching won him completely, and (having studied Greek for the purpose) he published in 1820, in Sanscrit and Bengalee, a collection of passages from the Gospel, which he entitled, *The Precepts of Jesus the Guide to Peace and Happiness.* In 1831 he came to England, charged with some affairs of the Delhi princes, and invested by them with the title of Rajah. He was treated with honour by the Government, given a place among ambassadors at the coronation of William IV., and generally much esteemed in England. According to his own phrase, "his heart was with the Unitarians;" and though he frequently attended the services of the Church of England, it was among the former body that he made his chief friends and associates; and at the house of one of them he died on the 27th of September, 1833. The much respected Uni-

* The reverence paid to the Vedas by Hindoos exceeds that given to the Mosaic writings by the most devout Jews, or to the Koran by Moslems. Brahma is represented in his images as holding the four Veds in his hands; and even in the age of the Institutes of Menu, it was the received doctrine that the highest of all merit consisted in the knowledge of these "scriptures,"—a knowledge which would expiate "slaying the inhabitants of three worlds."—*Inst. Menu*, c. 12.

tarian minister, Dr Lant Carpenter, attended him in his last days, and published a review of his life and labours, from which most of the above account has been derived.* Very naturally his claim to be considered a Unitarian Christian has been warmly vindicated by his English friends, nor need the question be revived to any good purpose now. It is certain that Rammohun Roy neither broke with Hindooism nor adopted Christianity by any *outward* act or rite, even to the directions given for his burial. Following out his idea of a return to the oldest Vedic religion, rather than the adoption of a new faith, the small body of adherents left by the Rajah in Calcutta kept up the practice of such forms as entitled them to retain their caste, and (as it would seem) made few efforts to push further the advance made by their leader. Not till many years after Rammohun Roy's death did the first Brahmin, Rámtanu Laheree, throw off the *Pavita* (the sacrificial thread); and since his courageous action, his example has been slowly followed by the elder members of the Samaj; the younger have naturally been more decided.

After Rammohun Roy's death the society he had founded was supported partly by his endowments and those of Dwarkanauth Tagore. A place of worship founded by the former, called the "Brahmo Samaj of Jorasanko," at Calcutta, continued to be frequented, and a monthly magazine he started was still maintained with considerable ability.† But little spirit, however, seems to have animated the body generally; and the founder's quotations from the Vedas left behind on his followers the impression that these sacred Scriptures were, in his opinion (as in those of all other Hindoos), of absolute and

* An interesting Life of Rammohun Roy has just been published by Dr Carpenter's daughter, the devoted philanthropist of Bristol.

† *The Tattwabodhini Putrikà*, still existing, devoted to theology and general literature.

divine authority. At last Debender Nath Tagore, a man of devout spirit and great dignity of character, by assuming such sacerdotal functions as the Samaj needed, and preaching continually discourses full of fervent piety, awakened many and impressed upon the Samaj much of his own spirituality.

About the beginning of 1860 the Brahmo Samaj acquired a convert, whose zeal very shortly infused a new element into its affairs—Keshub Chunder Sen, then aged about twenty-three, grandson of a man of some distinction, Ram Kamal Sen, and belonging to the Vaidya or physician caste, ranking next to the Brahmin. So far as it is possible for us to judge of such things, no more true influence has been exercised by any religion over its disciples than that which the faith in "the One God" has had over the life of this very remarkable man. Almost his first thoughts after the joy of escaping alike from Hindoo idolatry and the utter scepticism common among his more educated countrymen, was the duty of making his religion practical, and applying vigorously to the reform of the chief evils of Hindooism. In the month of June, 1860, Keshub Chunder published a tract, which proved the first of a series of addresses to his countrymen. If there be something of youthful enthusiasm in this pamphlet there is more of sound and manly sense. It is called *Young Bengal.* The following extracts will give a good idea of its power and purpose. The writer is supposed to congratulate his friend on arriving at a clear faith after passing through a period of scepticism:

"The liberal education you received led you to forsake idolatry, and delivered you from the galling yoke of the Brahminical priesthood and the thousand-and-one injurious institutions which have for centuries paralyzed all the nobler sentiments and energies of the people. But, alas, what did it give you instead of them? A spurious liberalism, mis-

chievous in the extreme. You started from disbelief in idolatry, but you landed in unbelief and scepticism; you doubted Hindooism, but you brought yourself to doubt religion altogether. In flinging away the shackles of corrupt doctrines, you scattered the holy bonds of morality. . . . Is this the result of education—to breed scepticism and atheism, instead of harmoniously developing all the powers of the soul, and leading them to God? If so, then perish such education! . . . But, blessed be God, your heart has undergone a change. . . .

"These numerous improvement societies, friendly meetings, debating clubs, whose number is hourly increasing, composed of young and intelligent men, or 'Young Bengal,' as they are generally styled, set themselves to the discussion of social questions with ardour and vehemence, concocting schemes how female education can be carried on—how the abominable system of caste can be exterminated—how the rays of knowledge can be made to penetrate the veil of ignorance which surrounds the millions of the masses. . . . But what is the upshot of all this? Mere prattle without practice! An elaborate essay, an eloquent speech, is all in all. Social reforms are speculated on, but not practically undertaken. He who yesterday protested against drunkenness is to-day seen lying prostrate. He who eloquently advocated female education does not make any attempt to educate his own wife, and sisters, and daughters. He who writes floridly on the benefits of travel would thunder rebukes on any of his relations who would go to a foreign country. He who speaks violently against the system of caste prudently guards himself that he may not in any practical concern break through its sacred bonds."

The addresses to his countrymen thus commenced by

Keshub Chunder were continued for a year, and form a series remarkable in more ways than one, and giving curious glimpses of the condition both of thought and feeling of the educated classes in Bengal. The second tract is entitled *Be Prayerful*, and discusses the efficacy of prayer in a dialogue with a sceptic. Neither party seem to think it needful to argue for or against any benefit to be derived from prayer for physical good. The conclusion sought to be established is, that—

"Prayer makes the weak powerful, the timid heroic, the corrupt righteous, and the ignorant wise. Prayer lifts the soul above all that is earthly, shadowy, and mean, and ushers it into the very presence of the All Holy."

Another paper introduces a speaker who applies for advice:

"I have been sorely perplexed. I have heard an orthodox Hindoo declare, 'What avails prayer if not accompanied with the offering of holy flowers at the feet of Doorgá and Kally?' I have heard many a Christian say, 'Indulge in prayers every day, every hour; true religion and salvation will be distant from you unless you make Jesus your Guide and Master.' Thus, alas! my prayerfulness is unavailing."

Some of the remaining tracts discuss with a good deal of Indian acuteness the metaphysical basis of religions—the validity of consciousness, &c. Others contain extracts from a variety of English writers bearing on the subject: J. D. Morell, Newman, Wilson, &c., &c. The last concerns the subject of Atonement as understood by Hindoos and Christians, and exposes the usual fallacy that those who reject such theories either make light of the grievous nature of sin, or must remain in fear of "an offended God." "Salvation," it

maintains, "means not deliverance from *punishment*, but deliverance from *sin*."

Besides this series of tracts a few others have been published, being lectures delivered at various branch churches by Keshub and another very eloquent Brahmoist, Hurro Lall Roy; the whole affording subject for curious reflection. The tone is fervent as that of the warmest Evangelical; nothing less is inculcated than what French divines well speak of as the *ambition sainte* after higher and yet higher goodness and spiritual union with God. At the same time there is a habit of placing together names of Eastern and Western teachers in a way which seems to realize the hope that the loosening which our age is destined to undergo with one direct chain in the sacred bond of the past, is at once compensated for by a drawing closer of all the ties which bind us to humanity at large. It is startling to hear a Hindoo place Jesus and Vyasa together for honour, but the fact that he is ready to do so is of no little significance.

Again, it is a noticeable point that Pantheism, in all its forms—whether of the most ancient Hindooism or the latest Hegelian philosophy—has always a tendency to deify intellect; to divide the wise from the ignorant; to value souls by a measure wherein one great man outweighs a hundred of the simple; and the development of his genius is reckoned to balance all their degradation. In a word, no Personal God being recognized, the worshipper is compelled, as it were, to gather up the fragments of Divinity scattered through the world; and naturally falls down and adores the hero in whom the largest portion seems to shine. Directly contrary appears to be the result of such forms of religious faith as centre upon a definite conception of a Personal God. Judaism, Christianity, Mahometanism, and the later Theisms of East and West, have all tended to level the value of souls—to make

each "son of Abraham," or "brother in Christ," or "true believer," equal in a spiritual sense. The Brahmin represents the one idea; Christ washing his disciples' feet the other.

Almost the first endeavour of the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj has been to elevate the lower castes of India; and such among them as belong to the Brahmin caste, like Debender Nath Tagore, have discarded the sacred thread, even when in other points they preserved conservative tendencies. A man is not a true Brâhmo till he has abandoned caste. Nay, further, the arguments of pantheists for the reality of a future life are always to be found to turn on the claims of great souls to immortality. The divine in them is to preserve them for ever. As for the stupid, the ignorant, the debased, it is (they confess) as hard to anticipate immortal life for them as for the beavers and the ants. Just the converse argument suggests itself to minds of an opposite order. "*Not* for the wise and gifted, whose lives have already been a boon; but for the poor, and stupid, and sinful, whose lives have attained no end worthy of God's creating love, for *them* is immortality to be claimed." Here also the Brâhmo proves the identity of his instincts with his fellows in the West; and we find him citing "the poor coolie labouring under an Indian sun," while "having in him the nature of Jesus" as the claimant of Divine sonship and immortal hope.

Among their other reforms, however, the one which for many reasons interests us most is the attempt of the Brâhmos to educate their women. Everything has yet to be begun in this direction, and the work is enormous—the material to be worked upon of very doubtful capacity. There is at present a female school in Calcutta—the Bethune school—and this may be made the starting-place of a new course of things if it receive proper assistance. The lady who superintends it

(Miss Pigott) has lately made a proposal which, if accepted, may begin the progress of female education throughout India; but something of the kind which she suggests—namely, the opening of a female normal school—is absolutely indispensable. The want of competent teachers at moderate cost is now an almost insuperable bar to female education, save in the richest Hindoo families. A few "raw Sanscrit pundits," as they are described, are the only alternative to native Christian governesses, who are said to possess a "very poor knowledge of Bengalee literature," and "to stand at too great a distance from popular sympathy by reason of their heterodox faith to render themselves useful to a desirable extent." As to European tutoresses, there are few who can undertake to teach Bengalee; besides that, their services would prove too expensive. Miss Pigott proposes to supply the lack of well-trained governesses by opening a normal Hindoo school for educating a number of elderly women; the school to consist at present of fifty students only. As the proposal has only been made in the spring of the present year, we are unable yet to make any report as to its acceptance.

But with or without well-trained teachers, the education of Hindoo women is hopeless till the baneful custom of early marriages be exploded. It is a mere farce to commence at five or six years old a training which is to be stopped at eight or nine. Hindoo girls, as things are now, are mothers at an age when our girls are beginning the serious work of education; just as our girls are so too often at the age when their brothers proceed from school to college. To discourage and denounce child-marriage is therefore the first step of Brahmo reform. Next follow marriages contracted by parents, neither husband nor wife having seen each other till the bond is irrevocable. Again—both to abolish caste and enable men and women to have free choice in marriage, the

intermarriage of the different castes is needful. This is a gigantic step in the view of Indian conservatives; one almost too great to be attempted. To help towards it a special society has been formed within the Brahmo Samaj, calling itself the Society of Brothers of East Bengal. Its programme, which lies before us, contains the resolution which each who approves of the objects of the society is requested to sign, and to which a good many names of gentlemen of different castes are attached. The resolution runs—

"I, *A.B.*, &c., do hereby solemnly resolve to promote the cause of intermarriage (of castes), widow marriage, and female education by all means in my power."

The society further calls on each member to set apart a sixteenth of his income to afford relief to brethren who may suffer excommunication and distress in consequence of their defiance of Hindoo custom in these matters.

So strongly rooted, however, is superstition in the minds of women who like the Hindoos have been brought up under its influence, that the Brâhmo fathers and husbands find the greatest difficulty in converting the inmates of their zenanas to their own religion. About six families only are said to be united in the adoption of the new religion. Among them are some ladies who have composed hymns of considerable merit, used in the public worship of the Samaj. So much interested are the Brâhmos generally in these female conversions, that the *Indian Mirror* of April, 1865, records the death of a Brâhmo lady whose last moments seem to have been peculiarly happy with the greatest gratification, as of an event of much promise. The last intelligence records the formation of a "*Brahmica Samaj* in the heart of Calcutta, where native ladies regularly congregate for the worship of the One True God." The congregation commenced with thirteen.

This *Indian Mirror*, which we have so often quoted, is the most important of the publications of the Brâhmos. It is issued fortnightly, and is tolerably well known in England, and extensively read in India. In August, 1861, its first number appeared, and after a time it was purchased by the Samaj, and made the direct organ of the body. It was edited for some time by Manomahan Ghose, a gentleman of remarkable ability, now studying for the bar in London, and whose pamphlet on *Open Competition for the Civil Service*, has gained much attention among those interested in Indian matters. The *Indian Mirror* is a paper somewhat of the *Examiner* or *Spectator* type, dealing with politics and social matters, but especially, of course, with the affairs of the Brahmo Samaj. The articles are generally well written, and always in good temper and spirit. About eighteen months ago it had to record an event which at first sight appeared highly injurious to the Samaj, but which there is now every reason to believe will be greatly to its benefit. Here also, as in every other church in the world, there is a conservative party and a progressive party. The conservative is represented by the patriarch Debender Nath Tagore, a man of high character and vast landed property; whose house in Calcutta is described as resembling the Hôtel du Louvre, all filled with the owner's children and grandchildren, to the third generation. The progressive party is represented by the ardent apostle of Brahmoism, Keshub Chunder Sen, of whom we have already spoken; and who, under the title of Secretary of the Samaj, has devoted himself to missionary journeys throughout India, founding new branch churches, and writing and preaching with the utmost fervour—a man whom the future historian of India may recognize as among the greatest of her benefactors.

Very naturally a difference of opinion arose between the

old man and the young as to the extent to which reforms should be carried. Tagore held for tender dealing with Hindooism, with reverence for the Vedas, albeit denying their Divine authority, and for the maintenance in public worship of some Sanscrit prayers. Keshub desired to break utterly with the old idolatry, and to institute a service wholly in the vernacular. To the honour of both, be it said, that Tagore's conservatism did not prevent him from relinquishing for himself the use of the thread, nor from marrying his daughter by Brâhmo rites, devoid of all idolatrous ceremonies, and *therefore* (by strange confusion of law) not legally binding in an English city. Keshub's zeal has never led him to adopt any attitude towards Tagore but one of thorough respect. The schism finally took place in January, 1865, when Tagore asserted his rights as trustee to the property of the Samaj in Calcutta, bequeathed by Rammohun Roy; and the two churches having now separate congregations, the progressive party is more at liberty to follow its own views. In each case the services seem to be of the simplest kind. They are held on every Wednesday evening and on the first Sunday morning of every Bengalee month. A discourse is read from notes of that given at the previous meeting, a prayer is offered, then another discourse—this time extemporary—is preached, and the whole ends with hymns sung to Indian airs performed on an harmonium. The discourses, it is said, are never controversial, but religious and moral exhortations, bearing on the particular duties of Brâhmos.

The number of the members of this interesting body are not accurately known, and would be hard to estimate, as hundreds—nay, it is said, *all* the educated youths of India (save a certain number of wholly sceptical tendencies)—are in sentiment favourable to Brahmoism, and gradually fall

into its ranks as the indulgence or death of their fathers may permit them to abandon Hindoo rites. The earlier custom of a formal admission to the Brâhmo brotherhood fell into disuse after about two thousand members were enrolled; and no accurate knowledge can be obtained of the subsequent conversions, which have ten times doubled that enumeration. In Calcutta alone, four or five thousand (*men* only; the women belonging to the body are too few to be enumerated) regularly attended the various services last year. There are, according to the reports furnished to the Representative Council, fifty-four Brâhmo Samajes in India, of which fifty are in Bengal, two in the North-western Provinces, one in the Punjaub, and one in Madras, the latter bearing the name of the Veda Samajum. Five of the Samajes are in Calcutta, the oldest of them being in its thirty-sixth year. Twenty-five new ones have been added in the last ten years. Eight of these churches have established religious schools for instruction in the tenets of Brahmoism. For secular education, there is the Calcutta College, established and instituted by the leading members of the Calcutta Samaj. There are also boys' and girls' schools in connection with ten provincial Samajes. All these are under the direct management of the members of the local Samajes, and are mostly assisted by Government grants. There are seven periodicals regularly maintained by the body; the monthly *Tattwabodhini Putrikâ*, of which we have already spoken, and two others of the same name published in Urdoo and Telegu, at Bareilly and Madras; four other magazines in native tongues, two newspapers in English—the *Mirror* and the *National Paper*—and two more native newspapers in Dacca.* For missionaries, as the *Mirror* remarks,

"Owing to the want of a system of ordination, and to the

* *Indian Mirror*, Jan. 1, 1866.

important principle of natural Theism, that all who have time and talents ought to do all they can to advance the cause of truth, it is not possible to single out a fixed body of missionaries. However, counting those only who have for some time been regularly working in the mission, we may fix the number at eight."

In concluding this brief account of a body of men certainly deserving of much sympathy in their efforts, we cannot refrain from asking whether something might not be done without either impolicy or favouritism to aid them in their work of reform? It would, indeed, be only an act of justice for the English Government to protect them from the consequences of abandoning idolatry and adopting a form of religion which, whatever may be its defects in the eyes of Christian missionaries, has assuredly every claim to the respect of those who regard moral and social improvement as the primary concern of the State. By the New Indian Civil Code, races not Hindoo, living in India, have certain special rights guaranteed, including marriages in their own forms, &c. These rights should be conceded to Brâhmos in all justice, with the rights also of adoption and divorce. Yet more, perhaps, might their hands be strengthened if the legislature would undertake to deal with the monster evil of early marriage, wherein (and not in the little-used polygamy) half the social evils of India have their origin. An act, limiting the age of lawful marriage say to fifteen, or even fourteen years, would be justified by the gravest reasons of public health and morals, and would leave room for the education of females, which is now well nigh out of the question. In this case, as in many others, it is said that the Hindoo prejudices might be conciliated, and the desired reforms rendered palatable, by a reference to ancient customs, wherein it appears that juvenile marriages were unknown in older times, and that even some

degree of freedom was permitted in the acquaintance and choice of the betrothed.*

While writing the last pages of this article another of Keshub Chunder's "Appeals to Young India" has reached us. The concluding page is the best evidence we can offer of the practical worth of the Brahmo Samaj :—

"There can be no doubt that the root of all the evils which afflict Hindoo society, that which constitutes the chief cause of its degradation, is Idolatry. Idolatry is the curse of Hindustan, the deadly canker that has eaten into the vitals of native society. It would be an insult to your superior education to say that you have faith in idolatry, that you still cherish in your hearts reverence for the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, or that you believe in the thousand and one absurdities of your ancestral creed. But however repugnant to your understanding and repulsive to your good sense the idolatry of your forefathers may be, there is not a thorough appreciation of its deadly character on moral grounds. It will not do to retain in the mind a speculative and passive disbelief in its dogmas, you must practically break with it as a dangerous sin and an abomination : you must give it up altogether as an unclean thing. You must discountenance it, discourage it, oppose it and hunt it out of your country. For the sake of your souls and for the sake of the souls of the millions of your countrymen, come away from hateful idolatry, and acknowledge the one supreme and true God, our Maker, Preserver, and Moral Governor, not in belief only, but in the every-day concerns and avocations of your life. By offering such uncompromising allegiance to Him and dedicating yourselves wholly to His service you will

* *Mémoires sur les Contrées Occidentales*, par Stanislas Julien—*Voyages des Pèlerins Bouddhistes.*

rescue your own consciences from corruption and sin, and your country from superstition, priestcraft, absurd rites, injurious practices, and horrid customs and usages. By declaring a vigorous crusade against Hinduism you will lay the axe at the root of the tree of corruption.

"Next to idolatry, and vitally connected with its huge system, is Caste. You should deal with it as manfully and unsparingly as with idolatry. That Hindu castism is a frightful social scourge no one can deny. It has completely and hopelessly wrecked social unity, harmony, and happiness, and for centuries it has opposed all social progress. But few seem to think that it is not so much as a social but as a religious institution that it has become the great scourge it really is. As a system of absurd social distinctions it is certainly pernicious. But when we view it on moral grounds it appears as a scandal to conscience, and an insult to humanity, and all our moral ideas and sentiments rise to execrate it, and to demand its immediate extermination. Caste is the bulwark of Hindu idolatry and the safeguard of Brahminical priesthood. It is an audacious and sacrilegious violation of God's law of human brotherhood.

"Thirdly, our marriage customs involve evils of great magnitude which call for reform. They are not only repugnant to morality and reason, but constitute a powerful cause of the physical degeneracy of our nation. . . . .

"Fourthly, the Zenana requires thorough reform. On this point it is unnecessary to dilate, as you daily witness the miserable condition of your wives and sisters, your mothers and daughters; you daily feel the wretchedness of your homes. And certainly nothing can be clearer to you than this, that so long as our females continue in their present degraded state—menials of the household, slaves of ignorance and superstition, and withal ciphers in society—the

reformation of our country will be partial and superficial. Women's minds are powerful; powerful for propagating good as well as evil. Do what you will to promote reformation, so long as errors and prejudices lodge in their minds they shall be perpetuated from generation to generation. When blessed with knowledge and refinement, our females will establish and extend the kingdom of truth with more than missionary zeal; and educated and dutiful mothers will achieve greater success in civilizing the country than all its schools and colleges. But apart from considerations of expediency, charity and justice imperatively demand that you should share with your wives and sisters the blessings of education. Remember that you have no right to treat them as outcasts of society, and deny them the precious advantages which you enjoy, and to which as God's children and possessed of immortal and responsible souls they too are fully entitled. Do full justice to their souls, and rescue them from the thraldom of ignorance and superstition and their attendant evils. Illumine their minds with the light of sound and liberal education, admit them into rational intercourse with enlightened and virtuous companions; above all, let them join you in your daily worship of the True God. Thus, our countrymen and women will walk hand-in-hand in the path of intellectual and moral advancement, and thus, as our social customs improve, enlightened and happy homes will be established as the sure basis of national prosperity and greatness."

THE FALLACIES OF MEMORY.

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THE FALLACIES OF MEMORY.

THE aberrations of memory have in them this peculiarity: we never remember that our remembrance is habitually, not merely fallible, but faulty. We treat all mistakes as exceptional, rather than instantial. We assume that when error is detected, there is either intentional falsehood or culpable inexactitude—or at the least, some singular accidental lapse which it somewhat taxes our candour to credit in our neighbours, and our pride to confess for ourselves. Over and over again the same result occurs whenever we have occasion to verify any particular recollection by reference to memoranda, or to return to the scene of a past occurrence, or to discuss with another witness the details of any event. Invariably we find our recollection has exaggerated the fact as recorded in the memorandum; invariably the scene we revisit differs essentially, in some of its leading features and dimensions, from that which we believed we remembered; invariably our fellow-witness remembers quite other words and acts from those which have impressed themselves on our minds. Nevertheless, in the face of such experience a hundred times repeated, we remark complacently again and again: "How strange that I should have mistaken such a fact! how singular that my memory (generally so accurate) should have made me fancy that house so much larger than it is! How stupid of So-and-so not to recollect what happened at such a time!" These absurd comments repeated by us all per-

petually, never seem to awaken us to the fact that their origin cannot be an infinite succession of exceptional cases, but a simple result of permanent mental laws. Like the old geologists who counted every fossil as an accidental deposit or relic of the Flood, we persist in attributing each freshly discovered error of memory, not to Nature, but to some singular chance, or some portentous cataclysm of the human faculties.

To judge of this matter more soundly must assuredly be desirable. How many of our daily acts, how much of our estimate of our fellows, how large a share even of our public justice, depends on our reliance upon the veracity of memory, it is needless to show. To proceed constantly on a false assumption in a matter so closely intertwined with all our affairs must needs cause us to fall into a thousand errors which would be avoided did we act on sounder theories. Yet so painful is the idea of the fallaciousness of one of our chief faculties, that we prefer to encounter the consequences of endless mistakes rather than face the humiliating truth, which would preserve us from them all. It is surely time that here also, as in so many other cases, we should open our doors to Truth; not leaving her for ever knocking thereat with one hard fact after another, nor yet challenging her before her entrance to disclose the gifts she has never yet failed to bear hidden in her hand. Let us candidly admit and intelligently study the phenomena of memory, and it cannot be but that our corrected judgment of its veracity will avail us better than our present habitual blind reliance. The Present, in our lives, is ever closely bound with the Past, and the cord which unites them is all woven of strands of memory. When we know that on the soundness of that cord we often hang honour, love, faith, justice, things more precious than life itself, our reluctance to test its strength would be as senseless

as that of Alpine travellers who should refuse to try the rope which is to support them over the abyss, lest perchance, in sooth, it might prove to be insecure.

To form a just estimate of the validity of an average human memory, it is, of course, only fair to eliminate from the mass of cases of inaccuracy which present themselves, all such as may fairly be assigned to some other origin than a *bona fide* failure of recollection.

Among these a great many will be found attributable to the imperfect command of language possessed by the majority even of educated persons. A poor vocabulary is a half-filled purse, unfit to supply the owner with coin to exchange for ideas. Some are so wretched as to have nothing but copper —others only silver. Not one man in a thousand has golden words enough to render always the Beautiful, the Sublime, the Holy. He may have seen, heard, and felt truly, remembered truly, and desired truly to record his remembrance—but the words which are needful fail him. He is a painter, with no pigments save gray and dun. How then shall he paint the purple and crimson of the sunset? We are for ever tempted to confound a man's expression of his thought with the thought itself. For aught we can tell there may be in the minds of thousands of "inarticulate" ones, ideas as bright, pictures as vividly grand and beautiful, as ever haunted the brain of noblest poet: but "mute, inglorious Miltons" they must remain, for the words which should reveal their thoughts in their true majesty are denied them. Lower down the human scale where there is no question of "poets who have never penned their inspiration," where impressions themselves are dim and thoughts prosaic, the same lack of words limit even the expression of these humbler ideas, and the phrases of the boor, who needs to tell the story of a village fray or detail the succession of his crops, will

labour as clumsily as the unwieldy oxen of his plough. When a blind gentleman asks his servant to describe to him the scene at the moment before his eyes, what is the answer he receives? Is it a faithful and vivid transcript of all its leading features? Nothing of the kind; only a bald mention of those particulars for which the man happens to possess either observation or nomenclature. The same scene described by a poet, a true artist in language, would seem to belong to another world. It is obviously idle to expect that when the servant details *past* events, he will more accurately describe what he *remembers* than what he *sees*.

Again, there are endless failures mistakeable for failures of memory, which, in reality, are failures in the accuracy of the original observation. To hundreds of persons we may justly repeat Johnson's rebuff to Boswell: "Sir, it is not your memory which is deficient, but your attention."

Of course, the ideas which are conveyed through sights and sounds imperfectly perceived are all faulty from the first, and no memory of them can be otherwise than faulty also.

How large is another class of errors wrongly set down to the default of memory—namely, voluntary falsehoods, covered by such pretence—there is no need to tell. On this matter of lying we shall have more to say presently, in reference to embellishments and exaggerations gradually superseding in the speaker's own recollection the original event.

Lastly, endless apparent lapses of memory must arise from the pure carelessness and inadvertence of many talkers. To hear some persons scatter their epithets, we might deem that words were of no more consequence than the drops of water a rower allows to run off his oar as he "feathers" it in a boat race.

All these causes which combine to add to the apparent inaccuracy of memory must, of course, be excluded from

view when we seek to form a just estimate of the fact. But when all is done, and we have deducted imperfect language, imperfect observation, fraud, and carelessness, we still retain a residue of experience pointing all one way, namely, to the immense uncertainty attaching to the exercise of the human faculty of memory. Let us analyze these facts of experience, so as a little to appreciate their number.

History is a science, which in our time seems chiefly occupied in dispelling delusions. The characters we supposed we knew most familiarly, the anecdotes which tradition repeated most constantly and confidently, are precisely the characters and anecdotes now oftenest revised, rejudged, and discredited. Criticism resembles the scientific lecturers of our schools twenty years ago, displaying to a class of children the marvels of the microscope: "Here you observe is a fine-pointed needle, here a piece of the most delicate French cambric, here is the golden hair of a beautiful young lady." We look through the fatal lens, and lo! the needle resembles a crowbar; the fine cambric has become villainous canvas; the golden hair is revealed to be an ugly tube, like a rusty gas pipe. Thus in reading history by the new method, all things are reversed. Our old heroes are heroes no more to the literary *valets-de-chambre* who so ruthlessly undress them. Our monsters of tyranny and iniquity come forth at the call of the beneficent enchanters, who undertake to transform them like the good Beast in the fairy-tale, restored to human shape, and worthy of the tenderest affections of Beauty. Martyrs, philosophers, and kings innumerable are now slowly rolling down the hill of Fame, like stones in a glacier, while, ever since Walpole recalled Richard III. from Hades for judgment, there has been a perpetual rehabilitation of the damned of history, till very soon we may expect to be left without a single time-dishonoured villain with whose name

to "point a moral or adorn a tale." The fact to which these great changes point must surely be this—that immense fallacies have been imbedded for ages in the memory of all civilized nations.

Again, not only the characters of individuals have been falsely conveyed to us, but the special details of their words and acts. The long speeches attributed by ancient historians to their orators and generals are hardly, we presume, supposed to represent accurately the original harangues; but when short, pithy sayings are universally given to certain characters, and have obtained currency, wherever the supposed speaker's name is known, we might justly assume that if historical memory be ever reliable, it would be in such a case. Yet the notorious fact is, that all such sayings, and aphorisms, and war-cries, nay, all very striking and characteristic anecdotes of any kind, are precisely the doubtful bits of the story of each great man's life. Whenever (as in such modern cases as the incidents of Waterloo) we are enabled to sift the evidence for and against the veracity of the anecdote, it is tolerably certain that the balance will incline against it. So completely is this truth now recognized that the old stories, which fifty years ago enlivened all histories, are now hardly quoted, or if quoted, are prefaced by the remark, "It is needless to say there is little authority to support the anecdote" —of Thomyris saying "Cyrus, thy thirst was blood,—or of Xerxes flogging the Hellespont,—or of Tell shooting the apple on his son's head,—or of Alfred spoiling the neatherd's cakes.

Even when some substratum of truth exists, the details, perhaps the most essential of the details, of the story are false. No anecdote is perhaps more widely circulated in England than that Nelson originated the exhortation which has become a sort of national *sursum corda*—"England expects every man to do his duty." The facts of the case (well known to the

near relatives of the parties) are these: Nelson ordered the signal to be made before the action at Trafalgar, "*Nelson* expects every man to do his duty." The officer who obeyed the command, found that the flag which should have signified "*Nelson*" was, by some accident, missing at the moment. Reflecting how he could supply the deficiency, he hit upon the happy idea of choosing the signal "*England*" as a substitute for "*Nelson*," and thus produced the watchword we have so constantly attributed to our naval hero himself.

