



BENJAMIN DISRAELI

CONNINGSBY

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CONINGSBY

OR THE NEW GENERATION

BY

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

As a novelist, Benjamin Disraeli belongs to the early part of the nineteenth century. "Vivian Grey" (1826-27) and "Sybil" (1845) mark the beginning and the end of his truly creative period; for the two productions of his latest years, "Lothair" (1870) and "Endymion" (1880), add nothing to the characteristics of his earlier volumes except the changes of feeling and power which accompany old age. His period, thus, is that of Bulwer, Dickens, and Thackeray, and of the later years of Sir Walter Scott--a fact which his prominence as a statesman during the last decade of his life, as well as the vogue of "Lothair" and "Endymion," has tended to obscure. His style, his material, and his views of English character and life all date from that earlier time. He was born in 1804 and died in 1881.

"Coningsby; or, The New Generation," published in 1844, is the best of his novels, not as a story, but as a study of men, manners, and principles. The plot is slight--little better than a device for stringing together sketches of character and statements of political and economic opinions; but these are always interesting and often brilliant. The motive which underlies the book is political. It is, in brief, an attempt to show that the political salvation of England was to be sought in its aristocracy, but that this aristocracy was morally weak and socially ineffective, and that it must mend its ways before its duty to the state could be fulfilled. Interest in this aspect of the book has, of course, to a large extent passed away with the political conditions which it reflected. As a picture of aristocratic life in England in the first part of the nineteenth century it has, however, enduring significance and charm. Disraeli does not rank with the great writers of English realistic fiction, but in this special field none of them has surpassed him. From this point of view, accordingly, "Coningsby" is appropriately included in

this series.

TO HENRY HOPE

It is not because this work was conceived and partly executed amid the glades and galleries of the DEEPDENE that I have inscribed it with your name. Nor merely because I was desirous to avail myself of the most graceful privilege of an author, and dedicate my work to the friend whose talents I have always appreciated, and whose virtues I have ever admired.

But because in these pages I have endeavoured to picture something of that development of the new and, as I believe, better mind of England, that has often been the subject of our converse and speculation.

In this volume you will find many a thought illustrated and many a principle attempted to be established that we have often together partially discussed and canvassed.

Doubtless you may encounter some opinions with which you may not agree, and some conclusions the accuracy of which you may find cause to question. But if I have generally succeeded in my object, to scatter some suggestions that may tend to elevate the tone of public life, ascertain the true character of political parties, and induce us for the future more carefully to distinguish between facts and phrases, realities and phantoms, I believe that I shall gain your sympathy, for I shall find a reflex to their efforts in your own generous spirit and enlightened mind.

GROSVENOR GATE: May Day 1844.

PREFACE

'CONINGSBY' was published in the year 1844. The main purpose of its writer was to vindicate the just claims of the Tory party to be the popular political confederation of the country; a purpose which he had, more or less, pursued from a very early period of life. The occasion was favourable to the attempt. The youthful mind of England had just recovered

from the inebriation of the great Conservative triumph of 1841, and was beginning to inquire what, after all, they had conquered to preserve. It was opportune, therefore, to show that Toryism was not a phrase, but a fact; and that our political institutions were the embodiment of our popular necessities. This the writer endeavoured to do without prejudice, and to treat of events and characters of which he had some personal experience, not altogether without the impartiality of the future.

It was not originally the intention of the writer to adopt the form of fiction as the instrument to scatter his suggestions, but, after reflection, he resolved to avail himself of a method which, in the temper of the times, offered the best chance of influencing opinion.

In considering the Tory scheme, the author recognised in the CHURCH the most powerful agent in the previous development of England, and the most efficient means of that renovation of the national spirit at which he aimed. The Church is a sacred corporation for the promulgation and maintenance in Europe of certain Asian principles, which, although local in their birth, are of divine origin, and of universal and eternal application.

In asserting the paramount character of the ecclesiastical polity and the majesty of the theocratic principle, it became necessary to ascend to the origin of the Christian Church, and to meet in a spirit worthy of a critical and comparatively enlightened age, the position of the descendants of that race who were the founders of Christianity. The modern Jews had long laboured under the odium and stigma of mediaeval malevolence. In the dark ages, when history was unknown, the passions of societies, undisturbed by traditionary experience, were strong, and their convictions, unmitigated by criticism, were necessarily fanatical. The Jews were looked upon in the middle ages as an accursed race, the enemies of God and man, the especial foes of Christianity. No one in those days paused to reflect that Christianity was founded by the Jews; that its Divine Author, in his human capacity, was a descendant of King David; that his doctrines avowedly were the completion, not the change, of Judaism; that the Apostles and the Evangelists, whose names men daily invoked, and whose volumes they embraced with reverence, were all Jews; that the infallible throne of Rome itself was established by a Jew; and that a Jew was the founder of the Christian Churches of Asia.

The European nations, relatively speaking, were then only recently converted to a belief in Moses and in Christ; and, as it were, still ashamed of the wild deities whom they had deserted, they thought they atoned for their past idolatry by wreaking their vengeance on a race to

whom, and to whom alone, they were indebted for the Gospel they adored.

In vindicating the sovereign right of the Church of Christ to be the perpetual regenerator of man, the writer thought the time had arrived when some attempt should be made to do justice to the race which had founded Christianity.

The writer has developed in another work ('Tancred') the views respecting the great house of Israel which he first intimated in 'Coningsby.' No one has attempted to refute them, nor is refutation possible; since all he has done is to examine certain facts in the truth of which all agree, and to draw from them irresistible conclusions which prejudice for a moment may shrink from, but which reason cannot refuse to admit.

D.

GROSVENOR GATE: May 1894.

CONINGSBY

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

It was a bright May morning some twelve years ago, when a youth of still tender age, for he had certainly not entered his teens by more than two years, was ushered into the waiting-room of a house in the vicinity of St. James's Square, which, though with the general appearance of a private residence, and that too of no very ambitious character, exhibited at this period symptoms of being occupied for some public purpose.

The house-door was constantly open, and frequent guests even at this early hour crossed the threshold. The hall-table was covered with sealed letters; and the hall-porter inscribed in a book the name of every individual who entered.

The young gentleman we have mentioned found himself in a room which offered few resources for his amusement. A large table amply covered with writing materials, and a few chairs, were its sole furniture, except the

grey druggot that covered the floor, and a muddy mezzotinto of the Duke of Wellington that adorned its cold walls. There was not even a newspaper; and the only books were the Court Guide and the London Directory. For some time he remained with patient endurance planted against the wall, with his feet resting on the rail of his chair; but at length in his shifting posture he gave evidence of his restlessness, rose from his seat, looked out of the window into a small side court of the house surrounded with dead walls, paced the room, took up the Court Guide, changed it for the London Directory, then wrote his name over several sheets of foolscap paper, drew various landscapes and faces of his friends; and then, splitting up a pen or two, delivered himself of a yawn which seemed the climax of his weariness.

And yet the youth's appearance did not betoken a character that, if the opportunity had offered, could not have found amusement and even instruction. His countenance, radiant with health and the lustre of innocence, was at the same time thoughtful and resolute. The expression of his deep blue eyes was serious. Without extreme regularity of features, the face was one that would never have passed unobserved. His short upper lip indicated a good breed; and his chestnut curls clustered over his open brow, while his shirt-collar thrown over his shoulders was unrestrained by handkerchief or ribbon. Add to this, a limber and graceful figure, which the jacket of his boyish dress exhibited to great advantage.

Just as the youth, mounted on a chair, was adjusting the portrait of the Duke, which he had observed to be awry, the gentleman for whom he had been all this time waiting entered the room.

'Floreat Etona!' hastily exclaimed the gentleman, in a sharp voice; 'you are setting the Duke to rights. I have left you a long time a prisoner; but I found them so busy here, that I made my escape with some difficulty.'

He who uttered these words was a man of middle size and age, originally in all probability of a spare habit, but now a little inclined to corpulency. Baldness, perhaps, contributed to the spiritual expression of a brow, which was, however, essentially intellectual, and gave some character of openness to a countenance which, though not ill-favoured, was unhappily stamped by a sinister cast that was not to be mistaken. His manner was easy, but rather audacious than well-bred. Indeed, while a visage which might otherwise be described as handsome was spoiled by a dishonest glance, so a demeanour that was by no means deficient in self-possession and facility, was tainted by an innate vulgarity, which in the long run, though seldom, yet surely developed itself.

The youth had jumped off his chair on the entrance of the gentleman, and then taking up his hat, said:

'Shall we go to grandpapa now, sir?'

'By all means, my dear boy,' said the gentleman, putting his arm within that of the youth; and they were just on the point of leaving the waiting-room, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and two individuals, in a state of great excitement, rushed into the apartment.

'Rigby! Rigby!' they both exclaimed at the same moment. 'By G---- they're out!'

'Who told you?'

'The best authority; one of themselves.'

'Who? who?'

'Paul Evelyn; I met him as I passed Brookes', and he told me that Lord Grey had resigned, and the King had accepted his resignation.'

But Mr. Rigby, who, though very fond of news, and much interested in the present, was extremely jealous of any one giving him information, was sceptical. He declared that Paul Evelyn was always wrong; that it was morally impossible that Paul Evelyn ever could be right; that he knew, from the highest authority, that Lord Grey had been twice yesterday with the King; that on the last visit nothing was settled; that if he had been at the palace again to-day, he could not have been there before twelve o'clock; that it was only now a quarter to one; that Lord Grey would have called his colleagues together on his return; that at least an hour must have elapsed before anything could possibly have transpired. Then he compared and criticised the dates of every rumoured incident of the last twenty-four hours, and nobody was stronger in dates than Mr. Rigby; counted even the number of stairs which the minister had to ascend and descend in his visit to the palace, and the time their mountings and dismountings must have consumed, detail was Mr. Rigby's forte; and finally, what with his dates, his private information, his knowledge of palace localities, his contempt for Paul Evelyn, and his confidence in himself, he succeeded in persuading his downcast and disheartened friends that their comfortable intelligence had not the slightest foundation.

They all left the room together; they were in the hall; the gentlemen who

brought the news looked somewhat depressed, but Mr. Rigby gay, even amid the prostration of his party, from the consciousness that he had most critically demolished a piece of political gossip and conveyed a certain degree of mortification to a couple of his companions; when a travelling carriage and four with a ducal coronet drove up to the house. The door was thrown open, the steps dashed down, and a youthful noble sprang from his chariot into the hall.

'Good morning, Rigby,' said the Duke.

'I see your Grace well, I am sure,' said Mr. Rigby, with a softened manner.

'You have heard the news, gentlemen?' the Duke continued.

'What news? Yes; no; that is to say, Mr. Rigby thinks--'

'You know, of course, that Lord Lyndhurst is with the King?'

'It is impossible,' said Mr. Rigby.

'I don't think I can be mistaken,' said the Duke, smiling.

'I will show your Grace that it is impossible,' said Mr. Rigby, 'Lord Lyndhurst slept at Wimbledon. Lord Grey could not have seen the King until twelve o'clock; it is now five minutes to one. It is impossible, therefore, that any message from the King could have reached Lord Lyndhurst in time for his Lordship to be at the palace at this moment.'

'But my authority is a high one,' said the Duke.

'Authority is a phrase,' said Mr. Rigby; 'we must look to time and place, dates and localities, to discover the truth.'

'Your Grace was saying that your authority--' ventured to observe Mr. Tadpole, emboldened by the presence of a duke, his patron, to struggle against the despotism of a Rigby, his tyrant.

'Was the highest,' rejoined the Duke, smiling, 'for it was Lord Lyndhurst himself. I came up from Nuneham this morning, passed his Lordship's house in Hyde Park Place as he was getting into his carriage in full dress, stopped my own, and learned in a breath that the Whigs were out, and that the King had sent for the Chief Baron. So I came on here at once.'

'I always thought the country was sound at bottom,' exclaimed Mr. Taper, who, under the old system, had sneaked into the Treasury Board.

Tadpole and Taper were great friends. Neither of them ever despaired of the Commonwealth. Even if the Reform Bill were passed, Taper was convinced that the Whigs would never prove men of business; and when his friends confessed among themselves that a Tory Government was for the future impossible, Taper would remark, in a confidential whisper, that for his part he believed before the year was over the Whigs would be turned out by the clerks.

'There is no doubt that there is considerable reaction,' said Mr. Tadpole. 'The infamous conduct of the Whigs in the Amersham case has opened the public mind more than anything.'

'Aldborough was worse,' said Mr. Taper.

'Terrible,' said Tadpole. 'They said there was no use discussing the Reform Bill in our House. I believe Rigby's great speech on Aldborough has done more towards the reaction than all the violence of the Political Unions put together.'

'Let us hope for the best,' said the Duke, mildly. 'Tis a bold step on the part of the Sovereign, and I am free to say I could have wished it postponed; but we must support the King like men. What say you, Rigby? You are silent.'

'I am thinking how very unfortunate it was that I did not breakfast with Lyndhurst this morning, as I was nearly doing, instead of going down to Eton.'

'To Eton! and why to Eton?'

'For the sake of my young friend here, Lord Monmouth's grandson. By the bye, you are kinsmen. Let me present to your Grace, MR. CONINGSBY.'

CHAPTER II.

The political agitation which for a year and a half had shaken England to its centre, received, if possible, an increase to its intensity and

virulence, when it was known, in the early part of the month of May, 1832, that the Prime Minister had tendered his resignation to the King, which resignation had been graciously accepted.

The amendment carried by the Opposition in the House of Lords on the evening of the 7th of May, that the enfranchising clauses of the Reform Bill should be considered before entering into the question of disfranchisement, was the immediate cause of this startling event. The Lords had previously consented to the second reading of the Bill with the view of preventing that large increase of their numbers with which they had been long menaced; rather, indeed, by mysterious rumours than by any official declaration; but, nevertheless, in a manner which had carried conviction to no inconsiderable portion of the Opposition that the threat was not without foundation.

During the progress of the Bill through the Lower House, the journals which were looked upon as the organs of the ministry had announced with unhesitating confidence, that Lord Grey was armed with what was then called a 'carte blanche' to create any number of peers necessary to insure its success. But public journalists who were under the control of the ministry, and whose statements were never contradicted, were not the sole authorities for this prevailing belief. Members of the House of Commons, who were strong supporters of the cabinet, though not connected with it by any official tie, had unequivocally stated in their places that the Sovereign had not resisted the advice of his counsellors to create peers, if such creation were required to carry into effect what was then styled 'the great national measure.' In more than one instance, ministers had been warned, that if they did not exercise that power with prompt energy, they might deserve impeachment. And these intimations and announcements had been made in the presence of leading members of the Government, and had received from them, at least, the sanction of their silence.

It did not subsequently appear that the Reform ministers had been invested with any such power; but a conviction of the reverse, fostered by these circumstances, had successfully acted upon the nervous temperament, or the statesman-like prudence, of a certain section of the peers, who consequently hesitated in their course; were known as being no longer inclined to pursue their policy of the preceding session; had thus obtained a title at that moment in everybody's mouth, the title of 'THE WAVERERS.'

Notwithstanding, therefore, the opposition of the Duke of Wellington and of Lord Lyndhurst, the Waverers carried the second reading of the Reform Bill; and then, scared at the consequences of their own headstrong

timidity, they went in a fright to the Duke and his able adviser to extricate them from the inevitable result of their own conduct. The ultimate device of these distracted counsels, where daring and poltroonery, principle and expediency, public spirit and private intrigue, each threw an ingredient into the turbulent spell, was the celebrated and successful amendment to which we have referred.

But the Whig ministers, who, whatever may have been their faults, were at least men of intellect and courage, were not to be beaten by 'the Waverers.' They might have made terms with an audacious foe; they trampled on a hesitating opponent. Lord Grey hastened to the palace.

Before the result of this appeal to the Sovereign was known, for its effects were not immediate, on the second morning after the vote in the House of Lords, Mr. Rigby had made that visit to Eton which had summoned very unexpectedly the youthful Coningsby to London. He was the orphan child of the youngest of the two sons of the Marquess of Monmouth. It was a family famous for its hatreds. The eldest son hated his father; and, it was said, in spite had married a lady to whom that father was attached, and with whom Lord Monmouth then meditated a second alliance. This eldest son lived at Naples, and had several children, but maintained no connection either with his parent or his native country. On the other hand, Lord Monmouth hated his younger son, who had married, against his consent, a woman to whom that son was devoted. A system of domestic persecution, sustained by the hand of a master, had eventually broken up the health of its victim, who died of a fever in a foreign country, where he had sought some refuge from his creditors.

His widow returned to England with her child; and, not having a relation, and scarcely an acquaintance in the world, made an appeal to her husband's father, the wealthiest noble in England and a man who was often prodigal, and occasionally generous. After some time, and more trouble, after urgent and repeated, and what would have seemed heart-rending, solicitations, the attorney of Lord Monmouth called upon the widow of his client's son, and informed her of his Lordship's decision. Provided she gave up her child, and permanently resided in one of the remotest counties, he was authorised to make her, in four quarterly payments, the yearly allowance of three hundred pounds, that being the income that Lord Monmouth, who was the shrewdest accountant in the country, had calculated a lone woman might very decently exist upon in a small market town in the county of Westmoreland.

Desperate necessity, the sense of her own forlornness, the utter impossibility to struggle with an omnipotent foe, who, her husband had

taught her, was above all scruples, prejudices, and fears, and who, though he respected law, despised opinion, made the victim yield. But her sufferings were not long; the separation from her child, the bleak clime, the strange faces around her, sharp memory, and the dull routine of an unimpassioned life, all combined to wear out a constitution originally frail, and since shattered by many sorrows. Mrs. Coningsby died the same day that her father-in-law was made a Marquess. He deserved his honours. The four votes he had inherited in the House of Commons had been increased, by his intense volition and unsparing means, to ten; and the very day he was raised to his Marquisate, he commenced sapping fresh corporations, and was working for the strawberry leaf. His honours were proclaimed in the London Gazette, and her decease was not even noticed in the County Chronicle; but the altars of Nemesis are beneath every outraged roof, and the death of this unhappy lady, apparently without an earthly friend or an earthly hope, desolate and deserted, and dying in obscure poverty, was not forgotten.

Coningsby was not more than nine years of age when he lost his last parent; and he had then been separated from her for nearly three years. But he remembered the sweetness of his nursery days. His mother, too, had written to him frequently since he quitted her, and her fond expressions had cherished the tenderness of his heart. He wept bitterly when his schoolmaster broke to him the news of his mother's death. True it was they had been long parted, and their prospect of again meeting was vague and dim; but his mother seemed to him his only link to human society. It was something to have a mother, even if he never saw her. Other boys went to see their mothers! he, at least, could talk of his. Now he was alone. His grandfather was to him only a name. Lord Monmouth resided almost constantly abroad, and during his rare visits to England had found no time or inclination to see the orphan, with whom he felt no sympathy. Even the death of the boy's mother, and the consequent arrangements, were notified to his master by a stranger. The letter which brought the sad intelligence was from Mr. Rigby. It was the first time that name had been known to Coningsby.

Mr. Rigby was member for one of Lord Monmouth's boroughs. He was the manager of Lord Monmouth's parliamentary influence, and the auditor of his vast estates. He was more; he was Lord Monmouth's companion when in England, his correspondent when abroad; hardly his counsellor, for Lord Monmouth never required advice; but Mr. Rigby could instruct him in matters of detail, which Mr. Rigby made amusing. Rigby was not a professional man; indeed, his origin, education, early pursuits, and studies, were equally obscure; but he had contrived in good time to squeeze himself into parliament, by means which no one could ever

comprehend, and then set up to be a perfect man of business. The world took him at his word, for he was bold, acute, and voluble; with no thought, but a good deal of desultory information; and though destitute of all imagination and noble sentiment, was blessed with a vigorous, mendacious fancy, fruitful in small expedients, and never happier than when devising shifts for great men's scrapes.

They say that all of us have one chance in this life, and so it was with Rigby. After a struggle of many years, after a long series of the usual alternatives of small successes and small failures, after a few cleverish speeches and a good many cleverish pamphlets, with a considerable reputation, indeed, for pasquinades, most of which he never wrote, and articles in reviews to which it was whispered he had contributed, Rigby, who had already intrigued himself into a subordinate office, met with Lord Monmouth.

He was just the animal that Lord Monmouth wanted, for Lord Monmouth always looked upon human nature with the callous eye of a jockey. He surveyed Rigby; and he determined to buy him. He bought him; with his clear head, his indefatigable industry, his audacious tongue, and his ready and unscrupulous pen; with all his dates, all his lampoons; all his private memoirs, and all his political intrigues. It was a good purchase. Rigby became a great personage, and Lord Monmouth's man.

Mr. Rigby, who liked to be doing a great many things at the same time, and to astonish the Tadpoles and Tapers with his energetic versatility, determined to superintend the education of Coningsby. It was a relation which identified him with the noble house of his pupil, or, properly speaking, his charge: for Mr. Rigby affected rather the graceful dignity of the governor than the duties of a tutor. The boy was recalled from his homely, rural school, where he had been well grounded by a hard-working curate, and affectionately tended by the curate's unsophisticated wife. He was sent to a fashionable school preparatory to Eton, where he found about two hundred youths of noble families and connections, lodged in a magnificent villa, that had once been the retreat of a minister, superintended by a sycophantic Doctor of Divinity, already well beneficed, and not despairing of a bishopric by favouring the children of the great nobles. The doctor's lady, clothed in cashmeres, sometimes inquired after their health, and occasionally received a report as to their linen.

Mr. Rigby had a classical retreat, not distant from this establishment, which he esteemed a Tusculum. There, surrounded by his busts and books, he wrote his lampoons and articles; massacred a she liberal (it was thought that no one could lash a woman like Rigby), cut up a rising genius whose

politics were different from his own, or scarified some unhappy wretch who had brought his claims before parliament, proving, by garbled extracts from official correspondence that no one could refer to, that the malcontent instead of being a victim, was, on the contrary, a defaulter. Tadpole and Taper would back Rigby for a 'slashing reply' against the field. Here, too, at the end of a busy week, he found it occasionally convenient to entertain a clever friend or two of equivocal reputation, with whom he had become acquainted in former days of equal brotherhood. No one was more faithful to his early friends than Mr. Rigby, particularly if they could write a squib.

It was in this refined retirement that Mr. Rigby found time enough, snatched from the toils of official life and parliamentary struggles, to compose a letter on the study of History, addressed to Coningsby. The style was as much like that of Lord Bolingbroke as if it had been written by the authors of the 'Rejected Addresses,' and it began, 'My dear young friend.' This polished composition, so full of good feeling and comprehensive views, and all in the best taste, was not published. It was only privately printed, and a few thousand copies were distributed among select personages as an especial favour and mark of high consideration. Each copy given away seemed to Rigby like a certificate of character; a property which, like all men of dubious repute, he thoroughly appreciated. Rigby intrigued very much that the headmaster of Eton should adopt his discourse as a class-book. For this purpose he dined with the Doctor, told him several anecdotes of the King, which intimated personal influence at Windsor; but the headmaster was inflexible, and so Mr. Rigby was obliged to be content with having his Letter on History canonized as a classic in the Preparatory Seminary, where the individual to whom it was addressed was a scholar.

This change in the life of Coningsby contributed to his happiness. The various characters which a large school exhibited interested a young mind whose active energies were beginning to stir. His previous acquirements made his studies light; and he was fond of sports, in which he was qualified to excel. He did not particularly like Mr. Rigby. There was something jarring and grating in that gentleman's voice and modes, from which the chords of the young heart shrank. He was not tender, though perhaps he wished to be; scarcely kind: but he was good-natured, at least to children. However, this connection was, on the whole, an agreeable one for Coningsby. He seemed suddenly to have friends: he never passed his holidays again at school. Mr. Rigby was so clever that he contrived always to quarter Coningsby on the father of one of his school-fellows, for Mr. Rigby knew all his school-fellows and all their fathers. Mr. Rigby also called to see him, not unfrequently would give him a dinner at the Star

and Garter, or even have him up to town for a week to Whitehall. Compared with his former forlorn existence, these were happy days, when he was placed under the gallery as a member's son, or went to the play with the butler!

When Coningsby had attained his twelfth year, an order was received from Lord Monmouth, who was at Rome, that he should go at once to Eton. This was the first great epoch of his life. There never was a youth who entered into that wonderful little world with more eager zest than Coningsby. Nor was it marvellous.

That delicious plain, studded with every creation of graceful culture; hamlet and hall and grange; garden and grove and park; that castle-palace, grey with glorious ages; those antique spires, hoar with faith and wisdom, the chapel and the college; that river winding through the shady meads; the sunny glade and the solemn avenue; the room in the Dame's house where we first order our own breakfast and first feel we are free; the stirring multitude, the energetic groups, the individual mind that leads, conquers, controls; the emulation and the affection; the noble strife and the tender sentiment; the daring exploit and the dashing scrape; the passion that pervades our life, and breathes in everything, from the aspiring study to the inspiring sport: oh! what hereafter can spur the brain and touch the heart like this; can give us a world so deeply and variously interesting; a life so full of quick and bright excitement, passed in a scene so fair?

CHAPTER III.

Lord Monmouth, who detested popular tumults as much as he despised public opinion, had remained during the agitating year of 1831 in his luxurious retirement in Italy, contenting himself with opposing the Reform Bill by proxy. But when his correspondent, Mr. Rigby, had informed him, in the early part of the spring of 1832, of the probability of a change in the tactics of the Tory party, and that an opinion was becoming prevalent among their friends, that the great scheme must be defeated in detail rather than again withstood on principle, his Lordship, who was never wanting in energy when his own interests were concerned, immediately crossed the Alps, and travelled rapidly to England. He indulged a hope that the weight of his presence and the influence of his strong character, which was at once shrewd and courageous, might induce his friends to relinquish their half measure, a course to which his nature was repugnant.

At all events, if they persisted in their intention, and the Bill went into committee, his presence was indispensable, for in that stage of a parliamentary proceeding proxies become ineffective.

The counsels of Lord Monmouth, though they coincided with those of the Duke of Wellington, did not prevail with the Waverers. Several of these high-minded personages had had their windows broken, and they were of opinion that a man who lived at Naples was not a competent judge of the state of public feeling in England. Besides, the days are gone by for senators to have their beards plucked in the forum. We live in an age of prudence. The leaders of the people, now, generally follow. The truth is, the peers were in a fright. 'Twas a pity; there is scarcely a less dignified entity than a patrician in a panic.

Among the most intimate companions of Coningsby at Eton, was Lord Henry Sydney, his kinsman. Coningsby had frequently passed his holidays of late at Beaumanoir, the seat of the Duke, Lord Henry's father. The Duke sat next to Lord Monmouth during the debate on the enfranchising question, and to while away the time, and from kindness of disposition, spoke, and spoke with warmth and favour, of his grandson. The polished Lord Monmouth bowed as if he were much gratified by this notice of one so dear to him. He had too much tact to admit that he had never yet seen his grandchild; but he asked some questions as to his progress and pursuits, his tastes and habits, which intimated the interest of an affectionate relative.

Nothing, however, was ever lost upon Lord Monmouth. No one had a more retentive memory, or a more observant mind. And the next day, when he received Mr. Rigby at his morning levee, Lord Monmouth performed this ceremony in the high style of the old court, and welcomed his visitors in bed, he said with imperturbable calmness, and as if he had been talking of trying a new horse, 'Rigby, I should like to see the boy at Eton.'

There might be some objection to grant leave to Coningsby at this moment; but it was a rule with Mr. Rigby never to make difficulties, or at least to persuade his patron that he, and he only, could remove them. He immediately undertook that the boy should be forthcoming, and notwithstanding the excitement of the moment, he went off next morning to fetch him.

They arrived in town rather early; and Rigby, wishing to know how affairs were going on, ordered the servant to drive immediately to the headquarters of the party; where a permanent committee watched every phasis of the impending revolution; and where every member of the Opposition, of note and trust, was instantly admitted to receive or to impart

intelligence.

It was certainly not without emotion that Coningsby contemplated his first interview with his grandfather. All his experience of the ties of relationship, however limited, was full of tenderness and rapture. His memory often dwelt on his mother's sweet embrace; and ever and anon a fitful phantom of some past passage of domestic love haunted his gushing heart. The image of his father was less fresh in his mind; but still it was associated with a vague sentiment of kindness and joy; and the allusions to her husband in his mother's letters had cherished these impressions. To notice lesser sources of influence in his estimate of the domestic tie, he had witnessed under the roof of Beaumanoir the existence of a family bound together by the most beautiful affections. He could not forget how Henry Sydney was embraced by his sisters when he returned home; what frank and fraternal love existed between his kinsman and his elder brother; how affectionately the kind Duke had welcomed his son once more to the house where they had both been born; and the dim eyes, and saddened brows, and tones of tenderness, which rather looked than said farewell, when they went back to Eton.

And these rapturous meetings and these mournful adieus were occasioned only by a separation at the most of a few months, softened by constant correspondence and the communication of mutual sympathy. But Coningsby was to meet a relation, his near, almost his only, relation, for the first time; the relation, too, to whom he owed maintenance, education; it might be said, existence. It was a great incident for a great drama; something tragical in the depth and stir of its emotions. Even the imagination of the boy could not be insensible to its materials; and Coningsby was picturing to himself a beneficent and venerable gentleman pressing to his breast an agitated youth, when his reverie was broken by the carriage stopping before the gates of Monmouth House.

The gates were opened by a gigantic Swiss, and the carriage rolled into a huge court-yard. At its end Coningsby beheld a Palladian palace, with wings and colonnades encircling the court.

A double flight of steps led into a circular and marble hall, adorned with colossal busts of the Caesars; the staircase in fresco by Sir James Thornhill, breathed with the loves and wars of gods and heroes. It led into a vestibule, painted in arabesques, hung with Venetian girandoles, and looking into gardens. Opening a door in this chamber, and proceeding some little way down a corridor, Mr. Rigby and his companion arrived at the base of a private staircase. Ascending a few steps, they reached a landing-place hung with tapestry. Drawing this aside, Mr. Rigby opened a

door, and ushered Coningsby through an ante-chamber into a small saloon, of beautiful proportions, and furnished in a brilliant and delicate taste.

'You will find more to amuse you here than where you were before,' said Mr. Rigby, 'and I shall not be nearly so long absent.' So saying, he entered into an inner apartment.

The walls of the saloon, which were covered with light blue satin, held, in silver panels, portraits of beautiful women, painted by Boucher. Couches and easy chairs of every shape invited in every quarter to luxurious repose; while amusement was afforded by tables covered with caricatures, French novels, and endless miniatures of foreign dancers, princesses, and sovereigns.

But Coningsby was so impressed with the impending interview with his grandfather, that he neither sought nor required diversion. Now that the crisis was at hand, he felt agitated and nervous, and wished that he was again at Eton. The suspense was sickening, yet he dreaded still more the summons. He was not long alone; the door opened; he started, grew pale; he thought it was his grandfather; it was not even Mr. Rigby. It was Lord Monmouth's valet.

'Monsieur Konigby?'

'My name is Coningsby,' said the boy.

'Milor is ready to receive you,' said the valet.

Coningsby sprang forward with that desperation which the scaffold requires. His face was pale; his hand was moist; his heart beat with tumult. He had occasionally been summoned by Dr. Keate; that, too, was awful work, but compared with the present, a morning visit. Music, artillery, the roar of cannon, and the blare of trumpets, may urge a man on to a forlorn hope; ambition, one's constituents, the hell of previous failure, may prevail on us to do a more desperate thing; speak in the House of Commons; but there are some situations in life, such, for instance, as entering the room of a dentist, in which the prostration of the nervous system is absolute.

The moment had at length arrived when the desolate was to find a benefactor, the forlorn a friend, the orphan a parent; when the youth, after a childhood of adversity, was to be formally received into the bosom of the noble house from which he had been so long estranged, and at length to assume that social position to which his lineage entitled him.

Manliness might support, affection might soothe, the happy anguish of such a meeting; but it was undoubtedly one of those situations which stir up the deep fountains of our nature, and before which the conventional proprieties of our ordinary manners instantaneously vanish.

Coningsby with an uncertain step followed his guide through a bed-chamber, the sumptuousness of which he could not notice, into the dressing-room of Lord Monmouth. Mr. Rigby, facing Coningsby as he entered, was leaning over the back of a large chair, from which as Coningsby was announced by the valet, the Lord of the house slowly rose, for he was suffering slightly from the gout, his left hand resting on an ivory stick. Lord Monmouth was in height above the middle size, but somewhat portly and corpulent. His countenance was strongly marked; sagacity on the brow, sensuality in the mouth and jaw. His head was bald, but there were remains of the rich brown locks on which he once prided himself. His large deep blue eye, madid and yet piercing, showed that the secretions of his brain were apportioned, half to voluptuousness, half to common sense. But his general mien was truly grand; full of a natural nobility, of which no one was more sensible than himself. Lord Monmouth was not in dishabille; on the contrary, his costume was exact, and even careful. Rising as we have mentioned when his grandson entered, and leaning with his left hand on his ivory cane, he made Coningsby such a bow as Louis Quatorze might have bestowed on the ambassador of the United Provinces. Then extending his right hand, which the boy tremblingly touched, Lord Monmouth said:

'How do you like Eton?'

This contrast to the reception which he had imagined, hoped, feared, paralysed the reviving energies of young Coningsby. He felt stupefied; he looked almost aghast. In the chaotic tumult of his mind, his memory suddenly seemed to receive some miraculous inspiration. Mysterious phrases heard in his earliest boyhood, unnoticed then, long since forgotten, rose to his ear. Who was this grandfather, seen not before, seen now for the first time? Where was the intervening link of blood between him and this superb and icy being? The boy sank into the chair which had been placed for him, and leaning on the table burst into tears.

Here was a business! If there were one thing which would have made Lord Monmouth travel from London to Naples at four-and-twenty hours' notice, it was to avoid a scene. He hated scenes. He hated feelings. He saw instantly the mistake he had made in sending for his grandchild. He was afraid that Coningsby was tender-hearted like his father. Another tender-hearted Coningsby! Unfortunate family! Degenerate race! He decided in his mind that Coningsby must be provided for in the Church, and looked at Mr.

Rigby, whose principal business it always was to disembarass his patron from the disagreeable.

Mr. Rigby instantly came forward and adroitly led the boy into the adjoining apartment, Lord Monmouth's bedchamber, closing the door of the dressing-room behind him.

'My dear young friend,' said Mr. Rigby, 'what is all this?'

A sob the only answer.

'What can be the matter?' said Mr. Rigby.

'I was thinking,' said Coningsby, 'of poor mamma!'

'Hush!' said Mr. Rigby; 'Lord Monmouth never likes to hear of people who are dead; so you must take care never to mention your mother or your father.'

In the meantime Lord Monmouth had decided on the fate of Coningsby. The Marquis thought he could read characters by a glance, and in general he was successful, for his natural sagacity had been nurtured by great experience. His grandson was not to his taste; amiable no doubt, but spooney.

We are too apt to believe that the character of a boy is easily read. 'Tis a mystery the most profound. Mark what blunders parents constantly make as to the nature of their own offspring, bred, too, under their eyes, and displaying every hour their characteristics. How often in the nursery does the genius count as a dunce because he is pensive; while a rattling urchin is invested with almost supernatural qualities because his animal spirits make him impudent and flippant! The school-boy, above all others, is not the simple being the world imagines. In that young bosom are often stirring passions as strong as our own, desires not less violent, a volition not less supreme. In that young bosom what burning love, what intense ambition, what avarice, what lust of power; envy that fiends might emulate, hate that man might fear!

CHAPTER IV.

'Come,' said Mr. Rigby, when Coningsby was somewhat composed, 'come with me and we will see the house.'

So they descended once more the private staircase, and again entered the vestibule.

'If you had seen these gardens when they were illuminated for a fête to George IV.,' said Rigby, as crossing the chamber he ushered his charge into the state apartments. The splendour and variety of the surrounding objects soon distracted the attention of the boy, for the first time in the palace of his fathers. He traversed saloon after saloon hung with rare tapestry and the gorgeous products of foreign looms; filled with choice pictures and creations of curious art; cabinets that sovereigns might envy, and colossal vases of malachite presented by emperors. Coningsby alternately gazed up to ceilings glowing with color and with gold, and down upon carpets bright with the fancies and vivid with the tints of Aubusson and of Axminster.

'This grandfather of mine is a great prince,' thought Coningsby, as musing he stood before a portrait in which he recognised the features of the being from whom he had so recently and so strangely parted. There he stood, Philip Augustus, Marquess of Monmouth, in his robes of state, with his new coronet on a table near him, a despatch lying at hand that indicated the special mission of high ceremony of which he had been the illustrious envoy, and the garter beneath his knee.

'You will have plenty of opportunities to look at the pictures,' said Rigby, observing that the boy had now quite recovered himself. 'Some luncheon will do you no harm after our drive;' and he opened the door of another apartment.

It was a pretty room adorned with a fine picture of the chase; at a round table in the centre sat two ladies interested in the meal to which Rigby had alluded.

'Ah, Mr. Rigby!' said the eldest, yet young and beautiful, and speaking, though with fluency, in a foreign accent, 'come and tell me some news. Have you seen Milor?' and then she threw a scrutinizing glance from a dark flashing eye at his companion.

'Let me present to your Highness,' said Rigby, with an air of some ceremony, 'Mr. Coningsby.'

'My dear young friend,' said the lady, extending her white hand with an

air of joyous welcome, 'this is Lucretia, my daughter. We love you already. Lord Monmouth will be so charmed to see you. What beautiful eyes he has, Mr. Rigby. Quite like Milor.'

The young lady, who was really more youthful than Coningsby, but of a form and stature so developed that she appeared almost a woman, bowed to the guest with some ceremony, and a faint sullen smile, and then proceeded with her Perigord pie.

'You must be so hungry after your drive,' said the elder lady, placing Coningsby at her side, and herself filling his plate.

This was true enough; and while Mr. Rigby and the lady talked an infinite deal about things which he did not understand, and persons of whom he had never heard, our little hero made his first meal in his paternal house with no ordinary zest; and renovated by the pasty and a glass of sherry, felt altogether a different being from what he was, when he had undergone the terrible interview in which he began to reflect he had considerably exposed himself. His courage revived, his senses rallied, he replied to the interrogations of the lady with calmness, but with promptness and propriety. It was evident that he had made a favourable impression on her Highness, for ever and anon she put a truffle or some delicacy in his plate, and insisted upon his taking some particular confectionery, because it was a favourite of her own. When she rose, she said,--

'In ten minutes the carriage will be at the door; and if you like, my dear young friend, you shall be our beau.'

'There is nothing I should like so much,' said Coningsby.

'Ah!' said the lady, with the sweetest smile, 'he is frank.'

The ladies bowed and retired; Mr. Rigby returned to the Marquess, and the groom of the chambers led Coningsby to his room.

This lady, so courteous to Coningsby, was the Princess Colonna, a Roman dame, the second wife of Prince Paul Colonna. The prince had first married when a boy, and into a family not inferior to his own. Of this union, in every respect unhappy, the Princess Lucretia was the sole offspring. He was a man dissolute and devoted to play; and cared for nothing much but his pleasures and billiards, in which latter he was esteemed unrivalled. According to some, in a freak of passion, according to others, to cancel a gambling debt, he had united himself to his present wife, whose origin was obscure; but with whom he contrived to live on terms of apparent

cordiality, for she was much admired, and made the society of her husband sought by those who contributed to his enjoyment. Among these especially figured the Marquess of Monmouth, between whom and Prince Colonna the world recognised as existing the most intimate and entire friendship, so that his Highness and his family were frequent guests under the roof of the English nobleman, and now accompanied him on a visit to England.

CHAPTER V.

In the meantime, while ladies are luncheoning on Perigord pie, or coursing in whirling britskas, performing all the singular ceremonies of a London morning in the heart of the season; making visits where nobody is seen, and making purchases which are not wanted; the world is in agitation and uproar. At present the world and the confusion are limited to St. James's Street and Pall Mall; but soon the boundaries and the tumult will be extended to the intended metropolitan boroughs; to-morrow they will spread over the manufacturing districts. It is perfectly evident, that before eight-and-forty hours have passed, the country will be in a state of fearful crisis. And how can it be otherwise? Is it not a truth that the subtle Chief Baron has been closeted one whole hour with the King; that shortly after, with thoughtful brow and compressed lip, he was marked in his daring chariot entering the courtyard of Apsley House? Great was the panic at Brookes', wild the hopes of Carlton Terrace; all the gentlemen who expected to have been made peers perceived that the country was going to be given over to a rapacious oligarchy.

In the meantime Tadpole and Taper, who had never quitted for an instant the mysterious head-quarters of the late Opposition, were full of hopes and fears, and asked many questions, which they chiefly answered themselves.

'I wonder what Lord Lyndhurst will say to the king,' said Taper.

'He has plenty of pluck,' said Tadpole.

'I almost wish now that Rigby had breakfasted with him this morning,' said Taper.

'If the King be firm, and the country sound,' said Tadpole, 'and Lord Monmouth keep his boroughs, I should not wonder to see Rigby made a privy councillor.'

'There is no precedent for an under-secretary being a privy councillor,' said Taper.

'But we live in revolutionary times,' said Tadpole.

'Gentlemen,' said the groom of the chambers, in a loud voice, entering the room, 'I am desired to state that the Duke of Wellington is with the King.'

'There is a Providence!' exclaimed an agitated gentleman, the patent of whose intended peerage had not been signed the day that the Duke had quitted office in 1830.

'I always thought the King would be firm,' said Mr. Tadpole.

'I wonder who will have the India Board,' said Taper.

At this moment three or four gentlemen entered the room in a state of great bustle and excitement; they were immediately surrounded.

'Is it true?' 'Quite true; not the slightest doubt. Saw him myself. Not at all hissed; certainly not hooted. Perhaps a little hissed. One fellow really cheered him. Saw him myself. Say what they like, there is reaction.' 'But Constitution Hill, they say?' 'Well, there was a sort of inclination to a row on Constitution Hill; but the Duke quite firm; pistols, and carriage doors bolted.'

Such may give a faint idea of the anxious inquiries and the satisfactory replies that were occasioned by the entrance of this group.

'Up, guards, and at them!' exclaimed Tadpole, rubbing his hands in a fit of patriotic enthusiasm.

Later in the afternoon, about five o'clock, the high change of political gossip, when the room was crowded, and every one had his rumour, Mr. Rigby looked in again to throw his eye over the evening papers, and catch in various chit-chat the tone of public or party feeling on the 'crisis.'

Then it was known that the Duke had returned from the King, having accepted the charge of forming an administration. An administration to do what? Portentous question! Were concessions to be made? And if so, what? Was it altogether impossible, and too late, 'stare super vias antiquas?' Questions altogether above your Tadpoles and your Tapers, whose idea of the necessities of the age was that they themselves should be in office.

