THE

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW.

No. CXLII. NEW SERIES.—OCTOBER 1, 1878.

IMPERIALISM.

THE time cannot be remote, it may be very near at hand, when we shall be called upon to elect a new Parliament. The election when it does arrive will, as far as we are permitted to see at present, turn upon questions very different from those which have agitated the public at least during the memory of the present generation. For reasons too obvious to require statement, the election can hardly turn on the merits or character of any existing statesman. We have not, and, we may be permitted to assert, are not likely to have, any proposal for domestic legislation which is calculated very deeply to interest the feelings or stir the energies of the great bulk of the constituencies. And yet this election will in all probability be ranked by posterity among the most momentous that has occurred during the last six hundred years. It may not turn on persons or on measures, but it will decide that on which the fate of persons and the success of measures must henceforth depend. It will lay down the principles on which statesmen must act, and the kind of measures which Parliament will henceforth view with favour. To many keenly disputed principles the present Parliament has already given the seal of its approbation. During the maximum period of two years which may remain to it, Parliament may give its approval to many more. But two things must always be remembered: one, that the innovations to which we allude have hitherto been the work not of those who are usually regarded as the party of innovation—the chartered libertines to whom nothing, however venerable from age or prescription, is sacred—but of the Conservative party, the party of tradition and permanence; the other, that these signal innovations on the ancient traditions and practice of England have never been brought to the notice and have never received the sanction of the electors, in whose hands the ultimate decision still lies. Many of these questions have been raised from time to time in the form of criticisms on the declarations or actions of the ministers

now in power. Others, though not distinctly stated, appear to be necessary corollaries from them. Others seem to point to analogies of very large and sweeping application. It has occurred to the writer of this paper that, perhaps, something might be gained for that clearness and precision which is so essential in a matter of such unspeakable importance, if he were first to endeavour to lay down affirmatively, rather than by way of hostile criticism, what appear to him to be the leading principles in dispute, and the reasons on which he conceives those principles to be based, reserving for after-consideration the criticism of those principles which appear to have been finally adopted by our present Ministry and Parliament.

So deep does the unsettlement of men's minds go, that the first question on which the constituencies will be bound to give an opinion is nothing less than the very elementary problem, What is the object which all those entrusted with political power ought to have in view in conducting the affairs of the country? The only answer that calm reason can give to such a question seems to be that the one duty of those entrusted with the government of mankind is to act purely and solely, as far as the infirmity of human nature will permit, with the single view of obtaining for that country over which they preside the greatest amount of happiness which the condition of its existence admits of. This is the alpha and omega of the duty of a statesman. As far as he does this, he discharges his duty to the people with whose destiny he is entrusted. As far as he allows himself to be drawn aside by any consideration whatever from this first and paramount obligation, be the temptation ever so great and so seducing, he is false to the trust reposed in him and to the office which he has undertaken. All other objects of desire, how glittering and seductive soever—military glory, success in diplomacy, personal distinction, increase of territory, prestige of all kinds—are not to be regarded as things to be desired for their own sake, but only so far as they contribute to the one cardinal and exclusive object, the happiness of those who have either directly or by their authorised agents entrusted their welfare to his care. Yet, true as this undoubtedly is, in the whole course of the recent controversy we never remember to have heard it mentioned. The whole dispute has turned on secondary matters, and the one end, in comparison with which all others sink into absolute insignificance, has been kept out of sight, and replaced by substitutes of infinitely inferior value.

Supposing this primary and all-important proposition to be conceded, another duty is thrown upon Government, for the performance of which they are gravely responsible. They are bound not only to abstain themselves from misleading the less informed and more excitable part of the community by directing their attention to these *idola theatri*, which may be substituted for the

pursuit of happiness; they are bound to warn them against these delusions, and to point out to them that upon them and upon their children the effects of what is called a spirited foreign policy, as opposed to the pursuit of happiness, will surely fall. The business of a just and honest administration was, we think, well illustrated in the case of the Alabama award. Every conceivable motive prompted refusal except one, but that one was the happiness of the people of England and America. It was a case where the ministry of the day might have easily gained a temporary popularity by stimulating the popular passion. They preferred saving the people to trafficking on their weaknesses and passions, and when they incurred unpopularity in such a cause they were discharging the highest and clearest duty of their office.

The same considerations which apply to war determine the duty of a really honest and patriotic government with regard to finance. A really honest and patriotic government regards itself as a trustee, in the strictest sense of the word, of the money which is raised from the people. Not only is it bound not to misapply those funds, it is bound to employ them strictly in the manner which Parliament has decided to be most beneficial to the public at large. When the service of the year has been provided for, the surplus, if any, should return to those from whom it came. It was theirs originally, it becomes theirs again when the purpose for which it was raised is answered. This may be done in one of two ways, either by remission of taxation or by payment of debt. It seems right that the people who contribute the taxes should have the surplus returned to them, rather than that the Government should spend it for them. Every man is the best judge of where the shoe pinches. It is not right to divert the balance to lending money to powerful municipal bodies at a lower interest than can be obtained elsewhere, although it is undoubtedly a means of obtaining popularity. The present Government has made many friends by the lending system. The late Government took off twelve millions of taxes, and paid off forty millions of what was or would have become debt, and we are not aware that by doing so they made a single friend or conciliated a single opponent—but most undoubtedly they did their duty.

The happiness of men, as far as money matters are concerned, is best consulted by leaving them as far as possible to spend the money they have earned in their own way. It may be said that this principle would countenance that of which we have recently had a sample, the postponing the duty of raising money for the payment of sums which are due for the service of the present year, for a period more or less remote. The answer is that the Government is a trustee for the happiness of the people not only during the present year, but

for all time; and that nothing tends so directly to foster those habits of extravagance, which are fatal alike to the happiness of nations and individuals, as giving any countenance to the idea that it can be either just or wise to teach the lesson that we have discovered the art by which one set of persons may be forced to pay for that which another set of persons have contrived to enjoy. In these, as in all other cases, a rigid adherence to justice will be found not only the guide to what is right, but also to what is sound policy, not necessarily the policy that will secure a prolonged tenure of office, but a policy which is good in itself, and will give to those who practise it the consciousness of having done their duty, and to those who live under it a respect for the institutions under which they live.

When we turn from domestic to foreign relations, we shall find that the same rule obtains. Our foreign relations have been happy and prosperous just in proportion as we have observed the rule of guiding ourselves by our true interests alone. From the first dawn of history mankind have been subject to the delusion that the happiness of a nation consists in the degree of influence that one people can exercise over the destiny of another; happy if they could make their neighbours tributary, happier still if they could reduce them to absolute dependence, happiest of all if they could degrade them to the condition of slaves. The Romans, who regulated their rights between each other with the most scrupulous exactness, had neither mercy nor justice for foreigners. The heroic stoic virtue of Brutus did not prevent him from starving the whole senate of our new and interesting possession of Cyprus to death, in order to extort from them the payment of interest at the rate of forty-eight per cent. The conquered provinces were plundered without mercy by prætors and pro-consuls to defray the expenses of Roman elections; and things reached such a degree of disorder and misery that the conquerors of the world submitted to a single tyrant, and reduced themselves to the condition of those whom they had conquered and trampled upon, rather than submit any longer to the fearful consequences of their own victories, bought by the extermination of the brave and thrifty inhabitants of Italy. This signal and prerogative instance, to which it would be easy to add many others, seems to show that when a nation has attained a certain amount of freedom and self-government, no step can be more fatal than a career of successful conquests. The dilemma forms itself in this way: if you raise your conquered enemy to a level with yourself, the blood and treasure which you have expended in the conquest have been wasted, and all that you have gained by it is a new element of discord and sedition; if you keep them in subjection they will inevitably, as in the case of Rome, drag you down to their own level.

It must also be remembered that the modern conqueror is in two respects worse off than his Roman predecessor: the ancient conqueror could impose a tribute, which the comparative mildness of modern notions will scarcely tolerate; and it was once worth while to conquer poor and savage races for the sake of obtaining slaves, which the civilisation of modern Europe no longer endures. Thus it appears that the principal motives which spurred men on to war in former times no longer exist, and that if it is the duty of statesmen to act solely for the happiness of the people they govern, it is equally their interest to avoid wars from which the mildness of modern manners prevents them from winning even the miserable advantages that war, if successful, could once afford.

But the case against war is still stronger when we consider that we have already obtained, without shedding a drop of blood, all and more than all that the most successful war could possibly give us. We won Canada by a series of bloody battles, but Australia we obtained without any battle at all. We sought in the most imperial way to make our colonies in North America our tributaries, and they separated from us, after inflicting upon us defeat and humiliation unknown to us before. We supposed that we had lost a great and irreplaceable dominion, but we found that for all useful purposes we had lost nothing by the separation; for all pacific uses the United States were still at our service. So long as vacant lands in temperate latitudes exist on the earth we have at our disposal, without shedding a drop of blood, all that the most successful war can give us. Just as we have discovered that any amount of territory may be acquired without war, so we have discovered and clearly proved that wealth beyond the dreams of avarice may be acquired without plunder. The way to grow rich is not to plunder and ruin other people, but to assist them in becoming rich themselves. The Roman empire perished because the subjects were unable to endure the weight of taxation. England flourishes because her peaceful industry can supply the demands of her Government, and yet leave enough in the hands of her people to stand against the competition of the world.

We trust that the observations which we have made will be found an appropriate introduction to the question which must be decided at the next general election. That question is, Shall we adhere to the policy which we have on the whole consistently adopted since the close of the Crimean war, or shall we discard it and substitute for it what in the language of our Secretaries of State is called Imperialism?

Every one of us when he enters upon life has before him two courses of action. He may take for his guide the simple rule of treating others as he would wish to be treated himself; he may consider their feelings, their interests, their prejudices; he may strive to place himself in their position; he may remember how often he

has required indulgence himself, and how often he may yet require it; he may reflect upon the uncertainties of the most assured position, and the probability that he may at some time find occasion to ask for that fair consideration which he is now asked to give to his neighbour. Without entering into the moral merit of such conduct, we are in the habit of considering such a man, it may be, as a good but certainly as a prudent and judicious person. Take a person of the contrary cast of character—a man who, bent only on his immediate advantage, pushes every opportunity to the utmost, avows cynically that his own interest is the sole guide of his conduct, and shows by words and actions that he recognises no other limit to the liberty which he allows himself in his dealings with others than the strict law, and not even that, unless there is a strong probability of its being enforced against him. Which course should we, speaking in the abstract and without any special temptation before us, desire those who are adopted as the agents for a nation of which we are members to follow? Surely we should say, we prefer the fair and generous course, more especially when we remember that man is but a transitory being, but that nations are endowed with almost boundless longevity, and have therefore much stronger motives than individuals for establishing a good character. To do the Tories justice, the name of Imperialism and the theory were foreign to their opinions and traditions. But now the party has obtained not only office but power, and this is the contribution which its new position has brought us. We are invited to cast aside what we had fondly conceived to be the universally recognised principles of foreign policy, and to adopt those in their stead which it was hoped and believed we had finally discarded.

Let us examine this new idol to which we are summoned to bow down, as suddenly and as unreasonably as the subjects of Nebuchadnezzar himself. What does Imperialism mean? It means the assertion of absolute force over others. If we can gain some purpose by persuading our adversary that we are right and he is wrong, that is mere logical and rhetorical dexterity. There is nothing imperial in it. If we can, by abating somewhat of our extreme right, or even by larger concessions, avert the calamities of war, that is utterly repugnant to Imperialism. But if by the menace of overbearing force we can coerce a weaker state to bow before our will, or if, better still, we can by a demonstration of actual force attain the same object, or, best of all, if we can conquer our adversary in open fight, and impose our own conditions at the bayonet's point, then, as Dryden sings, "these are imperial arts and worthy thee." It does not follow that the strongest party is always in the wrong, but the triumph of Imperialism is most complete when power is most clearly manifested; and of course the

victory is doubled when the victory is not only over weakness but over right.

We do not say that in her long and chequered history England has not often abused her power, but we believe that this is the first time that the leading members of her Government in England have descended so low as to teach their party to put forward such a symbol. Let us see what it is, and whither it will lead us. We are told as a matter of reproach that the question is between a great and a little England. Whether there may not also be a choice sometimes between a happy and a great, between an imperial and a just England, we are never desired to consider. Let us then analyse this light, and see whether it is of heaven or of the fogs and swamps of earth.

Imperialism is the apotheosis of violence. From the point of view of Imperialism, the less that there is to say for it beyond brute force the better. Every scintilla of justice that there is in your case is just so much deducted from its imperial quality. If he is thrice armed that has his quarrel just, he that has his quarrel unjust is thrice imperial. This doctrine in a nation like ours is as impolitic as it is iniquitous. We have a great deal more to lose than to gain by the spread of violence and rapine, and should, if it were only out of mere selfishness, adhere to the theory that sanctions existing rights and possessions. These cynical pretensions suit well with the insolence of prosperity, but have a bitter recoil in the days of adversity. Imperialism, so far as it is a leading motive, is the claim to be judges on our own cause—a claim which is neither just nor honourable. The Athenians, in their controversy with the Melians, cynically declare that "justice is to be applied when the forces on each side are equal; but what the strong shall exact, or the weak shall yield, is a mere question of power." Was that their opinion when, ten years afterwards, they found themselves at the mercy of the Spartans? There lurks a delusion, a prestige, in the proper sense of the word, in the very notion of Imperialism. One can imagine a single despot exulting in uncontrolled power, but what application has this to some thirty-five millions of people? We call them England by a figure of speech, but how many of them understand the glories of Imperialism, and how many of those on whom her glories descend would be willing to pay for them, if they knew the cost at which they are obtained, and had the question fairly put before them. We have recently had two samples of Imperialism which might, one would think, cool the aspirations of the most ardent Imperialist. The Emperor of the French, having no just title to fall back upon, determined to be ultra-imperial, *i.e.* to maintain by glory what he had gained by fraud and murder, and plunged into a most unjust war, with results which corresponded much more nearly to his deserts than his expectations. And we have a striking example in

Prussia how little mere military success contributes to the happiness or content of the victor.

The introduction of this new and most unacceptable addition to our vocabulary calls to memory Swift's comment on the pretentious motto of Chief Justice Whitshed:—

> "Libertas et natale solum,
> Fine words! I wonder where you stole 'em."

The real strength of a nation is measured not so much by what it does as by what it is able to do. Our strength in the day of trial, if it should arrive from unavoidable misfortune or be brought about by ministers imperially minded and in search of prestige, will consist mainly in this, that we have not trained away the flower of our youth from innocent and useful employment to spend their lives in barracks and cantonments, that we have not squandered our finances in vain military flourish and bravado, and that by these means we have kept our country in a state which will enable us to put forth considerable power if it should become necessary. How long this will be the case under the notions that are dominant in the most influential quarters, it is impossible to say. We may at any rate point with some pride and satisfaction to what was once the non-imperial policy of this country. Hitherto, as being more anxious for defence than attack, we have availed ourselves to the full of the advantages of our insular position, and safe behind our watery rampart have dispensed ourselves from the duty of vying with continental armies. But now it would seem all this is to be changed, and the principles to which we owe so much are to give way to a ruinous competition with the great continental armies. The Crimean war has taught us, if we did not know it before, how rapidly the wear and tear of war tells upon an English army, and how easily a force which can go anywhere and do anything may be transformed into the body of half-trained boys who were unable to hold the Redan. It is best to look our position boldly in the face, and to admit what is really undeniable, that the necessary concomitant of an imperial army and the first condition of giving effect to our new ideas is to adopt some form of conscription as soon as possible. As long as we were content to trust to our insular position, as long as we could count on being the attacked and not the attacking party, we were well justified in relying on an army of volunteers. But the attitude which we have now assumed really leaves us no other choice, unless we are prepared to be as ridiculous as we have been presumptuous, than to place our little army in some degree on an equality with our inflated pretensions.

We admit that there is one exception to the line of policy which we have pursued, but that exception only proves the rule. The conquest of India was not the work of the English Government but of a mercantile company. At the time when it passed into

the hands of the Crown, as it virtually did about a hundred years ago, we had a wolf by the ears which it was as difficult to let go as to hold. We could not go back, we could not stand still We had no choice but to advance. We are committed to this experiment, but the exception, we repeat, proves the rule. The greatest part of the difficulty in which we are involved arises from an overstrained and ridiculous anxiety as to the probability of an attack on India from the west. The existence of this periodical panic only shows the danger of such possessions and the rashness of committing ourselves, as we have just done, to other continental engagements, which, being less under our control, may very probably be even more dangerous and burdensome.

The objections which we have taken to the doctrine of imperialism have turned very much on its immorality. It is founded on the reckless acceptance of any means which appear likely to attain the ends in view, on the grossest selfishness and the most absolute disregard of what all men admit in the abstract to be their duty towards each other. Its principle, if anything so utterly unprincipled can deserve the name, resolves itself to the oppression of the weak by the strong, and the triumph of power over justice.

The Government seem to be labouring under the impression that the disorder from which the inhabitants of the British Islands are at this time suffering is a want of self-appreciation, and so they proceed logically enough to administer the strongest antidote to this disorder in the form of the grossest appeals to our national vanity. The effect that "Violet Crowned" is said by Aristophanes to have produced on the Athenian populace, our ministers evidently expect from the administration in large doses of the term "imperial." We are self-governed in England; we are the governors of others in India; and it is evidently thought by our guides and instructors that it is a much finer thing to govern others, than to be able to govern ourselves. They think that we are deficient in a due share of national vanity, and that it is their duty to raise us to a proper appreciation of our own merits. The only other supposition would be that the Government were playing the odious part of seeking low popularity by the arts of flattery and sycophancy, which, of course, is not to be entertained. But without inquiring too deeply into motives, we should like very much to be told when the Government has succeeded in flattering and fooling the people to the top of their bent, when each of us has come to consider himself as an Alexander or a Sesostris what shall we have gained, and what will the Government have gained by it? We must refer those who are rude enough to ask this question to Falstaff's Catechism of Honour, reminding them that if Imperialism pricks you on, it may also prick you off, and that it has no skill in surgery.

How desirable it is for those who do not share the views of the

Government to bestir themselves may be gathered from the following extract from the *Times* correspondent from India of September 11th, who is evidently writing under official inspiration. "It is necessary," he says, "to provide for a strong strategic position. It is indispensable that we should possess a commanding influence over the triangle of territory formed on the map by Cabul, Ghuznee, and Jellalabad. War would be an evil of infinitely less gravity than Russian influence in Cabul, which would extend hostility to British power in India." The only construction that we can put on this passage is that unless the Ameer of Cabul, who is notoriously hostile to us, will enter at once into a treaty of amity, we will at once enter upon a repetition of the invasion of Affghanistan of 1838—9, just to see whether we can re-enact the sanguinary drama of 1841—42. In other words, we will leap into the furnace, in order to save ourselves from the flames. The pretension thus put forward really seems to amount to this. Great Britain and Ireland are only a kingdom after all. India is an empire. But an empire is more worthy than a kingdom, and though it may happen that our whole strength lies in the kingdom, and our weakness mainly in the empire, it is the interest of the empire rather than the interest of the kingdom by which our policy is to be regulated. What is called a far-sighted policy is not always a wise one. A microscopic ingenuity may find for itself more profitable employment than in discovering causes for war. To search for a cause of offence, to find it, and by a sudden attack to convert an unpleasant possibility into a still more unpleasant certainty, is not one of the highest achievements of statesmanship. It is well to remember that the impact which we receive will be exactly in proportion to the violence of the attack, and that it is often wiser to watch and wait for mischiefs that may never happen, than by headlong precipitation to convert them into certainties. When every day brought a fresh challenge to Russia, it was only reasonable that she should seek what appeared to her the readiest mode of retaliation. Had we not better wait and see whether, the cause being removed, the effect may not also cease.

But we have still to consider Imperialism in another aspect in which it is even more odious. We know not of what materials an imperial conscience is made, but we think there must be very few English gentlemen on either side of the House who can have witnessed without some feelings of indignation and shame our treatment of the assembled powers of Europe at the Congress of Berlin. For reasons, which we will not now enter into or dispute, the English Government had come to the conclusion that it was expedient to form the state of Eastern Roumelia, to cede Batoum to Russia, to guarantee the integrity of the Turkish empire against Russia, and to obtain a decisive influence over the domestic administration of Turkey. They also desired to obtain possession of the island of Cyprus. We are not

dealing with the wisdom or expediency of these desires, but simply with the fact of their existence. There was but one fair and honourable way of attaining them. The European Conference was about to meet. These were all matters intimately connected with the questions which the Conference was summoned to discuss. If they were to be insisted on, to state them to the Conference was an absolute duty of ordinary honesty and good faith.

The meeting of Berlin was the Areopagus of Europe. It was acting in a judicial as well as an executive capacity, and no duty can be clearer than that of every member of the Congress to abstain from any secret arrangement which might limit its jurisdiction or mislead its judgment. But England had a point to carry, and that point was most easily if not most honourably attained by underhand negotiations and secret conventions. The moral principle once broken down, the choice lay between force or fraud, each founded on the maxim that the means justify the ends—both alike imperial and alike disgraceful. The powers of Europe who were not tainted by these transactions understood their dignity too well to waste time in fruitless reclamations; but Europe will not forget that England just before entering into a conference of a judicial nature on the affairs of Turkey, which bound her to the utmost purity and impartiality, stooped to receive a bribe from the country on whose destiny she was about to arbitrate, and forestalled the decision of the Congress by clandestine negotiations.

We have hitherto considered the spirit of Imperialism only as it relates to our dealings with foreign nations. But unhappily this does not exhaust the subject. We have yet to say a word on the influence of this pernicious innovation on our own constitution. Belial is a divinity who will not be served by halves, and no nation ever cast away the principles of just and fair dealing in its relations with others, without speedily feeling the recoil in its domestic affairs. Of all countries in the world England is the one which affords the readiest opportunity for unscrupulous persons to practise the arts of Imperialism as we have explained the term. The history of the English constitution is a record of liberties wrung and extorted bit by bit from arbitrary power. The shell of absolute power has been allowed to remain, so much of substance being removed as the emergencies of a particular crisis rendered necessary. When the prerogatives of the sovereign have been grossly abused, they have been restricted, but, owing to a certain moderation and phlegm in the character of the people, they have been more studious to guard against the mischiefs that have actually arisen, than to reduce the constitution to a clear and logical consistency. Thus most of the prerogatives of the Crown remain untouched, the country having been content with the assurance that they can only be exercised under the advice of responsible ministers.

It is the happy discovery of the present Parliament that responsibility has no terrors for a Government possessed of a large and manageable majority. Our institutions are framed in a spirit of generous but, as it now appears, mistaken confidence. The power of entering into treaties without the consent of Parliament has been only retained, because it was believed that it would not be abused. That by the abuse of this power the members of the Cabinet, without consulting Parliament, should be able to pledge the country to the most formidable engagements, to the clandestine acquisition of new territory peculiarly calculated to wound the susceptibilities of powers with whom it is alike our desire and interest to be on the most amicable terms, and to a treaty under which we may be called upon at a moment's notice to engage under every conceivable disadvantage in a war in a desolate and remote country with one of the greatest military powers in the world, as near to his resources as we are distant from our own, can only be believed possible because it has just been actually done. It is thus that the poisoned chalice of Imperialism which we have held out to our allies and rivals is now commended to our own lips. We have been learning under our present guides and leaders the doctrines of despotic and arbitrary power, and we must not repine if we experience in our own persons that which we are taught by these our new schoolmasters to be the proper treatment of our friends and allies. Thus it has ever been. The laws of good faith and fair dealing are violated towards strangers, in the vain hope that those virtues may flourish at home which are cynically cast aside abroad.

But this can never be. The spirit which teaches that the means are justified if the end be obtained, will not suffer its sphere of action to be limited to dealings with our adversaries or our allies. If all is held to be fair in war or diplomacy, it is but a slight step in advance to hold that political opponents within our own borders are entitled to no greater consideration. The House of Commons was called together three weeks earlier than usual that the Government might have the advantage of its advice and assistance. We will not weary our readers by recapitulating a history with which every one is well acquainted; but we put it to any candid person whether the treatment which the House has received from the first day of the session to the last of the Conference of Berlin, has not been on the part of Government one long course of deception and mystification. The House was deceived as to the movements of the fleet, kept in the dark as to the transportation of troops from India, and committed without knowing it to a new and most hazardous policy in Asia Minor. It would almost seem that the Commons of England were summoned and kept together mainly to show to the rest of Europe how vain was the notion that this great assembly is the ruling power in the State, and to prove that its functions are practi-

cally limited to voting money for expenditure on which it has never been consulted, and ratifying new and most hazardous schemes of policy of which it never heard till they were beyond recall. Just as a bold speculator in cosmogony is said to have declared that it was the duty of the architect of the universe to create it and then to commit suicide, so it seems to be assumed that the duty of a House of Commons is to create a Government, and, having accomplished this feat, to sink into a state of political coma till a new election heralds the advent of a new or the continuance of an old ministry. The result of what we have said seems to be that we are in no little danger of undergoing a very real revolution, however it may be veiled under apparent observance of the forms of the constitution. The House has become a machine for electing, and seems disposed to abdicate its functions of controlling and instructing ministers. The business of the Government is to find it occupation in the hunting of rats and mice and such small deer, while weightier matters are sedulously concealed from it till any practical interference, even were the House disposed to attempt it, has become impossible.

These things call aloud for a remedy if the House of Commons is to be something more, to discharge some higher duties, than the persons whose duty is limited to the election of the President of the United States. The remedy is in the constituencies or nowhere. The time which may elapse before the dissolution of Parliament cannot be better employed than in pointing out to those with whom the decision ultimately rests the great issues that are raised by a condition of affairs like the present. The people should be put on their guard against the flimsy but dangerous delusions to which they are exposed. They should be reminded of the principles by the observance of which this country has hitherto grown and prospered to an extent to which history affords no parallel. These may be summarised in industry and freedom at home, and peace, fair dealing, and moderation abroad. They should be warned against the stupid worship of mere size and bulk; they should be taught that the question is not, as our blind guides tell us, between a great and a little, but between an honest and happy and a disgraced unhappy England. They should be guarded against those odious sophisms which, under the vulgar mask of Imperialism, conceal the substitution of might for right, and seek to establish the dominion of one set of human beings on the degradation and misery of another. And above all, the public ought to be warned against that abuse of the prerogative of making treaties, by which, in defiance of constitutional practice and theory, we have been entangled in the most tremendous liabilities without the previous consent of the Parliament that should have sanctioned, or the people who must bear them.

ROBERT LOWE.

THE CHARACTER OF THE HUMOURIST.

CHARLES LAMB.

THOSE English critics who at the beginning of the present century introduced from Germany, together with some other subtleties of thought transplanted hither not without advantage, the distinction between the *Fancy* and the *Imagination*, made much also of the cognate distinction between *Wit* and *Humour*, between that unreal and transitory mirth, which is as the crackling of thorns under the pot, and the laughter which blends with tears and with the sublimities of the imagination even, and which, in its most exquisite motives, is one with pity,—the laughter of the comedies of Shakspere, hardly less expressive than his moods of seriousness or solemnity, of that deeply stirred soul of sympathy in him, as flowing from which both tears and laughter are alike genuine and contagious.

This distinction between wit and humour, Coleridge and other kindred critics applied, with much effect, in their studies of some of our older English writers. And as the distinction between imagination and fancy, made popular by Wordsworth, found its best justification in certain essential differences of stuff in Wordsworth's own writings, so this other critical distinction, between wit and humour, finds a sort of visible analogue and interpretation in the character and writings of Charles Lamb;—one who lived more consistently than most writers among subtle literary theories, and whose remains are still full of curious interest for the student of literature as a fine art.

The author of the *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*, coming to the humourists of the nineteenth, would have found, as is true pre-eminently of himself, the springs of pity in them deepened by the deeper subjectivity, the intenser and closer living with itself, which is characteristic of the temper of the later generation; and therewith, the mirth also, from the amalgam of which with pity humour proceeds, has become, in Charles Dickens, for instance, freer and more boisterous.

To this more high-pitched feeling, since predominant in our literature, the writings of Charles Lamb, whose life occupies the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, are a transition; and such union of grave, of terrible even, with gay, we may note in the circumstances of his life, as reflected thence into his work. We catch the aroma of a singular, homely sweetness about his first years, spent on Thames' side, among the red bricks and terraced gardens, with their rich historical memories of old-fashioned legal London. Just above the poorer class, de-

prived, as he says, of the "sweet food of academic institution," he is fortunate enough to be reared in the classical languages at an ancient school, where he becomes the companion of Coleridge, as at a later period his enthusiastic disciple. So far, the years go by with less than the usual share of boyish difficulties; protected, one fancies, seeing what he was afterwards, by some attraction of temper in the quaint child, small and delicate, with a certain Jewish expression in his clear, brown complexion, with eyes not precisely of the same colour, and a slow walk adding to the staidness of his figure; and whose infirmity of speech, increased by agitation, is partly engaging.

And the cheerfulness of all this, of the mere aspect of Lamb's quiet subsequent life also, might make the more superficial reader think of him as in himself something slight, and of his mirth as cheaply bought. Yet we know beneath this blithe surface there was something of the fateful domestic horror, of the beautiful heroism and devotedness also, of old Greek tragedy. His sister Mary, two years his senior, in a sudden paroxysm of madness, caused the death of her mother, and was brought to trial for what an overstrained justice might have construed as the greatest of crimes. She was released on the brother's pledging himself to watch over her; and to this sister, from the age of twenty-one, Charles Lamb devoted himself, "seeking thenceforth," says his excellent biographer, "no connexion which could interfere with her supremacy in his affections, or impair his ability to sustain and comfort her." The "feverish, romantic tie of love," he cast away for the "charities of home." Only, from time to time, the madness returned, affecting him too, once; and we see them voluntarily yielding to restraint. In estimating the humour of *Elia*, we must no more forget the strong undercurrent of this great misfortune and pity, than one could forget it in his actual story. So he becomes the best critic, almost the discoverer, of Webster, a dramatist of genius so sombre, so heavily coloured, so *macabre*. *Rosamund Grey*, written in his twenty-third year, a story with something bitter and exaggerated, an almost insane fixedness of gloom perceptible in it, strikes clearly this note in his work.

For himself, and from his own point of view, the exercise of his gift, of his literary art, came to gild or sweeten a life of monotonous labour, and seemed, as far as regarded others, no very important thing; availing to give them a little pleasure, and inform them a little, chiefly in a retrospective manner; but in no way concerned with the turning of the tides of the great world. And yet this very modesty, this unambitious way of conceiving his work, has impressed upon it a certain exceptional enduringness. For of the remarkable English writers contemporary with Lamb, many were greatly preoccupied with ideas of practice,—religious, moral, political,—ideas

which have since, in some sense or other, entered permanently into the general consciousness; and, these having no longer any stimulus for a generation provided with a different stock of ideas, the writings of those who spent so much of themselves in their propagation have lost, with posterity, something of what they gained in immediate influence. Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, even—sharing so largely in the unrest of their own age, and made personally more interesting thereby, yet, of their actual work, surrender more to the mere course of time than some of those who may have seemed to exercise themselves hardly at all in great matters, to have been little serious, or a little indifferent regarding them.

Of this number of the disinterested servants of literature, smaller in England than in France, Charles Lamb is one. In the making of prose he realises the principle of art for its own sake, as completely as Keats in the making of verse. And, working thus ever close to the concrete, to the details, great or small, of actual things, books, persons, and with no part of them blurred to his vision by the intervention of mere abstract theories, he has reached an enduring moral effect also, in a sort of boundless sympathy. Unoccupied, as he might seem, with great matters, he is in immediate contact with what is real, especially in its caressing littleness, that littleness in which there is much of the whole woeful heart of things, and meets it more than half-way with a perfect understanding of it. What sudden, unexpected touches of pathos in him!—bearing witness how the sorrow of humanity, the *Welt-schmerz*, the constant aching of its wounds, is ever present with him; but what a gift also for the enjoyment of life in its subtleties, of enjoyment actually refined by the need of some thoughtful economies and making the most of things! Little arts of happiness he is ready to teach to others. The quaint remarks of children which another would scarcely have heard, he preserves,—little flies in the priceless amber of his Attic wit,—and has his "Praise of chimney-sweepers," (as William Blake has written, with so much natural pathos, the Chimney-sweeper's Song,) valuing carefully their white teeth, and fine enjoyment of white sheets in stolen sleep at Arundel Castle, as he tells the story, anticipating something of the mood of our deep humourists of the last generation. His simple mother-pity for those who suffer by accident, or unkindness of nature, blindness, for instance, or fateful disease of mind, like his sister's, has something primitive in its bigness; and on behalf of ill-used animals he is early in composing a "Pity's Gift."

And if, in deeper or more superficial senses, the dead *do* care at all for their name and fame, then how must the souls of Shakspere and Webster have been stirred, after so long converse with things that stopped their ears above and below the soil, at his exquisite apprecia-

tions of them; the souls of Titian and of Hogarth also; for, what has not been observed so generally as the excellence of his literary criticism, Charles Lamb is a fine critic of painting also. It was as loyal, self-forgetful work for others, for Shakspere's self first, and then for Shakspere's readers, that this too was done; he has the true scholar's way of forgetting himself in his subject. For though "defrauded," as we saw, in his young years, "of the sweet food of academic institution," he is yet essentially a scholar, and all his work mainly retrospective, as I said; his own sorrows, affections, perceptions, being alone real to him of the present. "I cannot make these present times," he says once, "present to me."

Above all, he becomes not merely an expositor, permanently valuable, but for Englishmen almost the discoverer of the old English drama. "The book is such as I am glad there should be," he modestly says of the *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakspere;* to which, however, he adds in a series of notes the very quintessence of criticism, the choicest aromas and savours of Elizabethan poetry being sorted and stored here with a sort of delicate intellectual epicureanism, which has had the effect of winning for these, then almost forgotten poets, one generation after another of enthusiastic students. Could he but have known how fresh a source of culture he was evoking there for other generations, all through those years, in which, a little wistfully, he would harp on the limitation of his time by business, and sigh for a better fortune in regard of literary opportunities!

To feel strongly the charm of an old poet or moralist, the literary charm of Burton, for instance, or Quarles, or Lady Newcastle; and then to interpret that charm, to convey it to others,—he seeming to himself but to hand on to others, in mere humble ministration, that of which for them he is really the creator,—that, is the way of his criticism; cast off in a stray letter often, or passing note, or lightest essay or conversation; it is in such a letter, for instance, that we come upon a singularly penetrative estimate of the genius and writings of Defoe.

Tracking, with an attention always alert, the whole process of their production to its starting-point in the deep places of the mind, he seems to realise the but half-conscious intuitions of Hogarth or Shakspere, and develops the great ruling unities which have swayed their actual work; or "puts up," and takes, the one morsel of good stuff in an old, forgotten writer. There comes even to be an aroma of old English in what he says even casually; noticeable echoes, in chance turn and phrase, of the great masters of style, the old masters. Godwin, seeing in quotation a passage from *John Woodvil*, takes it for a choice fragment of an old dramatist, and goes to Lamb to assist him in finding the author. His power of delicate

imitation in prose and verse goes the length of a fine mimicry even, as in those last essays of Elia on Popular Fallacies, with their gentle reproduction or caricature of Sir Thomas Browne, showing the more completely his mastery, by disinterested study, of those elements in the man which are the real source of style in that great, solemn master of old English, who, ready to say what he has to say with a fearless homeliness, yet continually overawes one with touches of such strange utterance from things afar. For it is with the delicacies of fine literature especially, its gradations of expression, its fine judgment, its pure sense of words, of vocabulary,—things, alas! dying out in the English literature of the present, together with the appreciation of them in our literature of the past,—that his literary mission is chiefly concerned. And yet, delicate, refining, daintily epicurean, though he may seem, when he writes of giants such as Hogarth or Shakspere, though often but in a stray note, you catch the sense of awe with which those great names in past literature and art brooded over his intelligence, his undiminished impressibility by the great effects in them. Reading, commenting on Shakspere, he is like a man who walks alone under a grand stormy sky, and among unwonted tricks of light, when powerful spirits might seem to be abroad upon the air; and the grim humour of Hogarth, as he analyses it, rises into a kind of spectral grotesque; while he too knows the secret of fine, significant touches like theirs.