When anything remarkably noble, or poetical, or witty, is said by an obscure person, there is a universal tendency to attribute it to any contemporary individual with whose reputation it seems to harmonize. Sidney Smith and President Lincoln will doubtless share the credit of all the Joe Millers (another typical name) of England and America in this century, while a different class of anecdotes will attach themselves to Wellington, Garibaldi, and Whateley. These errors form, in fact, one entire class of myths; and there is a corresponding class, consisting of stories of what a distinguished man *ought* to have said, and, therefore, is alleged to have said, in a certain contingency. "Up, Guards, and at them!" would have been a natural speech under the circumstances. "La Garde meurt, mais ne se rend pas," would have been a sublime bit of French sentiment. But Wellington is proved not to have said the first phrase, and the second is equally discredited, albeit engraved on the monument at Nantes. All the legal world of England believed the anecdote of Erskine telling Thelwall that if he conducted his own defence on his trial he would surely be hanged, to which Thelwall was held to have responded, "Then I'll be hanged if I do!" Nevertheless, Thelwall assured a gentleman, from whom we derive the story, that neither Erskine nor he said anything of the kind. Both

these classes of myths, it is evident, involve curious lapses of memory, the memory of the *person* who really made the speech, or memory of the *speech* which the person really made. Again, modern warfare has appliances for recording the events of the field, such as ancient times could in no way parallel. Telegraphs, special correspondents, despatches, newspapers circulating in both the belligerent nations, afford us means, first, to ascertain the facts, then, to record them instantly, publicly, and before all parties. When we compare such a state of things with the old annals—written, usually, by men who never saw the battles they recorded, nor any battles at all, men who wrote years after the event, and passed their MSS. only among fellow-countrymen, neither able nor willing to contradict them—when we compare, I say, new history and old history, we may well stand aghast. If all our advantages end in such contradictions as those current about the Crimean war, the contradictions of the *Times* and the Russian newspapers, of Kinglake and Todleben, by what rule of three shall we estimate the utter unreliability of History written without our machinery of correction ? "*

* A very amusing instance of such contradictory evidence has taken place, as we write, in London. On opening the present session of Parliament the Queen was known to have intended a change in the usual programme. She declined to abandon her widow's weeds for the royal robes and diadem, and the robe was consequently merely laid upon the throne, and the crown carried beside her. Considerable curiosity arose to know how she would actually dress and act on the occasion, and the applications to obtain places in the gallery of the House of Lords were innumerable. Of course, when the Queen entered the splendid chamber (of very small dimensions), all eyes were fixed upon her, and, doubtless, turned to her, as the centre of interest during the ceremonies of the ensuing hour. The result of all this attention was, that the evening and morning papers afterwards all contradicted each other as to her costume and behaviour. The

Before quitting this part of our subject we may remark that, though it is the tendency, beyond a doubt, of all modern criticism to discredit all the *details* of History (and especially of those characteristic anecdotes in which tradition revels), it is clear, on the other hand, that all sound reason goes to strengthen the credit due to the veracity of the *larger* events of History—even of those unsupported by strict documentary evidence. To doubt the existence of any of the great prophets or conquerors of ancient times—to question the truth of the Persian Invasion of Greece, the Jewish Exodus, the Reign of Cæsar, the Norman Conquest of England—would be justly regarded in this century as a display of gross ignorance and impertinence. Yet, between the small events *à priori* doubtful and the large events *à priori* credible, there must be a middle region, embracing perhaps the greater part of history, where the improbability attaching to the one order of facts and the probability belonging to the other meet in a middle term of neutral likelihood. We have heard one of the ablest thinkers of the age remark that the determination of the relative value of historical facts according to this scale will be one of the tasks whose achievement will serve most importantly to clear up our future judgment of all the great problems which lie before us for solution.

Times stated it was "variously" asserted she wore violet or black, and, of six private friends of the writer, who witnessed the scene from the best situations in the House, the following evidence was derived: "1. The Queen wore black. 2. The Queen wore violet. 3. The Queen wore purple. 4. The Queen wore velvet. 5. The Queen wore silk. 6. The Queen wore miniver. 7. The Queen looked so pale, it was sad to see. 8. The Queen looked full of grief, her face flushed deeply. 9. The Queen took no notice of any one on entry, but kissed the Princess of Wales on going away. 10. The Queen at once went up to the Princess of Wales and kissed her tenderly." *Et voila comme on écrit l'histoire!* the history of the current hour!

Again, in our Courts of Justice it is notorious how continually the most honest witnesses contradict one another on the simplest matter of fact, and thereby prove the inaccuracy of memory, even when acting under the pressure of conscience, alarmed by judicial oaths and the tremendous results of a trial for capital offence. Such anecdotes as the following might be multiplied almost to any extent by a man conversant with the experience of the Bar. A trial took place in Dublin twenty years ago (as the writer was informed by one of the jury), in which three witnesses were summoned to give evidence whether a man who left their village for India many years previously was a certain Thomas Staunton or his kinsman, John Staunton. The three witnesses were perfectly uninterested in the result of the case, and of unimpeachable honesty so far as any chance of bribery was concerned; yet, of these three men, two swore it was Thomas Staunton who went to India, and one swore it was John. The ablest lawyers at the Irish Bar endeavoured, for two days, by cross-examination, to clear up the mistake, which no one doubted arose from involuntary lapse of memory. Their efforts, however, proved entirely abortive, and the case was given up. An eminent legal friend told us he was at one time counsel in a case called on at three separate intervals of six months. The short-hand notes taken by the reporters of the testimony of the witnesses at each of the trials were, of course, examined and compared with the final evidence, whereupon the curious phenomenon was presented of a regular ascending scale of certitude, and precisely in proportion as the event *ought* to have receded from the memory of the witnesses. On the first trial the testimony was brief and general. On the second it had grown longer and much more elaborate. On the third it had become enriched with a multitude of previously unknown details and clear statements

regarding matters which at first had been unremarked, or, at least, unstated.

Doubtless every experienced lawyer could quote many instances tending, like the above, to prove the unreliability of memory. The Saffron Hill murder was a notorious case in point, and serves to illustrate a yet further defect of the faculty, namely, that at moments of excitement of any kind it is even more than usually untrustworthy and fallacious. The witnesses of that fray were proved utterly incompetent to remember the crucial facts of the case, *who* struck a certain blow, or spoke certain words, or was present at a given moment. Doubtless the same confusion occurs whenever there is similar excitement. What a revelation then have we here of the unreliability of History! Precisely in proportion as any event involves great interest, just so far the memory of it is liable to be obscure. The excitement of strong feelings of anger, horror, astonishment, fear, causes the exciting transaction to be involved to the spectators in a sort of mental blur, like the perceptions of a man drunk with wine. Vehement excitement, in truth, *is* intoxication; an intoxication often more dangerous, because less suspected, than that produced by any material stimulant. To behold a deadly fray, to witness the supposed apparition of the departed, to lead a charge of cavalry, nay, to yield to the storm of our own passions, hate, love, or furious anger, is to be for the time in an abnormal condition of the mental faculties, such as haschish or alcohol can hardly produce. The results on the senses (obscuring all sensations, even to the mutilations of the limbs) and the subsequent distortion and partial effacement of the memory of the scene, are all parallel to the common phenomena we observe in the case of a drunken man. He has acted, as if borne on, without volition; he has seen and heard without ob-

serving; and he remembers what has occurred with the dimness of a photograph taken out of focus. It is true that some incidents of each scene will probably have been perceived with extraordinary clearness and vividness, like the glimpses of landscape suddenly revealed on a rainy day between clouds and showers, and brought close to us in a gleam of lurid light. The man will have seen a *part* of the transaction most lucidly, and this part will seem burnt in on his memory; but it must be recollected that such partial gleams and one-sided recollections are far from safe materials with which to form any just estimate of an event, on which they throw rather the delusive glare of a conjuror's stage, than a fair and equal illumination. The single passage of the scene, recalled without its context of antecedent and subsequent occurrences, is precisely the most misleading record we can possess. Yet this is all that memory, acting on the impressions received in moments of excitement, can give us. All beside is blurred as by the clouds which surround the one vivid glimpse of sea or mountain beheld in the storm.

When we reflect that nearly everything in the past history of our race which we most care to know has been delivered to us by witnesses labouring under these bewildering conditions of excitement of one kind or other, even such reliance as we might be disposed to give to common testimony seems loosened at the points where we would fain desire it could have been most firm.

Again, in ordinary private life, where no publicity attends the record of events, and no special excitement attaches to them, what do we find experimentally to be the worth of memory? In the first place, of course, we all recognize that after the lapse of some forty-eight hours, or thereabouts, we are quite unable to trace back our history, step by step, hour by hour. What we did a week ago, at a given hour, and the

week before, at another hour, is effaced, unless we are either so regular in our habits as to be able to mark any exceptions, or else chance to have been greatly concerned in that which may have happened. Where we walked or rode—with whom we conversed—what we read, or ate, or wore—whether it rained or shone—whether we were ill or well, sad or merry, all has been swept away, like yesterday's sea-weed by the morning tide. Trying to recall the past week, month, year, we shall succeed in finding certain points here and there, a few stepping-stones in the flood of time. Some of them stand out high and clearly, and on these we may pass in thought, bridging back our years to the first memorial of childhood. Others are nearly submerged under the ever-rising current of oblivion; and others, again, lie far down where we only see them in strange glimpses by day, or weird dreams by night. But when we have made the most of our poor memorials, there remains always a waste of unmarked sands of life, hours and days unnumbered, over which the swift river eddies fast, leaving no trace behind. Let any man take the almanacs of his past years, ten, twenty years ago, and say to how many of the days or months therein he can attach a recollection of any kind. The result will surely be to convince him that what we have said of exciting events holds good, in a measure, of all events. We behold parts of them, and lose the rest (often all that should explain them), in a thick impenetrable cloud. Like the faces in a great crowd, our past hours have gone by, and we remember only here and there a single one; an hour supremely beautiful in its joy, or an hour deformed with agony; an hour borne on the car of triumph, or an hour trampled under the foot of shame.

For the isolated events which we actually remember, or believe we remember, let us ask of what value is our memory.

Doubtless, antecedent to all test, we have a more or less strong persuasion of the veracity of our recollection. We are ready to aver that a place, a person, an event, was precisely as we recall it. If it happen that we have made no notes, taken no sketch or photograph, shared our witness with no one whose memory can be brought up to check our own, then everything remains undisturbed. No suspicion troubles our confidence in our faculty of memory. But when it happens that any of these verifications are tried, what is the usual result? Let us suppose that we have narrated some little incident at an interval of half a dozen years, and, at the end of that period, we chance to look at an old letter or journal, written on the very day or two after the event occurred. Did it ever happen to us to do this without something very like a blush, and the exclamation "Good Heaven! how much I have been mistaken in telling that story!"? It happened once to the writer to hear a most scrupulously conscientious friend narrate an incident of table-turning, to which she appended the assurance that the table rapped when nobody was within a yard of it. The writer was confounded by this latter fact, the lady was fully satisfied of its accuracy, but promised to look at the note she had made, ten years ago, of the transaction. The note was examined, and it was found to contain the distinct statement, that the table rapped when the hands of six persons rested on it! Nothing could be more instructive, for the lady's memory in all other points beside this one proved to be strictly correct and in this point she had erred in entire good faith, being, in fact, a person unusually and scrupulously conscientious in speech and in all other matters. Yet it is evident that while the whole story chanced to turn on one incident, her memory as regarded that incident was deceived. She was doubtless excited by the scene, and remembered the rapping most

vividly, but the position in which the six spectators stood was blurred in her mental picture of the scene. The table was a lucid point in the landscape; the six spectators were enveloped in a cloud.

Memory of places forms a still better test than that of events, seeing there is less disputable about their details. Now, in dreams it would appear we always mistake the places we imagine we see. We have a notion of identity, combined with the most curious inversion of every fact by which such identity could be verified. We see St Peter's, and are sure it is St Peter's we see, albeit the building before the eye of fancy is a red brick Gothic tower; we see the New Forest, and find it a sandy plain; we see Regent Street, and behold a pair of Polar bears walking up and down an iceberg in the middle of the Circus. Such are the vagaries of sleeping memory, at which we laugh when we awake. But are there no similar, though, of course, less monstrous, tricks played on us habitually by the waking faculty? Let any one endeavour to draw from memory a street, a mountain, a park, which he has gazed at for years, and then let him compare his sketch with the original, or with a photograph of the spot. We venture to affirm he will not do so without a little start, at the sudden jerk of rectification, as the wheels of memory run off the wrong rail upon the true one.

Again, as regards persons. When we meet a long-parted friend, whose features we have many a time recalled by day and conjured up in the darkness of the night, is it the mere change effected by years, the brown hair grown gray, the smooth cheek faded and lined with care, which we scan so anxiously? Is not the face itself different from that one which we fondly imagined we carried safe clasped in the locket of our hearts? If we had been asked to describe the face should we not have erred in more features than one?

The facts I have now stated will probably seem more or less important and decisive to my readers, in proportion as they may be personally gifted with a somewhat better or worse memory, or may have been induced already to pay attention to the eccentricities of the faculty generally. To all, however, I conceive it will be a somewhat unpleasant task to face the plausibility of a theory which shall make defects of memory the rule, and not the exception. Yet here is the point to which the above remarks, if just, assuredly must lead us. The sort of vague complaints of failure of memory or absence of mind, which we are all ready to make, will not answer here. As La Rochefoucauld said long ago, "Chacun se plaint de sa mémoire, mais personne ne se plaint de son jugement." To compare mental things with moral. We are all willing to avow, in generalities, that we are "miserable sinners," and that our natures are fallible. The thing needed, morally, is, that we should be conscious of actual transgression. And the thing needed, mentally, is, that we should recognize the habitual mendacity of our remembrance. But, surely, this is incumbent on us if it be proved that *whenever we bring memory to test* it is habitually found defective. The presumption that it is correct, when we cannot verify it, is, to say the least, very illogical. In the brief review we have just made of the subject, this defectiveness of tested memory has met us on all sides. In the details of History the characteristic anecdotes, the striking speeches, the whole character of remarkable men, we find ourselves constantly more and more driven, first to question, and then to rescind the judgment and testimony of the past. In judicial inquiries we find that the most experienced lawyers are the most completely satisfied of the unreliability of a large part of the evidence given concerning ordinary events; and of the double doubtfulness attaching to the evidence which relates

to events witnessed under strong excitement. In private life we find the vast majority of our past days a blank in recollection; and of the scenes, the persons, the transactions of which we suppose ourselves to have a true remembrance, we rarely test any single point by memoranda, photographs, collateral testimony, or in any other way, without finding we have erred, if not essentially in the main features of the case, yet in details which, according to circumstances, might become precisely the important points of our testimony. Surely, in the face of these facts, it is idle to go on acting as if lapses of memory were exceptional, and the accurate use of the faculty a thing to be expected and calculated upon? Surely, it is time we should change our gratuitous confidence in this most deceptive faculty for a cautious distrust of its allegations, whenever we lack time or opportunity to verify them?

It would be an invaluable service to mankind, we believe, were it possible to offer such a philosophy of memory as might serve for the basis of scientific analysis of the faculty, and a method of distinguishing its false from its true exercise. To the framing of such a philosophy the writer of this brief essay can make no pretension; nor to the remotest suggestion, helping to throw more light than has been already shed by psychological writers upon the nature and laws of this department of our mental organization. One observation only we presume to make on this most obscure subject, to correct a misleading metaphor, commonly applied to memory, and serving to keep up the prevalent false estimate of its veracity. Memory is for ever likened by poets and rhetoricians to an engraved tablet, treasured in the recesses of mind, and liable only to obliteration by the slow abrasion of time, or the dissolving heat of madness. We venture to affirm that such a simile is not in

the remotest degree applicable to the real phenomena of the case, and that memory is neither an impression made, once for all, like an engraving on a tablet, nor yet safe for an hour from obliteration or modification, after being formed. Rather is memory a finger-mark traced on shifting sand, ever exposed to obliteration when left unrenewed; and if renewed, then modified, and made, not the same, but a fresh and different mark. Beyond the first time of recalling a place or event, it is rare to remember again actually the place or the event. We remember, not the things themselves, but the first recollection of them, and then the second and the third, always the latest recollection of them. A proof that this is so may be found by anybody who will carefully study the processes of his own mind, after he has once detailed at length, in words, any scene he has previously witnessed. He will find himself constantly going over *precisely what he has narrated,* and no more. To proceed beyond this and recall from oblivion a single incident of which he had not spoken will require a distinct effort, perceptibly different and more difficult than the recollection of those facts of which he has spoken, and after a certain lapse of time or repetition of his narrative *minus* the excluded incidents, this effort will become nearly impracticable. In other words, it is easy to go back over the impression we have renewed with a fresh mark, but to descend beneath and clear up the original impression is extremely difficult. Thus, as in accordance with various laws of mind, each fresh trace varies a little from the trace beneath, sometimes magnifying and beautifying it, through the natural bias of the soul to grandeur and beauty; sometimes contracting it through languid imagination; sometimes distorting it through passion or prejudice; in all and every case the original mark is ere long essentially changed. We find, indeed, in our

minds something which we call a remembrance, and which appertains in truth to the faculty of memory; but it reproduces, not the event it assumes to record, but that idea of it which, after twenty modifying repetitions, has left for the moment the uppermost trace in our minds.

The more this view of memory is considered the more, we venture to affirm, it will be found to correspond with the actual phenomena of the case. By adopting it we account for the great fact we have signalized above, that the main portion of our past lives is a blank in memory, with only a few marks of remembered hours. Why is it a blank? Simply because we have not thought of it, brought it up for fresh remembrance, marked it afresh on the sand. Sometimes the most trifling scenes are passed on from childhood, remembered and renewed again and again. Why are these retained and others lost? Only because from some chance we have thought, or talked, or written of them, and have let the rest pass away without the fixing process of revision.

Again, by this theory of memory, we obtain an available hypothesis, to account for the notorious but marvellous fact, that liars come in time to believe their own falsehoods. The warping of the original trace of the story, albeit voluntary and conscious, has, equally with unconscious dereliction, effected the end of obliterating the primary mark, and substituting a false one, which has assumed the place of a remembrance. Without conscious falsehood, the same thing happens also occasionally when we realize strongly by imagination some circumstance which never happened, or happened to another person. A most truthful woman asserted, in our hearing, that a certain adventure had befallen her. It had really befallen her child, but the child repeating it often to her, she had realized it so vividly that it seemed her own experience. Another mother averred that the horses depicted

in Rosa Bonheur's great picture were as large as life. Her little boy had asked whether they could be ridden on, and her maternal imagination had stopped with that of her child. A very common way in which the same mendacious effect is produced, is by the habit of speculating on what *would have* happened had certain contingencies been otherwise than they were. We begin by saying: "It might have happened so and so," till having realized in fancy that hypothetical case more vividly than we remember the real one, we suddenly and unconsciously substitute the fancy for the fact. The writer once in early youth played a little jest on a companion, intended to startle her while reading a ghost story. The jest miscarried, owing to the intended victim pulling a certain string by accident *before* she sat down to read. Years afterward she alluded to the circumstances, "and it alarmed me so much *because* I was sitting over the fire reading a ghost story." Recalled to the fact, she admitted with astonishment that she had said, "*if* I had been reading a ghost story I should have been so much alarmed," till she convinced herself she had been reading one at the moment.

If it be granted that the simile now suggested to describe the action of memory be a just one, and that by using it we can in some degree figure to ourselves the mode in which the familiar phenomena of error and forgetfulness are produced, it will follow that our chief practical concern must be to study the laws of mind, whereby the successive traces of memory are liable to be warped and distorted, and, so far as it may prove possible, guard ourselves against the causes of error. These causes seem chiefly to be the following:

1st. Wilful falsehood, leading to unconscious self-deception.

2nd. Allowing ourselves to dwell on imaginary contingencies till they become realities in our imagination.

3rd. Diverging from literal truth, with the honest purpose of conveying a true meaning. This is a form of unveracity to which little attention is ever paid, and yet it is one of the most common of all, and whose constant practice tends very peculiarly to warp the memory. So strong is the dramatic element in us all that few ever detail a narrative without completing it by some touches not actually true, though conscientiously believed to *explain* the truth; to supply the genuine reason for this speech or the other action, or to bring into relief the real feelings of the actors. The fact is, we can never witness any transaction without making some theory of the motives, sentiments, and purposes of the agents; and, in telling the history thereof, we inevitably work out this theory in our description. Sketching on one occasion in the great temple at Baalbec, it occurred to the writer, in striving to give some idea of the splendid ruin, to endeavour to define where a certain arch had once extended. Every stone of the arch had fallen; only the marks on the walls revealed where it had been, and these marks, copied in a poor, hasty sketch, would have utterly failed to convey any impression of the fact. Quite unconsciously, a stone or two (fallen, doubtless, a thousand years ago) were replaced in the sketch; just enough, and no more, to convey the desired idea of the original arch. Then came the reflection, "Here is precisely what we do every day in our stories. We just add a stone, just darken a shadow, just double a line, to show what we very honestly believe to be true!" How large might be the falsehoods thus originated, how soon our theory would take in our memories the place of fact, there is no need to tell.

The form of memory most safe from such distortions is unquestionably the verbal memory, where the words to be remembered are arranged either in regular verse or in that special kind of rhythmical prose which answers the same purpose of

keeping them in close phalanx. The reason why such words are remembered is plain. The trace they make in the memory each time they are repeated is marked precisely in the same furrow. Any divergence is not (as in the case of other errors of memory) an exaggeration or distortion, but a positive transformation, which the rhythm usually disowns, or which, if permitted by the rhythm, yet jars upon ear or sense. After the curious process of committing verses to memory has been achieved, we do not very often find ourselves betrayed by such unconscious transformation. We may lose the trace altogether, or find it broken here and there, but we rarely find a wrong word established in our minds in the place of a right one, as we find a wrong circumstance of an event or feature of a scene. The real nature of this kind of memory remains, after all efforts to elucidate it, one of the most marvellous of all the mysteries of our nature. The law of association of ideas is surely here developed to the uttermost. After the lapse of twenty years, a few leading words will suggest to us line after line, perhaps hundreds of lines together, till we seem to draw out an endless coil of golden chain which has lain hidden in the deepest treasury of our minds. When we release it again, it furls up into so small a compass that we forget our very possession of it, and it may lie there, perchance, till, in extreme old age, when half our mental wealth is lost in oblivion, we may draw out once more the poem we loved long ago, and repeat, with faltering voice, the words we sang in the fresh tones of youth.

But, if words arranged in rhythm have peculiar safety of remembrance—and for this reason, doubtless, have the prayers, aphorisms, oracles, charms, of all nations, been so constantly given a rhythmical form, for traditional preservation—on the other hand, words *not* in rhythm are singularly hard to recall accurately. The clever game of "Russian

Scandal" is an excellent proof how impossible it is for half a dozen people to repeat the same words in succession, even immediately after they have heard them. No divergencies of witnesses in courts of justice are more remarkable than those concerning the words they have heard or read. Of all the prose lessons which most of us acquired by rote in our school days, it is rare that half a page will remain accurately in our recollection in middle life; although the sense of the lessons may be preserved, and the very words of others learnt in verse at the same period.

A very singular defect of verbal memory is the difficulty felt by nine persons out of ten in remembering proper names, at the same time that the possession of such name is felt to be the key to the whole knowledge of the subject. A man's face, figure, voice, in fact the man himself, in bodily presence before us, frequently fails to recall to us who he is, and what have been our relations to him. For all we can remember he may have been an old acquaintance, or a man who travelled with us yesterday in the railway, or a tradesman from whom we bought a pair of gloves. We know that we have seen him before, and that is all. The when, the where, and the how, we cannot remember. At the same time, we are quite aware that if we could only recall his name we should instantly remember all we ever knew about him. His name is the hook to which we have hung every fact in our collection, and in our hurry we cannot find it. By and by memory supplies us with the missing name, and then all is clear. Our vague stare is exchanged for the cordial recognition, and we exclaim: "How strange I should have forgotten your name for the moment! I remembered your face quite well, but could not tell where we had met." It is said that persons who have received injuries of the brain, and those who are failing in old age, suffer in a special degree

from this difficulty of remembering proper names, which may therefore be considered the most weak point in this very weak faculty. A familiar yet unaccountable fact connected therewith is the greater facility with which we recover the lost clue when we do not directly strive to recover it, but occupy ourselves in some other thoughts, leaving some unknown, unconscious faculty to work at the required search. As a star seems brighter when we are not looking directly at it, but a few degrees aside, so a word which we seek seems to come out of obscurity in our recollection when we have turned our direct mental vision a little away to other objects. Memory is a coy and wilful witness, who will not be interrogated with point-blank questions, nor browbeaten by cross-examination. She remains silent and sulky when so treated, but as soon as she is humoured by being left at peace she comes forward, of her own accord, and volunteers the information we desired. How, or why, this should be so, it seems difficult to understand. The action of the unconscious mental powers is even more marvellous than that of the faculties which work in the daylight of our cognizance.

It has often been observed that the memory of illiterate persons is stronger than that of the well educated. Undoubtedly those who cannot read often display singular accuracy in remembering, not only the events and places and persons on which it is natural their whole attention should be centred, but also such matters as addresses, names, figures, dates, which other people usually find it needful to record in written memoranda. We have known an instance in which a servant, who could not read or write, became a very directory and annual register for a whole household, and was safely referred to, even after the lapse of years, for any matter which had once passed under her knowledge. On the other hand, it has

been our own lot, in early studious days, to be obliged to keep written notes of every domestic or social engagement lest they should escape our recollection in a week, at the very time when the words and pages of the books we perused were securely committed to memory for years. The two classes of impressions, those derived from actual life and those derived from books, very obviously impinge differently on the memory, and mutually disturb one another. To recur to our simile: the shifting sands on which both traces are made are doubly disturbed by the varied and often transverse lines, and the whole field offers a more confused and difficult perusal than when a few simple impressions of sights and sounds fill up the whole space in the mind of the savage or the peasant.

The conclusions to which this brief review of the failures and weaknesses of memory must lead us are undoubtedly painful. To be deceived a hundred times, and misled even in important matters, by a wrong estimate of our powers, seems less sad than to be compelled to admit that the powers themselves are untrustworthy. "To be weak is to be miserable," in this as in all other things; but to find Memory weak is to be not only feeble in the present, but to lose our grasp of the past. That dear Past! the past by whose grave we are standing all our later life, is doubly lost to us if we must cover it up in dust and oblivion. To know that what we deem we recall so vividly is but a poor, shifting reflex—hardly of the thing itself, only of our earlier remembrance of the thing—this is sad and mournful. Almost more terrible it seems to confess the fallaciousness of the great traditions of History, and in the waste of waters, over which we are drifting, to behold the barks of past centuries no longer stretching their sails in our wake, but growing hazy and spectral in the mist of doubt, till some we

deemed the richest galleons in that mighty fleet fade from our eyes, and are lost for ever in impenetrable cloud. These things cannot be evaded or averted. On our generation of mankind has come the knowledge of an isolation, such as younger races never felt, and perhaps could less have borne. The sweet, childlike companionship with Nature, the reasoning beasts and birds, the half-human fauns and dryads and nymphs and river gods, the gnomes and sylphs and fairies; the peopled sky of angels, and nether world of demons and of ghosts—all are gone from us. We are alone, we of this poor, human race, so far as we have any knowledge or even definite fancy, among intelligent beings. Between us and our dumb brute slaves there is a gulf, which no longer is bridged over by any earth-born or heaven-descended race. Science, as she marches round us in wider and yet wider circles, leaves ever a hard and barren track behind her, on which no flower of fancy may bloom again. And at this hour she tells, or threatens to tell us yet more—that if we would know the parents from whom we came, whose Paradise-home yet seems the cradle of our infancy, we must retrace the world's course not for six thousand years, but for ages of millenniums, and find them at last—not beautiful and calm, conversing in Eden with the sons of God—but simious-browed and dwarf of limb, struggling with the mammoth and the cave-bear in the howling wilderness of an uncultured world. Is not this enough? Must we also relinquish those Elysian fields of History, where the great departed yet seemed to live in bowers of amaranth and never-fading fame? Keeping the landmarks of the ages—the wars and the dynasties; keeping the great heirlooms of wisdom, in books, in art, in temple and picture and poem and statue, must we relinquish those thousand lesser marks which have served to render History real and dear to us,

and have brought the mighty Dead, not as silent ghosts and faintly descried shades, but as living and speaking men before us? Must we be content to know, that only the outlines of the ancestral pictures of our house are true, and all the colours which make them beautiful, retouched and falsified? Perchance it must be so. Perchance the loneliness of human nature must needs be more impressed on us as science advances in the field of historical criticism, as in the fields of mythology and physiology. The past is becoming like a twilight scene in a mountain land, where the valleys are all filled with mist, and wood and waterfall and village spire are dimly shadowed. Only some snowy Alp, whose huge outline we recognize, towers into the upper air; while the lights gleam here and there, from hearth and cloister and student's cell, the rays of genius shining through the night of time. We are a thousand millions of men and women and babes living now upon earth; but of those who are gone before on whose dust we tread; and of those who may be dwelling now in the stars which glitter in our wintry sky, we know almost as much,—and that is not knowledge, but conjecture. We are alone on our island-world, as the descendants of the mutinous crew in the Pacific waste, when the memory of their fathers' land was fading away, and no ship had ever drawn near to break with its white wing the eternal circle of their horizon.

We are alone. But there is ONE whose hand we trace in every page we save from the wreck of the Past; whose Light of Inspiration gleams through the thickest night of time; who fills Himself alone the whole spirit-world we had peopled with the chimeras of imagination. Is it a hard matter to be alone in the Universe with GOD?

THE FENIAN "IDEA."

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THE FENIAN "IDEA."

It was a great truth Shelley uttered when he said that slavery would not be the enormous wrong and evil which it is if men who had long suffered under it could rise at once to freedom and self-government. We see this fact everywhere proved by races, nations, sexes, long held in bondage, and, when at last set free, displaying for years, perhaps for generations, the vices of cowardice, deceit, and cruelty engendered by slavery. Chains leave ugly scars on the flesh, but deeper scars by far on the soul. Even where the exercise of oppression has stopped short of actual serfdom,—where a race has been merely excluded from some natural rights, and burdened with some unrighteous restrictions,—the same result, in a mitigated degree, may be traced in moral degradation, surviving the injustice itself and almost its very memory. Ages pass away, and "Revenge and Wrong" still "bring forth their kind." The evil is not dead, though they who wrought it have long mouldered in their forgotten graves.