Lord Eskdale came up to Mr. Rigby. This peer was a noble Croesus, acquainted with all the gradations of life; a voluptuary who could be a Spartan; clear-sighted, unprejudiced, sagacious; the best judge in the world of a horse or a man; he was the universal referee; a quarrel about a bet or a mistress was solved by him in a moment, and in a manner which satisfied both parties. He patronised and appreciated the fine arts, though a jockey; respected literary men, though he only read French novels; and without any affectation of tastes which he did not possess, was looked upon by every singer and dancer in Europe as their natural champion. The secret of his strong character and great influence was his self-composure, which an earthquake or a Reform Bill could not disturb, and which in him was the result of temperament and experience. He was an intimate acquaintance of Lord Monmouth, for they had many tastes in common; were both men of considerable, and in some degree similar abilities; and were the two greatest proprietors of close boroughs in the country.

'Do you dine at Monmouth House to-day?' inquired Lord Eskdale of Mr. Rigby.

'Where I hope to meet your lordship. The Whig papers are very subdued,' continued Mr. Rigby.

'Ah! they have not the cue yet,' said Lord Eskdale.

'And what do you think of affairs?' inquired his companion.

'I think the hounds are too hot to hark off now,' said Lord Eskdale.

'There is one combination,' said Rigby, who seemed meditating an attack on Lord Eskdale's button.

'Give it us at dinner,' said Lord Eskdale, who knew his man, and made an adroit movement forwards, as if he were very anxious to see the Globe newspaper.

In the course of two or three hours these gentlemen met again in the green drawing-room of Monmouth House. Mr. Rigby was sitting on a sofa by Lord Monmouth, detailing in whispers all his gossip of the morn: Lord Eskdale murmuring quaint inquiries into the ear of the Princess Lucretia.

Madame Colonna made remarks alternately to two gentlemen, who paid her assiduous court. One of these was Mr. Ormsby; the school, the college, and the club crony of Lord Monmouth, who had been his shadow through life;

travelled with him in early days, won money with him at play, had been his colleague in the House of Commons; and was still one of his nominees. Mr. Ormsby was a millionaire, which Lord Monmouth liked. He liked his companions to be very rich or very poor; be his equals, able to play with him at high stakes, or join him in a great speculation; or to be his tools, and to amuse and serve him. There was nothing which he despised and disliked so much as a moderate fortune.

The other gentleman was of a different class and character. Nature had intended Lucian Gay for a scholar and a wit; necessity had made him a scribbler and a buffoon. He had distinguished himself at the University; but he had no patrimony, nor those powers of perseverance which success in any learned profession requires. He was good-looking, had great animal spirits, and a keen sense of enjoyment, and could not drudge. Moreover he had a fine voice, and sang his own songs with considerable taste; accomplishments which made his fortune in society and completed his ruin. In due time he extricated himself from the bench and merged into journalism, by means of which he chanced to become acquainted with Mr. Rigby. That worthy individual was not slow in detecting the treasure he had lighted on; a wit, a ready and happy writer, a joyous and tractable being, with the education, and still the feelings and manners, of a gentleman. Frequent were the Sunday dinners which found Gay a guest at Mr. Rigby's villa; numerous the airy pasquinades which he left behind, and which made the fortune of his patron. Flattered by the familiar acquaintance of a man of station, and sanguine that he had found the link which would sooner or later restore him to the polished world that he had forfeited, Gay laboured in his vocation with enthusiasm and success. Willingly would Rigby have kept his treasure to himself; and truly he hoarded it for a long time, but it oozed out. Rigby loved the reputation of possessing the complete art of society. His dinners were celebrated at least for their guests. Great intellectual illustrations were found there blended with rank and high station. Rigby loved to patronise; to play the minister unbending and seeking relief from the cares of council in the society of authors, artists, and men of science. He liked dukes to dine with him and hear him scatter his audacious criticisms to Sir Thomas or Sir Humphry. They went away astounded by the powers of their host, who, had he not fortunately devoted those powers to their party, must apparently have rivalled Vandyke, or discovered the safety-lamp.

Now in these dinners, Lucian Gay, who had brilliant conversational powers, and who possessed all the resources of boon companionship, would be an invaluable ally. He was therefore admitted, and inspired both by the present enjoyment, and the future to which it might lead, his exertions were untiring, various, most successful. Rigby's dinners became still,

more celebrated. It, however, necessarily followed that the guests who were charmed by Gay, wished Gay also to be their guest. Rigby was very jealous of this, but it was inevitable; still by constant manoeuvre, by intimations of some exercise, some day or other, of substantial patronage in his behalf, by a thousand little arts by which he carved out work for Gay which often prevented him accepting invitations to great houses in the country, by judicious loans of small sums on Lucian's notes of hand and other analogous devices, Rigby contrived to keep the wit in a fair state of bondage and dependence.

One thing Rigby was resolved on: Gay should never get into Monmouth House. That was an empyrean too high for his wing to soar in. Rigby kept that social monopoly distinctively to mark the relation that subsisted between them as patron and client. It was something to swagger about when they were together after their second bottle of claret. Rigby kept his resolution for some years, which the frequent and prolonged absence of the Marquess rendered not very difficult. But we are the creatures of circumstances; at least the Rigby race particularly. Lord Monmouth returned to England one year, and wanted to be amused. He wanted a jester: a man about him who would make him, not laugh, for that was impossible, but smile more frequently, tell good stories, say good things, and sing now and then, especially French songs. Early in life Rigby would have attempted all this, though he had neither fun, voice, nor ear. But his hold on Lord Monmouth no longer depended on the mere exercise of agreeable qualities, he had become indispensable to his lordship, by more serious if not higher considerations. And what with auditing his accounts, guarding his boroughs, writing him, when absent, gossip by every post and when in England deciding on every question and arranging every matter which might otherwise have ruffled the sublime repose of his patron's existence, Rigby might be excused if he shrank a little from the minor part of table wit, particularly when we remember all his subterranean journalism, his acid squibs, and his malicious paragraphs, and, what Tadpole called, his 'slashing articles.'

These 'slashing articles' were, indeed, things which, had they appeared as anonymous pamphlets, would have obtained the contemptuous reception which in an intellectual view no compositions more surely deserved; but whispered as the productions of one behind the scenes, and appearing in the pages of a party review, they were passed off as genuine coin, and took in great numbers of the lieges, especially in the country. They were written in a style apparently modelled on the briefs of those sharp attorneys who weary advocates with their clever commonplace; teasing with obvious comment, and torturing with inevitable inference. The affectation of order in the statement of facts had all the lucid method of an adroit

pettifogger. They dealt much in extracts from newspapers, quotations from the *Annual Register*, parallel passages in forgotten speeches, arranged with a formidable array of dates rarely accurate. When the writer was of opinion he had made a point, you may be sure the hit was in italics, that last resource of the Forcible Feebles. He handled a particular in chronology as if he were proving an alibi at the Criminal Court. The censure was coarse without being strong, and vindictive when it would have been sarcastic. Now and then there was a passage which aimed at a higher flight, and nothing can be conceived more unlike genuine feeling, or more offensive to pure taste. And yet, perhaps, the most ludicrous characteristic of these facetious gallimaufreys was an occasional assumption of the high moral and admonitory tone, which when we recurred to the general spirit of the discourse, and were apt to recall the character of its writer, irresistibly reminded one of Mrs. Cole and her prayer-book.

To return to Lucian Gay. It was a rule with Rigby that no one, if possible, should do anything for Lord Monmouth but himself; and as a jester must be found, he was determined that his Lordship should have the best in the market, and that he should have the credit of furnishing the article. As a reward, therefore, for many past services, and a fresh claim to his future exertions, Rigby one day broke to Gay that the hour had at length arrived when the highest object of reasonable ambition on his part, and the fulfilment of one of Rigby's long-cherished and dearest hopes, were alike to be realised. Gay was to be presented to Lord Monmouth and dine at Monmouth House.

The acquaintance was a successful one; very agreeable to both parties. Gay became an habitual guest of Lord Monmouth when his patron was in England; and in his absence received frequent and substantial marks of his kind recollection, for Lord Monmouth was generous to those who amused him.

In the meantime the hour of dinner is at hand. Coningsby, who had lost the key of his carpet-bag, which he finally cut open with a penknife that he found on his writing-table, and the blade of which he broke in the operation, only reached the drawing-room as the figure of his grandfather, leaning on his ivory cane, and following his guests, was just visible in the distance. He was soon overtaken. Perceiving Coningsby, Lord Monmouth made him a bow, not so formal a one as in the morning, but still a bow, and said, 'I hope you liked your drive.'

CHAPTER VI.

A little dinner, not more than the Muses, with all the guests clever, and some pretty, offers human life and human nature under very favourable circumstances. In the present instance, too, every one was anxious to please, for the host was entirely well-bred, never selfish in little things, and always contributed his quota to the general fund of polished sociability.

Although there was really only one thought in every male mind present, still, regard for the ladies, and some little apprehension of the servants, banished politics from discourse during the greater part of the dinner, with the occasional exception of some rapid and flying allusion which the initiated understood, but which remained a mystery to the rest. Nevertheless an old story now and then well told by Mr. Ormsby, a new joke now and then well introduced by Mr. Gay, some dashing assertion by Mr. Rigby, which, though wrong, was startling; this agreeable blending of anecdote, jest, and paradox, kept everything fluent, and produced that degree of mild excitation which is desirable. Lord Monmouth sometimes summed up with an epigrammatic sentence, and turned the conversation by a question, in case it dwelt too much on the same topic. Lord Eskdale addressed himself principally to the ladies; inquired after their morning drive and doings, spoke of new fashions, and quoted a letter from Paris. Madame Colonna was not witty, but she had that sweet Roman frankness which is so charming. The presence of a beautiful woman, natural and good-tempered, even if she be not a L'Espinasse or a De Stael, is animating.

Nevertheless, owing probably to the absorbing powers of the forbidden subject, there were moments when it seemed that a pause was impending, and Mr. Ormsby, an old hand, seized one of these critical instants to address a good-natured question to Coningsby, whose acquaintance he had already cultivated by taking wine with him.

'And how do you like Eton?' asked Mr. Ormsby.

It was the identical question which had been presented to Coningsby in the memorable interview of the morning, and which had received no reply; or rather had produced on his part a sentimental ebullition that had absolutely destined or doomed him to the Church.

'I should like to see the fellow who did not like Eton,' said Coningsby, briskly, determined this time to be very brave.

'Gad I must go down and see the old place,' said Mr. Ormsby, touched by a pensive reminiscence. 'One can get a good bed and bottle of port at the Christopher, still?'

'You had better come and try, sir,' said Coningsby. 'If you will come some day and dine with me at the Christopher, I will give you such a bottle of champagne as you never tasted yet.'

The Marquess looked at him, but said nothing.

'Ah! I liked a dinner at the Christopher,' said Mr. Ormsby; 'after mutton, mutton, mutton, every day, it was not a bad thing.'

'We had venison for dinner every week last season,' said Coningsby; 'Buckhurst had it sent up from his park. But I don't care for dinner. Breakfast is my lounge.'

'Ah! those little rolls and pats of butter!' said Mr. Ormsby. 'Short commons, though. What do you think we did in my time? We used to send over the way to get a mutton-chop.'

'I wish you could see Buckhurst and me at breakfast,' said Coningsby, 'with a pound of Castle's sausages!'

'What Buckhurst is that, Harry?' inquired Lord Monmouth, in a tone of some interest, and for the first time calling him by his Christian name.

'Sir Charles Buckhurst, sir, a Berkshire man: Shirley Park is his place.'

'Why, that must be Charley's son, Eskdale,' said Lord Monmouth; 'I had no idea he could be so young.'

'He married late, you know, and had nothing but daughters for a long time.'

'Well, I hope there will be no Reform Bill for Eton,' said Lord Monmouth, musingly.

The servants had now retired.

'I think, Lord Monmouth,' said Mr. Rigby, 'we must ask permission to drink one toast to-day.'

'Nay, I will myself give it,' he replied. 'Madame Colonna, you will, I am

sure, join us when we drink, THE DUKE!

'Ah! what a man!' exclaimed the Princess. 'What a pity it is you have a House of Commons here! England would be the greatest country in the world if it were not for that House of Commons. It makes so much confusion!'

'Don't abuse our property,' said Lord Eskdale; 'Lord Monmouth and I have still twenty votes of that same body between us.'

'And there is a combination,' said Rigby, 'by which you may still keep them.'

'Ah! now for Rigby's combination,' said Lord Eskdale.

'The only thing that can save this country,' said Rigby, 'is a coalition on a sliding scale.'

'You had better buy up the Birmingham Union and the other bodies,' said Lord Monmouth; 'I believe it might all be done for two or three hundred thousand pounds; and the newspapers too. Pitt would have settled this business long ago.'

'Well, at any rate, we are in,' said Rigby, 'and we must do something.'

'I should like to see Grey's list of new peers,' said Lord Eskdale. 'They say there are several members of our club in it.'

'And the claims to the honour are so opposite,' said Lucian Gay; 'one, on account of his large estate; another, because he has none; one, because he has a well-grown family to perpetuate the title; another, because he has no heir, and no power of ever obtaining one.'

'I wonder how he will form his cabinet,' said Lord Monmouth; 'the old story won't do.'

'I hear that Baring is to be one of the new cards; they say it will please the city,' said Lord Eskdale. 'I suppose they will pick out of hedge and ditch everything that has ever had the semblance of liberalism.'

'Affairs in my time were never so complicated,' said Mr. Ormsby.

'Nay, it appears to me to lie in a nutshell,' said Lucian Gay; 'one party wishes to keep their old boroughs, and the other to get their new peers.'

CHAPTER VII.

The future historian of the country will be perplexed to ascertain what was the distinct object which the Duke of Wellington proposed to himself in the political manoeuvres of May, 1832. It was known that the passing of the Reform Bill was a condition absolute with the King; it was unquestionable, that the first general election under the new law must ignominiously expel the Anti-Reform Ministry from power; who would then resume their seats on the Opposition benches in both Houses with the loss not only of their boroughs, but of that reputation for political consistency, which might have been some compensation for the parliamentary influence of which they had been deprived. It is difficult to recognise in this premature effort of the Anti-Reform leader to thrust himself again into the conduct of public affairs, any indications of the prescient judgment which might have been expected from such a quarter. It savoured rather of restlessness than of energy; and, while it proved in its progress not only an ignorance on his part of the public mind, but of the feelings of his own party, it terminated under circumstances which were humiliating to the Crown, and painfully significant of the future position of the House of Lords in the new constitutional scheme.

The Duke of Wellington has ever been the votary of circumstances. He cares little for causes. He watches events rather than seeks to produce them. It is a characteristic of the military mind. Rapid combinations, the result of quick, vigilant, and comprehensive glance, are generally triumphant in the field: but in civil affairs, where results are not immediate; in diplomacy and in the management of deliberative assemblies, where there is much intervening time and many counteracting causes, this velocity of decision, this fitful and precipitate action, are often productive of considerable embarrassment, and sometimes of terrible discomfiture. It is remarkable that men celebrated for military prudence are often found to be headstrong statesmen. In civil life a great general is frequently and strangely the creature of impulse; influenced in his political movements by the last snatch of information; and often the creature of the last aide-de-camp who has his ear.

We shall endeavour to trace in another chapter the reasons which on this as on previous and subsequent occasions, induced Sir Robert Peel to stand aloof, if possible, from official life, and made him reluctant to re-enter the service of his Sovereign. In the present instance, even temporary

success could only have been secured by the utmost decision, promptness, and energy. These were all wanting: some were afraid to follow the bold example of their leader; many were disinclined. In eight-and-forty hours it was known there was a 'hitch.'

The Reform party, who had been rather stupefied than appalled by the accepted mission of the Duke of Wellington, collected their scattered senses, and rallied their forces. The agitators harangued, the mobs hooted. The City of London, as if the King had again tried to seize the five members, appointed a permanent committee of the Common Council to watch the fortunes of the 'great national measure,' and to report daily. Brookes', which was the only place that at first was really frightened and talked of compromise, grew valiant again; while young Whig heroes jumped upon club-room tables, and delivered fiery invectives. Emboldened by these demonstrations, the House of Commons met in great force, and passed a vote which struck, without disguise, at all rival powers in the State; virtually announced its supremacy; revealed the forlorn position of the House of Lords under the new arrangement; and seemed to lay for ever the fluttering phantom of regal prerogative.

It was on the 9th of May that Lord Lyndhurst was with the King, and on the 15th all was over. Nothing in parliamentary history so humiliating as the funeral oration delivered that day by the Duke of Wellington over the old constitution, that, modelled on the Venetian, had governed England since the accession of the House of Hanover. He described his Sovereign, when his Grace first repaired to his Majesty, as in a state of the greatest 'difficulty and distress,' appealing to his never-failing loyalty to extricate him from his trouble and vexation. The Duke of Wellington, representing the House of Lords, sympathises with the King, and pledges his utmost efforts for his Majesty's relief. But after five days' exertion, this man of indomitable will and invincible fortunes, resigns the task in discomfiture and despair, and alleges as the only and sufficient reason for his utter and hopeless defeat, that the House of Commons had come to a vote which ran counter to the contemplated exercise of the prerogative.

From that moment power passed from the House of Lords to another assembly. But if the peers have ceased to be magnificoes, may it not also happen that the Sovereign may cease to be a Doge? It is not impossible that the political movements of our time, which seem on the surface to have a tendency to democracy, may have in reality a monarchical bias.

In less than a fortnight's time the House of Lords, like James II., having abdicated their functions by absence, the Reform Bill passed; the ardent

monarch, who a few months before had expressed his readiness to go down to Parliament, in a hackney coach if necessary, to assist its progress, now declining personally to give his assent to its provisions.

In the protracted discussions to which this celebrated measure gave rise, nothing is more remarkable than the perplexities into which the speakers of both sides are thrown, when they touch upon the nature of the representative principle. On one hand it was maintained, that, under the old system, the people were virtually represented; while on the other, it was triumphantly urged, that if the principle be conceded, the people should not be virtually, but actually, represented. But who are the people? And where are you to draw a line? And why should there be any? It was urged that a contribution to the taxes was the constitutional qualification for the suffrage. But we have established a system of taxation in this country of so remarkable a nature, that the beggar who chews his quid as he sweeps a crossing, is contributing to the imposts! Is he to have a vote? He is one of the people, and he yields his quota to the public burthens.

Amid these conflicting statements, and these confounding conclusions, it is singular that no member of either House should have recurred to the original character of these popular assemblies, which have always prevailed among the northern nations. We still retain in the antique phraseology of our statutes the term which might have beneficially guided a modern Reformer in his reconstructive labours.

When the crowned Northman consulted on the welfare of his kingdom, he assembled the ESTATES of his realm. Now an estate is a class of the nation invested with political rights. There appeared the estate of the clergy, of the barons, of other classes. In the Scandinavian kingdoms to this day, the estate of the peasants sends its representatives to the Diet. In England, under the Normans, the Church and the Baronage were convoked, together with the estate of the Community, a term which then probably described the inferior holders of land, whose tenure was not immediate of the Crown. This Third Estate was so numerous, that convenience suggested its appearance by representation; while the others, more limited, appeared, and still appear, personally. The Third Estate was reconstructed as circumstances developed themselves. It was a Reform of Parliament when the towns were summoned.

In treating the House of the Third Estate as the House of the People, and not as the House of a privileged class, the Ministry and Parliament of 1831 virtually conceded the principle of Universal Suffrage. In this point of view the ten-pound franchise was an arbitrary, irrational, and

impolitic qualification. It had, indeed, the merit of simplicity, and so had the constitutions of Abbé Siéyès. But its immediate and inevitable result was Chartism.

But if the Ministry and Parliament of 1831 had announced that the time had arrived when the Third Estate should be enlarged and reconstructed, they would have occupied an intelligible position; and if, instead of simplicity of elements in its reconstruction, they had sought, on the contrary, various and varying materials which would have neutralised the painful predominance of any particular interest in the new scheme, and prevented those banded jealousies which have been its consequences, the nation would have found itself in a secure condition. Another class not less numerous than the existing one, and invested with privileges not less important, would have been added to the public estates of the realm; and the bewildering phrase 'the People' would have remained, what it really is, a term of natural philosophy, and not of political science.

During this eventful week of May, 1832, when an important revolution was effected in the most considerable of modern kingdoms, in a manner so tranquil, that the victims themselves were scarcely conscious at the time of the catastrophe, Coningsby passed his hours in unaccustomed pleasures, and in novel excitement. Although he heard daily from the lips of Mr. Rigby and his friends that England was for ever lost, the assembled guests still contrived to do justice to his grandfather's excellent dinners; nor did the impending ruin that awaited them prevent the Princess Colonna from going to the Opera, whither she very good-naturedly took Coningsby. Madame Colonna, indeed, gave such gratifying accounts of her dear young friend, that Coningsby became daily a greater favourite with Lord Monmouth, who cherished the idea that his grandson had inherited not merely the colour of his eyes, but something of his shrewd and fearless spirit.

With Lucretia, Coningsby did not much advance. She remained silent and sullen. She was not beautiful; pallid, with a lowering brow, and an eye that avoided meeting another's. Madame Colonna, though good-natured, felt for her something of the affection for which step-mothers are celebrated. Lucretia, indeed, did not encourage her kindness, which irritated her step-mother, who seemed seldom to address her but to rate and chide; Lucretia never replied, but looked dogged. Her father, the Prince, did not compensate for this treatment. The memory of her mother, whom he had greatly disliked, did not soften his heart. He was a man still young; slender, not tall; very handsome, but worn; a haggard Antinous; his beautiful hair daily thinning; his dress rich and effeminate; many jewels, much lace. He seldom spoke, but was polished, though moody.

At the end of the week, Coningsby returned to Eton. On the eve of his departure, Lord Monmouth desired his grandson to meet him in his apartments on the morrow, before quitting his roof. This farewell visit was as kind and gracious as the first one had been repulsive. Lord Monmouth gave Coningsby his blessing and ten pounds; desired that he would order a dress, anything he liked, for the approaching Montem, which Lord Monmouth meant to attend; and informed his grandson that he should order that in future a proper supply of game and venison should be forwarded to Eton for the use of himself and his friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

After eight o'clock school, the day following the return of Coningsby, according to custom, he repaired to Buckhurst's room, where Henry Sydney, Lord Vere, and our hero held with him their breakfast mess. They were all in the fifth form, and habitual companions, on the river or on the Fives' Wall, at cricket or at foot-ball. The return of Coningsby, their leader alike in sport and study, inspired them to-day with unusual spirits, which, to say the truth, were never particularly depressed. Where he had been, what he had seen, what he had done, what sort of fellow his grandfather was, whether the visit had been a success; here were materials for almost endless inquiry. And, indeed, to do them justice, the last question was not the least exciting to them; for the deep and cordial interest which all felt in Coningsby's welfare far outweighed the curiosity which, under ordinary circumstances, they would have experienced on the return of one of their companions from an unusual visit to London. The report of their friend imparted to them unbounded satisfaction, when they learned that his relative was a splendid fellow; that he had been loaded with kindness and favours; that Monmouth House, the wonders of which he rapidly sketched, was hereafter to be his home; that Lord Monmouth was coming down to Montem; that Coningsby was to order any dress he liked, build a new boat if he chose; and, finally, had been pouched in a manner worthy of a Marquess and a grandfather.

'By the bye,' said Buckhurst, when the hubbub had a little subsided, 'I am afraid you will not half like it, Coningsby; but, old fellow, I had no idea you would be back this morning; I have asked Millbank to breakfast here.'

A cloud stole over the clear brow of Coningsby.

'It was my fault,' said the amiable Henry Sydney; 'but I really wanted to be civil to Millbank, and as you were not here, I put Buckhurst up to ask him.'

'Well,' said Coningsby, as if sullenly resigned, 'never mind; but why should you ask an infernal manufacturer?'

'Why, the Duke always wished me to pay him some attention,' said Lord Henry, mildly. 'His family were so civil to us when we were at Manchester.'

'Manchester, indeed!' said Coningsby; 'if you knew what I do about Manchester! A pretty state we have been in in London this week past with your Manchesters and Birminghams!'

'Come, come, Coningsby,' said Lord Vere, the son of a Whig minister; 'I am all for Manchester and Birmingham.'

'It is all up with the country, I can tell you,' said Coningsby, with the air of one who was in the secret.

'My father says it will all go right now,' rejoined Lord Vere. 'I had a letter from my sister yesterday.'

'They say we shall all lose our estates, though,' said Buckhurst; 'I know I shall not give up mine without a fight. Shirley was besieged, you know, in the civil wars; and the rebels got infernally licked.'

'I think that all the people about Beaumanoir would stand by the Duke,' said Lord Henry, pensively.

'Well, you may depend upon it you will have it very soon,' said Coningsby. 'I know it from the best authority.'

'It depends on whether my father remains in,' said Lord Vere. 'He is the only man who can govern the country now. All say that.'

At this moment Millbank entered. He was a good looking boy, somewhat shy, and yet with a sincere expression in his countenance. He was evidently not extremely intimate with those who were now his companions. Buckhurst, and Henry Sydney, and Vere, welcomed him cordially. He looked at Coningsby with some constraint, and then said:

'You have been in London, Coningsby?'

'Yes, I have been there during all the row.'

'You must have had a rare lark.'

'Yes, if having your windows broken by a mob be a rare lark. They could not break my grandfather's, though. Monmouth House is in a court-yard. All noblemen's houses should be in court-yards.'

'I was glad to see it all ended very well,' said Millbank.

'It has not begun yet,' said Coningsby.

'What?' said Millbank.

'Why, the revolution.'

'The Reform Bill will prevent a revolution, my father says,' said Millbank.

'By Jove! here's the goose,' said Buckhurst.

At this moment there entered the room a little boy, the scion of a noble house, bearing a roasted goose, which he had carried from the kitchen of the opposite inn, the Christopher. The lower boy or fag, depositing his burthen, asked his master whether he had further need of him; and Buckhurst, after looking round the table, and ascertaining that he had not, gave him permission to retire; but he had scarcely disappeared, when his master singing out, 'Lower boy, St. John!' he immediately re-entered, and demanded his master's pleasure, which was, that he should pour some water in the teapot. This being accomplished, St. John really made his escape, and retired to a pupil-room, where the bullying of a tutor, because he had no derivations, exceeded in all probability the bullying of his master, had he contrived in his passage from the Christopher to have upset the goose or dropped the sausages.

In their merry meal, the Reform Bill was forgotten. Their thoughts were soon concentrated in their little world, though it must be owned that visions of palaces and beautiful ladies did occasionally flit over the brain of one of the company. But for him especially there was much of interest and novelty. So much had happened in his absence! There was a week's arrears for him of Eton annals. They were recounted in so fresh a spirit, and in such vivid colours, that Coningsby lost nothing by his

London visit. All the bold feats that had been done, and all the bright things that had been said; all the triumphs, and all the failures, and all the scrapes; how popular one master had made himself, and how ridiculous another; all was detailed with a liveliness, a candour, and a picturesque ingenuousness, which would have made the fortune of a Herodotus or a Froissart.

'I'll tell you what,' said Buckhurst, 'I move that after twelve we five go up to Maidenhead.'

'Agreed; agreed!'

CHAPTER IX.

Millbank was the son of one of the wealthiest manufacturers in Lancashire. His father, whose opinions were of a very democratic bent, sent his son to Eton, though he disapproved of the system of education pursued there, to show that he had as much right to do so as any duke in the land. He had, however, brought up his only boy with a due prejudice against every sentiment or institution of an aristocratic character, and had especially impressed upon him in his school career, to avoid the slightest semblance of courting the affections or society of any member of the falsely-held superior class.

The character of the son as much as the influence of the father, tended to the fulfilment of these injunctions. Oswald Millbank was of a proud and independent nature; reserved, a little stern. The early and constantly-reiterated dogma of his father, that he belonged to a class debarred from its just position in the social system, had aggravated the grave and somewhat discontented humour of his blood. His talents were considerable, though invested with no dazzling quality. He had not that quick and brilliant apprehension, which, combined with a memory of rare retentiveness, had already advanced Coningsby far beyond his age, and made him already looked to as the future hero of the school. But Millbank possessed one of those strong, industrious volitions whose perseverance amounts almost to genius, and nearly attains its results. Though Coningsby was by a year his junior, they were rivals. This circumstance had no tendency to remove the prejudice which Coningsby entertained against him, but its bias on the part of Millbank had a contrary effect.

The influence of the individual is nowhere so sensible as at school. There the personal qualities strike without any intervening and counteracting causes. A gracious presence, noble sentiments, or a happy talent, make their way there at once, without preliminary inquiries as to what set they are in, or what family they are of, how much they have a-year, or where they live. Now, on no spirit had the influence of Coningsby, already the favourite, and soon probably to become the idol, of the school, fallen more effectually than on that of Millbank, though it was an influence that no one could suspect except its votary or its victim.

At school, friendship is a passion. It entrances the being; it tears the soul. All loves of after-life can never bring its rapture, or its wretchedness; no bliss so absorbing, no pangs of jealousy or despair so crushing and so keen! What tenderness and what devotion; what illimitable confidence; infinite revelations of inmost thoughts; what ecstatic present and romantic future; what bitter estrangements and what melting reconciliations; what scenes of wild recrimination, agitating explanations, passionate correspondence; what insane sensitiveness, and what frantic sensibility; what earthquakes of the heart and whirlwinds of the soul are confined in that simple phrase, a schoolboy's friendship! Tis some indefinite recollection of these mystic passages of their young emotion that makes grey-haired men mourn over the memory of their schoolboy days. It is a spell that can soften the acerbity of political warfare, and with its witchery can call forth a sigh even amid the callous bustle of fashionable saloons.

The secret of Millbank's life was a passionate admiration and affection for Coningsby. Pride, his natural reserve, and his father's injunctions, had, however, hitherto successfully combined to restrain the slightest demonstration of these sentiments. Indeed, Coningsby and himself were never companions, except in school, or in some public game. The demeanour of Coningsby gave no encouragement to intimacy to one, who, under any circumstances, would have required considerable invitation to open himself. So Millbank fed in silence on a cherished idea. It was his happiness to be in the same form, to join in the same sport, with Coningsby; occasionally to be thrown in unusual contact with him, to exchange slight and not unkind words. In their division they were rivals; Millbank sometimes triumphed, but to be vanquished by Coningsby was for him not without a degree of mild satisfaction. Not a gesture, not a phrase from Coningsby, that he did not watch and ponder over and treasure up. Coningsby was his model, alike in studies, in manners, or in pastimes; the aptest scholar, the gayest wit, the most graceful associate, the most accomplished playmate: his standard of excellent. Yet Millbank was the very last boy in the school who would have had credit given him by his

companions for profound and ardent feeling. He was not indeed unpopular. The favourite of the school like Coningsby, he could, under no circumstances, ever have become; nor was he qualified to obtain that general graciousness among the multitude, which the sweet disposition of Henry Sydney, or the gay profusion of Buckhurst, acquired without any effort. Millbank was not blessed with the charm of manner. He seemed close and cold; but he was courageous, just, and inflexible; never bullied, and to his utmost would prevent tyranny. The little boys looked up to him as a stern protector; and his word, too, throughout the school was a proverb: and truth ranks a great quality among boys. In a word, Millbank was respected by those among whom he lived; and school-boys scan character more nicely than men suppose.

A brother of Henry Sydney, quartered in Lancashire, had been wounded recently in a riot, and had received great kindness from the Millbank family, in whose immediate neighbourhood the disturbance had occurred. The kind Duke had impressed on Henry Sydney to acknowledge with cordiality to the younger Millbank at Eton, the sense which his family entertained of these benefits; but though Henry lost neither time nor opportunity in obeying an injunction, which was grateful to his own heart, he failed in cherishing, or indeed creating, any intimacy with the object of his solicitude. A companionship with one who was Coningsby's relative and most familiar friend, would at the first glance have appeared, independently of all other considerations, a most desirable result for Millbank to accomplish. But, perhaps, this very circumstance afforded additional reasons for the absence of all encouragement with which he received the overtures of Lord Henry. Millbank suspected that Coningsby was not affected in his favour, and his pride recoiled from gaining, by any indirect means, an intimacy which to have obtained in a plain and express manner would have deeply gratified him. However, the urgent invitation of Buckhurst and Henry Sydney, and the fear that a persistence in refusal might be misinterpreted into churlishness, had at length brought Millbank to their breakfast-mess, though, when he accepted their invitation, he did not apprehend that Coningsby would have been present.

It was about an hour before sunset, the day of this very breakfast, and a good number of boys, in lounging groups, were collected in the Long Walk. The sports and matches of the day were over. Criticism had succeeded to action in sculling and in cricket. They talked over the exploits of the morning; canvassed the merits of the competitors, marked the fellow whose play or whose stroke was improving; glanced at another, whose promise had not been fulfilled; discussed the pretensions, and adjudged the palm. Thus public opinion is formed. Some, too, might be seen with their books and exercises, intent on the inevitable and impending tasks. Among these, some

unhappy wight in the remove, wandering about with his hat, after parochial fashion, seeking relief in the shape of a verse. A hard lot this, to know that you must be delivered of fourteen verses at least in the twenty-four hours, and to be conscious that you are pregnant of none. The lesser boys, urchins of tender years, clustered like flies round the baskets of certain vendors of sugary delicacies that rested on the Long Walk wall. The pallid countenance, the lacklustre eye, the hoarse voice clogged with accumulated phlegm, indicated too surely the irreclaimable and hopeless votary of lollypop, the opium-eater of schoolboys.

'It is settled, the match to-morrow shall be between Aquatics and Drybobs,' said a senior boy; who was arranging a future match at cricket.

'But what is to be done about Fielding major?' inquired another. 'He has not paid his boating money, and I say he has no right to play among the Aquatics before he has paid his money.'

'Oh! but we must have Fielding major, he is such a devil of a swipe.'

'I declare he shall not play among the Aquatics if he does not pay his boating money. It is an infernal shame.'

'Let us ask Buckhurst. Where is Buckhurst?'

'Have you got any toffy?' inquired a dull looking little boy, in a hoarse voice, of one of the vendors of scholastic confectionery.

'Tom Trot, sir.'

'No; I want toffy.'

'Very nice Tom Trot, sir.'

'No, I want toffy; I have been eating Tom Trot all day.'

'Where is Buckhurst? We must settle about the Aquatics.'

'Well, I for one will not play if Fielding major plays amongst the Aquatics. That is settled.'

'Oh! nonsense; he will pay his money if you ask him.'

'I shall not ask him again. The captain duns us every day. It is an infernal shame.'

'I say, Burnham, where can one get some toffy? This fellow never has any.'

'I will tell you; at Barnes' on the bridge. The best toffy in the world.'

'I will go at once. I must have some toffy.'

'Just help me with this verse, Collins,' said one boy to another, in an imploring tone, 'that's a good fellow.'

'Well, give it us: first syllable in _fabri_ is short; three false quantities in the two first lines! You're a pretty one. There, I have done it for you.'

'That's a good fellow.'

'Any fellow seen Buckhurst?'

'Gone up the river with Coningsby and Henry Sydney.'

'But he must be back by this time. I want him to make the list for the match to-morrow. Where the deuce can Buckhurst be?'

And now, as rumours rise in society we know not how, so there was suddenly a flying report in this multitude, the origin of which no one in his alarm stopped to ascertain, that a boy was drowned.

Every heart was agitated.

What boy? When, where, how? Who was absent? Who had been on the river to-day? Buckhurst. The report ran that Buckhurst was drowned. Great were the trouble and consternation. Buckhurst was ever much liked; and now no one remembered anything but his good qualities.

'Who heard it was Buckhurst?' said Sedgwick, captain of the school, coming forward.

'I heard Bradford tell Palmer it was Buckhurst,' said a little boy.

'Where is Bradford?'

'Here.'

'What do you know about Buckhurst?'

'Wentworth told me that he was afraid Buckhurst was drowned. He heard it at the Brocas; a bargeman told him about a quarter of an hour ago.'

'Here is Wentworth! Here is Wentworth!' a hundred voices exclaimed, and they formed a circle round him.

'Well, what did you hear, Wentworth?' asked Sedgwick.

'I was at the Brocas, and a bargee told me that an Eton fellow had been drowned above Surley, and the only Eton boat above Surley to-day, as I can learn, is Buckhurst's four-oar. That is all.'

There was a murmur of hope.

'Oh! come, come,' said Sedgwick, 'there is some chance. Who is with Buckhurst; who knows?'

'I saw him walk down to the Brocas with Vere,' said a boy.

'I hope it is not Vere,' said a little boy, with a tearful eye; 'he never lets any fellow bully me.'

'Here is Maltravers,' halloed out a boy; 'he knows something.'

'Well, what do you know, Maltravers?'

'I heard Boots at the Christopher say that an Eton fellow was drowned, and that he had seen a person who was there.'

'Bring Boots here,' said Sedgwick.

Instantly a band of boys rushed over the way, and in a moment the witness was produced.

'What have you heard, Sam, about this accident?' said Sedgwick.

'Well, sir, I heard a young gentleman was drowned above Monkey Island,' said Boots.

'And no name mentioned?'

'Well, sir, I believe it was Mr. Coningsby.'

A general groan of horror.

'Coningsby, Coningsby! By Heavens I hope not,' said Sedgwick.

'I very much fear so,' said Boots; 'as how the bargeman who told me saw Mr. Coningsby in the Lock House laid out in flannels.'

'I had sooner any fellow had been drowned than Coningsby,' whispered one boy to another.

'I liked him, the best fellow at Eton,' responded his companion, in a smothered tone.

'What a clever fellow he was!'

'And so deuced generous!'

'He would have got the medal if he had lived.'

'And how came he to be drowned? for he was such a fine swimmer!'

'I heerd Mr. Coningsby was saving another's life,' continued Boots in his evidence, 'which makes it in a manner more sorrowful.'

'Poor Coningsby!' exclaimed a boy, bursting into tears: 'I move the whole school goes into mourning.'

'I wish we could get hold of this bargeman,' said Sedgwick. 'Now stop, stop, don't all run away in that mad manner; you frighten the people. Charles Herbert and Palmer, you two go down to the Brocas and inquire.'

But just at this moment, an increased stir and excitement were evident in the Long Walk; the circle round Sedgwick opened, and there appeared Henry Sydney and Buckhurst.

There was a dead silence. It was impossible that suspense could be strained to a higher pitch. The air and countenance of Sydney and Buckhurst were rather excited than mournful or alarmed. They needed no inquiries, for before they had penetrated the circle they had become aware of its cause.

Buckhurst, the most energetic of beings, was of course the first to speak. Henry Sydney indeed looked pale and nervous; but his companion, flushed and resolute, knew exactly how to hit a popular assembly, and at once came

to the point.

'It is all a false report, an infernal lie; Coningsby is quite safe, and nobody is drowned.'

There was a cheer that might have been heard at Windsor Castle. Then, turning to Sedgwick, in an undertone Buckhurst added,

'It is all right, but, by Jove! we have had a shaver. I will tell you all in a moment, but we want to keep the thing quiet, and so let the fellows disperse, and we will talk afterwards.'

In a few moments the Long Walk had resumed its usual character; but Sedgwick, Herbert, and one or two others turned into the playing fields, where, undisturbed and unnoticed by the multitude, they listened to the promised communication of Buckhurst and Henry Sydney.

'You know we went up the river together,' said Buckhurst. 'Myself, Henry Sydney, Coningsby, Vere, and Millbank. We had breakfasted together, and after twelve agreed to go up to Maidenhead. Well, we went up much higher than we had intended. About a quarter of a mile before we had got to the Lock we pulled up; Coningsby was then steering. Well, we fastened the boat to, and were all of us stretched out on the meadow, when Millbank and Vere said they should go and bathe in the Lock Pool. The rest of us were opposed; but after Millbank and Vere had gone about ten minutes, Coningsby, who was very fresh, said he had changed his mind and should go and bathe too. So he left us. He had scarcely got to the pool when he heard a cry. There was a fellow drowning. He threw off his clothes and was in in a moment. The fact is this, Millbank had plunged in the pool and found himself in some eddies, caused by the meeting of two currents. He called out to Vere not to come, and tried to swim off. But he was beat, and seeing he was in danger, Vere jumped in. But the stream was so strong, from the great fall of water from the lasher above, that Vere was exhausted before he could reach Millbank, and nearly sank himself. Well, he just saved himself; but Millbank sank as Coningsby jumped in. What do you think of that?'

'By Jove!' exclaimed Sedgwick, Herbert, and all. The favourite oath of schoolboys perpetuates the divinity of Olympus.

'And now comes the worst. Coningsby caught Millbank when he rose, but he found himself in the midst of the same strong current that had before nearly swamped Vere. What a lucky thing that he had taken into his head not to pull to-day! Fresher than Vere, he just managed to land Millbank

and himself. The shouts of Vere called us, and we arrived to find the bodies of Millbank and Coningsby apparently lifeless, for Millbank was quite gone, and Coningsby had swooned on landing.'

'If Coningsby had been lost,' said Henry Sydney, 'I never would have shown my face at Eton again.'

'Can you conceive a position more terrible?' said Buckhurst. 'I declare I shall never forget it as long as I live. However, there was the Lock House at hand; and we got blankets and brandy. Coningsby was soon all right; but Millbank, I can tell you, gave us some trouble. I thought it was all up. Didn't you, Henry Sydney?'

'The most fishy thing I ever saw,' said Henry Sydney.

'Well, we were fairly frightened here,' said Sedgwick. 'The first report was, that you had gone, but that seemed without foundation; but Coningsby was quite given up. Where are they now?'

'They are both at their tutors'. I thought they had better keep quiet. Vere is with Millbank, and we are going back to Coningsby directly; but we thought it best to show, finding on our arrival that there were all sorts of rumours about. I think it will be best to report at once to my tutor, for he will be sure to hear something.'

'I would if I were you.'

CHAPTER X.

What wonderful things are events! The least are of greater importance than the most sublime and comprehensive speculations! In what fanciful schemes to obtain the friendship of Coningsby had Millbank in his reveries often indulged! What combinations that were to extend over years and influence their lives! But the moment that he entered the world of action, his pride recoiled from the plans and hopes which his sympathy had inspired. His sensibility and his inordinate self-respect were always at variance. And he seldom exchanged a word with the being whose idea engrossed his affection.

And now, suddenly, an event had occurred, like all events, unforeseen,

which in a few, brief, agitating, tumultuous moments had singularly and utterly changed the relations that previously subsisted between him and the former object of his concealed tenderness. Millbank now stood with respect to Coningsby in the position of one who owes to another the greatest conceivable obligation; a favour which time could permit him neither to forget nor to repay. Pride was a sentiment that could no longer subsist before the preserver of his life. Devotion to that being, open, almost ostentatious, was now a duty, a paramount and absorbing tie. The sense of past peril, the rapture of escape, a renewed relish for the life so nearly forfeited, a deep sentiment of devout gratitude to the providence that had guarded over him, for Millbank was an eminently religious boy, a thought of home, and the anguish that might have overwhelmed his hearth; all these were powerful and exciting emotions for a young and fervent mind, in addition to the peculiar source of sensibility on which we have already touched. Lord Vere, who lodged in the same house as Millbank, and was sitting by his bedside, observed, as night fell, that his mind wandered.