There are traits, customs, characteristics of houses and dress, surviving morsels of old life, like those of which we get such delicate impressions in Hogarth, concerning which we well understand, how, common, uninteresting, or worthless even, in themselves, they have come to please us now as things picturesque, when thus set in relief against the modes of our different age. Customs, stiff to us, stiff dresses, stiff furniture,—types of cast-off fashions, left by accident, and which no one ever meant to preserve, we contemplate with more than good-nature, as having in them the veritable accent of a time, not altogether to be replaced by its more solemn and self-conscious deposits; like those tricks of individuality which we find quite tolerable in persons, because they convey to us the secret of life-like expression, and with regard to which we are all to some extent humourists. But it is part of the privilege of the genuine humourist to anticipate this pensive mood with regard to the ways and things of his own day; to look upon the tricks in manner of the life about him with that same refined, purged sort of vision, which will come naturally to those of a later generation, in observing whatever chance may have saved of its mere external habit. Seeing things always by the light of some more entire understanding than is possible for ordinary minds, of the whole mechanism of humanity, and the manner, the outward mode or fashion, always in strict connexion

with the spiritual condition which determines it, a humourist like Charles Lamb anticipates the enchantment of distance; and the characteristics of places, ranks, habits of life, are transfigured for him, even now and in advance of time, by poetic light; justifying what some might condemn as mere sentimentality, in the effort to hand on unbroken the tradition of such fashion or accent. "The praise of beggars," "the cries of London," the traits of actors just "old," the spots in "town" where the country, its fresh green and fresh water, still lingered on, one after another, amidst the bustle; the quaint, dimmed, just played-out farces, he had relished so much, coming partly through them to understand the earlier English theatre as a thing once really alive; those fountains and sundials of old gardens, of which he entertains such dainty discourse,—he feels the poetry of these things, as the poetry of things old indeed, but surviving as an actual part of the life of the present, and as something quite different from the poetry of things flatly gone from us and frankly antique, coming back to us, if at all, as entire strangers, like Scott's old Scotch-border figures, their oaths and armour. Such gift of appreciation depends, as I said, on the habitual apprehension of men's life as a whole; its organic wholeness, as extending even to the least things; of its outward manner in connexion with its inward temper; and it involves a fine perception of the congruities, the musical accordance of humanity with its environment of custom, society, intercourse of persons; as if all that, with its meetings, partings, ceremonies, gesture, tones of speech, were some delicate instrument on which an expert performer is playing.

These are some of the characteristics of Elia, one essentially an essayist, and of the true family of Montaigne, "never judging," as he says, "system-wise of things, but fastening on particulars;" saying all things as it were on chance occasion only, and as a pastime, yet succeeding thus, "glimpse-wise," in catching and recording more frequently than others "the gayest, happiest attitude of things;" a casual writer for dreamy readers, yet always giving the reader so much more than he seemed to propose. There is something of the follower of George Fox about him, and the quaker's belief in the inward light coming to one passive, to the mere wayfarer, who will be sure at all events to lose no light which falls by the way; glimpses, suggestions, delightful half-apprehensions, profound thoughts of old philosophers, hints of the innermost reason in things, the full knowledge of which is held in reserve; all the varied stuff, that is, of which genuine essays are made.

And with him, as with Montaigne, the desire of self-portraiture is, below all more superficial tendencies, the real motive in writing at all,—a desire closely connected with that intimacy, that modern subjectivity, which may be called the *Montaignesque* element in

literature. What he designs is to give you himself, to acquaint you with his likeness; but must do this, if at all, indirectly, being indeed always more or less reserved for himself and his friends; friendship counting for so much in his life, that he is jealous of anything that might jar or disturb it, even to a sort of insincerity, of which he has a quaint "praise;" this lover of stage plays significantly welcoming a little touch of the artificiality of play to sweeten intercourse.

And, in effect, a very delicate and expressive portrait of him does put itself together for the duly meditative reader; and in indirect touches of his own work, scraps of faded old letters, what others remembered of his talk, the man's likeness emerges; what he laughed and wept at, his sudden elevations and longings after absent friends; his fine casuistries of affection and devices to jog sometimes, as he says, the lazy happiness of perfect love; his solemn moments of higher discourse with the young, as they came across him on occasion, and went along a little way with him; the sudden, surprised apprehension of beauties in old literature, revealing anew the deep soul of poetry in things; and still the pure spirit of fun, having its way again,—laughter, that most short-lived of all things, (some of Shakspere's even having fallen dim,) wearing well with him. Much of all this comes out through his letters, which may be regarded as a part of his essays. He is an old-fashioned letter-writer, the essence of the old fashion of letter-writing lying, as with true essay-writing, in the dexterous availing oneself of accident and circumstance, in the prosecution of deeper lines of observation; although, just as in the record of his conversation, one loses something, in losing the actual tones of the stammerer, still graceful in his halting, (as he halted also in composition, composing slowly and in fits, "like a Flemish painter," as he tells us,) so "it is to be regretted," says the editor of his letters, "that in the printed letters the reader will lose the curious varieties of writing with which the originals abound, and which are scrupulously adapted to the subject."

Also, he was a true "collector," delighting in the personal finding of a thing, in the colour an old book or print gets for one by the little accidents which attest previous ownership. Wither's *Emblems*, "that old book and quaint," long-desired, when he finds it at last, he does not value less because a child had coloured the plates with its paints. A lover of household warmth everywhere, of the tempered atmosphere which our various habitations get by men living within them, he "sticks to his favourite books as he did to his friends," and loved the "town," with a jealous eye for all its characteristics, "old houses" coming to have souls for him. The yearning for mere warmth against him, in another, makes him content with pure brotherliness, "the most kindly and natural species of love," as he says, all through life, in place of the *passion* of love;

Jack and Jill sitting thus side by side, till one sat alone in the faint sun at last, in a way, the anticipation of which sounds sometimes as a too poignant note in the sweetly-linked music of their intercourse, and sets us speculating, as we read, as to precisely what amount of melancholy really accompanied for him the approach of old age, so steadily foreseen, and makes us note with pleasure his successive wakings up to cheerful realities, out of too curious musings over what is gone, and what remains, of life. In his subtle capacity for enjoying the more refined points of earth, of human relationship, he could throw the gleam of poetry or humour on what seemed common or threadbare; has a care for the sighs and weary, humdrum preoccupations of very weak people, down to their little pathetic "gentilities," even; while, in the purely human temper, he can write of death, almost like Shakspere.

And that care, through all his enthusiasm of discovery, for the accustomed in literature, connected thus with his close clinging to home and the earth, was congruous also with that love for the accustomed in religion, which we may notice in him. He is one of the last votaries of that old-world religion, based on the sentiments of hope and awe, which may be described as the religion of men of letters, (as Sir Thomas Browne has his *Religio Medici*,) religion as understood by the soberer men of letters in the last century, Addison, Gray and Johnson, by Jane Austen and Thackeray, later. In its essence, a high way of feeling induced by the constant presence of great things in literature, extended in its turn to those matters greater still, it lives, in the main retrospectively, in a system of received sentiments and beliefs; received, like those great things in literature and art, in the first instance, on the authority of a long tradition, in the course of which they have linked themselves in a thousand complex ways to the conditions of human life, and no more questioned now than the feeling one keeps by one of the greatness of Shakspere. For Charles Lamb, such form of religion becomes the solemn back-ground on which the nearer and more exciting objects of his immediate experience relieve themselves, borrowing from it an expression of calm; its necessary atmosphere being indeed a profound quiet, that quiet which has in it a kind of sacramental efficacy, working, we might say, on the principle of the *opus operatum*, almost without any co-operation of one's own, towards the assertion of the higher self; so physically sweet, moreover, to one of Lamb's delicately attuned temperament; such natures seeming to long for it sometimes, as for no merely negative thing, with a sort of mystical sensuality.

The writings of Charles Lamb are an excellent illustration of the value of reserve in literature. Below his quiet, his quaintness, his

humour, and what may seem the slightness, the merely occasional or accidental character of his work, there lies, as I said at starting, as in his life, a true tragic element. The gloom, reflected at its darkest, in those hard shadows of Rosamund Grey, is always there, though restrained always in expression, and not always realised either for himself or his readers; and it gives to those lighter matters on the surface of life and literature, among which he for the most part moved, a wonderful play of expression, as if at any moment these light words and fancies might pierce very far into the deeper heart of things. In his writing, as in his life, that quiet is not the low flying of one from the first drowsy by choice, and needing the prick of some strong passion or worldly ambition, to stimulate him into all the energy of which he is capable; but rather the reaction of nature, after an escape from fate, dark and insane as in old Greek tragedy; following which, the mere sense of relief becomes a kind of passion, as with one who, having just escaped earthquake or shipwreck, finds a thing for grateful tears in the mere sitting quiet at home, under the wall, till the end of days.

He felt the genius of places; and I sometimes think he resembles the places he knew and liked best, and where his lot fell;—London, sixty-five years ago, with Covent Garden and the old theatres, and the Temple Gardens still unspoiled, with Thames gliding down, and beyond to north and south the fields at Enfield or Hampton, to which, "with their living trees," the thoughts wander "from the hard wood of the desk;"—fields fresher, and coming nearer to town then, but in one of which the present writer remembers, on a brooding early summer's day, to have heard the cuckoo for the first time. Here, the surface of things is certainly humdrum, the streets dingy, the green places, where the child goes a-maying, tame enough. But nowhere are things more apt to respond to the brighter weather, nowhere is there so much difference between rain and sunshine, nowhere do the clouds roll together more grandly, mounting a little way till the sun touches their dun into gold; those quaint pastorals gathering a certain quality of grandeur from the background of the great city, visible from those distant fields also, with its weighty atmosphere, and portent of storm, in the rapid light on dome and bleached stone steeples.

WALTER H. PATER.

THE ENGLISH SCHOOL OF JURISPRUDENCE.

Part I.—Austin and Maine on Sovereignty.

The analysis of our primary ideas in law which was finally reduced to method by John Austin exactly fifty years ago, still remains to Englishmen the foundation of rational jurisprudence. But it is desirable to get rid of a great deal of exaggeration with which his work has been surrounded. The theory of Austin contained little that was in any sense new; it may be reduced to a small number of very simple propositions; and the truth of these propositions has been asserted in much too absolute a way.

The value of his analysis has been obscured, and the mind of the student is perplexed, by everything which prolongs this exaggeration. There is not the least ground for regarding the analysis as a purely original discovery, much less as forming a new epoch in political philosophy. Again, Bentham and Austin were driven by the conditions of their time into endless repetitions and criticisms which have now become simple encumbrances. And they fought tenaciously for a scheme of moral philosophy which is no longer the critical battle-field it was. Putting aside the parts of the "Province of Jurisprudence," which are purely combative, and the parts which belong rather to general or to moral philosophy, the residue is capable of being stated in a few plain doctrines. But these doctrines, if few, are of fundamental importance. And the frame of mind which they encourage is perhaps of more importance than the actual dogmas in themselves. For when we come to test them by the light of all that we have learnt in these fifty years we find that they depend for their truth on assumptions which are very far from being universally true in fact; and they require qualifications which very much reduce their scientific completeness as social laws.

The history of the famous analysis of sovereignty, political independence, law, sanction, and forms of government, which Austin has made so familiar to us, is a subject of some interest. Austin has reduced all these notions to their complete form; but it is well known that he did not discover them. His true merit is that he seized firm hold of these notions as the foundation-stones on which a strict jurisprudence must rest; and then he kept a tenacious grip on the definitions themselves with a marvellous consistency of hold. What lies in Bentham and in Hobbes imbedded in a mass of moral and political discussion, stands out in Austin clear cut like the proposition at the head of a problem in geometry. But no one can deny that all the essential features of this dissection of sovereignty, law,

political independence, and sanction, are to be found in Bentham, and in a far more distinct form in Hobbes. It has always been assumed that Hobbes (who is so often mentioned and quoted by Austin) was the original author of this method of thought. So far as England is concerned, he probably is. But substantially the same ideas are found in a much earlier foreign writer, whose influence on European, and indeed on English, thought long remained paramount in that sphere: one whom it is clear that Hobbes had not only read, but had assimilated. This man was the great French lawyer and politician of the sixteenth century, *John Bodin*, who is usually regarded on the Continent as, with *Machiavelli*, the founder of modern political philosophy. Bodin was a lawyer of the great law school of Toulouse, who rose to office and trust in the court of Henri III. of France, and came to England as the adviser of the Duke of Alençon when he was here to sue for the hand of Queen Elizabeth. Bodin's work *On the Commonwealth* was published in French in 1577, in Latin in 1586, under the title of *De Republica*, and in an English translation in 1605. There are not two opinions as to the originality and power of its reasoning, as to the profusion of learning and historical observation with which it is stored, or as to the vast influence which it exercised for at least a hundred years, until the works of Hobbes and of Locke somewhat superseded it. Mr. Hallam,[1] who compares Bodin with Aristotle and Machiavelli as a political philosopher, tells us that he and Montesquieu "are, in this province of political theory, the most philosophical of all those who have read so deeply, and the most learned of all those who have thought so much." With the political philosophy of Bodin we have now nothing to do; but it is impossible to read the *De Republica* without seeing how thoroughly the ideas of Hobbes as to sovereignty, political independence, law, and the normal types of government, had already become the common property of political thinkers. Those who rate at the highest the philosophical genius of Hobbes can still admit that in the juristic questions before us the relation of Hobbes to Bodin is even closer than the relation of Austin to Hobbes. Germs of these ideas undoubtedly appear in the discourses of Machiavelli; but it is not easy to trace them in Machiavelli in a very definite shape, nor do I know of any original of earlier date.

A few quotations will show how closely Bodin came to those notions of Hobbes about sovereignty and law which Bentham and Austin subsequently popularised. In the eighth chapter of his first book Bodin undertakes to analyse the idea of sovereignty, or *majestas*, as he calls it in his Latin version. The essence of this he makes to be "an absolute power, not subject to any law." "The chief power," he says, "given unto a prince with charge and condition is not

(1) *Literature of Europe*, vol. ii. ch. iv.

properly sovereignty, nor power absolute." Here appears Hobbes' aversion to limited monarchy. Bodin then describes the sovereign power as subject to no law but the law of God and of nature, and he gives as the tests and attributes of sovereignty the same general marks that Hobbes gives; all of them, he says, being summed up in the power to give laws to all subjects, and to receive none from them. "All the force of law and of custom lieth in the power of him that hath the sovereignty in a commonweal," and "all the marks of sovereignty are contained in this, to have power to give laws to all and every one of his subjects, and to receive none from them." He then very sufficiently treats of the question that no subordinate power, however powerful, can be sovereign, or any authority less than the supreme authority of an independent political community. The sovereignty again, he shows, may reside either in a single monarch, or in an aristocracy, or in a sovereign people. This famous tripartite division of states was originally propounded by Machiavelli; but Bodin has worked it out most fully, and his language curiously accords with that of Hobbes. Bodin then gives an analysis of law, which, he says, is, "The command of the sovereign concerning all his subjects in general or concerning general things" (the *or* here shows a looseness of grasp, or else a divergence from the view of Austin). *Law*, he says, "carryeth with it either reward or punishment;" and *custom* he rightly explained to depend on the sovereign and to owe its force to the confirmation of the sovereign; the power of the magistrate being also a delegated authority. In his words, "The magistrate next unto the sovereign prince is the principal person in the commonweal, and he upon whom they *which have the sovereignty discharge themselves;* communicating unto him the *authority, force, and power to command.*"

Now here we have, at any rate in outline, the theory of Hobbes as read in his *Leviathan*, or the *De Cive;* and at least the germs of the famous analysis of Bentham and Austin. We have the firm grasp on the idea of *sovereignty* as an unlimited power, itself free from law and the source of law, variously distributed in the body politic; the body politic as essentially *independent* of all external control whatever; *law*, *custom*, and *judicial authority* as having a power by delegation or implied assent of the sovereign power; *law* as being a command of the unlimited sovereign power imposing on the subject body some general rule, and as implying in itself a *sanction*—such sanction being either *reward* or *punishment*, which was Bentham's idea. And, curiously enough, the treatise opens with something very like Bentham's principle of Utility, as where he asks, "What is the object of the political society?": he replies, "The greatest good of every individual citizen, which is the same as that of the common wealth."

The history of these ideas is not difficult to trace. When Bodin

came to England in 1581, he found his work in such repute that it was taught in London and in Cambridge; and at his death, in 1595, his system was the one which dominated the political thought of Europe. Spinosa, Hobbes, and all the exact and profounder thinkers followed him; and the natural tendency of his severe logic was to strengthen the party who favoured absolutist theories and that imperialist spirit which played for a century so great a part in the history of European politics. The inevitable reaction followed in the metaphysical conception of a law of nature, anterior, and as it were superior, to the positive law of sovereign authority. This idea had been in terms admitted by Bodin and Hobbes, but in such a way as practically to absorb and supersede any law of nature. At the head of the other school stood Grotius, whose anti-absolutist theories were expanded by Locke and the republican school. It is obvious that this recourse to a fictitious law of nature was merely a metaphysical expedient to get some sanction to a legitimate resistance to absolute authority. And however useful or efficient in practical politics this theory may have been as a weapon, it was fatal to any strict reasoning in the analysis of sovereignty and law. Under the loose methods of argument, and the recourse to the reason of the thing and to natural justice, which were inevitable in this philosophy, the stricter logic of Bodin and Hobbes was lost sight of, until the constructive genius of Bentham seized on the mighty resource of a conception of sovereign authority unlimited in power of legislation, and itself anterior to and superior to all law; and finally the dry dogmatism of Austin found a congenial material in the passionless analysis of facts which Hobbes had cast into so hard and abstract form. Such was the origin of the Austinian analysis. But there never was a time when the abstract analysis of social force on which it rests in the pages of Bodin was ever without a regular succession of adherents, or during which it failed to exercise an influence over the thoughtful minds of Europe, and that long after Bodin himself had ceased to be read, or the theory had ceased to be ascribed to him.

Though we may get rid of the exaggeration which supposes Austin to be the original discoverer of his legal analysis, we must beware of undervaluing his remarkable achievement. He is plainly the first Englishman who detached these general ideas from an elastic political philosophy, or from utopian schemes of reform. In Austin English law found the first clear conception of an abstract jurisprudence; that is, a methodical examination of the general language of law. Though he occasionally wanders in his first six lectures into moral philosophy and the theory of politics, in the main his lectures deal with law alone in the spirit of a lawyer. His next great merit is to have detached for purposes of study rules of positive law from moral philosophy and from all general political theorising.

It seems to us so easy to keep ethical and legal ideas distinct, that we are apt to wonder what merit there could be in insisting on the line of demarcation. Now that the work is done, and the notion is a familiar commonplace, it seems easy enough. But it was not altogether easy at all times. Under the influence of the theory of the Law of Nature (indispensable as that theory no doubt was to make head against theocratic and absolutist dogmas) there was a constant tendency to base law either on moral justice or upon natural equity as the reputed parent, or source, or corrector of law. No man of that age ever attempted to generalise about law or its sources without at once breaking into pompous and elastic platitudes. The problem was this: how to get high abstract theories of the underlying conceptions in law without wandering into metaphysical commonplace? And this problem Austin solved. He insists, *usque ad nauseam*, that positive law as enforced in courts of justice (and positive law alone) is his subject; that positive law he traces up to its source in the unlimited sovereign authority of an independent body politic. Law, he says, rests for its title on the unlimited authority of the sovereign in every state to legislate for all citizens of its own community. That unlimited sovereign power is with him an ultimate fact. The form, monarchic, aristocratic, or democratic, is not his concern. Beyond that he will not be dragged: how it came into being is the business of the historian, not of the jurist. Law is what that sovereign commands by sanctions; and that which has no legal sanction is not law. But then, he says, taking positive law as an ultimate fact, we can analyse its elements and strictly define its leading conceptions, resources, and distinctions. And this he proceeds to do. It is quite true that in so doing he himself digresses into long and tedious discussions about the Law of Nature and the Law of God; the principle of utility, and the test of morality. All this is perfectly beside his own avowed method, and I think in itself almost worthless. But the current of ideas was too strong for him. He found everybody around him bent on discovering a basis for law in the law of Nature or the law of God. He himself insists that law rests on the command of the sovereign. But withal he wastes precious energy in trying to show that the legislator should always be animated by the principle of utility; and then, that the principle of utility will always conform to the Law of God, and in any rational use of the term to the Law of Nature. All this disquisition is needless for his theory, besides being, I think, perfectly idle. But perhaps it was too much to expect an Englishman, thinking upon law in the reign of George IV., to say boldly that law meant the rules which the legislature authorised its tribunals to enforce; and that what the legislature enforced must be obeyed. It was inevitable that a reasoner seeking to impress these two ideas on his time should fall

back on the logic of Hobbes, who coldly said, "No law can be unjust." But the horror which for two centuries this maxim has excited, forced Austin to clothe the unpopular truth in a long digression about the principle of utility, in order to show that there was nothing cynical in what he propounded.

It would be an interesting line of inquiry to seek how it came about that so much difficulty was in fact experienced in dissociating ethical from legal ideas, and why for centuries men shrank back from the very simple proposition that *law* is what the tribunals of the sovereign enforce on all men, simply as having sovereign authority; and that law must be obeyed simply because it is law—that is, enforced by penalties. Of course, during all these centuries, law was enforced as a fact, and men obeyed it in fact without a murmur; but they could not be brought to say so, at least not in solemn and thoughtful trains of reasoning. The reason, I think, is to be looked for in the history, and especially in the religious history, of Europe. In the mediæval time there had been a variety of vague theories underlying the curious problem presented to thoughtful minds by the question, Why should men obey the law? Partly, it was said, the law was contained in Revelation, and based on the will of God and the voice of the Church. Again it was said that law rested on a vague authority of infinite custom going back to the Roman Empire. Or again, the absolute and divine authority of princes was asserted as a sufficient authority. But at the Reformation and the religious wars, and the wars against monarchy, all these bases gave way; the Roman law became more and more inadequate for modern civilisation; it entirely failed as a basis of English or even French and German common law; the theological basis became less and less sufficient, and the prevailing tone was one of resistance to any antecedent right in princes. Nor did the idea of any paramount right in the people satisfy men's minds any better. In this unsettled state of things, for at least two centuries, there was a continual effort to clothe law and judicial authority with a moral or metaphysical dignity, to compensate it for the divine or imperial dignity which it seemed to have lost. Men who fiercely repudiated the claim that the law of the land was based either on royal prerogative or divine revelation were eager to believe and to persuade mankind that it was based on a natural and eternal justice anterior both to prerogative and to revelation. And both sides, whether republican zealots or sacerdotal absolutists, were equally prone to mix up in one spiritual and temporal power; both sought to use the sword of justice to enforce their own moral ideas, and claimed for their own decrees the sanction of paramount moral right. Hence, for nearly two centuries, all general statements about law involved an inextricable confusion with ethics. It was not until the intellectual battles which led up

to and led down from the great French Revolution, that the simple idea of social utility began to seem adequate as a basis for law and as an object for legislation. Bentham's principle of utility was nothing but the recognition of the truth that social well-being is a motive sufficient in itself, whether for the legislator in making the law, or for the citizen in obeying the law. This grand, simple, but somewhat late conception of human society had long, in truth, animated in this country, as in other countries, the political reformers of the age, both before and after the explosion of 1789. And under cover of that dominant school of ideas, Austin at last took heart to propound the simple doctrine which had so scandalised our forefathers: that law, if it is to be understood, must be kept free from morals; that the bases and sanctions of law and morals are, for logical purposes, totally distinct; and that, if we try to carry the authority of law to any higher and ulterior ground than the will of a sovereign legislature, it simply ceases to be *law*. In the language of modern philosophy, law belongs to the sphere of the temporal power. If we seek to give law a spiritual (or moral) foundation, we constitute a court of appeal over the highest magistrate, and we weaken the temporal efficacy of law. The citizen becomes a law to himself, or some other authority than the judge becomes a law to him. In either case he tends to weaken his obedience to law.

Now these propositions, which seem to us ordinary truisms, were anything but truisms when they were first insisted upon; and truisms or not, I cannot but think the assiduous reiteration of them by Austin is of the highest possible value to the student who is fresh to law. As a rule, he comes to the study of the law from some systematic education in moral and philosophical problems. His almost inevitable inclination is to assume some kind of ethical clue to law, and to attempt to generalise in law by the same logic and in the same spirit in which he has generalised in philosophy. In ethics and in metaphysics authority does not go for much, and a training in ethical and in metaphysical learning is too often the art of remembering which philosopher contradicted this or that philosopher, and in what particular part of his theory. Now in *law* authority is everything, and the reason of the thing, or philosophical probability, is nothing. There is no greater snare to the young lawyer than a proneness to reason by analogy, or to reason by any imagined standard of justice, that is to say by the light of nature. *Ita scriptum est* is the Decalogue of the jurist. Principle there is, analogy there is, and a very elaborate system of logical method. But it is a legal principle, a legal analogy, and a legal logic. There is nothing about it at all akin to ethical or philosophical reasoning. It is to be acquired by long practice and a refined sense of general rules underlying varying accidents. But law is almost as distinct from ethics as political

economy is distinct. And there is nothing which can so brace up the mental fibres of the student familiar with ethical and philosophical methods as to be plunged into the cold bath of Austin's clear but frigid reiteration of the truth that law means nothing but what the tribunals enforce by the delegated authority of sovereign power, and that nothing not so enforced is of account in law.

It was natural that the clearest and most logical assertion of this doctrine should come from an Englishman. The England of the eve of the first Reform Act, the profession of Mackintosh and Romilly and Brougham, formed exactly that mental atmosphere where ideas of any vague judicial prerogative were lowest, and ideas of the summary omnipotence of Parliament were highest; where the letter of the King's printer's statutes and of the cases in the authorised reports seemed to be of quite boundless authority; and where the idea of treating as law what had not been recorded in express words or formally promulgated as law, had most utterly receded out of sight. Everywhere on the Continent there is at times visible a tendency to refer law to the unexpressed will of a sovereign ruler, or to some sublime dictates of eternal justice, or to the paramount rule of public safety. To an English lawyer a case or a statute grows to be the one, final, and all-sufficient appeal and test of law. To the English publicist, Parliament presents a phenomenon of power without limit in the range of its capacity and the irresistibility of its force.

It is unfortunate that this valuable delimitation of the province of law has been mixed up by Austin with a mass of the very matter from which it was his special business to extricate law. But considered from the point of view of the mere jurist the propositions in Austin's first six lectures may be reduced to a few very plain definitions and a small body of argument in support. For this purpose we may neglect almost everything contained in the six lectures, excepting the first, the fifth, and the sixth. The second, third, and fourth are almost wholly occupied with that which is matter of ethics or of political philosophy. And the reasoning of the first, fifth, and sixth lectures might now be put into much fewer pages. There is no longer (thanks to Austin himself) any danger of confusing moral and legal obligation. No one needs any justification for giving an obedience to the decrees of courts of justice, or doubts that the sovereign Legislature can make that law which it chooses to enforce. No one now attaches any distinct meaning to the vague rhetoric of Blackstone about obeying the law of God when it conflicts with the law of man, or to the slipslop of Ulpian about the law of nature common to men and animals. The work is done; and therefore it is most unfortunate that Austin's clear assertion of the province of law should still be administered to the student encum-

bered with so much irritable iteration about the muddiness of Blackstone, and so much needless discussion about the principle of Utility. It being conceded that Blackstone wrote and thought in the age of vague commonplace about the ultimate sanction of law and of mysterious veneration of the British constitution, it is to be regretted that Austin should fill the mind of the beginner with contempt for a work like the *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, which is not only in itself a very masterly work of art, but is still the only available attempt to cast into a literary form a comprehensive panorama of English law as a whole. Austin was absorbed in keeping his grasp with rigid tenacity on certain coherent conceptions. Blackstone was occupied in arranging the complex labyrinth of English law into such an artistic composition as should at once impress the imagination of his lay readers. And this he has undoubtedly succeeded in accomplishing—and he alone has succeeded. Again, as a practical lawyer, he has, I think, adhered to a scheme of arrangement which, for real convenience, will probably outlast the efforts of analysis to recast. In the same way Austin's book is, to my mind, disfigured by violent attacks on men like Montesquieu and Hooker, whose purpose was a totally different one from his, who were not considering the *law* of the law courts at all, and whose very object it was to draw attention to the close analogy between the *order* enforced by positive enactments and physical penalties, and the *order* which rests only on the force of moral sanctions and public opinion.

II.

When we subtract the invective, now needless, and the excursus into ethics and the like, the first six lectures of Austin rest on a simple ground, and will go into a very moderate compass. If we reduce them to a practical form, divesting them of their highly abstract shape, and thinking only of their utility to the beginner in law, they amount, I believe, to something like the following principles and maxims:—

In every legal inquiry, the primary necessity is to determine the limits of the sovereign authority by which any legal obligation is created. That is equivalent in practice to the question of jurisdiction as a preliminary.

The sovereign authority is determined when we ascertain the definite superior in any independent political society which, as a fact, is habitually obeyed by the bulk of the community, and does not itself obey any higher authority. That amounts to say that the obligation to obey the laws of a community rests on the *de facto* authority of the power for the time being actually supreme, and habitually exercising the physical police.

We ascertain what is an independent political society when we find the limits and extent of that society which is free from any superior without it, and receives orders from no authority outside of it. That is to say, that we must separate all subordinate authorities from the supreme authority, until we reach back to the ultimate superior which gives, but never receives, commands.

That supreme authority in every independent community is, *for the purposes of the lawyer*, regarded first, as determinate; and then as of absolute, that is, of unlimited power. There is a popular saying which is equivalent, "An Act of Parliament can do anything except make a man a woman." That is to say, the only limits to the absolute power of the legislature lie outside of law altogether; in the case supposed, they are physical. Of course, there are also moral, political, and even international limits to the absolute power of the legislature; and there may be, as matter of history, politics, or political philosophy, no determinate sovereign. But there are no limits to the absolute power of the sovereign within the range of *municipal law;* or, in other words, *to the lawyer*, there are none. And, *to the lawyer*, there is always a determinate sovereign.

Law, for the purposes of the lawyer, is a species of command issued by such a political supreme authority, to its political inferiors or subjects habitually obeying it. Nothing that is not a *command* is *law;* and nothing commanded by anything but the supreme authority, as already defined, is law.

The *command* is the expression of a desire by the sovereign, or supreme authority, that the subject shall do, or abstain from doing, certain specified acts, or shall recognise a specified line of conduct.

But the simple expression of a wish is not enough to make a law. It needs a *sanction*. That is, there must be some evil which the supreme authority will inflict on the subject in case of neglect to observe the wish so expressed.

Nor is it sufficient that it should be a simple act to which the command relates. The command must be to do, or to abstain from, *acts of a class*.

When this *command* is duly accompanied with a *sanction*, or penalty for neglect to observe it, a *legal obligation* or duty lies on the subject to obey the command and to observe the rule.

If the legal obligation, or primary obligation, is violated, the liability of the sanction then arises, and is called a secondary obligation, or liability to punishment.

These few propositions seem nearly all of solid principle established in the first six lectures of Austin as to the analysis of sovereignty and of law. Summing up the steps in the process they may all be comprised in two propositions.

I. The source of all positive law is that definite sovereign authority which exists in every independent political community, and therein

exercises *de facto* the supreme power, being itself unlimited, as a matter of fact, by any limits of positive law.

II. Law is a command relating to the general conduct of the subjects, to which command such sovereign authority has given legal obligation by annexing a sanction, or penalty, in case of neglect.

Now these propositions are in themselves perfectly simple and almost obvious. They follow from the careful statement of the terms employed; and are only not truisms, because they have been so very confusedly conceived in other authors. The value of them to the student of law is this. The proposition or propositions as to sovereignty force on his attention that *law* is self-contained; that it draws a hard and fast line between all that is law of the land, and all that is without that line. In law there is no ambiguous zone, no no-man's law, as there is in morals and the like. Law is perfectly unaccommodating and rigid, as passionless and inexorable as a phenomenon in nature. The lawyer has nothing to do with hard cases. Bad law to him is not inequitable law (to him in his own science there is no such thing), but bad law is a rule falsely supposed to be law. His sole and ultimate standard of good law is the formal command of sovereign force supposed to be irresistible and unlimited.

It is somewhat singular that Austin rather inverts the order in which the analysis of law and of sovereignty are taken by him; and we have intentionally transposed them, speaking first of sovereignty and then of law. I know no sufficient reason why Austin should deviate from the natural order, the order followed by his own immediate authorities, by Bodin as by Hobbes, who start with the analysis of sovereignty. Austin has perhaps somewhat increased his difficulties by taking law first; for his analysis of law leads him to exaggerate somewhat the nature of the element of *command;* then he has to use forced language to present every law whatever as a command of the sovereign, bringing the *penalty* into prominence, and lastly he has to accumulate the language of forcible compulsion and of unlimited power in his definition of *sovereignty*. Without saying that his language in analyzing sovereignty is not to be justified, we must observe that he has used language about sovereign power in its capacity of unlimited might, which in effect is somewhat strained. Practically, we know, no sovereign authority is really free to make any law at its own will. And practically many sovereign authorities (such as a theocratic despot) are found strictly submitting to a conventional or customary law which they do not pretend that they are free to violate. Now, had Austin begun, like other writers on the theory of politics, by defining sovereignty, he might have avoided such violent phrases as this: "Every supreme government is legally despotic;" a phrase which I do not question as untrue, but which I think rather

forced in effect. He might simply have defined the sovereign as the power in every independent community which exercises political authority, which makes and enforces all orders of all kinds, and itself is subject to no orders having legal penalties behind them.

Why Austin should have found it necessary to fill so large a part of his first six lectures by enforcing, *usque ad nauseam*, the universal, unlimited, and illimitable despotism of what he calls the sovereign authority, is due, I think, to the following reason. Blackstone, and the school that he represents, were continually suggesting, in vague language, that there was a kind of universal law in the air anterior to legislation, and that the English common law in particular was an institution independent of legislative authority. Blackstone even went the length of saying that there was no binding obligation to obey any law that was contrary to the divine precepts. And these authorities were constantly assuming the existence of some binding law of a mysterious quality which no positive legislation could quite supersede. It was the force of this vague feeling which had animated the conservative resistance to the reforming projects of Bentham and others. These men vaguely regarded the old unwritten common law and the legislature as in some sense co-ordinate authorities, and they rather resented the encroachments of the more recent institution—as it seemed—the legislature. There is much historical justification for this sentiment. Sir H. Maine has shown that *custom* is recognised as a binding force before *law* is recognised; and, therefore, long before distinct or explicit legislation is recognised. Austin found Bentham and his friends resisted by a body of theorists and politicians who regarded this customary law as more ancient, more sacred, than any legislation, and in some sense superior to or independent of legislation. If, in Austin's own day, this idea was dying out, it must be remembered that Austin himself was a contemporary of Sir S. Romilly; that he lived in mental commerce with a generation earlier than his own. To him Blackstone and the defenders of the old constitutional and legal conservatism were living and ever-present realities—the obstacles to all progress and reform—Giants Despair and Doubting. Such I believe to be the explanation of the wearisome iteration with which Austin insists on the somewhat obvious position that the sovereign authority is the sole source of all that exercises powers of actual command in a state (*i.e.*, material pressure to enforce its orders), and is itself free from any material or forcible impediment in changing these commands at will. For us this is now a familiar proposition; we have not the opponents that Austin and Bentham had, and we can go lightly over ground on which they laboured so stoutly.

Let us turn now to the proposition as to *Law*. Law, says Austin, is everything which this unlimited sovereign authority has recognised as having a binding force, and nothing is law unless it has

been so recognised. No custom, or rule of convenience, no maxim of fairness, can make anything law in the absence of this sovereign recognition. The test of this recognition lies in this question—what sanction or penalty is incurred by those subjects who neglect to observe the rule? If there be no penalty, there is no legal obligation, no command, and so no law. If there be a penalty for breach of observance, then the obligation is a legal, instead of a moral, one. And in the threefold analysis of *law* into the correlatives, *command, legal obligation, sanction*, we get attention most usefully directed to the elementary aspects of every rule of law:—1. In what precise form has this rule been imposed as imperative? 2. On whom, and under what conditions, is the rule binding as a legal obligation? 3. What are the consequences in law to those who have neglected to observe that duty?

Those who know how difficult it is in practice always to detach in a labyrinth of concrete facts these three abstract elements—as to the positive *authority* for a rule of law, as to the *compass* of the legal obligation it creates, as to the consequences of any *breach* of such obligation—they, I say, will be the first to recognise the value of these initial maxims graven upon the portals of scientific jurisprudence.

III.

But these most pregnant definitions have been stated in too absolute a way. They belong to law, and cannot be carried beyond the world in which they spring. The analysis of sovereignty, of independent political societies, and of law, contained in Austin's *Province of Jurisprudence*, is of the highest value provided that we recognise its relative character, and do not attribute to it complete philosophical truth. If we attempt to give this analysis an absolute value apart from law, or if we take these definitions to be strict and ultimate explanations *per se*, we are stretching the theory until it snaps. This corollary, or qualification of the theory, is due to Sir H. Maine.