In a very remarkable manner this sad law of our nature applies to the condition of the Irish race. Doubtless the isolated position of Ireland, the small share it has had in the life and movement of our century, has allowed the old wrongs to fester in memory, and the old feelings of rancour to perpetuate themselves, as they could never have done in a country more in the highway of nations. Vendettas personal and political are ever to be found in islands like Corsica, Sicily, Ireland; or in remote glens and mountains, such as

those of Scotland or Greece. Men who live in New York, London, or Paris must be singularly retentive of passion to keep up even their own hatreds, not to speak of the hatreds of their ancestors. But it is alike the bane and blessing of lives spent in retirement and monotony to retain impressions for years, and live in the past almost more vividly than in the tame and uninteresting present. Ireland, at all events, has had nothing to divert her from her old traditions; and there is probably no man, woman, or child of Celtic race living in the country in whose mind a certain "historical element," compounded strangely of truth and falsehood, does not occupy a place such as no analogous impression takes in the thought of an ordinary Englishman or Frenchman. We shall endeavour in this paper to give a little idea of the nature of these Irish traditions and feelings; and if we succeed in doing so we shall at the same time afford to our readers a clue to some of the supposed mysteries of the recent outbreak of Fenianism. In sober truth, Fenianism is not, to Anglo-Irish observers, a startling apparition, an outburst of insane folly, an epidemic of national hate, but, on the contrary, a most familiar phenomenon, the mere appearance on the surface of what we always knew lay beneath,—an endemic as natural to the soil as the ague and fever which haunt the undrained bogs. Those who understand what Irishmen are always *thinking* will find no difficulty in understanding also what things they occasionally *do*.

The real wrongs inflicted by England upon Ireland are probably as bad as ever disgraced the history of a conquest, in itself without excuse. Not to speak of confiscations and executions often taking the form of murderous raids into suspected districts, there were laws passed one after another, from the time of Edward I. even to the present century, a collection of which would be a sad commentary on the

boasted justice of English Parliaments. Irishmen lay under disabilities, political, social, and ecclesiastical, so severe and numerous that it really seems to have been a question what they were expected to do *except* to break some of these arbitrary laws, and so incur some cruel penalty. Down to our own century, and for the avowed purpose of injuring the only flourishing trade of the country (that of linen), the English cotton and woollen manufacturers procured the passing of acts better called destructive than protective; and in sober truth, if England now deplores the low industrial and commercial state of Ireland, she has only to look over her own statute-book, and see if ingenuity could have further gone in the way of discouragement and depression. When we add to these wrongs the bitter drop of the Irish Church Establishment, it is doubtless clear that an able advocate could make out a very telling case for the plaintiff in that great case of Ireland *v.* England on which Europe and America sit as jury.

But it is a singularly inexact notion of the real historical wrongs of his country which an ordinary Irishman treasures in his heart. In fact, he has no idea of the real wrongs at all, but of other and quite imaginary ones. He sets out with the great fallacy that Ireland was at some indefinite epoch (described as "former times") a wealthy, prosperous, and united country, and that every declension from those characteristics is to be laid at the door of English tyranny and jealousy. When Moore wrote,

"Let Erin remember the days of old,
Ere her faithless sons betrayed her,
When Malachi wore the collar of gold
Which he won from her proud invader,

"When her kings, with their standards of green unfurled,
Led the Red Branch knights to danger,

Ere the emerald gem of the Western world
Was set in the crown of a stranger,"—

when, we say, a man of the world, who afterwards wrote a remarkably moderate and sensible History of Ireland, wrote nonsense like this, he was doubtless well aware he was only, by poetic license, describing what Irishmen commonly believed about "days of old," and their glorified circumstances. We once saw an Irish schoolmaster (just one of those who mould the ideas of the humbler classes) shown into a room furnished with the usual luxury of a handsome English drawing-room,—books, pictures, flowers, and china, "an earthly paradise of ormolu." The good man looked round with great admiration, and then innocently remarked, "Why, this must be like one of the palaces of our ancient kings!" Here was precisely the popular Irish idea. Her "ancient king," who actually lived in the *wattled* walls of Tara, enjoying barbarian feasts of beer and hecatombs of lean kine and sheep, is supposed to have been a refined and splendid prince, dwelling in ideal "halls" (doubtless compounded out of the Dublin Bank and Rotunda), and enjoying the finest music on a double-action harp. As a fact, there is no evidence whatever that the old Irish Pentarchy was much better than any five chieftainships of the Sandwich Islands. Even the historians who laud it in most pompous phrases, like Keatinge, give nothing but details of wars and massacres, disorders and rebellions without end. Out of one hundred and sixty-eight kings who by this (of course) half-fabulous story reigned from the Milesian Conquest to Roderick O'Connor, vanquished by Henry II. in 1172, no less than seventy-nine are said to have acquired the throne by the murder of their predecessors. The contests between the five kings for the supremacy, or for the acquisition of each other's territories, offer a spectacle which can only be compared to a

sanguinary game of Puss-in-the-corner lasting for a thousand years. As to any monuments of civilization, it would indeed be wonderful if they were found in a country so circumstanced. Such existing architecture as can be attributed to a Celtic origin is confined to the simple round towers, Cormac's Chapel at Cashel, and a few humble little stone-roofed edifices like the one known as "St Kevin's Kitchen," and made, with true Irish magniloquence, to stand well-nigh alone, for the "Seven Churches of Glendalough." For literature, ancient Ireland can show the respectable "Annals of the Four Masters," and a few minor chronicles in prose and verse, but not a single work deserving a place in European history. Literally the fame of a few nomad saints, and a collection of torques and brooches (of great beauty, but possibly of Byzantine workmanship) in the Irish Academy, are the chief grounds on which rest the claims of Ireland to ancient civilization. Yet not merely civilization, but the extreme grandeur and magnificence of Ireland in "former times," is the first postulate of all Irish discontent. It is because England has dimmed her glory and overthrown her royal state that Irishmen burn with patriot indignation, and not by any means because she has merely left barbarism and disunion still barbarous and disunited after seven centuries, and has checked, instead of encouraging, the industry and commerce of the land.

Proceeding on this false ground, the Celtic Irishman, with his fervid imagination, easily builds for himself a whole edifice of local and personal grievances on the pattern of the supposed national one. Was Ireland once a rich and splendid country? So was every town and neighbourhood once full of gaiety and prosperity, when "the family" lived at home and did not travel or spend the season in London. Full of extravagant reverence for birth and rank, it is

always, in the Irishman's mind, not *his* fault, nor that of his compeers of the working and middle classes, that trade and agriculture do not flourish in the land; but the fault of some lord or squire who ought to come and spend money there, or of some king or queen who should hold court in Dublin and waste as much treasure as possible upon State ceremonials. Nay, every man for himself, almost, has at the bottom of his heart a belief that he ought to be, not a labourer or carter, shoemaker or tailor, but the head of an ancient house, living not in his own mud cabin, but in the handsome residence of some English gentleman whose estate was wrongfully taken in "former times" from his—the labourer's or shoemaker's—ancestors.

Fenians talk of an Irish Republic, and the brave and honest men who led the rising of '98 undoubtedly heartily desired to establish one on the American model. But to any one really acquainted with Irish character to dream of such institutions for ages to come seems utterly vain. All the qualities which go to make a republican, in the true sense of the term, are wanting in the Irish nature; and, on the other hand, there is a superabundance of all the opposite qualities which go to make a loyal subject of a king; not too despotic, but still a strong-handed, visible, audible, tangible Ruler of men. Devotion to an idea, to a constitution, to a flag; respect for law *as* law; sturdy independence and self-reliance; regard for others' rights and jealousy of a man's own,—all these true republican characteristics are rarely to be found in Irishmen. Nay, the most important of all, the reverence for law, is almost, we might say, reversed in his nature. The true Irishman detests a law. He loves, indeed, mercy, retribution, many fine things which law may or may not produce. But the simple fact that a certain proceeding has been by proper authorities constituted a law or rule of

any kind, in public matters or private, is reason enough, in high or low, to make it secretly distasteful. As Coleridge used to say, that, "when anything was presented to him as a duty, he instantly felt himself seized by a sense of inability to perform it," so, to the Celtic mind, when anything comes in the guise of a law, there is an accompanying seizure of moral paralysis. Even if the law or rule be made by the offender himself, it is all the same. Having given it utterance, it is a law, and he dislikes it accordingly. On the other hand, nothing can exceed the generous, chivalrous personal and family loyalty of the Irish nature. But it is a Person he wants, not a Constitution or a Flag.

Of course, how far all these characteristics may be altered by residence in America we are unable to say. We write of the Irishmen in Ireland, from lifelong acquaintance. What dreams the Fenians in America may indulge, we are also in no position to know. But this we may safely aver: The Irishmen in Ireland who are caught by such schemes of rebellion and revolution are not, as might be thought, mere vulgar agitators, eager for notoriety or perhaps plunder. They are (such of them as are the dupes, not the dupers) men whose minds from childhood have been filled with anti-historic visions of Ireland's former grandeur, and who cherish patriotic indignation for her supposed wrongs, and patriotic hopes of her future glory. In a word, they live in a world of unrealities almost inconceivable to a cool Saxon brain; unreal splendours regretted in the past and utterly unreal and impossible future hopes. They neither see where England has actually wronged Ireland heretofore, nor how her Constitution opens to them now (were they but once united) the lawful means of obtaining all just redress and beneficial legislation they can desire. Instead of this, they are still talking of Tara and Kincora, of Ollamh Fodhla and Brien Boiromhe,

and dream in the year of grace 1866 to set England at naught with a few thousand undisciplined troops, and then burn down the hundred or two of handsome houses and banish all the cultivated people in the country (even including the priests!), to inaugurate a grand era of universal prosperity and civilization.

But however delusive the indignation and the hopes of the Fenians must be accounted, the sad fact remains, that old misgovernment and oppression have left behind a train of evil feelings, whose existence is only too real, however fantastic may be the shapes they assume. While three or four centuries sufficed to obliterate all trace of the Norman Conquest, and unite in indissoluble bonds of blood and language the two races who contended for mastery at Hastings, in Ireland, on the contrary, seven centuries have failed, not merely to efface, but even essentially to diminish the sharpness of the distinction between the conquerors and the conquered. Still, to this day, the two nations dwell in the same land, but are not united. Still each member of each race learns as his first lesson to which of the two he belongs, and recognizes, by some occult tokens, the race and creed of every man with whom he has dealings. Religious differences, of course, have come in to swell the side of mistrust, and to nullify the most strenuous efforts of the Anglo-Irish to gain the confidence of the Celts. In the books circulated in the baskets of the strolling pedlars, which constitute almost the sole literature of the labouring class, we have constantly seen the favourite tract entitled "A Father's Advice to his Son," in which the Catholic peasant is warned to put no faith in the desire of his Protestant neighbour to help him, and advised, *not*, indeed, to refuse his charity, but to return for it no gratitude, since a Protestant can have no real feeling for a Catholic. We have heard with our own ears O'Connell

say almost the same thing in Conciliation Hall, and tell his hearers that English subscriptions at the time of the famine were given from fear, not kindness. But even were all these false teachers silenced, were the enormous insult of the Irish Establishment retracted to-morrow, even then the root of national bitterness would not be killed. It would take generations to kill it.

Between fifty and a hundred years ago the Anglo-Irish gentry, as all the world knows, were a wild and extravagant race. Duelling and drinking were the two great duties of a gentleman. A young man was instructed how to "make his head" early in life, and to acquire the gentle art of pistolling his friends, when now he would be studying Greek under Professor Jowett, or "coaching" for a civil-service examination. It was in bad taste in those halcyon days for a man to leave a pleasant social party in a state of sobriety, and he was liable to be challenged by his aggrieved companions if he did it frequently. The custom of locking the dining-room door and putting the key in the fire, so as to secure a comfortable night (on the floor), was so common as hardly to deserve notice; and in many old houses are still preserved the huge glasses bearing the toast of the "Immortal Memory" of William III., and calculated to hold three bottles of claret, all to be drunk at once by one member of the company, who then won the prize of a seven-guinea piece deposited at the bottom. Gambling was not a pastime, but a business; and a business shared by the ladies. On rainy days it was customary to lay the card-tables at ten o'clock in the morning, and on all days the work began immediately after the four-o'clock dinner. Of all field-sports hunting was the favourite; and, of course, horses and hounds helped to run away with estates as well as cards and claret. Great pomp, however, of a certain semi-barbaric kind was the crowning extravagance. Everybody

drove four horses,—the loftier grandees invariably six,—with due accompaniment of outriders and running footmen. Dresses, jewels, and lace were of course in keeping with the equipage, albeit the furniture of the finest houses was what we should deem a strange mixture of magnificence and bareness, beautiful pictures on the walls, and no curtains to the windows, tapestry *fauteuils*, and a small square of carpet in the midst of a Sahara of plain deal floor. But the kitchen was the true scene of that Wilful Waste which assuredly brought Woful Want often enough in its train. Every gentleman's house served as a sort of free tavern for tenants, servants, labourers, and the relatives, friends, and acquaintances of tenants, servants, and labourers without end. Up-stairs there was endless dinner-giving and claret-drinking; down-stairs there was breakfasting, dining, and supping; only substituting beef for venison and whiskey for claret. One famous countess, coming into an estate of twenty thousand a year, with a reserve of one hundred thousand pounds, spent the whole, and left a debt of another hundred thousand, after Garter-King-at-Arms had been summoned from England to see her in state to her mausoleum as a descendant of the Plantagenets. An earl in the North, of no great wealth, was carried to his grave by a procession of five thousand people, all of whom were entertained, and three thousand clothed in mourning, for the occasion. But there is no need to go further into such traditions.

Were *these*, then, the people who earned the hoarded hate of the Fenian? Was it this coarse and stupid extravagance, contrasted with the abject penury of the peasantry (far greater then than now), which has left such indelible, bitter memories? Very far indeed is this from being the case. That age of lavish waste is looked back upon uni-

versally in Ireland as one of those "former times" which are to be for ever contrasted with the present,—an age of gold compared to an age of iron. True, the old landlords were harder on their tenants than any *dare* now to be; true, they neither improved land, nor built cottages, nor endowed schools, nor did one earthly thing to help the wretched and starving people in the face of whose misery they flaunted their splendour. But there was little or no bitterness of feeling toward them; for their faults were those with which the people sympathized, and their free-handed hospitality would have covered more sins even than they committed. Perhaps one of the very reasons why, in these last years, the never wholly quieted ground-swell of discontent has risen up in Fenianism is this, that the whole generation of which we have spoken has now utterly died out, and, since the Encumbered Estates Court has done its work, the families of landholders have undergone great changes, and, where not changed in race, have wholly changed in habits and mode of life. "Castle Rackrent" exists no more. Irish landlords have now neither power nor inclination to hold free quarters for all comers. On the other hand (we speak it advisedly), no class of men in Europe strive more earnestly and self-denyingly to improve the condition of those dependent on them, to build good houses for their tenants, open schools for children, and drain and fertilize the land. Let us hope that, as years roll on and generations pass, the tradition of imaginary wrongs, and the unseen but too real results of actual ones, will both pass away; and there may yet come a day in which it will not seem a satire to speak of the land of the Fenian and the Agrarian murderer as "THE ISLE OF SAINTS."

A DAY AT ADELSBERG.

[*Victoria Magazine, January,* 1864.]

A DAY AT ADELSBERG.

I AWOKE one morning in Constantinople with the resolution of pursuing my way as soon as possible towards a place I had long marked on the programme of my travels, the Grotto of Adelsberg, in Hungary. There were two modes of effecting the journey, the one *viâ* the Danube and Vienna, and the other round the Morea. The " Choice of Scipio " was pretty fairly represented for me by the rough and gloomy Black Sea, leading (where I knew I ought to go) to the yet unvisited regions of the North, and the sweet and smiling Bosphorus luring me to the already traversed Ægean. The Stoic example did not exercise sufficient force to determine my fluctuating will, and hearing the wind howling amid the domes and minarets of Stamboul, I hastened to take my place on board the good, nay, splendid, ship *Neptune*, bound for Trieste round Cape Matapan, and up the Adriatic. My little caïque plunged through the sea amid a shoal of dolphins past Seraglio Point, where the small bright waves for ever dance over the graves of so many hapless women. By-and-by I looked my last on Stamboul, and on that vast pile at Scutari to be henceforth associated through all time with English fortitude and English charity. Between Florence Nightingale and her band of nurses, and the poor slaves of the harem drowned under those blue waters, there was surely a gulf wider than that Bosphorus Strait,—wide as the whole capacity of womanhood for honour or dishonour.

Ere many hours were over we had swept down the Sea of Marmora, through the Hellespont, past the plains of Troy, and were gliding once more over the sunny seas of Greece. Whether it were one day, or two, or even three days, I cannot remember, before we had left the land of the Spartans, and Mount Elias, and Messene behind, and as evening drew on approached the northern groups of the Ionian Islands. The April night promised to be warm and soft, and I could not resist the temptation to enjoy it fully upon deck. The few passengers on board went below in due time, the crew were out of sight and silent, and, lying down on the pile of cushions prepared for me, I could take in all the scene without interruption.

It was one of those half-dozen nights one sees in a life-time; nights of a beauty transcendent and ineffable, which we vainly seek to reproduce in words. The sea was calm, not calm merely as our northern seas lie stilled sometimes in their fierceness; suggesting their past and future tempests even in their brief repose, and smiling only as might some sleeping tyrant, who never smiles awake. The Ionian waters lay hushed like little children weary of the long summer day's play, and resting in the peace of infancy till the morning breeze should waken them once more to dance and laughter. It was all absolute repose, without a ripple over the whole wide horizon. The young crescent moon shone mildly, not veiling with her radiance even the furthest of all the host of stars. Far behind us over the sea, as far as the eye could reach, the wake of the ship lay traced in a path of phosphoric fire, and the deep regular pulsation of the wheels in the still water, like the beating of a human heart, was the only sound for hours on the ear. So the night went on, still and calm like eternity, till it seemed as if nothing would ever break the silence any more. What infinite rest is there

in a night like this! Better than dreamless sleep, and beautiful as the "rapture of repose" upon the face of happy death. If there be one of all the dreams we have made of a future life which may claim some shadow of approval from reason, it is surely that which suggests that a condition of entire calm and silence should intervene after this life. Only a few hours of a calm night—a happy and beautiful night like mine on that Ionian sea—or a dark and dreary one—

"The deep unhappy midnight, when the rain is on the roof;"

how much do they not reveal to us of ourselves, of the meaning of our present acts and hopes, and of all the long buried Past! The chain of thought, no longer cut and broken at every link by the interruptions of daily existence, stretches out even like that grand track of fire in the wake of our ship. What would it be, to lie still and silent, without hunger or thirst or sleep, for a year, a month, or a few days only? How the world would be transformed for us, and how we should be transformed evermore! What truths might not such sustained flight of thought attain! What depths of remorse and agony would not conscience—the conscience even of the best of us—in that dread sounding fathom!

The hours went on over those calm waters of the Adrian Sea, and at last we passed under the lofty hills of Ithaca. The huge and massive cliffs half overhung the ship, and in the doubtful light looked grey and solemn. It seemed as if they bore somewhat of that grandeur which might well belong to the Isle which Homer sang; the strange dim grandeur of so many monuments of pre-historic time, like Stonehenge and Karnac and the Cyclopean ruins of all lands. A twilight seems always to hover round them. The men

who built them, the grey fathers of the world, must have worshipped on those vast altar stones as in the cold, chill dawn of earliest Religion.

For a long while we lingered near Ithaca; cape and headland loomed one after another over the masts and passed away behind us into the gloom. Then, to the left, uprose the higher and wilder outlines of Cephalonia. The midnight bell sounded in the silence, and then the moon began to sink lower and lower behind the mountains, while over the sea there arose a faint white mist which dimmed the glory of the stars. Still our trail of light stretched over the waters, and the great vessel panted on its way in the silence and the gathering gloom. By-and-by it was all shade and mist, the moon had set behind Cephalonia, the stars were gone, and the track of phosphoric fire ceased to shine. It seemed as if a spectral ship were moving through a visionary sea, all still, and dark, and silent. Suddenly, overhead, through the shroud of the mist, there loomed out a vast terrific wall of rock which towered up on high, till, almost lost in the night, appeared the summit; the Peak of Leucadia, "Sappho's Leap." There—down that sheer precipice of eight hundred feet (so tradition tells) fell the woman, whose name floats to us even now, like a perfume of orange-flowers wafted along the whole stream of History. Was that wild tale of genius and of passion indeed a true one? Or was it but a dream, and this its fitting close, only a poet's fancy of a poet's fate? Those few brief, burning words which descend to us as the echoes of her song, did they burst indeed from those rich lips? And here, under these dead, calm waters, did that tumultuous heart seek its eternal rest? We know not; we shall never know. Sleep, Sappho! Ideal for all time of woman's passion and woman's despair. Sleep beneath thy rock in the depths of the unfathomable sea.

May another ideal of woman's life and woman's hope arise from the heart of the world ere long, and point to a far different doom!

The morning broke over the snowy mountains of Epirus as we lay beneath

> "An Isle under Ionian skies,
> Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise."

It seems that these islands combine every condition of loveliness as none others well may do. First, there is beauty of form; then of colour. The outlines are varied; sometimes jagged and wild; sometimes huge and massive; sometimes soft and flowing. Everywhere the sea breaks through, in innumerable straits, and gulfs, and bays, producing endless change, each change lovely in its way. The Cyclades have this same beauty and variety of form, and to steam up through them from Cyprus is to pass through the most extraordinary panorama imaginable. But they are lacking altogether in verdure; there is among them all that dry bare ground without herbage, which first strikes us when we go anywhere south of Rome. Oh how the eye in those southern lands—Naples, Africa, Syria, Greece—longs for the rich sweet carpet which nature has laid down over the plains of our cold North! How the whole scene of hills and dales and olive woods bared before the blazing sun, looks to us like some splendid saloon glittering with lights and gilding, but left with an unsightly, dusty floor! We accustom ourselves, after a time, not to expect the earth to be emerald where the sky is sapphire, and to be content to rest our wearied limbs when we dismount from the day's ride on some cloak flung on the baked and dusty clay, instead of on the cool soft sod sprinkled with flowers and redolent of sweet clover and thyme, "the field-smells known

in infancy." Yet to the last I doubt that any one "to the manner born" can cease to regret the delight of lying among the buttercups in spring, looking up at the soft clouds sailing over the tender sky, listening to the larks and, mayhap, chewing, *not* "the cud of sweet or bitter fancy," but of the fresh juices of the young grass and the honey drops of the cowslips. Did any one at such a time sigh for the glitter and glory of the South? I do not believe it.

But to do the Ionian Islands justice, they have not only beautiful forms like the Cyclades, but rich colouring also, and such herbage as grows anywhere south of Switzerland. Then over the green earth and radiant blue sea, there tower in the distance the snowy peaks of the Albanian Mountains. Nothing is left to be desired of nature's architecture or nature's painting.

A day was spent pleasantly at Corfu in visiting old acquaintances, and another day and night no less pleasantly with well-travelled fellow passengers and the most courteous of ship captains—which is saying much, seeing that of all kindly and considerate men they seem the kindest. How many good-natured attentions and effective services I have received from them in sundry solitary voyages I cannot recount. Nor from them only! I could not recommend any better remedy for that deplorable disease—the distrust of one's kind—than that the patient (especially if a woman) should perform a long journey alone. If at the end of a year she does not acquire a firmly-rooted confidence that the world is full of kindly men and women, I am much mistaken.

Trieste is a city little interesting to a traveller knowing nought of its commercial prosperity. It has a large and beautiful cemetery, which it was a relief to see after the dreary cemeteries of Moslem countries, where Demoniacs

seemed intended to dwell amid the arid clods, and with the tombstones crowned with turbans, nodding at each other like imbecile spectres. At Trieste there are trees and flowers, and broad bright walks, a Garden of the Dead. One monument recorded in Italian that the lady who slept below had died "to preserve their father to her five children." How this new Alcestis performed her task is not narrated. In the old cathedral over the large apse behind the altar, there is a huge specimen of the ancient Byzantine mosaics. On a gold ground long tarnished and faded, a figure of Christ, half-length, but of colossal dimensions, rises from behind the altar and fills with its outstretched arms the whole semi-dome of the apse. On first discerning it in the darkened church, this grim terrific head looking down with the still, half human, half stony aspect of the old paintings, is well-nigh horrible.

Next morning before dawn I started by the train for Adelsberg, and found myself at the first light passing through a very curious country. What country it is *geographically* I cannot presume to say, I only speak of its geological conformation. There seems to lie in this corner of the map of Europe the most extraordinary conglomeration of states and nations of whose relative positions and accurate boundaries it must take a profound study to acquire a knowledge. Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Croatia, Carniola, Carinthia, Styria, Dalmatia, Albania, Montenegro, and some eight or ten more, where are they precisely, and what are their frontiers? Somebody knows all about it, no doubt, but this somebody is not the writer of the present article. What I do venture to affirm is that half the road between Trieste and Adelsberg (whether in Carniola or elsewhere) passes through a country of extraordinary geological formation.

The surface of the ground for some score of miles was

perfectly barren rock, a vast wilderness of low hills, and small dales; all grey and herbless. Only at intervals of a few hundreds of yards, more or less, were everywhere circular depressions in the rock, varying from a few feet to deep craters; and at the bottom of each of these holes was a round space well tilled and filled with corn or trees. Sometimes these little round fields were only a few yards wide, sometimes they might contain a rood or so of ground, but in every case they seemed to be cultivated to the uttermost. Nothing in the geological way that I have seen was much more curious than this series of little round gardens, sunk in the surface of the earth, and visible by glimpses as the railway ran above them. The form of each, whether larger or smaller, was as regular as an ant-eater's hole, a reversed truncated cone, perfectly circular at the top and at the bottom. It is this equal roundness on the surface of the ground which, as I am informed, marks the distinction between these curious pits and the craters of volcanic origin. Craters are always, of unequal heights on the different sides of the rim of the cup. These Hungarian pits were formed (an eminent geologist assures me) not by fire, but by the slow action of water, perforating the limestone rock, and forming subterraneous ponds whose roof of stone eventually fell in, leaving the circular basin regularly formed. The detritus and moisture lying at the bottom of each pit afforded sustenance for the vegetation carefully cultivated therein, by the poor peasants of the district, who possess no other soil.

Adelsberg, forty miles from Trieste, lies in a sufficiently pretty country partaking of the German type, and with its quaint little Teuton belfry peeping from among poplars and ash trees. The principal cavern (the whole district is full of smaller caves) is very near the station, and all the arrangements for seeing it with proper lights and guides, very well

and economically arranged. Two young German students making a walking tour were desirous of seeing it with me, and after engaging some four or five men with torches and Bengal lights, we soon entered the cave.

To pass underground and lose the sight of sunshine, and breathe the horrible atmosphere of caverns, is a matter, alas! very familiar to thousands of our fellow creatures, who spend their lives in the depths of coal mines and salt pits, or hewing out tunnels for our railways. Doubtless to them the law by which familiarity destroys all sense of awe is entirely fulfilled, and the coal or copper mine, a mile or two underground, is no more terrible than any other place. Without such habits, however, it must be avowed that the power of a vast, dark cavern to shake the nerves and try the imagination, is equal to anything else in art or nature. The gloom, the silence, the oppressive air, all tend to produce a peculiar sense of awe, sometimes, as in the case of funeral vaults and Pyramids, verging on actual horror. If the ancients had known of the existence of such a place as this Grotto of Adelsberg, what a part we should find it take in their mythologies. What Furies and Polyphemes and Demogorgons, what Hydras and "Chimeras dire" would not have issued from its portals to affright the world! Or, if the clergy of the Middle Ages, who turned the little cave in Lough Derg to such account, as the "Purgatory of St Patrick," were to have discovered this natural Pandemonium, where every awful and hideous object conceivable could be presented to the imagination of the visitor, what Calderon would have recorded for us the horrors of this real and actual Inferno, to throw Dante and Swedenborg into the shade for ever? Mysteries, indeed, whether heathen or Christian, could nowhere have been so fitly celebrated as here. No building erected by human hands, no rockhewn grotto of India, could for a moment compare

for impressiveness with this crypt and catacomb of nature's excavation.

I know not whether many, even among those who have rarely entered a mine or cavern, would have felt Adelsberg to be so solemn as it seemed to me. Perhaps all of us have got special objects of awe, which for some reason or other oppress us, and try our courage more than others. A storm at sea, a fire, a battle, a haunted room, the presence of the dead, pestilential diseases, are all alarming in different degrees to different people. But for solemn gloom which weighs down the heart and makes the breath come thick, surely there are no places in the world like the mysterious dark vaults under Baalbec, the Catacombs, the interior of the Pyramids, the Mamertine dungeons in Rome? To remain in any of these a few hours alone would try the nerves of many who would not blench at the cannon's mouth in the light of day. It is no wonder men have imagined Hell to be a dark cave. Wherever God's blessed sun may shine and the winds of heaven play there is no final horror, no absolute despair. Even death itself does not seem half so terrible under the open sky. It once happened to me to be called suddenly by terrified servants to look at the corpse of a man they had found, lying under a tree in an open field. It was some poor wanderer whose weary journeys in want and hunger had ended there; who had climbed through the park fence, and laid himself down in the long grass, with his poor torn clothes partly rolled under his head for a pillow, and his gaunt arm thrown back as in indolent repose. The setting sun was shining full on the sad and solemn sight as I came near, and very strange and unnatural it seemed; a dead man there in the quiet nook under the trees. But it was not terrible, not half so terrible as Death looks in the closed chambers of a house, surrounded with all the dread paraphernalia of the sepulchre.

It is in catacombs and state vaults that death itself is most sickening to the imagination. The fresh turf grave has no horrors, nor the funeral pyre, nor the depths of ocean. But those magnificent mausoleums which pride erects, those underground vaults where wealth hides its dead out of sight, these are places where the King of Terrors may hold his sway.

I cannot attempt to give any accurate description of Adelsberg. I confess the sense of awe weighed me down, and made me wholly incapable of asking questions, or even of listening to details of the heights of halls and lengths of corridors. I only know it was all vast, enormous, sublime. There were long, long galleries, and chambers, and domes succeeding one another, as it seemed, for ever. Sometimes narrow and low, compelling the visitor to bend and climb; sometimes so wide and lofty that the eye vainly sought to pierce the expanse. And through all the endless labyrinth appeared vaguely in the gloom the forms taken by the stalactites—now white as salt, now yellow and stained as if with age—representing to the fancy all conceivable objects of earth and sea, piled up in this cave as if in some vast lumber-house of creation. It was Chaos when yet all things slept in darkness waiting the fiat of existence. It was the final Ruin when all things shall return to everlasting night, and Man and all his works grow into stone and lie buried beside the mammoth and the ichthyosaur. Here were temples and tombs, and vast dim faces, and giant forms lying prone and headless, and huge lions sleeping in dark dens, and white ghosts with phantom raiment flickering in the gloom. And through the cavern, amid all the forms of awe and wonder, rolled a river black as midnight; a deep and rapid river which broke here and there over the rocks as in mockery of the sunny waterfalls of the woods, and gleamed

for a moment, white and ghastly, then plunged lower under the black arch into

> "Caverns measureless to man
> Down to a sunless sea."