The illness of Millbank, the character of which soon transpired, and was soon exaggerated, attracted the public attention with increased interest to the circumstances out of which it had arisen, and from which the parties principally concerned had wished to have diverted notice. The sufferer, indeed, had transgressed the rules of the school by bathing at an unlicensed spot, where there were no expert swimmers in attendance, as is customary, to instruct the practice and to guard over the lives of the young adventurers. But the circumstances with which this violation of rules had been accompanied, and the assurance of several of the party that they had not themselves infringed the regulations, combined with the high character of Millbank, made the authorities not over anxious to visit with penalties a breach of observance which, in the case of the only proved offender, had been attended with such impressive consequences. The feat of Coningsby was extolled by all as an act of high gallantry and skill. It confirmed and increased the great reputation which he already enjoyed.

'Millbank is getting quite well,' said Buckhurst to Coningsby a few days after the accident. 'Henry Sydney and I are going to see him. Will you come?'

'I think we shall be too many. I will go another day,' replied Coningsby.

So they went without him. They found Millbank up and reading.

'Well, old fellow,' said Buckhurst, 'how are you? We should have come up before, but they would not let us. And you are quite right now, eh?'

'Quite. Has there been any row about it?'

'All blown over,' said Henry Sydney; 'C*****y behaved like a trump.'

'I have seen nobody yet,' said Millbank; 'they would not let me till to-day. Vere looked in this morning and left me this book, but I was asleep. I hope they will let me out in a day or two. I want to thank Coningsby; I never shall rest till I have thanked Coningsby.'

'Oh, he will come to see you,' said Henry Sydney; 'I asked him just now to come with us.'

'Yes!' said Millbank, eagerly; 'and what did he say?'

'He thought we should be too many.'

'I hope I shall see him soon,' said Millbank, 'somehow or other.'

'I will tell him to come,' said Buckhurst.

'Oh! no, no, don't tell him to come,' said Millbank. 'Don't bore him.'

'I know he is going to play a match at fives this afternoon,' said Buckhurst, 'for I am one.'

'And who are the others?' inquired Millbank.

'Herbert and Campbell.'

'Herbert is no match for Coningsby,' said Millbank.

And then they talked over all that had happened since his absence; and Buckhurst gave him a graphic report of the excitement on the afternoon of the accident; at last they were obliged to leave him.

'Well, good-bye, old fellow; we will come and see you every day. What can we do for you? Any books, or anything?'

'If any fellow asks after me,' said Millbank, 'tell him I shall be glad to see him. It is very dull being alone. But do not tell any fellow to come if he does not ask after me.'

Notwithstanding the kind suggestions of Buckhurst and Henry Sydney,

Coningsby could not easily bring himself to call on Millbank. He felt a constraint. It seemed as if he went to receive thanks. He would rather have met Millbank again in school, or in the playing fields. Without being able then to analyse his feelings, he shrank unconsciously from that ebullition of sentiment, which in more artificial circles is described as a scene. Not that any dislike of Millbank prompted him to this reserve. On the contrary, since he had conferred a great obligation on Millbank, his prejudice against him had sensibly decreased. How it would have been had Millbank saved Coningsby's life, is quite another affair. Probably, as Coningsby was by nature generous, his sense of justice might have struggled successfully with his painful sense of the overwhelming obligation. But in the present case there was no element to disturb his fair self-satisfaction. He had greatly distinguished himself; he had conferred on his rival an essential service; and the whole world rang with his applause. He began rather to like Millbank; we will not say because Millbank was the unintentional cause of his pleasurable sensations. Really it was that the unusual circumstances had prompted him to a more impartial judgment of his rival's character. In this mood, the day after the visit of Buckhurst and Henry Sydney, Coningsby called on Millbank, but finding his medical attendant with him, Coningsby availed himself of that excuse for going away without seeing him.

The next day he left Millbank a newspaper on his way to school, time not permitting a visit. Two days after, going into his room, he found on his table a letter addressed to 'Harry Coningsby, Esq.'

ETON, May--, 1832.

'DEAR CONINGSBY, I very much fear that you must think me a very ungrateful fellow, because you have not heard from me before; but I was in hopes that I might get out and say to you what I feel; but whether I speak or write, it is quite impossible for me to make you understand the feelings of my heart to you. Now, I will say at once, that I have always liked you better than any fellow in the school, and always thought you the cleverest; indeed, I always thought that there was no one like you; but I never would say this or show this, because you never seemed to care for me, and because I was afraid you would think I merely wanted to con with you, as they used to say of some other fellows, whose names I will not mention, because they always tried to do so with Henry Sydney and you. I do not want this at all; but I want, though we may not speak to each other more than before, that we may be friends; and that you will always know that there is nothing I will not do for you, and that I like you better than any fellow at Eton. And I do not mean that this shall be only at Eton, but afterwards, wherever we may be, that you will always remember that there

is nothing I will not do for you. Not because you saved my life, though that is a great thing, but because before that I would have done anything for you; only, for the cause above mentioned, I would not show it. I do not expect that we shall be more together than before; nor can I ever suppose that you could like me as you like Henry Sydney and Buckhurst, or even as you like Vere; but still I hope you will always think of me with kindness now, and let me sign myself, if ever I do write to you, 'Your most attached, affectionate, and devoted friend,

'OSWALD MILLBANK.'

CHAPTER XI.

About a fortnight after this nearly fatal adventure on the river, it was Montem. One need hardly remind the reader that this celebrated ceremony, of which the origin is lost in obscurity, and which now occurs triennially, is the tenure by which Eton College holds some of its domains. It consists in the waving of a flag by one of the scholars, on a mount near the village of Salt Hill, which, without doubt, derives its name from the circumstance that on this day every visitor to Eton, and every traveller in its vicinity, from the monarch to the peasant, are stopped on the road by youthful brigands in picturesque costume, and summoned to contribute 'salt,' in the shape of coin of the realm, to the purse collecting for the Captain of Eton, the senior scholar on the Foundation, who is about to repair to King's College, Cambridge.

On this day the Captain of Eton appears in a dress as martial as his title: indeed, each sixth-form boy represents in his uniform, though not perhaps according to the exact rules of the Horse Guards, an officer of the army. One is a marshal, another an ensign. There is a lieutenant, too; and the remainder are sergeants. Each of those who are intrusted with these ephemeral commissions has one or more attendants, the number of these varying according to his rank. These servitors are selected according to the wishes of the several members of the sixth form, out of the ranks of the lower boys, that is, those boys who are below the fifth form; and all these attendants are arrayed in a variety of fancy dresses. The Captain of the Oppidans and the senior Colleger next to the Captain of the school, figure also in fancy costume, and are called 'Saltbearers.' It is their business, together with the twelve senior Collegers of the fifth form, who are called 'Runners,' and whose costume is also determined by

the taste of the wearers, to levy the contributions. And all the Oppidans of the fifth form, among whom ranked Coningsby, class as 'Corporals;' and are severally followed by one or more lower boys, who are denominated 'Polemen,' but who appear in their ordinary dress.

It was a fine, bright morning; the bells of Eton and Windsor rang merrily; everybody was astir, and every moment some gay equipage drove into the town. Gaily clustering in the thronged precincts of the College, might be observed many a glistening form: airy Greek or sumptuous Ottoman, heroes of the Holy Sepulchre, Spanish Hidalgos who had fought at Pavia, Highland Chiefs who had charged at Culloden, gay in the tartan of Prince Charlie. The Long Walk was full of busy groups in scarlet coats or fanciful uniforms; some in earnest conversation, some criticising the arriving guests; others encircling some magnificent hero, who astounded them with his slashed doublet or flowing plume.

A knot of boys, sitting on the Long Walk wall, with their feet swinging in the air, watched the arriving guests of the Provost.

'I say, Townshend,' said one, 'there's Grobbleton; he was a bully. I wonder if that's his wife? Who's this? The Duke of Agincourt. He wasn't an Eton fellow? Yes, he was. He was called Poitiers then. Oh! ah! his name is in the upper school, very large, under Charles Fox. I say, Townshend, did you see Saville's turban? What was it made of? He says his mother brought it from Grand Cairo. Didn't he just look like the Saracen's Head? Here are some Dons. That's Hallam! We'll give him a cheer. I say, Townshend, look at this fellow. He doesn't think small beer of himself. I wonder who he is? The Duke of Wellington's valet come to say his master is engaged. Oh! by Jove, he heard you! I wonder if the Duke will come? Won't we give him a cheer!'

'By Jove! who is this?' exclaimed Townshend, and he jumped from the wall, and, followed by his companions, rushed towards the road.

Two britskas, each drawn by four grey horses of mettle, and each accompanied by outriders as well mounted, were advancing at a rapid pace along the road that leads from Slough to the College. But they were destined to an irresistible check. About fifty yards before they had reached the gate that leads into Weston's Yard, a ruthless but splendid Albanian, in crimson and gold embroidered jacket, and snowy camise, started forward, and holding out his silver-sheathed yataghan commanded the postilions to stop. A Peruvian Inca on the other side of the road gave a simultaneous command, and would infallibly have transfixed the outriders with an arrow from his unerring bow, had they for an instant hesitated.

The Albanian Chief then advanced to the door of the carriage, which he opened, and in a tone of great courtesy, announced that he was under the necessity of troubling its inmates for 'salt.' There was no delay. The Lord of the equipage, with the amiable condescension of a 'grand monarque,' expressed his hope that the collection would be an ample one, and as an old Etonian, placed in the hands of the Albanian his contribution, a magnificent purse, furnished for the occasion, and heavy with gold.

'Don't be alarmed, ladies,' said a very handsome young officer, laughing, and taking off his cocked hat.

'Ah!' exclaimed one of the ladies, turning at the voice, and starting a little. 'Ah! it is Mr. Coningsby.'

Lord Eskdale paid the salt for the next carriage. 'Do they come down pretty stiff?' he inquired, and then, pulling forth a roll of bank-notes from the pocket of his pea-jacket, he wished them good morning.

The courtly Provost, then the benignant Goodall, a man who, though his experience of life was confined to the colleges in which he had passed his days, was naturally gifted with the rarest of all endowments, the talent of reception; and whose happy bearing and gracious manner, a smile ever in his eye and a lively word ever on his lip, must be recalled by all with pleasant recollections, welcomed Lord Monmouth and his friends to an assemblage of the noble, the beautiful, and the celebrated gathered together in rooms not unworthy of them, as you looked upon their interesting walls, breathing with the portraits of the heroes whom Eton boasts, from Wotton to Wellesley. Music sounded in the quadrangle of the College, in which the boys were already quickly assembling. The Duke of Wellington had arrived, and the boys were cheering a hero, who was an Eton field-marshal. From an oriel window in one of the Provost's rooms, Lord Monmouth, surrounded by every circumstance that could make life delightful, watched with some intentness the scene in the quadrangle beneath.

'I would give his fame,' said Lord Monmouth, 'if I had it, and my wealth, to be sixteen.'

Five hundred of the youth of England, sparkling with health, high spirits, and fancy dresses, were now assembled in the quadrangle. They formed into rank, and headed by a band of the Guards, thrice they marched round the court. Then quitting the College, they commenced their progress 'ad Montem.' It was a brilliant spectacle to see them defiling through the

playing fields, those bowery meads; the river sparkling in the sun, the castled heights of Windsor, their glorious landscape; behind them, the pinnacles of their College.

The road from Eton to Salt Hill was clogged with carriages; the broad fields as far as eye could range were covered with human beings. Amid the burst of martial music and the shouts of the multitude, the band of heroes, as if they were marching from Athens, or Thebes, or Sparta, to some heroic deed, encircled the mount; the ensign reaches its summit, and then, amid a deafening cry of 'Floreat Etona!' he unfurls, and thrice waves the consecrated standard.

'Lord Monmouth,' said Mr. Rigby to Coningsby, 'wishes that you should beg your friends to dine with him. Of course you will ask Lord Henry and your friend Sir Charles Buckhurst; and is there any one else that you would like to invite?'

'Why, there is Vere,' said Coningsby, hesitating, 'and--'

'Vere! What Lord Vere?' said Rigby. 'Hum! He is one of your friends, is he? His father has done a great deal of mischief, but still he is Lord Vere. Well, of course, you can invite Vere.'

'There is another fellow I should like to ask very much,' said Coningsby. 'if Lord Monmouth would not think I was asking too many.'

'Never fear that; he sent me particularly to tell you to invite as many as you liked.'

'Well, then, I should like to ask Millbank.'

'Millbank!' said Mr. Rigby, a little excited, and then he added, 'Is that a son of Lady Albinia Millbank?'

'No; his mother is not a Lady Albinia, but he is a great friend of mine. His father is a Lancashire manufacturer.'

'By no means,' exclaimed Mr. Rigby, quite agitated. 'There is nothing in the world that Lord Monmouth dislikes so much as Manchester manufacturers, and particularly if they bear the name of Millbank. It must not be thought of, my dear Harry. I hope you have not spoken to the young man on the subject. I assure you it is out of the question. It would make Lord Monmouth quite ill. It would spoil everything, quite upset him.'

It was, of course, impossible for Coningsby to urge his wishes against such representations. He was disappointed, rather amazed; but Madame Colonna having sent for him to introduce her to some of the scenes and details of Eton life, his vexation was soon absorbed in the pride of acting in the face of his companions as the cavalier of a beautiful lady, and becoming the cicerone of the most brilliant party that had attended Montem. He presented his friends, too, to Lord Monmouth, who gave them a cordial invitation to dine with him at his hotel at Windsor, which they warmly accepted. Buckhurst delighted the Marquess by his reckless genius. Even Lucretia deigned to appear amused; especially when, on visiting the upper school, the name of CARDIFF, the title Lord Monmouth bore in his youthful days, was pointed out to her by Coningsby, cut with his grandfather's own knife on the classic panels of that memorable wall in which scarcely a name that has flourished in our history, since the commencement of the eighteenth century, may not be observed with curious admiration.

It was the humour of Lord Monmouth that the boys should be entertained with the most various and delicious banquet that luxury could devise or money could command. For some days beforehand orders had been given for the preparation of this festival. Our friends did full justice to their Lucullus; Buckhurst especially, who gave his opinion on the most refined dishes with all the intrepidity of saucy ignorance, and occasionally shook his head over a glass of Hermitage or Côte Rôtie with a dissatisfaction which a satiated Sybarite could not have exceeded. Considering all things, Coningsby and his friends exhibited a great deal of self-command; but they were gay, even to the verge of frolic. But then the occasion justified it, as much as their youth. All were in high spirits. Madame Colonna declared that she had met nothing in England equal to Montem; that it was a Protestant Carnival; and that its only fault was that it did not last forty days. The Prince himself was all animation, and took wine with every one of the Etonians several times. All went on flowingly until Mr. Rigby contradicted Buckhurst on some point of Eton discipline, which Buckhurst would not stand. He rallied Mr. Rigby roundly, and Coningsby, full of champagne, and owing Rigby several years of contradiction, followed up the assault. Lord Monmouth, who liked a butt, and had a weakness for boisterous gaiety, slyly encouraged the boys, till Rigby began to lose his temper and get noisy.

The lads had the best of it; they said a great many funny things, and delivered themselves of several sharp retorts; whereas there was something ridiculous in Rigby putting forth his 'slashing' talents against such youngers. However, he brought the infliction on himself by his strange habit of deciding on subjects of which he knew nothing, and of always

contradicting persons on the very subjects of which they were necessarily masters.

To see Rigby baited was more amusement to Lord Monmouth even than Montem. Lucian Gay, however, when the affair was getting troublesome, came forward as a diversion. He sang an extemporaneous song on the ceremony of the day, and introduced the names of all the guests at the dinner, and of a great many other persons besides. This was capital! The boys were in raptures, but when the singer threw forth a verse about Dr. Keate, the applause became uproarious.

'Good-bye, my dear Harry,' said Lord Monmouth, when he bade his grandson farewell. 'I am going abroad again; I cannot remain in this Radical-ridden country. Remember, though I am away, Monmouth House is your home, at least so long as it belongs to me. I understand my tailor has turned Liberal, and is going to stand for one of the metropolitan districts, a friend of Lord Durham; perhaps I shall find him in it when I return. I fear there are evil days for the NEW GENERATION!'

END OF BOOK I.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

It was early in November, 1834, and a large shooting party was assembled at Beaumanoir, the seat of that great nobleman, who was the father of Henry Sydney. England is unrivalled for two things, sporting and politics. They were combined at Beaumanoir; for the guests came not merely to slaughter the Duke's pheasants, but to hold council on the prospects of the party, which it was supposed by the initiated, began at this time to indicate some symptoms of brightening.

The success of the Reform Ministry on their first appeal to the new constituency which they had created, had been fatally complete. But the triumph was as destructive to the victors as to the vanquished.

'We are too strong,' prophetically exclaimed one of the fortunate cabinet, which found itself supported by an inconceivable majority of three

hundred. It is to be hoped that some future publisher of private memoirs may have preserved some of the traits of that crude and short-lived parliament, when old Cobbett insolently thrust Sir Robert from the prescriptive seat of the chief of opposition, and treasury understrappers sneered at the 'queer lot' that had arrived from Ireland, little foreseeing what a high bidding that 'queer lot' would eventually command. Gratitude to Lord Grey was the hustings-cry at the end of 1832, the pretext that was to return to the new-modelled House of Commons none but men devoted to the Whig cause. The successful simulation, like everything that is false, carried within it the seeds of its own dissolution. Ingratitude to Lord Grey was more the fashion at the commencement of 1834, and before the close of that eventful year, the once popular Reform Ministry was upset, and the eagerly-sought Reformed Parliament dissolved!

It can scarcely be alleged that the public was altogether unprepared for this catastrophe. Many deemed it inevitable; few thought it imminent. The career of the Ministry, and the existence of the Parliament, had indeed from the first been turbulent and fitful. It was known, from authority, that there were dissensions in the cabinet, while a House of Commons which passed votes on subjects not less important than the repeal of a tax, or the impeachment of a judge, on one night, and rescinded its resolutions on the following, certainly established no increased claims to the confidence of its constituents in its discretion. Nevertheless, there existed at this period a prevalent conviction that the Whig party, by a great stroke of state, similar in magnitude and effect to that which in the preceding century had changed the dynasty, had secured to themselves the government of this country for, at least, the lives of the present generation. And even the well-informed in such matters were inclined to look upon the perplexing circumstances to which we have alluded rather as symptoms of a want of discipline in a new system of tactics, than as evidences of any essential and deeply-rooted disorder.

The startling rapidity, however, of the strange incidents of 1834; the indignant, soon to become vituperative, secession of a considerable section of the cabinet, some of them esteemed too at that time among its most efficient members; the piteous deprecation of 'pressure from without,' from lips hitherto deemed too stately for entreaty, followed by the Trades' Union, thirty thousand strong, parading in procession to Downing-street; the Irish negotiations of Lord Hatherton, strange blending of complex intrigue and almost infantile ingenuousness; the still inexplicable resignation of Lord Althorp, hurriedly followed by his still more mysterious resumption of power, the only result of his precipitate movements being the fall of Lord Grey himself, attended by circumstances which even a friendly historian could scarcely describe as honourable to

his party or dignified to himself; latterly, the extemporaneous address of King William to the Bishops; the vagrant and grotesque apocalypse of the Lord Chancellor; and the fierce recrimination and memorable defiance of the Edinburgh banquet, all these impressive instances of public affairs and public conduct had combined to create a predominant opinion that, whatever might be the consequences, the prolonged continuance of the present party in power was a clear impossibility.

It is evident that the suicidal career of what was then styled the Liberal party had been occasioned and stimulated by its unnatural excess of strength. The apoplectic plethora of 1834 was not less fatal than the paralytic tenuity of 1841. It was not feasible to gratify so many ambitions, or to satisfy so many expectations. Every man had his double; the heels of every placeman were dogged by friendly rivals ready to trip them up. There were even two cabinets; the one that met in council, and the one that met in cabal. The consequence of destroying the legitimate Opposition of the country was, that a moiety of the supporters of Government had to discharge the duties of Opposition.

Herein, then, we detect the real cause of all that irregular and unsettled carriage of public men which so perplexed the nation after the passing of the Reform Act. No government can be long secure without a formidable Opposition. It reduces their supporters to that tractable number which can be managed by the joint influences of fruition and of hope. It offers vengeance to the discontented, and distinction to the ambitious; and employs the energies of aspiring spirits, who otherwise may prove traitors in a division or assassins in a debate.

The general election of 1832 abrogated the Parliamentary Opposition of England, which had practically existed for more than a century and a half. And what a series of equivocal transactions and mortifying adventures did the withdrawal of this salutary restraint entail on the party which then so loudly congratulated themselves and the country that they were at length relieved from its odious repression! In the hurry of existence one is apt too generally to pass over the political history of the times in which we ourselves live. The two years that followed the Reform of the House of Commons are full of instruction, on which a young man would do well to ponder. It is hardly possible that he could rise from the study of these annals without a confirmed disgust for political intrigue; a dazzling practice, apt at first to fascinate youth, for it appeals at once to our invention and our courage, but one which really should only be the resource of the second-rate. Great minds must trust to great truths and great talents for their rise, and nothing else.

While, however, as the autumn of 1834 advanced, the people of this country became gradually sensible of the necessity of some change in the councils of their Sovereign, no man felt capable of predicting by what means it was to be accomplished, or from what quarry the new materials were to be extracted. The Tory party, according to those perverted views of Toryism unhappily too long prevalent in this country, was held to be literally defunct, except by a few old battered crones of office, crouched round the embers of faction which they were fanning, and muttering 'reaction' in mystic whispers. It cannot be supposed indeed for a moment, that the distinguished personage who had led that party in the House of Commons previously to the passing of the act of 1832, ever despaired in consequence of his own career. His then time of life, the perfection, almost the prime, of manhood; his parliamentary practice, doubly estimable in an inexperienced assembly; his political knowledge; his fair character and reputable position; his talents and tone as a public speaker, which he had always aimed to adapt to the habits and culture of that middle class from which it was concluded the benches of the new Parliament were mainly to be recruited, all these were qualities the possession of which must have assured a mind not apt to be disturbed in its calculations by any intemperate heats, that with time and patience the game was yet for him.

Unquestionably, whatever may have been insinuated, this distinguished person had no inkling that his services in 1834 might be claimed by his Sovereign. At the close of the session of that year he had quitted England with his family, and had arrived at Rome, where it was his intention to pass the winter. The party charges that have imputed to him a previous and sinister knowledge of the intentions of the Court, appear to have been made not only in ignorance of the personal character, but of the real position, of the future minister.

It had been the misfortune of this eminent gentleman when he first entered public life, to become identified with a political connection which, having arrogated to itself the name of an illustrious historical party, pursued a policy which was either founded on no principle whatever, or on principles exactly contrary to those which had always guided the conduct of the great Tory leaders. The chief members of this official confederacy were men distinguished by none of the conspicuous qualities of statesmen. They had none of the divine gifts that govern senates and guide councils. They were not orators; they were not men of deep thought or happy resource, or of penetrative and sagacious minds. Their political ken was essentially dull and contracted. They expended some energy in obtaining a defective, blundering acquaintance with foreign affairs; they knew as little of the real state of their own country as savages of an approaching eclipse. This factious league had shuffled themselves into power by

clinging to the skirts of a great minister, the last of Tory statesmen, but who, in the unparalleled and confounding emergencies of his latter years, had been forced, unfortunately for England, to relinquish Toryism. His successors inherited all his errors without the latent genius, which in him might have still rallied and extricated him from the consequences of his disasters. His successors did not merely inherit his errors; they exaggerated, they caricatured them. They rode into power on a springtide of all the rampant prejudices and rancorous passions of their time. From the King to the boor their policy was a mere pandering to public ignorance. Impudently usurping the name of that party of which nationality, and therefore universality, is the essence, these pseudo-Tories made Exclusion the principle of their political constitution, and Restriction the genius of their commercial code.

The blind goddess that plays with human fortunes has mixed up the memory of these men with traditions of national glory. They conducted to a prosperous conclusion the most renowned war in which England has ever been engaged. Yet every military conception that emanated from their cabinet was branded by their characteristic want of grandeur. Chance, however, sent them a great military genius, whom they treated for a long time with indifference, and whom they never heartily supported until his career had made him their master. His transcendent exploits, and European events even greater than his achievements, placed in the manikin grasp of the English ministry, the settlement of Europe.

The act of the Congress of Vienna remains the eternal monument of their diplomatic knowledge and political sagacity. Their capital feats were the creation of two kingdoms, both of which are already erased from the map of Europe. They made no single preparation for the inevitable, almost impending, conjunctures of the East. All that remains of the pragmatic arrangements of the mighty Congress of Vienna is the mediatisation of the petty German princes.

But the settlement of Europe by the pseudo-Tories was the dictate of inspiration compared with their settlement of England. The peace of Paris found the government of this country in the hands of a body of men of whom it is no exaggeration to say that they were ignorant of every principle of every branch of political science. So long as our domestic administration was confined merely to the raising of a revenue, they levied taxes with gross facility from the industry of a country too busy to criticise or complain. But when the excitement and distraction of war had ceased, and they were forced to survey the social elements that surrounded them, they seemed, for the first time, to have become conscious of their own incapacity. These men, indeed, were the mere children of routine. They

prided themselves on being practical men. In the language of this defunct school of statesmen, a practical man is a man who practises the blunders of his predecessors.

Now commenced that Condition-of-England Question of which our generation hears so much. During five-and-twenty years every influence that can develop the energies and resources of a nation had been acting with concentrated stimulation on the British Isles. National peril and national glory; the perpetual menace of invasion, the continual triumph of conquest; the most extensive foreign commerce that was ever conducted by a single nation; an illimitable currency; an internal trade supported by swarming millions whom manufacturers and inclosure-bills summoned into existence; above all, the supreme control obtained by man over mechanic power, these are some of the causes of that rapid advance of material civilisation in England, to which the annals of the world can afford no parallel. But there was no proportionate advance in our moral civilisation. In the hurry-skurry of money-making, men-making, and machine-making, we had altogether outgrown, not the spirit, but the organisation, of our institutions.

The peace came; the stimulating influences suddenly ceased; the people, in a novel and painful position, found themselves without guides. They went to the ministry; they asked to be guided; they asked to be governed. Commerce requested a code; trade required a currency; the unfranchised subject solicited his equal privilege; suffering labour clamoured for its rights; a new race demanded education. What did the ministry do?

They fell into a panic. Having fulfilled during their lives the duties of administration, they were frightened because they were called upon, for the first time, to perform the functions of government. Like all weak men, they had recourse to what they called strong measures. They determined to put down the multitude. They thought they were imitating Mr. Pitt, because they mistook disorganisation for sedition.

Their projects of relief were as ridiculous as their system of coercion was ruthless; both were alike founded in intense ignorance. When we recall Mr. Vansittart with his currency resolutions; Lord Castlereagh with his plans for the employment of labour; and Lord Sidmouth with his plots for ensnaring the laborious; we are tempted to imagine that the present epoch has been one of peculiar advances in political ability, and marvel how England could have attained her present pitch under a series of such governors.

We should, however, be labouring under a very erroneous impression. Run

over the statesmen that have figured in England since the accession of the present family, and we may doubt whether there be one, with the exception perhaps of the Duke of Newcastle, who would have been a worthy colleague of the council of Mr. Perceval, or the early cabinet of Lord Liverpool. Assuredly the genius of Bolingbroke and the sagacity of Walpole would have alike recoiled from such men and such measures. And if we take the individuals who were governing England immediately before the French Revolution, one need only refer to the speeches of Mr. Pitt, and especially to those of that profound statesman and most instructed man, Lord Shelburne, to find that we can boast no remarkable superiority either in political justice or in political economy. One must attribute this degeneracy, therefore, to the long war and our insular position, acting upon men naturally of inferior abilities, and unfortunately, in addition, of illiterate habits.

In the meantime, notwithstanding all the efforts of the political Panglosses who, in evening Journals and Quarterly Reviews were continually proving that this was the best of all possible governments, it was evident to the ministry itself that the machine must stop. The class of Rigbys indeed at this period, one eminently favourable to that fungous tribe, greatly distinguished themselves. They demonstrated in a manner absolutely convincing, that it was impossible for any person to possess any ability, knowledge, or virtue, any capacity of reasoning, any ray of fancy or faculty of imagination, who was not a supporter of the existing administration. If any one impeached the management of a department, the public was assured that the accuser had embezzled; if any one complained of the conduct of a colonial governor, the complainant was announced as a returned convict. An amelioration of the criminal code was discountenanced because a search in the parish register of an obscure village proved that the proposer had not been born in wedlock. A relaxation of the commercial system was denounced because one of its principal advocates was a Socinian. The inutility of Parliamentary Reform was ever obvious since Mr. Rigby was a member of the House of Commons.

To us, with our *_Times_* newspaper every morning on our breakfast-table, bringing, on every subject which can interest the public mind, a degree of information and intelligence which must form a security against any prolonged public misconception, it seems incredible that only five-and-twenty years ago the English mind could have been so ridden and hoodwinked, and that, too, by men of mean attainments and moderate abilities. But the war had directed the energies of the English people into channels by no means favourable to political education. Conquerors of the world, with their ports filled with the shipping of every clime, and their manufactories supplying the European continent, in the art of self-

government, that art in which their fathers excelled, they had become literally children; and Rigby and his brother hirelings were the nurses that frightened them with hideous fables and ugly words.

Notwithstanding, however, all this successful mystification, the Arch-Mediocrity who presided, rather than ruled, over this Cabinet of Mediocrities, became hourly more conscious that the inevitable transition from fulfilling the duties of an administration to performing the functions of a government could not be conducted without talents and knowledge. The Arch-Mediocrity had himself some glimmering traditions of political science. He was sprung from a laborious stock, had received some training, and though not a statesman, might be classed among those whom the Lord Keeper Williams used to call 'statemongers.' In a subordinate position his meagre diligence and his frigid method might not have been without value; but the qualities that he possessed were misplaced; nor can any character be conceived less invested with the happy properties of a leader. In the conduct of public affairs his disposition was exactly the reverse of that which is the characteristic of great men. He was peremptory in little questions, and great ones he left open.

In the natural course of events, in 1819 there ought to have been a change of government, and another party in the state should have entered into office; but the Whigs, though they counted in their ranks at that period an unusual number of men of great ability, and formed, indeed, a compact and spirited opposition, were unable to contend against the new adjustment of borough influence which had occurred during the war, and under the protracted administration by which that war had been conducted. New families had arisen on the Tory side that almost rivalled old Newcastle himself in their electioneering management; and it was evident that, unless some reconstruction of the House of Commons could be effected, the Whig party could never obtain a permanent hold of official power. Hence, from that period, the Whigs became Parliamentary Reformers.

It was inevitable, therefore, that the country should be governed by the same party; indispensable that the ministry should be renovated by new brains and blood. Accordingly, a Mediocrity, not without repugnance, was induced to withdraw, and the great name of Wellington supplied his place in council. The talents of the Duke, as they were then understood, were not exactly of the kind most required by the cabinet, and his colleagues were careful that he should not occupy too prominent a post; but still it was an impressive acquisition, and imparted to the ministry a semblance of renown.

There was an individual who had not long entered public life, but who had

already filled considerable, though still subordinate offices. Having acquired a certain experience of the duties of administration, and distinction for his mode of fulfilling them, he had withdrawn from his public charge; perhaps because he found it a barrier to the attainment of that parliamentary reputation for which he had already shown both a desire and a capacity; perhaps because, being young and independent, he was not over-anxious irremediably to identify his career with a school of politics of the infallibility of which his experience might have already made him a little sceptical. But he possessed the talents that were absolutely wanted, and the terms were at his own dictation. Another, and a very distinguished Mediocrity, who would not resign, was thrust out, and Mr. Peel became Secretary of State.

From this moment dates that intimate connection between the Duke of Wellington and the present First Minister, which has exercised a considerable influence over the career of individuals and the course of affairs. It was the sympathetic result of superior minds placed among inferior intelligences, and was, doubtless, assisted by a then mutual conviction, that the difference of age, the circumstance of sitting in different houses, and the general contrast of their previous pursuits and accomplishments, rendered personal rivalry out of the question. From this moment, too, the domestic government of the country assumed a new character, and one universally admitted to have been distinguished by a spirit of enlightened progress and comprehensive amelioration.

A short time after this, a third and most distinguished Mediocrity died; and Canning, whom they had twice worried out of the cabinet, where they had tolerated him some time in an obscure and ambiguous position, was recalled just in time from his impending banishment, installed in the first post in the Lower House, and intrusted with the seals of the Foreign Office. The Duke of Wellington had coveted them, nor could Lord Liverpool have been insensible to his Grace's peculiar fitness for such duties; but strength was required in the House of Commons, where they had only one Secretary of State, a young man already distinguished, yet untried as a leader, and surrounded by colleagues notoriously incapable to assist him in debate.

The accession of Mr. Canning to the cabinet, in a position, too, of surpassing influence, soon led to a further weeding of the Mediocrities, and, among other introductions, to the memorable entrance of Mr. Huskisson. In this wise did that cabinet, once notable only for the absence of all those qualities which authorise the possession of power, come to be generally esteemed as a body of men, who, for parliamentary eloquence, official practice, political information, sagacity in council,

and a due understanding of their epoch, were inferior to none that had directed the policy of the empire since the Revolution.

If we survey the tenor of the policy of the Liverpool Cabinet during the latter moiety of its continuance, we shall find its characteristic to be a partial recurrence to those frank principles of government which Mr. Pitt had revived during the latter part of the last century from precedents that had been set us, either in practice or in dogma, during its earlier period, by statesmen who then not only bore the title, but professed the opinions, of Tories. Exclusive principles in the constitution, and restrictive principles in commerce, have grown up together; and have really nothing in common with the ancient character of our political settlement, or the manners and customs of the English people. Confidence in the loyalty of the nation, testified by munificent grants of rights and franchises, and favour to an expansive system of traffic, were distinctive qualities of the English sovereignty, until the House of Commons usurped the better portion of its prerogatives. A widening of our electoral scheme, great facilities to commerce, and the rescue of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects from the Puritanic yoke, from fetters which have been fastened on them by English Parliaments in spite of the protests and exertions of English Sovereigns; these were the three great elements and fundamental truths of the real Pitt system, a system founded on the traditions of our monarchy, and caught from the writings, the speeches, the councils of those who, for the sake of these and analogous benefits, had ever been anxious that the Sovereign of England should never be degraded into the position of a Venetian Doge.

It is in the plunder of the Church that we must seek for the primary cause of our political exclusion, and our commercial restraint. That unhallowed booty created a factitious aristocracy, ever fearful that they might be called upon to regorge their sacrilegious spoil. To prevent this they took refuge in political religionism, and paltering with the disturbed consciences, or the pious fantasies, of a portion of the people, they organised them into religious sects. These became the unconscious Praetorians of their ill-gotten domains. At the head of these religionists, they have continued ever since to govern, or powerfully to influence this country. They have in that time pulled down thrones and churches, changed dynasties, abrogated and remodelled parliaments; they have disfranchised Scotland and confiscated Ireland. One may admire the vigour and consistency of the Whig party, and recognise in their career that unity of purpose that can only spring from a great principle; but the Whigs introduced sectarian religion, sectarian religion led to political exclusion, and political exclusion was soon accompanied by commercial restraint.

It would be fanciful to assume that the Liverpool Cabinet, in their ameliorating career, was directed by any desire to recur to the primordial tenets of the Tory party. That was not an epoch when statesmen cared to prosecute the investigation of principles. It was a period of happy and enlightened practice. A profounder policy is the offspring of a time like the present, when the original postulates of institutions are called in question. The Liverpool Cabinet unconsciously approximated to these opinions, because from careful experiment they were convinced of their beneficial tendency, and they thus bore an unintentional and impartial testimony to their truth. Like many men, who think they are inventors, they were only reproducing ancient wisdom.

But one must ever deplore that this ministry, with all their talents and generous ardour, did not advance to principles. It is always perilous to adopt expediency as a guide; but the choice may be sometimes imperative. These statesmen, however, took expediency for their director, when principle would have given them all that expediency ensured, and much more.

This ministry, strong in the confidence of the sovereign, the parliament, and the people, might, by the courageous promulgation of great historical truths, have gradually formed a public opinion, that would have permitted them to organise the Tory party on a broad, a permanent, and national basis. They might have nobly effected a complete settlement of Ireland, which a shattered section of this very cabinet was forced a few years after to do partially, and in an equivocating and equivocal manner. They might have concluded a satisfactory reconstruction of the third estate, without producing that convulsion with which, from its violent fabrication, our social system still vibrates. Lastly, they might have adjusted the rights and properties of our national industries in a manner which would have prevented that fierce and fatal rivalry that is now disturbing every hearth of the United Kingdom.

We may, therefore, visit on the _laches_ of this ministry the introduction of that new principle and power into our constitution which ultimately may absorb all, AGITATION. This cabinet, then, with so much brilliancy on its surface, is the real parent of the Roman Catholic Association, the Political Unions, the Anti-Corn-Law League.

There is no influence at the same time so powerful and so singular as that of individual character. It arises as often from the weakness of the character as from its strength. The dispersion of this clever and showy ministry is a fine illustration of this truth. One morning the Arch-

Mediocrity himself died. At the first blush, it would seem that little difficulties could be experienced in finding his substitute. His long occupation of the post proved, at any rate, that the qualification was not excessive. But this cabinet, with its serene and blooming visage, had been all this time charged with fierce and emulous ambitions. They waited the signal, but they waited in grim repose. The death of the nominal leader, whose formal superiority, wounding no vanity, and offending no pride, secured in their councils equality among the able, was the tocsin of their anarchy. There existed in this cabinet two men, who were resolved immediately to be prime ministers; a third who was resolved eventually to be prime minister, but would at any rate occupy no ministerial post without the lead of a House of Parliament; and a fourth, who felt himself capable of being prime minister, but despaired of the revolution which could alone make him one; and who found an untimely end when that revolution had arrived.

Had Mr. Secretary Canning remained leader of the House of Commons under the Duke of Wellington, all that he would have gained by the death of Lord Liverpool was a master. Had the Duke of Wellington become Secretary of State under Mr. Canning he would have materially advanced his political position, not only by holding the seals of a high department in which he was calculated to excel, but by becoming leader of the House of Lords. But his Grace was induced by certain court intriguers to believe that the King would send for him, and he was also aware that Mr. Peel would no longer serve under any ministry in the House of Commons. Under any circumstances it would have been impossible to keep the Liverpool Cabinet together. The struggle, therefore, between the Duke of Wellington and 'my dear Mr. Canning' was internecine, and ended somewhat unexpectedly.

And here we must stop to do justice to our friend Mr. Rigby, whose conduct on this occasion was distinguished by a bustling dexterity which was quite charming. He had, as we have before intimated, on the credit of some clever lampoons written during the Queen's trial, which were, in fact, the effusions of Lucian Gay, wriggled himself into a sort of occasional unworthy favour at the palace, where he was half butt and half buffoon. Here, during the interregnum occasioned by the death, or rather inevitable retirement, of Lord Liverpool, Mr. Rigby contrived to scrape up a conviction that the Duke was the winning horse, and in consequence there appeared a series of leading articles in a notorious evening newspaper, in which it was, as Tadpole and Taper declared, most 'slashingly' shown, that the son of an actress could never be tolerated as a Prime Minister of England. Not content with this, and never doubting for a moment the authentic basis of his persuasion, Mr. Rigby poured forth his coarse volubility on the subject at several of the new clubs which he was getting

up in order to revenge himself for having been black-balled at White's.

What with arrangements about Lord Monmouth's boroughs, and the lucky bottling of some claret which the Duke had imported on Mr. Rigby's recommendation, this distinguished gentleman contrived to pay almost hourly visits at Apsley House, and so bullied Tadpole and Taper that they scarcely dared address him. About four-and-twenty hours before the result, and when it was generally supposed that the Duke was in, Mr. Rigby, who had gone down to Windsor to ask his Majesty the date of some obscure historical incident, which Rigby, of course, very well knew, found that audiences were impossible, that Majesty was agitated, and learned, from an humble but secure authority, that in spite of all his slashing articles, and Lucian Gay's parodies of the Irish melodies, Canning was to be Prime Minister.

This would seem something of a predicament! To common minds; there are no such things as scrapes for gentlemen with Mr. Rigby's talents for action. He had indeed, in the world, the credit of being an adept in machinations, and was supposed ever to be involved in profound and complicated contrivances. This was quite a mistake. There was nothing profound about Mr. Rigby; and his intellect was totally incapable of devising or sustaining an intricate or continuous scheme. He was, in short, a man who neither felt nor thought; but who possessed, in a very remarkable degree, a restless instinct for adroit baseness. On the present occasion he got into his carriage, and drove at the utmost speed from Windsor to the Foreign Office. The Secretary of State was engaged when he arrived; but Mr. Rigby would listen to no difficulties. He rushed upstairs, flung open the door, and with agitated countenance, and eyes suffused with tears, threw himself into the arms of the astonished Mr. Canning.

'All is right,' exclaimed the devoted Rigby, in broken tones; 'I have convinced the King that the First Minister must be in the House of Commons. No one knows it but myself; but it is certain.'

We have seen that at an early period of his career, Mr. Peel withdrew from official life. His course had been one of unbroken prosperity; the hero of the University had become the favourite of the House of Commons. His retreat, therefore, was not prompted by chagrin. Nor need it have been suggested by a calculating ambition, for the ordinary course of events was fast bearing to him all to which man could aspire. One might rather suppose, that he had already gained sufficient experience, perhaps in his Irish Secretaryship, to make him pause in that career of superficial success which education and custom had hitherto chalked out for him, rather than the creative energies of his own mind. A thoughtful intellect

may have already detected elements in our social system which required a finer observation, and a more unbroken study, than the gyves and trammels of office would permit. He may have discovered that the representation of the University, looked upon in those days as the blue ribbon of the House of Commons, was a sufficient fetter without unnecessarily adding to its restraint. He may have wished to reserve himself for a happier occasion, and a more progressive period. He may have felt the strong necessity of arresting himself in his rapid career of felicitous routine, to survey his position in calmness, and to comprehend the stirring age that was approaching.

For that, he could not but be conscious that the education which he had consummated, however ornate and refined, was not sufficient. That age of economical statesmanship which Lord Shelburne had predicted in 1787, when he demolished, in the House of Lords, Bishop Watson and the Balance of Trade, which Mr. Pitt had comprehended; and for which he was preparing the nation when the French Revolution diverted the public mind into a stronger and more turbulent current, was again impending, while the intervening history of the country had been prolific in events which had aggravated the necessity of investigating the sources of the wealth of nations. The time had arrived when parliamentary preeminence could no longer be achieved or maintained by gorgeous abstractions borrowed from Burke, or shallow systems purloined from De Lolme, adorned with Horatian points, or varied with Virgilian passages. It was to be an age of abstruse disquisition, that required a compact and sinewy intellect, nurtured in a class of learning not yet honoured in colleges, and which might arrive at conclusions conflicting with predominant prejudices.