Shortly stated, the theory of Austin as to sovereignty amounts to this. *The force of all law is derived from that ultimate sovereign authority which in every independent political community actually exercises an unlimited power of command and is habitually obeyed by the bulk of the community.* Now this proposition seems to me perfectly true, and in fact to be almost a truism, if we understand it in the sense in which it is said: *i.e.* as true for the *lawyer* from the point of view of formal and scientific law. And for that very reason it is of such signal use in clearing the brain for the student who comes to law from the study of morals or other branches of social science. But from the point of view of a complete social philosophy, from the point of view of scientific history and scientific politics, the proposition requires so much qualification and correction, that it ceases to be a complete account of the matter at all. In a word, the proposition

ought to run somewhat in this way:—*The business of the lawyer is to consider*—the force of all law as derived from that ultimate sovereign authority which exercises in all regular and normal communities obedient to magistrates (*what for purposes of law we assume to be*) an *unlimited* power of command. From the point of view of history, the theory has been subjected to a searching criticism in the close of Sir H. Maine's work on primitive institutions.[1] He gives us there a suggestion which seems equally ingenious and fertile; that the theory is true, just as the theories of political economy are true, when understood as resting on a hypothesis: on the assumption that one element of the entire problem is being abstracted for logical purposes from the rest and solved independently. And so, he says, the theory of Austin rests on the assumption that the only side of sovereign power which we are considering is its imperative side, and its means of compelling obedience; and the only side of legislation which we are considering is its unlimited power of laying down the law, and the fact of its being uniformly obeyed. And for the lawyer that is exactly the assumption on which his whole train of reasoning rests. The one thing the lawyer has to do is to arrive at the true legal right, and the proper legal remedy, and to attribute to the law as he finds it absolute power, if not absolute wisdom. With any right and wrong—apart from legal right and legal remedy—he has (for the purposes of his own work) nothing whatever to do; nor can he attribute any intention or desire to the sovereign legislature except that which it distinctly expresses and also enforces by penalties. For the lawyer, the sovereign author of law is an absolute autocrat, and an autocrat which is omnipotent if not omniscient. It compels every one; and its power of compulsion is without limit.

But it is very easy to see that from the point of view of the politician, the moralist, or the historian, or the philosopher, this assumption will not serve, and therefore that the theory itself is not applicable. Socially speaking, we know that if law rested simply on sovereign authority, if it were the whole of the truth, as the Romans sometimes said, *ius est quod iussum est*, society would dissolve; and law would disappear with it. The lawyer shrinks from that other Roman definition that *ius est id quod iustum est*, precisely as the moralist shrinks from the *ius est quod iussum est*. But we all know that if law were really or permanently divorced from justice, it would not retain its binding power very long. Socially and politically viewed, the force of law depends on its coinciding with the moral judgment of the society, on its expressing public opinion, as Bentham said of its goodness, on its conforming to the "general expectation." Law would not be really imperative, we know, unless, behind the sword of the magistrate, the bulk of mankind felt the weight of social obligation, the irresistible burden of custom, of im-

(1) *The Early History of Institutions*, chaps. xii., xiii.

memorial tradition and the like, a social, and even a religious sanctity. But then the lawyer has to put aside all these forces, for there are occasions on which these forces are doubtful or conflict with the letter of the positive law; and they always tend to warp positive law. On such occasions the lawyer has to follow his text in the statutes or the reports. And thus it comes about that the lawyer has to assume law as resting on the single force of sovereign authority; whilst in other branches of thought we could only assume this hypothesis with the certainty of ending in confusion and positive error. Politically and socially speaking, law rests on something more than force. Juristically speaking, it rests on force, and force alone.

Sir H. Maine has shown us, in the chapters quoted, with what strange results we are confronted when we compare this theory of sovereignty with historical facts. The origin of sovereign powers has been almost infinitely varied, and sovereignty is found under the most widely different states of social cohesion. Sovereignty may indeed be brought in all under one general definition in words, but the actual conditions under which that sovereignty is exercised, and the actual manifestations of its power are so strangely disparate in ancient and modern societies, under an Eastern theocracy, or an Athenian Demos, or a British constitution, that the definition itself thus extended becomes purely verbal and hardly explains anything. As Sir H. Maine shows, the theory excludes from view the mass of historical traditions, which in almost every society known to us really gives sovereignty its social efficacy and its distinctive character.

On the other hand, all this is just what the lawyer has to exclude from his view by a scientific artifice. He is bound to assume that the moral, historical, and social forces which make up so large a part of sovereignty to the philosopher are of no account; because moral, historical, and social authority cannot make forensic law; and sometimes it conflicts with law as laid down by judges; or darkens law, as law is understood by a modern lawyer.

And furthermore, the proposition, or assumption, that there is always discoverable in every political society a determinate sovereign, can only be fitted on to some extreme forms of societies at the opposite pole to that of our Western civilisation, by the use of explanations and ingenuities which reduce the statement to a merely verbal meaning. Here, again, we have a further proof that the theory is relative to the purpose of the modern lawyer, and is only adapted to societies in a condition similar to our own. In other words it must be read with this postulate, *the lawyer of modern Europe has to assume*, that the force of all law is derived from the determinate and formally constituted sovereign authority of the state.

Nor is the assumption that this determinate sovereign power is

unlimited, at all more true outside the strict province of law. It is obvious that society implies a mass of conditions, limits, and obligations lying upon the sovereign authority. The theory may be stretched till it bursts when we suggest, as Sir H. Maine points out the Austinian analysis of sovereignty implies, that the Queen in Parliament might pass a statute for the slaughter of weakly children. No sovereign, as a fact, has unlimited power; no sovereign, not even a despot with a disturbed brain, or the Greek tyrant who is typically spoken of as a sort of wild beast, but is bound by a multitude of limitations, which in fact are stronger than any formal law. The most absolute despot of whom we have any knowledge, such as a Sultan in a purely Mahometan country, blindly obeyed in all things spiritual and temporal, the absolute master in theory of the bodies, and souls, and property, the beliefs, the acts, the ritual, and the labour of his subjects, is usually himself the slave of a code of traditional observance. This unwritten code is the object of more mysterious veneration than any modern body of law; it is not definitely enforced by any courts of justice; it is armed with no definable sanction; it reminds us of that unnameable sanction of the law parliamentary, as Mr. Speaker said, "God in heaven only knows what would happen" if the obligations of it were violated: and there is often no man or body of persons who have any power to change it, or in whose will it resides. Indeed, it is easy to imagine cases, and they abound in ancient and in Eastern history, in which the actual *de facto* sovereign, *i.e.*, the sole and ultimate depositary of all physical power, is regarded as the enemy of law; and his irresistible commands are contrasted with some unembodied undefined mass of usages or observances which are supposed to be the law, but of which no one pretends to be the authorised exponent, and which no one pretends to be able to change or to enforce.

These considerations show that Austin's conception of sovereignty deliberately excludes every other aspect of sovereignty except that of its legislative power; and that the conception has no place, and even no meaning, if taken to be a truth in social philosophy. It is intended to draw attention to this—that the limitations on sovereign power are not *legal* limitations, that what obligations the sovereign power is under are not *legal* obligations, are enforced by sanctions of different kinds, but not the sanctions of the law courts. The consideration of the limits on the sovereign power carries us outside of law courts, and therefore outside of law. If the sovereign be really sovereign, it will be able to compel its own law courts to enforce its own laws. Therefore, *to the lawyer, and for purposes of law*, the sovereign is unlimited. Any limitations on this sovereignty lie wholly outside the lawyer's province.

Austin's definition of sovereignty itself perhaps allows for that element of possible limitation on sovereign power by conditions ex-

ternal to law, in the clause in which he speaks of it as being habitually obeyed by the bulk of the community. We know as a fact that every conceivable type of sovereignty would only be obeyed by the bulk of the community within certain limits. No despot of ancient or modern times would be at all obeyed in some conceivable commands. Not only the bulk of the community, but the entire community would utterly defy him and refuse obedience, if he gave certain orders. Czar, Sultan, an emperor like Caligula, the old King of the Assassins, or the present King of Dahomey, all have limits perfectly known to all men, within which alone they can issue commands that will be obeyed. In theory Parliament, or King, Lords, and Commons, are omnipotent in England; but we all know that the bulk of the community would only obey an Act of Parliament within certain limits. A law of outrageous injustice and cruelty would be universally defied, even if regularly passed. Consequently there is a certain ambiguity in saying that the sovereign is "that authority which is habitually obeyed by the bulk of the community," and then that this sovereign is "unlimited," because there are very strict limits to the habitual obedience everywhere. If we took this proposition as holding good in political philosophy, it would be a sophism. But for law it is strictly true. No theory of scientific law can hold good for social convulsions, states of anarchy, rudimentary theocracies, or barbarous tribes. And the reason is this. Any scientific law implies the regular action of established law courts; and in states like those supposed there are not regular law courts. When the theory breaks down, then we have passed into a social sphere where "*law*," as we mean law in law courts, has ended; or has not begun.

There is, too, another qualification with which the theory has to be guarded. Cases may be imagined of societies very widely different from our own, in which the theory can only be applied, if it is applied at all, by a violent straining of language, or by a series of artificial postulates. There can be supposed societies in which the political forces are too ambiguous to admit of precisely determining the sovereignty, or to which some historical accident has given a form hardly political; as where the legislative force is practically absorbed in the force of custom or undefined habit, with no recognised sanction and no official interpreter. And some societies are so very rudimentary, or so very unstable, or so very minute, that the theory becomes ridiculous if strained to apply to them. Now this would be a fatal objection to any law in social philosophy pretending to explain the conditions under which men live in society. But it is no objection at all to a theory which professes only to explain the phenomena of law as law is understood in the law courts of civilised states. Law is, after all, a perfectly artificial set of rules, suited to the practical conveniences of civilised

men, and the product of infinite accidents, compromises, and adaptations. It is irrational to look for generalisations in this sphere, such as belong to the eternal relations of human nature under all terrestrial conditions.

The generalisations of law are, therefore, only meant to apply to such highly civilised communities as have, except in moments of anarchy:—(1) a perfectly defined centre of sovereign power; (2) where the spheres of positive law and of moral obligation are habitually treated as separate; (3) in which the resources of the tribunals and the range of their power are perfectly marked and generally recognised. It is very easy to imagine political societies in which these elements are held, as it were, in solution, in which the standard of right and wrong and the decrees of the tribunals seem mutually interchangeable, or where they inextricably overlap; where the moral and the political forces are in unstable equilibrium, so that one of the two sometimes seems to disappear or to be transformed into the other; where the practical sovereignty seems to be personal caprice; or where the only sovereign seems to be habit without force at all, and even without will at all. We can imagine such political societies; and to the historian and to the social philosopher they are exceedingly fruitful fields of study. But the lawyer finds that they do not present examples of *law* as understood in civilised states. They lie as completely outside of the sphere of his work, as societies of beavers, or republics of rooks.

The result is that the Austinian analysis of sovereignty is a perfectly sound conception when read in the light of the assumptions by which it is qualified, and limited to the sphere to which it belongs. It belongs strictly to law; and the assumptions or hypotheses on which it depends are:—(1) that the lawyer is considering sovereignty only on the side of force; (2) that for his purpose he assumes the force it exerts to be unlimited; (3) and that he is considering force only as it is applied by the tribunals of settled modern societies. With these assumptions the proposition as to sovereignty is strictly unassailable. But as a general proposition of human society, without the prefixed qualifications, in a word, treated as a philosophical principle, it is quite assailable and not very intelligible. A real step has been taken in the history of scientific jurisprudence when Sir H. Maine pointed out the conditions under which the definition of Austin must be read—conditions, I think, rather ignored by Austin himself. We now know that the historical and political difficulties in the path of Austin's doctrine are difficulties to it only when regarded as an absolute truth, and do not diminish its relative value to the student of modern law, in strictly marking out to him the limits of the field before him. FREDERIC HARRISON.

(*To be continued.*)

THE TWO FAIR COUSINS, A CHINESE ROMANCE.

An English version of the Chinese romance known as *Iu-Kiao-Li*, or the *Two Fair Cousins*, was published in 1827, having been translated from the French version of M. Abel Rémusat, the distinguished Chinese scholar. M. Rémusat tells us that being desirous of filling up a gap in French literature by translating a Chinese novel, and acting with the advice of two learned French missionaries, he selected the romance entitled *Iu-Kiao-Li*, as meriting a preference from its purity of style and its grace and elegance as a literary composition. The story itself is far more ancient than any work of a similar character produced in Europe; a copy of *Iu-Kiao-Li* in the original has existed in the Royal Library of Paris for nearly two centuries and a half, and the epoch at which the scene is laid is about the middle of the fifteenth century.

When this book was written the refined habits and modes of thought which characterize an advanced stage of civilisation evidently prevailed in China, and even if the author must be regarded as describing Chinese life during his own period rather than at an earlier date, a sufficient antiquity is given to the book for a comparison between contemporary Europe and China by no means unfavourable to the latter. During the centuries which have elapsed since the *Two Fair Cousins* was written, Europe has made giant strides of progress, while China has stood still, or retrograded; but the civilised society and orderly government described therein will contrast favourably with the condition of England during the Wars of the Roses, or of France during the struggle between Louis XI. and his turbulent vassals. Education, wealth, and internal tranquillity appear to have been generally distributed throughout China proper at a period when Western Europe was torn to pieces with civil wars, and when there was no safety for life or property outside the walls of a convent or a castle. In China social and political changes take place so slowly as to be almost imperceptible to outsiders, and the description of life and manners in *Iu-Kiao-Li* seems even now applicable to modern Chinese existence beyond the limits of treaty ports, although of late foreign intrusion and civil war have shaken the empire to its foundations.

Except the Roman Catholic missionaries, who conform entirely in their dress and mode of living to native customs, few foreigners resident in China know anything of the inner life of the Chinese. They employ Chinamen as clerks and as servants (excellent they are in both capacities), and they have business transactions with Chinese

merchants; but there is no social intercourse between foreigners and natives, and it is rare indeed for them to regard each other in the light of personal friends. An Englishman may indeed be found, such as Archdeacon Grey of Canton, who is familiar with the Chinese language, who is welcomed as a friend by all classes of the natives, before whom all doors open, and under whose escort a stranger may penetrate even to "the interior apartments" of a great Chinese mansion, and catch a glimpse of their fair and somewhat highly rouged inhabitants. An hour spent under the Archdeacon's guidance in the palace of the distinguished family of Ng, where every one, from the retired chief-justice to the household slave, received the visitors with smiles and hospitable offers, teaches as much of Chinese domestic life as years of residence in Hong Kong or the foreign settlement of Shanghai, and enables the imagination to picture with some approach to accuracy the scenes described in the pages of the *Two Fair Cousins*.

Works of fiction have been supplied to the reading public of modern Europe in such numbers and in such variety, that it would seem as if the resources of the European imagination were almost exhausted, and as if novelty in novels could now no longer be looked for. A genuine Chinese romance, such as the *Two Fair Cousins*, written to amuse the leisure of the sons and daughters of the Middle Kingdom, and never intended to meet the eye of a foreigner, ushers us into a new world of thought, feeling, and taste, and introduces us to the domestic life of a great civilised race, flourishing on the earth contemporaneously with ourselves, but as completely apart from us, until the most recent times, as if inhabiting the surface of another planet.

From the perusal of this work we discover that it is possible for a community of educated and cultivated persons even now to hold opinions on social and domestic subjects diametrically opposed to those which prevail in Europe, and which we are accustomed to consider essential to the maintenance of a well-organized society. In particular, as M. Rémusat tells us in his admirable preface, "we must go to China to witness bigamy justified by sentiment, and the most exacting of passions accommodating itself to participation and arrangement without losing either its force or its vivacity. A man *sentimentally* loving two women at once is a monster only to be found in the extremity of Asia." From the chivalrous hero of Christian romance and from the sensual polygamist of Islam such a man is equally far removed, and with neither is he in sympathy; but it must not be forgotten that these notions, which appear to us so eccentric, are even now accepted as reasonable by hundreds of millions of rational beings.

The action of our story commences in the middle of the fifteenth

century, when the reign of "universal honesty" was succeeded by that of "supreme splendour," and many magistrates who had been displaced were recalled to office. Among these is Pe Hiouan Thai-hiouan, a learned and upright man of great wealth, then living in retirement near the city of Nanking with his only daughter, the incomparable Houngiu (Red Jasper). The hope of finding in the northern capital a worthy son-in-law induces Pe Hiouan to accept the appointment of Master of Ceremonies at the Imperial Court, as he knows that he will find assembled there "the most eminent in literature that the empire can produce;" on rank or riches he lays no stress whatever.

The first scene is laid in the house of this great dignitary in Peking, where he is entertaining a few intimate friends with a view of his choice flowers, with verse-making, and with numerous small cups of wine, the very ideal of intellectual and luxurious enjoyment in the opinion of an accomplished Chinese gentleman. As a forfeit for talking politics, instead of writing verses on the beauty of the flowers, the host himself is sentenced to drink twenty cups of wine, but the first half-dozen of these prove too much for the head of Pe Hiouan, who retires and falls asleep, leaving his guests busily engaged in composition. Meanwhile Houngiu finds out through a servant what is occurring, and writes on behalf of her father a set of verses, the perusal of which fills the guests with astonishment and admiration. These feelings are of course greatly enhanced when one of their number, Houngiu's uncle, detects the handiwork of his niece. Another guest, an inspector-general of the empire, is at once seized with the desire to obtain in marriage for his only son a young lady so skilled in literary composition, but unfortunately the young man, although by no means disagreeable in appearance, and exceedingly good-tempered, is deficient in learning, and his father is well aware that this deficiency, if discovered, will prove fatal to his matrimonial projects. At a dinner, given for the express purpose, the youth's scholarship is tested by Houngiu's father and uncle, who readily satisfy themselves that his ignorance is such as to counterbalance all other qualifications, and when a formal proposal of marriage is made on his behalf there is no hesitation in declining it. The peculiar feature of the whole transaction is the fact that in rank, wealth, age, character, and appearance, the young suitor is the very husband whom Pe Hiouan is seeking for Houngiu; but these qualifications are hardly alluded to or considered on either side; it is not the beautiful heiress, but the accomplished poetess, whom Yang demands for his son, and it is the plucked candidate for literary honours whom Pe rejects for his daughter. Indignant at the rejection of his proposals, Inspector-General Yang makes use of his powerful court influence to have Pe nominated as ambassador to

Tartary (where the legitimate Emperor of China is at the time a captive), in order to negotiate a peace with the Tartars and to effect the Emperor's release. The mission is difficult and dangerous, the fatigues of the journey and the severity of the climate are particularly formidable to a man of Pe's advanced years, and his friends endeavour to persuade him to plead ill-health, and beg to be relieved of the appointment. His reply is: "How can any man in office refuse a commission that is imposed upon him? If I pretended illness now, I should not only be guilty of an act inconsistent with my duty and my character, but I should draw upon myself even the ridicule of old Yang. The Emperor is in the midst of danger, and his only place of shelter is a wretched hut; should the humblest of his subjects then presume to talk of fatigue?"

Animated by these loyal sentiments, the stout-hearted old gentleman sets out for the north, after a sorrowful parting from Houngiu, leaving her under the care of her uncle Gou, a doctor of the Imperial Academy, who promises to seek for her a suitable husband during his absence. The learned academician, finding that old Yang is determined to take advantage of Pe's departure, and to effect by force or fraud a marriage between Houngiu and his son, resolves to quit the capital for Nanking, taking his niece with him, and passing her off as his daughter under the unpretending name of Woukiao (without attractions).

A favourite pastime in early spring for all classes among the Chinese is to make picnic parties to admire the fruit-trees blossoming in the precincts of the suburban temples. Dr. Gou, whose mind is much absorbed in the responsibility of finding a suitable establishment for his niece, now in her seventeenth year, while taking part in one of these entertainments, finds inscribed on a wall a copy of verses of the highest purity and elegance, bearing the signature of "Sse Yeoupe." The ink of the gracefully traced characters is not yet dry, and he at once takes steps to discover the gifted author, who proves to be a student of the city college, an orphan with but little fortune, and without relations or connections in Nanking.

To a British parent or guardian these particulars would hardly appear satisfactory, but strange to relate: "Gou's satisfaction was now complete. 'Since this young man is poor and unmarried,' said he to himself, 'the affair is accomplished at once. He is without relations. I have full authority from Pe; there can be no impediment to it. He is a man distinguished by intellect as he is by appearance, and therefore the best husband a father can give his daughter.'"

Accordingly the services of an old lady are engaged as matrimonial go-between (a recognised and honourable profession in China), and formal overtures are made to Sse Yeoupe, whose name has just

appeared at the top of the list of candidates at the annual examination for bachelor degrees. The offer of a rich and noble bride of extraordinary beauty and talent to a poor student seems too good to be true, and Sse's suspicions are not unnaturally aroused. He asks why Dr. Gou has not given his daughter to some great personage, distinguished like himself with the purple sash of honour; and he insists on having a sight of the young lady. To the "go-between" this appears a very unreasonable request, but she tells him where he may have a chance of seeing the lady Gou and her daughter admiring the peach-blossoms from the top of a garden pavilion. Sse accordingly does see a young lady, with whose appearance he is grievously disappointed; she is really the daughter of Gou, betrothed, but still living in her father's house, and "for the daughter of so distinguished a person her merit is not of a superior order." In other words the young lady Wouyan (without beauty) is distinctly plain, and Sse, of course believing her to be the bride proposed to him, respectfully but firmly declines the brilliant alliance.

The worthy doctor is at first neither offended nor discouraged; he attributes the failure of the negotiation to the old woman's want of tact, and employs as his second ambassador a fellow-student of Sse Yeoupe. This young man exhausts his eloquence in pointing out that a poor bachelor, however successful at the examination, could not possibly hope for a more advantageous match. "I speak not of her beauty; her rank, sir, and riches, if you will but take possession of them, will prove a species of seasoning to the matrimonial dish, which you will relish more and more every day."

But Sse Yeoupe takes a different view of the matter: "Of all human affairs the first and most important is matrimony. For if real talent and exterior qualities are not combined, it is in reality but a state of slavery, to which one is condemned for the remainder of his life. I think with the prince of literature (Confucius), that the union which is formed by the sympathy of hearts is such as ensures felicity to two beings, even unto grey hairs; and the close of life shall still find them occupied in watching over each other. If talents even and beauty be found united in the same person, and if her tastes and sentiments do not accord as pulse to pulse with mine, the possessor of them still is not the amiable woman that Sse Yeoupe desires. If I do not meet with an accomplished woman, really worthy of being beloved, I will never marry; this is my determination."

Strange sentiments these for a Chinese to entertain. But Sse Yeoupe is a poet, and according to the Chinese saying, "Three parts of obstinacy and seven of imprudence ferment together to form the character of a poet."

Gou loses his temper when he hears that Sse is obdurate, and uses his influence with the chief examiner to have the young bachelor

deprived of his green collar, the mark of his degree, an act of injustice which does not disturb the equanimity of Sse. Meanwhile Pe Hiouan returns from his mission to Tartary, and receives honour and promotion at the imperial court, with leave of absence to visit his own country. He is, of course, eagerly welcomed by his daughter and brother-in-law, and soon hears the story of Sse Yeoupe, which excites his surprise and admiration. "This young man's firmness only makes him more respectable in my eyes. Men of genius have their own mode of viewing a matter, and they ought not to be harsh with each other." He requests his brother-in-law to lose no time in having Sse reinstated in his bachelor's degree.

At this juncture our hero receives a letter from his uncle, Sse Youan, imperial inspector-general, offering to adopt him as his son, and to take him at once to the capital, for which he is about to sail. Sse Yeoupe accepts, and starts on horseback to join his uncle, whose vessel is lying in the great river; but he is turned from his purpose by a series of adventures encountered on the way, and the inspector-general, after waiting several days for him in vain, is obliged to set sail alone.

Accidentally, Sse Yeoupe, passing near the place of Pe Hiouan's rural retirement, hears of his daughter's many charms and accomplishments, and, little thinking that he has already "passé à côté de son bonheur," and has actually refused this peerless damsel, he resolves to enter the lists as a competitor for her favour and that of her father. The lists in question are very different from those which an European hero of the same period must have entered, in order to vindicate his claim to the heroine with lance and sword against all comers. Nor are the suitors required to prove, as in modern Europe, to the satisfaction of the family lawyer, that they are in a position to make good settlements upon the bride.

Pe Hiouan has devoted all his leisure to the education of his motherless daughter, who has consoled him for that greatest of afflictions to a Chinese, the want of a son; and at the age of sixteen she might have vied with the first literary characters of the empire. His sole care now is to find a husband worthy of her, "to rank and wealth he is perfectly indifferent, looking rather to merit, accomplishments, and distinguished capacity."

The method of testing the numerous suitors who present themselves is characteristically Chinese, for even in our own times there has been as yet in the West no instance of a beautiful and accomplished heiress being made the prize of a competitive examination.

Houngiu, like Brynhilda in the Nibelungenlied, will wed no man who cannot contend successfully with herself, and the trial to which her suitors are subjected is the composition of verses on the same subject and with the same rhymes as she herself has selected. In

such a contest the redoubtable Sse Yeoupe is not likely to encounter equal foes, and were it not for fraud he would gain an easy victory; but a designing rival contrives to pass off Sse's verses as his own, and such is their excellence that Pe on reading them at once exclaims to his daughter: "My child, I have to-day found out a husband worthy of you!"

Houngiu is not so easily deceived as her father. She admits the taste and genius of the composition, but points out that the writing is heavy and vulgar; and as elegant penmanship is in China the mark of a scholar, she is led to suspect that the verses have not been composed but only transcribed by Chang, whose name they bear. The appearance of the supposititious author, when he presents himself, is not very satisfactory to Pe, and Houngiu's confidential waiting-maid gives a most unfavourable report of him to her mistress; but the unconscious aid of Sse enables him to pass a second test with credit, and he is established on trial as tutor to Pe's nephew. The indulgent father assures his daughter that if there is the least reluctance in her mind he will not strive to overcome it; his only fear is that they may find it very difficult to meet with another man of such intellect as Chang.

But Houngiu "has the penetration of a rhinoceros's eye," and she is ably seconded by her young handmaid Yansou. Ere long they discover who is the true poet, and Houngiu is quite satisfied with Sse's handwriting, which "reminds one of the delicate touches of the flying dragon," as well as with his personal appearance, having seen him from a place of concealment in an arbour. Nothing can be more refined and scrupulous than her conduct throughout; she considers that "the handwriting of a maiden should not be indiscreetly produced beyond the interior apartment," and will only send messages by the mouth of Yansou, who negatives indignantly the suggestion of Sse Yeoupe that he may be permitted to see, "at least in profile," her young mistress. Even when convinced of the fraud that has been practised upon her father as to the poetry, Houngiu thinks that it would be unbecoming for her to interfere, and she sends her lover to seek her uncle's assistance, assuring him at the same time of her unalterable fidelity—"gold and jasper never change." Gou Chouian, whose momentary resentment against Sse is completely appeased, has been recalled to the imperial court, and our hero accordingly sets out for Peking.

During his absence a new suitor for Miss Houngiu appears in Sse Yeoute, who avails himself of the similarity of name, and endeavours to personate the true hero, whom Pe Hiouan has not yet seen; but the result is that the dishonest suitors, Chang and Sse Yeoute, mutually check-mate and expose one another, and both receive their dismissal.

Meanwhile Sse Yeoupe meets with various adventures on his journey northwards. Although a hero of romance, he is an inexpert horseman, and has nothing to boast of as to personal strength or daring. He is accordingly robbed of horse and baggage in a somewhat ignominious manner by a single highwayman armed only with a bludgeon.

We now come to the most remarkable episode in the story. While Sse is endeavouring to obtain some money for the prosecution of his journey he is seen by the fair Mengli (Pear-tree-in-blossom), daughter of Pe Hiouan's only sister, who many years ago has married an officer named Lo, and settled in the province of Shantung, lying between Peking and Nanking, the northern and southern capitals of the Chinese empire. This young lady, disguised as a boy, comes to the assistance of Sse, and furnishes him with the requisite silver, learning from him at the same time the object of his journey and his engagement to her cousin Houngiu. She is not discouraged by this piece of information, but inquires: "The empire is vast; suppose that another person should be found gifted with like charms, what would you do, brother Sse?"

His reply is thoroughly logical: "When one is sensible to the charms of beauty, how can one have two kinds of heart? If another could be found possessing equal beauty, it would be quite natural that I should feel the same passion for her. But to quit one and attach myself to the other would be a treachery of which the fear of death even could not make me guilty."

With these catholic sentiments Miss Mengli is perfectly satisfied, and proposes that Sse Yeoupe should marry her twin sister (meaning, of course, herself) as soon as he has concluded his marriage with Houngiu. The impulsive Sse, who is delighted with the character and appearance of the supposed brother, at once accepts the proposal, justly reflecting that young Lo's twin sister most probably resembles him, and even suggests that no time need be lost in completing the business, as he can delay his departure for a few days.

But Mengli is loyal to her cousin, and will not allow him thus to turn aside in his usual desultory manner: "If you should thus stop half-way to marry my sister it would be a breach of your first engagements; and when it should come to Miss Pe's knowledge she would have every right to complain of it; and this would be laying up for the future motives of discord and subjects of contest. My dear brother, you should hasten to fulfil the engagements you have entered into with Miss Pe; that affair once terminated, the marriage of my sister will follow of course." She also advises him to proceed without loss of time to take the degree of licentiate, the next in order to that of bachelor, and dismisses him on his way

rejoicing, and without the slightest misgiving as to the view which Houngiu may take of this new alliance.

He has not proceeded far before he meets his uncle, who has been promoted, and is now judge of the province. The childless old man welcomes with delight his nephew, and adopts him formally as his son. The difficulties are now smoothed away from the path of Sse Yeoupe, and he proceeds successively to the provincial and imperial examinations, taking the two degrees of licentiate and of doctor with the highest distinction. This is the proudest moment in the life of a young Chinese. "The day in which honours are obtained is worth a thousand years of life."

Meanwhile the widowed lady, Lo, and her children seek an asylum with Pe Hiouan, and the two fair cousins meet. Mengli is only one year younger than Houngiu, they both have the same literary tastes, and soon become inseparable, agreeing that they must both marry the same man in order that they may never have to part. Miss Pe, indeed, raises this objection: "I know not if in the world as it now exists it would be possible to find a man sufficiently gifted with talent to be worthy to receive us both." But Miss Lo now confesses the whole story of her having disguised herself as a boy in order to meet Sse in the garden, and of the agreement then made between them: "I saw that since he was incapable of being unfaithful for a moment to you I ran no risk of his becoming so to me afterwards, and I at length obtained his consent to a double marriage." Mengli's conduct meets with Houngiu's complete approval, she praises her wit and resolution, agrees heartily to the arrangement proposed, and "from that moment the two cousins felt their mutual esteem and affection redoubled."

Old Pe, however, is not aware of the amicable agreement to which the two young ladies have come, and although he is charmed with the poetical talents of his niece, he feels strongly the responsibility of providing for her a suitable establishment. "If it has been already so difficult to find one son-in-law, what trouble shall I not now have to discover two?" He has quite lost sight of Sse Yeoupe, who, since taking his black scarf, the mark of a doctor's degree, has been appointed a magistrate in the province of Chekiang, where our old friend Yang is now governor. Once more the young poet gets into trouble through the offer of a splendid alliance: he declines to marry the governor's daughter, although Houngiu has been falsely reported dead, and Mengli has disappeared from her former home without leaving any clue by which she may be followed.

Having thus incurred the resentment of Governor Yang, his official superior, Sse resolves to resign his appointment, and wanders away with a heavy heart, faithful to the memory of Houngiu. The "Hermit of Gratitude," a soothsayer of whose skill he has previously

had a proof, meets him by the way, foretells a happy conclusion to all his troubles within a short period, and promises him a double marriage, with the rank of an imperial academician. Encouraged somewhat by the hermit's confident predictions, Sse Yeoupe follows his directions, and soon encounters Pe Hiouan, who is visiting the picturesque scenery of Chekiang; but both are travelling under assumed names, and, never having met before, they fail to recognise each other. Their dispositions and tastes are, however, thoroughly congenial, and Pe is so much pleased with his young companion, that, after being together for a few days, he offers to him in marriage both his daughter and his niece. Sse professes scruples, and intimates somewhat feebly his intention of remaining unmarried, as one of his betrothed is dead, and the other has disappeared; but Pe points out to him that he is too young for vows of celibacy, and he finally accepts the proposed alliance.

From this point of the story the course of true love runs smoothly enough, and all mistakes are corrected. Sse Yeoupe receives by imperial decree the rank to which his success at the examinations entitles him, but of which he has been defrauded through the jealousy of certain grandees; he becomes a doctor of the Grand Academy—in Chinese phrase, he "mounts the steed of gold, and sits in the hall of jasper," and all bow down before him. He learns that Houngiu is alive and well, and a letter from Mengli, which has been pursuing him all over the empire, at last comes to hand. The engagement entered into between Pe Thaihiouan and Sse Yeoupe, while travelling under false names, still causes some embarrassment to those gentlemen and some anxiety to the two young ladies, who stand bravely by one another in all their difficulties, Houngiu promising that she will not marry Sse Yeoupe unless Mengli is allowed to do so also. Of course all mistakes as to identity are easily corrected, and nothing remains to impede the double marriage, which takes place with a grand display of festal robes, lanterns and fireworks, music and bell-ringing, banquets and perfumed tapers. The bridegroom's former rivals, Chang and Sse Yeoute, act as his two best men or "go-betweens," one for each bride, and there is a double display of nuptial presents, given, not to the brides, but to their respective parents. Some tears are shed by the two young ladies, who, "clothed in golden stuffs, with ornaments of precious stones, appeared to be the daughters of the King of the Immortals." Of Houngiu in particular it is said that "her beauty is capable of attracting the fish from the bottom of the abysses, and bringing down the crane from the heights of heaven," and she, as the elder, receives the place of honour on the left. Her cousin, however, cannot be called her inferior, either in beauty or accomplishments, and Sse Yeoupe's good fortune seems to be quite beyond his merits,

although it must be admitted that he is modest and unassuming amidst all his literary triumphs, and that, like Horatio, he can take fortune's buffets and her favours with equal thanks.

Such is a brief outline of the tale of the *Two Fair Cousins*, Houngiu and Mengli, whose love for the same individual proves to be a source of sympathy instead of jealousy, and enhances the mutual esteem and affection between the two girls, whose tastes and opinions are in all respects identical. However repugnant the *dénouement* of the story may be to European notions and prejudices, it is clearly true that (in the words of M. Rémusat), "The union of three persons linked together by a happy conformity of taste, accomplishment, and disposition, forms in the eyes of the Chinese the highest earthly blessing, a sort of ideal happiness which heaven reserves for its favourites, as the reward of talent and of virtue."

Marriage is regarded by the Chinese as the most serious event of life, and the idea of marriage is constantly present to the minds of the Chinese of all classes, assuming as it does extra importance from their anxiety not to die without posterity. As regards the belief in a future state, few persons in China seem to take thought or care on the subject; but all alike dread the prospect of being deprived of proper funeral obsequies and of the reverential homage which ought to be paid at regular dates by male descendants to a tablet inscribed with the name of the deceased. Hence the lack of male posterity is regarded as the greatest of calamities, and celibacy as the height of folly. In order to avoid all risk of leaving no son to survive him, a Chinaman will, if he can, marry "early and often," the natural result being that China is over-peopled. This ruling desire of the Chinese must be constantly borne in mind as being a mainspring of their conduct in life, and a principal motive in all their dramas and romances. Apart from the anxiety to provide against the risk of dying childless, or rather "sonless," the Chinese seem not to be generally disposed towards polygamy, and the bird which they have selected as the emblem of conjugal happiness and fidelity is the teal, because teals are always to be seen swimming together in *couples*, and answer each other with a cry which the Chinese consider to be very harmonious. Even when there are more than one wife in a household, the first usually enjoys a distinct pre-eminence, and is the legal mistress of the house. But although wives of the second rank themselves occupy an inferior position, their children are placed on terms of perfect equality with those of the first wife, even as regards inheritance.

The ceremonious politeness of the well-bred Chinese is illustrated in almost every page of our novel. Of so exhausting a nature are the formal salutations when persons of condition meet, as to be dispensed with in cases of delicate health from sheer physical inca-

pacity to perform them. In such cases a "simple salutation" only takes place, "the hands being crossed upon the breast, and the head gently shaken with a grave and affable air." In polite conversation the speaker is always careful to depreciate his own rank and merits, while extolling those of the person whom he is addressing. The utmost punctilio is observed in paying and returning visits, and visiting cards are in general use. Hospitality is freely exercised, and in particular, when a man of distinction sets out upon a journey, he is overwhelmed with farewell banquets given by his colleagues and dependants, who escort him a part of the way as soon as he has made choice of a fortunate day for his departure. A quasi-supernatural element is introduced into *Iu-Kiao-Li* in the episode of the "Hermit of Gratitude," who displays a power of clairvoyance, or second sight, similar to that claimed by soothsayers and fortune-tellers in almost every age and country. He, however, does not himself lay claim to supernatural faculties, but merely interprets, according to established rules, the accidental positions of small rods, thrown like dice from a wooden case.