It is in this deadly river, which never reflects the light of day, that live those strange fleshy fishes, without eyes, and seemingly without natural skin, hideous water-worms which have dwelt in darkness from unknown ages, till the organs of sight are effaced.*

Over this dismal Styx the traveller passes on further and further into the cavern, through seemingly endless corridors, and vast cathedral aisles and halls without number. One of these large spaces is so enormous that it seemed as if St Peter's whole church and dome could lie beneath it. The men who were with us scaled the walls and threw coloured lights around, and rockets up to the roof, and dimly revealed the stupendous expanse, an underground hall, where Eblis and all his peers might hold the councils of Hell. Further on yet, through more corridors, more chambers, and aisles and domes, with the couchant lions and the altar-tombs and the ghosts and the great white faces all around; and then into a cavern more lately found than the rest where the white and yellow marble took forms of screens and organ pipes and richest Gothic tracery of windows—the region where the Genius of the Cavern had made his royal Oratory. It was all a great, dim, uneasy dream. Things were, and were not. As in dreams we picture places and identify them with those of waking life in some strange unreal identity, while in every particular they vary from the actual place; and as also in dreams we think we have beheld the same objects over and over again, while we only dream we see them; and go on wandering further and further, seeking for some unknown

* The Proteus Anguineus.

thing, and finding, not that which we seek, but every other thing in existence, and pass through all manner of narrow doors and impenetrable screens; and men speak to us and we cannot hear them, and show us open graves holding dead corpses whose features we cannot discern, and all the world is dim, and dark, and full of doubt and dread—even so is the Cavern of Adelsberg.

A LADY'S ADVENTURE

IN THE GREAT PYRAMID.

[*Once a Week*, *April* 14, 1866.]

A LADY'S ADVENTURE IN THE GREAT PYRAMID.

THE state of Coleridge's mind when he wrote his fragments of Kubla Khan must have nearly resembled that of any reasonably excitable person during a first visit to Cairo. Just a degree too vivid to be a natural dream; many degrees too beautiful and wonderful to be an ordinary daylight vision, the rich dim courts, the glorious mosques, the marble fountains, the showers of southern sunlight poured on stately palm-tree and slow-moving camel and shifting, many-hued crowd—all form together a scene such as no stage in the world may parallel for strangeness and splendour. One day spent in roaming aimlessly through the bazaars, and the gardens, and the mosques of Hassan and the Gama Tayloon does more to reveal to us what Eastern life means, what is the background of each great Eastern story, the indescribable atmosphere which pervades all Eastern literature, than could be gained by years of study.

At least, I can speak from experience that it was such a revelation to me, and one so immeasurably delightful that, having performed the long journey to Egypt mainly with the thought of the attractions of the ruins of Thebes and Memphis, Karnak and Philæ, I waited patiently for a fortnight within sight of the Pyramids without attempting to visit them, satisfied with the endless interest of the living town. At last the day came when the curiosity of some quarter of

a century (since that epoch in a child's life, the reading of Belzoni) could no longer be deferred. I had a *concern*, as good folks say, to visit Cheops that particular morning, and to Cheops I went, mounted on the inevitable donkey, and accompanied by a choice specimen of that genus of scamp, the Cairene donkey-boy. Unluckily I had overnight ordered my dragoman to wait in Cairo for certain expected mails, and bring them to me in Old Cairo whenever they might arrive; and of course the order involved my loss of his services for the entire day; spent by him, no doubt, with my letters in his pocket, at a coffee-shop. Thus it happened that my little expedition wanted all guidance or assistance; such acquaintances as I possessed in Cairo not even knowing of my intentions.

Arrived at the ferry of the Nile, just above the Isle of Rhoda, it was with considerable satisfaction that I found a party of pleasant English ladies and gentlemen also proceeding to the Pyramids. Their time, however, was limited by the departure of the Overland Mail that day, and of course they could make no delay (as they seemed kindly disposed to do) to keep up with me and my wretched donkey, or rather donkey-boy.

If there be an aggravating incident in this very trying world, it is assuredly that of being mounted on a non-progressive donkey, unarmed with any available whip, stick, spur, or other instrument of cruelty, and wholly at the mercy of a treacherous conductor, who pretends to belabour your beast, and only makes him kick, and keeps you behind your party, when you have every reason in the world to wish to retain your place in it. Only one thing is worse; a mule which carries you through a whole day of weary Alpine climbing, just too far from all your friends to exchange more than a scream at intervals. If there chance on such an ex-

cursion to be ten pleasant people of your party, and one unpleasant one, whom you particularly wish neither to follow nor seem to follow, it is inevitably that particular, objectionable person whose mule your mule will go after, and press past every one else to get at, and drag your arm out of its socket if you try to turn it back, and finally make you wish that an avalanche would fall and bury you and the demon-brute you have got under you in the abyss for ever. On horse-back you are a lord (or lady) of creation, with the lower animal subject unto you. On mule-back, or ass-back, you are a bale of goods, borne with contumely at the will of the vilest of beasts; not where you please, but where, when, and how *it* pleases.

To return to my expedition to the Pyramids. Very soon the English party were out of sight, and slowly and wearily I was led a zig-zag course through fields of young growing corn and palm-groves, and past the poor mud villages of the Fellah-Arabs. Mud, indeed, occupies in Egypt an amazing prominence in every view. Mud hovels, mud fields, where the rank vegetation is only beginning to spring through the deposit of the inundation, mud-dams across a thousand channels and ditches, and finally the vast yellow mud-banks of the mighty Nile. If man were first created in Egypt, it is small marvel that his bodily form should be a "muddy vesture of decay." In the course of my pilgrimage on this particular day my donkey-boy cleverly guided me into a sort of peninsula of mud, out of which there was no exit (short of returning on our steps) save by crossing a stream of some three or four feet deep. As usual in Egypt, two or three brown Arabs arose immediately when wanted, from the nearest brake of rushes, and volunteered to carry me across on their shoulders; their backshish, of course, being divided with the ingenious youth who had brought me into the trap.

What it costs to the olfactory organs to be carried by Fellah-Arabs language altogether fails to describe.

At last the troubles of the way were over; the sands of the Desert were reached, and the stupendous cluster of edifices, the three Pyramids of Ghizeh, the Sphinx, the Cyclopean Temple, and the splendid tombs, were before me and around. For miles off, in the clear air of Egypt, where there is literally no aerial perspective, I had been able to distinguish the ranges of stones which constitute the exterior of all the Pyramids, save the small portions of the second and third still covered with their original coating. It was hardly, as Longfellow says:—

> "The mighy pyramids of stone
> That wedge-like cleave the desert-airs,
> When nearer seen and better known
> Are but gigantic flights of stairs."

Almost as soon as they come within the range of vision they are seen with their serrated edges and the horizontal lines of the deep steps, marked sharply with the intense shadows of the south.

Of all these ruins of Ghizeh, these earliest and mightiest of the records of our race, the one by far the most affecting and impressive is assuredly the Sphinx. A human face, nay, an intensely human face, a portrait full of individuality even in its solemnity and colossal grandeur, gazes at us with the stony eyes before which have passed Hebrew prophet and Greek philosopher, and Roman conqueror, and Arab khalif. Had Napoleon the Great told his troops that sixty centuries looked on them through the Sphinx's eyes he would have used no unmeaning metaphor. Even the very ruin and disgrace of the mighty countenance seems to render it more affecting. Half immeasurably sublime, half pitiful, nay,

grotesque, in its desolation, it stands, with its brow calmly upturned to heaven, and a somewhat which one might almost deem a ruddy flush upon its cheek, but with every feature worn and marred since it has stood there, a stony St Sebastian, bearing through the ages the shafts and insults of sun and storm.

I must not pause to muse over the Sphinx, nor yet to describe the gradual revelation which comes to the traveller of the enormous magnitude of the Pyramid, as he slowly wades at its foot through the heavy sand, and perceives when he has walked thrice as far as it seemed he need have done, he has but reached the half of the base.

The English party, who had outridden me, were concluding their luncheon as I reached the Pyramid, and after declining their cordial offers to share it, I asked one of the ladies, "Had she visited the interior and Cheops' chamber?" "No. Some of the ladies and gentlemen had done so. The Arabs were a wild set of men, and she did not like to put herself in their power." Deeming the lady's caution must be over-developed, and too intensely interested to make very serious reflections on what I was doing, I engaged the Scheik at the door of the Pyramid to provide me with proper guides so soon as the English party had ridden away. Five strong Fellah-Arabs volunteered for the service, in spite of my remark that three were enough, and we were soon plunged into the darkness of the first entrance-passage. All the world knows how the Pyramid is constructed: a solid mass of huge stones, so perfectly fitted that scarcely a penknife might be introduced in any place between them. The passages at the widest scarcely permit of two persons going abreast, and are for long distances so low as to compel the visitor to stoop almost double. The angle at which these passages slope upwards is also one which, on the slippery well-worn floor,

renders progress difficult as on the ice of an Alpine mountain. But, oh! how different from the keen pure air, the wide horizon, the glittering sunlight, of the Alps, this dark suffocating cavern, where the dust, and lights, and breath of heated men make an atmosphere scarcely to be breathed, and where the sentiments of awe and horror almost paralyze the pulse. Perhaps my special fancy made me then, as ever since, find a cave, subterranean passage, or tunnel, unreasonably trying to the nerves; but so it was—the awe of the place well-nigh overpowered me.

The Arab guides helped me easily in their well-known way. One or two carried the candles, and all joined in a sort of song at which I could not help laughing, in spite of both awe and lack of breath. It seemed to be a chant of mingled Arabic and English (a language they all spoke after a fashion), the English words being apparently a continual repetition:—

> "Vera goot lady, backshish, backshish;
> Vera goot lady, give us backshish;"

and so on, *da capo*. Twice we had to rest on our way from sheer exhaustion, and on one occasion, where there is a break in the continuity of the passage, there was an ascent into a hole high up in the wall by no means easy to accomplish.

At last, after what seemed an hour, and I suppose was about fifteen minutes, since we left the sunshine, we stood in Cheops' burial-vault, the centre chamber of the Great Pyramid. As my readers know, it is a small oblong chamber, of course wholly without light or ventilation, with plain stone floor, walls, and roof, and with the huge stone sarcophagus (which once held the mummy of Cheops, but is now perfectly empty) standing at one end. The interest of the spot would alone have repaid a journey from England; but I was left small time to enjoy it. Suddenly I was

startled to observe that my guides had stopped their song and changed their obsequious voices, and were all five standing bolt upright against the walls of the vault.

"It is the custom," said one of them, "for whoever comes here to give us backshish."

I reflected in a moment that they had seen me foolishly transfer my purse from the pocket of my riding-skirt to the walking-dress I wore under it, and which I had alone retained on entering the Pyramid.

"Well," I said, as coolly as I was able, "I intend, of course, to give you 'backshish' for your trouble, and if you choose to be paid here instead of at the door, it is all the same to me. I shall give three shillings English (a favourite coin in Cairo), as I said I only wanted three men."

"Three shillings are not enough. We want backshish!"

"There they are. They are quite enough."

"Not enough! We want backshish!"

Things looked rather black. The Fellahs stood like so many statues of Osiris (even at the moment I could not help thinking of it), with their backs against the wall and their arms crossed on their breasts, as if they held the *flagellum* and *crux ansata*. Their leader spoke in a calm dogged sort of way to which they all responded like echoes.

"Well," I said, "as there are five of you, and I am rather heavy, I will give you one shilling more. There it is. Now you will get no more." Saying this I gave the man the fourth shilling, and then returned my purse to my pocket.

"This won't do. We want backshish!"

"It must do. You will get no more backshish."

"It won't do. We want backshish!"

Each moment the men's voices grew more resolute, and I must avow that horror seized me at the thought that they had nothing to do but merely to go out and leave me there

in the solitude and darkness, and I should go mad from terror. Not a creature in Cairo even knew where I had gone. I should not be missed or sought for, for days, and there I was, unarmed and alone, with these five savages, whose caprice or resentment might make them rush off in a moment, leaving me to despair. Luckily I knew well it would be fatal to betray any alarm, so I spoke as lightly as I could, and laughed a little.

"Come, come. You will have no more backshish, you know very well; and if you bully me you will have *stick* from the English consul. Come, I've seen enough. Let us go out."

"We want backshish!" said all five of the villains in one loud voice.

It was a crisis, and I believe if I had wavered a moment I might never have got away; but the extremity, of course, aided one's resolution, and I suddenly spoke out, angrily and peremptorily—

"I'll have no more of this. *You* fellow there, take the light, and go out. *You* give me your hand. Come, along, all of you."

It was a miracle; to my own comprehension, at all events. They one and all suddenly slunk down like so many scolded dogs, and without another syllable, did as I ordered them. The slave habit of mind doubtless resumed its usual sway with them the moment that any one asserted a claim of command. At all events, it was a fact that five Arabs yielded to a single Anglo-Saxon woman, who was herself quite as much surprised as they could be at the phenomenon.

O, how I rejoiced when the square of azure sky appeared at the end of the last of the passages, and when I at last emerged safe and *sane* out of the Great Pyramid! Dante

ascending out of the Inferno, "a riveder le stelle," could not have been half so thankful. Away I rode home to Old Cairo on my donkey, and could spare a real laugh under the sunshine when I found that the wretched old Arab Scheik, with whom I had left my riding-skirt, had quietly devoured my intended luncheon of dates, and then carefully replaced the *stones* in my pocket!

THE DIABLERÊTS.

THE DIABLERÊTS.

ABOUT eighteen miles from Aigle, in the Valley of the Rhone, and some half-dozen miles beyond any road which wheels may travel, lies a vast dale closed in by mountains, the loftiest of which bears the strange name of the Diablerêts. Why it should be that all over Christendom the loveliest and grandest spots should bear the name of Devil's Mountains, Devil's Glens, Devil's Gaps, Devil's Punchbowls, and the like, we cannot say. The "Son of the Morning," to mediæval imagination, was the most hideous being art could depict. Only a later age makes Sin anything but ugly. That hateful monster of hoofs and horns should naturally be associated rather with poisonous swamps and deceptive morasses luring the traveller to ruin, or at best with barren and thunder-riven precipices and crags, like those of Mont Pilatus, than with the rich sweet hills and dales of Killarney or Cumberland. If history permitted the hypothesis, we might almost suppose that the old pagan Pan, whose form the Christian artists so rudely borrowed for Satan, was still present as the god of Nature in the minds of those who gave such names to Nature's noblest scenes. However this may be, these Swiss Devil's Mountains are assuredly more calculated to make any man think of Heaven than even of this low and sin-stained earth, not to speak of nether dens of wickedness and despair. How the eye mounts up by imperceptible steps, gazing on such altar stairs! First, the wide bright green valley, with its glancing streams and dotted châlets; then

the deep dark pine-forest climbing up the lower slopes of the mountains; then the bare barren grey crags, where the chamois has his home and the eagle his nest; then the glaciers in the enormous hollows of the hills, and above them again, far away, the white summits of glittering snow; and over all, so high, so pure, so holy, the great deep blue heaven, seeming as clear as if our eyes might reach up through it, even to the far-off throne of God.

It is almost too much to look often and long upon such scenes. The sublime in nature either lifts us up into regions of overwrought emotion, or failing to work on our poor grovelling souls, leaves us baser than we were before; clods of the valley, to whom the thunder appeals in vain, while rocks and cliffs are rent by its echoes. A man must become a poet, prophet, fanatic among the eternal solitudes of the Alps, or he must cease to raise his eyes to them more than do his cattle or his flocks. He must become greater than ordinary man, or sink to the mere clown and money-seeking slave. Why else is it that Switzerland has never yet produced a poet, painter, musician? Why have those loveliest valleys, those stupendous mountains, those fairest of earthly lakes, those murmuring waterfalls and thundering avalanches, spoken nothing through all the thousands of human souls who have been born under the shadows of their forests, and have slept their last sleep with the singing of the fountains for their lullaby and requiem? Why is it that even no special nobility, nor that simplicity and unworldliness which is the truest nobility of character, should have marked among European nations the people who count among their heir-looms Lucerne and Lake Leman, the Matterhorn and the Yungfrau? Freedom has not failed them. They have been crushed under no tyrant's heel since the fabled days of Tell (for Switzerland's own hero was a hero of fable), nor have

they been shut out from the comity of nations, a despised and degraded race. Switzerland is not politically, nor socially, nor commercially unfortunate. Only that which we might have taken for granted her mountains must have done they have not done for her. They have failed to create a single artist worthy of the name; they have failed to ennoble the Swiss people beyond the greed of gain, the meanness of money-getting ambition. English Byron is the poet of Switzerland. Swiss soldiers are the mercenaries of every tyrant in Europe.

To visit a sublime scene, to behold for a brief period a sublime sight is to the æsthetic nature of man what a prayer is to his spiritual nature. It exalts, purifies, glorifies him. But as hermits and monks and nuns, who have sought to make prayer not the supreme uplifting of life, but its hourly employment, have failed and sunk into inanition and supineness of soul more dead and hopeless than that of him who has never prayed, so the dweller among the loftiest sublimities of the physical world, who hourly beholds scenes formed to strain every sentiment of awe and admiration to their uttermost tension, loses the power to feel them at all, and becomes an earthlier and more sordid being than if he had never lifted his eyes beyond the common ground. Could I choose the scene on which my eyes should perpetually rest, it would not be such a stupendous miracle of grandeur as the snow-crowned Alps. Neither should it be a vast desert plain, the nearest approach to the Alps for sublimity. It should not be the desolate grandeur of old Rome beheld from the heights of the Capitol, with the Forum and the Colosseum below, and the Campagna with all its tombs and ruined aqueducts beyond. I would not even dwell for ever by the shores of ocean, to feel its restlessness, its anger, and its moaning discontent call to the depths of my own soul for echoes it might perchance awaken. But

I would fain awake each morning to behold the soft green sward and glowing flowers of some grand old garden opening out on woods of hoary trees, amid which the rooks and the herons have their nests, and at whose feet the hares play, and the sheep lie sleeping. And miles away I would see the sea breaking in with a glimpse of azure, and the far-off mountains lying like clouds on the horizon. Such a scene—"Abode of Ancient Peace"—would I fain behold in age even as in youth, feeling that from its rich, soft calm the soul drinks in happier influences than from any other upon earth.

But whatsoever we might desire for a life-long gaze to rest upon, certain it is that few scenes in the world can give more keen pleasure for transient view than these sublime summits of the Alps. Never does the blue sky, "bending over all," seem half so translucently, spiritually blue as when before it, up high into the dark depths of the zenith, rises snowy dome and glittering peaks; the domes and spires, not of Stamboul or Milan, but of a New Jerusalem, let down from the sky and built for giant archangels to worship therein. Never does the earth glisten with such emerald hues, or wear such wreaths of wild flowers on her breast as in the upland Alpine fields, where the solitary herdsman tends his cattle through the long summer days, far away above all tumults and troubles of the world, a lonely Stylites, with a mountain for his column and the gentle beasts with wondering eyes for his innocent fellow-hermits.

The valley of the Diablerêts differs from the other lofty sites among the Alps chiefly in virtue of its remoteness. As we have said, there is no road, only a rough track for horses and mules, leading into it; and the nearest approach to a town is eighteen miles away. It is one of the highest

altitudes regularly inhabited, so that even in fierce summer heats the air is cool as in an English spring day, and the grass and flowers for ever bright and fresh. Sometimes in the midst of July and August the snow falls suddenly, and the hills all round take their winter robes, and the poor cattle in the upper pastures have to be hastily housed in such sheds as may be found. When men were dying in the streets of Paris from heat, one such storm came to us on the Diablerêts, and we awoke out of summer into a white world of snow. But Nature, like Jairus' daughter, tossed away the winding-sheet laid over her too soon, and rose up in an hour all smiles and roses, and the children brought us the Alpine strawberries sugared over with the snow.

The houses of the inhabitants of the Diablerêts are built of a dark brown wood, the colour of sienna, which has a rich effect contrasted with the green of the mown grass meadows around them. Very pretty châlets they are, and so numerous, one might imagine there were more houses than men to dwell in them. There are châlets for winter in the villages at the bottom of the valley, and châlets for summer high up the hills; châlets which become sheds for cattle in the snow, and châlets which are only solid heaps of wood, piled for future building. The latest built of the houses are as plain and little adorned as the original plan of a Swiss châlet, with its deep eaves and low pitched roof, may well permit. But a hundred years ago these wooden houses were built with the utmost care and pride, and were destined manifestly to shelter generations of pious Vaudois, from father to son. They are large and solidly constructed, and upon every available part of the exterior and interior elaborate and fanciful patterns have been carved, while rows of miniature windows, with their diamond panes bright as care can make them, glitter in

the sun. Across the front of each house, most laboriously wrought of all, these descendants of

> "The slaughtered saints, whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,"

have always carved some pious inscription, dedicating the house to God. Here are two of them not very like anything we commonly see, either in Switzerland or elsewhere—

"Dieu tout-puissant! Répands ta bénédiction sur cette maison et sur ses habitans, et faites qu'ils jouissent après la mort de ton grand salut éternel!"

"Par le secours de Dieu, Jacques Moyse et sa femme ont fait construire cette maison, l'an 1765. Père éternel! faites qu'en quittant ces lieux terrestres ils trouvent une asile dans les cieux."*

Placed in the midst of light green meadows, and nearly always with a mountain stream and a tree or two close beside them, these old châlets are as pretty objects as may be seen. A few common flowers are always to be found in the little patch of garden, and close by, on the banks of the torrent, ferns and wild raspberries and currants, and an abundance of the sweet natural flowers which spring up in every nook of Switzerland. Years ago, when these old houses were built, and when probably not a single traveller from France or England, not to speak of far-off America, had ever wandered into the valley of the Diablerêts, how nearly the lives of the inhabitants must have approached to our idea of pastoral simplicity,—and, alas! how wonderfully different must have been the feelings of those who longed for the "grand salut

* Almighty God! Spread thy benediction on this house and its inhabitants, and grant that after death they may enjoy thy great eternal salvation.

By the help of God, Jacques Moyse and his wife have caused this house to be constructed, A.D. 1765. Eternal Father! grant that when they leave this earthly home they may find refuge in heaven.

éternel" from that of their mercenary and thoroughly earthly-minded descendants! Their names are, indeed, still repeated with Puritan quaintness. No French "Césars" and "Adolphes," but biblical Josephs and Pauls and Maries. One we knew—a fine stalwart mountaineer—who bore familiarly the strange appellation of "Christ." But the characters of old "Jacques Moyse" and his contemporaries must, we suspect, be strangely reversed in those who hold their place. Above all did we notice, that not one of the peasants of the Diablerêts could be brought to express the smallest admiration for the splendid scenery around him, while, with every one, the acknowledged object of all hope and ambition was to be able to quit the valley and dwell for the future in one of the small sordid and vulgar towns, upon the unhealthy plain below.

It appears, indeed, as if the supposed tendency of the Swiss native to *heimweh* or *mal-du-pays* is very much open to question. If the *ranz des vaches* affects them abroad, they are at all events very little affected by any patriotic sentimentalism (not immediately connected with powder and shot, banners and declamation) at home. In every other country in the world up to Iceland, the "fairest land" is proverbially the native country of each speaker. In Italy the *contadino*, the poor hack carriage-driver, the very beggar will stand entranced before the sunset or moonlight effects upon the scene. But the nonchalance with which a Swiss mountaineer, even in the remoter and lonelier glens, replies to all observations on the beauty of his native land is, to say the least, disheartening. Even the salubrity of the climate is acknowledged with a sort of grumble. We once met a woman of Montreux, apparently of extreme age, but still brisk and sturdy, and able to climb nimbly up the precipitous slopes of her village. We addressed her respectfully, and

when we had learned various particulars of children and grandchildren, such as the aged love to tell, we congratulated her on her health and on the fine climate which had secured it so long.

"Oui, Madame," said the old crone, with a tone of injury, "oui, Madame, les étrangers disent que c'est un beau pays. Mais — que voulez vous! Ma foi—qu'est-ce-que ç'a me fait? *On ne meurt pas ici!*"

There were living in the village at that time, as I afterwards learned, at least a score of men and women whose ages exceeded eighty, and, in many cases, ninety years. The poor old woman to whom I spoke seemed to resent for herself and her contemporaries the dilatoriness of Death!

Such mountains as the Diablerêts necessarily appear very differently to him who can scale their mighty walls in the vigour of youth and strength, and to him who can only behold them from afar, inaccessible to his feeble feet as the clouds and the stars. It must be in truth a joy—as many an Alpine traveller has told us, and as we have many times read in the sparkling eyes of those who have just descended, like Moses from Sinai, with the glory still reflected on their faces—to mount up over rock and crag, through fields of snow and over icy chasms deep and cold as death, till the uttermost peak is reached at last, and the world, with all its lakes and plains and towns, lies far below. To conquer *man* is doubtless a dreadful joy. But to conquer *Nature,* nature revealed in all her grandeur and power, at the very hour when she lies vanquished, and all the ramparts of her eternal solitudes have been scaled and won, this must be a joy more rapturous even as more undefiled than the other.

But he who cannot look up to the Alpine crags as a conqueror, or even as an assailant, who has no sense of human power to help him to resist the awful impressiveness of their

mighty masses, to him the sight of them day after day, towering for ever on high above him, is not joyful, but terrible. To the slow pulses and feeble spirits of sickness the very effort to lift up the mind to the dazzling glaciers so far aloof becomes almost a pain, and our weary and baffled thoughts, like tired birds, sink down from their soarings, and nestle suddenly among the flowers at our feet. The Alps crush the soul which lies helpless on the ground before them. Only when it happens that some glorious storm sweeps over the world, and stirs the blood with its electric currents, and beats on the bared forehead with the freshness of forgotten youth, then sickness and health are levelled, and man again is "lord of all"—a "sharer in that fierce and far delight." The tempest in nature brings him repose.

Thus it came to one who lay all the bright summer long helpless and suffering, carried forth daily to lie beside the stream which flowed down cold and white from the glacier and sang under the alders its eternal *Miserere*. Around was the sweet, rich mountain grass, and the bees murmuring in the clover; and in front that tremendous concave of cliffs and snow, the magnificent Diablerêts. All day long it was beautiful, but towards evening, when the sun went down over the wild western hills, it grew lovelier still. The valley, rich and wide, with all its woods and pastures and bright brown châlets and falling streams, became one grand Cathedral, whose walls were the noble mountains to the north and to the south, and whose chancel was the gigantic apse wherewith it closed,—a splendid sanctuary truly, with the pine-forest for a carpet, and the glacier for a marble shrine. As the light fleecy clouds floated softly across the snow and took the rosy shades of sunset, the cliffs grew grey and dark beneath, and it seemed as if there

were a great hush and silence, waiting for the orison of the world.

But not always was it thus calm and still. Once, as the evening closed after the sultry summer day, the valley seemed invaded on all sides at once by black armies of clouds charged with lightning, and streaming up like vengeful furies on every side; not borne by the wind, but bringing with them the hurricane. Then all was changed. The vale, so calm and bright an hour before, was a chaos of storm and darkness. The thunder broke forth at last, and at its voice, remembered in far-off days of youth and strength, the heart of the woman who lay helpless beneath it leaped up to answer it. Pen and paper were near, and these were the words the storm dictated to her as she sate alone under the alders by the river :—

"Roll ! roll ! roar and crash !
Magnificent thunder ! roar !
The clouds on the mountain break and dash,
Like tempestuous waves on the shore,—

"And up from the depths of the valleys around
Huge volumes of vapour arise,
As if nations in battle were struggling beyond,
And their cannon smoke mounted the skies.

"Down ! down ! lower and lower !
Black cloud with the outspread wings,
Like a bird of night from thine eagle tower,
Sweep down to the glacier springs.

"The mountain is hid 'neath the lurid shroud,
Only the white snow gleams
Through a rift aloft in the torn, wild cloud,
Like a vision of heaven in dreams ;

"The vision of purity angels win
For a moment revealed to the soul,

Ere again the billows of passion and sin
In storm and oblivion roll.

"Flash! flash! arrow of light,
Down the crags by the chamois trod,—
Strike to the heart of the pine-forest's night,
Like the withering glance of a God.

"Roar, roar, roll and roar,
Glorious thunder! Roll!
The storm and the fury of Heaven's great war
Is the joy of a human soul."

THE

STATE VAULT OF CHRIST CHURCH.

[*Macmillan's Magazine, June,* 1864.]

THE STATE VAULT OF CHRIST CHURCH.

THE cathedral of Christ Church in Dublin is probably nearly the ugliest specimen of Gothic architecture in existence. The impressions, gorgeous or sublime, which we have enjoyed under the arches of Cologne or Winchester,

> "Or loveliest Milan, or the Sepulchre,
> So dark and solemn, where the Christ was laid,"

were utterly wanting in this mouldering old pile—huge, shapeless, and desolate. Part of the building claims to be coeval with the Danish sea-kings of Dublin, but of architectural beauty or merit of any kind there is entire dearth. Sordid whitewash, damp-stained and dust-begrimed, covers the walls; and blank, dank, dark and cold spreads the forlorn and useless nave, where the shattered statue of Strongbow lies on his altar-tomb—a desolate conqueror, forgotten and alone.

Into this disheartening place some researches of a genealogical kind guided my steps a few years ago. It was my desire to discover whether a certain Archbishop of Dublin, dead a century since, had been buried in the Cathedral, and, in such case, what record of the event could be discovered.

The well-disposed sacristan aided me to the best of his abilities to examine all the monuments through the building —monuments whose paucity made the task a brief one— and then announced that he could help me no more. There was but one chance remaining. The prelate might have been deposited in the State-vault under the chancel

without any tomb or tablet having been erected to his memory above-ground. His coffin might possibly be discovered there; but then, of course, I could not (so thought the sacristan) undertake the disagreeable task of descending into this vault and examining the various coffin-plates to find the one I desired. It did not seem so clear to me that this was impossible. The search was one I was anxious to accomplish satisfactorily; and it needed, apparently, only a little strain upon the nerves to do so. I asked the man whether he would accompany me to the vault; and, as he consented after slight hesitation, we were soon in the crypts of the cathedral, prepared with candles for our gloomy task.

If the upper part of the building were desolate, these crypts beneath it were a thousand times more so. The low arches rising out of the earthen floor extended in all directions in long dark vaults, down which our lights, of course, penetrated but a little way, leaving the gloom beyond unexplored. Above there had been the roar of the streets and the glare of the summer sun. Here the darkness and stillness were so absolute that the sacristan's little son, who had followed us thus far, exclaimed, in a suppressed voice of awe:

"How silent it is here!'

"Ay, my boy," said his father, "this is the place of silence. Those we are going to visit are the silent indeed."

The child looked wistfully at the man, and stole back to the sunshine, and we passed on without him to a low door in an archway, which the sacristan opened with ponderous keys—a mockery, as it seemed to me, of the peaceful prisoners within.