Adopting this view of the position of Mr. Peel, strengthened as it is by his early withdrawal for a while from the direction of public affairs, it may not only be a charitable but a true estimate of the motives which influenced him in his conduct towards Mr. Canning, to conclude that he was not guided in that transaction by the disingenuous rivalry usually imputed to him. His statement in Parliament of the determining circumstances of his conduct, coupled with his subsequent and almost immediate policy, may perhaps always leave this a painful and ambiguous passage in his career; but in passing judgment on public men, it behoves us ever to take large and extended views of their conduct; and previous incidents will often satisfactorily explain subsequent events, which, without their illustrating aid, are involved in misapprehension or mystery.

It would seem, therefore, that Sir Robert Peel, from an early period, meditated his emancipation from the political confederacy in which he was implicated, and that he has been continually baffled in this project. He

broke loose from Lord Liverpool; he retired from Mr. Canning. Forced again into becoming the subordinate leader of the weakest government in parliamentary annals, he believed he had at length achieved his emancipation, when he declared to his late colleagues, after the overthrow of 1830, that he would never again accept a secondary position in office. But the Duke of Wellington was too old a tactician to lose so valuable an ally. So his Grace declared after the Reform Bill was passed, as its inevitable result, that thenceforth the Prime Minister must be a member of the House of Commons; and this aphorism, cited as usual by the Duke's parasites as demonstration of his supreme sagacity, was a graceful mode of resigning the preeminence which had been productive of such great party disasters. It is remarkable that the party who devised and passed the Reform Bill, and who, in consequence, governed the nation for ten years, never once had their Prime Minister in the House of Commons: but that does not signify; the Duke's maxim is still quoted as an oracle almost equal in prescience to his famous query, 'How is the King's government to be carried on?' a question to which his Grace by this time has contrived to give a tolerably practical answer.

Sir Robert Peel, who had escaped from Lord Liverpool, escaped from Mr. Canning, escaped even from the Duke of Wellington in 1832, was at length caught in 1834; the victim of ceaseless intriguers, who neither comprehended his position, nor that of their country.

CHAPTER II.

Beaumanoir was one of those Palladian palaces, vast and ornate, such as the genius of Kent and Campbell delighted in at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Placed on a noble elevation, yet screened from the northern blast, its sumptuous front, connected with its far-spreading wings by Corinthian colonnades, was the boast and pride of the midland counties. The surrounding gardens, equalling in extent the size of ordinary parks, were crowded with temples dedicated to abstract virtues and to departed friends. Occasionally a triumphal arch celebrated a general whom the family still esteemed a hero; and sometimes a votive column commemorated the great statesman who had advanced the family a step in the peerage. Beyond the limits of this pleasance the hart and hind wandered in a wilderness abounding in ferny coverts and green and stately trees.

The noble proprietor of this demesne had many of the virtues of his class; a few of their failings. He had that public spirit which became his station. He was not one of those who avoided the exertions and the sacrifices which should be inseparable from high position, by the hollow pretext of a taste for privacy, and a devotion to domestic joys. He was munificent, tender, and bounteous to the poor, and loved a flowing hospitality. A keen sportsman, he was not untinctured by letters, and had indeed a cultivated taste for the fine arts. Though an ardent politician, he was tolerant to adverse opinions, and full of amenity to his opponents. A firm supporter of the corn-laws, he never refused a lease. Notwithstanding there ran through his whole demeanour and the habit of his mind, a vein of native simplicity that was full of charm, his manner was finished. He never offended any one's self-love. His good breeding, indeed, sprang from the only sure source of gentle manners, a kind heart. To have pained others would have pained himself. Perhaps, too, this noble sympathy may have been in some degree prompted by the ancient blood in his veins, an accident of lineage rather rare with the English nobility. One could hardly praise him for the strong affections that bound him to his hearth, for fortune had given him the most pleasing family in the world; but, above all, a peerless wife.

The Duchess was one of those women who are the delight of existence. She was sprung from a house not inferior to that with which she had blended, and was gifted with that rare beauty which time ever spares, so that she seemed now only the elder sister of her own beautiful daughters. She, too, was distinguished by that perfect good breeding which is the result of nature and not of education: for it may be found in a cottage, and may be missed in a palace. 'Tis a genial regard for the feelings of others that springs from an absence of selfishness. The Duchess, indeed, was in every sense a fine lady; her manners were refined and full of dignity; but nothing in the world could have induced her to appear bored when another was addressing or attempting to amuse her. She was not one of those vulgar fine ladies who meet you one day with a vacant stare, as if unconscious of your existence, and address you on another in a tone of impertinent familiarity. Her temper, perhaps, was somewhat quick, which made this consideration for the feelings of others still more admirable, for it was the result of a strict moral discipline acting on a good heart. Although the best of wives and mothers, she had some charity for her neighbours. Needing herself no indulgence, she could be indulgent; and would by no means favour that strait-laced morality that would constrain the innocent play of the social body. She was accomplished, well read, and had a lively fancy. Add to this that sunbeam of a happy home, a gay and cheerful spirit in its mistress, and one might form some faint idea of this gracious personage.

The eldest son of this house was now on the continent; of his two younger brothers, one was with his regiment and the other was Coningsby's friend at Eton, our Henry Sydney. The two eldest daughters had just married, on the same day, and at the same altar; and the remaining one, Theresa, was still a child.

The Duke had occupied a chief post in the Household under the late administration, and his present guests chiefly consisted of his former colleagues in office. There were several members of the late cabinet, several members for his Grace's late boroughs, looking very much like martyrs, full of suffering and of hope. Mr. Tadpole and Mr. Taper were also there; they too had lost their seats since 1832; but being men of business, and accustomed from early life to look about them, they had already commenced the combinations which on a future occasion were to bear them back to the assembly where they were so missed.

Taper had his eye on a small constituency which had escaped the fatal schedules, and where he had what they called a 'connection;' that is to say, a section of the suffrages who had a lively remembrance of Treasury favours once bestowed by Mr. Taper, and who had not been so liberally dealt with by the existing powers. This connection of Taper was in time to leaven the whole mass of the constituent body, and make it rise in full rebellion against its present liberal representative, who being one of a majority of three hundred, could get nothing when he called at Whitehall or Downing Street.

Tadpole, on the contrary, who was of a larger grasp of mind than Taper, with more of imagination and device but not so safe a man, was coquetting with a manufacturing town and a large constituency, where he was to succeed by the aid of the Wesleyans, of which pious body he had suddenly become a fervent admirer. The great Mr. Rigby, too, was a guest out of Parliament, nor caring to be in; but hearing that his friends had some hopes, he thought he would just come down to dash them.

The political grapes were sour for Mr. Rigby; a prophet of evil, he preached only mortification and repentance and despair to his late colleagues. It was the only satisfaction left Mr. Rigby, except assuring the Duke that the finest pictures in his gallery were copies, and recommending him to pull down Beaumanoir, and rebuild it on a design with which Mr. Rigby would furnish him.

The battue and the banquet were over; the ladies had withdrawn; and the butler placed fresh claret on the table.

'And you really think you could give us a majority, Tadpole?' said the Duke.

Mr. Tadpole, with some ceremony, took a memorandum-book out of his pocket, amid the smiles and the faint well-bred merriment of his friends.

'Tadpole is nothing without his book,' whispered Lord Fitz-Booby.

'It is here,' said Mr. Tadpole, emphatically patting his volume, 'a clear working majority of twenty-two.'

'Near sailing that!' cried the Duke.

'A far better majority than the present Government have,' said Mr. Tadpole.

'There is nothing like a good small majority,' said Mr. Taper, 'and a good registration.'

'Ay! register, register, register!' said the Duke. 'Those were immortal words.'

'I can tell your Grace three far better ones,' said Mr. Tadpole, with a self-complacent air. 'Object, object, object!'

'You may register, and you may object,' said Mr. Rigby, 'but you will never get rid of Schedule A and Schedule B.'

'But who could have supposed two years ago that affairs would be in their present position?' said Mr. Taper, deferentially.

'I foretold it,' said Mr. Rigby. 'Every one knows that no government now can last twelve months.'

'We may make fresh boroughs,' said Taper. 'We have reduced Shabbyton at the last registration under three hundred.'

'And the Wesleyans!' said Tadpole. 'We never counted on the Wesleyans!'

'I am told these Wesleyans are really a respectable body,' said Lord Fitz-Booby. 'I believe there is no material difference between their tenets and those of the Establishment. I never heard of them much till lately. We have too long confounded them with the mass of Dissenters, but their

conduct at several of the later elections proves that they are far from being unreasonable and disloyal individuals. When we come in, something should be done for the Wesleyans, eh, Rigby?'

'All that your Lordship can do for the Wesleyans is what they will very shortly do for themselves, appropriate a portion of the Church Revenues to their own use.'

'Nay, nay,' said Mr. Tadpole with a chuckle, 'I don't think we shall find the Church attacked again in a hurry. I only wish they would try! A good Church cry before a registration,' he continued, rubbing his hands; 'eh, my Lord, I think that would do.'

'But how are we to turn them out?' said the Duke.

'Ah!' said Mr. Taper, 'that is a great question.'

'What do you think of a repeal of the Malt Tax?' said Lord Fitz-Booby.

'They have been trying it on in ----shire, and I am told it goes down very well.'

'No repeal of any tax,' said Taper, sincerely shocked, and shaking his head; 'and the Malt Tax of all others. I am all against that.'

'It is a very good cry though, if there be no other,' said Tadpole.

'I am all for a religious cry,' said Taper. 'It means nothing, and, if successful, does not interfere with business when we are in.'

'You will have religious cries enough in a short time,' said Mr. Rigby, rather wearied of any one speaking but himself, and thereat he commenced a discourse, which was, in fact, one of his 'slashing' articles in petto on Church Reform, and which abounded in parallels between the present affairs and those of the reign of Charles I. Tadpole, who did not pretend to know anything but the state of the registration, and Taper, whose political reading was confined to an intimate acquaintance with the Red Book and Beatson's Political Index, which he could repeat backwards, were silenced. The Duke, who was well instructed and liked to be talked to, sipped his claret, and was rather amused by Rigby's lecture, particularly by one or two statements characterised by Rigby's happy audacity, but which the Duke was too indolent to question. Lord Fitz-Booby listened with his mouth open, but rather bored. At length, when there was a momentary pause, he said:

'In my time, the regular thing was to move an amendment on the address.'

'Quite out of the question,' exclaimed Tadpole, with a scoff.

'Entirely given up,' said Taper, with a sneer.

'If you will drink no more claret, we will go and hear some music,' said the Duke.

CHAPTER III.

A breakfast at Beaumanoir was a meal of some ceremony. Every guest was expected to attend, and at a somewhat early hour. Their host and hostess set them the example of punctuality. 'Tis an old form rigidly adhered to in some great houses, but, it must be confessed, does not contrast very agreeably with the easier arrangements of establishments of less pretension and of more modern order.

The morning after the dinner to which we have been recently introduced, there was one individual absent from the breakfast-table whose non-appearance could scarcely be passed over without notice; and several inquired with some anxiety, whether their host were indisposed.

'The Duke has received some letters from London which detain him,' replied the Duchess. 'He will join us.'

'Your Grace will be glad to hear that your son Henry is very well,' said Mr. Rigby; 'I heard of him this morning. Harry Coningsby enclosed me a letter for his grandfather, and tells me that he and Henry Sydney had just had a capital run with the King's hounds.'

'It is three years since we have seen Mr. Coningsby,' said the Duchess. 'Once he was often here. He was a great favourite of mine. I hardly ever knew a more interesting boy.'

'Yes, I have done a great deal for him,' said Mr. Rigby. 'Lord Monmouth is fond of him, and wishes that he should make a figure; but how any one is to distinguish himself now, I am really at a loss to comprehend.'

'But are affairs so very bad?' said the Duchess, smiling. 'I thought that

we were all regaining our good sense and good temper.'

'I believe all the good sense and all the good temper in England are concentrated in your Grace,' said Mr. Rigby, gallantly.

'I should be sorry to be such a monopolist. But Lord Fitz-Booby was giving me last night quite a glowing report of Mr. Tadpole's prospects for the nation. We were all to have our own again; and Percy to carry the county.'

'My dear Madam, before twelve months are past, there will not be a county in England. Why should there be? If boroughs are to be disfranchised, why should not counties be destroyed?'

At this moment the Duke entered, apparently agitated. He bowed to his guests, and apologised for his unusual absence. 'The truth is,' he continued, 'I have just received a very important despatch. An event has occurred which may materially affect affairs. Lord Spencer is dead.'

A thunderbolt in a summer sky, as Sir William Temple says, could not have produced a greater sensation. The business of the repast ceased in a moment. The knives and forks were suddenly silent. All was still.

'It is an immense event,' said Tadpole.

'I don't see my way,' said Taper.

'When did he die?' said Lord Fitz-Booby.

'I don't believe it,' said Mr. Rigby.

'They have got their man ready,' said Tadpole.

'It is impossible to say what will happen,' said Taper.

'Now is the time for an amendment on the address,' said Fitz-Booby.

'There are two reasons which convince me that Lord Spencer is not dead,' said Mr. Rigby.

'I fear there is no doubt of it,' said the Duke, shaking his head.

'Lord Althorp was the only man who could keep them together,' said Lord Fitz-Booby.

'On the contrary,' said Tadpole. 'If I be right in my man, and I have no doubt of it, you will have a radical programme, and they will be stronger than ever.'

'Do you think they can get the steam up again?' said Taper, musingly.

'They will bid high,' replied Tadpole. 'Nothing could be more unfortunate than this death. Things were going on so well and so quietly! The Wesleyans almost with us!'

'And Shabbyton too!' mournfully exclaimed Taper. 'Another registration and quiet times, and I could have reduced the constituency to two hundred and fifty.'

'If Lord Spencer had died on the 10th,' said Rigby, 'it must have been known to Henry Rivers. And I have a letter from Henry Rivers by this post. Now, Althorp is in Northamptonshire, mark that, and Northampton is a county--'

'My dear Rigby,' said the Duke, 'pardon me for interrupting you. Unhappily, there is no doubt Lord Spencer is dead, for I am one of his executors.'

This announcement silenced even Mr. Rigby, and the conversation now entirely merged in speculations on what would occur. Numerous were the conjectures hazarded, but the prevailing impression was, that this unforeseen event might embarrass those secret expectations of Court succour in which a certain section of the party had for some time reason to indulge.

From the moment, however, of the announcement of Lord Spencer's death, a change might be visibly observed in the tone of the party at Beaumanoir. They became silent, moody, and restless. There seemed a general, though not avowed, conviction that a crisis of some kind or other was at hand. The post, too, brought letters every day from town teeming with fanciful speculations, and occasionally mysterious hopes.

'I kept this cover for Peel,' said the Duke pensively, as he loaded his gun on the morning of the 14th. 'Do you know, I was always against his going to Rome.'

'It is very odd,' said Tadpole, 'but I was thinking of the very same thing.'

'It will be fifteen years before England will see a Tory Government,' said Mr. Rigby, drawing his ramrod, 'and then it will only last five months.'

'Melbourne, Althorp, and Durham, all in the Lords,' said Taper. 'Three leaders! They must quarrel.'

'If Durham come in, mark me, he will dissolve on Household Suffrage and the Ballot,' said Tadpole.

'Not nearly so good a cry as Church,' replied Taper.

'With the Malt Tax,' said Tadpole. 'Church, without the Malt Tax, will not do against Household Suffrage and Ballot.'

'Malt Tax is madness,' said Taper. 'A good farmer's friend cry without Malt Tax would work just as well.'

'They will never dissolve,' said the Duke. 'They are so strong.'

'They cannot go on with three hundred majority,' said Taper. 'Forty is as much as can be managed with open constituencies.'

'If he had only gone to Paris instead of Rome!' said the Duke.

'Yes,' said Mr. Rigby, 'I could have written to him then by every post, and undeceived him as to his position.'

'After all he is the only man,' said the Duke; 'and I really believe the country thinks so.'

'Pray, what is the country?' inquired Mr. Rigby. 'The country is nothing; it is the constituency you have to deal with.'

'And to manage them you must have a good cry,' said Taper. 'All now depends upon a good cry.'

'So much for the science of politics,' said the Duke, bringing down a pheasant. 'How Peel would have enjoyed this cover!'

'He will have plenty of time for sport during his life,' said Mr. Rigby.

On the evening of the 15th of November, a despatch arrived at Beaumanoir, informing his Grace that the King had dismissed the Whig Ministry, and sent for the Duke of Wellington. Thus the first agitating suspense was

over; to be succeeded, however, by expectation still more anxious. It was remarkable that every individual suddenly found that he had particular business in London which could not be neglected. The Duke very properly pleaded his executorial duties; but begged his guests on no account to be disturbed by his inevitable absence. Lord Fitz-Booby had just received a letter from his daughter, who was indisposed at Brighton, and he was most anxious to reach her. Tadpole had to receive deputations from Wesleyans, and well-registered boroughs anxious to receive well-principled candidates. Taper was off to get the first job at the contingent Treasury, in favour of the Borough of Shabbyton. Mr. Rigby alone was silent; but he quietly ordered a post-chaise at daybreak, and long before his fellow guests were roused from their slumbers, he was halfway to London, ready to give advice, either at the pavilion or at Apsley House.

CHAPTER IV.

Although it is far from improbable that, had Sir Robert Peel been in England in the autumn of 1834, the Whig government would not have been dismissed; nevertheless, whatever may now be the opinion of the policy of that measure; whether it be looked on as a premature movement which necessarily led to the compact reorganisation of the Liberal party, or as a great stroke of State, which, by securing at all events a dissolution of the Parliament of 1832, restored the healthy balance of parties in the Legislature, questions into which we do not now wish to enter, it must be generally admitted, that the conduct of every individual eminently concerned in that great historical transaction was characterised by the rarest and most admirable quality of public life, moral courage. The Sovereign who dismissed a Ministry apparently supported by an overwhelming majority in the Parliament and the nation, and called to his councils the absent chief of a parliamentary section, scarcely numbering at that moment one hundred and forty individuals, and of a party in the country supposed to be utterly discomfited by a recent revolution; the two ministers who in this absence provisionally administered the affairs of the kingdom in the teeth of an enraged and unscrupulous Opposition, and perhaps themselves not sustained by a profound conviction, that the arrival of their expected leader would convert their provisional into a permanent position; above all the statesman who accepted the great charge at a time and under circumstances which marred probably the deep projects of his own prescient sagacity and maturing ambition; were all men gifted with a high spirit of enterprise, and animated by that active fortitude which is the soul of

free governments.

It was a lively season, that winter of 1834! What hopes, what fears, and what bets! From the day on which Mr. Hudson was to arrive at Rome to the election of the Speaker, not a contingency that was not the subject of a wager! People sprang up like mushrooms; town suddenly became full. Everybody who had been in office, and everybody who wished to be in office; everybody who had ever had anything, and everybody who ever expected to have anything, were alike visible. All of course by mere accident; one might meet the same men regularly every day for a month, who were only 'passing through town.'

Now was the time for men to come forward who had never despaired of their country. True they had voted for the Reform Bill, but that was to prevent a revolution. And now they were quite ready to vote against the Reform Bill, but this was to prevent a dissolution. These are the true patriots, whose confidence in the good sense of their countrymen and in their own selfishness is about equal. In the meantime, the hundred and forty threw a grim glance on the numerous waiters on Providence, and amiable trimmers, who affectionately enquired every day when news might be expected of Sir Robert. Though too weak to form a government, and having contributed in no wise by their exertions to the fall of the late, the cohort of Parliamentary Tories felt all the alarm of men who have accidentally stumbled on some treasure-trove, at the suspicious sympathy of new allies. But, after all, who were to form the government, and what was the government to be? Was it to be a Tory government, or an Enlightened-Spirit-of-the-Age Liberal-Moderate-Reform government; was it to be a government of high philosophy or of low practice; of principle or of expediency; of great measures or of little men? A government of statesmen or of clerks? Of Humbug or of Humdrum? Great questions these, but unfortunately there was nobody to answer them. They tried the Duke; but nothing could be pumped out of him. All that he knew, which he told in his curt, husky manner, was, that he had to carry on the King's government. As for his solitary colleague, he listened and smiled, and then in his musical voice asked them questions in return, which is the best possible mode of avoiding awkward inquiries. It was very unfair this; for no one knew what tone to take; whether they should go down to their public dinners and denounce the Reform Act or praise it; whether the Church was to be re-modelled or only admonished; whether Ireland was to be conquered or conciliated.

'This can't go on much longer,' said Taper to Tadpole, as they reviewed together their electioneering correspondence on the 1st of December; 'we have no cry.'

'He is half way by this time,' said Tadpole; 'send an extract from a private letter to the Standard, dated Augsburg, and say he will be here in four days.'

At last he came; the great man in a great position, summoned from Rome to govern England. The very day that he arrived he had his audience with the King.

It was two days after this audience; the town, though November, in a state of excitement; clubs crowded, not only morning rooms, but halls and staircases swarming with members eager to give and to receive rumours equally vain; streets lined with cabs and chariots, grooms and horses; it was two days after this audience that Mr. Ormsby, celebrated for his political dinners, gave one to a numerous party. Indeed his saloons to-day, during the half-hour of gathering which precedes dinner, offered in the various groups, the anxious countenances, the inquiring voices, and the mysterious whispers, rather the character of an Exchange or Bourse than the tone of a festive society.

Here might be marked a murmuring knot of greyheaded privy-councillors, who had held fat offices under Perceval and Liverpool, and who looked back to the Reform Act as to a hideous dream; there some middle-aged aspirants might be observed who had lost their seats in the convulsion, but who flattered themselves they had done something for the party in the interval, by spending nothing except their breath in fighting hopeless boroughs, and occasionally publishing a pamphlet, which really produced less effect than chalking the walls. Light as air, and proud as a young peacock, tripped on his toes a young Tory, who had contrived to keep his seat in a Parliament where he had done nothing, but who thought an Under-Secretaryship was now secure, particularly as he was the son of a noble Lord who had also in a public capacity plundered and blundered in the good old time. The true political adventurer, who with dull desperation had stuck at nothing, had never neglected a treasury note, had been present at every division, never spoke when he was asked to be silent, and was always ready on any subject when they wanted him to open his mouth; who had treated his leaders with servility even behind their backs, and was happy for the day if a future Secretary of the Treasury bowed to him; who had not only discountenanced discontent in the party, but had regularly reported in strict confidence every instance of insubordination which came to his knowledge; might there too be detected under all the agonies of the crisis; just beginning to feel the dread misgiving, whether being a slave and a sneak were sufficient qualifications for office, without family or connection. Poor fellow! half the industry he had wasted on his cheerless

craft might have made his fortune in some decent trade!

In dazzling contrast with these throes of low ambition, were some brilliant personages who had just scampered up from Melton, thinking it probable that Sir Robert might want some moral lords of the bed-chamber. Whatever may have been their private fears or feelings, all however seemed smiling and significant, as if they knew something if they chose to tell it, and that something very much to their own satisfaction. The only grave countenance that was occasionally ushered into the room belonged to some individual whose destiny was not in doubt, and who was already practising the official air that was in future to repress the familiarity of his former fellow-stragglers.

'Do you hear anything?' said a great noble who wanted something in the general scramble, but what he knew not; only he had a vague feeling he ought to have something, having made such great sacrifices.

'There is a report that Clifford is to be Secretary to the Board of Control,' said Mr. Earwig, whose whole soul was in this subaltern arrangement, of which the Minister of course had not even thought; 'but I cannot trace it to any authority.'

'I wonder who will be their Master of the Horse,' said the great noble, loving gossip though he despised the gossipier.

'Clifford has done nothing for the party,' said Mr. Earwig.

'I dare say Rambrooke will have the Buckhounds,' said the great noble, musingly.

'Your Lordship has not heard Clifford's name mentioned?' continued Mr. Earwig.

'I should think they had not come to that sort of thing,' said the great noble, with ill-disguised contempt. 'The first thing after the Cabinet is formed is the Household: the things you talk of are done last;' and he turned upon his heel, and met the imperturbable countenance and clear sarcastic eye of Lord Eskdale.

'You have not heard anything?' asked the great noble of his brother patrician.

'Yes, a great deal since I have been in this room; but unfortunately it is all untrue.'

'There is a report that Rambrooke is to have the Buck-hounds; but I cannot trace it to any authority.'

'Pooh!' said Lord Eskdale.

'I don't see that Rambrooke should have the Buckhounds any more than anybody else. What sacrifices has he made?'

'Past sacrifices are nothing,' said Lord Eskdale. 'Present sacrifices are the thing we want: men who will sacrifice their principles and join us.'

'You have not heard Rambrooke's name mentioned?'

'When a Minister has no Cabinet, and only one hundred and forty supporters in the House of Commons, he has something else to think of than places at Court,' said Lord Eskdale, as he slowly turned away to ask Lucian Gay whether it were true that Jenny Colon was coming over.

Shortly after this, Henry Sydney's father, who dined with Mr. Ornisby, drew Lord Eskdale into a window, and said in an undertone:

'So there is to be a kind of programme: something is to be written.'

'Well, we want a cue,' said Lord Eskdale. 'I heard of this last night: Rigby has written something.'

The Duke shook his head.

'No; Peel means to do it himself.'

But at this moment Mr. Ornisby begged his Grace to lead them to dinner.

'Something is to be written.' It is curious to recall the vague terms in which the first projection of documents, that are to exercise a vast influence on the course of affairs or the minds of nations, is often mentioned. This 'something to be written' was written; and speedily; and has ever since been talked of.

We believe we may venture to assume that at no period during the movements of 1834-5 did Sir Robert Peel ever believe in the success of his administration. Its mere failure could occasion him little dissatisfaction; he was compensated for it by the noble opportunity afforded to him for the display of those great qualities, both moral and

intellectual, which the swaddling-clothes of a routine prosperity had long repressed, but of which his opposition to the Reform Bill had given to the nation a significant intimation. The brief administration elevated him in public opinion, and even in the eye of Europe; and it is probable that a much longer term of power would not have contributed more to his fame.

The probable effect of the premature effort of his party on his future position as a Minister was, however, far from being so satisfactory. At the lowest ebb of his political fortunes, it cannot be doubted that Sir Robert Peel looked forward, perhaps through the vista of many years, to a period when the national mind, arrived by reflection and experience at certain conclusions, would seek in him a powerful expositor of its convictions. His time of life permitted him to be tranquil in adversity, and to profit by its salutary uses. He would then have acceded to power as the representative of a Creed, instead of being the leader of a Confederacy, and he would have been supported by earnest and enduring enthusiasm, instead of by that churlish sufferance which is the result of a supposed balance of advantages in his favour. This is the consequence of the tactics of those short-sighted intriguers, who persisted in looking upon a revolution as a mere party struggle, and would not permit the mind of the nation to work through the inevitable phases that awaited it. In 1834, England, though frightened at the reality of Reform, still adhered to its phrases; it was inclined, as practical England, to maintain existing institutions; but, as theoretical England, it was suspicious that they were indefensible.

No one had arisen either in Parliament, the Universities, or the Press, to lead the public mind to the investigation of principles; and not to mistake, in their reformations, the corruption of practice for fundamental ideas. It was this perplexed, ill-informed, jaded, shallow generation, repeating cries which they did not comprehend, and wearied with the endless ebullitions of their own barren conceit, that Sir Robert Peel was summoned to govern. It was from such materials, ample in quantity, but in all spiritual qualities most deficient; with great numbers, largely acried, consoled up to their chins, but without knowledge, genius, thought, truth, or faith, that Sir Robert Peel was to form a 'great Conservative party on a comprehensive basis.' That he did this like a dexterous politician, who can deny? Whether he realised those prescient views of a great statesman in which he had doubtless indulged, and in which, though still clogged by the leadership of 1834, he may yet find fame for himself and salvation for his country, is altogether another question. His difficult attempt was expressed in an address to his constituents, which now ranks among state papers. We shall attempt briefly to consider it with the impartiality of the future.

CHAPTER V.

The Tamworth Manifesto of 1834 was an attempt to construct a party without principles; its basis therefore was necessarily Latitudinarianism; and its inevitable consequence has been Political Infidelity.

At an epoch of political perplexity and social alarm, the confederation was convenient, and was calculated by aggregation to encourage the timid and confused. But when the perturbation was a little subsided, and men began to inquire why they were banded together, the difficulty of defining their purpose proved that the league, however respectable, was not a party. The leaders indeed might profit by their eminent position to obtain power for their individual gratification, but it was impossible to secure their followers that which, after all, must be the great recompense of a political party, the putting in practice of their opinions; for they had none.

There was indeed a considerable shouting about what they called Conservative principles; but the awkward question naturally arose, what will you conserve? The prerogatives of the Crown, provided they are not exercised; the independence of the House of Lords, provided it is not asserted; the Ecclesiastical estate, provided it is regulated by a commission of laymen. Everything, in short, that is established, as long as it is a phrase and not a fact.

In the meantime, while forms and phrases are religiously cherished in order to make the semblance of a creed, the rule of practice is to bend to the passion or combination of the hour. Conservatism assumes in theory that everything established should be maintained; but adopts in practice that everything that is established is indefensible. To reconcile this theory and this practice, they produce what they call 'the best bargain;' some arrangement which has no principle and no purpose, except to obtain a temporary lull of agitation, until the mind of the Conservatives, without a guide and without an aim, distracted, tempted, and bewildered, is prepared for another arrangement, equally statesmanlike with the preceding one.

Conservatism was an attempt to carry on affairs by substituting the

fulfilment of the duties of office for the performance of the functions of government; and to maintain this negative system by the mere influence of property, reputable private conduct, and what are called good connections. Conservatism discards Prescription, shrinks from Principle, disavows Progress; having rejected all respect for Antiquity, it offers no redress for the Present, and makes no preparation for the Future. It is obvious that for a time, under favourable circumstances, such a confederation might succeed; but it is equally clear, that on the arrival of one of those critical conjunctures that will periodically occur in all states, and which such an unimpassioned system is even calculated ultimately to create, all power of resistance will be wanting: the barren curse of political infidelity will paralyse all action; and the Conservative Constitution will be discovered to be a Caput Mortuum.

CHAPTER VI.

In the meantime, after dinner, Tadpole and Taper, who were among the guests of Mr. Ormsby, withdrew to a distant sofa, out of earshot, and indulged in confidential talk.

'Such a strength in debate was never before found on a Treasury bench,' said Mr. Tadpole; 'the other side will be dumbfounded.'

'And what do you put our numbers at now?' inquired Mr. Taper.

'Would you take fifty-five for our majority?' rejoined Mr. Tadpole.

'It is not so much the tail they have, as the excuse their junction will be for the moderate, sensible men to come over,' said Taper. 'Our friend Sir Everard for example, it would settle him.'

'He is a solemn impostor,' rejoined Mr. Tadpole; 'but he is a baronet and a county member, and very much looked up to by the Wesleyans. The other men, I know, have refused him a peerage.'

'And we might hold out judicious hopes,' said Taper.

'No one can do that better than you,' said Tadpole. 'I am apt to say too much about those things.'

'I make it a rule never to open my mouth on such subjects,' said Taper. 'A nod or a wink will speak volumes. An affectionate pressure of the hand will sometimes do a great deal; and I have promised many a peerage without committing myself, by an ingenious habit of deference which cannot be mistaken by the future noble.'

'I wonder what they will do with Rigby,' said Tadpole.

'He wants a good deal,' said Taper.

'I tell you what, Mr. Taper, the time is gone by when a Marquess of Monmouth was Letter A, No. 1.'

'Very true, Mr. Tadpole. A wise man would do well now to look to the great middle class, as I said the other day to the electors of Shabbyton.'

'I had sooner be supported by the Wesleyans,' said Mr. Tadpole, 'than by all the marquesses in the peerage.'

'At the same time,' said Mr. Taper, 'Rigby is a considerable man. If we want a slashing article--'

'Pooh!' said Mr. Tadpole. 'He is quite gone by. He takes three months for his slashing articles. Give me the man who can write a leader. Rigby can't write a leader.'

'Very few can,' said Mr. Taper. 'However, I don't think much of the press. Its power is gone by. They overdid it.'

'There is Tom Chudleigh,' said Tadpole. 'What is he to have?'

'Nothing, I hope,' said Taper. 'I hate him. A coxcomb! Cracking his jokes and laughing at us.'

'He has done a good deal for the party, though,' said Tadpole. 'That, to be sure, is only an additional reason for throwing him over, as he is too far committed to venture to oppose us. But I am afraid from something that dropped to-day, that Sir Robert thinks he has claims.'

'We must stop them,' said Taper, growing pale. 'Fellows like Chudleigh, when they once get in, are always in one's way. I have no objection to young noblemen being put forward, for they are preferred so rapidly, and then their fathers die, that in the long run they do not practically interfere with us.'

'Well, his name was mentioned,' said Tadpole. 'There is no concealing that.'

'I will speak to Earwig,' said Taper. 'He shall just drop into Sir Robert's ear by chance, that Chudleigh used to quiz him in the smoking-room. Those little bits of information do a great deal of good.'

'Well, I leave him to you,' said Tadpole. 'I am heartily with you in keeping out all fellows like Chudleigh. They are very well for opposition; but in office we don't want wits.'

'And when shall we have the answer from Knowsley?' inquired Taper. 'You anticipate no possible difficulty?'

'I tell you it is "carte blanche,"' replied Tadpole. 'Four places in the cabinet. Two secretaryships at the least. Do you happen to know any gentleman of your acquaintance, Mr. Taper, who refuses Secretaryships of State so easily, that you can for an instant doubt of the present arrangement?'

'I know none indeed,' said Mr. Taper, with a grim smile.

'The thing is done,' said Mr. Tadpole.

'And now for our cry,' said Mr. Taper.

'It is not a Cabinet for a good cry,' said Tadpole; 'but then, on the other hand, it is a Cabinet that will sow dissension in the opposite ranks, and prevent them having a good cry.'

'Ancient institutions and modern improvements, I suppose, Mr. Tadpole?'

'Ameliorations is the better word, ameliorations. Nobody knows exactly what it means.'

'We go strong on the Church?' said Mr. Taper.

'And no repeal of the Malt Tax; you were right, Taper. It can't be listened to for a moment.'

'Something might be done with prerogative,' said Mr. Taper; 'the King's constitutional choice.'

'Not too much,' replied Mr. Tadpole. 'It is a raw time yet for prerogative.'

'Ah! Tadpole,' said Mr. Taper, getting a little maudlin; 'I often think, if the time should ever come, when you and I should be joint Secretaries of the Treasury!'

'We shall see, we shall see. All we have to do is to get into Parliament, work well together, and keep other men down.'

'We will do our best,' said Taper. 'A dissolution you hold inevitable?'

'How are you and I to get into Parliament if there be not one? We must make it inevitable. I tell you what, Taper, the lists must prove a dissolution inevitable. You understand me? If the present Parliament goes on, where shall we be? We shall have new men cropping up every session.'

'True, terribly true,' said Mr. Taper. 'That we should ever live to see a Tory government again! We have reason to be very thankful.'

'Hush!' said Mr. Tadpole. 'The time has gone by for Tory governments; what the country requires is a sound Conservative government.'

'A sound Conservative government,' said Taper, musingly. 'I understand: Tory men and Whig measures.'

CHAPTER VII.

Amid the contentions of party, the fierce struggles of ambition, and the intricacies of political intrigue, let us not forget our Eton friends. During the period which elapsed from the failure of the Duke of Wellington to form a government in 1832, to the failure of Sir Robert Peel to carry on a government in 1835, the boys had entered, and advanced in youth. The ties of friendship which then united several of them had only been confirmed by continued companionship. Coningsby and Henry Sydney, and Buckhurst and Vere, were still bound together by entire sympathy, and by the affection of which sympathy is the only sure spring. But their intimacies had been increased by another familiar friend. There had risen up between Coningsby and Millbank mutual sentiments of deep, and even ardent, regard. Acquaintance had developed the superior qualities of

Millbank. His thoughtful and inquiring mind, his inflexible integrity, his stern independence, and yet the engaging union of extreme tenderness of heart with all this strength of character, had won the goodwill, and often excited the admiration, of Coningsby. Our hero, too, was gratified by the affectionate deference that was often shown to him by one who condescended to no other individual; he was proud of having saved the life of a member of their community whom masters and boys alike considered; and he ended by loving the being on whom he had conferred a great obligation.

The friends of Coningsby, the sweet-tempered and intelligent Henry Sydney, the fiery and generous Buckhurst, and the calm and sagacious Vere, had ever been favourably inclined to Millbank, and had they not been, the example of Coningsby would soon have influenced them. He had obtained over his intimates the ascendant power, which is the destiny of genius. Nor was this submission of such spirits to be held cheap. Although they were willing to take the colour of their minds from him, they were in intellect and attainments, in personal accomplishments and general character, the leaders of the school; an authority not to be won from five hundred high-spirited boys without the possession of great virtues and great talents.

As for the dominion of Coningsby himself, it was not limited to the immediate circle of his friends. He had become the hero of Eton; the being of whose existence everybody was proud, and in whose career every boy took an interest. They talked of him, they quoted him, they imitated him. Fame and power are the objects of all men. Even their partial fruition is gained by very few; and that too at the expense of social pleasure, health, conscience, life. Yet what power of manhood in passionate intensesness, appealing at the same time to the subject and the votary, can rival that which is exercised by the idolised chieftain of a great public school? What fame of after days equals the rapture of celebrity that thrills the youthful poet, as in tones of rare emotion he recites his triumphant verses amid the devoted plaudits of the flower of England? That's fame, that's power; real, unquestioned, undoubted, catholic. Alas! the schoolboy, when he becomes a man, finds that power, even fame, like everything else, is an affair of party.

Coningsby liked very much to talk politics with Millbank. He heard things from Millbank which were new to him. Himself, as he supposed, a high Tory, which he was according to the revelation of the Rigbys, he was also sufficiently familiar with the hereditary tenets of his Whig friend, Lord Vere. Politics had as yet appeared to him a struggle whether the country was to be governed by Whig nobles or Tory nobles; and he thought it very unfortunate that he should probably have to enter life with his friends out of power, and his family boroughs destroyed. But in conversing with

Millbank, he heard for the first time of influential classes in the country who were not noble, and were yet determined to acquire power. And although Millbank's views, which were of course merely caught up from his father, without the intervention of his own intelligence, were doubtless crude enough, and were often very acutely canvassed and satisfactorily demolished by the clever prejudices of another school, which Coningsby had at command, still they were, unconsciously to the recipient, materials for thought, and insensibly provoked in his mind a spirit of inquiry into political questions, for which he had a predisposition.

It may be said, indeed, that generally among the upper boys there might be observed at this time, at Eton, a reigning inclination for political discussion. The school truly had at all times been proud of its statesmen and its parliamentary heroes, but this was merely a superficial feeling in comparison with the sentiment which now first became prevalent. The great public questions that were the consequence of the Reform of the House of Commons, had also agitated their young hearts. And especially the controversies that were now rife respecting the nature and character of ecclesiastical establishments, wonderfully addressed themselves to their excited intelligence. They read their newspapers with a keen relish, canvassed debates, and criticised speeches; and although in their debating society, which had been instituted more than a quarter of a century, discussion on topics of the day was prohibited, still by fixing on periods of our history when affairs were analogous to the present, many a youthful orator contrived very effectively to reply to Lord John, or to refute the fallacies of his rival.

As the political opinions predominant in the school were what in ordinary parlance are styled Tory, and indeed were far better entitled to that glorious epithet than the flimsy shifts which their fathers were professing in Parliament and the country; the formation and the fall of Sir Robert Peel's government had been watched by Etonians with great interest, and even excitement. The memorable efforts which the Minister himself made, supported only by the silent votes of his numerous adherents, and contending alone against the multiplied assaults of his able and determined foes, with a spirit equal to the great occasion, and with resources of parliamentary contest which seemed to increase with every exigency; these great and unsupported struggles alone were calculated to gain the sympathy of youthful and generous spirits. The assault on the revenues of the Church; the subsequent crusade against the House of Lords; the display of intellect and courage exhibited by Lord Lyndhurst in that assembly, when all seemed cowed and faint-hearted; all these were incidents or personal traits apt to stir the passions, and create in breasts not yet schooled to repress emotion, a sentiment even of

enthusiasm. It is the personal that interests mankind, that fires their imagination, and wins their hearts. A cause is a great abstraction, and fit only for students; embodied in a party, it stirs men to action; but place at the head of that party a leader who can inspire enthusiasm, lie commands the world. Divine faculty! Rare and incomparable privilege! A parliamentary leader who possesses it, doubles his majority; and he who has it not, may shroud himself in artificial reserve, and study with undignified arrogance an awkward haughtiness, but he will nevertheless be as far from controlling the spirit as from captivating the hearts of his sullen followers.

However, notwithstanding this general feeling at Eton, in 1835, in favour of 'Conservative principles,' which was, in fact, nothing more than a confused and mingled sympathy with some great political truths, which were at the bottom of every boy's heart, but nowhere else; and with the personal achievements and distinction of the chieftains of the party; when all this hubbub had subsided, and retrospection, in the course of a year, had exercised its moralising influence over the more thoughtful part of the nation, inquiries, at first faint and unpretending, and confined indeed for a long period to limited, though inquisitive, circles, began gently to circulate, what Conservative principles were.

These inquiries, urged indeed with a sort of hesitating scepticism, early reached Eton. They came, no doubt, from the Universities. They were of a character, however, far too subtle and refined to exercise any immediate influence over the minds of youth. To pursue them required previous knowledge and habitual thought. They were not yet publicly prosecuted by any school of politicians, or any section of the public press. They had not a local habitation or a name. They were whispered in conversation by a few. A tutor would speak of them in an esoteric vein to a favourite pupil, in whose abilities he had confidence, and whose future position in life would afford him the opportunity of influencing opinion. Among others, they fell upon the ear of Coningsby. They were addressed to a mind which was prepared for such researches.

There is a Library at Eton formed by the boys and governed by the boys; one of those free institutions which are the just pride of that noble school, which shows the capacity of the boys for self-government, and which has sprung from the large freedom that has been wisely conceded them, the prudence of which confidence has been proved by their rarely abusing it. This Library has been formed by subscriptions of the present and still more by the gifts of old Etonians. Among the honoured names of these donors may be remarked those of the Grenvilles and Lord Wellesley; nor should we forget George IV., who enriched the collection with a

magnificent copy of the Delphin Classics. The Institution is governed by six directors, the three first Collegers and the three first Oppidans for the time being; and the subscribers are limited to the one hundred senior members of the school.

It is only to be regretted that the collection is not so extensive as it is interesting and choice. Perhaps its existence is not so generally known as it deserves to be. One would think that every Eton man would be as proud of his name being registered as a donor in the Catalogue of this Library, as a Venetian of his name being inscribed in the Golden Book. Indeed an old Etonian, who still remembers with tenderness the sacred scene of youth, could scarcely do better than build a Gothic apartment for the reception of the collection. It cannot be doubted that the Provost and fellows would be gratified in granting a piece of ground for the purpose.