It is remarkable that the same method of divining which Gretchen employed is familiar also to Chinese maidens, for they too pluck the petals off a chrysanthemum or an aster in order to ascertain the sentiments of their lovers. Palmistry is practised as a regular profession in China, and even the foreigner who allows his left hand to be inspected is certain to be promised a couple of wives and any number of sons as readily as if he were a native. Throughout the narrative is interspersed much poetry of a mild character, in which fruit-trees, flowers, and birds figure conspicuously. The love of nature and picturesque scenery appears to be a ruling passion among the highly cultivated Chinese, second only to their love of poetry, with which wine is usually associated. Sse Yeoupe thus describes his ideal of felicity in somewhat Anakreontic terms: "Ah! if some day, seated near Houngiu, having an arbour before my eyes and lanterns over my head, I may alternately drink and sing, then will my whole life be filled with delicious thoughts." To drink numerous small cups of wine, and to compose verses in a prescribed metre and upon a given subject, are accomplishments in which no Chinese gentleman and scholar is expected to fail. The topics selected are usually simple enough in appearance, such as "The vernal willows," "The red-blossomed pear-tree," "The departure of the crane," "The return of the swallow," but the verses themselves are full of subtle metaphors and obscure allusions to classical writings, the whole couched in high-flown and somewhat incoherent language. The rapidity with which these concealed meanings are caught up by the hearers, and the certainty with which an impostor is detected by a single error in writing or pronunciation, indicate a

high standard of scholarship in polished Chinese society. The general style of the narrative is simple enough, but many poetical and figurative expressions are interspersed. Thus to die is to "see the land of the nine fountains;" to marry is to "tie the knot of silk," or "to unite one's voice to the concert of the phœnix;" a handsome person "seems to have been formed of the air of the mountains and the rivers." Even the different apartments of a dwelling bear imposing titles, and we have "the gallery of flowers," "the hall of meditations," and "the pavilion of rural dreams." Occasional proverbs occur similar to those in use among ourselves, such as to show "the horse's hoof," equivalent to "the cloven foot." Other sayings are more peculiarly Chinese: "to make a verse of five syllables, you must pluck out more than one bristle of your beard;" "it cannot be said which is the hand that has killed the stag," denoting that equal praise is merited.

The overweening pride and self-confidence which university stories attribute to the typical senior wrangler, can scarcely be called misplaced in the heart of a young Chinaman who has obtained the highest place at the grand triennial examination. A man so distinguished is almost certain of high preferment, although the story now before us shows that degrees are sometimes tampered with, and that jobbery is not altogether unknown even in connection with competitive examinations. The Imperial Academy, to whose members the highest appointments are given, is open to the humblest student; by industry and ability he may attain to "the Hall of Jasper, the Golden Horse, those true isles of the blessed." Nor does official promotion alone await the successful student in China; although good looks and distinguished bearing are by no means despised, talent and literary distinction are the first qualifications sought for by rich and powerful dignitaries in a son-in-law, and an Imperial Academician may aspire to marry the noblest lady in the land.

Among the many curious and interesting sights of a great city in China, none are more characteristically Chinese than the halls of examination for degrees. The examination for the first or B.A. degree is held annually in all the principal towns of China, and the place of trial is merely a large enclosure with numerous rows of tables and stone benches. The second degree, corresponding to M.A., is a far more serious affair, and can only be obtained at one of the provincial capitals, where triennial examinations take place and where persons of all ages compete, the candidates frequently being over seventy years of age. Success in these literary competitions confers honour not only on the learned individual and his immediate relatives, but also on his remote ancestors, which is a great additional spur to the ambition of a Chinaman.

In Canton ten thousand candidates can be examined at the same

time, the attendance of three thousand official persons in various capacities being involved; and the wholesale character of the business renders fraud or corruption on the part of individuals almost impossible. As a matter of fact, these examinations command the complete confidence and esteem of the public, and even if jobbery and favouritism occur subsequently as to appointments, the degrees themselves are fairly conferred according to an accepted standard of merit. It is greatly to be regretted that Chinese conservatism limits the range of study to such obsolete and useless literary subjects as to render the whole affair almost a *reductio ad absurdum* of the competitive system.

The mechanical arrangements for conducting the M.A. examination are most elaborate. Within a great enclosure, surrounded by a high wall, are long rows of covered stalls on either side of a wide central road; each stall is intended for the accommodation of one candidate, and each man is thus completely isolated from his neighbours. In front of each row of stalls watchmen constantly patrol, the only exit from the row is closed, and no candidate can leave the place during the three days of examination. The furniture of a stall consists of two or three boards—the candidate's bed at night, his table and chair by day. He must pay for his own writing materials, but he is provided with food at the public expense, and medical men are in attendance lest he should be taken ill. When I visited the place of examination in Canton, the broad central alley was utilised as a practice-ground for archery by the imperial troops, whose spirit in devoting themselves to that elegant but obsolete military exercise is similar to that which animates the student of ancient Chinese lore: the "wisdom of his ancestors" is quite sufficient for a Chinaman.

For the third and highest degree, usually designated as that of Doctor, the candidate must go to the imperial capital, and if he distinguishes himself there, his future may be looked upon as assured.

The competitive examination system, conducted as it is in China, involves periodical visits to the provincial capitals on the part of thousands of intelligent and educated persons, and brings to Peking the *élite* out of all these thousands for the last and most important competition; it has thus done much to consolidate the empire, and to unite all the provinces with the remote northern capital.

The characters in *Iu-Kiao-Li*, when they wish to make any payment are obliged to weigh out silver by the ounce or fraction of the ounce. It is almost incredible that in this respect the Chinese are now no better off than they were in the reign of "Universal Honesty," and that they are still without a currency of any sort except bullion distributed by weight.

The two great empires of Eastern Asia are naturally associated

together in Western minds, to whom the names of China and Japan suggest ideas almost identical of porcelain and lacquer-work, tea-gardens and pagodas, pigtails and oblique eyes, few being able to realise the essential differences existing between the Continentals and the Islanders as to their national characters, traditions, and modes of thought. This matter of the currency affords a good practical illustration of the intense conservatism of one race and the versatile adaptability of the other. The Japanese have not been in times past a mercantile people, and even now their foreign trade is not great; but no sooner were they made acquainted with the working of a State currency, than they at once appreciated its advantages, and already coins and bank-notes of admirable workmanship, the products of a national mint, are in circulation throughout the empire of Japan.

On the other hand the mercantile spirit of the Chinese has made them the bankers and money-lenders of Eastern Asia. In this capacity they are already invading Japan, and are expelling their European and American competitors from treaty ports, and even from British colonies. But these money-making people possess no money of their own, and their extensive monetary transactions are managed without the aid of any currency, except "cash" of copper, brass, or iron, so small in value that two or three dollars' worth is a load for a coolie, who carries the "cash" upon his shoulders in huge coils, threaded upon strings passed through a hole in the centre of each coin. Mexican dollars are, indeed, used in China for the purposes of foreign trade, but merely as bullion; the eagle and the prickly pear upon a "clean Mexican" are accepted as stamping the *quality* of the silver, but the *quantity* must be ascertained by weighing the dollars as carefully as the rude shoe-shaped lumps of "sycee" silver, which is the sole standard of value in the Chinese empire.

Postal arrangements in China at the period of our romance appear to have been defective, and considerable confusion arises from letters, generally sent by a special messenger, not being forwarded or duly delivered. Similarity, or rather identity, of family names is also a cause of mistakes, which must frequently occur in real life, as there are only four hundred family names for the vast population of China. Individuals, however, have at least two names, or three if they are men of any distinction. Thus the family name of our hero's uncle is Sse, his surname is Youan, and his name of rank Fanghoei, so that his full designation is Sse Youan Fanghoei; and we have in the same way Pe Hiouan Thaihiouan, Gou Kouei Chouian, &c. Roads, bridges, and canals in China have been sadly neglected of late, and the means of communication throughout the empire are now much inferior to what they have once been, if we may judge by the ease and rapidity with which the various characters in *Iu-Kiao-Li* pass from province to province, for we are told that a large household, travelling by easy stages, goes from Peking to Nanking in less than a month.

Important roads have been allowed to become almost impassable, and great canals are in many places nearly dry; but enough remains to tell of a more prosperous past, when the various provinces of the empire were linked together by a network of good roads and navigable canals.

At the present moment China seems almost to have attained the nadir of her fortunes: her fairest provinces have been for years ravaged by civil war on a vast scale; the insurgents, Mussulman and Taiping, have vied with the Imperialists in the work of destruction, and everywhere ruinous cities and desolate fields attest the thoroughness with which that work has been accomplished. In those provinces where the havoc of war was comparatively unfelt, drought and locusts have combined to produce a famine of almost unprecedented severity and extent. Large tracts of valuable territory have been ceded to Russia, and it cannot be disputed that of late years China has retrograded in wealth and power, in population and general prosperity.

This stagnation and decay are not likely to be permanent. A frugal and industrious race of inhabitants, a productive soil, and vast mineral resources confer upon China natural advantages that cannot be permanently neutralised by any amount of misgovernment and political corruption; but in the meanwhile every official hindrance is thrown in the way of progress, which is also grievously impeded by popular prejudice and superstition. The Chinaman worships the memory of his ancestors, and the fertile land, which should provide sustenance for his children, is suffered to lie waste, because the bones of former generations have been buried therein. The electric telegraph is supposed to interfere mischievously with certain occult, quasi-spiritual influences pervading the earth and the atmosphere, and cannot therefore be tolerated in the Flowery Land. The only railroad on Chinese soil has been purchased and destroyed by the government for reasons best known to themselves. The introduction of a stamped coinage, each piece of which, if genuine and unmutilated, shall have a recognised intrinsic value, will one day doubtless give a mighty stimulus to all trading operations in China, but at present a currency of coin or paper is regarded as a barbarous foreign invention, and the lumps of silver, used for so many centuries by their ancestors, are still good enough for the modern Chinese.

Nevertheless the latent power and wealth of China are enormous, and unsurpassed by those of any other country in the world except the United States. If she has indeed reached the nadir of her prosperity, she may be expected again to rise towards the zenith, and to attain once more as lofty a position as she occupied when the *Two Fair Cousins* flourished during the reign of "Supreme Splendour."

DAVID WEDDERBURN.

THE BEGINNING OF NERVES IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM.

NERVE-TISSUE universally consists of two elementary structures, viz. very minute nerve-cells and very minute nerve-fibres. The fibres proceed to and from the cells, so in some cases serving to unite the cells with one another, and in other cases with distant parts of the animal body. Nerve-cells are usually found collected together in aggregates, which are called nerve-centres or ganglia, to and from which large bundles of nerve-fibres come and go.

To explain the *function* of nerve-tissue, it is necessary to begin by explaining what physiologists mean by the term "excitability." Suppose that a muscle has been cut from the body of a freshly killed animal; so long as it is not interfered with in any way, so long will it remain quite passive. But every time a stimulus is supplied to it, either by means of a pinch, a burn, an electrical shock, or a chemical irritant, the muscle will give a single contraction in response to every stimulation. And it is this readiness of organic tissues to respond to a suitable stimulus that physiologists designate by the term "excitability."

Nerves, no less than muscles, present the property of being excitable. If, together with the excised muscle, there had been removed from the animal's body an attached nerve, every time any part of this nerve is stimulated the attached muscle will contract as before. But it must be carefully observed that there is this great difference between these two cases of response on the part of the muscle—that while in the former case the muscle responded to a stimulus *applied directly to its own substance*, in the latter case the muscle responded to a stimulus applied *at a distance from its own substance*, which stimulus was then *conducted* to the muscle by the nerve. And in this we perceive the characteristic function of nerve-*fibres*, viz. that of conducting stimuli to a distance. The function of nerve-*cells* is different, viz. that of accumulating nervous energy, and, at fitting times, of discharging this energy into the attached nerve-fibres. The nervous energy, when thus discharged, acts as a stimulus to the nerve-fibre; so that if a muscle is attached to the end of a fibre, it contracts on receiving this stimulus. I may add that when nerve-cells are collected into ganglia, they often appear to discharge their energy spontaneously; so that in all but the very lowest animals, whenever we see apparently *spontaneous* action, we infer that ganglia are probably present. Lastly, another important

distinction must be borne in mind—the distinction, namely, which I now draw between muscle and nerve. A stimulus applied to a nerveless muscle can only course through the muscle by giving rise to a visible wave of contraction, which spreads in all directions from the seat of disturbance as from a centre. A nerve, on the other hand, conducts the stimulus without undergoing any change of shape. Now, in order not to forget this distinction, I shall always speak of muscle-fibres as conveying a *visible* wave of *contraction*, and of nerve-fibres as conveying an *invisible*, or *molecular*, wave of *stimulation*. Nerve-fibres, then, are functionally distinguished from muscle-fibres—and also from protoplasm—by displaying the property of conducting invisible, or molecular, waves of stimulation from one part of an organism to another, so establishing physiological continuity between such parts, *without the necessary passage of contractile waves*.

Such being the structure and the function of nerve-tissue in its fully evolved form, I will now proceed to give the results of my researches on the structure and function of nerve-tissue where this tissue is first found to occur in the ascending series of animal life. The animals in which it so occurs are the Medusæ or jelly-fishes, which must be familiar to all who frequent the seaside. These animals present the general form of a mushroom. The organ which occupies the same position as the stalk does in the mushroom is the mouth and stomach of the Medusa, and is called the polypite; while the organ which resembles in shape the dome of the mushroom constitutes the main bulk of the animal, and is called the swimming-bell. Both the polypite and the swimming-bell are almost entirely composed of a thick, transparent, and non-contractile jelly; but the whole surface of the polypite, and the whole *concave* surface of the bell, are overlaid by a thin layer, or sheet, of contractile tissue. This tissue constitutes the earliest appearance in the animal kingdom of true muscular fibres. The thickness of this continuous layer of incipient muscle is pretty uniform, and is nowhere greater than that of very thin paper. The margin of the bell supports a series of highly contractile tentacles, and also another series of bodies which are of great importance in the following researches. These are the so-called marginal bodies, which are here represented, but the structure of which I need not describe. Lastly, it may not be super-

Fig. 1.

fluous to add that all the Medusæ are locomotive. The mechanism of their locomotion is very simple, consisting merely of an alternate contraction and relaxation of the entire muscular sheet which lines the cavity of the bell. At each contraction of this muscular sheet the gelatinous walls of the bell are drawn together; the capacity of the bell being thus diminished, water is ejected from the open mouth of the bell backwards, and the consequent reaction propels the animal forwards. In these swimming movements systole and diastole follow one another with as perfect a rhythm as they do in the beating of a heart.

Previous to my researches, the question as to whether or not the Medusæ possess a nervous system was one of the most vexed questions in biology—some eminent naturalists maintaining that they could detect microscopical indications of nervous tissues, and others maintaining that these indications were delusive—the deliquescent nature of the gelatinous tissues rendering microscopical observation in their case a matter of great difficulty. But amid all this controversy no one appears to have thought of testing the question by means of physiological experiments as distinguished from microscopical observations. Accordingly I made the experiment of cutting off now one part and now another part of a jelly-fish, in order to see whether by so doing I could alter the character of its movements in such a way as to show that I had removed nerve-centres or ganglia. The results which I obtained were in the highest degree astonishing. For, on removing the extreme margin of the swimming-bell, I invariably found that the operation caused immediate, total, and permanent paralysis of the entire organ. That is to say, if, with a pair of scissors, I cut off the whole marginal rim of the bell, carrying the cut round just above the insertion of the tentacles, the moment the last atom of the margin was removed, the pulsations of the bell instantly and for ever ceased. On the other hand, the severed margin continued its pulsations with vigour and pertinacity, notwithstanding its severance from the main organism. For hours and even for days after its removal the severed margin would continue its rhythmical contractions; so that the contrast between the death-like quiescence of the mutilated bell, and the active movements of the threadlike portion which had just been removed from its margin, was a contrast as striking as it is possible to conceive.

I may here add that although excision of the margin of the bell thus completely destroys the *spontaneity* of the bell, it does not at all diminish the *excitability* of the bell; so that although the mushroom-shaped mass will never move of its own accord after having been thus mutilated, it will give any number of locomotor contractions in response to an equal number of artificial stimulations, just in the same way as a frog with its head (nerve-centres of spontaneity)

removed will give any number of hops in response to successive stimulations.

These experiments, therefore, prove conclusively that in the extreme marginal rim of all the numerous species of Medusæ which I examined, there is situated an intensely localised system of nervous centres, to the functional activity of which the rhythmical contractions of the swimming-bell are exclusively due. And as the Medusæ are thus the lowest animals in which a nervous system has yet been, or probably ever will be discovered, we have in them the animals upon which we may experiment with the best hope of being able to elucidate all questions concerning the origin and endowments of primitive nervous tissues. I may here add that these experiments were independently made by Dr. Eimer, of Würtzburg.

After I had made the observation which I have described, it seemed to me desirable to follow it up with a number of other physiological, as distinguished from histological, researches. For I was much struck by the certainty and precision of the results which I had obtained by experiment, as distinguished from the uncertainty and disagreement of the results which had previously been obtained by the histological methods. Accordingly I decided, in the first instance, to feel my way in the direction of physiological experiment, before beginning that systematic histological research which, sooner or later, it was manifestly imperative to make. Study of function having so far guided the study of structure as to show that it was in the margin of the Medusæ that we must look for the principal, if not the exclusive, supply of central nervous tissue, it seemed desirable to ascertain how much light a further study of function might throw on the character and the distribution of the peripheral nervous tissue.[1] Accordingly, I began my physiological work chiefly with the view of guiding my subsequent histological work. But as the physiology of the subject continued to open up in the wonderful way in which it did, I felt it was undesirable either, on the one hand, to suspend this part of the inquiry, or, on the other hand, any longer to defer a thorough investigation of the histological part. I therefore represented the case to my friend Mr. Schäfer, who very kindly consented to join me in Scotland, with the view of co-operating with me in the research. The histological results which he has obtained from a most skilful and painstaking investigation are in the highest degree interesting. He worked chiefly with *Aurelia aurita*, and found that the tissue which performs the ganglionic function in the marginal bodies is of the nature of modified epithelium-cells, the ganglionic function of which could scarcely have been suspected but

(1) Although it sounds somewhat paradoxical to speak of the central nervous tissue as distributed on the periphery of a circular animal, and of the peripheral nervous tissue as occupying all the more centrally situated parts, the paradox is unavoidable.

for the paralysing effects which are produced by their excision. From these marginal ganglia there radiate what he regards as delicate pale nerve-fibres, which sometimes present the appearance of fibrillation. These fibres spread over the entire expanse of the muscular sheet in great numbers. It will thus be seen that these microscopical researches of Mr. Schäfer fully bear out my inference from the result of physiological experiments, which was previously published at the Royal Society—the inference, namely, that the entire muscular sheet of the Medusæ is overspread by a dense plexus of nervous channels. But these researches of Mr. Schäfer tend to negative another inference which was published at the Royal Institution—the inference, namely, as to the degree in which these channels are *differentiated*.[1] As the facts on which this inference was based have not been previously published in the Fortnightly Review, and as, apart from the dubious inference, they are facts of the first importance, it is necessary that I should here very briefly re-state them. The annexed woodcut (Fig. 2) represents a specimen of *Aurelia aurita* with its

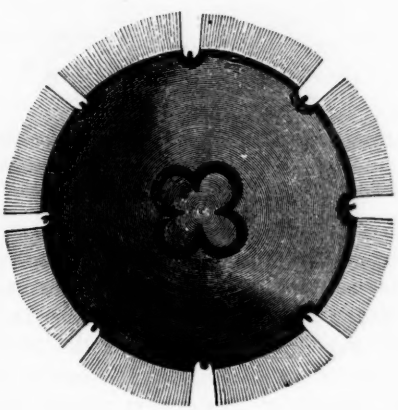

Fig. 2.

polypite cut off at the base, and the under, or concave, surface of the bell exposed to view. The bell, when fully expanded, as here represented, is about the size of a soup-plate, and in it all the ganglia are collected into these eight marginal bodies, as proved by the fact that on cutting out all the eight marginal bodies paralysis of the bell ensues. Therefore, if the reader will imagine

(1) I may here state that previous to Mr. Schäfer's researches I had observed both the tissue-elements which he describes; but I hesitated to pronounce upon their nervous character. It will thus be understood that even now, without wishing to dispute the accuracy of his judgment in this matter, I do wish it to be known that the responsibility of this judgment rests entirely with my friend.

this diagram to be overspread with a disc of muslin, the fibres of which start from one or other of these marginal ganglia, he will gain a tolerably correct idea of the lowest nervous system in the animal kingdom. Now suppose that seven of these eight ganglia are cut out, the remaining one then continues to supply its rhythmical discharges to the muscular sheet of the bell, the result being, at each discharge, two contractile waves, which start at the same instant, one on each side of the ganglion, and which then course with equal rapidity in opposite directions, and so meet at the point of the disc which is opposite to the ganglion. Suppose now a number of radial cuts are made in the disc, according to such a

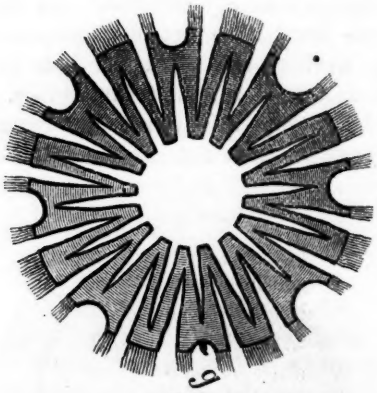

Fig. 3.

plan as this, wherein every radial cut deeply overlaps those on either side of it. The contractile waves which now originate from the ganglion must either become blocked and cease to pass round the disc, or they must zigzag round and round the tops of these overlapping cuts. Now, remembering that the passage of these contractile waves is presumably dependent on the nervous network progressively distributing the ganglionic impulse to the muscular fibres, surely we should expect that two or three overlapping cuts, by completely severing all the nerve-fibres lying between them, ought to destroy the functional continuity of these fibres, and so to block the passage of the contractile wave. Yet this is not the case; for even in a specimen of *Aurelia* so severely cut as the one here represented, the contractile waves, starting from the ganglion, continued to zigzag round and round the entire series of sections.

The same result attends other forms of section. Here, for instance, seven of the marginal ganglia having been removed as before, the eighth one was made the point of origin of a circumferential section, which was then carried round and round the bell in the form of a

continuous spiral—the result, of course, being this long ribbon-shaped strip of tissue with the ganglion at one end, and the remainder of the swimming-bell at the other. Well, as before, the contractile waves

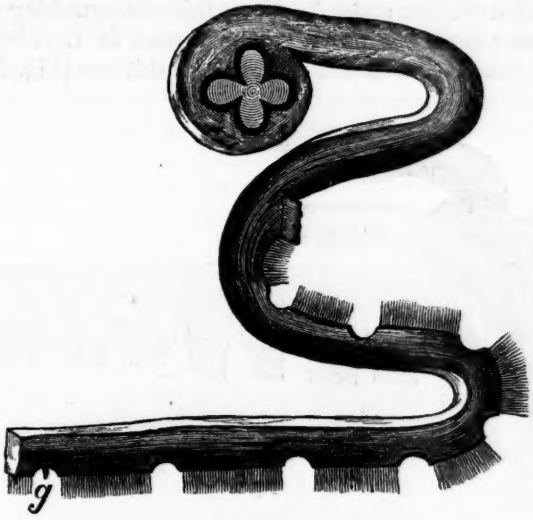

Fig. 4.

always originated at the ganglion; but now they had to course all the way along the strip until they arrived at its other extremity; and, as each wave arrived at that extremity, it delivered its influence into the remainder of the swimming-bell, which thereupon contracted. Now, in this experiment, when the spiral strip is only made about half an inch broad, it may be made more than a yard long before all the bell is used up in making the strip; and as nothing can well be imagined as more destructive of the continuity of a nerve-plexus than this spiral mode of section must be, we cannot but regard it as a very remarkable fact that the nerve-plexus should still continue to discharge its functions. Indeed, so remarkable does this fact appear, that to avoid accepting it we may well feel inclined to resort to another hypothesis—namely, that these contractile waves do not depend for their passage on the nervous network at all, but that they are of the nature of muscle-waves, or of the waves which we see in indifferentiated protoplasm, where all parts of the mass being equally excitable and equally contractile, however severely we cut the mass, so long as we do not actually divide it, contractile waves will pass throughout the whole mass. But this very reasonable hypothesis of the contractile waves in the Medusæ being possibly nothing other than muscle-waves, is negatived by another fact of a most extraordinary nature. At the beginning of this article I stated that

the distinguishing function of nerve consists in its power of conducting stimuli to a distance, irrespective of the passage of a contractile wave; and I may here add that when a stimulus so conducted reaches a ganglion or nerve-centre, it causes the ganglion to discharge by so-called "reflex action." Now, this distinguishing function of nerve can plainly be proved to be present in the Medusæ. For instance, take such a section of *Aurelia* as this one (Fig. 5), wherein

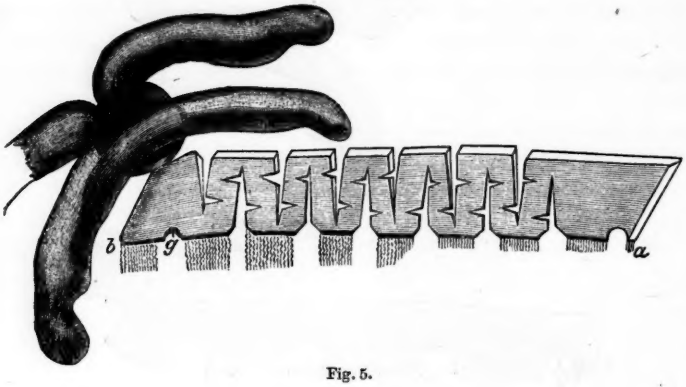

Fig. 5.

the bell has been cut into the form of a continuous parallelogram of tissue with the polypite and a single remaining ganglion at one end. (The cuts interposed in the parallelogram may for the present be neglected.) Now, if the end marked *a* of the nervo-muscular sheet most remote from the ganglion be gently brushed with a camel's-hair brush—*i.e.* too gently to start a responsive contractile wave—the ganglion at the other end will shortly afterwards discharge, as shown by its starting a contractile wave at its own end of the parallelogram *b*, thus proving that the stimulus caused by brushing the tissue at the other end, *a*, must have been conducted all the way along the parallelogram to the terminal ganglion *b*, so causing the terminal ganglion to discharge by reflex action. Indeed, in many cases, the passage of this nervous wave of stimulation admits of being actually *seen*. For the numberless tentacles which fringe the margin of *Aurelia* are more highly excitable than is the general contractile tissue of the bell; so that on brushing the end *a* of the parallelogram remote from the ganglion, the tentacles at this end respond to the stimulus by a contraction, then those next in the series do the same, and so on—a wave of contraction being thus set up in the tentacular fringe, the passage of which is determined by the passage of the nervous wave of stimulation in the superjacent nervous network. This tentacular wave is here represented as having traversed half the whole distance to the terminal ganglion, and when it reaches that ganglion it will

cause it to discharge by reflex action, so giving rise to a visible wave of muscular contraction passing in the direction *b a*, opposite to that which the nervous or tentacular wave had previously pursued. Now this tentacular wave, being an optical expression of the passage of a wave of stimulation, is a sight as beautiful as it is unique; and it affords a first-rate opportunity of settling this all-important question, namely, Will this conductile, or nervous, function prove itself as tolerant towards a section of the tissue as the contractile, or muscular, function has already proved itself to be? For, if so, we shall gain nothing on the side of simplicity by assuming that the contractile waves are merely muscle-waves, so long as the *undoubtedly nervous* waves are equally able to pass round sections interposed in their path. Briefly, then, I find that the nervous waves of stimulation are quite as able to pass round these interposed sections as are the waves of contraction. Thus, for instance, in this specimen (Fig. 5), the tentacular wave of stimulation continued to pass as before, even after I had submitted the parallelogram of tissue to the tremendously severe form of section which is represented in the diagram. And this fact, I am not afraid to say, is one of the most important that has ever been brought to light in the whole range of invertebrate physiology. For what does it prove? It proves that the distinguishing function of nerve, where it first appears upon the scene of life, admits of being performed vicariously to almost any extent by all parts of the same tissue mass. If we revert to our old illustration of the muslin as representing the nerve-plexus, it is clear that, however much we choose to cut the sheet of muslin with such radial or spiral sections as are represented in the diagrams, one could always trace the threads of the muslin with a needle round and round the disc, without once interrupting the continuity of the tracing; for on coming to the end of a divided thread, one could always double back on it and choose another thread which might be running in the required direction. And this is what we are now compelled to believe takes place in the fibres of this nervous network, if we assume that these visible fibres are the only conductile elements which are present. Whenever a stimulus wave reaches a cut, we must conclude that it doubles back and passes into the neighbouring fibres, and so on, time after time, till it succeeds in passing round and round any number of overlapping cuts.

Now it was in view of this almost unlimited power of vicarious action on the part of the fibres composing the (then) hypothetical nervous plexus, that I was in the first instance inclined to suppose these nerve-fibres to be of a non-fully differentiated character; and although the above detailed experiments, and others of a similar kind, proved that an intimate network of such channels was present, I scarcely expected that they would admit of being distinguished by

the microscope. But, not to give an inference the value of a fact, I was careful to state in the publication where this inference was adduced—viz. in the printed abstract of a Royal Institution lecture—that this position was only "provisional," and that until I should have had "time to conduct a systematic inquiry concerning the histology of the Medusæ," the inference in question "must be regarded as premature and uncertain."[1] Such a systematic inquiry has now shown that this provisional inference was perhaps erroneous, and that, in any case, when stained with gold, some of the nervous channels show themselves in the form of fully differentiated nerves. Now this fact, it is needless to say, greatly enhances the interest of the previous experiments. If, as I formerly said, the proof of vicarious action being possible to an almost unlimited extent in these incipient nerve-fibres appeared to me one of the most interesting among the additions to our knowledge of invertebrate physiology, much more interesting does this proof become if we further learn that these incipient nerve-fibres are only incipient in the sense of constituting the earliest appearance of nerve-fibres in the animal kingdom. For if these *true* nerve-fibres admit, from the peculiarly favourable plan of their anatomical distribution, of being proved to be not improbably capable of vicarious action to so extraordinary a degree, we may become the more prepared to believe that nerve-fibres elsewhere are similarly capable of vicarious action. But the interest does not end here, for Mr. Schäfer's numerous preparations all show the highly remarkable fact that the nerve-fibres which so thickly overspread the muscular sheet of *Aurelia* do not constitute a true plexus, but that each fibre is comparatively short, and nowhere joins with any of the other fibres. That is to say, although the constituent fibres of the network cross and recross one another in all directions—sometimes, indeed, twisting round one another like the strands of a rope—they can never be actually seen to join, but remain anatomically isolated throughout their length. So that the simile by which I have represented this nervous network—the simile, namely, of a sheet of muslin overspreading the whole of the muscular sheet—is as a simile even more accurate than has hitherto appeared; for just as in a piece of muslin the constituent threads, although frequently meeting one another, never actually coalesce, so in the nervous network of *Aurelia*, the constituent fibres, although frequently in contact, never actually unite.

Now, if it is a remarkable fact that in a fully differentiated nervous network the constituent fibres are not improbably capable of vicarious

(1) I guarded the inference in this way, lest the fibres in question should afterwards prove to be nerves; and it will therefore be observed that, supposing them to be nerves, the above inference cannot be negatived until it is shown that there are no other nervous channels present of a less differentiated character.

action to almost any extent, much more remarkable does this fact become when we find that no two of these constituent nerve-fibres are histologically continuous with one another. Indeed, it seems to me that we have here a fact as startling as it is novel. There can scarcely be any doubt that *some* influence is communicated from a stimulated fibre *a* to the adjacent fibre *b* at the point where these fibres come into close apposition. But what the nature of the process may be whereby a disturbance in the excitable protoplasm of *a* sets up a sympathetic disturbance in the anatomically separate protoplasm of *b*, supposing it to be really such—this is a question concerning which it would as yet be premature to speculate.[1] But if, for the sake of a name, we call this process, whatever it may be, a process of *physiological induction*, we may apply a similar name to a process which seems closely analogous to, if it is not really identical with, the process we are now considering. I refer to some highly remarkable observations which were published a year or two ago in Mr. Darwin's work on Insectivorous Plants. It is there stated that while looking at a linear series of excitable cells with the microscope, Mr. Darwin could observe the passage of a stimulus along the series, the protoplasm in the cells immediately stimulated first undergoing aggregation, then the protoplasm in those next adjacent doing the same, and so on. Now the protoplasm in each cell was separated from the protoplasm in the adjacent cell by the walls of both the cells; yet, notwithstanding there was no observable anatomical continuity between these masses of protoplasm, a disturbance set up in any one of the series of masses immediately set up, by some process of physiological induction, a sympathetic disturbance in the immediately adjacent masses.

This then is one case that seems to be comparable with the case of physiological induction in the nerve-fibres of *Aurelia*, and I think it may be well for physiologists to keep awake to the fact that a process of this kind probably takes place in the case of these nerve-fibres. For it thus becomes a possibility which ought not to be overlooked, that in the fibres of the spinal cord, and in ganglia generally, where histologists have hitherto been unable to trace any anatomical or structural continuity between cells and fibres, which must nevertheless be supposed to possess physiological or functional continuity—it thus becomes a possibility that in these cases no such anatomical continuity exists, but that the physiological continuity is maintained by some such process of physiological induction as probably takes place among the nerve-fibres of *Aurelia*.

(1) That it can scarcely be an *electrically inductive* effect would seem to be shown by the fact that such effects can only be produced on nerves by strong currents; and also by the fact that the saline tissues of the swimming-bell must short-circuit any feeble electrical currents as soon as they are generated.

Before quitting the histological part of the subject, it is desirable to state that at about the same time as Mr. Schäfer's work was communicated to the Royal Society, two other papers were published in Germany on the same subject. One of these papers was by Messrs. Hertwig, and the other by Dr. Eimer. Both memoirs display a large amount of patient research, and describe the character and distribution of the nervous tissues in various species of Medusæ. These authors, however, do not describe the nervous network which has been described by Mr. Schäfer. I may add the interesting fact that the nervous tissues in Medusæ appear to be exclusively restricted to the body-layer which is called the ectoderm, and which is the structural homologue of that body-layer in which the nervous tissues of all the higher animals are known to have their origin during the life history of the embryo.

Proceeding now to state some further results of various physiological experiments, I shall begin with the department Stimulation. And first to take the case of a physiological principle which I observed in the jelly-fish, and which has also been found to run through all excitable tissues. If a single stimulation is supplied to a paralyzed jelly-fish, a short period, called the period of latency, will elapse, and then the jelly-fish will give a single weak contraction. If, as soon as the tissue has relaxed, the stimulation is again repeated, the period of latency will be somewhat shorter, and will be followed by a somewhat stronger contraction. Similarly, if the stimulation is repeated a third time, the period of latency will be still shorter, and the ensuing contraction still stronger. And so on up to nine or ten times, when the period of latency will be reduced to its *minimum*, while the force of the contraction will be raised to its *maximum*. So that in the jelly-fish the effect of a series of excitations supplied at short intervals from one another, is that of both arousing the tissue into a state of increased *activity*, and also of producing in it a state of greater *expectancy*. Now, effects very similar to these have been found to occur in the case of the excitable plants by Dr. Burdon-Sanderson; in the case of the frog's heart by Dr. Bowditch; and in the case of reflex action of the spinal cord by Dr. Sterling. Indeed, the only difference in this respect between these four tissues, so widely separated from one another in the biological scale, consists in the *time* which may be allowed to elapse between the occurrence of the successive stimuli, in order to produce this so-called summating effect of one stimulus upon its successor: the *memory*, so to speak, of the heart-tissue, for the occurrence of a former stimulus being longer than the memory of the jelly-fish tissue; while the memory of the latter is longer than that of the plant-tissue. And I may here add that even in our own organization we may often observe

the action of this principle of the summation of stimuli. For instance, we can tolerate for a time the irritation caused by a crumb in our throats; but very rapidly the sense of irritation accumulates to a point at which it becomes impossible to avoid coughing. And similarly with tickling generally, the convulsive reflex movements to which it gives rise become more and more incontrollable the longer the stimulation is continued, until they reach a maximum point, where, in persons susceptible of this kind of stimulation, the muscular action passes completely beyond the power of the will. Lastly, I may further observe, what I do not think has ever been observed before, that even in the domain of psychology the action of this principle admits of being clearly traced. Who, for instance, has not felt it in the case of the ludicrous? We can endure for a short time, without giving any visible response, the psychological stimulation which is supplied by a comical spectacle; but if the latter continues sufficiently long in a sufficiently ludicrous manner, our appropriate emotion very rapidly runs up to a point at which it becomes incontrollable, and we burst into an explosion of ill-timed laughter. But in this case of psychological tickling, as in the previous case of physiological tickling, some persons are much more susceptible than others. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that from the excitable tissues of a plant, through those of a jelly-fish and a frog, up even to the most complex of our psychological processes, we have in this recently discovered principle of the summation of stimuli a very remarkable uniformity of occurrence.