Of the size of that chamber of death I cannot speak. It did not seem very large, and the stone roof bent down low overhead; but it was full, quite full. All round the walls

double and treble tiers of coffins were piled up to the height of several feet, lengthways, crossways, upright; and in the centre space stood several large coffins, on tressels, evidently of more recent date than the rest. One of those nearest the outer door was of handsome crimson velvet, and in the darkness I had rested against it to regain a little of the composure which the first sight of the vault had disturbed.

"That is the coffin of poor Archbishop L——," said the sacristan.

I started, for the good old man had once been near me in *life*, when, as a child, I had been at sea on a stormy night, and had stolen up on deck above. He had made me sit beside him and share his warm cloak, and I had afterwards learned to connect his name with that kindly shelter given to an unknown child. Now he was beside me again — but had no warmth to offer more.

The single candle borne by my guide glimmered feebly in the thick air of the vault, and it was some time before we could estimate where there was any probability of finding a coffin of the age of the one we sought. There were some, as I have said, quite recent, and others evidently of great age. The oaken lids of some had been broken or were removed, and within lay *something*, vaguely defined, one did not dare to look at too closely. Others, again, might have belonged to the last century; and among these the sacristan commenced his search. I confess I did not watch his search with any great interest. The object which had brought me there, and many other things besides, seemed too small to be regarded in that place, where the one only great event of human existence was commemorated. The sight of the dead is at all times to most of us the source of an awe which amounts to physical pain, like a stone-cold hand laid on the heart; and in going down into the vault I had not been sorry to accept

the occasion for overcoming such feelings. But even they were forgotten when actually there. There was no disgust; no terror. Only the one clear idea brought out into the foreground of thought till it filled the horizon—"DEATH!"

The man laboured on while I stood pondering. Coffin after coffin he had looked over, examining the names upon the plates. They had all belonged to men of rank, usually to such as had held some high office and had died in the city away from their ancestral mausoleums. One coffin was surmounted by a ducal coronet, another by that of an earl. Then came mitres of bishops and archbishops. As the dust lay thick over all, the sacristan had recourse to the expedient of pouring a drop or two from his candle on each plate, and rubbing it till the inscription became legible. Then, with doubtful voice, he spelled out, "The most noble the Marquis of * * *!" "His Grace the Lord Primate!" "The Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice * * *!" and so on, and so on. On some of the plates were coats-of-arms well known to me; on others names which had been familiar from childhood, whose owners' portraits hung round the walls of my home. Those pompous titles, deciphered now with a farthing candle in their dim vaults—those dust-engrained armorial bearings—those miserable tarnished coronets and mitres—no language can tell how pitiful they seemed.

At length the sacristan paused. If the coffin we sought were anywhere, it was buried under a pile of others, which could not have been moved without dreadful disclosures. We had been nearly an hour in the vault, and I begged him to desist from further search and come away. Before doing so, however, he looked round for a few moments, and approached a coffin whose lid was broken off, and within which some poor remnants of mortality lay visible under the yellow winding-sheet and the dust accumulated over it. Out

of this the man lifted carefully a singular object. It was a large heart of solid silver, and within it, when shaken, might be heard a faint sound, proving, doubtless, that it enclosed another which once had beaten in a human breast.

"This was brought over from France," said the sacristan, "long years ago, by a French nobleman. They say it was at the time of the French Revolution. He kept it with him till he died, and then he ordered it to be buried with him in his coffin. No one knows anything more of it, or remembers the name of the nobleman; but each sacristan receives it when he undertakes his office here, and transmits it safely to his successor. See! it is a beautiful mass of rough silver, not tarnished in the least!"

No; it was not tarnished! Those tinsel coronets and mitres and crests were all soiled and rusted; but the SILVER HEART, the fitting casket and type of human love, was unhurt by the mouldering decay of the sepulchre. I should vainly strive to describe the happy revulsion of feeling which the sight of that heart caused in me. I had been reading the lesson of the paltriness and misery of mortal pride and ambition in those pompous titles graven on the rotting coffin-lids in the vault, till it seemed as if the whole summary of our history was "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust"—

> "A life of nothings, nothing worth,
> From that first nothing ere our birth,
> To that last nothing under earth."

But here was a lesson of another kind. The love of which that heart was the memorial was not of the things which rust and perish in the grave. Honour and power all ended in that vault of death; their owners brought them just so far, and then left them on their coffin-lids. But Love had not ended when the faithful friend who had cherished its memorial through exile and bereavement was

laid low in that sepulchral chamber, with his long-hoarded treasure by his side. There was a *beyond* for Love, though not for Pride. Life here below was not all transitory and vain, with hopes and passions ending in the disgrace and ruin of the grave—a chain of "yesterdays"—

> ". . . Which have but lighted kings
> The way to dusty death. . ."

There was somewhat therein which might survive and endure for ever; somewhat beside the divine aspirations of religion; somewhat purely human and yet susceptible of immortality; somewhat which would not be laid by, like the coronets and crests and mitres, in the grave.

I took the Silver Heart reverently from the sacristan, and as I held it in my hands I thought: "Perchance that love which once made the little handful of dust herein to kindle and throb, is at this very hour a living love in heaven, filling with the joy of the immortals two glorified souls in the paradise of God."

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

[*Macmillan's Magazine, March,* 1865.]

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

On Mona's desolate shore, in a cavern by the sea, there dwelt long ages ago the last of the Druids. None knew whence he came or how long he had lived there alone; some said it was for a hundred years, and others that it was for a time far beyond the age of man, and that the Druid was no other than Merlin himself, who had seen Arthur die, and had dwelt in the halls of Caerleon, and worshipped in yet remoter time in the sun-temple of Stonehenge. Men and women travelled far to visit the solitary cavern where the Druid dwelt, and to ask him to reveal to them the mysteries of life and death; and kings came to consult him regarding war and the polity of states, and priests asked him concerning eternal things; and to all of them the Druid made response, and his words were wise and deep, and were treasured in many souls.

Now it came to pass one evening in the later autumn, when the air was still and shrouded, and the sere leaves were slowly dropping from the trees, and the salt green sea cast its tribute of wrack and shells at the door of the Druid's cave, that there came up together from different lands many suppliants, and they all entered into the cavern to entreat the seer to answer their questions and give them counsel. And behold the Druid sat on a stone in the depths of the cave, and the red firelight shone on his white raiment, and his hair and beard were white as snow, but his eye was blue and calm and sweet, and none who looked on him felt any

more fear. And the suppliants drew near and saluted him reverently; and he bowed his head in token that they should speak, and each of them in turn spake; and the first said unto him:—

"O Druid! I am a queen of far-off islands, and my king, who loved me well, loveth me no more, nor seemeth to heed me; and I have given him my father's crown, and loved him with my whole heart. What must I do to awaken his love?"

And the second suppliant spake and said:—

"O Druid! I am a knight, and I loved a lady who once gave me her troth; and I have borne it on my helm through many a bloody field, and I have brought her back glory and fame; yet she loves me no more. What must I do to awaken her love?"

And the third suppliant spake and said:—

"O Druid! I am a rich man, and I loved my brother, and divided with him my lands and gold; but he loves me no more. What must I do to awaken his love?"

And the fourth suppliant spake and said:—

"O Druid! I am a bard, and I loved not one man only, but all the good and wise, and I poured out my soul in song; but they loved me not, nor responded to my words. What must I do to awaken their love?"

And the fifth suppliant spake and said:—

"O Druid! I am a seeker of knowledge, and I love my race, and have imparted to them the truths I have read in the stars and gathered from the ends of the earth; but they love me not, nor regard my lessons. What must I do to awaken their love?

And the sixth suppliant spake and said:

"O Druid! I am not great, nor wise, nor rich, nor beautiful; I am but a poor maiden, and I love not only the

good and learned, but also the weak and the ignorant, and I give them all my tears, and all my life; but they love me not, and, because they love me not, I cannot serve them as I would. What must I do to awaken their love?"

And the seventh suppliant spake and said:—

"O Druid! I am a mother, and I love my only son; and I had no crown, or honour, or lands, or art, or wisdom, to give him; but I gave him what was more precious than them all—a mother's love. Yet he loves me not. What must I do to awaken his love?"

Then the seven suppliants stood silent, and the Druid sat still for a little space. And the night had fallen while they spake, and the fire had burned low, and the cave of the Druid was dark. And it came to pass, as they waited patiently, that the depth of the cavern seemed to become light, as if a luminous mist were filling it. And, as they gazed at the mist, behold! as if reclining on clouds, lay a form as of a beautiful youth, more beautiful than any of the children of men; and he lay asleep. And the Druid spake to the suppliants and said:—"Behold now, and see how Love sleepeth; and how heavy are his slumbers; and who is he that shall awaken him?" And lo! there came through the mist a train of beautiful forms, and each of them passed by the couch of Love, and strove to waken him with kisses and with tears. And some tried hollow smiles, though their eyes were dim; and others were seen to wring their hands and kneel at his feet in agony; and others brought him crowns, and sceptres, and gold, and gems, and stars of honour, and wreaths of fame, and they cried with exceeding bitter cries, "O Love, awake! awake!" But Love slumbered on, nor heeded any, and his sleep was unbroken alike by their kisses, or gifts, or tears.

Then there came forth from the mist another form, pale

and cold, and dressed in the cerements of the grave; and it passed slowly nearer and nearer to the couch, till its shadow fell like the shadow of a cloud over Love as he slept.

Then Love sprang up with a wild and terrible cry, and held forth his arms for those to return who had striven to waken him so long, but who now were passed away beyond his reach for ever. And the Druid turned mournfully to the suppliants and said:—"Only this solace have I for your aching hearts, SLEEPING LOVE WILL WAKEN WHEN OVER HIM FALLS THE SHADOW OF DEATH!"

ALURED.

[*Temple Bar Magazine, August,* 1866.]

ALURED.

AN ALLEGORY.

UNDER the shadows of grand old trees, in the varying light and shade of an English summer's day, a young man paced moodily.

"I will break this avenue," he thought. "I abhor this monotony of height and size and foliage. Uniformity is unnatural, and therefore for ever hideous. Nature never makes trees grow in lines in the virgin forest, or mountain chains straight-topped like walls. It is our tyrant taste which plays with the woods as despots do with their soldiers; and our miserable artificial civilization which brings about the still worse monotony of human society. O these men and women who surround me! Shall I ever reconcile myself to their dull conventional talk, their colourless characters, the endless sameness of their pursuits and ideas? The men are bad enough; but their monotony is now and then disturbed by some passion, good or evil, ambition or hatred, wine or women, the race-course or the gaming-table. But the women, these high-born and well-trained dames, my mother brings round me, hoping to find me willing to chain myself to one of their dead souls for life. What empty shows and mere spectres of real women they are!—of women such as Shakespeare drew, or Titian and Praxiteles saw in their dreams!

These women, with their paltry forms, their flimsy minds, their shallow hearts—who can talk of love to such beings? And they are all alike, as if cast in one common mould. What one of them thinks, another thinks; what one says, another says; what one feels, another feels. If they ever had a spark of fire in their earthy natures it was extinguished in their childhood. Only one woman did I ever know—my poor, lost Angela—who had will, and power, and thought, worthy to be loved and honoured. Would that she had lived! Would that I had loved her better while yet she might have been my wife! O would that I could find a being whom I could wholly, perfectly love, one whose thoughts should lift me up to nobler life, whose beauty should, like that of the old Greek statues, fill my heart with the rapture of their deep repose, one whose love should be my glory and my joy, and for whose dear sake I might yet become a man among men, and strike a blow in the great battle of the Right and the True. Could I find such a woman as *this*, methinks this rust of life would be brushed off, and my soul would leap forth as a sword from its sheath. I could love such a woman—surely I could love her—as man never loved before. Let me but find my Ideal, and my mother shall weep no more over my lonely, embittered, and inglorious life. A new existence should begin for me then."

Alured had wandered on deep into the forest, and stood still at last in an open space where a small conical hill seemed to testify to Druid handiwork. The thick trees shut it in round its base, and for miles away there was the silence of the woodland solitude, broken only by the cawing of the rooks, and the hum of summer insects, and the rustle of the hare in the fern. Looking upward at the mound as he stood at its foot, Alured was startled to behold a figure standing on the small green space on the summit, and looking

down on him earnestly. The more he gazed the greater grew his astonishment and wonder. It was a grand, majestic form which he beheld—

> "A daughter of the gods divinely tall
> And most divinely fair"—

the limbs and bust, noble as those of the Venus of Milo; but the face, rather wearing the soft beauty, the ineffable calm, sad smile of the Psyche of Praxiteles. Was it a lady of mortal mould before him? Alured could not tell; hitherto he had seen such a form only in his dreams, or in the marble of the mighty sculptors of old. Over her limbs and broad, high bosom flowed the folds of a white robe, so pure that it glistened in the sun, and her hair hung in rich masses, like the ripples of a golden river, from her shoulders almost to the ground. But there was yet more; somewhat which made Alured's heart stand still with the awful sense of beholding the superhuman and divine. Over the high brow, and seeming to rest on the rolling locks of gold, there was a gleam, a shimmer as of a light, a star which needed but the coming of twilight to shine out in fuller radiance. Alured could not speak. He stood still with his hands clasped, then slowly, reverently, ascended the mound towards her. At last, when he had approached her nearly, and her godlike beauty broke in full upon his heart, he sank upon his knees and lifted to her his face, pale with wonder and adoration.

Hours passed away, and the sun went down over the forest, and the twilight came, and the nightingale sang, and still the lady sat on the Druids' Mound, and Alured lay at her feet. The lady smiled on him, yet with somewhat solemn in her smile, and spoke to him in a low, soft voice,

which seemed, in some unknown way, to thrill him like a voice recalled in the memory of childhood. Alured spoke to her of all he had longed for and dreamed, and the lady answered him with words of sympathy, and noble counsels of faith and virtue. And she spoke to him of other worlds higher and holier than this, and of the light of unknown suns, and the radiance of moons unseen by human eyes; and of flowers, whose beauty and fragrance gave even the immortals joy. And Alured's heart beat fast, for he felt she spoke of such things as one who had known them. Then she spoke again, and told him of the mighty dead; of Plato, beside whom she had wandered in odoriferous groves, where the olives of the Academe were remembered; of Antoninus, whose kingly soul had been her guide; of "starry Galileo," whose solemn face she had seen lighten with a smile, telling how he had striven to behold through his glass the world where now he dwelt. Then she spoke of duty, and of the eternal right; of things which hold true in every world for ever; and of that great LOVE in which all creatures live and move throughout a boundless universe.

And Alured bent lower and lower, and bowed his head and said:

"O lady! I am not worthy to be near thee, or to speak to thee. Bid me depart, and die."

And the lady answered, and said:

"Not so, O my friend! I have sought thee, and come to thee from afar."

And Alured took the hem of her garment and kissed it, and buried his face in the grass. And the lady remained silent; and the nightingale sang in the wood. Then the young man lifted up his eyes and looked at the lady. And behold! the star on her head shone out now in the evening gloom with the mild radiance of Hesperus, and she sat still

with the star gleaming over her, like the statue of a holy saint.

And Alured was afraid of the star, and yet he loved it as a crown on the head of his beloved, and he said:

"Lady, tell me thy name, and how shall I call thee?"

And the lady answered, and said:

"Call me Stella, for thou fearest my star: and thou shalt not fear, but only love."

And the lady lifted her hand, and drew a tress of her hair over the star, and the star was veiled in a golden mist.

"But thou sayest thou wilt leave me, Stella," said Alured. "Thou wilt return to thy home, far off, and forget me;" and Alured wept like a boy.

And the lady answered, and said:

"I go, dear Alured, but also I return, if so thou willest it should be. See how the moon rises full-orbed, to-night, behind the trees. When she rises again in her full glory I shall be here, on this old mound amid the woods again. Wilt thou meet me, Alured, my friend?"

And Alured swore he would meet her, were rivers of fire in his path; and the lady smiled softly; and slowly and gently arose, and passed away into the dark green depths of the forest.

Then Alured awoke as from a dream, and sped him homeward to his castle: but his heart and thoughts were with the lady of the forest, and he answered his aged mother as if he heard not her voice, and refused to see his companions and friends, and spent his days in roaming alone through the great lonely woods.

And when the time of the full moon was come he hastened to the Druids' Mound, while his heart beat wildly with fear and hope.

And the moon rose at midnight, and there was a tempest

in the woods, and the trees rocked and crashed in the autumn gale, and the sere leaves fled before the storm, and the birds shrieked with terror. At last the moon shone out between the black rolling clouds, and tipped their borders with silver, and, through the rift, from the depth of the dark blue of heaven the stars shone down like the eyes of God unveiled.

And Stella and Alured walked together in the forest. And the soul of the young man swelled within him as the storm beat on his brow, and the freshness of the autumn night quickened his blood. And he wooed Stella with all the passion of his soul, and told her how he had longed for one who should be above and beyond the women of earth, who should not think their thoughts, nor speak their words, nor wear their false looks. And he told her how her stately grace and matchless beauty entranced him, but how her mind and soul called forth still deeper homage from his heart, and how to call her his own, his wife, was the highest ambition he should ever know.

Stella looked at him as he spoke, and smiled lovingly on him and said:

"Alured, in thy dreams thou didst long for a woman not of earth—a woman of larger, nobler soul than thy kindred, of higher gifts and of mightier love; but, Alured, deceive not thyself, deceive not me. Dost thou indeed desire me—such as I am—to be the wife of thy bosom, the companion of thy brightest as well as of thy gravest hours?"

Then Alured arose, and the moon shone on his brow, and his eye flashed brightly, and he said:

"Ay, Stella! I desire to have thee to be the friend of my life, the wife of my heart, the companion, witness, guide, of every step of my earthly way."

"Be it so, then, Alured," said Stella; "I will be thy wife."

And Alured took that star-crowned form in his arms, and kissed the lips which had tasted of the wine of heaven; and Alured fell senseless on the Druids' Mound, and lay without thought or motion.

In a fair chamber of a stately house Alured sat alone by the autumn fire, and looked around him thoughtfully. On the walls hung beautiful pictures, and, shaded by crimson draperies, gleamed marble statues; and there were flowers in precious vases, and books of many themes, and instruments of music. It was the chamber Alured had prepared for his bride; the bride whom he should see on the morrow. With a young man's love, he had lavished wealth and care in preparing this home for her who was to be the lady of his paradise, and in making it worthy of Stella. Yet Alured sate silent and downcast, and it seemed as if he were not the same as he who on the Druids' Mound had sunk overpowered with the rapture of Stella's love. As he looked around him, he strove to picture Stella dwelling there, and the more he strove the more faint grew the vision of his fancy; the more unreal it seemed that she—that stately being, great and wise above all he had ever dreamed—should come to him and be his wife, and dwell in an earthly home. Nay, as he strove to conjure up the reality of his hopes, it seemed as if a dead cold doubt came over him. "Would it be *well* she should thus come?" Her goodness, her wisdom, her graces, and gentleness, were perfect, and beyond all words of praise; but would not that very beauty make all things beside it seem bare and dull; would not that wisdom and goodness prove too high and majestic and solemn for all Alured's moods of pleasure, ambition, weariness? Alured's soul darkened as he thought. He felt himself, and hated to feel, poor and mean of nature, and that he could not endure the effulgence he had called down upon his

common earthly life. How should he bear to gaze always on that perfect beauty? How should he hold always that high converse? How should he live that noble, holy, devoted life which Stella should not scorn? How (and as he thought it the shameful flush dyed his temples)—how should he bear to hear the idle wonder or empty jests of his friends at the beauty and the wisdom alike above their standard and their comprehension? Then again, his mood changed, and his thoughts went back to Stella's gentleness and love, to her face of ineffable loveliness, to the power and truth of all her words; and a gush of his old love came over him, and he cried: "What can there be in earth or hell not worth striving or bearing if only I may call that seraph of heaven my own, and welcome her here, my wife, the angel of my home?" Suddenly Alured grew pale, and paused. "Home!" he murmured. "Will it be homelike with Stella? Can I breathe in the air she breathes; strain my languid thoughts up to her height of genius; gaze on that sun-like beauty and never grow bewildered with its brightness; be great and good as she is high and holy; and love her—love her with that supreme and perfect love she asks?" Alured sate silent. That high-strung life, that passionate emotion to which Stella had awakened him, exhausted him to contemplate as the duty and the sentiment of all his future years. He sank into anxious, miserable thought, and step by step his memory went back over his past youth, over the burning hours he had spent with Stella, over the dreary void of the time ere he beheld her, when he had longed to find such ideal women, and despised all others; and then at last back to the love of his boyhood, to Angela, whom his wayward fancy had first offered love, and then neglect, and who had died—he knew not how, but knew himself guilty. "Ah, Angela!" he murmured. "Angela, thou hadst not Stella's unearthly

beauty, nor Stella's eloquent lips, and knowledge of things above a mortal's ken. But, Angela, would not thy humbler love have been dearer? would not my life have been happier beside thee, than lifted up by Stella into that air, too clear and pure and bright for mortal breath?" Thus Alured pondered doubtfully.

The day appointed came, and at sunrise Alured stood on the Druids' Mound. Already the wintry frost had come, and the sun rose redly over the woods, and the dead fern under the trees looked like the feathers of slaughtered birds, and the grass upon the mound was drenched with dew and scattered over with decaying leaves. Alured was calm and frigid in the morning light, and almost asked himself whether all he had seen on that mound had not been a vision of the moonshine hours. By-and-by, out of the thicket Stella stepped forth. Alured could not see that divine form, that face of speechless love and gentleness, without feeling his heartstrings stirred with warm emotion. He came forward and clasped her hand, and drew her towards him. Stella yielded to his caress, but looked at him searchingly, and then, as he could almost fancy, brushed a tear away from her eyes.

"Stella, my beloved," he said. "Dear Stella, I have been labouring to make my home worthy of thee. How soon wilt thou come and dwell there with me for ever?"

"Alured!"

"What is it that disturbs thee, my beloved?" said Alured.

"Alured, how wouldst thou that I should come to thy home? Shall I come as thou hast seen me, with the star on my brow? Shall I come thus to thee, dear Alured, as the bride of thy heart?"

Then Alured grew pale and his voice faltered, and he

spoke doubtfully. "As thou willest so let it be, Stella, my beloved."

"But will this be as thou wouldst have me, Alured?"

And Alured took courage and looked round. The sun was shining cold and clear; the woods were stripped of their leaves and showed their stems, black and sharp against the sky, and through an opening where the storm had stricken them he could see his own ancestral castle, and the familiar windows of his chamber glittering in the rising sun. On the one hand was the real, on the other the ideal—the world of every day, and the world of his dreams. Alured thought he might reconcile the two. He answered Stella:

"Dearest and fairest! To me thou art best as I have seen thee first. I love thy soft star. Behold how I kiss the hem of thy radiant robe! But all the men and women of earth are not like me, nor would they understand thy beauty. Since thou wilt have me say all I desire, then, beloved, grant me my prayer. Reserve thy star for my happy eyes alone, and veil it, or lay it by, if so thou mayest, when others behold thee. Deign to come to me as a human bride, and not as a daughter of higher worlds unknown."

For a moment the white robe closed round Stella like a veil, and Alured deemed he heard one long sobbing sigh. Then she cast back her garment and the waves of her red-gold hair, and smiled and said:

"Be it so, dear Alured. Thy bride shall be as the daughters of earth, and none shalt deem thou hast wedded a being more than mortal."

There was somewhat in the voice of the lady as she spoke these words, which brought a chill to Alured's heart; he knew not why. It seemed as if a treasure, more precious than rubies, had been taken from him. For a moment he hesitated, and something within him prompted him to pray

Stella to forget what he had said, and to come to him in all the glory of celestial beauty. But he looked towards his home, and thought of his mother and his friends, and he answered:

"Thanks, dearest Stella; thanks a thousand times. I shall love thee far better since I, and only I, shall know from how great a height thou hast descended to bless me. And now, beloved, bid me wait no more, but tell me when thou wilt be mine own?"

And Stella answered and said:

"Nay, Alured, much more must I learn now of my duties, and of what thou wilt desire of thy future wife, ere I come to thee and take my place at thy side without causing thee any pain. There is much to be changed ere I can become such an one as men may deem thy fitting bride. I may hide this radiant star; but this white glittering robe, wouldst thou have me change it, and restrain these flowing locks, and put from my feet these golden sandals? Shall I change this garment of heaven for the dress thou wilt bring me from the great city?"

"Ay, dear Stella," said Alured; "if so far thou mightest condescend, I would greatly rejoice."

"And my words, Alured? Shall I speak no more of nobler worlds and grander feelings than this world and the feelings wherein thou hast dwelt? Shall I bring wisdom no more from the lips of the mighty dead, and reason no more of Life and Death and Duty and Immortality?"

"To *me*, to *me*, dear Stella, thou shalt speak of these things when we are alone: but before the world thou wilt surely learn to speak as others of the things of the hour and of the trifles which interest other women?"

"One word more, Alured! I have loved thee with a high and holy love, and while our two souls may dwell in

that great joy, even thy poor world would be as heaven in its gladness. Tell me, Alured, canst thou thus love me always? Wouldst thou that I should love thee in such wise—even so that life might be all glorious with truth and faith and noble aims and fervent aspirations? Wilt thou live with me on earth as we might live in heaven?"

And Alured looked upon the ground and muttered:

"I will surely love thee always tenderly, Stella; I would have thee love me the same."

"Nay, Alured, I ask not only for tenderness. Tenderness without honour or holy sympathies, or noble thoughts and deeds, is no tenderness for a daughter of that world whence I have come. Toy not with me more. If it might be that I could love thee with a more earthly love and be content with such love from thee, wouldst thou have it so?"

And Alured was ashamed to answer, and his heart smote him with self-contempt; but he bowed his head in token of acquiescence.

When Alured looked up after a moment's pause, he started to find that Stella was no longer beside him. He gazed anxiously around in the cold grey dawn, but saw her not.

"Stella! Stella!" he cried. "Come back, my beloved, come back! I spoke hastily. Never would I have thee change even so much as one hair of thy royal head. Come back, my glory, my queen! Come to my home with the star on thy brow, and thy robe of light around thee! Come to me, light of life!"

Then there came a voice, he knew not whence, but it seemed to be near him, and yet above him in the air.

"Never more, O Alured! never shall I visit thee more! I heard thy sighings, and I came to thee, for I loved thee, Alured,—I who was once thy cousin, Angela, who roamed these old woods beside thee in our childhood, who listened to the vows of thy boyish love, and then who passed away

from this poor home below to the blessed land on high. Thou didst sigh for thine ideal of beauty and of goodness, and I came to give it to thee; for the Ideal of earth is the Real of heaven, and all the high visions of men of the holy and the beautiful are but the prophecy and the shadow of that which the Blessed are. But, Alured, thine heart failed in thy trial; failed to lift itself up to thine ideal, even when it was given to thy prayers. Thou wouldst not have me as I am; thou wouldst have changed me to the semblance of the very beings thou dost despise. My star of glory, my robe of purity, my words of heaven's wisdom, my very love, so high and holy, thou wouldst have had me cast aside. Thou couldst adore thine ideal far away; but, brought near to thee, it only struck fear and awe to thy weak and worldly heart. Fear not, Alured! That ideal shall haunt thee no more. Fear not thy life shall be too high and noble, thy bride too beautiful and wise. Not I, such as I am, with the form of the immortals: not I, who have breathed the serene air of paradise, and learned the secrets which are beyond the grave: not I, with the glistening white robe around me and the star of light on my brow: not I, nor such as I, shall be thy bride. But thy bride shall be of the clay, and her soul shall be like thine own, full of worldly thoughts and pitiful ambitions, and her love shall be cold and shallow like thine. And day by day, as thy youth fadeth, even so shall fade away every aspiration after the holy and the beautiful which once enchanted thee. Farewell, Alured; a last farewell! Till the heavens be no more, we meet not again."

Then Alured flung himself on the earth and buried his face in the dust. And he arose and went his way and returned to his home. And Alured wept not again for any joy or any grief to the day of his death.

THE SPECTRAL ROUT.

PASSAGES FROM THE DIARY OF A GOVERNESS.

[*The Shilling Magazine, December,* 1865.]

THE SPECTRAL ROUT.

PASSAGES FROM THE DIARY OF A GOVERNESS.

AMONG the many families ruined by the various troubles consequent on the Irish famine, there were few whose fall called forth more general sympathy than that of the Rockinghams of Moreland. Accustomed as people grew in that sad time to those great disasters, those social deaths, as we may count them, of a whole race together, there were few who did not feel more than an ordinary pang on seeing in the fatal lists of the Encumbered Estates Court the name of that beautiful castle, known throughout the land for the magnitude of the efforts of its owner to improve the condition of his tenantry. To me especially the shock was painful, for in my position of governess to Mr Rockingham's youngest daughter I had learned to feel a most sincere attachment to the whole family. When dismissed about a year previously (with lavish recompense for my services), it had never occurred to me as possible that that splendid property of park and wood, cornfields and pastures, could be seriously embarrassed. Thus it proved, however, too sadly. Mr Rockingham was observed by his daughters to fall gradually into a low and anxious state of mind, and to undertake several journeys of whose purport they were left in the dark. Still no warning was given them, and no retrenchments attempted in their household,

till their father caught the prevalent fever in one of his tenant's cottages, where he was visiting the sick. Aggravating the disease by anxiety of mind and depression of spirits, Mr Rockingham soon lay at the point of death, and then the terrible truth was revealed. Adela and Florence were beggars. There was little chance that when the encumbrances were cleared off, the sale of the estate would leave any residue for them, and this sale was now inevitable. A few months' delay took place; but at last all was accomplished, and the ruin of the Rockingham property was found to be hopeless and complete.

Those who have never grappled with poverty, who have never known the meaning of the curse, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread until thou return to the ground," never guess what is labour, cheerless and unremitting, whose only rest must be the grave. Still less have they dreamed what it is to be willing to work, and yet find not the means to earn that bitter bread. Such people may talk easily of beggary and ruin, but *I* knew better; and when I thought of the weariness, anguish, wearing anxiety I had endured even in the profession to which I had been educated from childhood, I asked myself how such troubles could be borne by those proud girls, nurtured in all the habits of lavish liberality common to the Anglo-Irish landed gentry. A letter which I wrote to Miss Rockingham, expressing my heartfelt sympathy in her misfortune, and proffering such poor services as might be within my limited powers, brought from her an answer, of which the following is a copy:—

"My dear old Friend,—Your letter has done me good. That assurance is my best way to thank you for it. When we meet I shall tell you why your words awoke other feelings than those called forth by the numerous condolences of

our connections and acquaintances. I write to you to-day to beg you will do us an important service, and it is some relief to me in my desolation to know how eagerly you will seize the opportunity of lightening our difficulties. Pray procure for us the two very cheapest rooms to be let in Dublin in any locality not altogether unfit for us to inhabit. We must have *two* rooms, because Florence and I have resolved to endeavour to sell articles of millinery, in whose manufacture we think we shall succeed better than in plain work or dressmaking, of which, as you know, we are sadly ignorant. I can hardly write calmly of such things. Only think of my darling, splendid Florence—— I must not think of this. Oh, dear friend, how little did we dream in the happy years when I learned to be grateful to you for moulding Florence as no other governess could have done, that instructions so much humbler than those you gave her would ever have been needed! She would reprove me if she saw this letter. She is so brave, so calm, almost gay at some moments. I have no temptation to repine for my own sake, for any other loss, while she is left to me, but for her sake it is all very bitter. Write to me when you have secured our rooms in Dublin, as we must leave R—— immediately.