Great were the obligations of Coningsby to this Eton Library. It introduced him to that historic lore, that accumulation of facts and incidents illustrative of political conduct, for which he had imbibed an early relish. His study was especially directed to the annals of his own country, in which youth, and not youth alone, is frequently so deficient. This collection could afford him Clarendon and Burnet, and the authentic volumes of Coxe: these were rich materials for one anxious to be versed in the great parliamentary story of his country. During the last year of his stay at Eton, when he had completed his eighteenth year, Coningsby led a more retired life than previously; he read much, and pondered with all the pride of acquisition over his increasing knowledge.

And now the hour has come when this youth is to be launched into a world more vast than that in which he has hitherto sojourned, yet for which this microcosm has been no ill preparation. He will become more wise; will he remain as generous? His ambition may be as great; will it be as noble? What, indeed, is to be the future of this existence that is now to be sent forth into the great aggregate of entities? Is it an ordinary organisation that will jostle among the crowd, and be jostled? Is it a finer temperament, susceptible of receiving the impressions and imbibing the inspirations of superior yet sympathising spirits? Or is it a primordial and creative mind; one that will say to his fellows, 'Behold, God has given me thought; I have discovered truth, and you shall believe?'

The night before Coningsby left Eton, alone in his room, before he retired to rest, he opened the lattice and looked for the last time upon the landscape before him; the stately keep of Windsor, the bowery meads of Eton, soft in the summer moon and still in the summer night. He gazed upon them; his countenance had none of the exultation, that under such

circumstances might have distinguished a more careless glance, eager for fancied emancipation and passionate for a novel existence. Its expression was serious, even sad; and he covered his brow with his hand.

END OF BOOK II.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

There are few things more full of delight and splendour, than to travel during the heat of a refulgent summer in the green district of some ancient forest.

In one of our midland counties there is a region of this character, to which, during a season of peculiar lustre, we would introduce the reader.

It was a fragment of one of those vast sylvan tracts wherein Norman kings once hunted, and Saxon outlaws plundered; and although the plough had for centuries successfully invaded brake and bower, the relics retained all their original character of wildness and seclusion. Sometimes the green earth was thickly studded with groves of huge and vigorous oaks, intersected with those smooth and sunny glades, that seem as if they must be cut for dames and knights to saunter on. Then again the undulating ground spread on all sides, far as the eye could range, covered with copse and fern of immense growth. Anon you found yourself in a turfy wilderness, girt in apparently by dark woods. And when you had wound your way a little through this gloomy belt, the landscape still strictly sylvan, would beautifully expand with every combination and variety of woodland; while in its centre, the wildfowl covered the waters of a lake, and the deer basked on the knolls that abounded on its banks.

It was in the month of August, some six or seven years ago, that a traveller on foot, touched, as he emerged from the dark wood, by the beauty of this scene, threw himself under the shade of a spreading tree, and stretched his limbs on the turf for enjoyment rather than repose. The sky was deep-coloured and without a cloud, save here and there a minute, sultry, burnished vapour, almost as glossy as the heavens. Everything was still as it was bright; all seemed brooding and basking; the bee upon its

wing was the only stirring sight, and its song the only sound.

The traveller fell into a reverie. He was young, and therefore his musings were of the future. He had felt the pride of learning, so ennobling to youth; he was not a stranger to the stirring impulses of a high ambition, though the world to him was as yet only a world of books, and all that he knew of the schemes of statesmen and the passions of the people, were to be found in their annals. Often had his fitful fancy dwelt with fascination on visions of personal distinction, of future celebrity, perhaps even of enduring fame. But his dreams were of another colour now. The surrounding scene, so fair, so still, and sweet; so abstracted from all the tumult of the world, its strife, its passions, and its cares: had fallen on his heart with its soft and subduing spirit; had fallen on a heart still pure and innocent, the heart of one who, notwithstanding all his high resolves and daring thoughts, was blessed with that tenderness of soul which is sometimes linked with an ardent imagination and a strong will. The traveller was an orphan, more than that, a solitary orphan. The sweet sedulousness of a mother's love, a sister's mystical affection, had not cultivated his early susceptibility. No soft pathos of expression had appealed to his childish ear. He was alone, among strangers calmly and coldly kind. It must indeed have been a truly gentle disposition that could have withstood such hard neglect. All that he knew of the power of the softer passions might be found in the fanciful and romantic annals of schoolboy friendship.

And those friends too, so fond, so sympathising, so devoted, where were they now? Already they were dispersed; the first great separation of life had been experienced; the former schoolboy had planted his foot on the threshold of manhood. True, many of them might meet again; many of them the University must again unite, but never with the same feelings. The space of time, passed in the world before they again met, would be an age of sensation, passion, experience to all of them. They would meet again with altered mien, with different manners, different voices. Their eyes would not shine with the same light; they would not speak the same words. The favourite phrases of their intimacy, the mystic sounds that spoke only to their initiated ear, they would be ashamed to use them. Yes, they might meet again, but the gushing and secret tenderness was gone for ever.

Nor could our pensive youth conceal it from himself that it was affection, and mainly affection, that had bound him to these dear companions. They could not be to him what he had been to them. His had been the inspiring mind that had guided their opinions, formed their tastes, directed the bent and tenor of their lives and thoughts. Often, indeed, had he needed, sometimes he had even sighed for, the companionship of an equal or

superior mind; one who, by the comprehension of his thought, and the richness of his knowledge, and the advantage of his experience, might strengthen and illuminate and guide his obscure or hesitating or unpractised intelligence. He had scarcely been fortunate in this respect, and he deeply regretted it; for he was one of those who was not content with excelling in his own circle, if he thought there was one superior to it. Absolute, not relative distinction, was his noble aim.

Alone, in a lonely scene, he doubly felt the solitude of his life and mind. His heart and his intellect seemed both to need a companion. Books, and action, and deep thought, might in time supply the want of that intellectual guide; but for the heart, where was he to find solace?

Ah! if she would but come forth from that shining lake like a beautiful Ondine! Ah, if she would but step out from the green shade of that secret grove like a Dryad of sylvan Greece! O mystery of mysteries, when youth dreams his first dream over some imaginary heroine!

Suddenly the brooding wildfowl rose from the bosom of the lake, soared in the air, and, uttering mournful shrieks, whirled in agitated tumult. The deer started from their knolls, no longer sunny, stared around, and rushed into the woods. Coningsby raised his eyes from the turf on which they had been long fixed in abstraction, and he observed that the azure sky had vanished, a thin white film had suddenly spread itself over the heavens, and the wind moaned with a sad and fitful gust.

He had some reason to believe that on the other side of the opposite wood the forest was intersected by a public road, and that there were some habitations. Immediately rising, he descended at a rapid pace into the valley, passed the lake, and then struck into the ascending wood on the bank opposite to that on which he had mused away some precious time.

The wind howled, the branches of the forest stirred, and sent forth sounds like an incantation. Soon might be distinguished the various voices of the mighty trees, as they expressed their terror or their agony. The oak roared, the beech shrieked, the elm sent forth its deep and long-drawn groan; while ever and anon, amid a momentary pause, the passion of the ash was heard in moans of thrilling anguish.

Coningsby hurried on, the forest became less close. All that he aspired to was to gain more open country. Now he was in a rough flat land, covered only here and there with dwarf underwood; the horizon bounded at no great distance by a barren hill of moderate elevation. He gained its height with ease. He looked over a vast open country like a wild common; in the

extreme distance hills covered with woods; the plain intersected by two good roads: the sky entirely clouded, but in the distance black as ebony.

A place of refuge was at hand: screened from his first glance by some elm-trees, the ascending smoke now betrayed a roof, which Coningsby reached before the tempest broke. The forest-inn was also a farmhouse. There was a comfortable-enough looking kitchen; but the ingle nook was full of smokers, and Coningsby was glad to avail himself of the only private room for the simple meal which they offered him, only eggs and bacon; but very welcome to a pedestrian, and a hungry one.

As he stood at the window of his little apartment, watching the large drops that were the heralds of a coming hurricane, and waiting for his repast, a flash of lightning illumined the whole country, and a horseman at full speed, followed by his groom, galloped up to the door.

The remarkable beauty of the animal so attracted Coningsby's attention that it prevented him catching even a glimpse of the rider, who rapidly dismounted and entered the inn. The host shortly after came in and asked Coningsby whether he had any objection to a gentleman, who was driven there by the storm, sharing his room until it subsided. The consequence of the immediate assent of Coningsby was, that the landlord retired and soon returned, ushering in an individual, who, though perhaps ten years older than Coningsby, was still, according to Hippocrates, in the period of lusty youth. He was above the middle height, and of a distinguished air and figure; pale, with an impressive brow, and dark eyes of great intelligence.

'I am glad that we have both escaped the storm,' said the stranger; 'and I am greatly indebted to you for your courtesy.' He slightly and graciously bowed, as he spoke in a voice of remarkable clearness; and his manner, though easy, was touched with a degree of dignity that was engaging.

'The inn is a common home,' replied Coningsby, returning his salute.

'And free from cares,' added the stranger. Then, looking through the window, he said, 'A strange storm this. I was sauntering in the sunshine, when suddenly I found I had to gallop for my life. 'Tis more like a white squall in the Mediterranean than anything else.'

'I never was in the Mediterranean,' said Coningsby. 'There is nothing I should like so much as to travel.'

'You are travelling,' rejoined his companion. 'Every moment is travel, if

understood.'

'Ah! but the Mediterranean!' exclaimed Coningsby. 'What would I not give to see Athens!'

'I have seen it,' said the stranger, slightly shrugging his shoulders; 'and more wonderful things. Phantoms and spectres! The Age of Ruins is past. Have you seen Manchester?'

'I have seen nothing,' said Coningsby; 'this is my first wandering. I am about to visit a friend who lives in this county, and I have sent on my baggage as I could. For myself, I determined to trust to a less commonplace conveyance.'

'And seek adventures,' said the stranger, smiling, 'Well, according to Cervantes, they should begin in an inn.'

'I fear that the age of adventures is past, as well as that of ruins,' replied Coningsby.

'Adventures are to the adventurous,' said the stranger.

At this moment a pretty serving-maid entered the room. She laid the dapper cloth and arranged the table with a self-possession quite admirable. She seemed unconscious that any being was in the chamber except herself, or that there were any other duties to perform in life beyond filling a saltcellar or folding a napkin.

'She does not even look at us,' said Coningsby, when she had quitted the room; 'and I dare say is only a prude.'

'She is calm,' said the stranger, 'because she is mistress of her subject; 'tis the secret of self-possession. She is here as a duchess at court.'

They brought in Coningsby's meal, and he invited the stranger to join him. The invitation was accepted with cheerfulness.

'Tis but simple fare,' said Coningsby, as the maiden uncovered the still hissing bacon and the eggs, that looked like tufts of primroses.

'Nay, a national dish,' said the stranger, glancing quickly at the table, 'whose fame is a proverb. And what more should we expect under a simple roof! How much better than an omelette or a greasy olla, that they would give us in a posada! 'Tis a wonderful country this England! What a napkin!

How spotless! And so sweet; I declare 'tis a perfume. There is not a princess throughout the South of Europe served with the cleanliness that meets us in this cottage.'

'An inheritance from our Saxon fathers?' said Coningsby. 'I apprehend the northern nations have a greater sense of cleanliness, of propriety, of what we call comfort?'

'By no means,' said the stranger; 'the East is the land of the Bath. Moses and Mahomet made cleanliness religion.'

'You will let me help you?' said Coningsby, offering him a plate which he had filled.

'I thank you,' said the stranger, 'but it is one of my bread days. With your permission this shall be my dish;' and he cut from the large loaf a supply of crusts.

"Tis but unsavoury fare after a gallop,' said Coningsby.

'Ah! you are proud of your bacon and your eggs,' said the stranger, smiling, 'but I love corn and wine. They are our chief and our oldest luxuries. Time has brought us substitutes, but how inferior! Man has deified corn and wine! but not even the Chinese or the Irish have raised temples to tea and potatoes.'

'But Ceres without Bacchus,' said Coningsby, 'how does that do? Think you, under this roof, we could Invoke the god?'

'Let us swear by his body that we will try,' said the stranger.

Alas! the landlord was not a priest to Bacchus. But then these inquiries led to the finest perry in the world. The young men agreed they had seldom tasted anything more delicious; they sent for another bottle. Coningsby, who was much interested by his new companion, enjoyed himself amazingly.

A cheese, such as Derby alone can produce, could not induce the stranger to be even partially inconstant to his crusts. But his talk was as vivacious as if the talker had been stimulated by the juices of the finest banquet. Coningsby had never met or read of any one like this chance companion. His sentences were so short, his language so racy, his voice rang so clear, his elocution was so complete. On all subjects his mind seemed to be instructed, and his opinions formed. He flung out a result in a few words; he solved with a phrase some deep problem that men muse over

for years. He said many things that were strange, yet they immediately appeared to be true. Then, without the slightest air of pretension or parade, he seemed to know everybody as well as everything. Monarchs, statesmen, authors, adventurers, of all descriptions and of all climes, if their names occurred in the conversation, he described them in an epigrammatic sentence, or revealed their precise position, character, calibre, by a curt dramatic trait. All this, too, without any excitement of manner; on the contrary, with repose amounting almost to nonchalance. If his address had any fault in it, it was rather a deficiency of earnestness. A slight spirit of mockery played over his speech even when you deemed him most serious; you were startled by his sudden transitions from profound thought to poignant sarcasm. A very singular freedom from passion and prejudice on every topic on which they treated, might be some compensation for this want of earnestness, perhaps was its consequence. Certainly it was difficult to ascertain his precise opinions on many subjects, though his manner was frank even to abandonment. And yet throughout his whole conversation, not a stroke of egotism, not a word, not a circumstance escaped him, by which you could judge of his position or purposes in life. As little did he seem to care to discover those of his companion. He did not by any means monopolise the conversation. Far from it; he continually asked questions, and while he received answers, or had engaged his fellow-traveller in any exposition of his opinion or feelings, he listened with a serious and fixed attention, looking Coningsby in the face with a steadfast glance.

'I perceive,' said Coningsby, pursuing a strain of thought which the other had indicated, 'that you have great confidence in the influence of individual character. I also have some confused persuasions of that kind. But it is not the Spirit of the Age.'

'The age does not believe in great men, because it does not possess any,' replied the stranger. 'The Spirit of the Age is the very thing that a great man changes.'

'But does he not rather avail himself of it?' inquired Coningsby.

'Parvenus do,' rejoined his companion; 'but not prophets, great legislators, great conquerors. They destroy and they create.'

'But are these times for great legislators and great conquerors?' urged Coningsby.

'When were they wanted more?' asked the stranger. 'From the throne to the hovel all call for a guide. You give monarchs constitutions to teach them

sovereignty, and nations Sunday-schools to inspire them with faith.'

'But what is an individual,' exclaimed Coningsby, 'against a vast public opinion?'

'Divine,' said the stranger. 'God made man in His own image; but the Public is made by Newspapers, Members of Parliament, Excise Officers, Poor Law Guardians. Would Philip have succeeded if Epaminondas had not been slain? And if Philip had not succeeded? Would Prussia have existed had Frederick not been born? And if Frederick had not been born? What would have been the fate of the Stuarts if Prince Henry had not died, and Charles I., as was intended, had been Archbishop of Canterbury?'

'But when men are young they want experience,' said Coningsby; 'and when they have gained experience, they want energy.'

'Great men never want experience,' said the stranger.

'But everybody says that experience--'

'Is the best thing in the world, a treasure for you, for me, for millions. But for a creative mind, less than nothing. Almost everything that is great has been done by youth.'

'It is at least a creed flattering to our years,' said Coningsby, with a smile.

'Nay,' said the stranger; 'for life in general there is but one decree. Youth is a blunder; Manhood a struggle; Old Age a regret. Do not suppose,' he added, smiling, 'that I hold that youth is genius; all that I say is, that genius, when young, is divine. Why, the greatest captains of ancient and modern times both conquered Italy at five-and-twenty! Youth, extreme youth, overthrew the Persian Empire. Don John of Austria won Lepanto at twenty-five, the greatest battle of modern time; had it not been for the jealousy of Philip, the next year he would have been Emperor of Mauritania. Gaston de Foix was only twenty-two when he stood a victor on the plain of Ravenna. Every one remembers Condé and Rocroy at the same age. Gustavus Adolphus died at thirty-eight. Look at his captains: that wonderful Duke of Weimar, only thirty-six when he died. Banier himself, after all his miracles, died at forty-five. Cortes was little more than thirty when he gazed upon the golden cupolas of Mexico. When Maurice of Saxony died at thirty-two, all Europe acknowledged the loss of the greatest captain and the profoundest statesman of the age. Then there is Nelson, Clive; but these are warriors, and perhaps you may think there are

greater things than war. I do not: I worship the Lord of Hosts. But take the most illustrious achievements of civil prudence. Innocent III., the greatest of the Popes, was the despot of Christendom at thirty-seven. John de Medici was a Cardinal at fifteen, and according to Guicciardini, baffled with his statecraft Ferdinand of Arragon himself. He was Pope as Leo X. at thirty-seven. Luther robbed even him of his richest province at thirty-five. Take Ignatius Loyola and John Wesley, they worked with young brains. Ignatius was only thirty when he made his pilgrimage and wrote the "Spiritual Exercises." Pascal wrote a great work at sixteen, and died at thirty-seven, the greatest of Frenchmen.

'Ah! that fatal thirty-seven, which reminds me of Byron, greater even as a man than a writer. Was it experience that guided the pencil of Raphael when he painted the palaces of Rome? He, too, died at thirty-seven. Richelieu was Secretary of State at thirty-one. Well then, there were Bolingbroke and Pitt, both ministers before other men left off cricket. Grotius was in great practice at seventeen, and Attorney-General at twenty-four. And Acquaviva; Acquaviva was General of the Jesuits, ruled every cabinet in Europe, and colonised America before he was thirty-seven. What a career!' exclaimed the stranger; rising from his chair and walking up and down the room; 'the secret sway of Europe! That was indeed a position! But it is needless to multiply instances! The history of Heroes is the history of Youth.'

'Ah!' said Coningsby, 'I should like to be a great man.'

The stranger threw at him a scrutinising glance. His countenance was serious. He said in a voice of almost solemn melody:

'Nurture your mind with great thoughts. To believe in the heroic makes heroes.'

'You seem to me a hero,' said Coningsby, in a tone of real feeling, which, half ashamed of his emotion, he tried to turn into playfulness.

'I am and must ever be,' said the stranger, 'but a dreamer of dreams.' Then going towards the window, and changing into a familiar tone as if to divert the conversation, he added, 'What a delicious afternoon! I look forward to my ride with delight. You rest here?'

'No; I go on to Nottingham, where I shall sleep.'

'And I in the opposite direction.' And he rang the bell, and ordered his horse.

'I long to see your mare again,' said Coningsby. 'She seemed to me so beautiful.'

'She is not only of pure race,' said the stranger, 'but of the highest and rarest breed in Arabia. Her name is "the Daughter of the Star." She is a foal of that famous mare, which belonged to the Prince of the Wahabees; and to possess which, I believe, was one of the principal causes of war between that tribe and the Egyptians. The Pacha of Egypt gave her to me, and I would not change her for her statue in pure gold, even carved by Lysippus. Come round to the stable and see her.'

They went out together. It was a soft sunny afternoon; the air fresh from the rain, but mild and exhilarating.

The groom brought forth the mare. 'The Daughter of the Star' stood before Coningsby with her sinewy shape of matchless symmetry; her burnished skin, black mane, legs like those of an antelope, her little ears, dark speaking eye, and tail worthy of a Pacha. And who was her master, and whither was she about to take him?

Coningsby was so naturally well-bred, that we may be sure it was not curiosity; no, it was a finer feeling that made him hesitate and think a little, and then say:

'I am sorry to part.'

'I also,' said the stranger. 'But life is constant separation.'

'I hope we may meet again,' said Coningsby.

'If our acquaintance be worth preserving,' said the stranger, 'you may be sure it will not be lost.'

'But mine is not worth preserving,' said Coningsby, earnestly. 'It is yours that is the treasure. You teach me things of which I have long mused.'

The stranger took the bridle of 'the Daughter of the Star,' and turning round with a faint smile, extended his hand to his companion.

'Your mind at least is nurtured with great thoughts,' said Coningsby; 'your actions should be heroic.'

'Action is not for me,' said the stranger; 'I am of that faith that the Apostles professed before they followed their master.'

He vaulted into his saddle, 'the Daughter of the Star' bounded away as if she scented the air of the Desert from which she and her rider had alike sprung, and Coningsby remained in profound meditation.

CHAPTER II.

The day after his adventure at the Forest Inn, Coningsby arrived at Beaumanoir. It was several years since he had visited the family of his friend, who were indeed also his kin; and in his boyish days had often proved that they were not unmindful of the affinity. This was a visit that had been long counted on, long promised, and which a variety of circumstances had hitherto prevented. It was to have been made by the schoolboy; it was to be fulfilled by the man. For no less a character could Coningsby under any circumstances now consent to claim, since he was closely verging to the completion of his nineteenth year; and it appeared manifest that if it were his destiny to do anything great, he had but few years to wait before the full development of his power. Visions of Gastons de Foix and Maurices of Saxony, statesmen giving up cricket to govern nations, beardless Jesuits plunged in profound abstraction in omnipotent cabinets, haunted his fancy from the moment he had separated from his mysterious and deeply interesting companion. To nurture his mind with great thoughts had ever been Coningsby's inspiring habit. Was it also destined that he should achieve the heroic?

There are some books, when we close them; one or two in the course of our life, difficult as it may be to analyse or ascertain the cause; our minds seem to have made a great leap. A thousand obscure things receive light; a multitude of indefinite feelings are determined. Our intellect grasps and grapples with all subjects with a capacity, a flexibility, and a vigour, before unknown to us. It masters questions hitherto perplexing, which are not even touched or referred to in the volume just closed. What is this magic? It is the spirit of the supreme author, by a magnetic influence blending with our sympathising intelligence, that directs and inspires it. By that mysterious sensibility we extend to questions which he has not treated, the same intellectual force which he has exercised over those which he has expounded. His genius for a time remains in us. 'Tis the same with human beings as with books. All of us encounter, at least once in our

life, some individual who utters words that make us think for ever.

There are men whose phrases are oracles; who condense in a sentence the secrets of life; who blurt out an aphorism that forms a character or illustrates an existence. A great thing is a great book; but greater than all is the talk of a great man.

And what is a great man? Is it a Minister of State? Is it a victorious General? A gentleman in the Windsor uniform? A Field Marshal covered with stars? Is it a Prelate, or a Prince? A King, even an Emperor? It may be all these; yet these, as we must all daily feel, are not necessarily great men. A great man is one who affects the mind of his generation: whether he be a monk in his cloister agitating Christendom, or a monarch crossing the Granicus, and giving a new character to the Pagan World.

Our young Coningsby reached Beaumanoir in a state of meditation. He also desired to be great. Not from the restless vanity that sometimes impels youth to momentary exertion, by which they sometimes obtain a distinction as evanescent as their energy. The ambition of our hero was altogether of a different character. It was, indeed, at present not a little vague, indefinite, hesitating, inquiring, sometimes desponding. What were his powers? what should be his aim? were often to him, as to all young aspirants, questions infinitely perplexing and full of pain. But, on the whole, there ran through his character, notwithstanding his many dazzling qualities and accomplishments, and his juvenile celebrity, which has spoiled so much promise, a vein of grave simplicity that was the consequence of an earnest temper, and of an intellect that would be content with nothing short of the profound.

His was a mind that loved to pursue every question to the centre. But it was not a spirit of scepticism that impelled this habit; on the contrary, it was the spirit of faith. Coningsby found that he was born in an age of infidelity in all things, and his heart assured him that a want of faith was a want of nature. But his vigorous intellect could not take refuge in that maudlin substitute for belief which consists in a patronage of fantastic theories. He needed that deep and enduring conviction that the heart and the intellect, feeling and reason united, can alone supply. He asked himself why governments were hated, and religions despised? Why loyalty was dead, and reverence only a galvanised corpse?

These were indeed questions that had as yet presented themselves to his thought in a crude and imperfect form; but their very occurrence showed the strong predisposition of his mind. It was because he had not found guides among his elders, that his thoughts had been turned to the

generation that he himself represented. The sentiment of veneration was so developed in his nature, that he was exactly the youth that would have hung with enthusiastic humility on the accents of some sage of old in the groves of Academus, or the porch of Zeno. But as yet he had found age only perplexed and desponding; manhood only callous and desperate. Some thought that systems would last their time; others, that something would turn up. His deep and pious spirit recoiled with disgust and horror from such lax, chance-medley maxims, that would, in their consequences, reduce man to the level of the brutes. Notwithstanding a prejudice which had haunted him from his childhood, he had, when the occasion offered, applied to Mr. Rigby for instruction, as one distinguished in the republic of letters, as well as the realm of politics; who assumed the guidance of the public mind, and, as the phrase runs, was looked up to. Mr. Rigby listened at first to the inquiries of Coningsby, urged, as they ever were, with a modesty and deference which do not always characterise juvenile investigations, as if Coningsby were speaking to him of the unknown tongues. But Mr. Rigby was not a man who ever confessed himself at fault. He caught up something of the subject as our young friend proceeded, and was perfectly prepared, long before he had finished, to take the whole conversation into his own hands.

Mr. Rigby began by ascribing everything to the Reform Bill, and then referred to several of his own speeches on Schedule A. Then he told Coningsby that want of religious Faith was solely occasioned by want of churches; and want of Loyalty, by George IV. having shut himself up too much at the cottage in Windsor Park, entirely against the advice of Mr. Rigby. He assured Coningsby that the Church Commission was operating wonders, and that with private benevolence, he had himself subscribed 1,000_l_, for Lord Monmouth, we should soon have churches enough. The great question now was their architecture. Had George IV. lived all would have been right. They would have been built on the model of the Budhist pagoda. As for Loyalty, if the present King went regularly to Ascot races, he had no doubt all would go right. Finally, Mr. Rigby impressed on Coningsby to read the Quarterly Review with great attention; and to make himself master of Mr. Wordy's History of the late War, in twenty volumes, a capital work, which proves that Providence was on the side of the Tories.

Coningsby did not reply to Mr. Rigby again; but worked on with his own mind, coming often enough to sufficiently crude conclusions, and often much perplexed and harassed. He tried occasionally his inferences on his companions, who were intelligent and full of fervour. Millbank was more than this. He was of a thoughtful mood; had also caught up from a new school some principles, which were materials for discussion. One way or

other, however, before he quitted Eton there prevailed among this circle of friends, the initial idea doubtless emanating from Coningsby, an earnest, though a rather vague, conviction that the present state of feeling in matters both civil and religious was not healthy; that there must be substituted for this latitudinarianism something sound and deep, fervent and well defined, and that the priests of this new faith must be found among the New Generation; so that when the bright-minded rider of 'the Daughter of the Star' descanted on the influence of individual character, of great thoughts and heroic actions, and the divine power of youth and genius, he touched a string that was the very heart-chord of his companion, who listened with fascinated enthusiasm as he introduced him to his gallery of inspiring models.

Coningsby arrived at Beaumanoir at a season when men can neither hunt nor shoot. Great internal resources should be found in a country family under such circumstances. The Duke and Duchess had returned from London only a few days with their daughter, who had been presented this year. They were all glad to find themselves again in the country, which they loved and which loved them. One of their sons-in-law and his wife, and Henry Sydney, completed the party.

There are few conjunctures in life of a more startling interest, than to meet the pretty little girl that we have gambolled with in our boyhood, and to find her changed in the lapse of a very few years, which in some instances may not have brought a corresponding alteration in our own appearance, into a beautiful woman. Something of this flitted over Coningsby's mind, as he bowed, a little agitated from his surprise, to Lady Theresa Sydney. All that he remembered had prepared him for beauty; but not for the degree or character of beauty that he met. It was a rich, sweet face, with blue eyes and dark lashes, and a nose that we have no epithet in English to describe, but which charmed in Roxalana. Her brown hair fell over her white and well turned shoulders in long and luxuriant tresses. One has met something as brilliant and dainty in a medallion of old Sèvres, or amid the terraces and gardens of Watteau.

Perhaps Lady Theresa, too, might have welcomed him with more freedom had his appearance also more accorded with the image which he had left behind. Coningsby was a boy then, as we described him in our first chapter. Though only nineteen now, he had attained his full stature, which was above the middle height, and time had fulfilled that promise of symmetry in his figure, and grace in his mien, then so largely intimated. Time, too, which had not yet robbed his countenance of any of its physical beauty, had strongly developed the intellectual charm by which it had ever been distinguished. As he bowed lowly before the Duchess and her daughter, it

would have been difficult to imagine a youth of a mien more prepossessing and a manner more finished.

A manner that was spontaneous; nature's pure gift, the reflex of his feeling. No artifice prompted that profound and polished homage. Not one of those influences, the aggregate of whose sway produces, as they tell us, the finished gentleman, had ever exercised its beneficent power on our orphan, and not rarely forlorn, Coningsby. No clever and refined woman, with her quick perception, and nice criticism that never offends our self-love, had ever given him that education that is more precious than Universities. The mild suggestions of a sister, the gentle raillery of some laughing cousin, are also advantages not always appreciated at the time, but which boys, when they have become men, often think over with gratitude, and a little remorse at the ungracious spirit in which they were received. Not even the dancing-master had afforded his mechanical aid to Coningsby, who, like all Eton boys of his generation, viewed that professor of accomplishments with frank repugnance. But even in the boisterous life of school, Coningsby, though his style was free and flowing, was always well-bred. His spirit recoiled from that gross familiarity that is the characteristic of modern manners, and which would destroy all forms and ceremonies merely because they curb and control their own coarse convenience and ill-disguised selfishness. To women, however, Coningsby instinctively bowed, as to beings set apart for reverence and delicate treatment. Little as his experience was of them, his spirit had been fed with chivalrous fancies, and he entertained for them all the ideal devotion of a Surrey or a Sydney. Instructed, if not learned, as books and thought had already made him in men, he could not conceive that there were any other women in the world than fair Geraldines and Countesses of Pembroke.

There was not a country-house in England that had so completely the air of habitual residence as Beaumanoir. It is a charming trait, and very rare. In many great mansions everything is as stiff, formal, and tedious, as if your host were a Spanish grandee in the days of the Inquisition. No ease, no resources; the passing life seems a solemn spectacle in which you play a part. How delightful was the morning room at Beaumanoir; from which gentlemen were not excluded with that assumed suspicion that they can never enter it but for felonious purposes. Such a profusion of flowers! Such a multitude of books! Such a various prodigality of writing materials! So many easy chairs too, of so many shapes; each in itself a comfortable home; yet nothing crowded. Woman alone can organise a drawing-room; man succeeds sometimes in a library. And the ladies' work! How graceful they look bending over their embroidery frames, consulting over the arrangement of a group, or the colour of a flower. The panniers and

fanciful baskets, overflowing with variegated worsted, are gay and full of pleasure to the eye, and give an air of elegant business that is vivifying. Even the sight of employment interests.

Then the morning costume of English women is itself a beautiful work of art. At this period of the day they can find no rivals in other climes. The brilliant complexions of the daughters of the north dazzle in daylight; the illumined saloon levels all distinctions. One should see them in their well-fashioned muslin dresses. What matrons, and what maidens! Full of graceful dignity, fresher than the morn! And the married beauty in her little lace cap. Ah, she is a coquette! A charming character at all times; in a country-house an invaluable one.

A coquette is a being who wishes to please. Amiable being! If you do not like her, you will have no difficulty in finding a female companion of a different mood. Alas! coquettes are but too rare. 'Tis a career that requires great abilities, infinite pains, a gay and airy spirit. 'Tis the coquette that provides all amusement; suggests the riding party, plans the picnic, gives and guesses charades, acts them. She is the stirring element amid the heavy congeries of social atoms; the soul of the house, the salt of the banquet. Let any one pass a very agreeable week, or it may be ten days, under any roof, and analyse the cause of his satisfaction, and one might safely make a gentle wager that his solution would present him with the frolic phantom of a coquette.

'It is impossible that Mr. Coningsby can remember me!' said a clear voice; and he looked round, and was greeted by a pair of sparkling eyes and the gayest smile in the world.

It was Lady Everingham, the Duke's married daughter.

CHAPTER III.

'And you walked here!' said Lady Everingham to Coningsby, when the stir of arranging themselves at dinner had subsided. 'Only think, papa, Mr. Coningsby walked here! I also am a great walker.'

'I had heard much of the forest,' said Coningsby.

'Which I am sure did not disappoint you,' said the Duke.

'But forests without adventures!' said Lady Everingham, a little shrugging her pretty shoulders.

'But I had an adventure,' said Coningsby.

'Oh! tell it us by all means!' said the Lady, with great animation.

'Adventures are my weakness. I have had more adventures than any one. Have I not had, Augustus?' she added, addressing her husband.

'But you make everything out to be an adventure, Isabel,' said Lord Everingham. I dare say that Mr. Coningsby's was more substantial.' And looking at our young friend, he invited him to inform them.

'I met a most extraordinary man,' said Coningsby.

'It should have been a heroine,' exclaimed Lady Everingham.

'Do you know anybody in this neighbourhood who rides the finest Arab in the world?' asked Coningsby. 'She is called "the Daughter of the Star," and was given to her rider by the Pacha of Egypt.'

'This is really an adventure,' said Lady Everingham, interested.

'The Daughter of the Star!' said Lady Theresa. 'What a pretty name! Percy has a horse called "Sunbeam."' "

'A fine Arab, the finest in the world!' said the Duke, who was fond of horse. 'Who can it be?'

'Can you throw any light on this, Mr. Lyle?' asked the Duchess of a young man who sat next her.

He was a neighbour who had joined their dinner-party, Eustace Lyle, a Roman Catholic, and the richest commoner in the county; for he had succeeded to a great estate early in his minority, which had only this year terminated.

'I certainly do not know the horse,' said Mr. Lyle; 'but if Mr. Coningsby would describe the rider, perhaps--'

'He is a man something under thirty,' said Coningsby, 'pale, with dark hair. We met in a sort of forest-inn during a storm. A most singular man! Indeed, I never met any one who seemed to me so clever, or to say such

remarkable things.'

'He must have been the spirit of the storm,' said Lady Everingham.

'Charles Verney has a great deal of dark hair,' said Lady Theresa. 'But then he is anything but pale, and his eyes are blue.'

'And certainly he keeps his wonderful things for your ear, Theresa,' said her sister.

'I wish that Mr. Coningsby would tell us some of the wonderful things he said,' said the Duchess, smiling.

'Take a glass of wine first with my mother, Coningsby,' said Henry Sydney, who had just finished helping them all to fish.

Coningsby had too much tact to be entrapped into a long story. He already regretted that he had been betrayed into any allusion to the stranger. He had a wild, fanciful notion, that their meeting ought to have been preserved as a sacred secret. But he had been impelled to refer to it in the first instance by the chance observation of Lady Everingham; and he had pursued his remark from the hope that the conversation might have led to the discovery of the unknown. When he found that his inquiry in this respect was unsuccessful, he was willing to turn the conversation. In reply to the Duchess, then, he generally described the talk of the stranger as full of lively anecdote and epigrammatic views of life; and gave them, for example, a saying of an illustrious foreign Prince, which was quite new and pointed, and which Coningsby told well. This led to a new train of discourse. The Duke also knew this illustrious foreign Prince, and told another story of him; and Lord Everingham had played whist with this illustrious foreign Prince often at the Travellers', and this led to a third story; none of them too long. Then Lady Everingham came in again, and sparkled agreeably. She, indeed, sustained throughout dinner the principal weight of the conversation; but, as she asked questions of everybody, all seemed to contribute. Even the voice of Mr. Lyle, who was rather bashful, was occasionally heard in reply. Coningsby, who had at first unintentionally taken a more leading part than he aspired to, would have retired into the background for the rest of the dinner, but Lady Everingham continually signalled him out for her questions, and as she sat opposite to him, he seemed the person to whom they were principally addressed.

At length the ladies rose to retire. A very great personage in a foreign, but not remote country, once mentioned to the writer of these pages, that

he ascribed the superiority of the English in political life, in their conduct of public business and practical views of affairs, in a great measure to 'that little half-hour' that separates, after dinner, the dark from the fair sex. The writer humbly submitted, that if the period of disjunction were strictly limited to a 'little half-hour,' its salutary consequences for both sexes need not be disputed, but that in England the 'little half-hour' was too apt to swell into a term of far more awful character and duration. Lady Everingham was a disciple of the 'very little half-hour' school; for, as she gaily followed her mother, she said to Coningsby, whose gracious lot it was to usher them from the apartment:

'Pray do not be too long at the Board of Guardians to-day.'

These were prophetic words; for no sooner were they all again seated, than the Duke, filling his glass and pushing the claret to Coningsby, observed,

'I suppose Lord Monmouth does not trouble himself much about the New Poor Law?'

'Hardly,' said Coningsby. 'My grandfather's frequent absence from England, which his health, I believe, renders quite necessary, deprives him of the advantage of personal observation on a subject, than which I can myself conceive none more deeply interesting.'

'I am glad to hear you say so,' said the Duke, 'and it does you great credit, and Henry too, whose attention, I observe, is directed very much to these subjects. In my time, the young men did not think so much of such things, and we suffer consequently. By the bye, Everingham, you, who are a Chairman of a Board of Guardians, can give me some information. Supposing a case of out-door relief--'

'I could not suppose anything so absurd,' said the son-in-law.

'Well,' rejoined the Duke, 'I know your views on that subject, and it certainly is a question on which there is a good deal to be said. But would you under any circumstances give relief out of the Union, even if the parish were to save a considerable sum?'

'I wish I knew the Union where such a system was followed,' said Lord Everingham; and his Grace seemed to tremble under his son-in-law's glance.

The Duke had a good heart, and not a bad head. If he had not made in his youth so many Latin and English verses, he might have acquired considerable information, for he had a natural love of letters, though his

pack were the pride of England, his barrel seldom missed, and his fortune on the turf, where he never betted, was a proverb. He was good, and he wished to do good; but his views were confused from want of knowledge, and his conduct often inconsistent because a sense of duty made him immediately active; and he often acquired in the consequent experience a conviction exactly contrary to that which had prompted his activity.

His Grace had been a great patron and a zealous administrator of the New Poor Law. He had been persuaded that it would elevate the condition of the labouring class. His son-in-law, Lord Everingham, who was a Whig, and a clearheaded, cold-blooded man, looked upon the New Poor Law as another Magna Charta. Lord Everingham was completely master of the subject. He was himself the Chairman of one of the most considerable Unions of the kingdom. The Duke, if he ever had a misgiving, had no chance in argument with his son-in-law. Lord Everingham overwhelmed him with quotations from Commissioners' rules and Sub-commissioners' reports, statistical tables, and references to dietaries. Sometimes with a strong case, the Duke struggled to make a fight; but Lord Everingham, when he was at fault for a reply, which was very rare, upbraided his father-in-law with the abuses of the old system, and frightened him with visions of rates exceeding rentals.

Of late, however, a considerable change had taken place in the Duke's feelings on this great question. His son Henry entertained strong opinions upon it, and had combated his father with all the fervour of a young votary. A victory over his Grace, indeed, was not very difficult. His natural impulse would have enlisted him on the side, if not of opposition to the new system, at least of critical suspicion of its spirit and provisions. It was only the statistics and sharp acuteness of his son-in-law that had, indeed, ever kept him to his colours. Lord Henry would not listen to statistics, dietary tables, Commissioners' rides, Sub-commissioners' reports. He went far higher than his father; far deeper than his brother-in-law. He represented to the Duke that the order of the peasantry was as ancient, legal, and recognised an order as the order of the nobility; that it had distinct rights and privileges, though for centuries they had been invaded and violated, and permitted to fall into desuetude. He impressed upon the Duke that the parochial constitution of this country was more important than its political constitution; that it was more ancient, more universal in its influence; and that this parochial constitution had already been shaken to its centre by the New Poor Law. He assured his father that it would never be well for England until this order of the peasantry was restored to its pristine condition; not merely in physical comfort, for that must vary according to the economical circumstances of the time, like that of every class; but to its condition

in all those moral attributes which make a recognised rank in a nation; and which, in a great degree, are independent of economics, manners, customs, ceremonies, rights, and privileges.

'Henry thinks,' said Lord Everingham, 'that the people are to be fed by dancing round a May-pole.'

'But will the people be more fed because they do not dance round a May-pole?' urged Lord Henry.

'Obsolete customs!' said Lord Everingham.

'And why should dancing round a May-pole be more obsolete than holding a Chapter of the Garter?' asked Lord Henry.

The Duke, who was a blue ribbon, felt this a home thrust. 'I must say,' said his Grace, 'that I for one deeply regret that our popular customs have been permitted to fall so into desuetude.'

'The Spirit of the Age is against such things,' said Lord Everingham.

'And what is the Spirit of the Age?' asked Coningsby.

'The Spirit of Utility,' said Lord Everingham.

'And you think then that ceremony is not useful?' urged Coningsby, mildly.

'It depends upon circumstances,' said Lord Everingham. 'There are some ceremonies, no doubt, that are very proper, and of course very useful. But the best thing we can do for the labouring classes is to provide them with work.'

'But what do you mean by the labouring classes, Everingham?' asked Lord Henry. 'Lawyers are a labouring class, for instance, and by the bye sufficiently provided with work. But would you approve of Westminster Hall being denuded of all its ceremonies?'

'And the long vacation being abolished?' added Coningsby.

'Theresa brings me terrible accounts of the sufferings of the poor about us,' said the Duke, shaking his head.

'Women think everything to be suffering!' said Lord Everingham.

'How do you find them about you, Mr. Lyle?' continued the Duke.

'I have revived the monastic customs at St. Genevieve,' said the young man, blushing. 'There is an almsgiving twice a-week.'

'I am sure I wish I could see the labouring classes happy,' said the Duke.

'Oh! pray do not use, my dear father, that phrase, the labouring classes!' said Lord Henry. 'What do you think, Coningsby, the other day we had a meeting in this neighbourhood to vote an agricultural petition that was to comprise all classes. I went with my father, and I was made chairman of the committee to draw up the petition. Of course, I described it as the petition of the nobility, clergy, gentry, yeomanry, and peasantry of the county of ----; and, could you believe it, they struck out peasantry as a word no longer used, and inserted labourers.'

'What can it signify,' said Lord Everingham, 'whether a man be called a labourer or a peasant?'

'And what can it signify,' said his brother-in-law, 'whether a man be called Mr. Howard or Lord Everingham?'

They were the most affectionate family under this roof of Beaumanoir, and of all members of it, Lord Henry the sweetest tempered, and yet it was astonishing what sharp skirmishes every day arose between him and his brother-in-law, during that 'little half-hour' that forms so happily the political character of the nation. The Duke, who from experience felt that a guerilla movement was impending, asked his guests whether they would take any more claret; and on their signifying their dissent, moved an adjournment to the ladies.