Hitherto Light has never been actually proved to act as a direct stimulus to ganglionic matter. It is therefore of interest to note that it thus acts in the case of some species of Medusæ. *Sarsiæ*, for instance, almost invariably respond to a single flash by giving one or more contractions. If the animal is vigorous, the effect of a momentary flash thrown upon it during one of the natural pauses is immediately to originate a bout of swimming; but if the animal is non-vigorous, it usually gives only one contraction in response to every flash. That it is light *per se*, and not the sudden transition from darkness to light, which here acts as the stimulus, is proved by the result of the converse experiment—viz. placing a vigorous specimen in sunlight, waiting till the middle of one of the natural pauses, and then suddenly darkening. In no case did I thus obtain any response. Indeed, the effect of this converse experiment is rather that of inhibiting contractions; for if the sunlight be suddenly shut off during the occurrence of a swimming bout, it frequently happens that the quiescent stage immediately sets in. Again, in a general way, it is observable that *Sarsiæ* are more active in the light than they are in the dark: it appears as though light acts towards these animals as a constant stimulus. Neverthe-

less, when the flashing method of experimentation is employed, it is observable that the stimulating effect of the flashes progressively declines with their repetition. The time during which the deleterious effect of one such stimulus on its successor lasts appears to be about a quarter of a minute. The period of latent stimulation is, judging by the eye, as short in the case of luminous as in that of other stimulation; but when the efficacy of luminous stimulation is being diminished by frequent repetition, the period of latency is very much prolonged.

The question as to what part of the organism it is which is thus susceptible of luminous stimulation, was easily determined by detaching various parts of the organism and experimenting with them separately. I thus found that it is the marginal bodies alone which are thus affected by light; for when these are removed, the swimming-bell, though still able (in the case of *Sarsia*) [1] to contract spontaneously, no longer responds to luminous stimulation; whereas, if only one marginal body be left *in situ*, or if the severed margin, or even a single excised marginal body, be experimented on, unfailing response to this mode of stimulation may be obtained.

Responses to luminous stimulation occur in all cases equally well, whether the light employed be direct sunlight, diffused daylight, polarised light, or any of the luminous rays of the spectrum employed separately. On the other hand, neither the non-luminous rays beyond the red, nor those beyond the violet, appear to exert the smallest degree of stimulating effect. Hence, in all respects, the rudimentary eye of *Sarsia* appears to be affected by the same qualities of light as are our own.

Not so, however, in the case of another species of Medusa, which I have called *Tiaropsis polydiademata*. This jelly-fish responds to luminous stimulation in the same peculiar manner as it responds to all other artificial—as distinguished from natural ganglionic—stimulation; that is to say, instead of giving a locomotor contraction of the bell, it throws the bell into a violent contraction of a long-sustained character, resembling cramp or tonic spasm. Now, in the case of this Medusa, the luminous stimulation requires to act for a comparatively long time in order to produce a response. For while in *Sarsia* the period of latent stimulation appears to be as short in the case of luminous as it is in the case of other modes of stimulation, in the case of *Tiaropsis* this is not so, although, as regards all modes of stimulation other than luminous, the latent period is as brief in the case of *Tiaropsis* as it is in the case of *Sarsia*. In other words, while

(1) In all the *naked*-eyed division of Medusæ, to which *Sarsia* belongs, total paralysis of the bell can only be obtained by removing the *entire margin;* but in all the covered-eyed division, to which *Aurelia* belongs, paralysis of the bell ensues on removing the *marginal bodies alone.*

this period is quite as instantaneous in the case of *Tiaropsis* as it is in the case of *Sarsia* when the stimulus employed is other than luminous, in response to light the characteristic spasm does not take place till slightly more than a second has elapsed after the first occurrence of the stimulus. Now, as my experiments on *Sarsia* proved that the only respect in which luminous stimulation differs from other modes of stimulation consists in its being exclusively a stimulation of ganglionic matter, we have evidence, in the case of *Tiaropsis*, of an enormous difference between the rapidity of response to stimuli by the contractile and by the ganglionic tissues respectively. The next question, therefore, is as to whether the enormous length of time occupied by the process of stimulation in the ganglia is due to any necessity on the part of the latter to accumulate the stimulating influence of light prior to originating a discharge, or to an immensely lengthened period of latent stimulation manifested by the ganglia under the influence of light.[1] To answer this question, I first allowed a continuous flood of light to fall on the Medusid, and then noted the time at which the responsive spasm first began. This time, as already stated, was slightly more than one second. I next threw in single flashes of light of measured duration, and found that, unless the flash was of slightly more than one second's duration, no response was given. That is to say, the minimal duration of a flash required to produce a responsive spasm was just the same as the time during which a continuous flood of light required to operate in order to produce a similar spasm. From this, therefore, I conclude that the enormously long period of latent excitation in the case of luminous stimuli is not, properly speaking, a period of latent excitation at all; but that it represents the time during which a certain summation of stimulating influence is taking place in the ganglia, which requires somewhat more than a second to accumulate, and which then causes the ganglia to originate an abnormally powerful discharge. So that in the action of light upon the ganglionic matter of this Medusid we have some analogy to its action on certain chemical compounds in this respect—that just as in the case of those compounds which light is able to split up, a more or less lengthened exposure to its influence is necessary in order to admit of the summating influence of its vibrations on the molecules; so in the case of this ganglionic material, the decomposition which is effected

(1) The period of latent stimulation merely means the time after the occurrence of an excitation during which a series of physiological processes are taking place which terminate in a contraction; so that whether the excitation is of a strong or of a weak intensity, the period of latent stimulation is not much affected. The above question, therefore, was simply this, Does the prolonged delay on the part of these ganglia, in responding to light, represent the time during which the series of physiological processes are taking place in response to an adequate stimulus, or does it represent the time during which light requires to act before it becomes an adequate stimulus?

in it by light, and which terminates in an explosion of nervous energy, can only be effected by a prolonged exposure of the unstable material to the summating influence of the luminous vibrations. Probably, therefore, we have here the most rudimentary type of a visual organ that is possible; for it is evident that if the ganglionic matter were a very little more stable than it is, it would either altogether fail to be thrown down by the luminous vibrations, or would occupy so long a time in the process that the visual sense would be of no use to its possessor. How great is the contrast between the excitability of such a sense-organ and that of a fully evolved eye, which is able to effect the needful molecular changes in response to a flash as instantaneous as that of lightning!

Before leaving the case of luminous stimulation, I may observe that some of the Medusæ appear to be very fond of light. For, on placing a number of *Sarsiæ* in a large bell-jar in a dark room, and then throwing a beam of light through a part of the water in the bell-jar, the Medusæ all crowded into the path of the beam, and dashed themselves against the glass nearest to the light, very much as moths might do under the influence of similar stimulation. On moving the lamp round the jar, a cluster of Medusæ always followed it. This latter experiment is important, because it proves that the marginal ganglia are so far co-ordinated in their action that they can steer the animal in any particular direction.

Staurophora laciniata is a large species of naked-eyed Medusa, which responds to stimulation in two very different ways, according as the stimulation is applied to the nervo-muscular sheet, or to the marginal ganglia. For if the stimulation is applied to the nervo-muscular sheet, the response is an ordinary locomotor contraction; whereas, if the stimulation is applied to the marginal ganglia, the response is a tonic spasm of the same kind as that already alluded to in the case of *Tiaropsis polydiademata*. Now it is a remarkable fact that into whatever form the bell of this Medusa is cut—say, for instance, into the form of a long ribbon—whenever a locomotor contraction is started by stimulating any part of the general nervo-muscular sheet, it will pass all through that sheet, from end to end of the ribbon, in the form of an ordinary or gentle contractile wave. On the other hand, whenever a *spasmodic* contraction is started in the nervo-muscular sheet by stimulating any of the marginal ganglia, it will pass all through that sheet, from end to end of the ribbon, in the form of a spasmodic or violent contractile wave. Hence the muscular fibres of this Medusa are capable of liberating this energy in either of two very different ways; and whenever some of them liberate their energy in one of these two ways, they determine that all the other fibres in the nervo-muscular sheet shall do the same. So that we may adopt a far-fetched but convenient simile, and liken the muscular fibres in

this Medusa to the fibres in a mass of gun-cotton. For in a mass of gun-cotton the fibres are likewise able to liberate their energy in either of two very different ways—viz. either by burning in quiet flame when they are simply ignited, or by exploding in a violent manner when they are detonated, as by a percussion cap. And both in the case of the muscle-fibres of *Staurophora* and the cotton-fibres of gun-cotton, whenever any one of the whole number is made by appropriate stimulation (*i.e.* muscular stimulation or ignition) to liberate its energy in a quiet manner, then all the other fibres in the mass do the same; whereas if any one of the whole number is made by another appropriate stimulation (*i.e.* ganglionic stimulation or detonation) to liberate its energy in a violent manner, then all the other fibres in the mass do the same. Now why the ganglia of this Medusa should thus act as detonators to the muscular fibres, and why, if they do, the muscular fibres should be capable of two such different kinds of response—these are questions quite novel in physiology, and as such I will not endeavour to answer them.

Poisons.—As my space is now very nearly exhausted, I will conclude this article by very briefly stating the general results of a large number of observations concerning the action of various nerve-poisons on the Medusæ. It is easy to see that this is an important branch of the inquiry on which I am engaged; for in the nerve-poisons we have, as it were, so many tests whereby to ascertain whether nerve-tissue, where it first appears upon the scene of life, is of the same essential character, as to its various functions, as is the nerve-tissue of higher animals.

Chloroform, ether, morphia, &c., all exert their anæsthesiating influence on the Medusæ quite as decidedly as they do on the higher animals. Soon after a few drops of the anæsthetic have been added to the water in which the Medusæ are contained, the swimming motions of the latter become progressively slower and feebler, until in a minute or two they cease altogether, the animals remaining at the bottom of the water, apparently quite dead. No form or degree of stimulation will now elicit the slightest response; and this fact, it must be remembered, is quite as remarkable in the case of the Medusæ as in that of any other animal. Recovery in normal sea-water is exceedingly rapid, especially in the case of chloroform and ether.

The effects of strychnia may be best observed on a species called *Cyanæa capillata*, from the fact that, in water kept at a constant temperature, the ordinary swimming motions of this animal are as regular and sustained as the beating of a heart. But soon after the water has been poisoned with strychnia, unmistakable signs of irregularity in the swimming motions begin to show themselves. Gradually these signs of irregularity become more and more pronounced, until at last

they develop into well-marked convulsions. The convulsions show themselves in the form of extreme deviations from the natural rhythm of this animal's motion. Instead of the heart-like regularity with which systole and diastole follow one another in the unpoisoned animal, we may now observe prolonged periods of violent contraction, amounting in fact to tonic spasm; and even when this spasm is momentarily relieved, the relaxation has no time to assert itself properly before another spasm supervenes. Moreover, these convulsions are very plainly of a *paroxysmal* nature; for after they have lasted from five to ten minutes, a short period of absolute repose comes on, during which the jelly-fish expands to its full dimensions, falls to the bottom of the water in which it is contained, and looks in every way like a dead animal. Very soon, however, another paroxysm sets in, and so on—prolonged periods of convulsion alternating with shorter periods of repose for several hours, until finally death puts an end to all these symptoms so characteristic of strychnine poisoning in the higher animals.

Similarly, without going into tedious details, I may say in general terms that I have tried caffein, nitrite of anyl, nicotin, veratrium, digitalin, atropin, curare, cyanide of potassium, alcohol, as well as other poisons; and almost without any exception I find them to produce the same effects on the Medusæ as they severally produce on the higher animals. The case of alcohol is particularly interesting, not only because an intoxicated jelly-fish is a ludicrous object to observe, but also because the experiments with alcohol show how precisely the specific gravity of the Medusæ is adjusted to that of the sea-water. For if, after a jelly-fish has become tolerably well drunk by immersion in a mixture of alcohol and water, it is transferred to normal sea-water, the exceedingly small amount of alcohol which it has imbibed is sufficient to make the animal remain permanently floating at the surface of the water, until it again gets rid of the alcohol by osmosis.

As my space is now at an end, I must postpone for the present my account of a number of other experiments which, in point of interest though not in point of systematic arrangement, have a better claim to statement than some of those which I have now detailed. It is impossible, however, in one article to treat of all the new facts which have been yielded by this research; so that by making the present article dovetail with the one which was previously published in *Nature*, and also with future articles on the same subject, I shall hope eventually to lay all the results before the general public.

GEORGE J. ROMANES.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

I HAVE heard that aggrieved authors, when they remonstrate with their critics, are wont to lay great stress on the curiously dissonant utterances of the latter. "I am desirous," a person of a modest and docile temper will say, "to improve myself by attending to the dictates of my reviewers; but how am I to do so when I find A blaming me for exactly the same thing which B commends?" It is even on record that one author, possessed of a somewhat Gallic malignity, prefixed to his second work an anthology of contradictory judgments on his first, as a testimony against the injustice of critics convinced out of their own mouth. I am not concerned here to discuss the causes of this phenomenon. But there are probably few authors who might assemble in this way more hopelessly irreconcilable judgments than the author of *Les Trois Mousquetaires*. Thackeray, for instance, who may be admitted to have spoken with some authority, is never weary of praising him. The *Roundabout Papers* are full of complimentary expressions to Dumas, and *On a Peal of Bells* contains a formal panegyric and apology devoted to the creator of Chicot and Dantès, D'Artagnan and Coconnas. I think, too, that it will be found that most men of letters of eminence who mention Dumas at all, mention him with a kind of affection and gratitude not dissimilar to Thackeray's. On the other hand, the general judgment is less complimentary. Most of us can remember that in our younger days he was joined with Eugène Sue—very much as if a man should join Scott and the author of the *Mysteries of London*—in a mysterious bond of moral condemnation. Afterwards it became fashionable to affect literary contempt for the author who, next to Victor Hugo, did most to stimulate, if not to exemplify, the great literary revival in France. It is almost a commonplace to speak of him as a scene painter; nor can we greatly wonder at this, when we remember that no less considerable a man than Peacock compared the author of *Waverley* to a pantomime writer, and even affected to consider the pantomime writer the more remarkable genius of the two. I turn from Peacock to a popular, and deservedly popular, book of reference, and I find under the title of Dumas that "his crisp hair and thick lips bear testimony to his African origin, a testimony confirmed by the savage voluptuousness and barbaric taste of his innumerable compositions." Before I have done questioning the relevance and civilised taste of this ethnological remark, I find that Dumas's works "are for the most part worthless, and for the most part not his," that his appearance in literature is

"a portentous phenomenon," and that "the avidity with which his immoral fictions are devoured is the most severe condemnation of modern and especially French society that could well be pronounced." It must surely be worth while to examine the peculiarities of a writer whom one of the greatest of English men of letters is never tired of praising, and who appears to other persons a phenomenon only to be duly qualified by the terms portentous, immoral, and the like.

In the first place, it may be well to get out of the way the charge of issuing other men's works as his own, which is so constantly made, and which seems to prejudice Dumas so much in some English eyes. There is, of course, no doubt whatever that a large part of the enormous total of his so-called works is not his. The industry—doubtless altogether benevolent and public-spirited—of MM. Karr, Quérard, and the person who calls himself De Mirecourt, have put that matter beyond question. Nor is it worth discussing the exact morality of such a proceeding. If not unknown in England, it is not openly practised here, and is certainly not considered creditable. I think, for my part, that we are quite right in refusing it our approval. But it must be remembered that in France collaboration is much more common than here, and that collaboration glides into devilling by very easy stages. However, I am not at all careful to excuse Dumas in this matter. Much of his later work and some of his earlier is obviously not his to the most unpractised literary taster, and all such work has simply done his reputation harm instead of good. I do not suppose that anybody bases his admiration on *Le Pasteur D'Ashbourn*, which is said to be in some roundabout way plagiarised from the German, or on *Madame de Chamblay*, which has the air of being, and may not impossibly be, an unsuccessful attempt of M. Octave Feuillet or some disciple of his, or on *Les Louves de Machecoul*, where the episode of Ewan of Brigglands is calmly translated verbatim from *Rob Roy*. But the assailants of Dumas have gone further. They declare that even his most famous works, the D'Artagnan series and the like, are the work of devils. They go further still, and give us the names of the devils themselves. But this proceeding has given occasion to an answer which has never been fairly rebutted. Many if not most of these inferior spirits have done work independently, and that work has been absolutely different in character, if not in merit, from the *Trois Mousquetaires* and the *Reine Margot*.

Chief among the earlier aides-de-camp is ranked M. Auguste Maquet, who is even said, if I mistake not, to have written the *Three Musketeers*. No devotee of 1830, as I frankly profess myself to be, can think of speaking disrespectfully of M. Maquet. His delightful pseudonym, Augustus MacKeat, adopted to show his

horror of classicism and his admiration for English literature, must conciliate every Englishman. With Philothée O'Neddy and the *Compagnon Miraculeux* Jules Vabre, whose fame as an author rests on the unpublished *Essai sur l'Incommodité des Commodes*, and whom Théophile Gautier last saw in England intent upon translating Shakespeare on the spot, M. Maquet composes the fine flower and unforgettable trinity of the early romantics. But I am not aware that any one has claimed for M. Maquet's original romances, which are tolerably numerous, any share of the merits of the books which he is said to have devilled, though his theatrical powers are well spoken of. Again, M. Octave Feuillet was one of the "young men." Does any reader of *Bellah* or *Onesta* see, in either of those works, possibilities of the scene under the scaffold in *Vingt Ans Après*, or the transports of Marguerite and the Duchesse de Nevers over the heads of Coconnas and La Mole? M. Fiorentino is another name cited. Do his capital feuilletons suggest many memories to the reader of Dumas? We might go through all these writers with the same result. Either their genius failed them utterly when they began to sign their own names, or it completely changed its character, or else Dumas must have had some mysterious power of animating and inspiring his subordinates, which is to me quite as remarkable and quite as interesting as the power of actual composition.

The excellent historian of French literature, M. Géruzez, has a remark which I have always felt inclined to quote to all separatists, critics of internal evidence, and such-like folk. "La critique érudite," says M. Géruzez, "se propose d'enlever à Chrétien de Troyes le Perceval. Nous verrons bien. S'il doit être dépossédé, nous aurons à louer un autre poète qui sera de son école et son égal." This is very much the case with Dumas. No one who has any literary palate can fail to perceive in the best of the works attributed to him a unity and a peculiarity of savour which cannot be mistaken. This savour has not been shown to be the property of any other man, though perhaps it is not his. If it be not, there is another unnamed novelist who possesses the charm. For the present we shall call this novelist by the only name known, that of Alexandre Dumas, and busy ourselves with his characteristics only. Whether he be identical or not with the person who in the flesh made forty thousand pounds in a single year, who followed Garibaldi about, and whose physical peculiarities so distressed the sensitive encyclopædist I have quoted, is a question that concerns a school of criticism to which I do not pretend to belong.

The principles and characteristics of Dumas's *faire* are not very difficult to discover, though they are by no means so simple and inartistic as it suits the upholders of the scene-painting theory to maintain. In his better work he prefers, though he does not

invariably choose, a tolerably stout canvas of history, memoirs, and the like. Without such writers as De l'Estoile, Tallemant des Réaux, Brantôme, Madame de Motteville, he would, it may freely be acknowledged, be very badly off: perhaps he would not be very well off without the help of more modern commentators and servers-up of such books. Sometimes (it must also be admitted) the canvas shows through, and then the book, as in the case of parts of *Isabel de Bavière*, is a failure. But generally the borrowed material is so skilfully worked up and covered over, that it is legitimately made the borrower's own property. In doing this he uses, of course, the four instruments which every novelist must use—plot, character, description, and dialogue. But there is no comparison between the proportions in which he employs these instruments and the success which attends their employment. For a novelist who is so prodigal of incident, Dumas is remarkably indifferent to a regular or cunningly entangled plot. In many of his works, indeed, there is really no particular reason why they should begin or end at the precise points of their beginning and ending. They are emphatically chronicles, slices from the history of the world or of certain individuals, the dimensions of which are determined merely by the arbitrary will of the carver. This is why they lend themselves so admirably to continuations, and why Dumas is one of the very few writers whose second parts do not disappoint us. It is true that in many of his books there is a central incident of some sort, but its development bears often no proportion to the extraneous matter introduced. What, for instance, is the central interest of *Les Trois Mousquetaires?* The quest for the diamonds? It finishes too soon. The wrath and discomfiture of Milady? It does not begin till too late. What is the central interest of *Vingt Ans Après?* The attempt to rescue Charles I. perhaps, but yet this occupies but a very small part of the book. In *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne* there are two distinct themes—the restoration of Charles II., and the winning of Belleisle for Louis XIV.—and the two might well have made two separate books. *La Dame de Monsoreau* has indeed an unusually regular plot; but its sequel, *Les Quarante-cinq*, though it contains some of the very best scenes of the master, is one of the most promiscuous of books, and the forty-five themselves play a very subordinate part as compared with the ruses and adventures of Chicot, and the requital of the Duke of Anjou. The authorities at the disposal of the author or his own fertile imagination usually supply him with an inexhaustible store of moving incidents, and these he connects together as well as may be by the expedient of making the same personages figure in all or most of them. Nor is he any more to be called a novelist of description than a novelist of plot. Indeed he is less abundant and less successful in this respect than almost any other writer of great

volume. Little bits of description of houses, dresses, and so forth are frequent enough, and the authorities are sometimes drawn upon largely for a festival or a battle. But Dumas seems to have felt that his readers did not want elaborate set-pieces from him, but plenty of "business" and lively speech. His characters, however, are a much more curious study. Those who call his general method scene-painting, of course, call his characters lay-figures. The appellation does not do their observation much credit. Dumas is nothing so little as an analyst, and he does not attempt to give us complicated or intricate studies of character, but his men and women are curiously adapted to their purpose and curiously lifelike of their kind. They are naturally types rather than individuals, and types of a somewhat loose and vague order, but still there is an amount of individuality about them which is very rarely found in novels of incident. No one will deny that the three, or rather four, musketeers are sustained in their contrast of dispositions throughout the score or so of volumes they occupy, with a good deal of skill. Nor are the repetitions of the types in different books merely *calqués* the one on the other. Chicot and D'Artagnan have remarkable points of contact, yet they are not mere duplicates. Ernauton de Carmainges is a clever variation of La Mole, rather than a mere reproduction of the character.

But it is in his dialogue that Dumas's real secret consists, and it is this which is the rosin that none of his imitators have ever succeeded in stealing, however confident they may be that they have got the fiddle. Its extraordinary volume would be the most remarkable point about it, if its goodness, considering its volume, were not equally remarkable. The rapidity of it deprives it necessarily of much literary grace, and prevents it from supplying any jewels five words long. Indeed Dumas, to recur once more to Peacock's cavillings at Scott, is one of the least quotable of writers. But still, if not quotable, his dialogue is extraordinarily readable, and carries the reader along with it in a manner hardly to be paralleled elsewhere. Dumas possesses fully the secret of making dialogue express action, and this is where he is supreme. His gift, however, in this respect is of the kind which is almost necessarily a snare. He abuses his dialogic facility constantly, and the result is the exorbitant length of some of his books. It is absolutely impossible for him to be concise. He will make a single interview extend over half-a-dozen chapters, and give a volume to the talk of a single day. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the *Vicomte de Bragelonne*. That vast book contains two of his best, if not his very best, pieces of work—the kidnapping, namely, of Monk, and the death of Porthos in the Grotto of Locmaria. But the *longueurs* of its middle, of the endless court conversations, and the conspiracies that come to nothing, are almost incredible. It is undeniable, again, that his situations have a tendency

to repeat themselves, though, as in the case of his characters, the repetition is often very skilfully masked and coloured. But on the whole he succeeds not merely in rivetting the attention of the reader, but also in securing his affection for and interest in his characters. No one has ever managed the process called "working up" better than he has. In such scenes as that where the four princes wait at Marguerite's door, ready to assassinate La Mole, where the powder is found in the wine-casks, where D'Artagnan extracts the Queen and Mazarin from the clutches of the Parisians, and scores of others, it is impossible to avert the attention when once fairly engaged, and impossible to avoid identifying one's self with the characters. That is the triumph of this sort of novel-writing.

It may be noticed that I have hitherto taken my illustrations chiefly from the D'Artagnan series, and from that which contains *La Reine Margot*, *La Dame de Monsoreau*, and *Les Quarante-cinq*. I have done so because these six novels seem to me to be on the whole not merely the author's best, but also the most characteristic of his genius. The period which they cover seems to have had a special faculty of inspiring him, or, perhaps, we may say that it was the only one with which he was sufficiently familiar to be able to employ his method with successful effect. In those of his historical novels which are earlier in date, the elements are less happily blended. I have spoken of *Isabel de Bavière*. Something similar may, perhaps, be said of the *Bâtard de Mauléon*. It is interesting, the story is well told, and there is certainly no lack of exciting incident. The scene indeed of Duguesclin's negotiation with Sir Hugh Calverley and the Free Companions, the battle of Najara, and other passages, are excellent. But the life is not in the characters in the same way as it is in Aramis and Porthos. One feels that the author is not so sure of his surroundings, and is chary of the little touches that make scenes and characters live. Nor do the novels whose scene is in more modern times please me much better. Almost all those of purely modern society may be swept away altogether. Dumas had not the least power of dealing with contemporary subjects in any of the ways in which it is now possible to deal with them. His *Maître d'Armes* again, and other such things, seem to me very poor stuff. They sink mostly to the level of mere recitals, interesting simply from the actual facts they contain. Nor, again, has he been happier than other novelists in treating the great revolution. Of the *Collier de la Reine* I shall speak presently. But the *Chevalier de Maisonrouge* adds, to my mind, only one more to the long list of failures which might be made up of French novels having '89 and its sequel for their subjects. The causes of this failure, if they were not somewhat irrelevant to my present purpose, it would be rather interesting to discuss. At present I need only

repeat that the *Chevalier de Maisonrouge* is a failure. The best character in it, Lorin, the devotee of Parny, is not bad, but he is not of a kind that Dumas can really manage well. There are, however, two novels besides the *Collier de la Reine* and *Monte Cristo*, which lie outside the limits I have drawn, and which are usually ranked among the author's masterpieces. These are *La Tulipe Noire* and the *Chevalier d'Harmental*. With respect to *La Tulipe Noire*, I am inclined to think that, charming as it is in parts, it has been over-praised. Its complete adaptation to the needs of Mr. Podsnap's young person appears to have bribed all its critics. But it has the serious literary fault of being out of scale. The tulip fancying and the loves of the excellent Cornelius Van Baerle make a perfect subject for a really short tale of a hundred pages or so. But Dumas's unfortunate prolixity is here especially unfortunate. The tale is choked up with irrelevant matter and spun out to an unconscionable length. But it is none the less charming, perhaps, if one consents to lay aside rule and compass, and it certainly squares but ill with the theory of the "barbaric and voluptuous" tastes of its author; while, on the other hand, the identity of touch between it and some of his most apparently dissimilar work is too remarkable to escape any competent critic. The contrast between the detestable part assigned to William the Dutchman at the beginning and his beneficence at the end, for instance, recalls most curiously the picture of Colbert, drawn in the *Vicomte de Bragelonne*. *Le Chevalier d'Harmental* is a very different book. This, too, has the striking similarities to other parts of the author's work to which I have already alluded. The scene between the Duchesse du Maine and her poets reminds one at once of that between the poetical adherents of Fouquet and their master. The rather unnecessary descriptions of Madame Denis's domestic interior are in the style exactly of the details of the Broussel family and servants in *Vingt Ans Après*. Besides being thus closely connected with the other books which, as I have said, must necessarily be attributed to a single influence, *Le Chevalier d'Harmental* contains detached passages of very striking merit. Le Capitaine Roquefinette, the last of the descendants of Dugald Dalgetty, is a great creation, though Dumas has been extremely hard on him. There is no reason whatever why the uninteresting chevalier should have been allowed to obtain such a victory, except the necessity, which Alexander the Great generally recognises, of making the end of his books melancholy. The calligraphist, Buvat, is another triumph; and his incarceration in the gilded captivity of the Palais Royal is most charmingly told. The Regent Philippe, again, is excellent; and the way in which Richelieu, Saint Simon, and other historical characters are made to play their part, is most artful. Lastly, it must be remembered, in

favour of the *Chevalier d'Harmental*, that it is one of the very few books of its author that has a regular plot. The Cellamare conspiracy gives just enough framework for the book, and not too much, and the episodes and digressions are scarcely disproportionate in their extent. After allowing all these merits, which can certainly not be allowed in like measure to many others of Dumas's books, it might seem only reasonable to call it his masterpiece. Yet there is about it something wanting which is present elsewhere. The dialogue is not of the best, and the lack of interest which one feels in the hero is a serious drawback. For once, Dumas has let himself follow Scott in the mistake of making his hero too generally faultless and lucky, and this is the cause, I think, of failure, if failure there be, in the *Chevalier d'Harmental*.

The *Collier de la Reine*, perhaps, demands a more special mention than the run of Dumas's less eminent works. With *Le Chevalier d'Harmental*, *Joseph Balsamo*, *Le Chevalier de Maisonrouge*, and so forth, it forms a series corresponding in some measure with the earlier and more successful cycles, and continuing them until the end of the last century. With *Joseph Balsamo*—*Mémoires d'un Médecin*—it composes, moreover, a sub-series treating of Cagliostro, a character naturally attractive to Dumas as combining the peculiarities of the successful adventurer with the suspicion of charlatanism, which it is to be feared was not a very great drawback in the eyes of the creator of Edmond Dantès. *Le Collier de la Reine* is one of Dumas's most popular works, but it seems to me to be very far from being one of his best. There is no single character in it of any particular excellence, and the endless scenes of intrigue between Jeanne de la Motte and the Cardinal de Rohan, between Oliva and Cagliostro, between the Queen and a half-a-dozen different personages, are altogether wearisome. The author has not succeeded in interesting us sufficiently to make his volume tolerable, and it is not tolerable in itself in virtue of any skill in handling the subject. This subject, moreover, is felt to be too much for Dumas. The stupendous interest of the French Revolution wants quite a different chronicler and quite other modes of treatment. The particular episode, too, of the diamond necklace is one of those which have, in virtue of their special interest and strangeness, passed out of the class of subjects which can be successfully treated by fiction. All those who have studied the philosophy of novel-writing at all closely know that great historical events are bad subjects, or are only good subjects on one condition—a condition the steady observance of which constitutes one of the great merits of Sir Walter Scott. The central interest in all such cases must be connected with a wholly fictitious personage, or one of whom sufficiently little is known to give the romancer free play. When this condition is complied with, the actual historical events may be,

and constantly have been, used with effect as aids in developing the story and working out the fortunes of the characters. Dumas himself has observed this law in his more successful efforts; he has not observed it here. If Scott, instead of writing the *Abbot* and making Catherine Seyton the heroine, had taken the court of Holyrood before the death of Darnley as his subject, and had made Mary his central figure, he would almost assuredly have failed. The character of Cagliostro as here given, moreover, is one which no writer could manage. He is at once too supernatural and not supernatural enough.

If, however, there is one book of Dumas's which deserves especial attention, both because of its immense popularity and because of the clearness with which it exhibits the limits of its author's powers, that book is the *Comte de Monte Cristo*. *Monte Cristo* is said to have been at its first appearance, and for some time subsequently, the most popular book in Europe. Perhaps no novel within a given number of years had so many readers and penetrated into so many different countries. I do not know how far this popularity has been maintained, but it still remains the book with which, with the possible exception of the *Three Musketeers*, more people connect the name of Dumas than with any other of his works. How far does it deserve this popularity? The answer of most critical persons would probably be, without any intention of flippancy, as far as the end of the first volume. The Château d'If indeed, as this section has sometimes been called, is almost faultless, and few persons can have found anything to object to in it except the rather dubious omniscience of the Abbé Faria. The style and character of the book, moreover, is so far all the author's own, and deals only with subjects which he can well manage. From the time, however, that Dantès has discovered the treasure, the case is altered. The succeeding scenes give indeed an opportunity of portraying what Dumas has always endeavoured and loved to portray, the rise of an adventurer to supreme power and importance. Nor is there any taint of the supernatural as in the case of Cagliostro; but, on the other hand, the scenes described and the characters attempted are scenes and characters in which the author is not himself at home, and which constantly recall to us scenes and characters in the work of other men who can manage them. Take, to begin with, Monte Cristo himself. Whether it is altogether fair for the generation which has come after him, and which he himself has helped to render *blasé* with persons of extraordinary attributes, may be answered in the negative by a fervent Alexandrian. But it cannot be denied that at the present day Edmond Dantès in his parts, of Lord Wilmore, or the Abbé Busoni, or the Count, appears to us a very tiresome and rather ludicrous player at providence. His use of his money seems ostentatious, and some-

times, as in the case of the horses bought from Danglars, intolerably vulgar. His mania for theatrical peripeteias—which might have resulted in the death both of Morrel and his son—is equally to be objected to, and the skimble-skamble stuff which so impresses his Parisian friends (for instance, in his first interview with Villefort) is pitiable enough. In few of the author's books, moreover, is the abuse of over-length greater, and the complicated series of intrigues, though managed with considerable skill, wearies the reader more than it interests him. But the involuntary comparisons that one makes in reading the book are the most unfortunate. No one, for instance, who knows Gautier's literary dealings with haschisch can avoid a sigh over the pages in which Franz d'Epinay's very commonplace experiences of the drug are described. I am not myself among those who consider Henri de Marsay, Bixiou, Blondel, and the rest as absolutely perfect creations beyond which the wit of man cannot go, but Châteaurenaud, Debray, the journalist Beauchamp, and others of De Morcerf's set, certainly remind one but unpleasantly of Balzac's favourite cliques. The viscount himself would have been more acceptable if he had not in his excessive hospitality displayed "all the tobaccos of the known world" when he was expecting his visitors. Another point in which Dumas here fails is his description. This is, as I already said, probably his weakest point, and it is particularly noticeable in a book where description, one would have thought, was particularly in place. But the prevailing want all through is the want of a sufficient grasp of character to make scenes so familiar and modern as those of Parisian life in the middle of the present century tolerable. The plan is the plan of Balzac, the hand is the hand of Dumas, and it is impossible that the inefficiency of the workmanship should not be felt. There is no attempt at an impression of growing horror culminating in the horrible death of Madame de Villefort and her child. The interest is frittered away in endless details and episodes. The narrow escape of Valentine, and the burglarious attempt of Caderousse, are treated at the same length and on the same scale; and, above all, the dangerous method of introducing long recitals by various characters in order to help on the movement and join the intrigue is unscrupulously resorted to. The first impulse of the reader is to wish that the five last volumes had been condensed to at most two; it is to be feared that his last is to regret that they were ever written at all.

The following scene may, perhaps, be useful as illustrating some of the remarks which I have made and shall make. It is from *Les Quarante-Cinq*. The jester Chicot, imperilled by the vengeance of the Guises, has solicited and obtained from Henry III. a mission to Henry of Navarre. His letters of credence have just been

delivered to him by two of the King's guard at a short distance from Paris :—

"As soon as they had disappeared, Chicot, who seemed to have the faculty of seeing behind him, and who could no longer perceive either Ernauton or Sainte-Maline, stopped at the top of the slope, and scanned the horizon, the ditches, the level ground, the bushes, the river, in short everything up to the dappled clouds that glided across the sky beyond the tall elms of the causeway. When he was sure that there was no one to disturb or play the spy on him, he sat down on the slope of a hedge with a tree to lean against, and began what he called his process of self-examination.

"He had two purses, for he had already perceived that the bag given him by Sainte-Maline contained, besides the royal letter, certain round and slippery objects which had all the appearance of gold or silver coin. The bag itself was a pattern royal purse and bore two h's embroidered on it, the one above, the other below. 'That is very pretty,' said Chicot, contemplating it, 'indeed it is quite charming of his Majesty. Could anything be more generous or more foolish? I shall never make anything of him. Upon my word I wonder that this most excellent of kings did not have the letter itself embroidered outside the purse and my acknowledgment as well. Why not? It is the fashion to be open in political matters nowadays, and why should he not follow the fashion? If Chicot were put out of the way, like a certain other courier that Henry sent to Rome, it would only be a friend the less, and friends are so common just now that he can be lavish of them. Really heaven is not fortunate in its choice of kings! However, let us see what there is in the purse in the way of money. We can take the letter afterwards. Ah! a hundred crowns! Just the same sum that I borrowed from Gorenflot. No, let us be exact, here is a little packet. It is Spanish gold. Five doubloons. Come, that is a very delicate attention of Master Harry's, and if it were not for these unnecessary cyphers and fleurs-de-lis I would blow him a kiss for it. As it is this purse is a nuisance: the very birds overhead look as if they took me for a king's messenger, and were scoffing at me, or, which would be worse, telling tales of me to the passers-by.