"Ever yours gratefully,

"ADELA ROCKINGHAM."

To this letter I returned in a few days the following reply :—

"My beloved Miss Rockingham, — You judged me rightly when you said that I should eagerly seize the opportunity of doing you the smallest service. Immediately on knowing your wishes I set forth in search of such lodgings as might suit you, but was for many days unsuccessful. There

are no really cheap apartments on this side of the town except in streets you could not inhabit. I have, however, been fortunate enough to find an abode for you which, I think, will be for many reasons more desirable than such a lodging as that of which you spoke. You do not know Dublin very well, as I remember, so you are probably unacquainted with the old quarter of the town near Dominick Street. It consists of large houses, many of them still handsome and tenanted by respectable people, others much dilapidated and inhabited only by paupers. One of these streets is extremely quiet, having no thoroughfare, and the few large houses of which it is composed having few occupants. It would therefore be no improper abode for you; and when I found that the whole of your great-grandfather's, old Lord Galtimore's house was to be let for less than such rent as would procure you two respectable rooms on the south side of the city, I did not hesitate to engage it for you for the next year. I do not conceal from you that it is entirely destitute of furniture, and that the walls and ceilings are in sad condition from damp and dirt; but such as it is, your position in the house will be far preferable to any you could obtain elsewhere at the same expense, and I feel confident you will approve my choice. The old woman who has charge of the house lives on the opposite side of the street, and would act as your charwoman if you desired it. I asked her how it chanced that the price of so large a building could be so trifling, and she muttered something about the 'quality' having left this part of the town, and the poor being 'afeard of the cowld in them big rooms.' I have some suspicion, however, that she is herself 'afeard' of something besides the cold, for she made great demur about entering the large back drawing-room, and crossed herself vigorously when I made an observation on the odd appearance of an old looking-glass still on the walls, from

which nearly all the quicksilver has departed. I daresay you will see old Lord Galtimore in it some of these days! Dear Miss Rockingham, I am trying to give you a smile, but my heart is aching; I have so much, so very much to say to you about yourself and my dear, dear pupil, but I will not write it to-day. Tell me on what day I may wait for you at the railway-terminus and bring you to S—— Street."

A fortnight later Adela and Florence Rockinghan were established in their new abode. At first they hardly perceived or understood the nature of the life they were preparing to lead. Florence made immense efforts to seem amused with the new circumstances in which they were placed. She led Adela through the desolate rooms, debating with mock earnestness which of them should be devoted to the reception of their guests and which to their boudoir, library, and billiard-room. The front parlour of the house was of comparatively small dimensions and tolerably clean and cheerful; this therefore they agreed should be the show-room for their millinery. Behind it was a vast dining-room, gloomy and dreary beyond description, with its leather hangings torn to strips on the walls, and its great black marble mantelpiece all disjointed and falling to pieces. On the first floor were four rooms, three of moderate size, the fourth of the same dimensions as the dining-room. This had formerly been the state drawing-room, and in it yet remained two articles of furniture recalling its ancient splendour. In the central panel of the four windows which occupied its length there stood what had once been a magnificent buhl pier-table, and over it a mirror reaching to the ceiling, of which I had taken notice on first seeing the room. Nearly all the brass had been stripped off the table, and the gilt locks taken from its numerous draws and openings, but it was so firmly fixed both

to the wall and floor, and was of such massive proportions, that no one had been at the trouble of removing it. The looking-glass—as was the fashion in Ireland in the last century—was intersected in all directions by wreaths of flowers in carved wood; but from these the gilding had nearly all departed. On the summit were the shield and coronet of the House of Galtimore, which had become extinct on the death of the last lord, whose only daughter was the grandmother of Adela and Florence.

"See," said Florence, gaily, as they were wandering through the rooms, and examining this solitary piece of furniture,—"see, Ady! There is our own dear old saltier between the four lions which we bear on our second and third quarters. I have it here on the ring you gave me. Why, we are quite at home, are we not, with our own shield over our looking-glass?"

"Yes," said Adela, with that pride of birth which always increases with the loss of worldly wealth,—"yes, we are the only family entitled to quarter the Galtimore arms, and they are as old, it is said, as Sir Hugh de Morbihan, from whom their name of Malvern was corrupted. By the way, do you recollect that curious story of the curse on the first Protestant Earl of Galtimore?"

I am afraid that in her heart Florence knew the whole matter as well as Adela; but seeing her sister brighten up a little in speaking, she answered,

"What was the curse exactly? Was it not in consequence of great-great-grandpapa Galtimore getting possession of some lands belonging to a nunnery?"

"They say so; and then the Abbess gave him the most horrible curse, with bell, book, and candle. She said, 'You have left us no peace in the cloister, and you shall have no peace in your bed, and no peace in your grave; you nor

yours till the Judgment-Day. Wicked shall the Malverns live, and wicked shall they die, till their lands be given to others, and their wealth lost, and their name forgotten.' "

"That was a Christian-like sort of a curse, certainly," said Florence; "and as strange as any of those of the Barnwells or Kavanaghs."

"The *strange* thing," said Adela, unconsciously suiting her voice, "was, that it was said the Malverns never did sleep like other people. They used to spend the whole night in the routs and card-parties then in fashion, and never went to bed till daylight."

"Of course, then," said I, "they did not live very long, and so had an opportunity of soon trying the second part of the curse."

"No. The last Lord Galtimore died at thirty, leaving all his property to his wife—a famous old lady in the traditions of Dublin. She was herself one of the Malverns, first cousin of her husband. Of course, Lord Galtimore expected her to leave the estates to their only child, Lady Florence; but she did nothing of the kind. As soon as ever Lady Florence was grown up, Lady Galtimore married her off hand to our grandfather, who it seems was too much in love to make any stir at the moment about settlements."

"Well, what happened?" said Florence, half-listening, half, like her sister, feigning to talk.

"Why, Lady Galtimore lived on and on beyond all their lives, and in the most extravagant way, even for those extravagant times, driving always in her coach and six, with outriders, and going to the Castle in the most magnificent diamonds that were ever seen in Dublin. It was said she sold two estates in the North to buy them, not content with the old Malvern jewels. When she died at last, our grandfather and grandmother were both dead, and our poor father

a minor—there was nobody to look after his claims on the Galtimore property. All the lands were sold long before by the old lady, and this house went to pay her debts. I have heard our father say he often wondered what had become of the diamonds. They could hardly have been sold with the furniture; but the executors were not very trustworthy people, and he could never obtain any information on the subject."

"I daresay he did not try very hard. It was not in his line, poor dear father!"

"No, not at all. Let us come out of this cold room, darling, and settle ourselves in our bed-room up-stairs as well as we can for the evening."

The apartment the sisters had chosen for themselves was a small one over one end of the great drawing-room. They had procured a pretty bed and a few chairs and tables. On the latter lay so many little elegant articles of their toilet and writing materials with which they had not thought of parting, that, with the addition of several pictures on the walls, the room looked almost suitable to its occupants. They had taken their evening meal in their show-room on the lower floor, so they sat together at some work for which I had been fortunate enough to procure an order. At last Adela said:—

"Now, Florence dearest, do go to bed. You have done quite enough to-night, and it must be past eleven o'clock."

"Are you coming to bed, my Ady?"

"Yes, of course, by-and-by. Fold up that cloak at once, now, darling, and brush your hair."

"Now, Adela, I tell you once for all, that I will never finish my work at night till you finish yours; so take your choice, come to bed with me, or I sit up with you."

"Dear Florence, pray don't be obstinate. You know we

must get on pretty fast with our work if it is to pay us at all. I could not sleep if I went to bed, so I may as well sit up a little while longer; but your eyes look quite heavy. *Do* go to bed."

"Not I, Adela. You would sit up till three if I left you; so we will both sit up till one, and that will come to the same."

The hours passed on. The fire, which on that late autumn night, and in that long deserted house, had been indispensable, had burnt down in the rusty grate, and the last sounds of footsteps had long died away in the street, when the sisters, hearing a distant clock striking an hour after midnight, at last put aside their work, and prepared for sleep. There are few things in the world, to my thinking, more beautiful than that "going to bed" of two loving sisters. Coleridge brings before us a pretty vision of Christabel—

> "Her gentle limbs did she undress,
> And lay down in her loveliness;"

but it is far prettier to watch two delicate young creatures giving to one another the little services which are pleasures to each to give and to receive—the services which are caresses. This was almost the first night in which Adela and Florence had dispensed with the attendance of a maid; and Florence, as usual, tried to turn all her difficulties into jest, declaring that pins and strings had entered into a league, offensive and defensive, against her.

"Now, Flo," said her sister, "I am not going to allow you to tear out all your hair in that manner. Give me the brush, and I will do it for you."

"Oh, thank you, Adela; that will be so nice! Dear me, how much pleasanter it is to feel your cool soft hand on my head than poor Thornton's hard one." And Florence

contrived to bring the said hand into juxta-position with her lips instead of her head, and Adela found her attitude very convenient for kissing Florence's forehead, and so the hair-dressing was forgotten as the two orphans flung themselves into each other's arms, and clung together, mingling tears and kisses. Then they calmed each one the other very gently and tenderly, and knelt down close together by their little bed. Silently they rose at length, and having extinguished the light, lay down, nestled into each other's arms, and were soon asleep.

About an hour had elapsed, when Adela was awakened by sounds for which, in her state of fatigue and half-unconsciousness, she was quite unable to account. She had been dreaming that she was still at Moreland, and that the rooms were filled with guests as on the occasions of their old receptions. When she awoke it seemed to her that the same sounds of conversation and laughter were in her ears. She sat up in bed, painfully recalling, amid the darkness, in how different a home she was now placed from that to which the blessed power of dreams had recalled her. There could be no doubt of it; there were sounds in the house, and they proceeded from the room below them. It is true they were not of an alarming nature, as they were, as I have said, just such as might be heard at a considerable distance from a party of well-bred ladies and gentlemen. As she listened, Adela was sure she could distinguish in particular one manly voice with a peculiarly deep and unpleasant tone, and also at intervals one sharp and treble, like that of an old woman. It was a terrible discovery for the poor solitary girls that there should be unknown persons in their house at night. They had wished to engage the old woman who had had charge of it to sleep down-stairs as some protection, but she demanded so large a remuneration for the service, that they had been

obliged to dispense with it, and trust the protection of their house to the excellent police of Dublin. Now, however, it seemed evident that a number of people had in some manner effected an entrance to it. Strange to say, however, notwithstanding the evidence of her own ears, Adela did not feel quite convinced. There were sounds, it is true, and they were those of voices; but there was something in them which inspired her with a sense of vague terror, very different from that she would have felt at the distinct voice of housebreakers, were there never so much positive danger to be apprehended from them. In this state of uncertainty and fear she turned instinctively to waken her sister, but she could hear in the darkness Florence's gentle respiration, and the arm which had been round her own neck lay so still, that she hesitated for a moment to disturb the rest the poor child required so much. During this pause a change occurred in the sounds she had heard in the room below. The door seemed to be flung open, a single voice pronounced some word or two, and then there seemed a movement, and she heard many steps on the stairs. Could they be ascending? Adela's heart stood still with terror, while every nerve was strained to catch the sounds. No; they were not approaching, they were going down-stairs. Then there was a distant door shut, and the sounds became so feeble, she could hardly hear them at all. "They are in the dining-room," said she to herself. "Merciful heaven! *who* are in it? What can all this mean?" The temptation to waken her sister was so great, that only a mind as strong as that of Adela's could have resisted it; but she reflected that of whatever nature the sounds might be, Florence's knowledge of them could do no good, and would inevitably terribly excite her, at a time when she greatly required that her nerves should be calmed. If there were robbers in the house, it was probably the safest

thing the sisters could do to remain as if asleep. Exercising then an immense effort over herself, Adela remained quiet for several hours, during which the sounds occasionally rose a little. At last, just before the dawn, there was one, thrice repeated, which seemed to the terrified listener something between a cheer and a yell of sudden agony. Then all was silent.

When the sun was up Adela rose from her bed, leaving Florence still sleeping, and stole fearfully down the stairs. Often in her descent did she pause and listen, but not the slightest noise met her ear; and gaining courage from the growing daylight, she at last turned to look into the great drawing-room itself, whence the mysterious sounds had first proceeded. Everything was precisely as she had left it. The one window which Florence had partially opened was in the same state, and the other three closed and barred. "Perhaps," thought Adela, "the robbers may have entered through that window by a ladder." It was not so; the sash had been long ago pasted down, and had evidently remained unopened for years. An examination of the rooms below was equally fruitless, and the hall door and back door seemed both perfectly secure. Utterly unable to solve the mystery, and having many other cares claiming her attention, Miss Rockingham dismissed the subject from her mind for the moment, resolving to consult me upon it as soon as she could do so without exciting Florence's attention.

The days and weeks which followed this event left little leisure to recur to the consideration of it. Though the two sisters worked with an industry and perseverance which soon left its traces on their fading cheeks and heavy eyes, yet they were so unaccustomed to all the arts of the poor, that their in-comings always fell far short of their expenditure. One

after another each little luxury was dispensed with. Day by day, when I was able to visit them, I watched with an aching heart the disappearance of the few little relics of former wealth and elegance which they had preserved in the general wreck. Their bedroom had never a fire in it now, though the weather was miserably cold; the toilet table had no more ornaments; the last brooch and ring had disappeared from their own dress. One week I missed their father's writing-desk, the next their mother's Indian workbox was no longer to be seen, and after that I found that they seemed not to wish me to go into their bedroom; and I understood the reason when I saw at a picture-dealer's the beautiful portraits of their parents, with which they had parted last of all. It was a heart-breaking business. I took on myself to write to two or three of their friends, telling them the condition to which they were reduced; but one was absent on the Continent, another never answered my letter, a third was himself ruined. One only, and she a lady of small fortune, responded to my appeal by sending to Adela anonymously a ten-pound note. It happened to arrive while I was sitting with them; and when the sisters saw the money they both burst into hysterical tears, from which I had great difficulty to calm them. From this time things went rather better. They had sufficient work, though but poorly paid, and with the help of the ten pounds, they contrived to pass through the spring and summer. But oh, how altered they were! so thin, so pale, so stooping! There were grey hairs among Adela's chestnut bands, and Florence's eyes looked dim and sunken, and her ringing laugh grew so rare, it startled me when I heard it. It was a most unhappy thing that the poor girls had no relations or connections who could or would help them, even so far as to ask them to their houses for a few days. The whole hot summer passed away, and

they seemed to droop more and more for want of air and rest; and when the autumn came, and there were few people in town, their work grew slack, and absolute want stared them in the face when they were less than ever able to cope with it.

One day I knocked at their house, bringing with me a few of the little luxuries which my own poverty permitted me to offer. Florence opened the door, and leading me into the work-room, said—

"Don't go up-stairs yet. Adela is not very well, I made her stay in bed. It is nothing but a cold. You shall see her by-and-by, but I want to tell you something."

"Dear child," said I, "don't be so agitated. How pale you are! Sit down; I will stay as long as you like."

"Oh, Mrs L——, you don't know, you cannot think, what has happened! This horrible house! I dare not stay in it! And yet we must starve or go to the poor-house if we leave it. Oh, it is so very, very dreadful! It is no matter for me, I am strong, you know; but Adela—nobody knows what Adela is, what an angel of God she has been through all this year of misery. Oh, that He would let me die and save her from all this agony."

Poor Florence laid her head upon the table, and her whole frame shook with the violence of her burst of grief. I was greatly alarmed, but at last succeeded in pacifying her a little, and induced her to give me, though somewhat incoherently, the following account:—

"We went to bed rather early last night, Adela was not well, and I persuaded her to do so. She fell into a heavy sleep; and then, as there was a great piece to be finished of that work which Miss G—— insisted should be ready to-day, I got up again and stole down here to do it. Of course I only lighted one candle, and that was the reason, I suppose,

why I grew so nervous, besides being very cold; but I kept my eyes from looking about the room, and went on, though I got worse and fancied all sorts of things coming about me. At last, it was no fancy at all, I most distinctly heard a noise in the rooms overhead. It was not in the one over this, but in the great drawing-room over the dining-room. I heard first, one sharp, querulous sort of voice, and then a whole set of other voices, among them one deep one, like the deepest organ."

"Nonsense, dear Miss Florence, it was all your nervous imagination."

Adela had confided to me in private what she had heard, but had never told Florence, and I was horror-stricken at the similarity of their stories.

"No, no, Mrs L——," went on Florence, with increased vehemence, "it was no imagination, I heard the voices as I hear yours. I could not stir, my heart stood still; I sat there I don't know how long listening to them. I would have given the whole world to have been with Adela, but I dared not pass up the stairs. At last, you won't believe me, but it is true, I heard steps on the stairs—a great many steps—as if forty or fifty people were coming down and talking all the time. I think I fainted; I expected them to come into this room; and I don't know what happened till I heard them in the dining-room. Yes, there! through those folding doors! I tell you I heard them! There were voices of men and women talking and laughing. Oh, such awful, hollow, bitter sort of laughs! it made my blood run cold; and then there were noises of glasses, as if they were feasting. And this went on, went on, so long, I thought I had gone mad as I sat listening. At last there were three hideous sounds I cannot describe, and then it was all silence. What *could* it all be? What do you think it was?"

"It was all your poor overworked brain, dear Miss Florence. I hope you did not tell Miss Rockingham?"

"Why, when I was at last able to run up-stairs, I found her still asleep, so I thought I would wait till I could tell you."

"You did very wisely. It must be all imagination; but you are not able to endure these lonely vigils, dear young lady. Allow me to come and sit up for a few nights with you, till your nerves are calmed. I am sure Lady F—— will allow me to walk over when my pupils are gone to bed, and to return to F—— House in the morning."

Poor Florence tried to decline my offer, but it was too evidently needed; and we parted with the understanding that I would, if possible, return at eleven o'clock and share the apartment of the sisters for the night, taking our turns to rest and work.

By a chance, which at the time seemed most unfortunate, one of my pupils gave herself a severe sprain that evening, and as she lay moaning and fevered in bed it was utterly impossible for me to leave her. Her mother had gone out to a dinner and ball at the Castle, and was not likely to return till three or four o'clock, so that I was compelled to send for the family physician myself, and remain beside the poor little sufferer till she fell asleep at dawn. Full of anxiety for the consequences of another solitary night to the Rockinghams, I hurried, as soon as possible, across the town to their house. Florence met me at the door, her large eyes glittering, her hand trembling with excitement as she led me up-stairs.

"Oh, Mrs L——! It *is* true! There are beings—God knows what they are—in this house. Adela and I *both* saw them."

"You *saw* them?"

"Yes, yes. Come in here. Come down, Ada," She

called to her sister as she pulled me into the great dining-room. The shutters of this vast apartment were mostly closed, only where one or two of the hinges had broken and the boards fallen away; the dull, yellow light of the winter morning entered and displayed the dreary torn hangings on the walls, and the bare floor pierced in every direction by the rats. Just as we entered the slight concussion of our steps caused the final giving way of one of the large black marble slabs in the ruined mantelpiece, and it fell to the ground with a shock and a reverberation which caused poor Florence to scream with terror, and even shook my nerves almost beyond control. Adela rushed in at the moment.

"Merciful God! what has happened? Florence, my life, are you hurt?"

It was touching to see the poor desolate children cling to one another, and at last find calmness in each other's arms. By degrees I led them to describe to me the events of the night, for their terrors, if unreal, could only be dispelled by examination; and, if real, some steps must be instantly taken to relieve them from such a position. But what did I mean by "real?"

"We both sat up," said Adela, "in our bedroom, expecting you to come every moment, and getting on meantime with our work. Towards the middle of the night we began to hear sounds in the drawing-room below. Then Florence told me that she had heard them the night before, just the same as I told you I had done when we first came here. It was very awful; but as we were together, and the noises had never come anywhere but in those two rooms and on the stairs, we bore it as well as we could. Only there was one shrill woman's voice which, whenever we heard it, made me turn sick with horror. I cannot describe it." And Adela hid her face in her handkerchief.

"They went down," said Florence, "as before, to supper, and then the sounds grew faint. All this time the night was passing, and we could not think why you did not come. At last I fancied I heard you ring at the hall door, but the distance is so great I could not be sure, and there were those fearful noises, like jingling glasses, from time to time, in this dining-room, which I might have mistaken for your bell."

"Florence wanted to come down to open the door to you," said Adela; "but it was more than I could bear while those noises went on. At last there were three hideous sounds, such as there always are at the end, and then all was silent. After some time we took our candle and went down to open the door in case you were there. Of course we were frightened, going down-stairs, and stopped at the landings to let our candle light below us as far as it could, but we heard or saw nothing till we came to the door of the great drawing-room, which was standing open quite wide. I knew I had closed it when we went to bed, and we both stood before it, trembling, afraid either to go in or to go down past it, when there might be some one there who might come out after us. At last I thought, 'Well, we are in God's hands, though we seem so desolate;' and I resolved I would go into the room at any cost, and see if we could find out any clue to this horrible mystery which will drive us out to starvation. Florence would not let me go alone, so we went in arm-in-arm, both holding the candle. At first we did not see anything different from usual; but when we were half way down the room we saw, there, in the looking-glass in the centre pier——"

"You know that great hideous tarnished mirror!" cried Florence, her lips white with fear at the recollection.

I nodded, and Adela went on—

"There was *something* reflected in that mirror—not our-

selves; we were not yet opposite to it. But dull as it was, and half spoiled for the want of the quicksilver, there was no mistake—*something* was moving and nodding, as it were, before it. Whether there was anything between us and the glass to throw such a reflection we never looked, for once we had seen the thing in the glass, we could not take our eyes off it. There was scarlet and gold and feathers, and something dazzlingly brilliant among them, till at last we made out clearly enough the terrible thing it was. It was a dead old woman's face surrounded by some gaudy head-dress, and loaded with jewels. The face! oh, that horrible face! It was quite that of a corpse, wan and drawn, and the eyes dead; but the cheeks were rouged, and it had black curls and black eyebrows, as if they were false, and great white teeth in the fallen jaws. I thought I should have gone mad with terror."

"So did I," said Florence; "I tore poor Ada's arm clutching it. But at last the horrible creature seemed to finish looking and nodding at herself in the glass, and she began to take off all the diamonds which were in her head-dress and round her frightful neck, till they lay in a heap on the table. And then—then——"

"She turned round as if to look if any one saw her; and in our agony we dropped the candle, and both of us rushed out of the room, and Florence hit her head against the door, in the dark, and I hardly know what happened till we were up-stairs in our own room; but I thought I heard a sharp, angry cry, just in that same shrill voice which terrified me before. The cold grey dawn was coming on, and I had to bathe poor Florence's head, and we stayed there till we heard you just now at the hall door."

What I felt at the recital of this strange story it is needless to say. Summoning all my courage, I said at last—

"My dear young ladies, I do not pretend to know that there are not in this world mysteries of the awful kind at which this vision of yours seem to point; but at least you have always agreed with me, dear Miss Rockingham, that it is far less *likely* the dead can appear in such forms, than that our brains should be deceived into fancying we see them. You know you are both quite ill from excitement at this moment, and the state you are in would be precisely that in which visions are formed. Be assured that that hideous old glass reflected your own fears, and nothing else. Let us go into the room and examine everything, and let in the sunlight and good air, and I dare say you will be satisfied I am right."

The sisters listened to me with the kindly deference they always showed to my opinion, but evidently remained quite unshaken in the belief of the reality of the apparition they had witnessed. At last, however, I persuaded them to accompany me into the dreaded apartment. It was dark, the shutters being less broken than in the dining-room, and it took us both time and courage to wait to open them, and then to throw up one or two of the rusty sashes. Till this was done I had felt oppressed by the odour of the room. It might be merely damp, but I could not resist the association of ideas that connected it rather with

> "The smell, cold, oppressive, and dank,
> Sent through the pores of the coffin plank."

We turned finally to the unfortunate mirror, and to the great buhl-table fixed beneath it. The sisters showed me where they had stood, and in what part of the centre panel the spectre appeared, and I tried vainly to construct out of the blurred and spotted surface anything which should have offered a ground for their imagination.

"She laid her diamonds down there," said Florence, laying her hand on the table.

"A great heap they were," said Adela. "A splendid necklace and earrings, and then a tiara like an earl's coronet."

"Why, they must be the great Galtimore diamonds!" cried Florence.

We stood all three overwhelmed at this idea. It was quite true, as Miss Rockingham had said on the night of their arrival in that house, their great-grandmother, the last Countess of Galtimore, possessed diamonds whose almost fabulous splendour was among the common traditions of the Irish society of the last century; and the disappearance of these magnificent jewels, without any adequate search by the guardians of Mr Rockingham when he inherited the empty heraldic honours of his mother's family, had been more than once mentioned in the sad debates so often held at every table on the ruin of the Rockinghams.

"There *was* a countess's coronet among the Galtimore diamonds. I have heard my father say so," said Adela.

"And old, wicked Lady Galtimore——. Why, good heavens! Ada" (and Florence turned as pale as death), "do you recollect the picture in the bedroom at the end of the north corridor at Rockingham?"

"It was *she!*"

None of us could speak. The corroboration of the frightful story of the sisters' vision was too wonderful to permit of any further observation on my part. By degrees I persuaded them to return to their room up-stairs, and take some little refreshment. Both were frightfully ill, and it was with great regret I left them for a few hours. My employer, though somewhat unwillingly, consented to my spending each night with them for some time to come; and this soon ended in my nursing both of them through severe attacks of fever.

They had but the one little bed; I was their only attendant, except the charwoman, who came in occasionally in my absence during the day; and they were wanting in nearly every comfort their miserable condition of health required. It was a trial, indeed, for me to pass from the *parvenue* Lady F——'s splendid house and luxurious table, to the fireless garret where lay those two high-born girls shivering in ague, and needing even such food as Lady F——'s servants would have disdained. How I longed to carry away, instead of eating, my own share of those continual feasts! How I *did* beg of Lady F——, and of her guests, one help after another, till she peremptorily forbade a repetition of my offence against good manners.

"I have given you a great deal, Mrs L——, for your friends. It is enough that I should be worried by beggars in the streets; I will not be teased, or have my visitors teased in my house. If you think me hard-hearted, you need not remain with me; for my part, I must consider my own children, and not waste my fortune, as Mr Rockingham wasted all his vast property so shamefully."

Alas! I knew too well that to offend further was to forfeit the salary by which alone I was able to assist in some degree my poor young friends.

Days and weeks passed. The Rockinghams were struggling back to life; but their few customers had ceased to send work which they had been unable to perform, and every article of their little property, and most even of their wardrobe, had been sold for food and fire. It was a pitiful sight, those two pale girls, still beautiful and delicate as hothouse flowers, but oh, so worn! so sad! It truly seemed as if the dreaded poor-house — the lowest cesspool into which the misery and vice of our great cities drain, the receptacle of disease and beggary and profligacy—was to be the last stage

of the earthly road whereon Adela and Florence were travelling toward a better world. The idea of *their* submission to the degrading circumstances of a workhouse, the pauper's dress, the vulgar officials' brutal ordering, the contact (perhaps even in their beds) with the blear-eyed outcasts and fallen creatures inhabiting those abodes of misery—it was too much for me to bear. We never named it, but we thought of little else. I saw each thought only of the other, not of herself; but *that* was almost unendurable. Many a time, when I had been sitting up with them, and forcing them to go to bed, I had seen one or the other rise from her evening prayers with a face of agony which betrayed to my heart the thought which she had sought for strength to bear, and then had flung herself, weeping passionately, on her sister's neck. Their patience, their gentleness, their efforts each to sacrifice herself for the other, were beyond all praise of mine.

One night things had come to the uttermost. Like them, I had sold all that I dared to part with while preserving an exterior permissible in Lady F——'s household. There was no food—no chance of getting any for the morrow. The relieving-officer, to whom we had applied, had told us that no assistance could be given except on "accepting the test of destitution," and taking shelter in the poor-house. The worst of our fears was on the point of being realized.

That night I resolved at all events to spend with my unhappy friends, and accordingly I went to their house at eleven o'clock, and, after some attempts to comfort them, persuaded them to lie down on what yet remained of their bedding, while I sat on the floor beside them. Wearied with grief and tears, I believe we all slept at last, till when the spring morning had broken, and the sun was shining into the room, I was awakened violently by Ada starting up

in bed. "Mrs L——! Florence, darling! waken up! Oh, I have had such a dream!" And her eyes sparkled as I had not seen them shine, alas! for many a day.

"Such a dream!" she went on, eagerly; "all that same horrible vision we saw in the drawing-room below; only I saw—I'm *sure* I saw—where the diamonds were placed. Lady Galtimore hid them in the buhl-table. I know exactly where they are."

"Oh, be calm, dear Miss Rockingham!" I cried; "this is only a dream."

"Darling Ada!" said Florence, kissing her, sobbing, while the sad reality of the day contrasted in her mind with these visions of the night.

Ada collected herself for a moment, and then said, as she rose up and threw on hastily some of her clothes, "You are right—it was but a dream; but who knows but in my dream my thoughts have led me to a discovery which may save Florence from——? Oh, if it could be so!" she added, as her knees trembled and her lips quivered.

There was something almost solemn in the spirit in which we all three went together down the wide old staircase and into the haunted room, on our errand of life and death. The sun shone brightly into the room. We looked at nothing round us, but walked to the massive table, from which, as I have already described, nearly all the gilt brass, and tortoise-shell, and locks of the drawers, had been torn away, but which yet remained, by sheer solid strength and weight, fixed into the floor and against the lower part of the mysterious looking-glass. On reaching the table, Adela, without a moment's hesitation, opened a little door such as buhl cabinets usually possess in the front, and which, as we knew, displayed a small recess, once no doubt filled with some elegant trifles, but now empty. Placing her hand against the roof of this

recess, Adela touched a spring, and a small shallow drawer under the ledge of the table started out. We all three grasped it and dragged it out, but it was perfectly empty.

"I knew it was," said Ada, quite resolutely. "Now"! and she placed her hand behind the drawer, in the space left when it was taken out.

"Here is the very lock I dreamed of!" she muttered, in the intensest excitement; and, catching hold of a small handle beside the lock, she gave it a hasty jerk, and it came off in her hand. "Oh, heavens!" she cried; "it is locked! We cannot get at the drawer; but it is there! The diamonds are there. It is all exactly as I dreamed!"