They joined the ladies in the music-room. Coningsby, not experienced in feminine society, and who found a little difficulty from want of practice in maintaining conversation, though he was desirous of succeeding, was delighted with Lady Everingham, who, instead of requiring to be amused, amused him; and suggested so many subjects, and glanced at so many topics, that there never was that cold, awkward pause, so common with sullen spirits and barren brains. Lady Everingham thoroughly understood the art of conversation, which, indeed, consists of the exercise of two fine qualities. You must originate, and you must sympathise; you must possess at the same time the habit of communicating and the habit of listening. The union is rather rare, but irresistible.

Lady Everingham was not a celebrated beauty, but she was something

infinitely more delightful, a captivating woman. There were combined, in her, qualities not commonly met together, great vivacity of mind with great grace of manner. Her words sparkled and her movements charmed. There was, indeed, in all she said and did, that congruity that indicates a complete and harmonious organisation. It was the same just proportion which characterised her form: a shape slight and undulating with grace; the most beautifully shaped ear; a small, soft hand; a foot that would have fitted the glass slipper; and which, by the bye, she lost no opportunity of displaying; and she was right, for it was a model.

Then there was music. Lady Theresa sang like a seraph: a rich voice, a grand style. And her sister could support her with grace and sweetness. And they did not sing too much. The Duke took up a review, and looked at Rigby's last slashing article. The country seemed ruined, but it appeared that the Whigs were still worse off than the Tories. The assassins had committed suicide. This poetical justice is pleasing. Lord Everingham, lounging in an easy chair, perused with great satisfaction his *Morning Chronicle*, which contained a cutting reply to Mr. Rigby's article, not quite so 'slashing' as the Right Honourable scribe's manifesto, but with some searching mockery, that became the subject and the subject-monger.

Mr. Lyle seated himself by the Duchess, and encouraged by her amenity, and speaking in whispers, became animated and agreeable, occasionally patting the lap-dog. Coningsby stood by the singers, or talked with them when the music had ceased: and Henry Sydney looked over a volume of Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, occasionally, without taking his eyes off the volume, calling the attention of his friends to his discoveries.

Mr. Lyle rose to depart, for he had some miles to return; he came forward with some hesitation, to hope that Coningsby would visit his bloodhounds, which Lord Henry had told him Coningsby had expressed a wish to do. Lady Everingham remarked that she had not been at St. Genevieve since she was a girl, and it appeared Lady Theresa had never visited it. Lady Everingham proposed that they should all ride over on the morrow, and she appealed to her husband for his approbation, instantly given, for though she loved admiration, and he apparently was an iceberg, they were really devoted to each other. Then there was a consultation as to their arrangements. The Duchess would drive over in her pony chair with Theresa. The Duke, as usual, had affairs that would occupy him. The rest were to ride. It was a happy suggestion, all anticipated pleasure; and the evening terminated with the prospect of what Lady Everingham called an adventure.

The ladies themselves soon withdrew; the gentlemen lingered for a while; the Duke took up his candle, and bid his guests good night; Lord

Everingham drank a glass of Seltzer water, nodded, and vanished. Lord Henry and his friend sat up talking over the past. They were too young to call them old times; and yet what a life seemed to have elapsed since they had quitted Eton, dear old Eton! Their boyish feelings, and still latent boyish character, developed with their reminiscences.

'Do you remember Bucknall? Which Bucknall? The eldest: I saw him the other day at Nottingham; he is in the Rifles. Do you remember that day at Sirly Hall, that Paulet had that row with Dickinson? Did you like Dickinson? Hum! Paulet was a good fellow. I tell you who was a good fellow, Paulet's little cousin. What! Augustus Le Grange? Oh! I liked Augustus Le Grange. I wonder where Buckhurst is? I had a letter from him the other day. He has gone with his uncle to Paris. We shall find him at Cambridge in October. I suppose you know Millbank has gone to Oriel. Has he, though! I wonder who will have our room at Cookesley's? Cookesley was a good fellow! Oh, capital! How well he behaved when there was that row about our going out with the hounds? Do you remember Vere's face? It makes me laugh now when I think of it. I tell you who was a good fellow, Kangaroo Gray; I liked him. I don't know any fellow who sang a better song!'

'By the bye,' said Coningsby, 'what sort of fellow is Eustace Lyle? I rather liked his look.'

'Oh! I will tell you all about him,' said Lord Henry. 'He is a great ally of mine, and I think you will like him very much. It is a Roman Catholic family, about the oldest we have in the county, and the wealthiest. You see, Lyle's father was the most violent ultra Whig, and so were all Eustace's guardians; but the moment he came of age, he announced that he should not mix himself up with either of the parties in the county, and that his tenantry might act exactly as they thought fit. My father thinks, of course, that Lyle is a Conservative, and that he only waits the occasion to come forward; but he is quite wrong. I know Lyle well, and he speaks to me without disguise. You see 'tis an old Cavalier family, and Lyle has all the opinions and feelings of his race. He will not ally himself with anti-monarchists, and democrats, and infidels, and sectarians; at the same time, why should he support a party who pretend to oppose these, but who never lose an opportunity of insulting his religion, and would deprive him, if possible, of the advantages of the very institutions which his family assisted in establishing?'

'Why, indeed? I am glad to have made his acquaintance,' said Coningsby. 'Is he clever?'

'I think so,' said Lord Henry. 'He is the most shy fellow, especially

among women, that I ever knew, but he is very popular in the county. He does an amazing deal of good, and is one of the best riders we have. My father says, the very best; bold, but so very certain.'

'He is older than we are?'

'My senior by a year: he is just of age.'

'Oh, ah! twenty-one. A year younger than Gaston de Foix when he won Ravenna, and four years younger than John of Austria when he won Lepanto,' observed Coningsby, musingly. 'I vote we go to bed, old fellow!'

CHAPTER IV.

In a valley, not far from the margin of a beautiful river, raised on a lofty and artificial terrace at the base of a range of wooded heights, was a pile of modern building in the finest style of Christian architecture. It was of great extent and richly decorated. Built of a white and glittering stone, it sparkled with its pinnacles in the sunshine as it rose in strong relief against its verdant background. The winding valley, which was studded, but not too closely studded, with clumps of old trees, formed for a great extent on either side of the mansion a grassy demesne, which was called the Lower Park; but it was a region bearing the name of the Upper Park, that was the peculiar and most picturesque feature of this splendid residence. The wooded heights that formed the valley were not, as they appeared, a range of hills. Their crest was only the abrupt termination of a vast and enclosed tableland, abounding in all the qualities of the ancient chase: turf and trees, a wilderness of underwood, and a vast spread of gorse and fern. The deer, that abounded, lived here in a world as savage as themselves: trooping down in the evening to the river. Some of them, indeed, were ever in sight of those who were in the valley, and you might often observe various groups clustered on the green heights above the mansion, the effect of which was most inspiring and graceful. Sometimes in the twilight, a solitary form, magnified by the illusive hour, might be seen standing on the brink of the steep, large and black against the clear sky.

We have endeavoured slightly to sketch St. Geneviève as it appeared to our friends from Beaumanoir, winding into the valley the day after Mr. Lyle had dined with them. The valley opened for about half-a-mile opposite the

mansion, which gave to the dwellers in it a view over an extensive and richly-cultivated country. It was through this district that the party from Beaumanoir had pursued their way. The first glance at the building, its striking situation, its beautiful form, its brilliant colour, its great extent, a gathering as it seemed of galleries, halls, and chapels, mullioned windows, portals of clustered columns, and groups of airy pinnacles and fretwork spires, called forth a general cry of wonder and of praise.

The ride from Beaumanoir had been delightful; the breath of summer in every breeze, the light of summer on every tree. The gay laugh of Lady Everingham rang frequently in the air; often were her sunny eyes directed to Coningsby, as she called his attention to some fair object or some pretty effect. She played the hostess of Nature, and introduced him to all the beauties.

Mr. Lyle had recognised them. He cantered forward with greetings on a fat little fawn-coloured pony, with a long white mane and white flowing tail, and the wickedest eye in the world. He rode by the side of the Duchess, and indicated their gently-descending route.

They arrived, and the peacocks, who were sunning themselves on the turrets, expanded their plumage to welcome them.

'I can remember the old house,' said the Duchess, as she took Mr. Lyle's arm; 'and I am happy to see the new one. The Duke had prepared me for much beauty, but the reality exceeds his report.'

They entered by a short corridor into a large hall. They would have stopped to admire its rich roof, its gallery and screen; but their host suggested that they should refresh themselves after their ride, and they followed him through several apartments into a spacious chamber, its oaken panels covered with a series of interesting pictures, representing the siege of St. Geneviève by the Parliament forces in 1643: the various assaults and sallies, and the final discomfiture of the rebels. In all these figured a brave and graceful Sir Eustace Lyle, in cuirass and buff jerkin, with gleaming sword and flowing plume. The sight of these pictures was ever a source of great excitement to Henry Sydney, who always lamented his ill-luck in not living in such days; nay, would insist that all others must equally deplore their evil destiny.

'See, Coningsby, this battery on the Upper Park,' said Lord Henry. 'This did the business: how it rakes up the valley; Sir Eustace works it himself. Mother, what a pity Beaumanoir was not besieged!'

'It may be,' said Coningsby.

'I always fancy a siege must be so interesting,' said Lady Everingham. 'It must be so exciting.'

'I hope the next siege may be at Beaumanoir, instead of St. Geneviève,' said Lyle, laughing; 'as Henry Sydney has such a military predisposition. Duchess, you said the other day that you liked Malvoisie, and here is some.'

'Now broach me a cask of Malvoisie,
Bring pasty from the doe;'

said the Duchess. 'That has been my luncheon.'

'A poetic repast,' said Lady Theresa.

'Their breeds of sheep must have been very inferior in old days,' said Lord Everingham, 'as they made such a noise about their venison. For my part I consider it a thing as much gone by as tilts and tournaments.'

'I am sorry that they have gone by,' said Lady Theresa.

'Everything has gone by that is beautiful,' said Lord Henry.

'Life is much easier,' said Lord Everingham.

'Life easy!' said Lord Henry. 'Life appears to me to be a fierce struggle.'

'Manners are easy,' said Coningsby, 'and life is hard.'

'And I wish to see things exactly the reverse,' said Lord Henry. 'The means and modes of subsistence less difficult; the conduct of life more ceremonious.'

'Civilisation has no time for ceremony,' said Lord Everingham.

'How very sententious you all are!' said his wife. 'I want to see the hall and many other things.' And they all rose.

There were indeed many other things to see: a long gallery, rich in ancestral portraits, specimens of art and costume from Holbein to

Lawrence; courtiers of the Tudors, and cavaliers of the Stuarts, terminating in red-coated squires fresh from the field, and gentlemen buttoned up in black coats, and sitting in library chairs, with their backs to a crimson curtain. Woman, however, is always charming; and the present generation may view their mothers painted by Lawrence, as if they were patronesses of Almack's; or their grandmothers by Reynolds, as Robinettas caressing birds, with as much delight as they gaze on the dewy-eyed matrons of Lely, and the proud bearing of the heroines of Vandyke. But what interested them more than the gallery, or the rich saloons, or even the baronial hall, was the chapel, in which art had exhausted all its invention, and wealth offered all its resources. The walls and vaulted roofs entirely painted in encaustic by the first artists of Germany, and representing the principal events of the second Testament, the splendour of the mosaic pavement, the richness of the painted windows, the sumptuousness of the altar, crowned by a masterpiece of Carlo Dolce and surrounded by a silver rail, the tone of rich and solemn light that pervaded all, and blended all the various sources of beauty into one absorbing and harmonious whole: all combined to produce an effect which stilled them into a silence that lasted for some minutes, until the ladies breathed their feelings in an almost inarticulate murmur of reverence and admiration; while a tear stole to the eye of the enthusiastic Henry Sydney.

Leaving the chapel, they sauntered through the gardens, until, arriving at their limit, they were met by the prettiest sight in the world; a group of little pony chairs, each drawn by a little fat fawn-coloured pony, like the one that Mr. Lyle had been riding. Lord Henry drove his mother; Lord Everingham, Lady Theresa; Lady Everingham was attended by Coningsby. Their host cantered by the Duchess's side, and along winding roads of easy ascent, leading through beautiful woods, and offering charming landscapes, they reached in due time the Upper Park.

'One sees our host to great advantage in his own house,' said Lady Everingham. 'He is scarcely the same person. I have not observed him once blush. He speaks and moves with ease. It is a pity that he is not more graceful. Above all things I like a graceful man.'

'That chapel,' said Coningsby, 'was a fine thing.'

'Very!' said Lady Everingham. 'Did you observe the picture over the altar, the Virgin with blue eyes? I never observed blue eyes before in such a picture. What is your favourite colour for eyes?'

Coningsby felt embarrassed: he said something rather pointless about

admiring everything that was beautiful.

'But every one has a favourite style; I want to know yours. Regular features, do you like regular features? Or is it expression that pleases you?'

'Expression; I think I like expression. Expression must be always delightful.'

'Do you dance?'

'No; I am no great dancer. I fear I have few accomplishments. I am fond of fencing.'

'I don't fence,' said Lady Everingham, with a smile. 'But I think you are right not to dance. It is not in your way. You are ambitious, I believe?' she added.

'I was not aware of it; everybody is ambitious.'

'You see I know something of your character. Henry has spoken of you to me a great deal; long before we met,--met again, I should say, for we are old friends, remember. Do you know your career much interests me? I like ambitious men.'

There is something fascinating in the first idea that your career interests a charming woman. Coningsby felt that he was perhaps driving a Madame de Longueville. A woman who likes ambitious men must be no ordinary character; clearly a sort of heroine. At this moment they reached the Upper Park, and the novel landscape changed the current of their remarks.

Far as the eye could reach there spread before them a savage sylvan scene. It wanted, perhaps, undulation of surface, but that deficiency was greatly compensated for by the multitude and prodigious size of the trees; they were the largest, indeed, that could well be met with in England; and there is no part of Europe where the timber is so huge. The broad interminable glades, the vast avenues, the quantity of deer browsing or bounding in all directions, the thickets of yellow gorse and green fern, and the breeze that even in the stillness of summer was ever playing over this table-land, all produced an animated and renovating scene. It was like suddenly visiting another country, living among other manners, and breathing another air. They stopped for a few minutes at a pavilion built for the purposes of the chase, and then returned, all gratified by this visit to what appeared to be the higher regions of the earth.

As they approached the brow of the hill that hung over St. Geneviève, they heard the great bell sound.

'What is that?' asked the Duchess.

'It is almsgiving day,' replied Mr. Lyle, looking a little embarrassed, and for the first time blushing. 'The people of the parishes with which I am connected come to St. Geneviève twice a-week at this hour.'

'And what is your system?' inquired Lord Everingham, who had stopped, interested by the scene. 'What check have you?'

'The rectors of the different parishes grant certificates to those who in their belief merit bounty according to the rules which I have established. These are again visited by my almoner, who countersigns the certificate, and then they present it at the postern-gate. The certificate explains the nature of their necessities, and my steward acts on his discretion.

'Mamma, I see them!' exclaimed Lady Theresa.

'Perhaps your Grace may think that they might be relieved without all this ceremony,' said Mr. Lyle, extremely confused. 'But I agree with Henry and Mr. Coningsby, that Ceremony is not, as too commonly supposed, an idle form. I wish the people constantly and visibly to comprehend that Property is their protector and their friend.'

'My reason is with you, Mr. Lyle,' said the Duchess, 'as well as my heart.'

They came along the valley, a procession of Nature, whose groups an artist might have studied. The old man, who loved the pilgrimage too much to avail himself of the privilege of a substitute accorded to his grey hairs, came in person with his grandchild and his staff. There also came the widow with her child at the breast, and others clinging to her form; some sorrowful faces, and some pale; many a serious one, and now and then a frolic glance; many a dame in her red cloak, and many a maiden with her light basket; curly-headed urchins with demure looks, and sometimes a stalwart form baffled for a time of the labour which he desired. But not a heart there that did not bless the bell that sounded from the tower of St. Geneviève!

CHAPTER V.

'My fathers perilled their blood and fortunes for the cause of the Sovereignty and Church of England,' said Lyle to Coningsby, as they were lying stretched out on the sunny turf in the park of Beaumanoir,' and I inherit their passionate convictions. They were Catholics, as their descendant. No doubt they would have been glad to see their ancient faith predominant in their ancient land; but they bowed, as I bow, to an adverse and apparently irrevocable decree. But if we could not have the Church of our fathers, we honoured and respected the Church of their children. It was at least a Church; a 'Catholic and Apostolic Church,' as it daily declares itself. Besides, it was our friend. When we were persecuted by Puritanic Parliaments, it was the Sovereign and the Church of England that interposed, with the certainty of creating against themselves odium and mistrust, to shield us from the dark and relentless bigotry of Calvinism.'

'I believe,' said Coningsby, 'that if Charles I. had hanged all the Catholic priests that Parliament petitioned him to execute, he would never have lost his crown.'

'You were mentioning my father,' continued Lyle. 'He certainly was a Whig. Galled by political exclusion, he connected himself with that party in the State which began to intimate emancipation. After all, they did not emancipate us. It was the fall of the Papacy in England that founded the Whig aristocracy; a fact that must always lie at the bottom of their hearts, as, I assure you, it does of mine.'

'I gathered at an early age,' continued Lyle, 'that I was expected to inherit my father's political connections with the family estates. Under ordinary circumstances this would probably have occurred. In times that did not force one to ponder, it is not likely I should have recoiled from uniting myself with a party formed of the best families in England, and ever famous for accomplished men and charming women. But I enter life in the midst of a convulsion in which the very principles of our political and social systems are called in question. I cannot unite myself with the party of destruction. It is an operative cause alien to my being. What, then, offers itself? The Duke talks to me of Conservative principles; but he does not inform me what they are. I observe indeed a party in the State whose rule it is to consent to no change, until it is clamorously called for, and then instantly to yield; but those are Concessionary, not Conservative principles. This party treats institutions as we do our pheasants, they preserve only to destroy them. But is there a statesman

among these Conservatives who offers us a dogma for a guide, or defines any great political truth which we should aspire to establish? It seems to me a, barren thing, this Conservatism, an unhappy cross-breed; the mule of politics that engenders nothing. What do you think of all this, Coningsby? I assure you I feel confused, perplexed, harassed. I know I have public duties to perform; I am, in fact, every day of my life solicited by all parties to throw the weight of my influence in one scale or another; but I am paralysed. I often wish I had no position in the country. The sense of its responsibility depresses me; makes me miserable. I speak to you without reserve; with a frankness which our short acquaintance scarcely authorises; but Henry Sydney has so often talked to me of you, and I have so long wished to know you, that I open my heart without restraint.'

'My dear fellow,' said Coningsby, 'you have but described my feelings when you depicted your own. My mind on these subjects has long been a chaos. I float in a sea of troubles, and should long ago have been wrecked had I not been sustained by a profound, however vague, conviction, that there are still great truths, if we could but work them out; that Government, for instance, should be loved and not hated, and that Religion should be a faith and not a form.'

The moral influence of residence furnishes some of the most interesting traits of our national manners. The presence of this power was very apparent throughout the district that surrounded Beaumanoir. The ladies of that house were deeply sensible of the responsibility of their position; thoroughly comprehending their duties, they fulfilled them without affectation, with earnestness, and with that effect which springs from a knowledge of the subject. The consequences were visible in the tone of the peasantry being superior to that which we too often witness. The ancient feudal feeling that lingers in these sequestered haunts is an instrument which, when skilfully wielded, may be productive of vast social benefit. The Duke understood this well; and his family had imbibed all his views, and seconded them. Lady Everingham, once more in the scene of her past life, resumed the exercise of gentle offices, as if she had never ceased to be a daughter of the house, and as if another domain had not its claims upon her solitude. Coningsby was often the companion of herself and her sister in their pilgrimages of charity and kindness. He admired the graceful energy, and thorough acquaintance with details, with which Lady Everingham superintended schools, organised societies of relief, and the discrimination which she brought to bear upon individual cases of suffering or misfortune. He was deeply interested as he watched the magic of her manner, as she melted the obdurate, inspired the slothful, consoled the afflicted, and animated with her smiles and ready phrase the energetic and the dutiful. Nor on these occasions was Lady Theresa seen under less

favourable auspices. Without the vivacity of her sister, there was in her demeanour a sweet seriousness of purpose that was most winning; and sometimes a burst of energy, a trait of decision, which strikingly contrasted with the somewhat over-controlled character of her life in drawing-rooms.

In the society of these engaging companions, time for Coningsby glided away in a course which he sometimes wished nothing might disturb. Apart from them, he frequently felt himself pensive and vaguely disquieted. Even the society of Henry Sydney or Eustace Lyle, much as under ordinary circumstances they would have been adapted to his mood, did not compensate for the absence of that indefinite, that novel, that strange, yet sweet excitement, which he felt, he knew not exactly how or why, stealing over his senses. Sometimes the countenance of Theresa Sydney flitted over his musing vision; sometimes the merry voice of Lady Everingham haunted his ear. But to be their companion in ride or ramble; to avoid any arrangement which for many hours should deprive him of their presence; was every day with Coningsby a principal object.

One day he had been out shooting rabbits with Lyle and Henry Sydney, and returned with them late to Beaumanoir to dinner. He had not enjoyed his sport, and he had not shot at all well. He had been dreamy, silent, had deeply felt the want of Lady Everingham's conversation, that was ever so poignant and so interestingly personal to himself; one of the secrets of her sway, though Coningsby was not then quite conscious of it. Talk to a man about himself, and he is generally captivated. That is the real way to win him. The only difference between men and women in this respect is, that most women are vain, and some men are not. There are some men who have no self-love; but if they have, female vanity is but a trifling and airy passion compared with the vast voracity of appetite which in the sterner sex can swallow anything, and always crave for more.

When Coningsby entered the drawing-room, there seemed a somewhat unusual bustle in the room, but as the twilight had descended, it was at first rather difficult to distinguish who was present. He soon perceived that there were strangers. A gentleman of pleasing appearance was near a sofa on which the Duchess and Lady Everingham were seated, and discoursing with some volubility. His phrases seemed to command attention; his audience had an animated glance, eyes sparkling with intelligence and interest; not a word was disregarded. Coningsby did not advance as was his custom; he had a sort of instinct, that the stranger was discoursing of matters of which he knew nothing. He turned to a table, he took up a book, which he began to read upside downwards. A hand was lightly placed on his shoulder. He looked round, it was another stranger; who said, however, in a tone of

familiar friendliness,

'How do you do, Coningsby?'

It was a young man about four-and-twenty years of age, tall, good-looking. Old recollections, his intimate greeting, a strong family likeness, helped Coningsby to conjecture correctly who was the person who addressed him. It was, indeed, the eldest son of the Duke, the Marquis of Beaumanoir, who had arrived at his father's unexpectedly with his friend, Mr. Melton, on their way to the north.

Mr. Melton was a gentleman of the highest fashion, and a great favourite in society. He was about thirty, good-looking, with an air that commanded attention, and manners, though facile, sufficiently finished. He was communicative, though calm, and without being witty, had at his service a turn of phrase, acquired by practice and success, which was, or which always seemed to be, poignant. The ladies seemed especially to be delighted at his arrival. He knew everything of everybody they cared about; and Coningsby listened in silence to names which for the first time reached his ears, but which seemed to excite great interest. Mr. Melton frequently addressed his most lively observations and his most sparkling anecdotes to Lady Everingham, who evidently relished all that he said, and returned him in kind.

Throughout the dinner Lady Everingham and Mr. Melton maintained what appeared a most entertaining conversation, principally about things and persons which did not in any way interest our hero; who, however, had the satisfaction of hearing Lady Everingham, in the drawing-room, say in a careless tone to the Duchess.

'I am so glad, mamma, that Mr. Melton has come; we wanted some amusement.'

What a confession! What a revelation to Coningsby of his infinite insignificance! Coningsby entertained a great aversion for Mr. Melton, but felt his spirit unequal to the social contest. The genius of the untutored, inexperienced youth quailed before that of the long-practised, skilful man of the world. What was the magic of this man? What was the secret of this ease, that nothing could disturb, and yet was not deficient in deference and good taste? And then his dress, it seemed fashioned by some unearthly artist; yet it was impossible to detect the unobtrusive causes of the general effect that was irresistible. Coningsby's coat was made by Stultz; almost every fellow in the sixth form had his coats made by Stultz; yet Coningsby fancied that his own garment looked as if it had been furnished by some rustic slopseller. He began to wonder where Mr.

Melton got his boots from, and glanced at his own, which, though made in St. James's Street, seemed to him to have a cloddish air.

Lady Everingham was determined that Mr. Melton should see Beaumanoir to the greatest advantage. Mr. Melton had never been there before, except at Christmas, with the house full of visitors and factitious gaiety. Now he was to see the country. Accordingly, there were long rides every day, which Lady Everingham called expeditions, and which generally produced some slight incident which she styled an adventure. She was kind to Coningsby, but had no time to indulge in the lengthened conversations which he had previously found so magical. Mr. Melton was always on the scene, the monopolising hero, it would seem, of every thought, and phrase, and plan. Coningsby began to think that Beaumanoir was not so delightful a place as he had imagined. He began to think that he had stayed there perhaps too long. He had received a letter from Mr. Rigby, to inform him that he was expected at Coningsby Castle at the beginning of September, to meet Lord Monmouth, who had returned to England, and for grave and special reasons was about to reside at his chief seat, which he had not visited for many years. Coningsby had intended to have remained at Beaumanoir until that time; but suddenly it occurred to him, that the Age of Ruins was past, and that he ought to seize the opportunity of visiting Manchester, which was in the same county as the castle of his grandfather. So difficult is it to speculate upon events! Muse as we may, we are the creatures of circumstances; and the unexpected arrival of a London dandy at the country-seat of an English nobleman sent this representative of the New Generation, fresh from Eton, nursed in prejudices, yet with a mind predisposed to inquiry and prone to meditation, to a scene apt to stimulate both intellectual processes; which demanded investigation and induced thought, the great METROPOLIS OF LABOUR.

END OF BOOK III.

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I.

A great city, whose image dwells in the memory of man, is the type of some great idea. Rome represents conquest; Faith hovers over the towers of Jerusalem; and Athens embodies the pre-eminent quality of the antique

world, Art.

In modern ages, Commerce has created London; while Manners, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, have long found a supreme capital in the airy and bright-minded city of the Seine.

What Art was to the ancient world, Science is to the modern: the distinctive faculty. In the minds of men the useful has succeeded to the beautiful. Instead of the city of the Violet Crown, a Lancashire village has expanded into a mighty region of factories and warehouses. Yet, rightly understood, Manchester is as great a human exploit as Athens.

The inhabitants, indeed, are not so impressed with their idiosyncrasy as the countrymen of Pericles and Phidias. They do not fully comprehend the position which they occupy. It is the philosopher alone who can conceive the grandeur of Manchester, and the immensity of its future. There are yet great truths to tell, if we had either the courage to announce or the temper to receive them.

CHAPTER II.

A feeling of melancholy, even of uneasiness, attends our first entrance into a great town, especially at night. Is it that the sense of all this vast existence with which we have no connexion, where we are utterly unknown, oppresses us with our insignificance? Is it that it is terrible to feel friendless where all have friends?

Yet reverse the picture. Behold a community where you are unknown, but where you will be known, perhaps honoured. A place where you have no friends, but where, also, you have no enemies. A spot that has hitherto been a blank in your thoughts, as you have been a cipher in its sensations, and yet a spot, perhaps, pregnant with your destiny!

There is, perhaps, no act of memory so profoundly interesting as to recall the careless mood and moment in which we have entered a town, a house, a chamber, on the eve of an acquaintance or an event that has given colour and an impulse to our future life.

What is this Fatality that men worship? Is it a Goddess?

Unquestionably it is a power that acts mainly by female agents. Women are the Priestesses of Predestination.

Man conceives Fortune, but Woman conducts it.

It is the Spirit of Man that says, 'I will be great;' but it is the Sympathy of Woman that usually makes him so.

It was not the comely and courteous hostess of the Adelphi Hotel, Manchester, that gave occasion to these remarks, though she may deserve them, and though she was most kind to our Coningsby as he came in late at night very tired, and not in very good humour.

He had travelled the whole day through the great district of labour, his mind excited by strange sights, and at length wearied by their multiplication. He had passed over the plains where iron and coal supersede turf and corn, dingy as the entrance of Hades, and flaming with furnaces; and now he was among illumined factories with more windows than Italian palaces, and smoking chimneys taller than Egyptian obelisks. Alone in the great metropolis of machinery itself, sitting down in a solitary coffee-room glaring with gas, with no appetite, a whirling head, and not a plan or purpose for the morrow, why was he there? Because a being, whose name even was unknown to him, had met him in a hedge alehouse during a thunderstorm, and told him that the Age of Ruins was past.

Remarkable instance of the influence of an individual; some evidence of the extreme susceptibility of our hero.

Even his bedroom was lit by gas. Wonderful city! That, however, could be got rid of. He opened the window. The summer air was sweet, even in this land of smoke and toil. He feels a sensation such as in Lisbon or Lima precedes an earthquake. The house appears to quiver. It is a sympathetic affection occasioned by a steam-engine in a neighbouring factory.

Notwithstanding, however, all these novel incidents, Coningsby slept the deep sleep of youth and health, of a brain which, however occasionally perplexed by thought, had never been harassed by anxiety. He rose early, freshened, and in fine spirits. And by the time the deviled chicken and the buttered toast, that mysterious and incomparable luxury, which can only be obtained at an inn, had disappeared, he felt all the delightful excitement of travel.

And now for action! Not a letter had Coningsby; not an individual in that vast city was known to him. He went to consult his kind hostess, who

smiled confidence. He was to mention her name at one place, his own at another. All would be right; she seemed to have reliance in the destiny of such a nice young man.

He saw all; they were kind and hospitable to the young stranger, whose thought, and earnestness, and gentle manners attracted them. One recommended him to another; all tried to aid and assist him. He entered chambers vaster than are told of in Arabian fable, and peopled with habitants more wondrous than Afrite or Peri. For there he beheld, in long-continued ranks, those mysterious forms full of existence without life, that perform with facility, and in an instant, what man can fulfil only with difficulty and in days. A machine is a slave that neither brings nor bears degradation; it is a being endowed with the greatest degree of energy, and acting under the greatest degree of excitement, yet free at the same time from all passion and emotion. It is, therefore, not only a slave, but a supernatural slave. And why should one say that the machine does not live? It breathes, for its breath forms the atmosphere of some towns. It moves with more regularity than man. And has it not a voice? Does not the spindle sing like a merry girl at her work, and the steam-engine roar in jolly chorus, like a strong artisan handling his lusty tools, and gaining a fair day's wages for a fair day's toil?

Nor should the weaving-room be forgotten, where a thousand or fifteen hundred girls may be observed in their coral necklaces, working like Penelope in the daytime; some pretty, some pert, some graceful and jocund, some absorbed in their occupation; a little serious some, few sad. And the cotton you have observed in its rude state, that you have seen the silent spinner change into thread, and the bustling weaver convert into cloth, you may now watch as in a moment it is tinted with beautiful colours, or printed with fanciful patterns. And yet the mystery of mysteries is to view machines making machines; a spectacle that fills the mind with curious, and even awful, speculation.

From early morn to the late twilight, our Coningsby for several days devoted himself to the comprehension of Manchester. It was to him a new world, pregnant with new ideas, and suggestive of new trains of thought and feeling. In this unprecedented partnership between capital and science, working on a spot which Nature had indicated as the fitting theatre of their exploits, he beheld a great source of the wealth of nations which had been reserved for these times, and he perceived that this wealth was rapidly developing classes whose power was imperfectly recognised in the constitutional scheme, and whose duties in the social system seemed altogether omitted. Young as he was, the bent of his mind, and the inquisitive spirit of the times, had sufficiently prepared him,

not indeed to grapple with these questions, but to be sensible of their existence, and to ponder.

One evening, in the coffee-room of the hotel, having just finished his well-earned dinner, and relaxing his mind for the moment in a fresh research into the Manchester Guide, an individual, who had also been dining in the same apartment, rose from his table, and, after lolling over the empty fireplace, reading the framed announcements, looking at the directions of several letters waiting there for their owners, picking his teeth, turned round to Coningsby, and, with an air of uneasy familiarity, said,--

'First visit to Manchester, sir?'

'My first.'

'Gentleman traveller, I presume?'

'I am a traveller.' said Coningsby.

'Hem! From south?'

'From the south.'

'And pray, sir, how did you find business as you came along? Brisk, I dare say. And yet there is a something, a sort of a something; didn't it strike you, sir, there was a something? A deal of queer paper about, sir!'

'I fear you are speaking on a subject of which I know nothing,' said Coningsby, smiling; 'I do not understand business at all; though I am not surprised that, being at Manchester, you should suppose so.'

'Ah! not in business. Hem! Professional?'

'No,' said Coningsby, 'I am nothing.'

'Ah! an independent gent; hem! and a very pleasant thing, too. Pleased with Manchester, I dare say?'

continued the stranger.

'And astonished,' said Coningsby; 'I think, in the whole course of my life, I never saw so much to admire.'

'Seen all the lions, have no doubt?'

'I think I have seen everything,' said Coningsby, rather eager and with some pride.

'Very well, very well,' exclaimed the stranger, in a patronising tone. 'Seen Mr. Birley's weaving-room, I dare say?'

'Oh! isn't it wonderful?' said Coningsby.

'A great many people.' said the stranger, with a rather supercilious smile.

'But after all,' said Coningsby, with animation, 'it is the machinery without any interposition of manual power that overwhelms me. It haunts me in my dreams,' continued Coningsby; 'I see cities peopled with machines. Certainly Manchester is the most wonderful city of modern times!'

The stranger stared a little at the enthusiasm of his companion, and then picked his teeth.

'Of all the remarkable things here,' said Coningsby, 'what on the whole, sir, do you look upon as the most so?'

'In the way of machinery?' asked the stranger.

'In the way of machinery.'

'Why, in the way of machinery, you know,' said the stranger, very quietly, 'Manchester is a dead letter.'

'A dead letter!' said Coningsby.

'Dead and buried,' said the stranger, accompanying his words with that peculiar application of his thumb to his nose that signifies so eloquently that all is up.

'You astonish me!' said Coningsby.

'It's a booked place though,' said the stranger, 'and no mistake. We have all of us a very great respect for Manchester, of course; look upon her as a sort of mother, and all that sort of thing. But she is behind the times, sir, and that won't do in this age. The long and short of it is, Manchester is gone by.'

'I thought her only fault might be she was too much in advance of the rest

of the country,' said Coningsby, innocently.

'If you want to see life,' said the stranger, 'go to Staleybridge or Bolton. There's high pressure.'

'But the population of Manchester is increasing,' said Coningsby.

'Why, yes; not a doubt. You see we have all of us a great respect for the town. It is a sort of metropolis of this district, and there is a good deal of capital in the place. And it has some first-rate institutions. There's the Manchester Bank. That's a noble institution, full of commercial enterprise; understands the age, sir; high-pressure to the backbone. I came up to town to see the manager to-day. I am building a new mill now myself at Staleybridge, and mean to open it by January, and when I do, I'll give you leave to pay another visit to Mr. Birley's weaving-room, with my compliments.'

'I am very sorry,' said Coningsby, 'that I have only another day left; but pray tell me, what would you recommend me most to see within a reasonable distance of Manchester?'

'My mill is not finished,' said the stranger musingly, 'and though there is still a great deal worth seeing at Staleybridge, still you had better wait to see my new mill. And Bolton, let me see; Bolton, there is nothing at Bolton that can hold up its head for a moment against my new mill; but then it is not finished. Well, well, let us see. What a pity this is not the 1st of January, and then my new mill would be at work! I should like to see Mr. Birley's face, or even Mr. Ashworth's, that day. And the Oxford Road Works, where they are always making a little change, bit by bit reform, eh! not a very particular fine appetite, I suspect, for dinner, at the Oxford Road Works, the day they hear of my new mill being at work. But you want to see something tip-top. Well, there's Millbank; that's regular slap-up, quite a sight, regular lion; if I were you I would see Millbank.'

'Millbank!' said Coningsby; 'what Millbank?'

'Millbank of Millbank, made the place, made it himself. About three miles from Bolton; train to-morrow morning at 7.25, get a fly at the station, and you will be at Millbank by 8.40.'

'Unfortunately I am engaged to-morrow morning,' said Coningsby, 'and yet I am most anxious, particularly anxious, to see Millbank.'

'Well, there's a late train,' said the stranger, '3.15; you will be there by 4.30.'

'I think I could manage that,' said Coningsby.

'Do,' said the stranger; 'and if you ever find yourself at Staleybridge, I shall be very happy to be of service. I must be off now. My train goes at 9.15.' And he presented Coningsby with his card as he wished him good night.

MR. G. O. A. HEAD,
STALEYBRIDGE.

CHAPTER III.

In a green valley of Lancaster, contiguous to that district of factories on which we have already touched, a clear and powerful stream flows through a broad meadow land. Upon its margin, adorned, rather than shadowed, by some old elm-trees, for they are too distant to serve except for ornament, rises a vast deep red brick pile, which though formal and monotonous in its general character, is not without a certain beauty of proportion and an artist-like finish in its occasional masonry. The front, which is of great extent, and covered with many tiers of small windows, is flanked by two projecting wings in the same style, which form a large court, completed by a dwarf wall crowned with a light, and rather elegant railing; in the centre, the principal entrance, a lofty portal of bold and beautiful design, surmounted by a statue of Commerce.

This building, not without a degree of dignity, is what is technically, and not very felicitously, called a mill; always translated by the French in their accounts of our manufacturing riots, 'moulin;' and which really was the principal factory of Oswald Millbank, the father of that youth whom, we trust, our readers have not quite forgotten.

At some little distance, and rather withdrawn from the principal stream, were two other smaller structures of the same style. About a quarter of a mile further on, appeared a village of not inconsiderable size, and remarkable from the neatness and even picturesque character of its architecture, and the gay gardens that surrounded it. On a sunny knoll in the background rose a church, in the best style of Christian architecture,

and near it was a clerical residence and a school-house of similar design. The village, too, could boast of another public building; an Institute where there were a library and a lecture-room; and a reading-hall, which any one might frequent at certain hours, and under reasonable regulations.

On the other side of the principal factory, but more remote, about half-a-mile up the valley, surrounded by beautiful meadows, and built on an agreeable and well-wooded elevation, was the mansion of the mill-owner; apparently a commodious and not inconsiderable dwelling-house, built in what is called a villa style, with a variety of gardens and conservatories. The atmosphere of this somewhat striking settlement was not disturbed and polluted by the dark vapour, which, to the shame of Manchester, still infests that great town, for Mr. Millbank, who liked nothing so much as an invention, unless it were an experiment, took care to consume his own smoke.

The sun was declining when Coningsby arrived at Millbank, and the gratification which he experienced on first beholding it, was not a little diminished, when, on enquiring at the village, he was informed that the hour was past for seeing the works. Determined not to relinquish his purpose without a struggle, he repaired to the principal mill, and entered the counting-house, which was situated in one of the wings of the building.

'Your pleasure, sir?' said one of three individuals sitting on high stools behind a high desk.

'I wish, if possible, to see the works.'

'Quite impossible, sir;' and the clerk, withdrawing his glance, continued his writing. 'No admission without an order, and no admission with an order after two o'clock.'

'I am very unfortunate,' said Coningsby.

'Sorry for it, sir. Give me ledger K. X., will you, Mr. Benson?'

'I think Mr. Millbank would grant me permission,' said Coningsby.

'Very likely, sir; to-morrow. Mr. Millbank is there, sir, but very much engaged.' He pointed to an inner counting-house, and the glass doors permitted Coningsby to observe several individuals in close converse.

'Perhaps his son, Mr. Oswald Millbank, is here?' inquired Coningsby.

'Mr. Oswald is in Belgium,' said the clerk.

'Would you give a message to Mr. Millbank, and say a friend of his son's at Eton is here, and here only for a day, and wishes very much to see his works?'

'Can't possibly disturb Mr. Millbank now, sir; but, if you like to sit down, you can wait and see him yourself.'

Coningsby was content to sit down, though he grew very impatient at the end of a quarter of an hour. The ticking of the clock, the scratching of the pens of the three silent clerks, irritated him. At length, voices were heard, doors opened, and the clerk said, 'Mr. Millbank is coming, sir,' but nobody came; voices became hushed, doors were shut; again nothing was heard, save the ticking of the clock and the scratching of the pen.

At length there was a general stir, and they all did come forth, Mr. Millbank among them, a well-proportioned, comely man, with a fair face inclining to ruddiness, a quick, glancing, hazel eye, the whitest teeth, and short, curly, chestnut hair, here and there slightly tinged with grey. It was a visage of energy and decision.

He was about to pass through the counting-house with his companions, with whom his affairs were not concluded, when he observed Coningsby, who had risen.

'This gentleman wishes to see me?' he inquired of his clerk, who bowed assent.

'I shall be at your service, sir, the moment I have finished with these gentlemen.'

'The gentleman wishes to see the works, sir,' said the clerk.

'He can see the works at proper times,' said Mr. Millbank, somewhat pettishly; 'tell him the regulations;' and he was about to go.

'I beg your pardon, sir,' said Coningsby, coming forward, and with an air of earnestness and grace that arrested the step of the manufacturer. 'I am aware of the regulations, but would beg to be permitted to infringe them.'

'It cannot be, sir,' said Mr. Millbank, moving.

'I thought, sir, being here only for a day, and as a friend of your son--'

Mr. Millbank stopped and said,

'Oh! a friend of Oswald's, eh? What, at Eton?'

'Yes, sir, at Eton; and I had hoped perhaps to have found him here.'

'I am very much engaged, sir, at this moment,' said Mr. Millbank; 'I am sorry I cannot pay you any personal attention, but my clerk will show you everything. Mr. Benson, let this gentleman see everything;' and he withdrew.

'Be pleased to write your name here, sir,' said Mr. Benson, opening a book, and our friend wrote his name and the date of his visit to Millbank:

'HARRY CONINGSBY, Sept. 2, 1836.'

Coningsby beheld in this great factory the last and the most refined inventions of mechanical genius. The building had been fitted up by a capitalist as anxious to raise a monument of the skill and power of his order, as to obtain a return for the great investment.

'It is the glory of Lancashire!' exclaimed the enthusiastic Mr. Benson.

The clerk spoke freely of his master, whom he evidently idolised, and his great achievements, and Coningsby encouraged him. He detailed to Coningsby the plans which Mr. Millbank had pursued, both for the moral and physical well-being of his people; how he had built churches, and schools, and institutes; houses and cottages on a new system of ventilation; how he had allotted gardens; established singing classes.

'Here is Mr. Millbank,' continued the clerk, as he and Coningsby, quitting the factory, re-entered the court.