"Chicot emptied the purse into his hand, drew from his pocket Gorenflot's plain canvas bag, and poured the gold and the silver into it, observing to the coins as he did so, 'You need not quarrel, my dears, you are countrymen.' Then he took the letter out of the bag, picked up a pebble and putting it in, drew the strings and sent it whizzing as if from a sling into the Orge which flowed eddying under the bridge. There was a splash, and the circles as they widened broke up against the bank. 'That is for my own convenience,' said Chicot; 'now let us go to work for Henry.' And he took up the letter which he had laid down for greater ease in throwing the purse into the river. But there came along the road a donkey laden with wood, and with the donkey were two women driving him, while he marched with a step as stately as if, instead of firewood, he were carrying relics. Chicot covered the letter with his broad palm, resting it on the ground, and let them pass. As soon as he was alone he took up the letter and broke the seal with the greatest coolness in the world, just as if it was an ordinary document in the course of business. Then he took the envelope, crushed it in his hands, ground up the seal between two stones, and sent both in the track of the bag. 'Now, then,' said he, 'let us see how he writes.' And he opened the letter and read:—

"'VERY DEAR BROTHER,—The deep affection which our late brother and King, Charles IX., bore you still dwells under the roof of the Louvre, and is firmly seated in my heart.' Here Chicot bowed. 'It is thus very painful to me to have to discuss with you troublesome and unpleasant subjects. But you are full of fortitude in bearing ill-fortune, and thus I do not hesitate to inform you of such things as one only tells to valiant and tried friends.' Chicot

interrupting himself made another profound bow. 'Besides, I have an interest in interesting you in this matter, for the honour of your name and mine is at stake. We are alike in this point that we are surrounded by enemies. Chicot will explain to you how.'

"('*Chicotus explicabit*,' said Chicot, 'or rather *evolvet*, which is better Latin.')

"'Your servant the Viscount de Turenne furnishes subjects of daily scandal to your court. God forbid that I should look into your affairs except for your interest and honour. But your wife, whom to my sorrow I must call my sister, ought to be thus solicitous for you in my place, and she is not.'

"('Oh!' said Chicot, continuing his work of translation, '*Quæque omittit facere!* That is severe.')

"'I entreat you then, my brother, to take heed that the relations of Margot with the Viscount de Turenne, who is closely connected with our common enemies, do not bring shame and loss to the House of Bourbon. Make an example as soon as you are assured of the facts, and make sure of the facts as soon as you have heard the explanation of my letter from Chicot.'

"('*Statim atque audiveris Chicotum litteras explicantem*,' said Chicot; 'let us continue.')

"It would be vexatious that the least suspicion should rest upon the legitimacy of your heirs, my brother, a point on which God has forbidden me to be anxious on my own account, for I, alas! am condemned to childlessness. The two associates, whom as a king and a brother I denounce to you, usually assemble in a little chateau called Loignac, and they make the chase their excuse. This castle is also a centre of intrigues with which the Guises are not unconcerned. I make no doubt, my dear brother, that you know with what strange affection my sister regarded Henry of Guise and our brother the Duke of Anjou, at the time when I bore this title and he was called Duke of Alençon.

"('*Quo et quam irregulari amore sit prosecuta et Henricum Guisium et germanum meum*,' translated Chicot.)

"'I embrace you, and strongly recommend my suggestions to your attention, being at the same time ready to aid you in all things. Meanwhile make use of the advice of Chicot, whom I send you.'

"('*Age auctore Chicoto*,' said the messenger. 'Good! It appears that I am nominated privy councillor to His Majesty the King of Navarre.')

"'Your affectionate, &c. &c.'"

"When he had read this, Chicot took his head in his two hands:

"'It strikes me,' he said, 'that this is rather an unpleasant job, and that, as Master Horace remarks, in avoiding one evil one sometimes falls into a worse. I really think I like Mayenne the best of the two. Yet with the exception of that unpardonable embroidered wallet the letter is a clever one. Supposing Hal of Navarre to be made of the ordinary substance of husbands, this document ought to set him at loggerheads with his wife, with Turenne, with Anjou, with Guise, and even with Spain. In fact, for Henry of Valois up in the Louvre to be so well informed of what goes on with Henry of Navarre down at Pau he must have spies at work, and these spies will be very unpleasant to the Bearnese. On the other hand the letter will make it very unpleasant to me if I meet a Spaniard, a Fleming, a Bearnese, or a Lorrainer who is curious to know what they are sending me to Pau for. Now it would be extremely thoughtless of me if I did not make up my mind to meet one or other of these. My friend Monsieur Borromée especially owes me a turn.

"'In the second place what did Chicot seek when he asked for a mission to King Henry? A quiet life. Now his present errand is to set the King of Navarre at loggerheads with his wife. Clearly this is not Chicot's game, inasmuch as by setting two such personages at variance he will make himself mortal enemies who will interfere with his peaceful attainment of the age of fourscore years. Perhaps this would not matter, for life is only worth living when one is young. But then M. De Mayenne's dagger thrust might as

well have been waited for. That, however, would not have done, for one good turn deserves another, and dagger thrusts cannot always be paid back. Consequently Chicot will pursue his journey; but as he is not a fool, he will take his precautions, that is to say he will keep nothing about him but money in order that if they kill him nobody else may suffer. Therefore he will go on as he has begun, and he will translate this fine letter into Latin that it may better stick in his memory, where two-thirds of it are already. Then he will buy a horse, because between Juvigny and Pau the right foot has to be put before the left rather too often. But before anything else Chicot will tear the letter of his friend Henry of Valois into an infinite number of little pieces, and will take care that the little pieces go partly into the Orge, partly to the winds, and the rest into the bosom of our mother earth, whence all things come and whither all must go, even the follies of kings. When Chicot has finished what he has begun. . . . .

"Here he interrupted himself to execute his project of division. A third of the letter went down the stream, another third into the air, and the third disappeared in a hole which he dug with an instrument that hung at his girdle, and was neither dagger nor knife, but could take the place of both at need. . . . Then he went on.

"'. . . . Chicot will resume his journey with the greatest care, and will dine at the good town of Corbeil like a man of honest appetite, as he is. Meanwhile, let us occupy ourselves with our Latin theme. The version ought to be an elegant one.'

"All of a sudden he stopped, for it occurred to him that it was impossible properly to Latinise the word Louvre, which was very annoying. Margot, too, had to receive the Macaronic equivalent of Margota, just as Chicot had become Chicotus. It is true that there was Margarita, but to this he did not even give a thought, the translation would not have been sufficiently faithful. This Latin, however, with the researches necessary to secure duly Ciceronian purity, occupied the whole way to Corbeil, an agreeable town where the valiant ambassador looked but little at the wonders of Saint Spire, and a great deal at those of a certain victualler, the smoke of whose appetising wares perfumed the neighbourhood of the church."

This passage, though it does not come from one of the author's most famous works, but rather from one in which the separatists might discern traces of a second hand, is I think a characteristic one. The monologue of the garrulous jester may stand well for a hundred other monologues of the same kind, and not badly for the still more interminable dialogues in which all the characteristic novels abound. The endless picking up of little insignificant circumstances is noticeable in it too, and shows clearly enough how the vast extent of some of the books is filled up, while the burlesque tone—there is a better word than burlesque for it in French, namely, *goguenard*, but it is not translateable—is a trait which came into fashion in the earliest days of the romantic movement, and was never afterwards lost. The extract necessarily contains little action; I say necessarily, because wherever Dumas deals with action he is simply unquotable by reason of length. The episode of the bastion Saint Gervais in the *Trois Mousquetaires*, unquestionably his masterpiece in this way, would occupy considerably more space than the whole of this article. There are, however, not many writers who lend themselves less to analysis of their individual works or to extracts from them than the author of

Monte Cristo. Analysis even of the concisest character of all the works published under his name would take a goodly volume, and would assuredly not be worth the doing, still less worth the reading, when it was done. It has been sometimes remarked that most of the later literature of France, despite the innovations and the neglect of the Renaissance and the seventeenth century, recalls some part or other of the abundant and long undiscovered wealth of its mediæval libraries. There can be little hesitation with any one who knows early French literature with what part of it to identify the novels of our author. He is the descendant of the later trouvères who, in the fourteenth century, busied themselves with filling up the gaps in the connection of the *chansons de geste*, and spinning out the already sufficient length of those epics into interminable *romans d'aventures*. These authors of thirty and fifty thousand line poems rivalled Dumas in their longwindedness, in their skilful working up and repetition of a certain limited number of motives and incidents; while as industrious completers of the *gestes*, and as rigid genealogists who discovered that there was a gap between this hero and his grandfather, and that that hero's great-uncle had been wrongfully deprived of his due celebration, they represent the spirit which led Dumas to carry D'Artagnan and Chicot and Richelieu through dozens and scores of volumes. One could rename his novels in mediæval style with ease. *Les Trois Mousquetaires* is *La Chevalerie Artagnan*, *Vingt Ans Après* is *Les Enfances Raoul*, and *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne* might be either *Le Couronnement Charlon*, or, substituting thirteenth century for seventeenth century notions perhaps *Le Moniage Athos*. Only Dumas has the advantage over the forgotten verse-writers, his predecessors, that he set, or helped to set, the example of a style instead of taking it up when it had been already worked to death, and the merit of knowing how to infuse into almost all his work sparks of life and touches of nature.

Whether the parallel will be completed by the utter neglect of his work after a short time we must wait to see. That much of it will go the way of all but the best fictitious literature, cannot for a moment be doubted. Whether any will survive is a question less easy to answer. The danger to which writers like Dumas are exposed, as a rule, is that there is not enough idiosyncrasy in their work to keep it fresh in men's memory. Every age, or almost every age, produces for itself specimens of the talented improvisatore who has energy enough to produce enormously, and originality enough to launch his work in popular favour. Every age too naturally prefers its own practitioners in this manner, because they can hit its own tastes, and because the ephemeral adornments and fashion of their work are such as it understands and appreciates. The next age has no such inducements to read work of little permanent literary value. That Dumas is one of the princes of all such improvising writers I

have no doubt whatever, and that he possesses the element of something better than improvisation must I think be evident to careful readers of him.

In order to estimate his deficiencies and at the same time the merits which accompany them, I do not know a more curious exercise than the comparison of one of these books, say *La Reine Margot* or the *Mousquetaires*, with Gautier's *Capitaine Fracasse*. They are in intention exactly similar. But Gautier had one thing which Dumas had not, an incomparable literary faculty, and Dumas had what Gautier had not, the knowledge how to *charpenter* a novel. The consequence is that, while *Le Capitaine Fracasse* is a magnificent piece of writing, it is only a second-rate story, and that *La Reine Margot*, though offering no special quotations or passages to the memory, is a book which it is impossible to put down till you have finished it. Such things as the Chateau de la Misère, as the description of the swordsman's garret and his tavern haunt, and above all as the wonderful duel between Lampourde and Sigognac, Dumas was utterly incapable of writing. He never wrote positively badly, but his writing never attracts admiration for itself. It is not negligent, but on the other hand it is not careful. The first word that comes into his head is used. Probably it is not a bad word, and serves very well to convey the impression intended. But of art, of careful choice, and laborious adaptation of words and phrases and paragraphs, there is none. It is even capable of being argued whether, consistently with his peculiar plan and object, there could have been or ought to have been any. The presence in a novel of incident of passages of the highest literary value may be plausibly contended to be a mistake, as well as an unnecessary extravagance. When the palate is tempted to linger over individual pages, to savour them slowly, and to dwell on the flavour, the continuity of interest of the story proper runs a danger of being broken. On the other hand, if the interest be strong enough to induce rapid reading, it is impossible to do justice to the vintage that it set before one. It is not, therefore, either accidental or from incapacity that the great masters of style in fictitious writing, like Merimée and Gautier, have usually preferred to write short stories. It is rather from a sense of incongruity. A story that takes at shortest half-an-hour to read may, without wearying the appetite for it as a story, have a couple of hours spent upon it. But supposing that the time necessary to read *Les Trois Mousquetaires* is half a day, no one who has this appetite at all will consent to spend three days over it. Nor again in such a story is it possible, as it is with one of the analytic kind, to read first for the story and afterwards for the style. A novel of incident that allows itself to be treated in this way is a bad novel of incident, and if it be good it must be read just as rapidly the seventh time as it is the first.

There are two classes of persons to whom I cannot hope that my estimate of the novelist who has had most readers during the last half-century of any writer in Europe will be satisfactory. The first is made up of those whose critical method consists in invariably requiring of one class of writer the notes of another; in demanding that a poet shall choose his subjects on the principles of a preacher; that a novelist's works shall be suitable for delivery in the schools; that a historian shall chime in with their tastes and sympathies; that, in his estimate of facts, a man devoted to one science shall say nothing which disagrees with the prevalent ideas among the followers of another. For my part I prefer to judge a poet as a poet, a novelist according to the requirements of novel-composition, a theologian as a theologian, and a man of science according to the laws of his own pursuit. There is, however, a second way of judging, which is almost equally if not so glaringly unreasonable, and there are more practitioners of it in novel criticism than in any other division of critical practice. These are the people who, as it has been said, "find fault with Onestar because he is not brilliant like Twostars, pathetic like Threestars, philosophical like Fourstars;" who concentrate their attention upon what he has not said and done rather than on what he has; and who forget that in no class of composition is the field so wide, in none are the crops to be cultivated so various, and in none is partial excellence more to be looked to, and universal success less to be required. I have endeavoured in these papers to avoid this fault, and to see rather what a writer has to offer me, than what he has not. I might have asked Gautier for a series of moral tales, M. Flaubert for a harmony in rose-pink and sky-blue, M. Sandeau for a sensational novel, Charles de Bernard for a study in Parisian backslums, Murger for silver fork details and accurate acquaintance with the ways of high life. Each of these writers has some special subject or style in which he is remarkable, and this is what, as it seems to me, the critic has chiefly to look to. In the same way Dumas has the faculty, as no other novelist has, of presenting rapid and brilliant dioramas of the picturesque aspects of history, animating them with really human if not very intricately analysed passion, and connecting them with dialogue matchless of its kind. He can do nothing more than this, and to ask him for anything more is a blunder. But he will pass time for you as hardly any other novelist will, and unlike most novelists of his class his pictures, at least the best of them, do not lose their virtue by re-beholding. I at least find the *Three Musketeers* as effectual for its purpose now as I found it nearly twenty years ago, and I think there must be something more in work of such a virtue than mere scene-painting for a background and mere lay figures for actors.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

A RAJPUT CHIEF OF THE OLD SCHOOL.[1]

Moribundus Loquitur.

I.

And why say ye that I must leave
This pleasure-garden, where the sun
Is baffled by the boughs that weave
Their shade o'er my pavilion ?
The trees I planted with my hands,
This house I built among the sands,
Within a lofty wall which rounds
This green oasis, kept with care ;
With room for my horses, hawks, and hound—
And the cool arcade for my ladies fair.

II.

How often, while the landscape flames
With heat, within the marble court
I lie and laugh to see my dames
About the shimmering fountain sport :
Or after the long scorching days,
When the hot wind hushes, and falling stays
The clouds of dust, and stars are bright,
I've spread my carpets in the grove,
And talked and loitered the live-long night
With some foreign leman light o' love.

III.

My wives—I married, as was fit,
Some thirteen of the purest blood—
And two or three have germs of wit,
And almost all are chaste and good ;
But all their womanhood has been
Hencooped behind a marble screen ;
They count their pearls and doze—while she,
The courtezan, had travelled far,
Her songs were fresh, her talk was free
Of the Delhi Court, or the Kábul War.

(1) Written in Rajputana, 1877.

IV.

Those days are gone—I am old and ill,
Why should I move? I love the place;
The dawn is fresh, the nights are still—
Ah yes! I see it in your face,
My latest dawn and night are nigh,
And of my clan a chief must die
Within the ancestral rampart's fold
Paced by the listening sentinel,
Where ancient cannon, and beldames old
As the guns, peer down from the citadel.

V.

Once more, once only, they shall bear
My litter up the steep ascent
That pierces, mounting stair on stair,
The inmost ring of battlement.
Oft-times that frowning gate I've past
(This time, but one, shall be the last),
Where the tribal dæmon's image stands
Crowning the arch, and on the side
Are scarlet prints of women's hands—
Farewell! and forth must the lady ride,

VI.

Her face unveiled, in rich attire,
She strikes the stone with fingers red—
"Farewell the palace, to the pyre
We follow, widows of the dead!"
And I, whose life has reached its verge,
Bethink me of the wailing dirge
That day my father forth was borne,
High seated, swathed in many a shawl,
By priests who scatter flowers, and mourn—
And the eddying smoke of the funeral.

VII.

Thus did he vanish. With him went
Seven women, by the flames set free;
I built a stately monument
To shrine their graven effigy:
In front my father, godlike, stands;
The widows kneel with folded hands;
All yearly rites are duly paid,
All round are planted sacred trees,
And the ghosts are soothed by the spreading shade,
And lulled by the strain of the obsequies.

VIII.

His days were troubled; his curse I earned
Full often, ere he passed that arch,
My father, by his farms we burned
By raiding on the English march;
And then that summer I rebelled,
One fort we seized, and there we held
Until my father's guns grew hot;
But the floods and darkness veiled our flight,
We rode their lines with never a shot,
For the matches were moist in the rainy night.

IX.

That's forty years ago, and since,
With all these wild unruly clans,
In this salt wilderness, a prince
Of camel-riding caterans,
I've sought religiously, Heaven knows,
A life of worship and repose,
Vext by the stiff ungrateful league
Of all my folk in fretful stir,
By priest and gods in dark intrigue,
And the wasting curse of the sorcerer.

X.

They say I seized their broad estates,
Upbraid me with a kinsman's blood;
He led his bands before my gates,
And then—it was an ancient feud.
But I must offer gifts, and pray
The Brahmin's stain be washed away—
Saint and poisoner, fed with bribes,
Deep versed in every traitorous plan—
I told them only to kill the scribes,
But my Afghans hated the holy man.

XI.

Yes, peace is blessed, and prayer is good;
My eldest son defied my power;
I lost his mother in the wood
That hides my lonely hunting tower:
She was a proud unbroken dame:
Like son, like mother, hard to tame
Or tire—And so he took the bent,
His mother's kinsfolk at his heel,
With many a restless malcontent—
There were some had ease, ere I sheathed my steel.

XII.

The English say I govern ill,
That laws must silence spear and gun,
So may my peaceful subjects till;
But peaceful subjects have I none.
I can but follow my father's rule,
I cannot learn in English school;
Yet the hard world softens, and change is best,
My sons must leave the ancient ways,
The folk are weary, the land shall rest,
And the gods are kind, for I end my days.

XIII.

Then carry me to my castle steep,
Whose time is ending with its lord's:
Eight months my grandsire held the keep
Against the fierce Maratta hordes;
It would not stand three winter suns
Before the shattering English guns;
And so these rude old faithful stones,
My fathers' haven in high war-tide,
Must rive and moulder, as soon my bones
Shall bleach on the holy river side.

XIV.

Years hence, when all the earth is calm,
And forts are level, and foes agree
To leave their fighting, trade and farm,
And toil, like oxen, patiently,
When this my garden palace stands
A desert ruin, choked with sands,
A broken well 'mid trees that fade,
Some traveller still my name may bless,
The chief lang syne that left him shade
And a water spring in the wilderness.

A. C. LYALL.

AN ECONOMIC ADDRESS: WITH SOME NOTES.

[The following pages contain the substance of an Address which was delivered before the Trades Union Congress at Bristol, on the eleventh of September. It was fully reported in the *Times* and elsewhere, and some of the positions advanced in it have been the subject of public discussion. When controversy reaches the region of the surrebutter and surrejoinder, it usually ceases to be profitable, but one or two points that have been raised deserve further consideration, and I have therefore endeavoured to deal with them.

It is hardly worth while to notice the contention that no one is entitled to join in economical discussion, who is not an employer of labour. The journalists who use the argument are no more employers of labour than I am, and if their charge were of any weight, they would have no more right to approve the action of the masters, than I have to disapprove it. Such an argument is never brought forward except against a disputant who attempts to put the case of the workmen. A manufacturer from Stockport writes to the *Times* that I have no knowledge of the cotton trade; that he is amazed, wonders, regrets, etcetera, etcetera. As it happens, the proposition from which he infers my ignorance, was suggested to me *verbatim* by one of the most experienced men in the cotton trade, not a mutinous factory-hand, but one whose personal interests are entirely with the employers.

Apart from these trifling exceptions, there has been nothing to complain of in the recent discussion; on the contrary there has been a very general recognition both among employers themselves and in journals so little open to the suspicion of prepossession against them as the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Saturday Review*, the *Manchester Examiner*, the *Leeds Mercury*, that the subject is of great importance to the whole country, and not merely to special localities; that it is difficult and complex, and not to be decided offhand on the *ipse dixit* of one side; that the views of the workmen may have a balance of argument against them, but that in any case they deserve considerate investigation.]

Any one who has realised the momentous importance to human interests of the action of the skilled workmen being wise and just in relation to themselves, the capitalists, and the public, must feel that to meddle, however humbly, in this field can be no light matter. The situation of trade, of profits, of wages, at the present moment happens to make your discussion more than ordinarily serious. The face of

the industrial world has been overcast with the gloom of falling markets, silent factories, idle furnaces, closed pits and yards, scanty profits often crossing the line to losses that are not scanty, and lowered wages. It is more needful than ever, therefore, that all who venture into discussions that concern the vast and complex industrial system of the country should weigh their words.

Bad times perhaps, after all, furnish the best opportunity for looking into some of the fundamental movements in English trade. I have heard of its being said that bad times are the only times in which it is possible to economise in industrial processes, or to improve industrial arrangements; in good times you are much too busy in making money to have time to save it, or to alter machinery. In the same way in good times neither employers nor workmen have either leisure or inclination to examine seriously into the great questions of industrial policy.

Let us, however, beware of exaggerating the amount and intensity of the existing depression. It must often perplex many of us to think why it is that Great Britain, so wealthy, so united on the whole in social spirit, so abundant in resources, so strong in short in every way, should be the country where before all others people take most delight in crying out that they are killed before they are hurt. We are told in the sombre tones of suppressed panic that the exports have fallen off. Considering that both iron and steel rails have been at prices 120 per cent. higher than they are now; that coal has been 200 per cent. higher; and that within the last two years many large classes of cotton goods were 40 per cent. above their prices to-day, it would of course be nothing short of a miracle if the volume of our exports had maintained their money value. It is constantly assumed, for instance, that the exports have fallen off in the cotton trade, and many sinister inferences are drawn from it. But this, if we look to quantity and not to value, is not the case. The export of cotton pieces in 1877 was nearly 300 million yards beyond the exports of 1872, and of cotton yarn 15 million pounds more than in 1872. In value there was a falling off to the extent of some 10 million pounds sterling, but more than one half of this decrease represents the decline during the two periods in the price of the raw cotton. During the first half of last year the trade was described by those who had no interest in seeming cheerful, as being fairly remunerative, and it was not until last autumn that it declined.

Still, when we have made all allowances for such considerations as these, it remains true that trade has been, and in some great branches of trade threatens to remain, dull, unprogressive, and in some cases obstinately stagnant. Some public writers, both on the continent and at home, hold that this state of things will last, that we have

arrived at what they call a definitive crisis, and that we are not merely suffering from one of those ordinary trade recoils which have come upon us before at periodic intervals. This is an intricate question, which the present is no proper occasion for discussing. Whatever conditions may be operating to stamp the present crisis with a special and a lasting mark, we have at any rate no difficulty in observing, independently of them, obvious causes for the comparative depression of commerce. They have been set forth hundreds of times in various ways. What they come to is, in homely words, that some who were once our greatest customers have foolishly spent all their money, others have lost it by misadventure, and others again have perished bodily. In India the recent famine is computed to have caused between four and five millions of deaths, to say nothing of untold impoverishment. In China the destruction from the same cause has been far more sweeping. There has been a famine in the Brazils. There have been three bad harvests in succession at home. The inflation in certain trades with America has collapsed. Political events in France, and in the East, filled the commercial world with disquiet. All these things in some of the greatest and most depressed of our industries are enough to explain the want of trade, without going farther.

But the point on which I shall venture to submit one or two remarks to the Congress is that the general effect of these inevitable misfortunes has been aggravated by unprofitable competition. There is nothing original in this, and if it were merely my own opinion it would be of very little value. It is the deliberate judgment of many of the very ablest of the manufacturers and merchants of the country. In the words of one of them, "The redundancy of loose capital brought about by an extraordinary combination of circumstances"—which I need not now describe—"stimulated much unprofitable competition among the members of the manufacturing and distributing classes who were possessed either of credit or means of their own." Now it may be said that the industrial capitalists of the country, if they had been preternaturally shrewd, prudent, and far-sighted men, would have realised the possibility or reasonable probability of these unfavourable events coming to pass, either singly or in a fatal combination, and would have been careful not to allow the intoxication of their splendid prosperity to carry them away into headlong excesses of production. A moralist might speculate on the loss of the millions that have been flung into the ocean of worthless foreign investments, and might perhaps further have his own reflections on the morality of investments which can only make a return on condition that the masters of Egyptian and Turkish peasants grind their faces to the earth, to extort interest for the foreign lender. But people with capital are so far not unlike people without it, and there

is nothing astonishing or extraordinary in the motives which have actuated the employers in their policy of headlong extension. Roaring profits offered an immediate temptation which, in the present state of human nature, we had no right to expect them to resist.

Nor is it any one class that contributed the capital for this enormous extension. In Lancashire a great deal of the capital for the new mills was subscribed, in such places as Oldham especially, directly by the workmen. It is said that there are certain towns in England in which every maidservant is a shipowner, for a fine ship could be bought for £1,000; one sixty-fourth share in her would cost £16; and a housemaid might save that, and for two or three years the investment might bring 30, 40, or as much as 50 per cent. But after all it is the directing classes of the community that have been responsible for this unwise rush after great profits. It is just to add that out of these roaring profits the workmen got good wages. That the rise in wages was in proportion to the profits many will deny, and it is to be remembered that at the time of the great coal inflation when in West Yorkshire, for instance, the price of coal at the pit's mouth had gone up by 15*s.* 5*d.* per ton, the wages of the colliers only went up 1*s.* 1½*d.* a ton, though the newspapers laid the entire blame of the rise in price on the collier, and his criminal passion for champagne and grand pianos.

However this may be, and however willing we may be to admit that it was only natural for the employers, obeying the same motives as their neighbours, to rush headlong into incessant extension and multiplied production, yet it is now clear that in a trade like the cotton trade, and in some others, their policy in the administration of their capital was rash and precipitate. And what the country ought to see, and the capitalists themselves ought to see, is that the only thing that prevented the result of this over-production from being still more disastrous to the country, was the strong feeling and vigorous action of the very bodies whom they vituperate with such really childish persistency, namely, the trade-societies of the workmen. If this were an occasion for an exhaustive criticism of the policy of trade-societies, many mistakes would have to be pointed out, many bad rules, many unwise and unjust strikes, and much unjustifiable language. But we are now discussing one particular matter, and on that matter, I repeat, it is plain to any impartial observer of the history of production for the last twenty years, that the only effective impediment to the desperate competition of employers with one another, not abroad but at home, and the consequent over-production, has been the determination of the English artisans not to work fourteen hours a day. And if anybody says that this determination about hours has been carried out to the loss of the employer and to the advantage of the foreign competitor, then

I can only answer that, in the trade where the resistance on the part of the employers to the Ten Hours Bill and the Nine Hours Bill was most strenuous, the textile trades of Lancashire, even with shortened hours they are turning out a greater quantity of work for each spindle and loom per week, than at any previous period in the history of the trade, and more than they are doing in any other country in Europe, however many hours they may work.

This is by the way. To return to our special subject. The employers and merchants of this country, I say, are the last persons to deny that there has been a deplorable maladministration of capital. Take the iron and coal trades, to begin with. I have before me a list, which I will not take up time by reading out to you, of the great iron and coal concerns which have ended in disaster, not because they were "eaten up by their workpeople," as is so constantly and so foolishly said, but because they insisted on going on. The result was ruinous loss, after the difference between the lowest cost of producing iron and getting coal, and the prices which the iron and coal would bring, had ceased to be profitable. One concern in this way wasted and destroyed a million and a half of capital; another three-quarters of a million; a copper-mining enterprise, from first to last not less than a million and a quarter. No less than eight concerns in Glamorganshire, Pembrokeshire, and Montgomeryshire have been closed, while others are in liquidation. There are others again in which the £10 share is down at £3 or at £1.

This is one result of the persistency of the capitalists in following blindfold the formula which at this moment finds such favour in the cotton trade, namely, that if you only go on producing, the consequent low prices must inevitably stimulate demand, and the markets right themselves. Unlimited production implies illimitable demand, which is an absurdity. One of the arguments in favour of the policy of unrestricted production is that low prices send goods into more distant circles, into which in more prosperous times it was not worth while to send them; and then when prices have risen again, this newly acquired trade remains, because after people have once become accustomed to an article, they do not readily abandon it. This is a proposition with much probability in it, but it is far too general to be adopted as an exact guide for practical conduct in a special and particular set of trade circumstances. The recoil has been tremendous. I am informed that the collieries of Great Britain have not worked more than about seven days a fortnight on the average during the last two years; all markets are overstocked; and coal-owners complain like the cotton-manufacturers that they are working at an actual loss.

If you want to know what has become of the working collier, I understand on authority which cannot be denied that thousands of

miners are getting 3*s.* 7*d.* for a day of eight hours' actual work at the coal face. If it is retorted that this is the natural recoil after a rise in prices which in one year gave £15,000,000 in increased wages, I would only remind him that the same rise in the same year gave £66,000,000 in increased profits.

Let us turn to the shipping-trade. The President of the Board of Trade, at a banquet at Liverpool last month, triumphantly exclaimed: "Only fancy what an amount of tonnage is represented in this room! It is something portentous, something to make one proud of the country to which one belongs." Well, Lord Sandon is a newcomer to the Board of Trade, and one of the peculiarities of our system is that a statesman is only expected to have mastered the circumstances of his department in time to be promoted to some other. Many of the shipowners present must have felt the compliment an awkward one, and would have been much more proud of themselves if they had represented a great deal less tonnage. About that date I was favoured with a communication from a gentleman whose name I need not mention, but who is one of the ablest and best-informed shipowners in Liverpool, and this gentleman wrote: "In our Indian ports £2,000,000 worth of shipping is at present lying idle, and in no part of the world is any shipping concern, unless it be some small obscure company in possession of a speciality, making a profit, while our ports are crowded with sound vessels which nevertheless cannot be sent on any voyage wherein the receipts promise to equal the expenses. Foreign competition has had nothing to do with it." And an illustration of our marine supremacy might be found in the striking fact that the quickest route by which goods and letters can be sent to the east coasts of South America from New York, is by English steamers to Liverpool, and thence by the English mails to Brazil. "The fact is that we British," says my informant, "have not only beaten the foreigner out of the carrying trade of the world, but have cut our own throats into the bargain." And that pungent way of putting the matter might serve for a general account of much British trade. Last month more than 50,000 tons of shipping were lying idle in Bombay. In Calcutta ships had been lying twelve months, during which time there had been from 80 to 100,000 tons disengaged and constantly pressing on the market, with freights averaging about one half of the paying rate. The China seas and the Straits are full of ships. In Australia one of my informants had had a ship waiting three months for a chance to load home. In San Francisco there were in July 100,000 tons lying in port. The explanation of the present condition of the shipping trade is no new or intricate story. Free trade increased the volume of exchange in the world, in other words the volume of the carrying trade of the world, so immensely in proportion to the

then existing supply of shipping, that high profits were the rule for many years. Ship-building was actively stimulated, and all the arts connected with it were energetically spurred on. The history of the building of iron ships is the history of a constant series of discoveries and inventions, involving a rapidly progressive facility of production, and leading by changes of form and new systems of management to such a reduction of cost and extension of accommodation as would have seemed, only a year or two before each improvement, to be fabulous and incredible. Hence a perpetual temptation to fresh tonnage. In less than forty years the shipping of the three kingdoms has risen from 2,700,000 tons to 6,200,000 tons. The old vessel remained sound, in good order, and ready for work as ever, but the new-comer with her improvements had the advantage. A well-built vessel, but not up to the latest improvements, has been described as a perfect Frankenstein; it harasses the owner out of his life; it will not die, and it cannot be used to a profit.

Then steamers which originally began their career by carrying only mails and passengers were found some twenty-five or thirty years ago to be useful conveyers of cargo. "Excellent, admirable, and beautiful fleets of sailing ships," as has been said, "withered almost as quickly as the leaves of a year before a few steamers, which could carry goods more cheaply." But those excellent sailing ships could not be broken up; they changed hands at low values; and these in their turn interfered with lower trades, and displaced humbler competitors, as they had themselves been displaced by the steamers. Then steamers were over-produced, and being more special both in their arrangements and in the trades where they could be profitably worked, they are said to have presented instances of decrease in value, even more lamentable for the owner than the depreciation of sailing ships. Within thirty years the steam tonnage rose from 87,000 to 2,000,000. And yet two million pounds sterling of shipping are lying idle in the Indian ports at this moment.

If we go from shipping to cotton, the story is not materially different. "Great profits—reckless extensions of factories—overstocked markets—losses in trade;" that is the sorrowful tale of a leading manufacturer in the *Times* last week. In one great town in Lancashire the only dispute is whether they are losing £20,000, or only £10,000 a week. "It is well known," said the President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce in February, "that during the last ten years the building of spinning factories by private firms, and more especially by joint-stock companies, has been *in the nature of a mania.*" What he justly calls the enormous outlay of 10 millions sterling represents the extension from 1865 to 1875, "during which time the exports followed the increased production, until within the last

three or four years the over-production of both yarn and cloth has filled every available market."

In the great manufactures of worsted and woollen, on the other hand, the best authorities assure me that there has been no over-production. The proof of this is that in spite of the long depression of trade and the greatly reduced exports, there are no large stocks pressing upon the markets. The Yorkshire manufacturers have been very cautious, and have prevented the accumulation of stocks by limiting their production to the daily demand. Hence in those districts, though the profits during the last four or five years have been small, and though in some cases there have been losses, yet the very trifling increase of pauperism, and the general aspect of the workmen, combine to prove that good wages have been earned.

Over-production is, I need not say, far from being always an evil to the great body of consumers, either in a given country or all over the world. In the shipping trade, for instance, the fact that the carriage of goods was never so cheap, is a clear boon to everybody save the carrier. It brings the whole world, as has been said, to the feet of any person in it, and we are told that nothing that has not happened seems a safer thing to predict, than that the value of meat, with very slight differences for carriage, will equalise itself over the world. So in the coal trade, the fact that railway companies which had to pay 18*s.* a ton for their fuel in 1873, are now paying under 5*s.* in some cases, is what makes all the difference between a bad and a fairly good dividend on the great investment of the middle class. And it is not only the middle class that is affected. It has been calculated by Mr. Fawcett that the reduction of the price of coal to its former level represents a relief to the country at large of a burden which, apart from its indirect influence on manufactures, was equal to half the interest on the National Debt.

A well-informed correspondent of the *Times*, after describing this extension, lays the blame of the present state of things on the fact that the surpluses of good years were expended on additional plant, instead of being husbanded for a rainy day. The means of producing our staple manufactures, such as iron and textiles, he says, has been of late years abnormally increased far beyond the consuming power of the world. It is quite possible that this may be so. For myself I cannot see the evidence which would justify this final limitation of consuming power. It is enough for our purpose to recognise the increase beyond the consuming power of the world at the present moment.[1]

(1) "An extension of markets may reasonably be anticipated, while so large a portion of mankind are still unclothed, or have scarcely a change of raiment. The cry of over-production, therefore, seems absurd, except as the expression of a passing embarrassment. Even our own working classes spend less upon clothing than is good for them."—The able correspondent of the *Times* at Manchester, September 21.