It will not be wondered at that our impatience reached an almost uncontrollable pitch at this moment. By inserting our arms in the recess left by the drawer in the table, we could feel quite well that there was a strong brass lock closing an inner drawer, reaching no doubt to the back of the table. On one side of the lock was the companion loop-shaped handle to the one which Ada had wrenched away; but even had the two remained, there seemed no chance of our being able to burst open the lock, which was evidently of strongest materials. Such keys as we had with us were tried, but quite in vain. Should we send for a locksmith? We dared not attempt to do so. At last, by pulling out every drawer in the table, and groping in every possible direction, we reached (also at the back of the table) another spring, from which started a tiny little drawer wherein lay two objects—one was an old gold ring, with a portrait of Lord Galtimore; the other was a gilt brass key.

There was something which, even in that moment of wild excitement, inspired me with respect for Adela Rockingham, as I watched the way in which she almost solemnly took the key from my trembling hand and applied it to the

unseen lock in the depth of the table. We could hear it *click* as the rusty wards gave way, and then Adela drew forth the heavy drawer within. It was about three inches deep, and eight or nine long; and over its contents lay a piece of yellowish old paper, containing some memoranda of figures. We lifted the paper—and there, each in its black velvet bed, lay the enormous Galtimore diamonds—the necklace, the earrings, the gorgeous coronet. Adela and Florence threw themselves into each other's arms. God knows if their sobs of joy did not find an echo in my old heart then and ever since.

There could be no question as to the right of Adela and Florence Rockingham to the jewels so strangely discovered. Even the proprietor of the house did not attempt to dispute their possession with the well-known heiresses of the family of Galtimore. Before long the diamonds were disposed of and a large treasure realized; but from the first day we were able to quit the gloomy abode where those young girls had endured such terrible sufferings, and where also they had recovered the opulence to which they were born. No explanation of the mysterious sights and sounds of the dreary old mansion has ever been made. At the moment when Adela drew forth the diamonds, we were all too overwhelmed with joy to afford attention to anything else; but on discussing the matter afterwards, it appeared that all three of us vaguely recollected having heard a sound like the shrill treble laugh of an aged woman, quivering, as it were, in the darkness of the further end of the great desolate room. Be this as it may, we are assured that the SPECTRAL ROUT has been known no more in the old gloomy house. Perchance the dread visitors have been banished by the voices of the happy little children of a great national charity, whose abode it has been made, and for whose use it has been refreshed and

purified. Perchance the "Wicked Malverns" have at last borne the full measure of their terrible curse, and may now "rest in their graves," while their innocent descendants redeem their evil name by the generous use of those long-lost treasures to which they guided them in such awful and mysterious fashion.

My brief story is told. I write from Italy, where Adela and Florence have come to regain health and spirits. They forced me to accompany them here, and say I shall never leave them again. It shall be as they will, for they are dear to me as my own children. I must go and join them now, as they sit on the terrace of this beautiful villa, where among the orange-trees and the vines the fire-flies are flashing, and the nightingales singing in the warm air laden with perfume. Far below us the Arno is rushing, and the Marble Duomo gleams amid the lights of Florence, and the purple Apennines rise up among the stars, and overhead stretches the blue Italian night.

THE
HUMOUR OF VARIOUS NATIONS.

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THE HUMOUR OF VARIOUS NATIONS.

THERE are three classes of people in society,—those who *radiate* spirits, those who *reflect* spirits, and those who *absorb* spirits. The Radiators are few, the Reflectors sufficiently numerous, but the Absorbents, alas! nearly enough to balance them both. The height of the thermometer of cheerfulness at any social gathering might be predicted beforehand by any one who should carefully estimate the numbers of the guests to be ranked under these respective classes. Are there no Radiators? Then it is as useless to gather Reflectors as to fill a room with mirrors and expect them to be bright without the introduction of lamps. Are there two or three Radiators? Then Reflectors may be multiplied with advantage, almost *ad infinitum;* and even a limited number of Absorbents, carefully stowed away in corners, will not do much harm; but this must be managed with caution, for even the brightest of Radiators placed at dinner between two Absorbents, will often fade away, and merely "twinkle, twinkle," like a very "little star" indeed, for the rest of the evening.

It must have happened to all persons to observe how differently these characteristics are divided in various nations. In some countries there is actually a majority of Radiators; in others the Absorbents hold over all society the canopy of dulness and most ancient night. Again, as to rank: there are gay peasantries with a stupid nobility; and still more

often, a lively upper class to whom wit and laughter are familiar, while below them the idea of a joke looms rarely and dimly, like the sun through a London fog. Then, again, there are churches where good spirits and jests are by no means thought to exclude religious excellence, and there are others where all eminent Christians are expected so decidedly to "appear unto men to fast," that, as we once heard a poor servant express herself of one of them, "He is *so good* you could not laugh in the same room with his picture!" Lastly, even between the sexes this difference is most perceptible; men are mostly either Radiators or grim Absorbents; women past girlhood, are usually simple Reflectors.

Perhaps a few observations on these varied exhibitions of animal spirits, and also on the different forms of wit, humour, fun, and jocularity, by which they are manifested, may not be found uninteresting. In any case a little study of the subject may help to preserve us from that awful *fiasco* which those among us who are guilty of occasionally retailing good jokes know only too well; the disgrace of narrating one of them in an audience utterly incapable of appreciating the point thereof, and perceiving that the result of our social attempt has only been to place ourselves in the category of foolish and dangerous acquaintances. A friend of the writer, once in this way described to a serious English gentleman the scene when Sheridan was taken up dead drunk, and being asked his name and address, stammered out, "My name is Wil-Wil-Wilberforce." The serious gentleman, after a few moments' deep consideration, looked up and asked his fair informant, "What *did* Sheridan mean?" We all know a similar misadventure, when Sydney Smith told a lady visitor that he found the weather so hot he was actually obliged to "take off his flesh and sit in his bones." Whereupon the lady answered, in consternation, "Oh, Mr Smith! how

could you do that?" Casting pearls before swine in these ways is something deplorable.

As a general rule, it would seem that in the English race humour is the chief expression of jocularity. It is a broad, genial, glorious humour, of which Shakespeare was the Pope and Sydney Smith the Cardinal; a humour like summer sheet lightning, hurting nobody, and illuminating everything in soft, bright flashes. When it becomes forked with sarcasm, and takes to riving hearts of oak, and tearing off the roofs of men's houses, and shaking down steeples, then it is not true English humour. It is something against which we ought to put up conductors, to bury it down out of sight in the ground as fast as possible. *Satire*, pleasant reading? Faugh! Would it be pleasant to see a man flogged at the cart's tail, if it were done ever so deftly, and even if he had been a garotter? Real fun ought to give the side-ache to everybody and the heart-ache to nobody. Pretty sport archery-meetings would be if ladies and gentlemen always stood in place of the target, and all the arrows were dipped in poison, and he who hit nearest the heart was supposed to touch the gold! Pain must be given in this world, alas! It will never do to adopt the principle of the pseudo George Crabbe, in "Rejected Addresses," who "had learned in his clerical capacity never to give any pain, however slight, for any motive, however good, to any individual, however foolish or wicked." But to give pain in *a joke* is like those hideous mediæval poisoners who used to put their drugs into flowers, so that their victims inhaled death from a rose. The Arab's bread and salt ought not to be more sacred than partaking of a good wholesome jest in common; and to find oneself afterwards tied to a mare's tail and dragged round the camp is treachery indeed.

But the true English humour, the good, honest, hurtless

fun, such as Leech painted and Smith wrote, is curiously divided in the different strata of society. At the summit—intellectual and social—the finest flowers are to be found, as might be expected, and few people quite of the upper class have not at least learned to know a joke when they see it, if not to enjoy it very heartily. But here there is less nationality in wit, as in other things; there is more French *esprit* and brilliant epigram; more light easy *persiflage* than actual humour. Very fine ladies and gentlemen, who possess in full that repose "which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere," can hardly be expected to be in earnest even about making a solid joke. They may drop good things about drawing-rooms like Esterhazy's diamonds, and be much too indolent to see if anybody picks them up; but as to subscribing one or two of them deliberately for the relief of a famished universe, dying of jokelessness, it is not to be expected from them. Then comes the upper middle class, intellectual and non-intellectual; and here at once there is a marvellous change. Conversation, instead of being as easy and light as Cerito's steps, merely tripping over the "burning marl" of the poor old world, ready to *effleurer* any pleasant oasis therein, has become all at once a steady tramp, like that of a troop of volunteers; or, at the very least, of Paterfamilias going to his counting-house, and Materfamilias walking resolutely in double-soled Balmorals to church. Everybody is in some sort of earnest; those who make jokes, and those who would fain have people believe they have something too weighty on their minds to attend to such folly, but who in truth are only troubled with those sad distempers, plethora of the pocket, and vacuity of the cerebrum. Among these, the unintellectual upper middle class, and the lower middle class generally, there is apparently the social Sahara where jokes fall not, nor any fun is made. The dwellers therein may be

the salt of the earth for moral goodness, they may be wise as serpents and rich as Crœsus, and fare sumptuously like Dives every day, on venison and whitebait:—

> "But oh! the choice what heart can doubt,
> Of chops with wit, or turtle without?"

"Better," (as an artist friend of ours once remarked, assuming that she quoted Solomon,) "better is a stalled ox where love is, than a dry morsel aud hatred therewith." Of course, it is better to enjoy *both* champagne and fun together, but if one must make a choice, why then let it be fun. To this class generally, *Punch* is a mighty deliverer. When the weekly number appears on the desert horizon, then Memnon himself gives forth a sound of mirth. *Punch* lies on the table at tea-parties where, without him, Dr Cumming might rule in lilac arrogance alone. If *Punch* should stop, it would (as Johnson said of the death of Garrick) extinguish the gaiety of nations, and leave an innumerable number of old gentlemen in a state of indigestion ever more.

For the Humour of the lower classes in England, what shall we say? It is a most variable characteristic. There exist a few Sam Wellers and Mrs Poysers, but to balance them it would seem there is an immense cloud of witnesses to the obtuseness and dulness of the popular mind; especially the agricultural mind. Perhaps the truth is, that the delicate weapon of language is wielded with difficulty by those whose habitual talk is of oxen, and the most pointed of epigrams fails to pierce through a certain thickness of skull. Possibly some sagacious ethnologist may hereafter, on comparing the various crania in his collection (his skullery as we might call it), be able to show us exactly how far a joke of the bullet sort has been found to impinge on the *dura mater*, and how far a fine hair-drawn witticism can insinuate itself. At present all that observers can ever state seems to be, that in proportion to the thickness of the skull is the obtuseness to

the joke, and the rougher and coarser must be the fun which will penetrate it. Mere verbal witticisms and the very best of puns are not understood by the working classes anywhere; even in countries where wit in other forms is far more readily appreciated than in England. And, on the other hand, there is nothing like a practical absurdity, where no words at all are involved, but only some physical upset of dignity, to bring out the loud guffaw which so pleasantly recalls John Bull's appropriate cognomen. A man dancing on his head in a village fair will produce much heartier laughter than Shakespeare's most comic scenes; and Molière might in vain have sought in England for a cook whose amusement should afford a fair test of the drollery of the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," not to speak of the wit of "Tartuffe" and "Les Précieuses Ridicules."

English Humour, of the most purely national cast, shows itself in our great towns among the working (and *idling*) classes, the cabbies, costermongers, and, above all, the street sweepers, and city Arabs. The repartees of these men and boys, their instant appreciation of the ridiculous in any little scene or uncommon figure in the streets, is peculiarly English. There is nothing like it that we have ever observed on the Continent; the inimitable *gamin* of Paris, of whom Gavroche is the type, being quite another genus. We have a capital idea of it when Leech makes the poor old country clergyman in the omnibus appeal piteously, with infinite mildness, to the conductor, to "make haste and save his appointment in the Strand," and the conductor cries to the driver, "Go on, Bill! Here's a old cove a cussin' and a swearin' like anythink!"—and another, when the magnificent "swell," with his head in the air, walks out of Tattersall's, and a street boy exclaims, "I say! They've let out that 'ere hanimal without his martingale on!" We can vouch

for the fact of the following, which is still better. A lady, teaching in a ragged school one Sunday evening, was trying to impress on her class of young city Arabs the duty of thankfulness to Providence; and, to begin at the lowest and most tangible proposition, asked them to mention the pleasures which in the course of the year they enjoyed the most; holidays on some fine neighbouring downs being in her unsophisticated mind the probable reply to her question, or at the worst the good Christmas dinner provided by the guardians of the schools. The class, composed of ten or a dozen lads between sixteen and eighteen, all sat very still for a moment in profound cogitation. Then the leader lifted his head, looked the lady straight in the face, and answered:

"Cock-fightin', ma'am."

The position of the unhappy teacher (author of the present article), reduced to draw a moral of thankfulness from that particular species of enjoyment, needs no elucidation.

Not only in classes of society, but in religious sects and churches, as we have already noticed, does the comprehension of humour vary immensely. For some occult reason the Romanist and Anglican seems to possess usually the idea of the ridiculous in very fair development; but the extreme Calvinist wanders into regions where all light on the subject is extinguished; and the thorough Methodist loses entirely his perception of what constitutes the absurd. Were it otherwise, it would be impossible for him to intersperse his religious worship with such utterly ludicrous hymns as that lately quoted in the *Spectator*:—

"My soul is like a rusty lock,
O, ile it with Thy grace!"

Or this one, which a friend assured me he had heard with his own ears in a "Little Bethel":—

"Before him now we bow
Bow, wow, wow, wow, wow,
(Chorus) Bow, wow—Bow, wow, wow."

We were once in a church where the clergyman, being of this order of mind, was reading the Gospel for the day, under the exasperating presence of an enemy's dog, which persisted in flapping his heavy tail continuously on the floor of his mistress's pew, after the manner of big dogs under durance. The clergyman at last read out, in the confusion of his feelings, this extraordinary scriptural lesson:—"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: Turn out that dog if you please, it is extremely wrong to bring a dog into church."

Celtic wit is again a totally different thing from Saxon humour. Let no deluded Englishman imagine that the Joe Miller stories beginning, "An Irishman once," have any—the slightest—connexion with the true spirit of Hibernian fun. As truly might the other tales commencing, "An Oxford Scholar taking a walk," be held to represent the average standard of behaviour among the graduates of that University. Neither is it for a moment to be supposed that the jokes of carmen and beggars, retailed by English tourists with such infinite glee, and imbecile imitations of the brogue, are looked upon by the said carmen and beggars in other light than as the old-established and perfectly lawful Kinahan's LL. whisky is palmed off upon the same tourists by the inn-keepers as original "potteen," racy from an illicit still.

There are two kinds of Irish wit: the intentional and the unintentional. Of this latter sort there is an absolutely limitless supply, afforded by the redundancy of metaphor and illustration common to the national mind, and productive of absurdities and hyperboles delightful to study. Take the peroration, for instance, of a clergyman describing the joyful

death of the Christian :—" My brethren, he leaps into the very arms of Death, and makes his hollow jaws ring with eternal hallelujahs!" And the destiny of the wicked, " When Death, with his quiver full of arrows, mows them down with the Besom of Destruction." A Poor-law Guardian in the North of Ireland very lately surpassed these flowers of rhetoric when he addressed his audience : " Mr Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Board! The eyes of Europe are upon us. The apple of discord has been flung in our midst, and if it be not nipped in the bud, it will burst into a conflagration, which will deluge the world!" At all times the richness of Irish phraseology borders on the grotesque. An English Squire would be amazed at receiving the good wishes expressed once to our knowledge to an Irish one : " Long life to your honour for ever, and *long may you reign* in splendour ;" or a petition addressed to the writer's father, couched in these words : " As I am shortly going to make my exit from this Vale of Tears, I hope your honour will send me two-and-sixpence by return of post." The queer ideas which enter the fertile brains of Hibernians at all times are sufficiently astonishing. A school of poor children having read in their chapter in the Bible the denunciations against hypocrites who " strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," were afterwards examined by the benevolent patroness, Lady E——, as to their recollections of the chapter. " What, in particular, was the sin of the Pharisees, children ?" said the lady. " *Ating* camels, my lady," was the prompt reply.

An Irish nobleman having lived to a great age in a very feeble and imbecile condition, it occurred to one of his tenants to suggest to his son and heir, " Don't you think, sir, maybe the poor ould Lord has been *forgotten* up there (pointing to the sky) this while past ? If your honour was

to take him up to the top of Slieve na More and *show him a little*, wouldn't it be a good chance?"

But beside these unintentional drolleries, there is abundance of true wit in Ireland, with a flavour all its own. Few theological definitions, for instance, could bear the palm from that of a priest who, having preached a sermon on Miracles, was asked by one of his congregation walking homeward, to explain a little more lucidly what a miracle meant. "Is it a meracle you want to understand?" said the priest. "Walk on then there forninst me, and I'll think how I can explain it to you." The man walked on, and the priest came behind him and gave him a tremendous kick. "Ugh!" roared the sufferer, "why did you do that?" "Did you feel it?" said the priest. "To be sure I did," replied the unhappy disciple. "Well, then, remember this. It would have been a 'miracle' if you had *not*."

Very lately a somewhat rigid specimen of the English governess, primly dressed as became her years, and by no means attractive in corkscrew curls and well-pinched lips, addressed a Dublin carman in an authoritative manner, with the obnoxious stipulation—

"I take you for an hour."

Cabby (in an insinuating manner), "Ah, ma'am, won't ye take me for life?"

The lady's indignation may be easily figured.

It is a great delusion to imagine that "bulls" are in any way particularly Irish forms of absurdity. In truth it is rare enough to hear one from the Irish peasant. Droll repartees there are in abundance, as that of a young girl, who, being taunted for squinting, answered at once, "What use are two eyes if you only look the same way with them?" and graceful speeches like that of a labourer to a handsome lady :— "Ah, ma'am, I wish I were a gentleman for your sake!"

and poetical phrases such as, "May the heavens be your bed!" "You're as sweet as the flowers in May!" "May you sit in a golden chair in the kingdom of God." But of the true "bull," the best we have heard in our lives had no Celtic origin. One was that of an Englishwoman, who remarked, while wailing over the advent of a musical neighbour, "And you know *people who live next door* always play so badly!" Another was, of course, intentional, and truly ingenious. It was from a lady who observed that she had had an unpleasant dip in the morning: "The sea felt damp from not having been bathed in all the winter!" The third and best of all was by a Capuchin monk, who called upon his congregation to be especially thankful that Providence should have placed death at the end of life, and not in the middle, so that we might have all possible time to prepare for it.

The wit current among the upper classes in Ireland, in the last century, must doubtless have been considerable, albeit of a somewhat coarse description, and mingled with practical jokes, often cruel, and commonly not over refined. Of stories of this sort of thing Barrington has given us abundance. The jokes, indeed, were made under every conceivable and inconceivable circumstance of humanity, even to the pronouncing of a sentence of death. The pun-making judge, Lord Norbury, condemned two ruffians to be hanged for the atrocious crime of *carding*, i. e., scraping their victims' backs with the iron combs used for cleaning wool. The terrible decree of the scaffold ended with the pun, "And let these villains remember, that though they have the cards in their hands, they have not won the game!" Another judge sentenced a man to be flogged at the cart's tail from Kilmainham jail to a certain turnpike. The wretched man answered derisively: "Thank you, my Lord! You've done

your worst." "*And back again,*" added the judge, with imperturbable composure.

Of a more agreeable character were the anecdotes we used to hear in our youth of the gay doings of ladies and gentlemen at routs and masquerades. Whether much real wit enlivened these amusements may be questioned; at all events, there were droll scenes in abundance. Take the following for example. Old Lady Rossmore was possessed (in common with most of the nobility and gentry of the epoch) of a drunken coachman. On one occasion she was at a party where her host thought it his duty to inform her that the man was so tipsy it would not be safe for her to allow him to drive her the long road home. Lady Rossmore only said quietly, "Let me speak to the fellow myself," and went to the hall-door, where the following colloquy occurred:—

"Are you drunk, John?"

"Yes, my lady!"

"Are you more drunk than usual, John?"

"No, my lady!"

"Let down the steps, Thomas—I shall go home."

A younger lady, afterwards well known in Irish society as Lady C——, had just returned to her mother, Mrs T——, from a fashionable London school, when bailiffs came to arrest Mrs T——, who, as usual at the period, was dressed in a huge cap, and wore spectacles and a front of false hair. Miss T—— ordered the servants to delay the bailiffs a moment in the hall, and without hesitation donned her mother's headgear and gown, and sat in her chair over the fire. The bailiffs, on being admitted, expounded their errand. Miss T—— declared she was not the person they sought; expostulations and arguments occupied half an hour, and by the time they had brought the blooming young girl to their den (where of

course she was instantly released), the mother had had ample time to effect her escape.

Of the behaviour of another of these *grandes dames* of a past generation, we obtain a curious glimpse by tradition. The Rev. W. P. C——, desiring to gather some information concerning an ancestress, Baroness Le Poer, afterwards Countess of Tyrone (a lady whose manuscript Advice to her Daughter is still preserved as a family Mrs Chapone), inquired at the church of her parish for any reminiscences concerning her. The sexton, after a glowing eulogium on her liberality and splendour, concluded thus: "And oh! it would have done your Reverence's heart good *to hear her cursing her footmen when she came to church!*"

Scotch wit, or "wut," seems a very difficult thing to describe; perhaps because its vitality is not very highly developed. Scotch people have good sense, good brains, good culture, and super-eminently good consciences, if extreme scrupulosity constitutes goodness in that particular. But very rarely indeed to these fine qualities do they seem to add anything like either English humour or Irish wit. The nearest approach to anything of the kind appears to be a certain dry way of saying things so exceedingly plain and sensible as to occasion the same sense of surprise as that produced by the startling coruscation of ideas belonging to real wit. Of this class is a story we have heard of an English geologist, tempted on a Sunday in Scotland furtively to chip with his pocket-hammer a wayside rock of too tempting appearance. An old woman passing by remarked, with all the sternness befitting the offence, "It's not stones you're breaking, but the Sabbath." Also the old anecdote of the tourist indignantly asking, "Does it always rain in this abominable country?" and receiving the reply, "Na. It sometimes snaws."

Another gentleman, sarcastically observing in the midst of a down-pour, "Fine weather!"—was answered doubtfully, "Wall! I was thinking it was rayther dampish."

Above all, there is the capital story of the Scotch lady who was afraid to go over a certain ferry on a stormy day, and preferred going round by the bridge. Her friends suggested to her that she ought to "trust in the Lord," and have no fear; to which she replied, "I'll na trust in the Lord so long as there's a brigg in the county!"

The advertisement of a Scotch stage coach, some years ago, bore the singular announcement that it would always start on Mondays, "the Lord permitting and the weather being favourable;" but that, failing to do so, it would go on Tuesday *whether or not.*

After Scott and Dean Ramsay, however, it is idle to talk as if "Caledonia stern and wild" had not her merry moods occasionally.

Traversing the Atlantic, we find the American branch of the Anglo-Saxon race displaying the faculty for humour in quite a peculiar manner. Yankee fun is altogether *sui generis*, and some of it is not easily comprehensible by the uninitiated. A favourite form of it, and the one most familiar to us, is that of such grotesque hyperbole as leaves the mind of the hearer in blank amazement, as if he were running smoothly along a green lawn, and was suddenly brought up short by the sort of sunk fence called a ha-ha. When a description of the way owls are caught in forests is told as follows, the imagination itself seems to twist its neck off:—"The sportsman looks about till he sees an owl sitting on a branch. Then he approaches cautiously, with his eyes fixed on the bird; the owl always stares at him in return, with that wise and solemn look peculiar to its species. When the man is satisfied he has caught the owl's eye, he begins to walk round

the tree, slowly, keeping the owl's gaze always fixed on his own; the owl sits still, but necessarily twists its head as the man turns, and twists and twists till at last it fairly wrings off its own head, and falls at the man's feet quite dead!"

An American gentleman, lately in England, utterly discomfited some of the natives who were boasting of the rapidity of travelling in this island. "Oh! that is nothing to what we do in America. Why, sir, in my country a man may set off and make the whole tour of the U—nited States, sir, in less time—in less time, sir, than it will take him to stay at home."

Every newspaper used to contain stories like these, in the pleasant times before we had learned to look on our nearest kin among the nations with the same unreasoning prejudice, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, as our fathers looked on Frenchmen in the days of Dibdin's songs; a prejudice considerably less excusable on our part; since we are neither at war with the Americans, nor do they "call a hat *chapeau*," which was deemed by the good old sailor to account for any degree of moral reprobation. There are other forms of American wit less familiar to us, except in the pages of Mrs Stowe and Wendell Holmes; and in Longfellow's prose stories. The Puritan ideas and phraseology which lie as substrata under the education of New England, form an inimitable ground for such pure drollery as that of Mrs Stowe. Miss Prissy, discussing alternately the Five Points of Calvinism and the piecings and trimmings on which she is engaged as a dressmaker, is a character not to be matched over here, where such a mixture of ideas belongs only to hypocrisy, or to a Miss Fudge, arguing that she must continue to buy fashionable clothes for the sake of her milliner's salvation:—

> "For if pious people her custom should drop,
> Pray what's to become of her soul and her shop?"

But the raciness of American Puritanism is far beyond

this, and many a time have we fairly succumbed before the irresistible drollery of a quotation from one of their favourite phrases, introduced in the midst of some discordant scene—a Roman artist's studio, or at a gay English dinner-table. The uttermost extreme of American absurdity seems the famous Hard-Shell Baptist's Sermon, doubtless well known to our readers, comparing Methodists and Episcopalians to turkey-buzzards and 'coons, which rise very high but often fall down again ("for the Methedis' is always a fallin' from grace"); and the victorious Hard-Shell Baptist to the 'possum, "which goes up and up to the top of the higher-most trees; and the thunder may roll, and the earth may quake, but that 'ere 'possum clings there still, for he has got his tail round the branch, and nothing can shake him off."

French *esprit* is again as different from that of any branch of the Anglo-Saxon race as it is possible to conceive. Often the mere perfection of terseness and brilliance with which an ordinary thought can be expressed in that tongue of polished steel, is sufficient to constitute wit of itself. Often, again, there is inimitable drollery in the way a Frenchman is able to view a subject otherwise grave enough. What elegance is in the epigram on Napoleon III.

> "Des deux Napoleons les gloires sont inégales
> Et les moyens sont inégaux
> L'un prit à l'étranger ses capitales,
> L'autre à son pays ses capitaux."

And who can help smiling at the view of matrimonial ethics conveyed in the exclamation, "*Tiens! tu aimes ton mari! C'est bizarre ça. Pourtant—ça n'est pas défendu!*"

There is no conveying the peculiar aroma of wit which pervades a good French book to merely English readers. Only the coarser particles are preserved when passed through the sieve of translation. There is a general brilliancy and

sparkle through the whole substance of the writing, rather than special points of wit or drollery to be cited. When a Frenchman deserts this style and takes to be humorous, as Voltaire in his "*Romans*," or Paul de Kock in his novels, he seems invariably to become gross and immoral, or else profane. Fun which does not offend either God or a modest woman seems to have no flavour whatever. It is a sad pity it should be so, for the drollery of the French imagination is sometimes irresistible. Take, for instance, the story of the man concealed in a clock from a jealous husband. The husband remarks that the clock has stopped, and gets up from his chair to set it going; whereupon the lover, to convince him that it is all right, begins to imitate the ticking, saying "Tick tick tack tick" with all regularity. The husband sits down again, satisfied, to his newspaper, but for four hours the wretched man in the clock is obliged to go on saying "Tick tick tack tick," never stopping an instant for fear of immediate discovery.

The old memoirs are full of excellent stories, affiliated more or less correctly to well-known characters. One of them gives an idea of the wit of French thieves. The Marquis de l'Etorriére, the handsomest man of his age, and among the most dissipated, was one day in a crowded church in Paris during the performance of Mass. A man pushed him several times, and then civilly asked him to turn to one side. De l'Etorriére naturally asked the reason of the request, and the man confessed that a lady had commissioned an artist to take the Marquis's portrait, and that he was at that moment engaged in doing so, and wished to see his face in a particular attitude. The highly-flattered gentleman, looking up in the direction indicated, and seeing a man staring at him and holding something like a pencil in his hand, obligingly turned as he was desired, and took all possible pains to remain quite still in the position the artist required. After a time

the man beside him thanked him very warmly for his compliance, and told him the job was over. So it *was*, very effectually in fact, for De l'Etorriére had been stripped of his watch, purse, and handkerchief.*

The *noblesse de l'ancien régime* were doubtless, however, more often victorious than conquered in matters of wit. The Duc de Richelieu, a splendid sample of the *grand seigneur*, was showing his guests one day a curious collection of jewels. Amongst them were two very valuable watches. In passing them from hand to hand an unfortunate young gentleman allowed them both to fall on the floor. The Duke hastened to relieve him from his mortification, by saying, "Ah! sir, you are more clever than my watchmaker; he has never succeeded in making them *go together*."

During the French Revolution a *ci-devant* applied for a passport under the name of "*nis*." "*Nis?*" said the authorities at the passport office,—"*Comment, nis?*—Have you no other name?" "Not now," said the satirical applicant. "I used to be called St Denis, but since you have abolished the saints, and forbidden the use of the prefix *De*, there is nothing left for me but *nis*."

On one of these nobles—a bishop of irreproachable character, but extravagant aristocratic pride—this epigram was composed:—

> "On dit qu'entrant en paradis,
> Il fut reçu—vaille que vaille—
> Mais qu'il en sortit par mépris
> N'y trouvant que de la canaille!"

The Maréchal de N—— always sought for every place under Government the moment it became vacant. It was said he used to desire his valet to waken him at eight o'clock,

* This story, and several hereafter quoted, is taken from a very amusing and little-known book, "Paris, Versailles, et les Provinces au dix-huitième siècle."

"*s'il ne meurt personne cette nuit!*" A similar place-hunter in Prussia, having asked Frederick the Great for the grant of some rich Protestant bishopric, the King expressed his profound regret that it was already given away, but broadly hinted that there was a Catholic abbacy at his disposal. The applicant managed to be converted in a week, and received into the bosom of the true Church; after which he hastened to his friend the King, and told him how his conscience had been enlightened.

"Ah!" exclaimed Frederick, "how terribly unfortunate! I have given away the abbacy. But the chief Rabbi is just dead, and the Synagogue is at my disposal! Suppose you were to turn Jew?"

The Abbé Terray, Minister of Finance, being asked by Louis XV. "*Comment trouvez-vous ces fêtes?*" (those in honour of the marriage of the Dauphin, which were preposterously extravagant), replied, as became the head of the Exchequer, "*Ah! Sire, Je les trouve* IMPAYABLES."

Frenchmen, however, are quite as capable of saying foolish things as any other people, Irishmen not excepted. A French doctor, hearing that a patient who had forsaken him and consulted another physician, was just dead, exclaimed, shaking his head solemnly, in warning, "*Cela lui apprendra à changer de médecin!*" A Parisian, as vain as all others of his city breeding, and desirous of snubbing the provincials, was walking on the quay at Lyons, and asked one of the natives what he called the river. "It is the Rhone," replied the Lyonnese. "*Eh bien! voyez vous!* In Paris *we* call *that* the Seine!"