Mr. Millbank was approaching the factory, and the moment that he observed them, he quickened his pace.

'Mr. Coningsby?' he said, when he reached them. His countenance was rather disturbed, and his voice a little trembled, and he looked on our friend with a glance scrutinising and serious. Coningsby bowed.

'I am sorry that you should have been received at this place with so little ceremony, sir,' said Mr. Millbank; 'but had your name been

mentioned, you would have found it cherished here.' He nodded to the clerk, who disappeared.

Coningsby began to talk about the wonders of the factory, but Mr. Millbank recurred to other thoughts that were passing in his mind. He spoke of his son: he expressed a kind reproach that Coningsby should have thought of visiting this part of the world without giving them some notice of his intention, that he might have been their guest, that Oswald might have been there to receive him, that they might have made arrangements that he should see everything, and in the best manner; in short, that they might all have shown, however slightly, the deep sense of their obligations to him.

'My visit to Manchester, which led to this, was quite accidental,' said Coningsby. 'I am bound for the other division of the county, to pay a visit to my grandfather, Lord Monmouth; but an irresistible desire came over me during my journey to view this famous district of industry. It is some days since I ought to have found myself at Coningsby, and this is the reason why I am so pressed.'

A cloud passed over the countenance of Millbank as the name of Lord Monmouth was mentioned, but he said nothing. Turning towards Coningsby, with an air of kindness:

'At least,' said he, 'let not Oswald hear that you did not taste our salt. Pray dine with me to-day; there is yet an hour to dinner; and as you have seen the factory, suppose we stroll together through the village.'

CHAPTER IV.

The village clock struck five as Mr. Millbank and his guest entered the gardens of his mansion. Coningsby lingered a moment to admire the beauty and gay profusion of the flowers.

'Your situation,' said Coningsby, looking up the green and silent valley, 'is absolutely poetic.'

'I try sometimes to fancy,' said Mr. Millbank, with a rather fierce smile, 'that I am in the New World.'

They entered the house; a capacious and classic hall, at the end a staircase in the Italian fashion. As they approached it, the sweetest and the clearest voice exclaimed from above, 'Papa! papa!' and instantly a young girl came bounding down the stairs, but suddenly seeing a stranger with her father she stopped upon the landing-place, and was evidently on the point of as rapidly retreating as she had advanced, when Mr. Millbank waved his hand to her and begged her to descend. She came down slowly; as she approached them her father said, 'A friend you have often heard of, Edith: this is Mr. Coningsby.'

She started; blushed very much; and then, with a trembling and uncertain gait, advanced, put forth her hand with a wild unstudied grace, and said in a tone of sensibility, 'How often have we all wished to see and to thank you!'

This daughter of his host was of tender years; apparently she could scarcely have counted sixteen summers. She was delicate and fragile, but as she raised her still blushing visage to her father's guest, Coningsby felt that he had never beheld a countenance of such striking and such peculiar beauty.

'My only daughter, Mr. Coningsby, Edith; a Saxon name, for she is the daughter of a Saxon.'

But the beauty of the countenance was not the beauty of the Saxons. It was a radiant face, one of those that seem to have been touched in their cradle by a sunbeam, and to have retained all their brilliancy and suffused and mantling lustre. One marks sometimes such faces, diaphanous with delicate splendour, in the southern regions of France. Her eye, too, was the rare eye of Aquitaine; soft and long, with lashes drooping over the cheek, dark as her clustering ringlets.

They entered the drawing-room.

'Mr. Coningsby,' said Millbank to his daughter, 'is in this part of the world only for a few hours, or I am sure he would become our guest. He has, however, promised to stay with us now and dine.'

'If Miss Millbank will pardon this dress,' said Coningsby, bowing an apology for his inevitable frock and boots; the maiden raised her eyes and bent her head.

The hour of dinner was at hand. Millbank offered to show Coningsby to his dressing-room. He was absent but a few minutes. When he returned he found

Miss Millbank alone. He came somewhat suddenly into the room. She was playing with her dog, but ceased the moment she observed Coningsby.

Coningsby, who since his practice with Lady Everingham, flattered himself that he had advanced in small talk, and was not sorry that he had now an opportunity of proving his prowess, made some lively observations about pets and the breeds of lapdogs, but he was not fortunate in extracting a response or exciting a repartee. He began then on the beauty of Millbank, which he would on no account have avoided seeing, and inquired when she had last heard of her brother. The young lady, apparently much distressed, was murmuring something about Antwerp, when the entrance of her father relieved her from her embarrassment.

Dinner being announced, Coningsby offered his arm to his fair companion, who took it with her eyes fixed on the ground.

'You are very fond, I see, of flowers,' said Coningsby, as they moved along; and the young lady said 'Yes.'

The dinner was plain, but perfect of its kind. The young hostess seemed to perform her office with a certain degree of desperate determination. She looked at a chicken and then at Coningsby, and murmured something which he understood. Sometimes she informed herself of his tastes or necessities in more detail, by the medium of her father, whom she treated as a sort of dragoman; in this way: 'Would not Mr. Coningsby, papa, take this or that, or do so and so?' Coningsby was always careful to reply in a direct manner, without the agency of the interpreter; but he did not advance. Even a petition for the great honour of taking a glass of sherry with her only induced the beautiful face to bow. And yet when she had first seen him, she had addressed him even with emotion. What could it be? He felt less confidence in his increased power of conversation. Why, Theresa Sydney was scarcely a year older than Miss Millbank, and though she did not certainly originate like Lady Everingham, he got on with her perfectly well.

Mr. Millbank did not seem to be conscious of his daughter's silence: at any rate, he attempted to compensate for it. He talked fluently and well; on all subjects his opinions seemed to be decided, and his language was precise. He was really interested in what Coningsby had seen, and what he had felt; and this sympathy divested his manner of the disagreeable effect that accompanies a tone inclined to be dictatorial. More than once Coningsby observed the silent daughter listening with extreme attention to the conversation of himself and her father.

The dessert was remarkable. Millbank was proud of his fruit. A bland expression of self-complacency spread over his features as he surveyed his grapes, his peaches, his figs.

'These grapes have gained a medal,' he told Coningsby. 'Those too are prize peaches. I have not yet been so successful with my figs. These however promise, and perhaps this year I may be more fortunate.'

'What would your brother and myself have given for such a dessert at Eton!' said Coningsby to Miss Millbank, wishing to say something, and something too that might interest her.

She seemed infinitely distressed, and yet this time would speak.

'Let me give you some,' He caught by chance her glance immediately withdrawn; yet it was a glance not only of beauty, but of feeling and thought. She added, in a hushed and hurried tone, dividing very nervously some grapes, 'I hardly know whether Oswald will be most pleased or grieved when he hears that you have been here.'

'And why grieved?' said Coningsby.

'That he should not have been here to welcome you, and that your stay is for so brief a time. It seems so strange that after having talked of you for years, we should see you only for hours.'

'I hope I may return,' said Coningsby, 'and that Millbank may be here to welcome me; but I hope I may be permitted to return even if he be not.'

But there was no reply; and soon after, Mr. Millbank talking of the American market, and Coningsby helping himself to a glass of claret, the daughter of the Saxon, looking at her father, rose and left the room, so suddenly and so quickly that Coningsby could scarcely gain the door.

'Yes,' said Millbank, filling his glass, and pursuing some previous observations, 'all that we want in this country is to be masters of our own industry; but Saxon industry and Norman manners never will agree; and some day, Mr. Coningsby, you will find that out.'

'But what do you mean by Norman manners?' inquired Coningsby.

'Did you ever hear of the Forest of Rossendale?' said Millbank. 'If you were staying here, you should visit the district. It is an area of twenty-four square miles. It was disforested in the early part of the sixteenth

century, possessing at that time eighty inhabitants. Its rental in James the First's time was 120_l._ When the woollen manufacture was introduced into the north, the shuttle competed with the plough in Rossendale, and about forty years ago we sent them the Jenny. The eighty souls are now increased to upwards of eighty thousand, and the rental of the forest, by the last county assessment, amounts to more than 50,000_l._, 41,000 per cent, on the value in the reign of James I. Now I call that an instance of Saxon industry competing successfully with Norman manners.'

'Exactly,' said Coningsby, 'but those manners are gone.'

'From Rossendale,' said Millbank, with a grim smile; 'but not from England.'

'Where do you meet them?'

'Meet them! In every place, at every hour; and feel them, too, in every transaction of life.'

'I know, sir, from your son,' said Coningsby, inquiringly, 'that you are opposed to an aristocracy.'

'No, I am not. I am for an aristocracy; but a real one, a natural one.'

'But, sir, is not the aristocracy of England,' said Coningsby, 'a real one? You do not confound our peerage, for example, with the degraded patricians of the Continent.'

'Hum!' said Millbank. 'I do not understand how an aristocracy can exist, unless it be distinguished by some quality which no other class of the community possesses. Distinction is the basis of aristocracy. If you permit only one class of the population, for example, to bear arms, they are an aristocracy; not one much to my taste; but still a great fact. That, however, is not the characteristic of the English peerage. I have yet to learn they are richer than we are, better informed, wiser, or more distinguished for public or private virtue. Is it not monstrous, then, that a small number of men, several of whom take the titles of Duke and Earl from towns in this very neighbourhood, towns which they never saw, which never heard of them, which they did not form, or build, or establish, I say, is it not monstrous, that individuals so circumstanced, should be invested with the highest of conceivable privileges, the privilege of making laws? Dukes and Earls indeed! I say there is nothing in a masquerade more ridiculous.'

'But do you not argue from an exception, sir?' said Coningsby. 'The question is, whether a preponderance of the aristocratic principle in a political constitution be, as I believe, conducive to the stability and permanent power of a State; and whether the peerage, as established in England, generally tends to that end? We must not forget in such an estimate the influence which, in this country, is exercised over opinion by ancient lineage.'

'Ancient lineage!' said Mr. Millbank; 'I never heard of a peer with an ancient lineage. The real old families of this country are to be found among the peasantry; the gentry, too, may lay some claim to old blood. I can point you out Saxon families in this county who can trace their pedigrees beyond the Conquest; I know of some Norman gentlemen whose fathers undoubtedly came over with the Conqueror. But a peer with an ancient lineage is to me quite a novelty. No, no; the thirty years of the wars of the Roses freed us from those gentlemen. I take it, after the battle of Tewkesbury, a Norman baron was almost as rare a being in England as a wolf is now.'

'I have always understood,' said Coningsby, 'that our peerage was the finest in Europe.'

'From themselves,' said Millbank, 'and the heralds they pay to paint their carriages. But I go to facts. When Henry VII. called his first Parliament, there were only twenty-nine temporal peers to be found, and even some of them took their seats illegally, for they had been attainted. Of those twenty-nine not five remain, and they, as the Howards for instance, are not Norman nobility. We owe the English peerage to three sources: the spoliation of the Church; the open and flagrant sale of its honours by the elder Stuarts; and the boroughmongering of our own times. Those are the three main sources of the existing peerage of England, and in my opinion disgraceful ones. But I must apologise for my frankness in thus speaking to an aristocrat.'

'Oh, by no means, sir, I like discussion. Your son and myself at Eton have had some encounters of this kind before. But if your view of the case be correct,' added Coningsby, smiling, 'you cannot at any rate accuse our present peers of Norman manners.'

'Yes, I do: they adopted Norman manners while they usurped Norman titles. They have neither the right of the Normans, nor do they fulfil the duty of the Normans: they did not conquer the land, and they do not defend it.'

'And where will you find your natural aristocracy?' asked Coningsby.

'Among those men whom a nation recognises as the most eminent for virtue, talents, and property, and, if you please, birth and standing in the land. They guide opinion; and, therefore, they govern. I am no leveller; I look upon an artificial equality as equally pernicious with a factitious aristocracy; both depressing the energies, and checking the enterprise of a nation. I like man to be free, really free: free in his industry as well as his body. What is the use of Habeas Corpus, if a man may not use his hands when he is out of prison?'

'But it appears to me you have, in a great measure, this natural aristocracy in England.'

'Ah, to be sure! If we had not, where should we be? It is the counteracting power that saves us, the disturbing cause in the calculations of short-sighted selfishness. I say it now, and I have said it a hundred times, the House of Commons is a more aristocratic body than the House of Lords. The fact is, a great peer would be a greater man now in the House of Commons than in the House of Lords. Nobody wants a second chamber, except a few disreputable individuals. It is a valuable institution for any member of it who has no distinction, neither character, talents, nor estate. But a peer who possesses all or any of these great qualifications, would find himself an immeasurably more important personage in what, by way of jest, they call the Lower House.'

'Is not the revising wisdom of a senate a salutary check on the precipitation of a popular assembly?'

'Why should a popular assembly, elected by the flower of a nation, be precipitate? If precipitate, what senate could stay an assembly so chosen? No, no, no! the thing has been tried over and over again; the idea of restraining the powerful by the weak is an absurdity; the question is settled. If we wanted a fresh illustration, we need only look to the present state of our own House of Lords. It originates nothing; it has, in fact, announced itself as a mere Court of Registration of the decrees of your House of Commons; and if by any chance it ventures to alter some miserable detail in a clause of a bill that excites public interest, what a clatter through the country, at Conservative banquets got up by the rural attorneys, about the power, authority, and independence of the House of Lords; nine times nine, and one cheer more! No, sir, you may make aristocracies by laws; you can only maintain them by manners. The manners of England preserve it from its laws. And they have substituted for our formal aristocracy an essential aristocracy; the government of those who are distinguished by their fellow-citizens.'

'But then it would appear,' said Coningsby, 'that the remedial action of our manners has removed all the political and social evils of which you complain?'

'They have created a power that may remove them; a power that has the capacity to remove them. But in a great measure they still exist, and must exist yet, I fear, for a long time. The growth of our civilisation has ever been as slow as our oaks; but this tardy development is preferable to the temporary expansion of the gourd.'

'The future seems to me sometimes a dark cloud.'

'Not to me,' said Mr. Millbank. 'I am sanguine; I am the Disciple of Progress. But I have cause for my faith. I have witnessed advance. My father has often told me that in his early days the displeasure of a peer of England was like a sentence of death to a man. Why it was esteemed a great concession to public opinion, so late as the reign of George II., that Lord Ferrars should be executed for murder. The king of a new dynasty, who wished to be popular with the people, insisted on it, and even then he was hanged with a silken cord. At any rate we may defend ourselves now,' continued Mr. Millbank, 'and, perhaps, do something more. I defy any peer to crush me, though there is one who would be very glad to do it. No more of that; I am very happy to see you at Millbank, very happy to make your acquaintance,' he continued, with some emotion, 'and not merely because you are my son's friend and more than friend.'

The walls of the dining-room were covered with pictures of great merit, all of the modern English school. Mr. Millbank understood no other, he was wont to say! and he found that many of his friends who did, bought a great many pleasing pictures that were copies, and many originals that were very displeasing. He loved a fine free landscape by Lee, that gave him the broad plains, the green lanes, and running streams of his own land; a group of animals by Landseer, as full of speech and sentiment as if they were designed by Aesop; above all, he delighted in the household humour and homely pathos of Wilkie. And if a higher tone of imagination pleased him, he could gratify it without difficulty among his favourite masters. He possessed some specimens of Etty worthy of Venice when it was alive; he could muse amid the twilight ruins of ancient cities raised by the magic pencil of Danby, or accompany a group of fair Neapolitans to a festival by the genial aid of Uwins.

Opposite Coningsby was a portrait, which had greatly attracted his attention during the whole dinner. It represented a woman, young and of a

rare beauty. The costume was of that classical character prevalent in this country before the general peace; a blue ribbon bound together as a fillet her clustering chestnut curls. The face was looking out of the canvas, and Coningsby never raised his eyes without catching its glance of blended vivacity and tenderness.

There are moments when our sensibility is affected by circumstances of a trivial character. It seems a fantastic emotion, but the gaze of this picture disturbed the serenity of Coningsby. He endeavoured sometimes to avoid looking at it, but it irresistibly attracted him. More than once during dinner he longed to inquire whom it represented; but it is a delicate subject to ask questions about portraits, and he refrained. Still, when he was rising to leave the room, the impulse was irresistible. He said to Mr. Millbank, 'By whom is that portrait, sir?'

The countenance of Millbank became disturbed; it was not an expression of tender reminiscence that fell upon his features. On the contrary, the expression was agitated, almost angry.

'Oh! that is by a country artist,' he said, 'of whom you never heard,' and moved away.

They found Miss Millbank in the drawing-room; she was sitting at a round table covered with working materials, apparently dressing a doll.

'Nay,' thought Coningsby, 'she must be too old for that.'

He addressed her, and seated himself by her side. There were several dolls on the table, but he discovered, on examination, that they were pincushions; and elicited, with some difficulty, that they were making for a fancy fair about to be held in aid of that excellent institution, the Manchester Athenaeum. Then the father came up and said,

'My child, let us have some tea;' and she rose and seated herself at the tea-table. Coningsby also quitted his seat, and surveyed the apartment.

There were several musical instruments; among others, he observed a guitar; not such an instrument as one buys in a music shop, but such an one as tinkles at Seville, a genuine Spanish guitar. Coningsby repaired to the tea-table.

'I am glad that you are fond of music, Miss Millbank.'

A blush and a bow.

'I hope after tea you will be so kind as to touch the guitar.'

Signals of great distress.

'Were you ever at Birmingham?'

'Yes:' a sigh.

'What a splendid music-hall! They should build one at Manchester.'

'They ought,' in a whisper.

The tea-tray was removed; Coningsby was conversing with Mr. Millbank, who was asking him questions about his son; what he thought of Oxford; what he thought of Oriel; should himself have preferred Cambridge; but had consulted a friend, an Oriel man, who had a great opinion of Oriel; and Oswald's name had been entered some years back. He rather regretted it now; but the thing was done. Coningsby, remembering the promise of the guitar, turned round to claim its fulfilment, but the singer had made her escape. Time elapsed, and no Miss Millbank reappeared. Coningsby looked at his watch; he had to go three miles to the train, which started, as his friend of the previous night would phrase it, at 9.45.

'I should be happy if you remained with us,' said Mr. Millbank; 'but as you say it is out of your power, in this age of punctual travelling a host is bound to speed the parting guest. The carriage is ready for you.'

'Farewell, then, sir. You must make my adieux to Miss Millbank, and accept my thanks for your great kindness.'

'Farewell, Mr. Coningsby,' said his host, taking his hand, which he retained for a moment, as if he would say more. Then leaving it, he repeated with a somewhat wandering air, and in a voice of emotion, 'Farewell, farewell, Mr. Coningsby.'

CHAPTER V.

Towards the end of the session of 1836, the hopes of the Conservative party were again in the ascendant. The Tadpoles and the Tapers had infused

such enthusiasm into all the country attorneys, who, in their turn, had so bedeviled the registration, that it was whispered in the utmost confidence, but as a flagrant truth, that Reaction was at length 'a great fact.' All that was required was the opportunity; but as the existing parliament was not two years old, and the government had an excellent working majority, it seemed that the occasion could scarcely be furnished. Under these circumstances, the backstairs politicians, not content with having by their premature movements already seriously damaged the career of their leader, to whom in public they pretended to be devoted, began weaving again their old intrigues about the court, and not without effect.

It was said that the royal ear lent itself with no marked repugnance to suggestions which might rid the sovereign of ministers, who, after all, were the ministers not of his choice, but of his necessity. But William IV., after two failures in a similar attempt, after his respective embarrassing interviews with Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, on their return to office in 1832 and 1835, was resolved never to make another move unless it were a checkmate. The king, therefore, listened and smiled, and loved to talk to his favourites of his private feelings and secret hopes; the first outraged, the second cherished; and a little of these revelations of royalty was distilled to great personages, who in their turn spoke hypothetically to their hangers-on of royal dispositions, and possible contingencies, while the hangers-on and go-betweens, in their turn, looked more than they expressed; took county members by the button into a corner, and advised, as friends, the representatives of boroughs to look sharply after the next registration.

Lord Monmouth, who was never greater than in adversity, and whose favourite excitement was to aim at the impossible, had never been more resolved on a Dukedom than when the Reform Act deprived him of the twelve votes which he had accumulated to attain that object. While all his companions in discomfiture were bewailing their irretrievable overthrow, Lord Monmouth became almost a convert to the measure, which had furnished his devising and daring mind, palled with prosperity, and satiated with a life of success, with an object, and the stimulating enjoyment of a difficulty.

He had early resolved to appropriate to himself a division of the county in which his chief seat was situate; but what most interested him, because it was most difficult, was the acquisition of one of the new boroughs that was in his vicinity, and in which he possessed considerable property. The borough, however, was a manufacturing town, and returning only one member, it had hitherto sent up to Westminster a radical shopkeeper, one Mr. Jawster Sharp, who had taken what is called 'a leading part' in the town

on every 'crisis' that had occurred since 1830; one of those zealous patriots who had got up penny subscriptions for gold cups to Lord Grey; cries for the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill; and public dinners where the victual was devoured before grace was said; a worthy who makes speeches, passes resolutions, votes addresses, goes up with deputations, has at all times the necessary quantity of confidence in the necessary individual; confidence in Lord Grey; confidence in Lord Durham; confidence in Lord Melbourne: and can also, if necessary, give three cheers for the King, or three groans for the Queen.

But the days of the genus Jawster Sharp were over in this borough as well as in many others. He had contrived in his lustre of agitation to feather his nest pretty successfully; by which he had lost public confidence and gained his private end. Three hungry Jawster Sharps, his hopeful sons, had all become commissioners of one thing or another; temporary appointments with interminable duties; a low-church son-in-law found himself comfortably seated in a chancellor's living; and several cousins and nephews were busy in the Excise. But Jawster Sharp himself was as pure as Cato. He had always said he would never touch the public money, and he had kept his word. It was an understood thing that Jawster Sharp was never to show his face again on the hustings of Darlford; the Liberal party was determined to be represented in future by a man of station, substance, character, a true Reformer, but one who wanted nothing for himself, and therefore might, if needful, get something for them. They were looking out for such a man, but were in no hurry. The seat was looked upon as a good thing; a contest certainly, every place is contested now, but as certainly a large majority. Notwithstanding all this confidence, however, Reaction or Registration, or some other mystification, had produced effects even in this creature of the Reform Bill, the good Borough of Darlford. The borough that out of gratitude to Lord Grey returned a jobbing shopkeeper twice to Parliament as its representative without a contest, had now a Conservative Association, with a banker for its chairman, and a brewer for its vice-president, and four sharp lawyers nibbing their pens, noting their memorandum-books, and assuring their neighbours, with a consoling and complacent air, that 'Property must tell in the long run.' Whispers also were about, that when the proper time arrived, a Conservative candidate would certainly have the honour of addressing the electors. No name mentioned, but it was not concealed that he was to be of no ordinary calibre; a tried man, a distinguished individual, who had already fought the battle of the constitution, and served his country in eminent posts; honoured by the nation, favoured by his sovereign. These important and encouraging intimations were ably diffused in the columns of the Conservative journal, and in a style which, from its high tone, evidently indicated no ordinary source and no common pen. Indeed, there appeared

occasionally in this paper, articles written with such unusual vigour, that the proprietors of the Liberal journal almost felt the necessity of getting some eminent hand down from town to compete with them. It was impossible that they could emanate from the rival Editor. They knew well the length of their brother's tether. Had they been more versant in the periodical literature of the day, they might in this 'slashing' style have caught perhaps a glimpse of the future candidate for their borough, the Right Honourable Nicholas Rigby.

Lord Monmouth, though he had been absent from England since 1832, had obtained from his vigilant correspondent a current knowledge of all that had occurred in the interval: all the hopes, fears, plans, prospects, manoeuvres, and machinations; their rise and fall; how some had bloomed, others were blighted; not a shade of reaction that was not represented to him; not the possibility of an adhesion that was not duly reported; he could calculate at Naples at any time, within ten, the result of a dissolution. The season of the year had prevented him crossing the Alps in 1834, and after the general election he was too shrewd a practiser in the political world to be deceived as to the ultimate result. Lord Eskdale, in whose judgment he had more confidence than in that of any individual, had told him from the first that the pear was not ripe; Rigby, who always hedged against his interest by the fulfilment of his prophecy of irremediable discomfiture, was never very sanguine. Indeed, the whole affair was always considered premature by the good judges; and a long time elapsed before Tadpole and Taper recovered their secret influence, or resumed their ostentatious loquacity, or their silent insolence.

The pear, however, was now ripe. Even Lord Eskdale wrote that after the forthcoming registration a bet was safe, and Lord Monmouth had the satisfaction of drawing the Whig Minister at Naples into a cool thousand on the event. Soon after this he returned to England, and determined to pay a visit to Coningsby Castle, feast the county, patronise the borough, diffuse that confidence in the party which his presence never failed to do; so great and so just was the reliance in his unerring powers of calculation and his intrepid pluck. Notwithstanding Schedule A, the prestige of his power had not sensibly diminished, for his essential resources were vast, and his intellect always made the most of his influence.

True, however, to his organisation, Lord Monmouth, even to save his party and gain his dukedom, must not be bored. He, therefore, filled his castle with the most agreeable people from London, and even secured for their diversion a little troop of French comedians. Thus supported, he received his neighbours with all the splendour befitting his immense wealth and

great position, and with one charm which even immense wealth and great position cannot command, the most perfect manner in the world. Indeed, Lord Monmouth was one of the most finished gentlemen that ever lived; and as he was good-natured, and for a selfish man even good-humoured, there was rarely a cloud of caprice or ill-temper to prevent his fine manners having their fair play. The country neighbours were all fascinated; they were received with so much dignity and dismissed with so much grace. Nobody would believe a word of the stories against him. Had he lived all his life at Coningsby, fulfilled every duty of a great English nobleman, benefited the county, loaded the inhabitants with favours, he would not have been half so popular as he found himself within a fortnight of his arrival with the worst county reputation conceivable, and every little squire vowing that he would not even leave his name at the Castle to show his respect.

Lord Monmouth, whose contempt for mankind was absolute; not a fluctuating sentiment, not a mournful conviction, ebbing and flowing with circumstances, but a fixed, profound, unalterable instinct; who never loved any one, and never hated any one except his own children; was diverted by his popularity, but he was also gratified by it. At this moment it was a great element of power; he was proud that, with a vicious character, after having treated these people with unprecedented neglect and contumely, he should have won back their golden opinions in a moment by the magic of manner and the splendour of wealth. His experience proved the soundness of his philosophy.

Lord Monmouth worshipped gold, though, if necessary, he could squander it like a caliph. He had even a respect for very rich men; it was his only weakness, the only exception to his general scorn for his species. Wit, power, particular friendships, general popularity, public opinion, beauty, genius, virtue, all these are to be purchased; but it does not follow that you can buy a rich man: you may not be able or willing to spare enough. A person or a thing that you perhaps could not buy, became invested, in the eyes of Lord Monmouth, with a kind of halo amounting almost to sanctity.

As the prey rose to the bait, Lord Monmouth resolved they should be gorged. His banquets were doubled; a ball was announced; a public day fixed; not only the county, but the principal inhabitants of the neighbouring borough, were encouraged to attend; Lord Monmouth wished it, if possible, to be without distinction of party. He had come to reside among his old friends, to live and die where he was born. The Chairman of the Conservative Association and the Vice President exchanged glances, which would have become Tadpole and Taper; the four attorneys nibbed their pens with increased energy, and vowed that nothing could withstand the

influence of the aristocracy 'in the long run.' All went and dined at the Castle; all returned home overpowered by the condescension of the host, the beauty of the ladies, several real Princesses, the splendour of his liveries, the variety of his viands, and the flavour of his wines. It was agreed that at future meetings of the Conservative Association, they should always give 'Lord Monmouth and the House of Lords!' superseding the Duke of Wellington, who was to figure in an after-toast with the Battle of Waterloo.

It was not without emotion that Coningsby beheld for the first time the castle that bore his name. It was visible for several miles before he even entered the park, so proud and prominent was its position, on the richly-wooded steep of a considerable eminence. It was a castellated building, immense and magnificent, in a faulty and incongruous style of architecture, indeed, but compensating in some degree for these deficiencies of external taste and beauty by the splendour and accommodation of its exterior, and which a Gothic castle, raised according to the strict rules of art, could scarcely have afforded. The declining sun threw over the pile a rich colour as Coningsby approached it, and lit up with fleeting and fanciful tints the delicate foliage of the rare shrubs and tall thin trees that clothed the acclivity on which it stood. Our young friend felt a little embarrassed when, without a servant and in a hack chaise, he drew up to the grand portal, and a crowd of retainers came forth to receive him. A superior servant inquired his name with a stately composure that disdained to be supercilious. It was not without some degree of pride and satisfaction that the guest replied, 'Mr. Coningsby.' The instantaneous effect was magical. It seemed to Coningsby that he was borne on the shoulders of the people to his apartment; each tried to carry some part of his luggage; and he only hoped his welcome from their superiors might be as hearty.

CHAPTER VI.

It appeared to Coningsby in his way to his room, that the Castle was in a state of great excitement; everywhere bustle, preparation, moving to and fro, ascending and descending of stairs, servants in every corner; orders boundlessly given, rapidly obeyed; many desires, equal gratification. All this made him rather nervous. It was quite unlike Beaumanoir. That also was a palace, but it was a home. This, though it should be one to him, seemed to have nothing of that character. Of all mysteries the social

mysteries are the most appalling. Going to an assembly for the first time is more alarming than the first battle. Coningsby had never before been in a great house full of company. It seemed an overwhelming affair. The sight of the servants bewildered him; how then was he to encounter their masters?

That, however, he must do in a moment. A groom of the chambers indicates the way to him, as he proceeds with a hesitating yet hurried step through several ante-chambers and drawing-rooms; then doors are suddenly thrown open, and he is ushered into the largest and most sumptuous saloon that he had ever entered. It was full of ladies and gentlemen. Coningsby for the first time in his life was at a great party. His immediate emotion was to sink into the earth; but perceiving that no one even noticed him, and that not an eye had been attracted to his entrance, he regained his breath and in some degree his composure, and standing aside, endeavoured to make himself, as well as he could, master of the land.

Not a human being that he had ever seen before! The circumstance of not being noticed, which a few minutes since he had felt as a relief, became now a cause of annoyance. It seemed that he was the only person standing alone whom no one was addressing. He felt renewed and aggravated embarrassment, and fancied, perhaps was conscious, that he was blushing. At length his ear caught the voice of Mr. Rigby. The speaker was not visible; he was at a distance surrounded by a wondering group, whom he was severally and collectively contradicting, but Coningsby could not mistake those harsh, arrogant tones. He was not sorry indeed that Mr. Rigby did not observe him. Coningsby never loved him particularly, which was rather ungrateful, for he was a person who had been kind, and, on the whole, serviceable to him; but Coningsby writhed, especially as he grew older, under Mr. Rigby's patronising air and paternal tone. Even in old days, though attentive, Coningsby had never found him affectionate. Mr. Rigby would tell him what to do and see, but never asked him what he wished to do and see. It seemed to Coningsby that it was always contrived that he should appear the *protégé*, or poor relation, of a dependent of his family. These feelings, which the thought of Mr. Rigby had revived, caused our young friend, by an inevitable association of ideas, to remember that, unknown and unnoticed as he might be, he was the only Coningsby in that proud Castle, except the Lord of the Castle himself; and he began to be rather ashamed of permitting a sense of his inexperience in the mere forms and fashions of society so to oppress him, and deprive him, as it were, of the spirit and carriage which became alike his character and his position. Emboldened and greatly restored to himself, Coningsby advanced into the body of the saloon.

On his legs, wearing his blue ribbon and bending his head frequently to a lady who was seated on a sofa, and continually addressed him, Coningsby recognised his grandfather. Lord Monmouth was somewhat balder than four years ago, when he had come down to Montem, and a little more portly perhaps; but otherwise unchanged. Lord Monmouth never condescended to the artifices of the toilet, and, indeed, notwithstanding his life of excess, had little need of them. Nature had done much for him, and the slow progress of decay was carried off by his consummate bearing. He looked, indeed, the chieftain of a house of whom a cadet might be proud.

For Coningsby, not only the chief of his house, but his host too. In either capacity he ought to address Lord Monmouth. To sit down to dinner without having previously paid his respects to his grandfather, to whom he was so much indebted, and whom he had not seen for so many years, struck him not only as uncourtly, but as unkind and ungrateful, and, indeed, in the highest degree absurd. But how was he to do it? Lord Monmouth seemed deeply engaged, and apparently with some very great lady. And if Coningsby advanced and bowed, in all probability he would only get a bow in return. He remembered the bow of his first interview. It had made a lasting impression on his mind. For it was more than likely Lord Monmouth would not recognise him. Four years had not sensibly altered Lord Monmouth, but four years had changed Harry Coningsby from a schoolboy into a man. Then how was he to make himself known to his grandfather? To announce himself as Coningsby, as his Lordship's grandson, seemed somewhat ridiculous: to address his grandfather as Lord Monmouth would serve no purpose: to style Lord Monmouth 'grandfather' would make every one laugh, and seem stiff and unnatural. What was he to do? To fall into an attitude and exclaim, 'Behold your grandchild!' or, 'Have you forgotten your Harry?'

Even to catch Lord Monmouth's glance was not an easy affair; he was much occupied on one side by the great lady, on the other were several gentlemen who occasionally joined in the conversation. But something must be done.

There ran through Coningsby's character, as we have before mentioned, a vein of simplicity which was not its least charm. It resulted, no doubt, in a great degree from the earnestness of his nature. There never was a boy so totally devoid of affectation, which was remarkable, for he had a brilliant imagination, a quality that, from its fantasies, and the vague and indefinite desires it engenders, generally makes those whose characters are not formed, affected. The Duchess, who was a fine judge of character, and who greatly regarded Coningsby, often mentioned this trait as one which, combined with his great abilities and acquirements so unusual at his age, rendered him very interesting. In the present instance

it happened that, while Coningsby was watching his grandfather, he observed a gentleman advance, make his bow, say and receive a few words and retire. This little incident, however, made a momentary diversion in the immediate circle of Lord Monmouth, and before they could all resume their former talk and fall into their previous positions, an impulse sent forth Coningsby, who walked up to Lord Monmouth, and standing before him, said,

'How do you do, grandpapa?'

Lord Monmouth beheld his grandson. His comprehensive and penetrating glance took in every point with a flash. There stood before him one of the handsomest youths he had ever seen, with a mien as graceful as his countenance was captivating; and his whole air breathing that freshness and ingenuousness which none so much appreciates as the used man of the world. And this was his child; the only one of his blood to whom he had been kind. It would be exaggeration to say that Lord Monmouth's heart was touched; but his goodnature effervesced, and his fine taste was deeply gratified. He perceived in an instant such a relation might be a valuable adherent; an irresistible candidate for future elections: a brilliant tool to work out the Dukedom. All these impressions and ideas, and many more, passed through the quick brain of Lord Monmouth ere the sound of Coningsby's words had seemed to cease, and long before the surrounding guests had recovered from the surprise which they had occasioned them, and which did not diminish, when Lord Monmouth, advancing, placed his arms round Coningsby with a dignity of affection that would have become Louis XIV., and then, in the high manner of the old Court, kissed him on each cheek.

'Welcome to your home,' said Lord Monmouth. 'You have grown a great deal.'

Then Lord Monmouth led the agitated Coningsby to the great lady, who was a Princess and an Ambassadors, and then, placing his arm gracefully in that of his grandson, he led him across the room, and presented him in due form to some royal blood that was his guest, in the shape of a Russian Grand-duke. His Imperial Highness received our hero as graciously as the grandson of Lord Monmouth might expect; but no greeting can be imagined warmer than the one he received from the lady with whom the Grand-duke was conversing. She was a dame whose beauty was mature, but still radiant. Her figure was superb; her dark hair crowned with a tiara of curious workmanship. Her rounded arm was covered with costly bracelets, but not a jewel on her finely formed bust, and the least possible rouge on her still oval cheek. Madame Colonna retained her charms.

The party, though so considerable, principally consisted of the guests at the Castle. The suite of the Grand-duke included several counts and generals; then there were the Russian Ambassador and his lady; and a Russian Prince and Princess, their relations. The Prince and Princess Colonna and the Princess Lucretia were also paying a visit to the Marquess; and the frequency of these visits made some straight-laced magnificoes mysteriously declare it was impossible to go to Coningsby; but as they were not asked, it did not much signify. The Marquess knew a great many very agreeable people of the highest _ton_, who took a more liberal view of human conduct, and always made it a rule to presume the best motives instead of imputing the worst. There was Lady St. Julians, for example, whose position was of the highest; no one more sought; she made it a rule to go everywhere and visit everybody, provided they had power, wealth, and fashion. She knew no crime except a woman not living with her husband; that was past pardon. So long as his presence sanctioned her conduct, however shameless, it did not signify; but if the husband were a brute, neglected his wife first, and then deserted her; then, if a breath but sullies her name she must be crushed; unless, indeed, her own family were very powerful, which makes a difference, and sometimes softens immorality into indiscretion.

Lord and Lady Gaverstock were also there, who never said an unkind thing of anybody; her ladyship was pure as snow; but her mother having been divorced, she ever fancied she was paying a kind of homage to her parent, by visiting those who might some day be in the same predicament. There were other lords and ladies of high degree; and some who, though neither lords nor ladies, were charming people, which Lord Monmouth chiefly cared about; troops of fine gentlemen who came and went; and some who were neither fine nor gentlemen, but who were very amusing or very obliging, as circumstances required, and made life easy and pleasant to others and themselves.

A new scene this for Coningsby, who watched with interest all that passed before him. The dinner was announced as served; an affectionate arm guides him at a moment of some perplexity.

'When did you arrive, Harry? We shall sit together. How is the Duchess?' inquired Mr. Rigby, who spoke as if he had seen Coningsby for the first time; but who indeed had, with that eye which nothing could escape, observed his reception by his grandfather, marked it well, and inwardly digested it.

CHAPTER VII.

There was to be a first appearance on the stage of Lord Monmouth's theatre to-night, the expectation of which created considerable interest in the party, and was one of the principal subjects of conversation at dinner. Villebecque, the manager of the troop, had married the actress Stella, once celebrated for her genius and her beauty; a woman who had none of the vices of her craft, for, though she was a fallen angel, there were what her countrymen style extenuating circumstances in her declension. With the whole world at her feet, she had remained unsullied. Wealth and its enjoyments could not tempt her, although she was unable to refuse her heart to one whom she deemed worthy of possessing it. She found her fate in an Englishman, who was the father of her only child, a daughter. She thought she had met in him a hero, a demi-god, a being of deep passion and original and creative mind; but he was only a voluptuary, full of violence instead of feeling, and eccentric, because he had great means with which he could gratify extravagant whims. Stella found she had made the great and ir retrievable mistake. She had exchanged devotion for a passionate and evanescent fancy, prompted at first by vanity, and daily dissipating under the influence of custom and new objects. Though not stainless in conduct, Stella was pure in spirit. She required that devotion which she had yielded; and she separated herself from the being to whom she had made the most precious sacrifice. He offered her the consoling compensation of a settlement, which she refused; and she returned with a broken spirit to that profession of which she was still the ornament and the pride.

The animating principle of her career was her daughter, whom she educated with a solicitude which the most virtuous mother could not surpass. To preserve her from the stage, and to secure for her an independence, were the objects of her mother's life; but nature whispered to her, that the days of that life were already numbered. The exertions of her profession had alarmingly developed an inherent tendency to pulmonary disease. Anxious that her child should not be left without some protector, Stella yielded to the repeated solicitations of one who from the first had been her silent admirer, and she married Villebecque, a clever actor, and an enterprising man who meant to be something more. Their union was not of long duration, though it was happy on the side of Villebecque, and serene on that of his wife. Stella was recalled from this world, where she had known much triumph and more suffering; and where she had exercised many virtues, which elsewhere, though not here, may perhaps be accepted as some palliation of one great error.

Villebecque acted becomingly to the young charge which Stella had bequeathed to him. He was himself, as we have intimated, a man of enterprise, a restless spirit, not content to move for ever in the sphere in which he was born. Vicissitudes are the lot of such aspirants. Villebecque became manager of a small theatre, and made money. If Villebecque without a sou had been a schemer, Villebecque with a small capital was the very Chevalier Law of theatrical managers. He took a larger theatre, and even that succeeded. Soon he was recognised as the lessee of more than one, and still he prospered. Villebecque began to dabble in opera-houses. He enthroned himself at Paris; his envoys were heard of at Milan and Naples, at Berlin and St. Petersburg. His controversies with the Conservatoire at Paris ranked among state papers. Villebecque rolled in chariots and drove cabriolets; Villebecque gave refined suppers to great nobles, who were honoured by the invitation; Villebecque wore a red ribbon in the button-hole of his frock, and more than one cross in his gala dress.

All this time the daughter of Stella increased in years and stature, and we must add in goodness: a mild, soft-hearted girl, as yet with no decided character, but one who loved calmness and seemed little fitted for the circle in which she found herself. In that circle, however, she ever experienced kindness and consideration. No enterprise however hazardous, no management however complicated, no schemes however vast, ever for a moment induced Villebecque to forget 'La Petite.' If only for one breathless instant, hardly a day elapsed but he saw her; she was his companion in all his rapid movements, and he studied every comfort and convenience that could relieve her delicate frame in some degree from the inconvenience and exhaustion of travel. He was proud to surround her with luxury and refinement; to supply her with the most celebrated masters; to gratify every wish that she could express.

But all this time Villebecque was dancing on a volcano. The catastrophe which inevitably occurs in the career of all great speculators, and especially theatrical ones, arrived to him. Flushed with his prosperity, and confident in his constant success, nothing would satisfy him but universal empire. He had established his despotism at Paris, his dynasties at Naples and at Milan; but the North was not to him, and he was determined to appropriate it. Berlin fell before a successful campaign, though a costly one; but St. Petersburg and London still remained. Resolute and reckless, nothing deterred Villebecque. One season all the opera-houses in Europe obeyed his nod, and at the end of it he was ruined. The crash was utter, universal, overwhelming; and under ordinary circumstances a French bed and a brasier of charcoal alone remained for Villebecque, who was equal to the occasion. But the thought of La Petite

and the remembrance of his promise to Stella deterred him from the deed. He reviewed his position in a spirit becoming a practical philosopher. Was he worse off than before he commenced his career? Yes, because he was older; though to be sure he had his compensating reminiscences. But was he too old to do anything? At forty-five the game was not altogether up; and in a large theatre, not too much lighted, and with the artifices of a dramatic toilet, he might still be able successfully to reassume those characters of coxcombs and muscadins, in which he was once so celebrated. Luxury had perhaps a little too much enlarged his waist, but diet and rehearsals would set all right.