Now having admitted that the employers in those trades where there has been excessive extension, have only obeyed a natural impulse, and granting that in some instances the over-production has been very advantageous to the consumers, we are able to see that the pith of the whole controversy lies in the following question, namely, how the consequences of a reaction from over-trading may least injuriously affect the workmen; or, to put it in another way, how the shock of one of these periodical trade-recoils is to be prudently softened to those who were least responsible for the policy that made the recoil so violent. The ordinary language on the subject implies that the shock cannot be softened. "The whole class of producers," we are told, "must be content to suffer: it is a hard necessity, but there is no escape from it." Quite true; but the real issue is *in what degree* the workmen—who, I repeat, are not more but less responsible—are to suffer. It does not follow that because wages are on the whole decided by natural causes, therefore you can in any given case decide them by an abstract principle. There is no eternal and immutable law of nature which tells you, as the sun tells you the hour of the day, whether it is fair that the reduction shall be 5, or 7½, or 10 per cent. You have to find that out, as you find out other reductions, in a free market. The process must necessarily be a rough one. No reduction is ever exactly and precisely just all round. The 10 per cent. reduction in Lancashire the other day, even if it had given any relief to the employers, would have given it in unequal degrees, for as they admit and insist for other purposes, the circumstances of no two employers are exactly the same, and therefore though 10 per cent. may just save an employer in a bad position from a heavier loss than he could bear, it may actually turn the balance of an employer in a good position to the side of profit. All these things, I repeat, are rough; they are mere approximations. An error in the calculation of the combined employers, however honest the intention of the calculators, may make all the difference to the workmen between a fair reduction and a thoroughly unfair one. Yet the workman is bidden to be dumb as a sheep before the shearers. What one wants to know is why he alone among persons with a commodity to dispose of, is forbidden to refuse the first price that is offered to him, under penalty of being court-martialled at the drum-head of the newspaper press. The truth is that the workpeople of this country could not be so vigorous, energetic, and skilful as they are in their various arts and trades, if they were more dependent or obsequious in relation to their employers. The same vigour which makes them the most productive of labourers, is just what makes them the least willing to take the word of other people about their own concerns. Well, what the workman is told is that the burden is not to be distributed among consumers, capitalists, and

workmen, but to be borne in a certain degree by the capitalists, and in a much greater degree and a far more serious way by the workmen. In other words, what this doctrine of the *Times* comes to, if it means anything, is that capitalists are free to bring together a great population, to induce men to spend the decisive part of their lives in acquiring a craft, to invite them to strike the very roots of existence in a district and an employment, and then are to be free to say, "The day of roaring profits is over; shift for yourselves." Capitalists do not as a matter of fact say this; their interests usually prevent them from saying it, and if their interests did not, their humanity in most cases certainly would. But this is what the theory comes to, and their haste on every emergency to reduce wages is a sufficiently near approach to the full execution of the theory.[1] Can we wonder that the workmen, not at the dictation of Unions, but by irresistible and spontaneous instinct, cry that they will not, if they can help it, suffer their destinies and the destinies of their children to be made the stake of a reckless system of competitive gambling? The low wages of the foreign workman, with their stability, would be better than the high wages of the English workman, if these are to be accompanied by violent and indefinite instability. It is better

(1) In a careful and serious article in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Sept. 12) the writer says:—

"The original excess of production may have been innocent and even useful, and yet limitation of production may be the proper remedy for it. Mr. Morley asks us, in effect, to disregard the almost unanimous opinion of the employers—a body of men who, it will be admitted, are usually very keen-sighted in all that concerns their own interests—and to say with the workman that this is so. He cannot seriously mean that while reduction of wages is injurious to the workman, limitation of production leaves him comparatively unharmed. While the remedy is in course of application, the workman suffers at least as much from short time as he suffers from reduced wages."

Undoubtedly; but that does not affect the contention that wage-reduction is an injury to the workman, without being a prospective relief to the trade, whereas limitation of supply is believed, rightly or wrongly, to promise a speedier return to a normal state, and to arrest that alleged waste of capital which is a consequence of continued full production at a heavy loss. Limitation of production by no means leaves the workmen unharmed, but in their view it would check a course of things that, as they think, must end in the ruin of many employers, and consequently in the disorganization of the trade, and the breaking up of the existence of many of the employed. The policy of mere wage-reduction, unaccompanied by other measures, is crude and inadequate—how inadequate, the failure of the 10 per cent. reduction has shown. The point is not the present and temporary suffering of the weaver or spinner; he is not unprepared to bear that; what he protests against is perseverance, under the pressure of domestic competition, in wasting that capital to which he has to look for his future maintenance.

for a man's character, for his chances of contentment, and a well-ordered life, to have 18*s*. a week, and to know that he is not likely ever to get either more or less, than for him to fluctuate between 25*s*. and 35*s*.[1]

Again, it is said that if resistance to a reduction of wages keeps up prices, then the whole public of consumers is punished. But it should not be forgotten that a reduction of wages punishes at least another portion of the public besides the workman. To strike 20 per cent. from his wages is to lessen the trade of the shopkeepers of his district by 20 per cent. If the depression goes further, it means an addition to the rates and to the burdens therefore, not merely of the employer himself, but of all the other ratepayers in the district. In short, the economic relations of all the sections of a community are so closely connected, so intimate with one another, that under our system, backed as it is by a Poor Law, it is neither more nor less than impossible that the labouring class alone should pay the penalties of imprudent trading.

I am not saying anything so impudently absurd as that reduction of wages is never justified, and is not often justified, though that would not be more absurd than what in some quarters is the current contention, namely, that a reduction is *always* justified. What I contend is, that employers should be less ready to treat reduction of wages as the first and only possible remedy when their trade is bad; that they should not resort to this form of relief unless they are quite sure that they will get the benefit of it—which in Lancashire just now they have not done—and that an equal amount of relief could not be got in some other way, or more effectively by resorting at the

(1) Many persons seem to have found this sentence a hard saying, and perhaps it is too abruptly expressed. The propositions that are implied in it are of this kind;—that a workman, like everybody else, is the better for having a fixed system of living, such as leaves him undistracted in his domestic, public, or religious interests by restless desires and vague aims; that sudden flushes of money, and the hope and expectation of them, encourage these restless desires, and induce that fatal habit of mind, discontent with one's present; that our population is as yet a long way removed from such practice of self-control as enables them to bear the excitement of these violent fluctuations without detriment. It is not expected that these will be received as self-evident propositions, but they will perhaps be thought worth considering as a corrective to the current doctrine. It will be observed that this is no plea for low wages; on the contrary, I should point to the Lancashire workmen as among the best in the world, because wages there have been on the whole both high and steady. It is against violent fluctuations that we are arguing. Is it not true that an agricultural labourer, in spite of the fact that his wages are low, yet by reason of the fact that they are steady, does, on the whole, lead a better-ordered life than the average miner, whose wages have fluctuated within a year or two from 10*s*. or more, to 4*s*. or less, for the day's work?

same time and along with it to some other expedient for righting the market.

We were told by the *Times* last week of such a position as this, that the proper way to judge of it is to suppose it universally applied. I answer, that this is exactly not the proper way. In these disputes no such truth is of universal application. We must judge the cases as they arise, with reference to the special circumstances. The plan proposed for keeping up prices when trade is slack, says the *Times*, "might be repeated when trade became brisk." No doubt it might, but that a certain course might be followed at a wrong time, is no reason why it should not be followed at a right time. A temporary limitation of supply for the purpose of relieving over-production is the natural remedy. In saying that, the workmen are right. A permanent limitation of supply for the purpose of raising prices is an artificial device. When they say that, the workmen will be thoroughly wrong.[1]

It is of course contended against all this that it prepares the way for foreign competition. Now that foreign manufacturers will *never* compete successfully with us is what, I think, no sensible man will venture to maintain. As matter of a speculative kind, the subject is full of interest, but when the prospect of foreign competition is brought forward as so immediate and so undoubted, as to justify worse wages and longer hours in a given trade now and here, then I say that is a premiss which we have a right to look upon with the utmost suspicion until it is proved, and after the premiss is proved, I shall not feel at all bound to accept the conclusion until that has been proved too. Workmen may be excused for thinking twice before they play ducks and drakes with their wages on a speculative possibility. Mr. Mundella, who has taken great pains to form a comprehensive judgment, has come to the conclusion that nothing has yet occurred to shake our commercial predominance as a whole, because the causes which led to this predominance still remain, namely, our

(1) In the face of such passages as this, the writer of a leading article in the *Times* (Sept. 12), taxed me with urging, directly or by implication, a general restriction of production for the purpose of raising prices all round. Having fathered upon me a premiss which I expressly disowned—namely that what is economically right under one set of circumstances must therefore be right under every other—the writer inferred from it that I was making myself the advocate of general dearness. But the employers themselves have never denied that limitation of supply in a demonstrably overstocked market may be a justifiable expedient to meet a temporary evil. It would be insane to deny such a proposition. What has that to do with advocating general dearness? Does this writer mean that whenever a manufacturer restricts production, he is promoting a general rise of prices, and is therefore, to use his own language, "cutting the throats" of the workmen? A journalist, who will not even take the trouble to read his brief, is indeed Hesiod's *ἀχρήϊος ἀνήρ*.

excellent geographical position; a climate which is peculiarly conducive to continuous labour; cheapness and abundance of capital; efficiency of labour; our great hold on the carrying trade; and our sound economic system. Mr. A. J. Wilson, the author of two well-informed and comprehensive volumes on the Resources of Modern Countries, decides that the backward wave which has swept the trade of the whole world downwards, has been due to causes too universal to lead us to suppose that any special decrease in the producing and monopolising capacities of England has occurred. Mr. Giffen, the head of the statistical department of the Board of Trade, and a singularly cool and competent head, has stated a number of unanswerable reasons why we need have no fear of a quickly increased foreign competition, but I will only state one of them. "The capital sunk in producing annually £140,000,000 of value must be immense—at least several hundred millions. But even £100,000,000 would not be easily found in the whole civilised world outside of England for the erection of new works to compete with our manufactories. The annual accumulations of France are computed at £60,000,000 a year, and of Germany at £40,000,000; and the accumulations of the United States must also be very large. But the accumulations are not free savings, to be directed into any enterprise. They are largely used in building houses, in furniture, in improving land under the direction of its owners, and in other ways, so that it is only a small surplus which is annually available for new enterprise. We see, therefore, what an effort of imagination is required when the displacement of England as a manufacturer for export is talked of. Even if she could be displaced at once from her whole export trade, the loss would be much less than is sometimes thought; but the amount of capital required to displace us even partially is so great, that it must take many years for our competitors to accumulate any such amount."

As to the *facts* of a new foreign competition, I have anxiously examined many of the cases that have been brought forward, subject to the correction of experts. In Germany it does appear that a worsted industry very much resembling our own has been developed with considerable success. But, on the whole, if we are beaten in neutral markets or in our own, it is not in the articles in which we have naturally excelled, but in those which other countries—France especially—have always produced to greater advantage than ourselves, and which therefore it is in the natural order of things that they should continue to produce. In no case has the new foreign competition in our own market been genuine. I will take one illustration, which may stand for more. The Lancashire operatives are warned that American cloth has found its way into the Manchester market. But the history of that cloth—except in a special kind where the

Americans have always had our market—is well known, and it is this. After the war, a tariff was imposed, which gave to the manufacturers high profits, and a proportionate stimulus to extend the trade. They re-invested their own profits and attracted new capital, and the production expanded enormously. In 1873, owing to financial causes, the home demand fell off; stocks lay oppressively on hand; banks grew unwilling to continue ever-enlarging advances; and an intense pressure to effect sales followed. But to whom? The two-edged sword of their tariff had cut off foreign competition from themselves, and it had cut off their own power to compete in neutral markets. Even had they secured this power, the returns would be too slow for the urgency of their necessities. Money, and not produce, was what they sought and must have. Hence shipments to England, where quantity was no object if the price were only low enough. If the competition were bonâ fide, why should they choose to send the goods to Manchester of all places in the world, the place where they would compete at the greatest possible disadvantage, instead of sending them to the ultimate markets direct? It is not denied that there are firms in New York quite wealthy enough to make ventures at low prices to neutral markets, and to afford to await the result. But the history of the bulk of the shipments which have been held up to frighten the public and confound the workmen is as I have said.[1]

Let me mention one or two curious facts in the same trade. At a meeting of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, where every speaker had wound up, as if it were the chorus of a convivial song, by denouncing the action of trade unions as disabling us in foreign competition,—at this meeting it was casually remarked that in 1876, when the employers were still doing a profitable trade, the price of the calico that we sent abroad was less per yard than in any year except one in the history of the cotton trade. If this be so, what becomes of the argument that the tyranny of the workpeople and the legislative restrictions on the hours of labour are driving our manufacturers out of the market? How can this be, if at the moment

(1) "I believe the time is far distant when the Fall River mills can profitably compete with those of Great Britain, for although they claim to get raw cotton a quarter cent. per lb. less than its cost delivered at the mills in Lancashire, the climate is not so well adapted as that of England for spinning wool or cotton, and it is more oppressive for the operatives, while the saving from the small amount of water power available at Fall River is more than counterbalanced by the large quantity of coals consumed, which costs over 5 dollars per ton." This is from one of Mr. Conolly's recent elaborate letters to the *Times* (Sept. 23), on the subject of the American cotton trade. And an English cotton-spinner, who has visited the United States, gave the present writer exactly the same information.

when tyranny and interference had reached their maximum, that did not hinder the price, a price with a profit, from falling to a minimum?

Again, if it were true that it is the action of the workmen that disables us in foreign competition, then we should expect that the more labour entered into the cost of production, the greater would be our disadvantage in the competition. But in the cotton trade at all events, exactly the contrary of this is true. The articles in the production of which labour is the most expensive element, are just those in which competition is least formidable. A common shirting sold say at 7*s.*, and which has cost only 2*s.* in wages, is exposed to competition. But a piece of fine cambric, sold, say at 9*s.* 3*d.*, has cost 4*s.* 6*d.* in wages, and yet in this department the English goods have complete command of the markets. That is to say, the article on which the manufacturer has paid most to his workmen, is precisely that article on which he has feared least from his foreign rival.

Nothing is more useful than to compare our own situation with that which is complained of in other countries. A remarkable report was addressed to the French Senate last May by a parliamentary committee appointed to inquire into the causes of the existing commercial suffering. The reporter begins, just as a similar committee would begin in England, by showing an astonishing change in the relative amounts of exports and imports. From 1872 to 1875 the exports exceeded the imports by amounts varying from 190 to 330 millions of francs. In 1876 the tide turned; the imports exceeded the exports by more than 400 millions of francs; and in the first four months of the present year, that excess already amounted to 350 millions. The inference to be drawn as to the prosperity of the country, from this change in the relations between imports and exports, is not perhaps what the reporters suppose, and what some persons suppose in a corresponding situation in England. But that is not to my present point. After these figures, the senatorial reporters come to business. They remark that "it is by a reduction of wages that the English strive at this moment to keep up the struggle with their foreign rivals," and they ask themselves this question:—"*Must we think in France of effecting reduction of wages? Must we condemn the workmen to pay from their family budget a part of the expense of the struggle à outrance which is being fought out among producing countries? We will confine ourselves to putting the question, and we will say that to answer it affirmatively would be both impolitic and inhumane.*"

Now it is as far as possible from my thought to sympathise with the drift of the solution finally hinted at in this report, which points to restrictive duties and protection. If want of protection were the

cause of the present depression in France, then why should there be a far greater depression in the United States, where two thousand articles are in the tariff, and where protection in a great number of important articles is carried to the extent of virtual prohibition? But though protection would only be an aggravation of the evils of which they complain, yet it is worthy of remark that in this way the burden of the depression would at any rate be distributed over the whole class of consumers throughout the land, and not be thrown entirely on the back of the wage-receiving class. It is quite true that it would bring serious mischiefs to France in its train, and I hope that no one will suppose that I am advocating reciprocity or restriction; I utterly renounce the protectionist devil and all its works. And, by the way, in spite of the systematic blame with which so many writers and speakers habitually cover the workpeople of this country, it is worth noticing that while the French have never shaken off protective tariffs, while Germany is harbouring socialism, while even from the United States, besides its protection, there come rumours of a communistic onslaught on property, the workmen of Great Britain have never for a moment in a single serious instance since the beginning of the present period of bad trade given an ear to one of these great economic delusions.[1]

I was going on to say, I could not help marking the promptitude with which this French committee of manufacturers and economists dismissed the idea of making the workmen bear the whole cost of the international struggle; and contrasting it with the promptitude on the other hand, the ungenerous promptitude, with which in this country on the very first sign of bad trade, the air instantly resounds with sermons on the thriftlessness of the workpeople, with ignorant reviling of trade societies, and with peremptory warnings in every leading article, speech, letter, on the subject, that in resisting reductions of wages they are guilty of mutiny against the commonwealth.

It ought to raise some doubts in the present cry about foreign competition being the cause of existing slackness, when we find that in the same report the French are saying just the same thing. "These industries," they say, "are bending under the burden of foreign competition, ... and it is not possible to keep up a situation that threatens both the future of our manufactures and the wages of our workpeople." There is another illustration. The two gentlemen who went from Huddersfield and Leeds to report on the woollen industry of France — and a very able report they issued — when they reached Elbœuf, a great centre of that trade, were informed at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, that they could not enjoy any facilities for visiting the

(1) It was the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and not the Trade Union Congress, that passed a resolution in favour of Reciprocity.

mills, nor obtain the information of which they were in search. The reason of this, as the Elbœuf manufacturers candidly admitted, was that their trade had seriously declined of late years, and they attributed the decline to the competition of British goods. That is, the gentlemen from Leeds and Huddersfield heard the very argument used by French manufacturers against English manufacturers and in favour of protection, which English manufacturers use against their own workmen to support reductions of wages. And in the next page of this report, the writers quote an explanation of the decline of the Elbœuf trade, which is exactly like one of the explanations that I have heard Lancashire workmen give of the decline of the cotton trade. "The Elbœuf manufacturers," said local observers, "were universally acknowledged to be the best in the world, but they were wanting in commercial sagacity, and in the knowledge and application of sound business principles."

However that may be, it would be amusing—if the infirmities of human nature on a great scale were allowed to be amusing—to compare the eagerness of our shrewd Yorkshiremen to prove in what a miserable plight they are, with the eagerness of the men of Elbœuf to prove to the Senatorial commission that in their town the number of manufacturers has decreased, the revenue from municipal taxation has fallen off, and the exportation of woollen fabrics has remained stationary. Just the same story is told in other branches of industry. At Aubusson the famous manufacture of carpets is declared to be extinguished by the competition of English and oriental carpets. In cotton velvets the English have flooded the markets, and ruined one of the industries of Amiens. The makers of looms and engines at Rouen declare their trade to be reduced to a most precarious condition by the competition of England, Belgium, and Switzerland.

It is the same throughout. The whole report is one long moan over the ruin that is being slowly brought upon French industry by triumphant foreigners. In short, what they and their English rivals are equally unwilling to see, is that the same effect in both countries is due to one common cause, the lessened resources of their customers.

The *Economist* has had accounts, evidently by an expert, of woollen and cotton in the Paris Exhibition. The writer has forgotten all about trades unions, and with an unbiassed mind tells us the truth in a businesslike way. And what is the truth? "The whole range and variety of English woollen goods is fairly illustrated; and as regards prices, if exhibition prices can be relied upon for comparison, we should have no hesitation in stating that they would compare very favourably with any similar make of goods in any other country. . . . . Whilst our own woollen trade retains its old

position, with a decided improvement in the matter of taste and design in the fancy goods, progress of a most marked and important character is shown in the productions of several other countries." Then as to cotton. "There can be no doubt," he says, "about the sterling character of all the [English] goods exhibited, and we may look in vain for any serious rivalry as regards these productions, either in quality, colour, or finish, whilst a very marked improvement is visible in the designs of the fancy fabrics—damasks, prints, quiltings, &c."

The last point is striking, because with that excessive national humility which so curiously mixes with what some people have thought our excessive national self-assertion, we are accustomed foolishly to suppose that Englishmen are incapable of taste. Even if it were true that we are being beaten in some kinds of manufacture by the superior taste of foreigners, how can that at any rate be laid to the charge of the English workmen? In the Woollen report to which I have referred, the writers say candidly:—

"We fear we must admit that those at the head of French mills are better educated and of more cultivated taste than the generality of English managers and designers. In saying this, we do not intend to cast any stigma or reproach on so valuable and able a body of men as our own foremen. If there be blame anywhere, it is with our statesmen and prominent citizens, for not having earlier bestirred themselves to procure good primary and technical education for those, on whose exertions the future of the great industries of this country so largely depends."

This is undoubtedly true, though in passing let us notice that the French avow themselves amazed, and sometimes they use the word "humiliated," by the gigantic strides in skill and taste that have been taken by English workers since 1851. I have a French newspaper before me, in which the writer tells his countrymen that the English have no longer any need of their lessons and patterns; that it would be a good thing if every French workman could pass two years in England; and that in one department at least, that of furniture, the English show a taste the most pure, the most judicious, the least vulgar that it is possible to conceive. Despondent people may say that this admiring critic is only praising us in order to vent a little political spite on his countrymen, but whether that be so or not, we can see for ourselves that the improvement in the taste of English workmanship of all kinds within our generation has been immense; and we may see, too, that if this improvement does not continue, the fault will not be with the workmen, any more than the fault was with them in the past, but, as the Yorkshire manufacturers say, with our public men and leading citizens, in not still more energetically bestirring themselves to

procure good primary and secondary education for those on whose exertions the future of our great industries depend.

In fine, I think we shall at worst be quite safe if we act on the conclusions of an inquirer to whom I have already referred. What we shall have to face, he says, is a greater preparedness for competition in some of our best customers when trade revives, and not only for that, but for the erection of barriers more or less high in the shape of hostile tariffs. Instead of energy being wasted in mutual recriminations between employers and workmen, this prospect ought to be faced in a manly and solid way by employers and workmen alike. Nothing that our competitors can teach us in machinery or workmanship or design should be neglected. Those trade societies which have rules that make against improved processes, would certainly do well to revise them,[1] for, apart from other reasons, there is hardly one of these improvements that does not in the long run increase the workman's earning power. Finally, though I expect no millennium in the relations between capital and labour, there is no reason why those relations should not be marked by a spirit of justice and manly good-will, nor why in the midst of the struggles that will from time to time unavoidably arise, either employers or workmen should forget that the great fact after all, is that they are both of them in equal degree co-operating agents in the cause of civilisation, and joint partners in the service of the world.

Postscript.—This is a convenient place for offering one or two short remarks on a paper contributed by Mr. Greg to the August number of the Fortnightly Review, under the title of "Rectifications." Mr. Greg is one of the very few publicists who bring to the discussion of special circumstances in the economical and political situation of the hour, principles and a habit of mind formed by reflecting on society and its problems as a great whole. This lends a peculiar interest to all that he has written on the momentous group of questions relating to capital and labour. The present discussion brings into relief his now well-known theory of the position and prospects of English industry. The danger or certainty of foreign competition is the key to the whole of his speculation on the subject, as it is the fulcrum on which the employers rest their constant argument for long hours and low wages. From the certainty of foreign competition Mr. Greg concludes that "to lower the cost of production is the interest, the necessity, and the duty of the British manufacturer, and that to oppose this object is to fight against the stars in their courses." The retention of our export trade "depends upon our continuous power of underselling our competitors abroad, and

(1) It is worth recording that this remark was received with loud approval from all parts of the hall.

the mode of securing this power insisted upon by our sagacious Unionist chiefs is that we shall steadily refuse to cheapen production or to lower prices!" "The employers in the late contest, with only one or two exceptions, were perfectly convinced not only that they could not carry on their business any longer without a loss of capital for which they were not prepared, but that they would be unable to retain their markets, to continue their production, or dispose of their goods, unless they could lower prices; in order to do this it was notoriously necessary for them *to reduce the cost of production;* and this not only as a temporary measure, but probably for a continuance, in order to prevent being undersold by foreign competitors."

This is a thoroughly lucid statement of that policy of wage-reduction which is the single idea, the one resort, of the embarrassed manufacturer in England, though it is not so in other countries. The previous pages contain a number of facts, in which I hope that Mr. Greg will see a serious endeavour to deal with his position. A short further answer is attempted in the following sentences.

1. Mr. Greg assumes that there is only one way of cheapening production, namely, by reducing wages. The assumption is not justified. Wage-reduction is only one way among others. The whole history of English manufactures is a history of production constantly cheapened, and wages constantly rising. Production may be cheapened by improved processes, and economising inventions. Nothing is so likely to numb the alertness of the employers in this direction, as the knowledge that they can, whenever they please, save their profits by falling upon the wages of their workmen.

2. Again, Mr. Greg assumes that there is only one way of retaining our trade, namely, by cheapening the cost of production. Is this assumption justified? The recent history of certain branches of the cotton-trade, and of the woollen-trade, shows that it is not; and that a market may be retained, extended, or created, as surely by active facility of adaptation to the tastes of our customers, as by cheapness. Versatility in the production of attractive designs and the combination of new materials is—and by the young and enterprising manufacturers is felt to be—a more hopeful way of fighting our rivals, than gradually reducing the wages of the workmen to the lowest level at which they can keep body and soul together. A cotton manufacturer who turns over Dr. Forbes Watson's illustrations of the productions of the native hand-looms of India, will perceive that there is a field nothing short of boundless for the English power-loom. It is routine and mechanical humdrum that will undo the cotton-trade, if it be undone, and not the wages of the workmen.

3. Is a limitation of supply in the face of an overstocked market

ever justifiable, or is it not? Mr. Greg's argument seems to imply that it is not. Yet surely to put the question is to answer it, for to say that limitation of supply is never justifiable, is simply to say that a manufacturer is bound, under penalty of economic damnation, to continue to produce his goods at a loss until he has exhausted the last pound of his capital and his credit. There is no sin in short time and limited production to meet a temporary glut. It is a natural way of equalising supply and demand. And whatever sin there is in it, must be divided between the employers and the workmen, for Mr. Jackson in his last published words on the subject stated that reduction of production is already going on through short time and entire stoppage. The issue of May and June turned not upon short time in itself, nor on restriction of production, but upon organized short time.

Then, if limitation of supply for a time may be justifiable or necessary, why are the workmen who urged that course (*along with a reduction of their own wages*, be it remembered) to be lectured on the folly of trying artificially to secure higher wages all round, raising the price of the articles of their own consumption, and so forth?

I can only understand Mr. Greg's position on this particular point, by supposing that he regards the present depression of trade, or of the cotton trade, as likely to be permanent, whilst the argument of the leaders of the workmen rested on the assumption that the depression is due to temporary causes, and will pass away when they pass. If the depression is permanent, then of course an artificial limitation of supply would deserve all that Mr. Greg says of it. But the workmen have taken for granted, as most of the employers have done, that the depression is only temporary; and they have a right to be criticised from the point of view of their own hypothesis.

EDITOR.

MR. GLADSTONE'S POLICY AND THE NEW EQUILIBRIUM.

SENSITIVE under the reproach of being wedded to ideas of non-intervention and of peace at any price, Mr. Gladstone has presented his principles of foreign policy in something like a connected view. The method which he has chosen is the most convenient, for here mere abstract rules deserve nothing but distrust. Any minister attempting to frame a code of foreign policy, would either produce something hopelessly vague, or, were it definite, a scheme which, in the course of an average tenure of power, he would surely be obliged to scatter to the winds. Mr. Gladstone, on the contrary, passes in review the acts of various governments with which he has been connected, commends their spirit to our imitation, and indicates some of the questions which may more usefully absorb our activity abroad than such ventures as the annexation of Cyprus, or the protectorate of Asia Minor.

If any one had ever supposed that the opinions of Mr. Gladstone were identical with those of Mr. Cobden, or that extreme caution in undertaking military risks is one of his foibles, there is a passage in his narrative which will at once disarm such a critic. With evident satisfaction he refers to the proposal made to Napoleon III. by Lord Palmerston's Government to join with England in making war upon Germany, with the object of securing the sovereign rights of Denmark in the recalcitrant duchies. When the Danish Conference was held in London, the late Lord Clarendon maliciously endeavoured to make the Austrian plenipotentiaries admit that they were contending for the principle of nationalities. Lord Clarendon having never encouraged Count Cavour, and having held aloof from the English Cabinet throughout the Italian revolution, might fairly make this thrust; but, as regards the Power he was then representing, he was using a two-edged weapon. If there was the amusing inconsistency which delighted Lord Clarendon, in being at once reactionary in Italy and German in Schleswig-Holstein, there was the corresponding inconsistency in the English Ministers, who had encouraged the national movement in Italy, but, in the case of the similar agitation in Schleswig-Holstein, had adopted a rigidly Conservative policy, founded upon adherence to the letter of treaties. Granting, however, that Denmark was clearly in the right, could it be anticipated that the success of foreign intervention in her behalf would be more than momentary? With all her claims to esteem, liberal institutions, good finances, the Protestant religion, Denmark

was evidently not in a position to allow herself the luxury of retaining two unwilling provinces, backed in their disaffection by the great kindred people behind them. In every European complication Germany would have sought the opportunity of solving this question; and as long as it remained open, the European concert, as far, at least, as regards Germany, was practically at an end. But the truth is, the proposed intervention would not have succeeded, and, in all probability, would have led to disasters, greater than any which could have followed from the most adventurous projects of the war party in recent affairs. All the materials for forming a judgment upon this point with incontestable accuracy are at hand. We know that in 1866 the Emperor Napoleon did not consider his army equal to encountering Prussia alone, and that at a time when Austria and the minor states, although defeated, were not disarmed. In 1864, at the date of the English overtures, while the French forces were not greater than they were two years later, and certainly inferior to what they were in the disastrous campaign of 1870, Prussia would have been supported by the whole strength of the Austrian Empire and by the considerable armies of the smaller states. Prussia, again, had then the monopoly of the needle-gun, which she had lost in 1870. In these circumstances, is it probable that the English contingent of about fifty thousand men could ever have filled up the gap between the military strength of France and that of Prussia, aided by an Austrian army of from two to three hundred thousand men, which, as the war of 1866 clearly proved, Austria would have been able to spare for a campaign on the Rhine, after making adequate provision for the invasion of Italy? We wonder whether Mr. Gladstone ever considered what would have become of his own Italians, with Prussia unwilling and France unable to succour them. The laborious work of the Italian revolution would have been undone, and all in order that two provinces which desired to be German might be coerced into continuing Danish! Sedan, it is obvious, would have taken place six years before its time, and we should perhaps have had our share in the capitulation. Fortunate if Mr. Gladstone had not been constrained to break the sequence of his economical reforms, in order to ransom our prisoner army, by the payment of a huge indemnity. He can hardly envy the laurels of M. Emile Ollivier, and yet he involves us in ominous wars with a light, retrospective heart.

In his references to the origin of the Crimean war, Mr. Gladstone is always embarrassed. He is accustomed to say that it was undertaken in defence of the European Concert, but he has lately discovered that in the East the concert of the Powers is of little value, because with two, or at the most three exceptions, each of them subordinates its policy in Turkey to more essential interests elsewhere. This was

the case also in 1854, for the motives of France were simply dynastic, and Count Cavour cared only to advance the Italian cause. Besides, if the European concert is valuable, its application is not limited to the East, but we remember no serious attempt to maintain its action either in the Italian or in the German movements, or during the war of 1870, in all which cases conquerors and victims were left to settle matters by themselves. Mr. Gladstone confounds the pretext with the reasons, which were that the English Government and people were alarmed by the prospect of Russian encroachments, while they believed that the vices of the Turkish Government had been exaggerated, and that when a little administrative inaptitude had worn off, it might be improved, by the help of good advice, into a very defensible system. These opinions are not professed with the same unanimity in the present day, but the real justification of the war is to be found in the fact that the Emperor Nicholas was making himself intolerable in Europe. Some of the less irrational invectives applied to Russia in the present day might, with some allowance for exaggeration, have been accepted as fair descriptions of the Russia of that epoch. If the Czar had been compelled to put his authority to the test in arms, his reputation would have immediately collapsed, but the secret of his power lay in the divided state of Germany; and in order that that favourable condition should not be changed, he weighed like an Alp upon all national aspirations there. He played off Austria against Prussia, or Prussia against Austria, as occasion required, and when these rivals had agreed to compose their quarrels and to co-operate in the work of German unification, the Czar, only varying his tactics, defeated their combined influences by placing himself at the head of the minor States. If the reasons which induced us to engage in the Crimean war are now relegated to the limbo of obsolete politics, it must be owned that the pretext was respectable and the justification complete.

The danger to be apprehended from Russia, having its root in the weakness and divisions of Germany, it is obvious that the aspect of affairs was completely changed by the great transformation of 1866. Our complaint against Mr. Gladstone is that he never seems to have realised the important bearing and the momentous consequences of the Seven Days' war. We are by no means concerned to defend the French Empire, but the tone of Mr. Gladstone's references to the Benedetti Treaty shows how little he appreciates the magnitude of Prince Bismarck's achievements. He is appalled indeed by the result of the War of 1870, but it was that of 1866 which really struck the deadly blow at the old supremacy of France. If the Emperor of the French had suddenly annexed the half of Italy, other objections apart, Germany would certainly have had a right to feel aggrieved at the balance changed to her detriment. But the catastrophe of 1866 represents a much greater disturbance than this. If only

Austria had been excluded from the Confederation, the dualism which had deprived Prussia of all initiative being extinguished, the change would have been great; but the fact is that, whereas Europe in 1815 had given Germany a cumbrous constitution only intended to work for the purpose of defence, Prussia, by her victory in 1866, obtained a liberty of action as wide as that of any other European State, with an addition of territory and population which placed her at once at the head of the military monarchies of the Continent. It was only the English government which appears to have been unaware that the sceptre of military supremacy had already passed from Paris to Berlin. What with direct annexations and obedient confederates, Prussia had gained an accession of twelve million subjects, while the remaining eight millions of non-Austrian Germans accepted the position of Prussia's dependent allies. In the face of this immense change in the distribution of European forces, unchallenged by Europe, was it so very heinous, was it beyond precedent "base," if the French Emperor, at a moment when kingdoms and principalities on his borders were being mediatized or annexed, should have supposed that Belgium, which had been in turn French, Spanish, Austrian, German, which had received one destination at the Congress of Vienna and another sixteen years later,—that Belgium with no homogeneous nationality, without even a distinctive language, might be left as compensation to France? The French might fairly ask whether Europe intended inflexibly to maintain the barriers which checked their expansion, while those which existed to their advantage were thrown down with impunity.

Mr. Gladstone's allusions to the proposed Benedetti Treaty seem to correspond but little with the facts. In an essay which he wrote soon after the outbreak of the War of 1870, he oddly contrasted the alacrity of the Prussians to renounce all claim to Belgium with the apparent reluctance of the French, as if it were not a piece of inexpensive virtue to abjure the share of spoil assigned to another. As in the early debates of the Session, he still considers his Belgian policy a masterpiece of diplomatic skill. The truth is, if Belgium was ever in any real danger, which is doubtful, that danger had certainly ceased before the outbreak of the war, for the draft treaty only represented an effort to arrive at a compromise, which Prussia indeed seemingly encouraged, but perhaps never seriously entertained, and before the Hohenzollern incident had definitively abandoned. The whole story will perhaps never be accurately known, but the leading facts are patent. Napoleon III. was sufficiently sagacious to understand the significance of the national movements which dated from the year 1848. He was bent upon avoiding his uncle's fault; he would never incur the hatred of a nation; his wars were only to be diplomatic,—against sovereigns that is, not against Peoples. At the same time he wished to secure

his dynasty by an addition, a very modest addition, to the French territory. His ambition did not, as was popularly supposed, go to the length of expecting the Rhine frontier, but he was anxious at least to make good the penal loss of territory which the Bonapartes had entailed upon France. In 1814, the Allies, with a wise moderation, largely due to the Duke of Wellington's influence, resolved to leave France with the territorial limits of 1792, so that her area was to be again exactly what it was before the revolutionary war. In 1815, however, as a punishment for Napoleon's return from Elba, and as a compensation to the Allies for the Waterloo campaign, France was deprived of portions of territory, on her eastern side, which involved a loss of about a million inhabitants. Although he was sometimes flattered by larger schemes, the Emperor's fixed idea was to recover these lost districts. In order to realise his great project for the aggrandizement of Prussia in security, Prince Bismarck required the acquiescence, that is to say, the friendly neutrality of France. In an evil hour for himself and for his dynasty, the Emperor listened to the voice of the charmer. His part of the compact he performed, for in the decisive hour Prussia was able to denude the Rhine provinces of troops. After Sadowa, the Emperor put in his claim to the compensation, which he believed to have been promised, but the charmer had become much less accommodating. Napoleon III. would then have forthwith unsheathed his sword, but he found that he had no army. There was nothing to do but to make the best of things, for a season, at least, but subsequently negotiations were renewed. Germany, it was said, could not give up a yard of German soil, but there was Belgium. "And England?" said the Emperor, but the good-natured German was quite reassuring, and his Majesty fell headlong into the trap.