This is nearly as good as what the writer herself heard a Londoner say, in the waiting-room at Holyhead. Comparing his watch with the clock set to London time for railway travellers, he exclaimed triumphantly, "There! my watch is right to the minute; I have never altered it since I left

London, and—would you believe it?—there was not one clock in Dublin, not even the Post Office, that was not a quarter of an hour too slow; and when I went to Galway they were worse still!" How many Frenchmen and Englishmen are of these opinions, that Paris is to give its own fashion to everything, and that the order of the universe must be set to London time!

The clergy of France do not seem to be always more fortunate in the application made of their discourses than Bishop Blomfield when he preached on the text, "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God;" and one of his audience remarked afterwards, "That was a very fine sermon; but *for all you say*, my Lord, I do think there *is* a God!" A poor French Curé, knowing that his congregation were terribly addicted to the lottery, preached a long discourse on the sin and folly of such gambling, observing that they thought of nothing else, day or night. "You rise in the morning and run to your friend: 'My dear friend, I dreamt number ninety-three. We must take it.' Then you go and buy the ticket with the money wanted for your children's bread." When the Curé had concluded, an old woman came to him as he was leaving the pulpit, and pulling his *soutane*, inquired anxiously, "*Mon Père*, was it number ninety-three your reverence advised us to buy?" Another unhappy divine was confessor to a lady who was in love with the Prince de Conti. Of course such feelings were the objects of the confessor's direst reprobation, and in particular he commanded his penitent to forbid the prince from waiting eternally in her ante-room. "Oh, *Mon Père!*" exclaimed the patient, starting up joyfully, "how glad I am to hear he is there! I thought he might have forgotten me!"

But we must close these random specimens from the mine of French wit, and leave the humour of the rest of Europe untouched for the present.

THE FENIANS OF BALLYBOGMUCKY.

[*The Argosy, December,* 1865.]

THE FENIANS OF BALLYBOGMUCKY.

EARLY last summer the *Times* entertained us all by a clever piece of satire, quoting the immense preparations for insurrection detailed in the American Fenian papers, and then pretending to explain the mystery of the non-appearance of such armies by assuming that the Fenians had inherited the magical arts of the old mythical *Tuatha,* and were enabled to render themselves invisible to the eyes of English travellers traversing the bogs, where they were marshalled by thousands. But it appears that a certain nucleus of truth lay concealed within the very large nebula of Fenian boasting. There have been actually found men who believed that it was possible to wrench Ireland from the grasp of England's strong right arm, and establish there a system which would, probably, best be described as—

> ——— the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can.

That the leaders of this attempt calculated upon the unbounded ignorance of the mass of the Irish peasantry, their readiness to be roused to insurrection and violence, their deeply-planted jealousy of the landed class, whose pillage was a main feature of the programme,—all this is evident enough. It will surely not be amiss for us in England to pause a little and study the state of some millions of our fellow-subjects to whom such a character as this can be justly attributed; whom those who ought to know them

best treat as a sort of social powder-magazine, ready to be exploded by the first weak hand that applies to them the torch of some wildfire project. Between Arcadian pictures of O'Connell's "finest peasantry in the world," compounded of accounts of ecstatic tourists, with scenery and costumes furnished by reminiscences of the *Colleen Bawn* at the Adelphi, and certain very different portraits drawn from the less agreeable sources of police reports of Agrarian and other murders,—the English idea of the Irish peasant is, to say the least, somewhat obscure. We propose in the following pages to offer a little contribution of veritable sketches, to enable such of our readers as may desire it to form for themselves a rather more accurate notion of the subject. For this purpose we shall simply describe, under altered names, a fair specimen of the poorer class of an Irish village and its inhabitants a few years ago. Every character and incident we pledge ourselves to draw from life, albeit no map of Ireland will be found to mark the precise locality of Ballybogmucky, nor Burke's "Landed Gentry" to detail the heraldic honours of the Nortons of Knockillsassenach. The actual conduct of the dwellers in the original hamlet at the time of Smith O'Brien's rebellion may perhaps afford some clue to the hopes of Mr Stephens and his friends, that the Irish peasantry may be still ready to rise at any call to insurrection, however monstrous and impracticable may be the schemes of its leaders, and renew once more, amid burning houses and shrieking women, the horrors of the massacres of old. Let it be borne in mind, however, that, in dealing with a race so different in blood, in training, and in religion, from our own, not one picture, nor fifty pictures, were they drawn with tenfold the power which the present writer can claim, could suffice to give a real knowledge of the character of a people, or enable us truly to do justice either to their

merits or their failings. Those who know Ireland best will, we believe, without exception, be found to be also those who feel most tenderly for her people; while they admit that in Celtic veins there runs, along with the largest share of the milk of human kindness, a drop of intensest gall, having no appreciable parallel in the Saxon constitution; a drop which in evil hours seems to turn the whole nature into bitterness. Doubtless, a larger philosophy of human character, a better acquaintance with the different families of earth, will in some way explain how it is that the most loving are thus oftentimes transformed into the most ferocious. We shall learn to accept it as a law, that true tenderness is the correlative only of strength, and that where there is much softness, mildness, easily-excited emotions, and general *malleability* of character, there also will surely be latent the complementary colours of possible treachery and ferocity, and of that worst cruelty which comes of fear. The "mild Hindoo" proved himself the inheritor of all the feline qualities amid the horrors of the Mutiny; the Negro has shown that his cruelty can reach *almost* that of the Southern planters, who so often, in cold blood, burned and scourged to death his brethren of Georgia and the Carolinas. He can be treacherous and ferocious for his brief hour of frenzy beyond, perhaps, what a Saxon well may be. What lesson, then, are we to learn from this fact of human nature? Surely not that Celt, or Hindoo, or Negro, are irreclaimable beings, never to be given the rights of civilized men, but simply that, like children of mingled virtues and faults, they must be treated with a view to *their* characters, and not to the characters of far other races; and that, in all our dealings with them, we must bear in mind the law that, in proportion as they are habitually mild, warm-hearted, docile, religious, in that proportion also we must expect to find in them a predisposition

towards occasional outbursts of insane violence, fanaticism, and treachery.

Turn we from these larger speculations to our little sketch of an Irish village, a village such as might be found anywhere in Ireland before the Famine and the Exodus, and whose likeness is by no means extinct, albeit five hundred thousand such mud hovels as those of which it was formed have since been swept from the face of the earth.

Ballybogmucky is certainly *not* the "loveliest village of the plain." Situated partly on the edge of an old common, partly on the skirts of the domain of a nobleman who has not visited his estate for thirty years, it enjoys all the advantages of freedom from restraint upon the architectural genius of its builders. The result is a very crooked, straggling street, with mud cabins turned to it, and from it, in every possible angle of incidence: some face to face, some back to back, some sideways, some a little retired, so as to admit of a larger than ordinary heap of manure between the door and the road; such is the ground-plan of Ballybogmucky. The cabins are all of mud, with mud floors and thatched roofs; some contain one room only, others two, and perhaps half-a-dozen, three rooms: all, very literally, on the ground—that is, on the bare earth. Furniture, of course, is of the usual Irish description: a bed (sometimes having a bedstead, oftener consisting of a heap of straw on the floor), a table, a griddle, a kettle, a stool or two, and a *boss* of straw, with occasionally the grand adjunct of a settle; a window whose normal condition is being stuffed with an old hat; a door, over and under and round which all the winds and rains of heaven find their way; a population consisting of six small children, a bedridden grandmother, a husband and wife, a cock and three hens, a pig, a dog, and a cat; lastly, a decoration of coloured prints, including the Virgin with seven

swords in her heart, St Joseph, the story of Dives and Lazarus, and a caricature of a man tossed by a bull, and a fat woman getting over a stile.

Of course, as Ballybogmucky lies in the lowest ground in the neighbourhood, and the drains were originally planned to run at "their own sweet will," the *town* (as its inhabitants call it) is subject to the inconvenience of being about two feet under water whenever there are any considerable floods of rain. We have known a case of such a flood literally entering the door and rising into the bed of a poor woman, as in Mr Macdonald's charming story of *Alec Forbes;* only the woman we knew did not die, but gave to the world that night a very fine little child, whom we saw not long ago scampering along the roads with true Irish hilarity. At other times when there were no floods, only the usual rains, Ballybogmucky presented the view of a filthy green stream slowly oozing down the central street, now and then draining off under the door of any particularly lowly placed cabin to form a pool in the floor, and finally terminating in a lake of abomination under the viaduct of a railway. Yes, reader! a railway ran through Ballybogmucky even while the description I have given of it held true in every respect. The only result it seemed to have effected in the village was the formation of the Stygian pool above mentioned, where, heretofore, the stream had somehow escaped into a ditch.

Let us now consider the people who dwelt amid all this squalor and wretchedness. They were mostly field labourers, working for the usual wages of seven or eight shillings a week. Many of them held their cabins as freeholds, having built or inherited them from those who had "squatted" unmolested on the common. A few paid rent to the noble landlord before mentioned. Work was seldom wanting, coals were cheap, excellent schools were open for the

children at a penny a week a head. Families which had not more than three or four mouths to fill beside the bread-winner's were not in absolute want: save when disease, or a heavy snow, or a flood, or some similar calamity arrived. Then—down on the ground, poor souls, literally and metaphorically, they could fall no lower, and a week was enough to bring them to the verge of starvation.

Let us try and recall some of the characters of the inhabitants of Ballybogmucky some ten or fifteen years ago.

Here in the first cabin is a comfortable family where there are three sons at work, and mother and three daughters at home. Enter at any hour there is a hearty welcome and bright jest ready. Here is the schoolmaster's house, a little behind the others, and back to back with them. It has an attempt at a curtain for the window, a knocker for the door. The man is a curious deformed creature, of whom more will be said hereafter. The wife is what is called in Ireland a *Voteen*, a person given to religion, who spends most of her time in the chapel, or repeating prayers, and who wears as much semblance of black as her poor means may allow. Ballybogmucky, be it said, is altogether Catholic and devout. It is honoured by the possession of what it calls "the Holy Griddle." Perhaps our readers have heard of the Holy Grail, the original Sacramental Chalice so long sought by the chivalry of the Middle Ages, and may ask if the Holy Griddle be akin thereto. We cannot trace any likeness. A "griddle," as all the Irish and Scotch world knows, is a circular iron plate, on which the common unleavened cakes of wheatmeal and oatmeal are baked. The Holy Griddle of Ballybogmucky is one of these utensils, which was bequeathed to the village under the following circumstances. Years ago, probably in the last century, a poor "lone widow" lay on her death-bed. She had none to pray for her after she

was gone, for she was childless and altogether desolate; neither had she any money to give to the priest to pray for her soul. Yet the terrors of Purgatory were near. How should she escape them? She possessed but one object of any value—a griddle, whereon she was wont to bake the meal of the wheat she gleaned every harvest to help her through the winter. So the widow left her griddle as a legacy to the village for ever, on one condition. It was to pass from hand to hand as each might want it, but every one who used her griddle was to say a prayer for her soul. Years have passed away, but the griddle, still in constant use, is "the best griddle in the town;" the cakes baked on the Holy Griddle being twice as good as any others. May the poor widow who so simply bequeathed it have found long ago "rest for her soul" better than any prayers have asked for her, even the favourite Irish prayer, "May you sit in heaven on a golden chair!"

Here is another house, where an old man lives with his sister. The old woman is the Mrs Gamp of Ballybogmucky. The old man has a curious story attached to him. Having laboured long and well on the estate of the Squire of Knockill-sassenach, the latter finding him grow rheumatic and helpless, pensioned him with his wages for life, and Paddy retired to the enjoyment of such privacy as Ballybogmucky might afford. Growing more and more helpless, he at last for some years hobbled about feebly on crutches, a confirmed cripple. One day the writer, with amazement, saw him walking without his crutches, and tolerably firmly, a long way from home. The gentleman who had pensioned him went to speak to him, and soon returned, saying, "Here is a strange thing. Paddy Russell says he has been to Father Matthew, and Father Matthew has blessed him, and he is cured! He came to tell me he wished to give up his pension since he

returns to work at S.'s farm next week." Very naturally, and as might be expected, poor Paddy, three weeks later, was again helpless, and a suppliant for the restoration of his pension, which was of course immediately renewed. But one who had witnessed only the scene of the long-familiar cripple walking up stoutly to decline his pension (the very best possible proof of his sincère belief in his own recovery) might well be excused for narrating the story as no small wonder wrought by a true moral reformer, the Irish "Apostle of Temperance."

Next door to Paddy Russell's cabin stood "the shop," a cabin a trifle better than the rest, where butter, flour, and dip-candles, *Ingy-male* (Indian meal), and possibly a small quantity of soap, were the chief objects of commerce. Further on came a miserable hovel with the roof broken in, and a pool of filth, *en permanence*, in the middle of the floor, Here dwelt a miserable good-for-nothing old man and equally good-for-nothing daughter, hopeless recipients of anybody's bounty. Opposite them, in a tidy little cabin, always as clean as white-wash and sweeping could make its poor mud walls and earthen floor, lived an old woman and her daughter. The daughter was deformed, the mother a beautiful old woman, bedridden, but always perfectly clean, and provided, by her daughter's hard labour in the fields, and gathering cockles by the sea-shore, with all she could need. After years of devotion, when Mary was no longer young, the mother died, and the daughter, left quite alone in the world, seemed absolutely broken-hearted. Night after night she strayed about the chapel-yard where her mother lay buried, hoping, as she told us, to see her ghost.

"And do you think," she asked, fixing her eyes on us, "do you think I shall ever see her again? I asked Father M—— would I see her in heaven? and all he said was, 'I

should *see her in the glory of God.*' What does that mean? I don't understand what it means. Will I see her, herself—my poor old mother?"

After long years, we lately found this faithful heart still yearning to be re-united to the "poor old mother," and patiently labouring on in solitude, waiting till God should call her home out of that little white cabin to one of the "many mansions" where her mother is waiting for her.

Here is a house where there are many sons and daughters, and some sort of prosperity: we shall speak more of them by and by. Here, again, is a house with three rooms, and several inmates, and in one room lives a strange tall old man, with something of dignity in his aspect. He asked us once to come into his room, and showed us the book over which all his spare hours seemed spent, "*Thomas à Kempis.*"

"Ah, yes—that is a great book, a book full of beautiful things."

"Do *you* know it? do Protestants read it?"

"Yes, to be sure; we read all sorts of books."

"I'm glad of it. It's a comfort to me to think you read this book."

Here again is an old woman with hair as white as snow, who deliberately informs us she is ninety-eight years of age, and, next time we see her, corrects herself, and "believes it is eighty-nine—but it is all the same, she disremembers numbers." This poor old soul in some way hurt her foot, and after much suffering was obliged to have half of it amputated. Strange to say, she recovered; but, when we congratulated her on the happy event, we shall never forget the outbreak of true feminine sentiment which followed. Stretching out the poor, mutilated, and blackened limb, and looking at it with woeful compassion, she exclaimed, "Ah, ma'am, but it will *never be a purty foot again!*" Age, squalor, poverty,

and even mutilation, had not sufficed to quench that little spark of vanity which "springs eternal in the *female* breast."

Here, again, are half-a-dozen cabins, each occupied by widows with one or more daughters; houses which, though poorest of all, are by no means the most dirty or uncared-for. Of course there are a dozen others literally overflowing with children, children in the cradle, children on the floor, children on the threshold, children on the "midden" outside; rosy, bright, merry children, who thrive with the smallest possible share of buttermilk and stirabout, are utterly innocent of shoes and stockings, and learn at school all that is taught to them at least half as fast again as a tribe of little Saxons. Several of them in Ballybogmucky are the adopted children of the people who provide for them. First sent down by their parents (generally domestic servants) to be nursed in that salubrious spot, after a year or two it generally happened that the pay ceased, the parent was not heard of, and the foster-mother and father would no more have thought of sending the child to the Poor-house than of sending it to the moon. The Poor-house, indeed, occupied a very small space in the imagination of the people of Ballybogmucky. It was beyond Purgatory, and hardly more real. Not that the actual institution was conducted on other than the very mildest principles, but there was a fearful Ordeal by Water—in the shape of a warm bath—to be undergone on entrance; there were large rooms with glaring windows, admitting a most uncomfortable degree of light, and never shaded by any broken hats or petticoats; there were also stated hours, and rules thoroughly disgusting to the Celtic mind, and, lastly, for the women, there were caps without borders!

Yes! cruelty had gone so far (masculine guardians, however compassionate, little recking the woe they caused), till at length a wail arose—a clamour—almost a Rebellion!

"*Would* they make them wear caps without borders?" The stern heart of manhood relented, and answered "No!"

But we must return to Ballybogmucky. Do our readers ask was nothing done to ameliorate the condition of that wretched place? Certainly; at all events there was much attempted. There was a wealthy old lady who lived in the neighbourhood, who built and endowed capital schools for both boys and girls, and pensioned some of the poorest of the old people. The Squire of the parish, Mr Norton of Knockillsassenach, having a wholesome horror of pauperizing, tried hard at more complete reforms, by giving regular employment to as many as possible, and aiding all efforts to improve the houses. Not being the landlord of Ballybogmucky, however, he could do nothing effectually, nor enforce any kind of sanitary measures; so that while his own villages were neat, trim, and healthy, poor Ballybogmucky went on year after year deserving the epithet it bore among the Nortons, of the *Slough of Despond.* The failures of endeavours to mend it would form a chapter of themselves. On one occasion, Squire Norton's eldest son undertook the true task for a Hercules; to drain, *not* the stables of Augeas, but the town of Ballybogmucky. The result was that his main drain was found soon afterwards effectually stopped up by the *dam* of an old beaver bonnet. Again, he attempted to whitewash the entire village; but many inhabitants objected to whitewash. The old squire, like another King of Dahomey, formed a band of some eight girls, each of them the support of a widowed mother, clothed them comfortably, and set them under steady guardianship, not exactly to practise Amazon warfare, but to weed his walks, and trim his pleasure-grounds. Of course when any flood, or snow, or storm came (and what wintry month did they not come in Ireland?) some of the Nortons went to see the state of

affairs at Ballybogmucky, and provide what could be provided. And of course when anybody was born, or married, or ill, or dead, or going to America, in or from Ballybogmucky, embassies were sent to Knockillsassenach seeking assistance; money for burial or passage, wine, meat, coals, in sickness, and (strange to say) in cases of death, always *jam!* The connection between dying and wanting raspberry jam remained to the last a mystery, but whatever was its nature, it was invariable. "Mary Keogh," or "Peter Reilly," as the case might be, "isn't expected, and would be very thankful for some jam," was the regular message. Be it remarked that Irish delicacy has suggested the euphuism of "isn't expected" to signify that a person is likely to die. What it is that he or she "is not expected" to do, is never mentioned. When the supplicant was not supposed to be personally known at Knockillsassenach, or a little extra persuasion was thought needful to cover too frequent demands, it was commonly urged that the petitioner was a "poor orp*hant*"—commonly aged thirty or forty—or else a "desolate widow." The word desolate, however, being always pronounced "*dissolute*," the epithet proved less affecting than it was intended to be. But absurd as their words might sometimes be (and sometimes, on the contrary, they were full of touching pathos and simplicity), the *wants* of the poor souls were only too real, as the Nortons very well knew, and it was not often that a petitioner from Ballybogmucky to Knockillsassenach went empty away.

But such help was only of temporary avail. The Famine came and things grew worse. In poor families, that is, families where there was only one man to earn and five or six mouths to be fed, the best wages given in the country proved insufficient to buy the barest provision of food; wheatmeal for "griddle" bread, oatmeal for stirabout, turnips to

make up for the lost potatoes. Strong men fainted at their work in the fields, having left untasted for their little children the food they needed so sorely. Beggars from the more distressed districts (for Ballybogmucky was in one of those which suffered least in Ireland) swarmed through the country, and rarely, at the poorest cabin, asked in vain for bread. Often and often have we seen the master or mistress of some wretched hovel bring out the "griddle cake," and give half of it to some wanderer, who answered simply with a blessing and passed on. Once we remember passing by the house of a poor widow, who had seven children of her own, and as if that were not enough, had adopted an orphan left by her sister. At her cabin door one day, we saw, propped up against her knees, a miserable "traveller," a wanderer from what a native of Ballybogmucky would call "other nations; a *bowzy villain* from other nations,"—that is to say, a village eight or ten miles away. The traveller lay senseless, starved to the bone and utterly famine-stricken. The widow tried tenderly to make him swallow a spoonful of bread and water, but he seemed unable to make the exertion. A few drops of spirit by and by restored him to consciousness. The poor "bowzy" leaned his head on his hands and muttered feebly "Glory be to God." The widow looked up, rejoicing, "Glory be to God, he's saved anyhow." Of course all the neighbouring gentry joined in the usual schemes of soup-kitchens and the like, and by one means or other the hard years of famine were passed over.

Then came the Fever, in many ways a worse scourge than the famine. Of course it fell heavily on such ill-drained places as Ballybogmucky. After a little time, as each patient remained ill for many weeks, it often happened that three or four were in the fever in the same cabin, or even all the family at once, huddled in the two or three beds, and with

only such attendance as the kindly neighbours, themselves overburdened, could supply. Soon it became universally known that recovery was to be effected only by improved food and wine; not by drugs. Those whose condition was already good, and who caught the fever, invariably died; those who were in a depressed state, if they could be raised, were saved. It became precisely a question of life and death how to supply nourishment to all the sick. As the fever lasted on and on, and reappeared time after time, the work was difficult, seeing that no stores of any sort could ever be safely intrusted to Irish prudence and frugality.

Then came Smith O'Brien's rebellion. The country was excited. In every village (Ballybogmucky nowise behindhand) certain clubs were formed, popularly called "Cut-throat Clubs," for the express purpose of purchasing pikes and organizing the expected insurrection in combination with leaders in Dublin. *Head-Centre* of the club of Ballybogmucky was the ex-schoolmaster, of whom we have already spoken. How he obtained that honour we know not; possibly because he could write, which most probably was beyond the achievements of any other member of the institution; possibly also because he claimed to be the lawful owner of the adjoining estate of Knockillsassenach. How the schoolmaster's claim was proved to the satisfaction of himself and his friends is a secret which, if revealed, would probably afford a clue to much of Fenian ambition. Nearly every parish in Ireland has thus its lord *de facto*, who dwells in a handsome house in the midst of a park, and another lord who dwells in a mud-cabin in the village, and is fully persuaded he is the lord *de jure*. In the endless changes of ownership and confiscation to which Irish land has been subjected, there is always some heir of one or other of the dispossessed families, who, if nothing had happened that did

happen, and nobody had been born of a score or two of persons who somehow, unfortunately, were actually born, then he or she, might, could, would, or should have inherited the estate. In the present case Mr Norton's ancestor (an Englishman holding high office) had purchased the estate some hundred and fifty years ago, from another English family who had held it for some generations. When and where the poor Celtic schoolmaster's forefathers had come upon the field none pretended to know. Anxious, however, to calm the minds of his neighbours, the Squire thought fit to address them in a paternal manifesto, posted about the different villages, entreating them to forbear from entering the "Cut-throat Clubs," and pointing the moral of the recent death of the Archbishop of Paris at the barricades. The result of this step was simply that the newspaper, then published in Dublin under the audacious name of the *Felon*, devoted half a column to exposing that gentleman by name to the hatred of good Clubbists, and pointing him out as "one of the very first for whose benefit the pikes were procured." Boxes of pikes were accordingly actually sent by the railway before mentioned, and duly delivered to the Club; and still the threat of rebellion rose higher, till even calm people like the Nortons began to wonder whether it was a volcano on which they were treading, or the familiar mud of Ballybogmucky.

Knockillsassenach having had its chief wing added at the period of '98, or thereabouts, bore testimony to the fact in two or three little features. There was a long corridor which had once been all hung with weapons, and there was a certain board in the floor of an inner closet which could be taken up when desirable, and beneath which appeared a large receptacle wherein the aforesaid weapons were stored in times of danger. Stories of '98 were familiar to the Nortons from infancy. There was the story of the Le Hunts of Wex-

ford, when the daughter of the family dreamed three times that the guns in her father's hall were all broken, and on inducing Colonel Le Hunt to examine them, the dream was found to be true, and his own butler the traitor. There was the delightful story of Commissioner Beresford, who had a bank in Dublin, and whose notes the (truly) Irish rebels collected to the amount of many thousands of pounds, and then publicly burned, with every expression of contempt; thus presenting him with a large fortune. Horrible stories were there, also, of burnings and *cardings* (*i. e.* tearing the back with the iron comb used in carding wool); and nursery threats of rebels coming up back stairs on recalcitrant "*puck-hawns*" (naughty children—children of Puck), insomuch that to "play at rebellion" was the natural resource of all the little Nortons. A favourite resort in wet weather carried out the idea, by displaying ammunition of bows and arrows, and old court-swords, and a valuable provision against famine in case of siege, consisting of such comestibles as acidulated drops and similar restoratives. Born and bred in this atmosphere, it seemed like a bad dream come true that there were actual pikes imported into well-known cabins, and that there were in the world beings stupid and wicked enough to wish to apply them to those who laboured constantly for their benefit. Yet the papers teemed with stories of murders of good and just landlords; yet threats, each day more loud, came with every post, of what Smith O'Brien and his friends would do if they but succeeded in raising the peasantry, alas! all too ready to be raised. Looking over the miserable *fiasco* of that "cabbage-garden" rebellion now, it seems all too ridiculous to have ever excited the least alarm. But at that time, while none could doubt the final triumph of England, it was very possible to doubt whether aid could be given by the English Government

before every species of violence might be committed by the besotted peasantry at the gates.

A little incident which occurred at the moment rather confirmed the idea that Ballybogmucky was transformed for the nonce into a little Hecla; not under snow, but mud. One of the Nortons visiting the fever patients, was detained late of a summer's evening in the village. So many were ill, there seemed no end of sick to be supplied with food, wine, and other things needed. In particular, three together were ill in a house already mentioned, where there were several grown-up sons, and the people were somewhat better off than usual, though by no means sufficiently so to be able to procure meat or such luxuries. Here Miss Norton lingered, questioning and prescribing, till at about nine o'clock the visit ended; the visitor leaving money to procure some of the things needed. Next morning the Squire (of course a magistrate) addressed his daughter:—

"So you were at Ballybogmucky last night?"

"Yes, I was kept there."

"You stayed in T——'s house till nine o'clock?"

"Yes; how do you know?"

"You gave six and sixpence to the mother to get provisions?"

"Yes; how *do* you know?"

"Well, very simply. The police were watching the door and saw you through it. As soon as you were gone the Club assembled there; they were waiting for your departure; and the money you gave was subscribed to buy pikes—of course to pike me!"

A week later, the bubble burst in the memorable cabbage-garden. The rebel chiefs were leniently dealt with by the Government, and their would-be rebel followers fell back into all the old ways as if nothing had happened.

What became of the pikes no one knew. Possibly they exist in Ballybogmucky still, waiting for some Fenian Movement to be brought forth. At the end of a few months the poor schoolmaster, claimant of Knockillsassenach, died; and as the same visitor from the family threatened by his pikes stood by his bedside and gave him what little succour was possible, the poor fellow lifted his eyes full of meaning, and said, "To think *you* should come to help me now!" It was the last reference made to the once-dreaded rebellion.

Years have passed, and all things in Ireland wear a better aspect, Ballybogmucky among the number. After endless efforts the young Squire has carried his point and drained the whole village—beaver bonnets notwithstanding. Whitewash has become popular. *Middens* (as the Scotch call them, the Irish have a simpler phrase) are placed more frequently behind houses than in front of them. Costume has undergone some vicissitudes, among which the introduction of shoes and stockings, among even the juvenile population, is the most remarkable feature; a great change truly, since we can remember an old woman, to whom a pair had been given by a too-benevolent gentleman, complaining that she had *caught cold* in consequence of wearing for the first time in her life those superfluous garments.

Of course there have been graver changes than these. Many have been drawn into the stream of the Exodus, and have left the country. How helpless they are in their migrations, poor souls, was proved by one sad story. A steady, good young woman, whose sister had settled comfortably in New York, resolved to go out to join her, and for the purpose took her passage at an emigration agency office in Dublin. Going as usual to make her farewell respects at Knockillsassenach, the following conversation ensued between her and Miss Norton.

"So, Bessie, you are going to America?"

"Yes, ma'am, to join Biddy at New York. She wrote for me to come, and sent me the passage-money."

"That is very good of her. Of course you have taken your passage direct to New York."

"Well, no, ma'am. The agent said there was no ship going to New York, but one to some place close by, New-something-else."

"New-something-else, near New York; I can't think where that could be."

"Yes, ma'am, New—New—I disremember what it was, but he told me I could get from it to New York immadiently."

"Oh, Bessie, it wasn't New Orleans?"

"Yes, ma'am, that was it! New Orleans—New Orleans, close to New York, he said."

"And you have paid your passage-money?"

"Yes, ma'am, I must go there anyhow, now."

"Oh, Bessie, Bessie, why would you never come to school and learn geography? You are going to a terrible place, far away from your sister. That wicked agent has cheated you horribly."

The poor girl went to New Orleans, and there died of fever. The birds of passage and fish which pass from sea to sea seem more capable of knowing what they are about than the greater number of the emigrants driven by scarcely less blind an instinct. Out of the *three millions* who, before this year closes, will have gone since the famine, from Ireland to America, how many must there have been who had no more knowledge than poor Bessie of the land to which they went!

And there are many who have gone on a longer journey, a greater Exodus, "gone over to the majority," as the old Romans used to say. In the little chapel yard, where

"The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,"

there are many more headstones to be seen; a few surmounted by the old Irish cross, others bearing a favourite bas-relief of a Lamb in glory. But these can hardly belong to the graves of those of whom we have written. For the old man who took such delight in "Thomas à Kempis," for the cripple whom Father Matthew restored, for the beloved old mother whose ghost her daughter still yearns to see, for all these "the turf of the valley" suffices to cover the resting-place. It is hard to think what life may have been to them, and what it is to millions such as they. No "fitful fever" like our own, can it resemble, of hope and passions, pleasure and grief; that life of vivid consciousness which comes of cultured intellect and awakened taste, and fancy left free to roam the universe, and affection strung to morbid delicacy in the atmosphere of leisure and refinement. Rather must it be a troubled twilight dream; the dream of one who slumbers wearily, yet knows he must awake to toil; the dream of a little joy in youth, and after that, much want, much labour, much patience—and then—peace. Is it not for souls whose earthly course has been thus dim and sorrowful, who have beheld so little of this beautiful world, tasted so few of the varied pleasures it contains, cultivated so poor a share of all the wondrous powers which lie hid in every human heart and brain,—is it not for souls like these we are most sure there waits the LIFE IMMORTAL? Is not the rest in "Abraham's bosom" for *Lazarus* before us all?

THE END.

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