If the Emperor's smaller scheme had been carried out, it would have been a fraud upon the French, perhaps, for the compensation would have been inadequate, but we cannot see who else would have had a right to complain, nor are we struck by the iniquity of the larger project; but Prince Bismarck probably displayed his strong political sense, when he decided that the question between France and Germany was one of those which must be fought out and which admit of no compromise. With his usual courage, he determined that the responsibility should not be shifted to the shoulders of posterity, and in 1869 he was able to inform the ambassador of a great Power, that if in 1866 Prussia would not have feared France, her measures were then completed for making victory certain. The Benedetti draft was only to be used to work upon English opinion.

"England," says Mr. Gladstone, "in 1870, stamped out in a fortnight the embers of the Benedetti project." That scheme consisted of two parts, relating first to the advantages to be secured to Germany, and secondly, to the compensations to be given to France. So far

from having stamped out this project, Mr. Gladstone never asked the German Government to give up its share of the bargain, and in fact all the German conditions were fulfilled during the war, with the addition of Alsace-Lorraine and the French milliards at its termination. As to Belgium, if Prince Bismarck had decided upon yielding it to France, there would have been no Franco-German war. It was not Mr. Gladstone's treaty which prevented beaten France from making new acquisitions, but Marshal Moltke's victories. It is obvious that there could have been no danger to Belgium, unless Germany and France had been acting together, and to any such concert the war of course put an end.

Never having sympathised with the German movement, never having understood its magnitude, Mr. Gladstone appears to us to have failed altogether to perceive how usefully it comes to our aid in lessening those onerous engagements which, he rightly apprehends, we may soon discover to be excessive. On the morrow of Sadowa our foreign policy might well have been reconsidered. Up to that time we had been constantly engaged in forming barriers against France and against Russia. Mr. Gladstone discards the assumption that we guaranteed the independence of Belgium with any view to our own safety, and ridicules the notion of fleets sailing from Antwerp to make a landing in England. As regards the fear of invasion from Antwerp we are agreed, and, indeed, we go further, for it is impossible to study the Franco-German war without seeing how great are the difficulties of invasions even where every appliance is at hand, and where circumstances are adverse to the resistance. Convinced that, as long as England retains her maritime superiority, and the people their present spirit, an invader would find his task impossible, we are disposed to suspect that when such fears are suggested by competent military men, it is only that they can find no other ostensible ground for urging an increase of warlike preparations. But we persist in believing, whatever may be said to the contrary, that the anxiety of England and of her associates, as to the fate of Belgium, was entirely due to the fact that, failing special precautions, so nondescript a country would fall into the hands of France, and, bringing to her resources the addition of a rich, industrious, and populous province, make her a dangerously powerful neighbour. No other valid reason can we see why the treasure and blood of England should be pledged to the maintenance of an independent Belgium. Whatever service this prosperous State may be rendering to the world it is hardly of such a kind or amount that it should bear a charmed life. That the competitors of our industry should be unplagued by excessive military service or unweighted by much taxation is highly convenient to them, but nevertheless we much doubt whether, if a jury of experts were

consulted, the majority would not declare that it would be better for the Belgians themselves to be incorporated in a larger state. Does any one suppose that the transfer would really be painful? Another power is now suspected, and apparently by Mr. Gladstone, of casting its eyes upon Belgium; but if the Great Napoleon had made peace before the fortunes of France were at so low an ebb, Belgium would probably have been French; nor is there any reason to suppose that the people would have been less contented with their lot than was Alsace. If in 1815 too little account was taken of national tendencies, there surely has lately been a disposition, much shared by Mr. Gladstone, to attribute to Peoples far greater fixity of opinion and purpose, as regards the choice of a nationality, than they can justly claim. In 1866 the people of Baden were so violently opposed to Prussia that they forced their Grand Duke, who was the son-in-law, the attached son-in-law, and even the convinced partizan of the King of Prussia, to declare war against him, and to enter into an alliance with Austria. Baden was mulcted in its war indemnity; but two or three years later there was no German State in which the enthusiasm for Prussia was greater, and nowhere in 1870 was the call to arms against France more heartily obeyed. Observe, again, what is passing in Alsace, which but yesterday was spoken of as another Poland, doomed to eternal sorrow. Last year Alsace was visited by a well-known French writer, who, under the name of Saint Genest, parades a narrow patriotism with the strongest anti-German bias. He reported that never, he was sure, no, never would Alsace become reconciled to Germany, but that he had one, just one fear, namely, that the party in favour of autonomy was gradually gaining ground. Thus, according to this most unwilling witness, five years had been enough to make a considerable body of the population contemplate with serenity their final separation from France—a step, and it must be owned a long step, towards ultimate union with Germany. Lastly, we had always supposed that the Italians at least, after many centuries, had learnt to take the measure of their Austrian masters; but a recent and admiring biographer of Count Cavour reproduces a statement, which we remember to have heard at the time, namely, that one chief reason why the Piedmontese statesman was anxious to hurry on the war of liberation was that, according to the apprehensions of the Italian party, the gifted Archduke, who afterwards perished in Mexico, was beginning to succeed in reconciling Lombardy to Habsburgh rule.

But, whatever may be thought of the Belgian question, it is certain that in another quarter the resurrection of Germany ought to have enabled us to feel absolutely secure. Just as it was in the competitions of the German States that the Emperor Nicholas found the sources of his strength, so, with Germany unified, all reasonable fear of dangerous

encroachments upon Europe by Russia and her Slav allies had vanished. That Germany should place a limit to the Russian advance is essential, because, owing to the distribution of the Slav Peoples—who, for instance, form the majority in Bohemia and Moravia close up to the Southern frontier of Prussia—negligence might lead to the great Teutonic Empire being literally circumvented. If Russia were to obtain in Austro-Hungary, where the Slavs are the most numerous race, an influence equal to that now exercised by Germany at Vienna and at Pest, the danger would certainly be great. That the two great Powers should hitherto have appeared as allies is not inconsistent with this view. The German government is too enlightened to hold that it is by opposing Russia on ground where her moral right is so clear as in Bulgaria, or by the help of such an ally as Turkey, that a great national movement can be kept within those bounds of safety which prudence indicates and which are far from having been already attained. It is for the common interest of mankind that a conflict between these two races should be long postponed, and if possible never occur, but if such a war should unhappily become necessary, it would be waged on the part of Germany with a more unswerving spirit than she has ever yet displayed. All the unassimilated elements, all the disaffected, all the hostile, which in a war against France would be indifferent, or sullen or even reluctant, against Russia would be alert, unanimous and eager; the Jews, detached by their cosmopolitan intelligence—the Roman Catholics who are estranged—the Poles, who are both alien and adverse. As long as Germany sees no danger to herself, there can be none to more remote countries. She knows that she would be the first victim, and until her empire show signs of decay, we may dismiss apprehension and trust our safety to the guardianship of the manifest, the inevitable, the destined antagonist of Slav domination.

However great the services which Mr. Gladstone has rendered during the Eastern crisis, his action would have been still more efficacious if he had more accurately appreciated the significance of Germany's present position. When he imprudently admitted that barriers against Russia were required, he conceded half the case of the Turkish party. If Russia were really a danger to liberty, to civilization, to England, common sense inclined to make the best of the Turkish barrier to her advance; it might stand in need of repair, but, at any rate, it was ancient, existing, tried, efficient. When Mr. Gladstone proposed that we should join our arms to those of Russia to coerce the Porte and to create a belt of independent States, which were to be so many obstacles to the Czar's advance, average Englishmen, who, as Lord Beaconsfield once said, in foreign affairs never see farther than their noses, were fairly puzzled. They were

quite ready to believe that Russia was not so black as she was painted, but to expect her to enter upon a course of expensive and hazardous measures, with a view to raise bulwarks against herself, was conduct too angelic to be human. Those who have considered the question more maturely are able to tell Mr. Gladstone why his scheme was visionary. In the first place, he speaks of creating independent States, as if that were as easy as to build an ironclad. At a time when the small independent States have nearly all disappeared or are threatened in their existence, it does not appear very hopeful to set about fabricating them afresh, but Mr. Gladstone requires his ironclad to be instinct with perpetual motion, and that in one particular direction. It is very evident that when he spoke of independent States he really meant them dependent, in the sense of their assuming an attitude towards Russia agreeable to the supposed interests of our country. Now, our antecedents with these people were of the worst; they knew perfectly well that we had been constantly in league with the degrading despotism under which they lived; England, liberal and scrupulous everywhere else, against them alone by the mouths of her statesmen, her ambassadors, and her consuls, had lent herself to systematic suppressions of truth and suggestions of falsehood. How were we at once to efface the past, and ingratiate ourselves with these despised and rejected clients?

In the case of Italy, it is true, our influence may be said to have equalled that of France after the war of 1859, but towards Italy our bearing had always been sympathetic. The tone of travellers, of the press, of our public men, had for years been pre-eminently friendly. Besides, after 1859, it became our interest as well as our inclination to encourage the Italians in every adventure which helped to complete the imperfect work of Villafranca. As regards the Slavs, we have no such advantages, least of all that of being able to help them in any new enterprise. It is to this especially that we desire to call Mr. Gladstone's attention. He appears to have thought that Bulgaria once provided with a decent government, the mission of Russia would be at an end. He takes no notice whatever of the Slav movement, which raises far wider issues. As long as the Slavs in Turkey, in Hungary, in Austria are treated as an inferior race, the ties which bind them to Russia are indissoluble. We are far from saying that in all these countries they will march together until they become dominant; but they are conscious of the fact that their emancipation in some cases, the degree of respect in which they are held in others, depend principally upon the degree of power and authority to which Russia may attain. They know perfectly well that after Sadowa no European State would have dared to treat a population claiming kindred with Germany as Slavs have been treated by Turks, and even by Magyars.

If Mr. Gladstone thinks that nations only care in these days about being comfortable at home, he might contemplate with advantage the action of Servia and Roumania in the late war. They, at least, had no complaint to make against the Turks; they were not only unmolested but self-governing.

We cannot, therefore, but think that the Liberal position would have been logically and strategically stronger if the organs of the party, instead of offering a scheme for repressing Russia by means of independent States, to be created by her own policy—a scheme which could not possibly inspire any confidence in its efficacy, and which we believe to be absolutely illusory—they had shown that there was really nothing to be feared, and that no barriers at all were required. When Mr. Gladstone is represented by the Philo-Turks as cloaking the aims of Russia or as being blind to their character, there is some slight foundation for the charge. The benevolent enterprises of nations are seldom unmixed with objects of patriotic ambition. Can any one doubt that English, French, or Germans, situated as Russia is towards Bulgaria, geographically, historically, with the same community of race and religion, would not have annexed it long ago? But this movement is not merely political as well as philanthropic, it is also intuitive and natural, and we shut our eyes to its true importance if we refuse to realise that Russia is instinctively advancing towards the Southern Sea. We are far from questioning that the Bulgarian sympathies of the Russian people were sincere; the agitation, we fully believe, was only unconsciously politic; we have here to do not with aggression but rather with expansion—not with conquest so much as with migration. By remembering that Russia is young, by recalling the means by which the older States have been gradually formed, we shall better understand the situation. Let us acknowledge that the process in those older States would hardly have borne the fierce light of the present century. Charges of hypocrisy or imputations of territorial greed against the Russian nation or government would come badly from those who have planted upon so many distant shores, what Lord Erskine called "the restless foot of English adventure." The Belgians, for whom Mr. Gladstone eloquently pleads, and the Swiss, never attack a neighbour, but neither would they submit to the payment of a halfpenny income-tax in order to liberate a hemisphere. It is only the conquering nations that are generous.

The Russian side of this great question, as distinguished from the Bulgarian or Montenegrin, appears entirely to have escaped Mr. Gladstone's notice. For us, it possesses an interest which certainly does not attach to the acts of petty communities just emerging from barbarism. What will be the ultimate effects of this war upon Russia and upon her influence in Europe? If the last arrival amongst the

nations, left shivering in the anteroom, be allowed by the older guests to come and warm himself at the fire; if the Colossus be suffered to come down to the Ægean, to bathe his feet in those quickening waters, and to bask in the Mediterranean sun, will his genius ripen, or will his vigour fade? Is it a peculiarity of the Arctic zone that minds singularly receptive of each successive philosophical system, whether of German, French, or English invention, curiously eloquent in their exposition, seem to be stricken with sterility as to all results? Rapid is the growth, luxuriant the flower, scanty the yield. It recalls the almond under our northern sky, which blossoms but cannot bear fruit.

We may venture, however, to observe that Mr. Gladstone seldom sympathises with the emotions of great nations. As long as a people is weak and oppressed, no one can be more generously eager to serve them. He willed that Italy should be strong, but chiefly with a view to preventing the recurrence of hostile inroads; he gives new provinces to Greece, in order that she may stretch to the dimensions which are almost necessary to her existence; but he has no sympathy with Germany asserting her right to be a nation, nor, on the other hand, with France, startled by suddenly receiving a neighbour with doubled military strength. Again, during the American war he is on the side of the South, and cannot enter into the feelings of the great Republic; preferring, if we may imitate the language of Livy, her unity defended amidst disaster, to peace at the price of disruption. In the same way with Russia. Mr. Gladstone finds a terrible stumbling-block in the Bessarabian question. He knows perfectly well that all the work of liberation ever accomplished in that part of the world was done by Russia. It is all very well to glorify Mr. Canning, but unfortunately he had passed away, and had been succeeded by a minister unfriendly to the Greek cause, so that in the end it was to the Czar that Greece was indebted for her emancipation. Once, in the course of these many fertilizing wars, Russia was beaten by the intervention of the Western powers, who professed to believe in the perfectibility of Turkish rule. Under an impression which was erroneous, and upon a plea which was unjust, they resolved to degrade Russia from her position as a Danubian Power. The erroneous impression related to the commercial and political importance of the Danube, which at the time of the Crimean war, and, indeed, up to yesterday, was enormously over-rated; and the unjust plea was that Russia had wilfully impeded the navigation of the stream, the fact being that the discovery of the art by which a river flowing into a non-tidal sea may be prevented from becoming choked with sand, was subsequently made by the English engineer of the Danubian Commission. Yet Mr. Gladstone, with all these facts before him, expected Russia after her recent triumph to go on

wearing the badge of defeat and humiliation, because, forsooth, it is assumed (we are aware of no proof), that some seventy thousand border Roumanians will object to go back to their former allegiance and to the cognate province, from which twenty years ago they were arbitrarily detached. As to the grievance of the Principality, the case was pitiable; the compensation offered was immeasurably more valuable than the ceded district. Instead of the dead arm of the Danube, the Roumanians received that which by the European Commission has been patiently improved, and is now the main channel of the Delta, together with three harbours on the Black Sea, —an inestimable boon, for, practically, Roumania has hitherto possessed no seaboard, to her great chagrin, and the river is closed by ice during many months of the year. No one, again, can suppose that the intended retrocession announced by Russia at Berlin, at Vienna, in London early in June, and once more to Colonel Wellesley at the beginning of August, last year, had never been mooted in the Czar's communications with the Prince and his Ministers. And yet Mr. Gladstone gravely reproached the British Plenipotentiaries with not having prevented this act of restitution, and, in his most solemn accents, declared that it was "a question between Russia and justice, between Russia and freedom!"

The lack of a simpler line on the part of so powerful a critic is the more to be regretted, inasmuch as the fault of artificiality is that with which the policy of her Majesty's Government may principally be reproached. Erring in this way they certainly are, when they seek to push the Austro-Hungarian monarchy into courses which any real friend, aware of the very peculiar conditions of its existence, would know to be fraught with peril. It would carry us far were we to enter upon this question, but we must observe, in passing, that the levity with which policies are shaped for Austria from outside is difficult to match. M. Gambetta, for instance, virtual ruler of France, has taken care to announce that he is satisfied with the Berlin Congress, because it has broken up the alliance of the three Emperors—because, that is, Austria is now set free, while England has come out of her isolation. Mr. Gladstone's view of the effect of our Asiatic Protectorate, should it become real, in rather lessening our future participation in European politics, is here the more accurate; but we return to M. Gambetta, who is evidently angling for an Austro-British alliance. His readiness to show the cloven foot is no bad justification for the measures, which Prince Bismarck may have in contemplation for strengthening the position of Germany, but, meanwhile, we would call attention to the French statesman's restricted knowledge of his subject. All M. Gambetta's organs in the press are almost savagely Anti-Slav, and we should like to inquire upon what party in Austria the Republican Chieftain

is relying. Of the three great nationalities which go to make up the Monarchy, the Germans, and the German Liberals in particular, are strongly averse to any military policy, especially to one directed against the German Empire; the Magyars, again—except such as happen to be Ultramontane, a party decimated at the recent elections—fearing above all things absorption by the Slavs, and not a little alarmed by any signs of reactionary policy at Court, are accustomed to lean upon the German alliance, and it was they who mainly prevented any help being given to France in 1870. If an anti-German policy found any favour at Vienna, it would be with the Court and with the Court section of the aristocracy, resting only upon the Clericals and upon the Slavs, both of whom M. Gambetta is constantly denouncing. The decisions of the Congress having been notoriously agreeable to Prince Bismarck's views, and the German Chancellor having shown some aptitude for suiting the means to his ends, we incline to the belief that he has not been carefully forging fetters for his country, and remain unconvinced by M. Gambetta's sanguine diagnosis.

Artificiality, again, is the charge which we bring against the arrangements for limiting the influence of Russia, especially in Eastern Roumelia. Many forms of government are familiar to us—monarchy, absolute or limited; republics, aristocratic or popular—but government by committees of consuls or by international commissions is a monstrous birth. Then it seems to be considered a great stroke of policy to prevent the emigration of the Mussulman population, a movement which is both natural and salutary. Let it not be supposed that the result of the war has been to establish equality of races and creeds in Bulgaria, or even in Eastern Roumelia, although the Congress may have sought to decorate the slovenly and incongruous edifice which it has constructed on the south of the Balkans by flimsy decrees, which are intended to coax the spirit of the age. The change effected by the war is really far more sweeping, for, all cobweb restrictions notwithstanding, authority has virtually passed from out of the hands of the once dominant nation into those of the subject. Our aim should rather be to facilitate the Mussulman exodus, and for this purpose it would be much wiser to saddle the liberated provinces with a reasonable indemnity to the emigrating inhabitants, than to burden them with the interest upon loans, of which the proceeds never reached the provinces, and which the Porte had repudiated before the war. In one section of our society, a phrase used by the lecturer before an aristocratic assembly, has excited a lively sympathy with the displaced Mussulmans. He called them "the landlords of Turkey." The description is true of the Mahommedans of Bosnia, who are not Turks; but it is by ourselves that these were condemned to dispossession. The Bosnian Begs

are indeed territorial chiefs; hence their obdurate resistance to the Austrian occupation. But probably some amongst us have been picturing to themselves a body of Bulgarian squires, with parks and family pews and polished marble recording the virtues of departed ancestors; but in the Bulgaria of real life there are no parks; in the mosques there are no family pews; and least of all has the Turk any ancestors. When they have Christians or other subjects beneath them, the Osmanlis may have something in common with aristocracies, but the caste within itself is the most democratic society in the world. Far more even than in France is the career open to all the able; hence, perhaps, those occasional spasms of intermittent vitality which baffle the West.

Again, as regards our dealings with Turkey for the sake of the Turks, we bring a double charge of impolitic ingenuity. When a province is inhabited by a majority hostile to the Porte, we do our utmost to bolster up the sinking authority of the Government; we screen its torpor, sometimes even its ferocity; we cheapen the subject race, and calumniate the Power that befriends them. Is not all this activity wasted? and would it not be better, even for Turkey, that such a province should be quietly lopped off? "Yes," it is said, "but Constantinople?" As defenders of Constantinople, we reply, the Turks are far from being strengthened by the retention of distant, unruly possessions. Those who have studied the idiosyncrasy of this strange race and government will be rather disposed to believe that the capital would be more efficiently protected against an enemy known to be near; and, therefore, that the nearest strategical lines would be the best. After all, they ought only to be expected to hold out until succour can arrive, from those who may think it their interest to afford it. While, however, we cannot approve the wisdom of seeking to preserve the Turkish dominion over alien and mutinous populations, we hold, on the contrary, that within the limits, whatever they may be, which are left to the Sultan's authority, that authority ought to be recognised as supreme. Schemes for placing Christians or Mahommedans upon a footing of political equality we believe to be wholly misplaced. When the time for religious equality has arrived, the hour for discarding the Turkish Government will have struck. Meanwhile, let us not impair the power and energy of the Government by exacting concessions which, if sincere, only humiliate it in the eyes of its subjects, and, when known by rumour in the distant parts of the empire, produces a state of chaotic insubordination. If we wish Turkey to live, we must respect the theocratic basis of the State. "It is a great part of wisdom," says Burke, "to know how much of evil you will tolerate." The idea of turning the Ottoman Empire into a modern State, with laws and regular finances and equal religions,

ought never to have been entertained, and should be quickly abandoned. England wishes the Osmanlis to defend what remains of their dominion stoutly, and perhaps—no one can say more, for they are incalculable—they will be ready to do so, but the Turkey for which they fight must be a Turkey of their own, not a land of consular commissions or of British residents.

But of all the artificial schemes which have been proposed, the most utterly hopeless is that which would look to Greece for a bulwark against Russia. If we choose to send an army to the Slav provinces of Turkey, we might invest the Greeks with authority, but it must not be supposed that their partisans amongst the people are sufficiently numerous to render their rule self-supporting. As our agents, any other nationality would do equally well—the Dutch, for instance, or the Danes—and indeed better, for strangers would have no bad antecedents and would not start by being already odious. Very misleading is the quotation from the Duke of Wellington, who talked of re-establishing a Greek empire at Constantinople, under a Western prince. At the time when the Duke wrote, and until a comparatively recent date, subsequent to the Crimean War, it was believed that the non-Mussulman population of European Turkey was in race, as well as in religion, Greek. It was, if we mistake not, the last Lord Strangford who discovered the existence of the Slavs. What the Duke evidently meant was, that he would give the whole Peninsula, including Constantinople and the mouths of the Danube, to the Christian population, formed into a new Monarchical State. Whether the Duke would have modified his opinion, had he learnt that, among the subject races, by far the most powerful element was one in close affinity to Russia, it is impossible to say. Certainly, he was far too sagacious to suppose that the Hellenic kingdom, with its fifteen hundred thousand inhabitants, together with a germane population of little more than a million, scattered over the Ottoman dominions and the islands, could form a bulwark against the hundred millions of Slavs, who obey or sympathize with Russia. Even if we confidently accepted native statistics and believed all that inaccurate Greece may dare in ethnology, we might as well think of looking to Portugal, as a sufficient set-off against the military predominance of Germany. Nothing could be more illiberal than the way in which the Greeks were lately used to warn away the Slavs from their own seaboard. Mr. Gladstone, who has proved by more than words his sincere affection for the Greek cause, is certainly guiltless of having ever employed it to limit the measure of Slav emancipation; but this is an instructive example of the way in which the principle of nationality is sometimes pushed, by its adversaries, to the extreme of absurdity, in order to defeat the objects of those who have the development of nations in view. It is not because a foreign element happens to have lodged itself in seaport towns that a country ought

to be denied its access to the sea. Marseilles has not been always French, but had it continued distinctively foreign, it would not any the less be the great emporium of Southern France. In the same way, the northern coast, from Dunkirk almost as far as Normandy, is occupied by a population which, about a century ago, as to race and language, was rather Dutch or Flemish than French. Towns may belong ethnologically to one nation, but geographically, politically, commercially to another—like "unredeemed" and, as we believe, never-to-be-redeemed Trieste. Add to this, that a foreign element, when it is not too numerous, may play a part useful to its adopted country and profitable to itself. The Armenians, the Jews, the Greek merchants themselves, the Alsatians formerly in France, and the Germans in Russia—of late rather discarded, as we regret to learn—are illustrations of our meaning.

Of all States, as we ought never to allow ourselves to forget, England is the one which is the least qualified to follow up an artificial policy. This subject has recently been treated in these pages, and we need only say that no conviction has sunk more deeply into the minds of those, who occupy themselves with such studies, than that of the incompatibility which exists between free institutions and the pursuit of an elaborate, or even of a consecutive external policy. The difficulty is much aggravated by our insular position, for the vicissitudes of Continental nations, alternately invaders and invaded, brings home to the popular mind facts and apprehensions, which in England elude its grasp. Russia, let us further note, has the twofold advantage of being better constructed than any other State for successfully working an artificial system in her dealings with foreign countries, and, at the same time, that of usually obeying a natural and instinctive impulse.

Immediately after the Crimean and Italian wars, the apprehension was general that the French Empire was becoming dangerously great. Some, indeed, connecting the rise of France with the resuscitation of Italy, the progress of Spain and with the foundation of a Mexican Empire, were disturbed by the presentiment of a formidable move in advance by the whole of the Latin race. The German transformation of 1866 dispelled these visions, and showed that we should only have been wasting our strength, had we suffered ourselves to be led, by eloquent voices, into wars about Savoy and Nice. Just as the unification of Germany counterbalanced the supposed effects of French activity in Italy and elsewhere, so it may well turn out that Europe will recover its equilibrium when, following in the footsteps of the Italians and the Germans, the Slavs have attained to their just position. In order to be as precise as possible, we may state that, in our opinion, Russia should be allowed to come down to the Ægean, while the western portion of the Balkan Peninsula might be placed under other influences. There would be no

danger in this extension, were we to abstain from nagging at the great Teutonic movement, which has not yet reached the landmarks of its full development. Especially is it necessary that, instead of chafing against that which is fated, we should resign ourselves to leaving the German Empire to give the form which it prefers to its relations with Austria. Germany's internal malady, which has its roots in the oppressive conditions of military service, points to the pressing necessity of distributing that burden over a wider area of population; for, in the face of French preparations and of M. Gambetta's equivocal hints, disarmament, never very probable, is out of the question. The future of European politics largely depends upon the respective positions of the Slav and German races, and upon the character of their reciprocal relations. We are not given to be apprehensive, but, were the Teutonic movement to make a sudden stride in advance—were Germany, with the magical rapidity of 1866, to attain to the old limits of the empire, while Russia and the Slavs are repressed—some danger might possibly threaten the liberties of Europe. If, however, as the wish of some is, both here and abroad, a great league were to be formed against both Russia and Germany, those nations would conspire together, and we might even see them young and faithful, poor and brave, Goths in energy and valour, one of them at least more than Roman in discipline and science, pour down upon the luxurious societies of the West, where symptoms of decrepitude are visible. But if, instead of consuming our energy in futile intrigues or in stale combinations, we applied ourselves to fostering the elements of a new equilibrium, no nobler work could be found for English statesmen than to aid in fixing the bounds, within which these great races are to have their being. Difficult and complicated will be the questions which may arise, especially when the inevitable moment is come for the liquidation of the Austrian Empire. In order, however, that our voice may be heard, the tone and temper of our policy must undergo a change which, even from other points of view, will not appear detrimental. Here also apply the admirable words of Count de Montalivet, in which he lately censured the prevalent but imprudent notion that the controlling body in the State ought to represent opinions antagonistic to those of the popular branch of the Legislature. "Un contrôle hostile irrite, passionne, et détruit; un contrôle ami calme, modère, et conserve."

But some one may say: "I agree that Russia is travelling surely towards the Mediterranean, and that she will arrive there, sooner or later, but later let it be." There is much to be answered. When a movement is natural, when it is instinctive, when its ultimate success is fated, by resisting you strengthen, by thwarting you anger it. Is it not possible that by keeping up this irritation from without, you may be counteracting some domestic tendency, within

the rival State, which, if left to work itself out, would put an end to all your fears? Observe, too, what occurred in regard to Germany: Europe opposed the popular demand of the Germans, and, for a while, with success; but nothing so much contributed to prepare the ground for Prince Bismarck's mission as the discouraging sense of impotence, to settle even so small a question as that of Schleswig-Holstein, which from that time forth oppressed the German mind. If Europe had yielded, there would only have been a German princeling the more: the result of our momentary triumph was that, brooding over her wrongs, husbanding her strength, Germany, in the fulness of time, in lieu of the petty duke whom we had refused to tolerate, presented us with an Emperor, a real Imperator.

Incomprehensible to us is the undignified jealousy excited here by the idea of Russia acquiring an Ægean harbour. Even supposing her maritime progress to be rapid beyond all precedent, for long years she would only be fattening a prey for our ironclads. As we pointed out two years ago in these pages, nothing could be more agreeable to our Asiatic interests, and were Russia a Mediterranean power, we should hold pledges for her pacific bearing in Afghanistan which are altogether lacking at present. For purposes of aggression, a state is often weakened by the extent of its possessions, and Germany would be far less formidable were her strength distributed, according to the bright wisdom of our Imperialists, over colonies and distant fiefs. The Great Napoleon, when the Russian alliance was of the highest moment, was unwilling to sanction the extension of Russia beyond the Balkans, because he wished her to act as a thorn in our side in Asia, although the rivalry of the two powers there was, at that time, but dimly foreshadowed. For this purpose it was indispensable to find a nation, whose territory presented no vulnerable points in Europe, for our blockades of Russian ports do more injury to our own commerce than to hers, and if we attempted to land expeditionary forces we should only be facing new Walcherens. That will always be the policy of any ambitious monarch or minister who, aiming at supremacy in Europe, will desire to see Russia herself engaged and paralysing the action of England upon a distant scene. The antagonism which vexes us on our Indian frontier is but the echo of the impolitic antagonism which we have set up in the Slav provinces of Turkey. This is not a question between "imperial and economic" systems, but rather one upon which prudent counsellors of either school would think alike. The obvious and the easy course is here the just and the politic, and we are convinced that Machiavelli as well as Cobden would be found voting in our lobby.

A portion of Mr. Gladstone's exertions in the past have been devoted to vindicating treaties and European law, and he is anxious that England should reserve her strength for this mission in the

future. Nothing, we believe, is more hopeless than to endeavour to frame an automatic policy upon such a basis as this. In civil life laws can be rigidly enforced, because there is a power competent to repeal them when they are unjust, or to modify them if they have ceased to be applicable. In international affairs, there is no such authority, and the consequence is that each State will cling to the treaties which it approves, and disregard those which are opposed to its interests or to its inclinations. In every one of the cases cited by Mr. Gladstone, his appeal to treaty rights, or to international law, was in favour of a cause which, upon other grounds, and for its own sake, he was anxious to serve. The *Trent* affair rather stands by itself, for there the rights of individuals and the inviolability of the ambassadorial character were involved, and not merely the aggregate rights of a community, but the sympathies of Mr. Gladstone and perhaps of the majority of the nation having been with the Confederate rebellion, no little satisfaction was felt at the North being caught tripping, and an excuse for sending an army to Halifax was not unwelcome. England, says Mr. Gladstone, was the only power which in 1870 rose to vindicate the public law about the Black Sea; but England, it should be added, was, and is still, the only power which considers itself interested in handicapping Russia in those secluded waters. Lastly, when Mr. Gladstone appealed to treaties in favour of Belgium and in favour of Denmark, he was acting as the partisan, the honourable but avowed partisan of those little States. It is by showing deference to compacts or to enactments which tell against their desires, that private citizens or governments can alone display their disinterested submission to law. Mr. Gladstone's vindication of treaties as to Denmark lost all its force from the fact that in the case of Italy, where he sympathised with the popular movement, he never uttered a word of censure upon systematic violations of treaties and of international law, accompanied by much intrigue and perfidy. Again, in the recent war, would Mr. Gladstone condemn the conduct of Roumania, or even that of Servia, although each of these principalities was guilty, the latter flagrantly guilty, of the grossest breach of international law? Thanks to the initiative of our Government in proposing the Conference at Constantinople, Russia was supplied with a *casus belli*, and all her proceedings were perfectly regular: but supposing this otherwise; supposing the Czar, unable to abandon the Bulgarians, had been obliged to declare a war technically unjustifiable, would the Russian cause have lost a single adhesion? Certainly not, as we conjecture, for the common sense of mankind breaks loose from these formal bonds. To stereotype treaties is to condemn Europe to immobility, and often to perpetuate pernicious rights. Substantial, and not formal, considerations are those which alone should guide the foreign policy of nations.

In every case where Mr. Gladstone claims to have distinguished

his action from that of Mr. Cobden's school, the conclusion appears to us irresistible that the precepts from which he departed were conceived in a spirit of wisdom superior to that of the example which he has set. The Alabama indemnity, which he had the courage to offer, would never have been necessary if, having long posed as the implacable enemies of slavery, our neutrality in the American conflict had been to the North benevolent. Few will regret that the French Emperor, as he reminds us with some asperity, prevented Mr. Gladstone from engaging us in the Danish hostilities; or again, that after much hesitation he finally abandoned the project of going to war for the Black Sea restrictions.[1] The failure, on his part, to perceive how the equilibrium of Europe had been affected by the growth of German power, was, at any rate, disastrous to his own Government and to his party. The addition to our forces in 1870, unnecessary as against France, ludicrously inadequate as against Germany, placed the Government in financial difficulties, in which it lost the bloom of its prestige. It is generally fatal to a party to be obliged to adopt measures at variance with its reputed principles. When Protestants emancipate the Roman Catholics, or Protectionists repeal the Corn Laws, or Conservative ministers propose household suffrage, we know that the end of their reign is at hand. The whole tenor of Mr. Gladstone's administration had been to lead the country to thoughts of peace and economy, and it seemed to lose its vital energy from the epoch when it felt compelled to enter upon a course of increased armaments and military reforms. Excellent in themselves, those reforms, both in their immediate and in their remote effects, were prejudicial to the interests of the Liberal party. We have always held that a strong and popular military caste is the element which, in modern societies, may be most effectually opposed to democratic influences; but, while the lower classes were indifferent, the richer and more aristocratic were bitterly and, we must add, stupidly hostile to Mr. Cardwell's policy. Since then, the recrudescence of warlike and aggressive passions is largely owing to the stimulus applied to military ambition, by the greater encouragement which the reformer gave to officers of cultivated intelligence. The old type of army man, always ready for duty and eager to fight, although popular and even admired, was never in the least influential. Very different is the intellectual soldier, wielding the pen as well as the sword, who now finds his way into various departments of the Government,

(1) This incident has been overlooked, but it is clearly proved by the remarkable despatch of Mr. Odo Russell, who had been sent on a special mission to Versailles in November, 1870, and who found it necessary to remonstrate with Mr. Gladstone's pacific and minimizing allusions to the Black Sea question, at the opening of the session, which were at variance with the warlike tone of Mr. Russell's instructions. It is curious that Mr. Gladstone's government had placed a stringent interpretation upon the Tripartite Treaty of 1856, which has been disavowed by Lord Derby and the present administration.

acquires ascendancy over his chief, excites his alarms, perhaps fascinates his imagination, and succeeds by persuasive arts in committing us to some onward step, which opens to himself the path to fame, and at the same time enables him to reward the little band of clever satellites who, through the press, have been disseminating his favourite opinions, and promoting the common advantage. What with administrative reforms and military, a number of ambitions have been created, which this island is too narrow to contain.

As an alternative to the ministerial policy, Mr. Gladstone's programme will fail to attract, and if, as is not impossible, he may soon regain the public favour, it will be as the apostle of peace and retrenchment. It is laudable to endeavour to wean the popular mind from visions of conquest and dominion; but it will not do to be too ascetic. There was indeed once a monarch of half mankind who left the Palace for the Cloister, submitted the head which had been diademed with many a crown to the tonsure, and discarded Imperial ermine for the cowl; but then the pious Emperor withdrew altogether from the world, and passed his remaining days in gazing upon the everlasting joys which religion shows to the eyes of faith. With the ambitious projects which Mr. Gladstone denounces, we have no sympathy, but if we are to defray expenditure, if we are to maintain armaments, if we are to run risks, the public will prefer the annexation of Egypt, and perhaps even of Asia Minor, to making wars for Portugal, Belgium, Denmark, or for the dry bones of Treaty law.

Intermediate is the position which Mr. Gladstone occupies upon the Eastern Question. He has not been able to convince himself that an alliance with Russia is possible, except upon conditions which narrow her legitimate expansion, and needlessly wound her self-love; but it is to him that we owed, in the war, our divorce from the Turkish alliance. He it was who elevated it to the rank of a dogma—and one of those dogmas which take hold of the conscience and of the heart—that it would be a sin for England to fight for Turkey. At three several epochs the waves of the war tempest surged against the dogma, but they only dashed their fury against adamant. One orator, and one only, is capable of moving the people as deeply, but to him nature has denied both the physical energy and the rhetorical abundance which, on the verge of his seventieth year, Mr. Gladstone has marvellously displayed throughout a protracted and arduous campaign.

The statesman who shall place our relations with Russia upon good and sure foundations will deserve well of England and of India, but it may be that, even as we are writing, it is already too late, and that we shall have to learn, to our sorrow, that these things were hidden from our eyes at the time when they belonged unto our peace.

RALPH A. EARLE.