Villebecque in their adversity broke to La Petite, that the time had unfortunately arrived when it would be wise for her to consider the most effectual means for turning her talents and accomplishments to account. He himself suggested the stage, to which otherwise there were doubtless objections, because her occupation in any other pursuit would necessarily separate them; but he impartially placed before her the relative advantages and disadvantages of every course which seemed to lie open to them, and left the preferable one to her own decision. La Petite, who had wept very much over Villebecque's misfortunes, and often assured him that she cared for them only for his sake, decided for the stage, solely because it would secure their not being parted; and yet, as she often assured him, she feared she had no predisposition for the career.

Villebecque had now not only to fill his own parts at the theatre at which he had obtained an engagement, but he had also to be the instructor of his ward. It was a life of toil; an addition of labour and effort that need scarcely have been made to the exciting exertion of performance, and the dull exercise of rehearsal; but he bore it all without a murmur; with a self-command and a gentle perseverance which the finest temper in the world could hardly account for; certainly not when we remember that its possessor, who had to make all these exertions and endure all this wearisome toil, had just experienced the most shattering vicissitudes of fortune, and been hurled from the possession of absolute power and illimitable self-gratification.

Lord Eskdale, who was always doing kind things to actors and actresses, had a great regard for Villebecque, with whom he had often supped. He had often been kind, too, to La Petite. Lord Eskdale had a plan for putting Villebecque, as he termed it, 'on his legs again.' It was to establish him with a French Company in London at some pretty theatre; Lord Eskdale to take a private box and to make all his friends do the same. Villebecque, who was as sanguine as he was good-tempered, was ravished by this friendly scheme. He immediately believed that he should recover his great fortunes

as rapidly as he had lost them. He foresaw in La Petite a genius as distinguished as that of her mother, although as yet not developed, and he was boundless in his expressions of gratitude to his patron. And indeed of all friends, a friend in need is the most delightful. Lord Eskdale had the talent of being a friend in need. Perhaps it was because he knew so many worthless persons. But it often happens that worthless persons are merely people who are worth nothing.

Lord Monmouth having written to Mr. Rigby of his intention to reside for some months at Coningsby, and having mentioned that he wished a troop of French comedians to be engaged for the summer, Mr. Rigby had immediately consulted Lord Eskdale on the subject, as the best current authority. Thinking this a good opportunity of giving a turn to poor Villebecque, and that it might serve as a capital introduction to their scheme of the London company, Lord Eskdale obtained for him the engagement.

Villebecque and his little troop had now been a month at Coningsby, and had hitherto performed three times a-week. Lord Monmouth was content; his guests much gratified; the company, on the whole, much approved of. It was, indeed, considering its limited numbers, a capital company. There was a young lady who played the old woman's parts, nothing could be more garrulous and venerable; and a lady of maturer years who performed the heroines, gay and graceful as May. Villebecque himself was a celebrity in characters of airy insolence and careless frolic. Their old man, indeed, was rather hard, but handy; could take anything either in the high serious, or the low droll. Their sentimental lover was rather too much bewigged, and spoke too much to the audience, a fault rare with the French; but this hero had a vague idea that he was ultimately destined to run off with a princess.

In this wise, affairs had gone on for a month; very well, but not too well. The enterprising genius of Villebecque, once more a manager, prompted him to action. He felt an itching desire to announce a novelty. He fancied Lord Monmouth had yawned once or twice when the heroine came on. Villebecque wanted to make a *coup*. It was clear that La Petite must sooner or later begin. Could she find a more favourable audience, or a more fitting occasion, than were now offered? True it was she had a great repugnance to come out; but it certainly seemed more to her advantage that she should make her first appearance at a private theatre than at a public one; supported by all the encouraging patronage of Coningsby Castle, than subjected to all the cynical criticism of the stalls of St. James'.

These views and various considerations were urged and represented by Villebecque to La Petite, with all the practised powers of plausibility of

which so much experience as a manager had made him master. La Petite looked infinitely distressed, but yielded, as she ever did. And the night of Coningsby's arrival at the Castle was to witness in its private theatre the first appearance of MADEMOISELLE FLORA.

CHAPTER VIII.

The guests re-assembled in the great saloon before they repaired to the theatre. A lady on the arm of the Russian Prince bestowed on Coningsby a haughty, but not ungracious bow; which he returned, unconscious of the person to whom he bent. She was, however, a striking person; not beautiful, her face, indeed, at the first glance was almost repulsive, yet it ever attracted a second gaze. A remarkable pallor distinguished her; her features had neither regularity nor expression; neither were her eyes fine; but her brow impressed you with an idea of power of no ordinary character or capacity. Her figure was as fine and commanding as her face was void of charm. Juno, in the full bloom of her immortality, could have presented nothing more majestic. Coningsby watched her as she swept along like a resistless Fate.

Servants now went round and presented to each of the guests a billet of the performance. It announced in striking characters the début of Mademoiselle Flora. A principal servant, bearing branch lights, came forward and bowed to the Marquess. Lord Monmouth went immediately to the Grand-duke, and notified to his Imperial Highness that the comedy was ready. The Grand-duke offered his arm to the Ambassadors; the rest were following; Coningsby was called; Madame Colonna wished him to be her beau.

It was a pretty theatre; had been rapidly rubbed up and renovated here and there; the painting just touched; a little gilding on a cornice. There were no boxes, but the ground-floor, which gradually ascended, was carpeted and covered with arm-chairs, and the back of the theatre with a new and rich curtain of green velvet.

They are all seated; a great artist performs on the violin, accompanied by another great artist on the piano. The lights rise; somebody evidently crosses the stage behind the curtain. They are disposing the scene. In a moment the curtain will rise also.

'Have you seen Lucretia?' said the Princess to Coningsby. 'She is so

anxious to resume her acquaintance with you.'

But before he could answer the bell rang, and the curtain rose.

The old man, who had a droll part to-night, came forward and maintained a conversation with his housekeeper; not bad. The young woman who played the grave matron performed with great finish. She was a favourite, and was ever applauded. The second scene came; a saloon tastefully furnished; a table with flowers, arranged with grace; birds in cages, a lap-dog on a cushion; some books. The audience were pleased; especially the ladies; they like to recognise signs of *_bon ton_* in the details of the scene. A rather awful pause, and Mademoiselle Flora enters. She was greeted with even vehement approbation. Her agitation is extreme; she curtsies and bows her head, as if to hide her face. The face was pleasing, and pretty enough, soft and engaging. Her figure slight and rather graceful. Nothing could be more perfect than her costume; purely white, but the fashion consummate; a single rose her only ornament. All admitted that her hair was arranged to admiration.

At length she spoke; her voice trembled, but she had a good elocution, though her organ wanted force. The gentlemen looked at each other, and nodded approbation. There was something so unobtrusive in her mien, that she instantly became a favourite with the ladies. The scene was not long, but it was successful.

Flora did not appear in the next scene. In the fourth and final one of the act, she had to make a grand display. It was a love-scene, and rather of an impassioned character; Villebecque was her suitor. He entered first on the stage. Never had he looked so well, or performed with more spirit. You would not have given him five-and-twenty years; he seemed redolent of youth. His dress, too, was admirable. He had studied the most distinguished of his audience for the occasion, and had outdone them all. The fact is, he had been assisted a little by a great connoisseur, a celebrated French nobleman, Count D'O----y, who had been one of the guests. The thing was perfect; and Lord Monmouth took a pinch of snuff, and tapped approbation on the top of his box.

Flora now re-appeared, received with renewed approbation. It did not seem, however, that in the interval she had gained courage; she looked agitated. She spoke, she proceeded with her part; it became impassioned. She had to speak of her feelings; to tell the secrets of her heart; to confess that she loved another; her emotion was exquisitely performed, the mournful tenderness of her tones thrilling. There was, throughout the audience, a dead silence; all were absorbed in their admiration of the unrivalled

artist; all felt a new genius had visited the stage; but while they were fascinated by the actress, the woman was in torture. The emotion was the disturbance of her own soul; the mournful tenderness of her tones thrilled from the heart: suddenly she clasped her hands with all the exhaustion of woe; an expression of agony flitted over her countenance; and she burst into tears. Villebecque rushed forward, and carried, rather than led, her from the stage; the audience looking at each other, some of them suspecting that this movement was a part of the scene.

'She has talent,' said Lord Monmouth to the Russian Ambassadors, 'but wants practice. Villebecque should send her for a time to the provinces.'

At length M. Villebecque came forward to express his deep regret that the sudden and severe indisposition of Mlle. Flora rendered it impossible for the company to proceed with the piece; but that the curtain would descend to rise again for the second and last piece announced.

All this accordingly took place. The experienced performer who acted the heroines now came forward and departed most jocundly. The failure of Flora had given fresh animation to her perpetual liveliness. She seemed the very soul of elegant frolic. In the last scene she figured in male attire; and in air, fashion, and youth, beat Villebecque out of the field. She looked younger than Coningsby when he went up to his grandpapa.

The comedy was over, the curtain fell; the audience, much amused, chattered brilliant criticism, and quitted the theatre to repair to the saloon, where they were to be diverted tonight with Russian dances. Nobody thought of the unhappy Flora; not a single message to console her in her grief, to compliment her on what she had done, to encourage her future. And yet it was a season for a word of kindness; so, at least, thought one of the audience, as he lingered behind the hurrying crowd, absorbed in their coming amusements.

Coningsby had sat very near the stage; he had observed, with great advantage and attention, the countenance and movements of Flora from the beginning. He was fully persuaded that her woe was genuine and profound. He had felt his eyes moist when she wept. He recoiled from the cruelty and the callousness that, without the slightest symptom of sympathy, could leave a young girl who had been labouring for their amusement, and who was suffering for her trial.

He got on the stage, ran behind the scenes, and asked for Mlle. Flora. They pointed to a door; he requested permission to enter. Flora was sitting at a table, with her face resting on her hands. Villebecque was

there, resting on the edge of the tall fender, and still in the dress in which he had performed in the last piece.

'I took the liberty,' said Coningsby, 'of inquiring after Mlle. Flora;' and then advancing to her, who had raised her head, he added, 'I am sure my grandfather must feel much indebted to you, Mademoiselle, for making such exertions when you were suffering under so much indisposition.'

'This is very amiable of you, sir,' said the young lady, looking at him with earnestness.

'Mademoiselle has too much sensibility,' said Villebecque, making an observation by way of diversion.

'And yet that must be the soul of fine acting,' said Coningsby; 'I look forward, all look forward, with great interest to the next occasion on which you will favour us.'

'Never!' said La Petite, in a plaintive tone; 'oh, I hope, never!'

'Mademoiselle is not aware at this moment,' said Coningsby, 'how much her talent is appreciated. I assure you, sir,' he added, turning to Villebecque, 'I heard but one opinion, but one expression of gratification at her feeling and her fine taste.'

'The talent is hereditary,' said Villebecque.

'Indeed you have reason to say so,' said Coningsby.

'Pardon; I was not thinking of myself. My child reminded me so much of another this evening. But that is nothing. I am glad you are here, sir, to reassure Mademoiselle.'

'I came only to congratulate her, and to lament, for our sakes as well as her own, her indisposition.'

'It is not indisposition,' said La Petite, in a low tone, with her eyes cast down.

'Mademoiselle cannot overcome the nervousness incidental to a first appearance,' said Villebecque.

'A last appearance,' said La Petite: 'yes, it must be the last.' She rose gently, she approached Villebecque, she laid her head on his breast, and

placed her arms round his neck, 'My father, my best father, yes, say it is the last.'

'You are the mistress of your lot, Flora,' said Villebecque; 'but with such a distinguished talent--'

'No, no, no; no talent. You are wrong, my father. I know myself. I am not of those to whom nature gives talents. I am born only for still life. I have no taste except for privacy. The convent is more suited to me than the stage.'

'But you hear what this gentleman says,' said Villebecque, returning her embrace. 'He tells you that his grandfather, my Lord Marquess, I believe, sir, that every one, that--'

'Oh, no, no, no!' said Flora, shaking her head. 'He comes here because he is generous, because he is a gentleman; and he wished to soothe the soul that he knew was suffering. Thank him, my father, thank him for me and before me, and promise in his presence that the stage and your daughter have parted for ever.'

'Nay, Mademoiselle,' said Coningsby, advancing and venturing to take her hand, a soft hand, 'make no such resolutions to-night. M. Villebecque can have no other thought or object but your happiness; and, believe me, 'tis not I only, but all, who appreciate, and, if they were here, must respect you.'

'I prefer respect to admiration,' said Flora; 'but I fear that respect is not the appanage of such as I am.'

'All must respect those who respect themselves,' said Coningsby. 'Adieu, Mademoiselle; I trust to-morrow to hear that you are yourself.' He bowed to Villebecque and retired.

In the meantime affairs in the drawing-room assumed a very different character from those behind the scenes. Coningsby returned to brilliancy, groups apparently gushing with light-heartedness, universal content, and Russian dances!

'And you too, do you dance the Russian dances, Mr. Coningsby?' said Madame Colonna.

'I cannot dance at all,' said Coningsby, beginning a little to lose his pride in the want of an accomplishment which at Eton he had thought it

spirited to despise.

'Ah! you cannot dance the Russian dances! Lucretia shall teach you,' said the Princess; 'nothing will please her so much.'

On the present occasion the ladies were not so experienced in the entertainment as the gentlemen; but there was amusement in being instructed. To be disciplined by a Grand-duke or a Russian Princess was all very well; but what even good-tempered Lady Gaythorp could not pardon was, that a certain Mrs. Guy Flouncey, whom they were all of them trying to put down and to keep down, on this, as almost on every other occasion, proved herself a more finished performer than even the Russians themselves.

Lord Monmouth had picked up the Guy Flounceys during a Roman winter. They were people of some position in society. Mr. Guy Flouncey was a man of good estate, a sportsman, proud of his pretty wife. Mrs. Guy Flouncey was even very pretty, dressed in a style of ultra fashion. However, she could sing, dance, act, ride, and talk, and all well; and was mistress of the art of flirtation. She had amused the Marquess abroad, and had taken care to call at Monmouth House the instant the *Morning Post* apprised her he had arrived in England; the consequence was an invitation to Coningsby. She came with a wardrobe which, in point of variety, fancy, and fashion, never was surpassed. Morning and evening, every day a new dress equally striking; and a riding habit that was the talk and wonder of the whole neighbourhood. Mrs. Guy Flouncey created far more sensation in the borough when she rode down the High Street, than what the good people called the real Princesses.

At first the fine ladies never noticed her, or only stared at her over their shoulders; everywhere sounded, in suppressed whispers, the fatal question, 'Who is she?' After dinner they formed always into polite groups, from which Mrs. Guy Flouncey was invariably excluded; and if ever the Princess Colonna, impelled partly by goodnature, and partly from having known her on the Continent, did kindly sit by her, Lady St. Julians, or some dame equally benevolent, was sure, by an adroit appeal to Her Highness on some point which could not be decided without moving, to withdraw her from her pretty and persecuted companion.

It was, indeed, rather difficult work the first few days for Mrs. Guy Flouncey, especially immediately after dinner. It is not soothing to one's self-love to find oneself sitting alone, pretending to look at prints, in a fine drawing-room, full of fine people who don't speak to you. But Mrs. Guy Flouncey, after having taken Coningsby Castle by storm, was not to be

driven out of its drawing-room by the tactics even of a Lady St. Julians. Experience convinced her that all that was required was a little patience. Mrs. Guy had confidence in herself, her quickness, her ever ready accomplishments, and her practised powers of attraction. And she was right. She was always sure of an ally the moment the gentlemen appeared. The cavalier who had sat next to her at dinner was only too happy to meet her again. More than once, too, she had caught her noble host, though a whole garrison was ever on the watch to prevent her, and he was greatly amused, and showed that he was greatly amused by her society. Then she suggested plans to him to divert his guests. In a country-house the suggestive mind is inestimable. Somehow or other, before a week passed, Mrs. Guy Flouncey seemed the soul of everything, was always surrounded by a cluster of admirers, and with what are called 'the best men' ever ready to ride with her, dance with her, act with her, or fall at her feet. The fine ladies found it absolutely necessary to thaw: they began to ask her questions after dinner. Mrs. Guy Flouncey only wanted an opening. She was an adroit flatterer, with a temper imperturbable, and gifted with a ceaseless energy of conferring slight obligations. She lent them patterns for new fashions, in all which mysteries she was very versant; and what with some gentle glozing and some gay gossip, sugar for their tongues and salt for their tails, she contrived pretty well to catch them all.

CHAPTER IX.

Nothing could present a greater contrast than the respective interiors of Coningsby and Beaumanoir. That air of habitual habitation, which so pleasingly distinguished the Duke's family seat, was entirely wanting at Coningsby. Everything, indeed, was vast and splendid; but it seemed rather a gala-house than a dwelling; as if the grand furniture and the grand servants had all come down express from town with the grand company, and were to disappear and to be dispersed at the same time. And truly there were manifold traces of hasty and temporary arrangement; new carpets and old hangings; old paint, new gilding; battalions of odd French chairs, squadrons of queer English tables; and large tasteless lamps and tawdry chandeliers, evidently true cockneys, and only taking the air by way of change. There was, too, throughout the drawing-rooms an absence of all those minor articles of ornamental furniture that are the offering of taste to the home we love. There were no books neither; few flowers; no pet animals; no portfolios of fine drawings by our English artists like the album of the Duchess, full of sketches by Landseer and Stanfield, and

their gifted brethren; not a print even, except portfolios of H. B.'s caricatures. The modes and manners of the house were not rural; there was nothing of the sweet order of a country life. Nobody came down to breakfast; the ladies were scarcely seen until dinner-time; they rolled about in carriages together late in the afternoon as if they were in London, or led a sort of factitious boudoir life in their provincial dressing-rooms.

The Marquess sent for Coningsby the morning after his arrival and asked him to breakfast with him in his private rooms. Nothing could be more kind or more agreeable than his grandfather. He appeared to be interested in his grandson's progress, was glad to find Coningsby had distinguished himself at Eton, solemnly adjured him not to neglect his French. A classical education, he said, was a very admirable thing, and one which all gentlemen should enjoy; but Coningsby would find some day that there were two educations, one which his position required, and another which was demanded by the world. 'French, my dear Harry,' he continued, 'is the key to this second education. In a couple of years or so you will enter the world; it is a different thing to what you read about. It is a masquerade; a motley, sparkling multitude, in which you may mark all forms and colours, and listen to all sentiments and opinions; but where all you see and hear has only one object, plunder. When you get into this crowd you will find that Greek and Latin are not so much diffused as you imagine. I was glad to hear you speaking French yesterday. Study your accent. There are a good many foreigners here with whom you may try your wing a little; don't talk to any of them too much. Be very careful of intimacies. All the people here are good acquaintance; at least pretty well. Now, here,' said the Marquess, taking up a letter and then throwing it on the table again, 'now here is a man whom I should like you to know, Sidonia. He will be here in a few days. Lay yourself out for him if you have the opportunity. He is a man of rare capacity, and enormously rich. No one knows the world like Sidonia. I never met his equal; and 'tis so pleasant to talk with one that can want nothing of you.'

Lord Monmouth had invited Coningsby to take a drive with him in the afternoon. The Marquess wished to show a part of his domain to the Ambassador. Only Lucretia, he said, would be with them, and there was a place for him. This invitation was readily accepted by Coningsby, who was not yet sufficiently established in the habits of the house exactly to know how to pass his morning. His friend and patron, Mr. Rigby, was entirely taken up with the Grand-duke, whom he was accompanying all over the neighbourhood, in visits to manufactures, many of which Rigby himself saw for the first time, but all of which he fluently explained to his Imperial Highness. In return for this, he extracted much information from

the Grand-duke on Russian plans and projects, materials for a 'slashing' article against the Russophobia that he was preparing, and in which he was to prove that Muscovite aggression was an English interest, and entirely to be explained by the want of sea-coast, which drove the Czar, for the pure purposes of commerce, to the Baltic and the Euxine.

When the hour for the drive arrived, Coningsby found Lucretia, a young girl when he had first seen her only four years back, and still his junior, in that majestic dame who had conceded a superb recognition to him the preceding eve. She really looked older than Madame Colonna; who, very beautiful, very young-looking, and mistress of the real arts of the toilet, those that cannot be detected, was not in the least altered since she first so cordially saluted Coningsby as her dear young friend at Monmouth House.

The day was delightful, the park extensive and picturesque, the Ambassadors sparkling with anecdote, and occasionally, in a low voice, breathing a diplomatic hint to Lord Monmouth, who bowed his graceful consciousness of her distinguished confidence. Coningsby occasionally took advantage of one of those moments, when the conversation ceased to be general, to address Lucretia, who replied in calm, fine smiles, and in affable monosyllables. She indeed generally succeeded in conveying an impression to those she addressed, that she had never seen them before, did not care to see them now, and never wished to see them again. And all this, too, with an air of great courtesy.

They arrived at the brink of a wooded bank; at their feet flowed a fine river, deep and rushing, though not broad; its opposite bank the boundary of a richly-timbered park.

'Ah! this is beautiful!' exclaimed the Ambassador. 'And is that yours, Lord Monmouth?'

'Not yet,' said the Marquess. 'That is Hellingsley; it is one of the finest places in the county, with a splendid estate; not so considerable as Coningsby, but very great. It belongs to an old, a very old man, without a relative in the world. It is known that the estate will be sold at his death, which may be almost daily expected. Then it is mine. No one can offer for it what I can afford. For it gives me this division of the county, Princess. To possess Hellingsley is one of my objects.' The Marquess spoke with an animation unusual with him, almost with a degree of excitement.

The wind met them as they returned, the breeze blew rather freshly.

Lucretia all of a sudden seemed touched with unusual emotion. She was alarmed lest Lord Monmouth should catch cold; she took a kerchief from her own well-turned throat to tie round his neck. He feebly resisted, evidently much pleased.

The Princess Lucretia was highly accomplished. In the evening, having refused several distinguished guests, but instantly yielding to the request of Lord Monmouth, she sang. It was impossible to conceive a contralto of more thrilling power, or an execution more worthy of the voice. Coningsby, who was not experienced in fine singing, listened as if to a supernatural lay, but all agreed it was of the highest class of nature and of art; and the Grand-duke was in raptures. Lucretia received even his Highness' compliments with a graceful indifference. Indeed, to those who watched her demeanour, it might be remarked that she seemed to yield to none, although all bowed before her.

Madame Colonna, who was always kind to Coningsby, expressed to him her gratification from the party of the morning. It must have been delightful, she assured Coningsby, for Lord Monmouth to have had both Lucretia and his grandson with him; and Lucretia too, she added, must have been so pleased.

Coningsby could not make out why Madame Colonna was always intimating to him that the Princess Lucretia took such great interest in his existence, looked forward with such gratification to his society, remembered with so much pleasure the past, anticipated so much happiness from the future. It appeared to him that he was to Lucretia, if not an object of repugnance, as he sometimes fancied, certainly one only of absolute indifference; but he said nothing. He had already lived long enough to know that it is unwise to wish everything explained.

In the meantime his life was agreeable. Every day, he found, added to his acquaintance. He was never without a companion to ride or to shoot with; and of riding Coningsby was very fond. His grandfather, too, was continually giving him goodnatured turns, and making him of consequence in the Castle: so that all the guests were fully impressed with the importance of Lord Monmouth's grandson. Lady St. Julians pronounced him distinguished; the Ambassadors thought diplomacy should be his part, as he had a fine person and a clear brain; Madame Colonna spoke of him always as if she took intense interest in his career, and declared she liked him almost as much as Lucretia did; the Russians persisted in always styling him 'the young Marquess,' notwithstanding the Ambassador's explanations; Mrs. Guy Flouney made a dashing attack on him; but Coningsby remembered a lesson which Lady Everingham had graciously bestowed on him. He was not to be caught again easily. Besides, Mrs. Guy Flouney laughed a little too

much, and talked a little too loud.

As time flew on, there were changes of visitors, chiefly among the single men. At the end of the first week after Coningsby's arrival, Lord Eskdale appeared, bringing with him Lucian Gay; and soon after followed the Marquess of Beaumanoir and Mr. Melton. These were all heroes who, in their way, interested the ladies, and whose advent was hailed with general satisfaction. Even Lucretia would relax a little to Lord Eskdale. He was one of her oldest friends, and with a simplicity of manner which amounted almost to plainness, and with rather a cynical nonchalance in his carriage towards men, Lord Eskdale was invariably a favourite with women. To be sure his station was eminent; he was noble, and very rich, and very powerful, and these are qualities which tell as much with the softer as the harsher sex; but there are individuals with all these qualities who are nevertheless unpopular with women. Lord Eskdale was easy, knew the world thoroughly, had no prejudices, and, above all, had a reputation for success. A reputation for success has as much influence with women as a reputation for wealth has with men. Both reputations may be, and often are, unjust; but we see persons daily make good fortunes by them all the same. Lord Eskdale was not an impostor; and though he might not have been so successful a man had he not been Lord Eskdale, still, thrown over by a revolution, he would have lighted on his legs.

The arrival of this nobleman was the occasion of giving a good turn to poor Flora. He went immediately to see his friend Villebecque and his troop. Indeed it was a sort of society which pleased Lord Eskdale more than that which is deemed more refined. He was very sorry about 'La Petite;' but thought that everything would come right in the long run; and told Villebecque that he was glad to hear him well spoken of here, especially by the Marquess, who seemed to take to him. As for Flora, he was entirely against her attempting the stage again, at least for the present, but as she was a good musician, he suggested to the Princess Lucretia one night, that the subordinate aid of Flora might be of service to her, and permit her to favour her friends with some pieces which otherwise she must deny to them. This suggestion was successful; Flora was introduced occasionally, soon often, to their parties in the evening, and her performances were in every respect satisfactory. There was nothing to excite the jealousy of Lucretia either in her style or her person. And yet she sang well enough, and was a quiet, refined, retiring, by no means disagreeable person. She was the companion of Lucretia very often in the morning as well as in the illumined saloon; for the Princess was devoted to the art in which she excelled. This connexion on the whole contributed to the happiness of poor Flora. True it was, in the evening she often found herself sitting or standing alone and no one noticing her; she had

no dazzling quality to attract men of fashion, who themselves love to worship ever the fashionable. Even their goddesses must be *à la mode*. But Coningsby never omitted an opportunity to show Flora some kindness under these circumstances. He always came and talked to her, and praised her singing, and would sometimes hand her refreshments and give her his arm if necessary. These slight attentions coming from the grandson of Lord Monmouth were for the world redoubled in their value, though Flora thought only of their essential kindness; all in character with that first visit which dwelt on the poor girl's memory, though it had long ago escaped that of her visitor. For in truth Coningsby had no other impulse for his conduct but kind-heartedness.

Thus we have attempted to give some faint idea how life glided away at the Castle the first fortnight that Coningsby passed there. Perhaps we ought not to omit that Mrs. Guy Flouncey, to the infinite disgust of Lady St. Julians, who had a daughter with her, successfully entrapped the devoted attentions of the young Marquess of Beaumanoir, who was never very backward if a lady would take trouble enough; while his friend, Mr. Melton, whose barren homage Lady St. Julians wished her daughter ever particularly to shun, employed all his gaiety, good-humour, frivolity, and fashion in amusing that young lady, and with irresistible effect. For the rest, they continued, though they had only partridges to shoot, to pass the morning without weariness. The weather was fine; the stud numerous; all might be mounted. The Grand-duke and his suite, guided by Mr. Rigby, had always some objects to visit, and railroads returned them just in time for the banquet with an appetite which they had earned, and during which Rigby recounted their achievements, and his own opinions.

The dinner was always first-rate; the evening never failed; music, dancing, and the theatre offered great resources independently of the soul-subduing sentiment harshly called flirtation, and which is the spell of a country house. Lord Monmouth was satisfied, for he had scarcely ever felt wearied. All that he required in life was to be amused; perhaps that was not all he required, but it was indispensable. Nor was it wonderful that on the present occasion he obtained his purpose, for there were half a hundred of the brightest eyes and quickest brains ever on the watch or the whirl to secure him distraction. The only circumstance that annoyed him was the non-arrival of Sidonia. Lord Monmouth could not bear to be disappointed. He could not refrain from saying, notwithstanding all the resources and all the exertions of his guests,

'I cannot understand why Sidonia does not come. I wish Sidonia were here.'

'So do I,' said Lord Eskdale; 'Sidonia is the only man who tells one

anything new.'

'We saw Sidonia at Lord Studcaster's,' said Lord Beaumanoir. 'He told Melton he was coming here.'

'You know he has bought all Studcaster's horses,' said Mr. Melton.

'I wonder he does not buy Studcaster himself,' said Lord Monmouth; 'I would if I were he; Sidonia can buy anything,' he turned to Mrs. Guy Flouncey.

'I wonder who Sidonia is,' thought Mrs. Guy Flouncey, but she was determined no one should suppose she did not know.

At length one day Coningsby met Madame Colonna in the vestibule before dinner.

'Milor is in such good temper, Mr. Coningsby,' she said; 'Monsieur de Sidonia has arrived.'

About ten minutes before dinner there was a stir in the chamber. Coningsby looked round. He saw the Grand-duke advancing, and holding out his hand in a manner the most gracious. A gentleman, of distinguished air, but with his back turned to Coningsby, was bowing as he received his Highness' greeting. There was a general pause in the room. Several came forward: even the Marquess seemed a little moved. Coningsby could not resist the impulse of curiosity to see this individual of whom he had heard so much. He glided round the room, and caught the countenance of his companion in the forest inn; he who announced to him, that 'the Age of Ruins was past.'

CHAPTER X.

Sidonia was descended from a very ancient and noble family of Arragon, that, in the course of ages, had given to the state many distinguished citizens. In the priesthood its members had been peculiarly eminent. Besides several prelates, they counted among their number an Archbishop of Toledo; and a Sidonia, in a season of great danger and difficulty, had exercised for a series of years the paramount office of Grand Inquisitor.

Yet, strange as it may sound, it is nevertheless a fact, of which there is

no lack of evidence, that this illustrious family during all this period, in common with two-thirds of the Arragonese nobility, secretly adhered to the ancient faith and ceremonies of their fathers; a belief in the unity of the God of Sinai, and the rights and observances of the laws of Moses.

Whence came those Mosaic Arabs whose passages across the strait from Africa to Europe long preceded the invasion of the Mohammedan Arabs, it is now impossible to ascertain. Their traditions tell us that from time immemorial they had sojourned in Africa; and it is not improbable that they may have been the descendants of some of the earlier dispersions; like those Hebrew colonies that we find in China, and who probably emigrated from Persia in the days of the great monarchies. Whatever may have been their origin in Africa, their fortunes in Southern Europe are not difficult to trace, though the annals of no race in any age can detail a history of such strange vicissitudes, or one rife with more touching and romantic incident. Their unexampled prosperity in the Spanish Peninsula, and especially in the south, where they had become the principal cultivators of the soil, excited the jealousy of the Goths; and the Councils of Toledo during the sixth and seventh centuries attempted, by a series of decrees worthy of the barbarians who promulgated them, to root the Jewish Arabs out of the land. There is no doubt the Council of Toledo led, as directly as the lust of Roderick, to the invasion of Spain by the Moslem Arabs. The Jewish population, suffering under the most sanguinary and atrocious persecution, looked to their sympathising brethren of the Crescent, whose camps already gleamed on the opposite shore. The overthrow of the Gothic kingdoms was as much achieved by the superior information which the Saracens received from their suffering kinsmen, as by the resistless valour of the Desert. The Saracen kingdoms were established. That fair and unrivalled civilisation arose which preserved for Europe arts and letters when Christendom was plunged in darkness. The children of Ishmael rewarded the children of Israel with equal rights and privileges with themselves. During these halcyon centuries, it is difficult to distinguish the follower of Moses from the votary of Mahomet. Both alike built palaces, gardens, and fountains; filled equally the highest offices of the state, competed in an extensive and enlightened commerce, and rivalled each other in renowned universities.

Even after the fall of the principal Moorish kingdoms, the Jews of Spain were still treated by the conquering Goths with tenderness and consideration. Their numbers, their wealth, the fact that, in Arragon especially, they were the proprietors of the soil, and surrounded by warlike and devoted followers, secured for them an usage which, for a considerable period, made them little sensible of the change of dynasties and religions. But the tempest gradually gathered. As the Goths grew

stronger, persecution became more bold. Where the Jewish population was scanty they were deprived of their privileges, or obliged to conform under the title of 'Nuevos Christianos.' At length the union of the two crowns under Ferdinand and Isabella, and the fall of the last Moorish kingdom, brought the crisis of their fate both to the New Christian and the nonconforming Hebrew. The Inquisition appeared, the Institution that had exterminated the Albigenses and had desolated Languedoc, and which, it should ever be remembered, was established in the Spanish kingdoms against the protests of the Cortes and amid the terror of the populace. The Dominicans opened their first tribunal at Seville, and it is curious that the first individuals they summoned before them were the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the Marquess of Cadiz, and the Count of Arcos; three of the most considerable personages in Spain. How many were burned alive at Seville during the first year, how many imprisoned for life, what countless thousands were visited with severe though lighter punishments, need not be recorded here. In nothing was the Holy Office more happy than in multiform and subtle means by which they tested the sincerity of the New Christians.

At length the Inquisition was to be extended to Arragon. The high-spirited nobles of that kingdom knew that its institution was for them a matter of life or death. The Cortes of Arragon appealed to the King and to the Pope; they organised an extensive conspiracy; the chief Inquisitor was assassinated in the cathedral of Saragossa. Alas! it was fated that in this, one of the many, and continual, and continuing struggles between the rival organisations of the North and the South, the children of the sun should fall. The fagot and the San Benito were the doom of the nobles of Arragon. Those who were convicted of secret Judaism, and this scarcely three centuries ago, were dragged to the stake; the sons of the noblest houses, in whose veins the Hebrew taint could be traced, had to walk in solemn procession, singing psalms, and confessing their faith in the religion of the fell Torquemada.

This triumph in Arragon, the almost simultaneous fall of the last Moorish kingdom, raised the hopes of the pure Christians to the highest pitch. Having purged the new Christians, they next turned their attention to the old Hebrews. Ferdinand was resolved that the delicious air of Spain should be breathed no longer by any one who did not profess the Catholic faith. Baptism or exile was the alternative. More than six hundred thousand individuals, some authorities greatly increase the amount, the most industrious, the most intelligent, and the most enlightened of Spanish subjects, would not desert the religion of their fathers. For this they gave up the delightful land wherein they had lived for centuries, the beautiful cities they had raised, the universities from which Christendom drew for ages its most precious lore, the tombs of their ancestors, the

temples where they had worshipped the God for whom they had made this sacrifice. They had but four months to prepare for eternal exile, after a residence of as many centuries; during which brief period forced sales and glutted markets virtually confiscated their property. It is a calamity that the scattered nation still ranks with the desolations of Nebuchadnezzar and of Titus. Who after this should say the Jews are by nature a sordid people? But the Spanish Goth, then so cruel and so haughty, where is he? A despised suppliant to the very race which he banished, for some miserable portion of the treasure which their habits of industry have again accumulated. Where is that tribunal that summoned Medina Sidonia and Cadiz to its dark inquisition? Where is Spain? Its fall, its unparalleled and its irremediable fall, is mainly to be attributed to the expulsion of that large portion of its subjects, the most industrious and intelligent, who traced their origin to the Mosaic and Mohammedan Arabs.

The Sidonias of Arragon were Nuevos Christianos. Some of them, no doubt, were burned alive at the end of the fifteenth century, under the system of Torquemada; many of them, doubtless, wore the San Benito; but they kept their titles and estates, and in time reached those great offices to which we have referred.

During the long disorders of the Peninsular war, when so many openings were offered to talent, and so many opportunities seized by the adventurous, a cadet of a younger branch of this family made a large fortune by military contracts, and supplying the commissariat of the different armies. At the peace, prescient of the great financial future of Europe, confident in the fertility of his own genius, in his original views of fiscal subjects, and his knowledge of national resources, this Sidonia, feeling that Madrid, or even Cadiz, could never be a base on which the monetary transactions of the world could be regulated, resolved to emigrate to England, with which he had, in the course of years, formed considerable commercial connections. He arrived here after the peace of Paris, with his large capital. He staked all he was worth on the Waterloo loan; and the event made him one of the greatest capitalists in Europe.

No sooner was Sidonia established in England than he professed Judaism; which Torquemada flattered himself, with the fagot and the San Benito, he had drained out of the veins of his family more than three centuries ago. He sent over, also, for several of his brothers, who were as good Catholics in Spain as Ferdinand and Isabella could have possibly desired, but who made an offering in the synagogue, in gratitude for their safe voyage, on their arrival in England.

Sidonia had foreseen in Spain that, after the exhaustion of a war of twenty-five years, Europe must require capital to carry on peace. He reaped the due reward of his sagacity. Europe did require money, and Sidonia was ready to lend it to Europe. France wanted some; Austria more; Prussia a little; Russia a few millions. Sidonia could furnish them all. The only country which he avoided was Spain; he was too well acquainted with its resources. Nothing, too, would ever tempt him to lend anything to the revolted colonies of Spain. Prudence saved him from being a creditor of the mother-country; his Spanish pride recoiled from the rebellion of her children.

It is not difficult to conceive that, after having pursued the career we have intimated for about ten years, Sidonia had become one of the most considerable personages in Europe. He had established a brother, or a near relative, in whom he could confide, in most of the principal capitals. He was lord and master of the money-market of the world, and of course virtually lord and master of everything else. He literally held the revenues of Southern Italy in pawn; and monarchs and ministers of all countries courted his advice and were guided by his suggestions. He was still in the vigour of life, and was not a mere money-making machine. He had a general intelligence equal to his position, and looked forward to the period when some relaxation from his vast enterprises and exertions might enable him to direct his energies to great objects of public benefit. But in the height of his vast prosperity he suddenly died, leaving only one child, a youth still of tender years, and heir to the greatest fortune in Europe, so great, indeed, that it could only be calculated by millions.

Shut out from universities and schools, those universities and schools which were indebted for their first knowledge of ancient philosophy to the learning and enterprise of his ancestors, the young Sidonia was fortunate in the tutor whom his father had procured for him, and who devoted to his charge all the resources of his trained intellect and vast and varied erudition. A Jesuit before the revolution; since then an exiled Liberal leader; now a member of the Spanish Cortes; Rebello was always a Jew. He found in his pupil that precocity of intellectual development which is characteristic of the Arabian organisation. The young Sidonia penetrated the highest mysteries of mathematics with a facility almost instinctive; while a memory, which never had any twilight hours, but always reflected a noontide clearness, seemed to magnify his acquisitions of ancient learning by the promptness with which they could be reproduced and applied.

The circumstances of his position, too, had early contributed to give him an unusual command over the modern languages. An Englishman, and taught

from his cradle to be proud of being an Englishman, he first evinced in speaking his native language those remarkable powers of expression, and that clear and happy elocution, which ever afterwards distinguished him. But the son of a Spaniard, the sonorous syllables of that noble tongue constantly resounded in his ear; while the foreign guests who thronged his father's mansion habituated him from an early period of life to the tones of languages that were not long strange to him. When he was nineteen, Sidonia, who had then resided some time with his uncle at Naples, and had made a long visit to another of his father's relatives at Frankfort, possessed a complete mastery over the principal European languages.

At seventeen he had parted with Rebello, who returned to Spain, and Sidonia, under the control of his guardians, commenced his travels. He resided, as we have mentioned, some time in Germany, and then, having visited Italy, settled at Naples, at which city it may be said he made his entrance into life. With an interesting person, and highly accomplished, he availed himself of the gracious attentions of a court of which he was principal creditor; and which, treating him as a distinguished English traveller, were enabled perhaps to show him some favours that the manners of the country might not have permitted them to accord to his Neapolitan relatives. Sidonia thus obtained at an early age that experience of refined and luxurious society, which is a necessary part of a finished education. It gives the last polish to the manners; it teaches us something of the power of the passions, early developed in the hot-bed of self-indulgence; it instils into us that indefinable tact seldom obtained in later life, which prevents us from saying the wrong thing, and often impels us to do the right.

Between Paris and Naples Sidonia passed two years, spent apparently in the dissipation which was perhaps inseparable from his time of life. He was admired by women, to whom he was magnificent, idolised by artists whom he patronised, received in all circles with great distinction, and appreciated for his intellect by the very few to whom he at all opened himself. For, though affable and gracious, it was impossible to penetrate him. Though unreserved in his manner, his frankness was strictly limited to the surface. He observed everything, thought ever, but avoided serious discussion. If you pressed him for an opinion, he took refuge in raillery, or threw out some grave paradox with which it was not easy to cope.

The moment he came of age, Sidonia having previously, at a great family congress held at Naples, made arrangements with the heads of the houses that bore his name respecting the disposition and management of his vast fortune, quitted Europe.

Sidonia was absent from his connections for five years, during which period he never communicated with them. They were aware of his existence only by the orders which he drew on them for payment, and which arrived from all quarters of the globe. It would appear from these documents that he had dwelt a considerable time in the Mediterranean regions; penetrated Nilotic Africa to Sennaar and Abyssinia; traversed the Asiatic continent to Tartary, whence he had visited Hindostan, and the isles of that Indian Sea which are so little known. Afterwards he was heard of at Valparaiso, the Brazils, and Lima. He evidently remained some time at Mexico, which he quitted for the United States. One morning, without notice, he arrived in London.

Sidonia had exhausted all the sources of human knowledge; he was master of the learning of every nation, of all tongues dead or living, of every literature, Western and Oriental. He had pursued the speculations of science to their last term, and had himself illustrated them by observation and experiment. He had lived in all orders of society, had viewed every combination of Nature and of Art, and had observed man under every phasis of civilisation. He had even studied him in the wilderness. The influence of creeds and laws, manners, customs, traditions, in all their diversities, had been subjected to his personal scrutiny.

He brought to the study of this vast aggregate of knowledge a penetrative intellect that, matured by long meditation, and assisted by that absolute freedom from prejudice, which, was the compensatory possession of a man without a country, permitted Sidonia to fathom, as it were by intuition, the depth of questions apparently the most difficult and profound. He possessed the rare faculty of communicating with precision ideas the most abstruse, and in general a power of expression which arrests and satisfies attention.

With all this knowledge, which no one knew more to prize, with boundless wealth, and with an athletic frame, which sickness had never tried, and which had avoided excess, Sidonia nevertheless looked upon life with a glance rather of curiosity than content. His religion walled him out from the pursuits of a citizen; his riches deprived him of the stimulating anxieties of a man. He perceived himself a lone being, alike without cares and without duties.

To a man in his position there might yet seem one unfailing source of felicity and joy; independent of creed, independent of country, independent even of character. He might have discovered that perpetual spring of happiness in the sensibility of the heart. But this was a sealed fountain to Sidonia. In his organisation there was a peculiarity, perhaps

a great deficiency. He was a man without affections. It would be harsh to say he had no heart, for he was susceptible of deep emotions, but not for individuals. He was capable of rebuilding a town that was burned down; of restoring a colony that had been destroyed by some awful visitation of Nature; of redeeming to liberty a horde of captives; and of doing these great acts in secret; for, void of all self-love, public approbation was worthless to him; but the individual never touched him. Woman was to him a toy, man a machine.

The lot the most precious to man, and which a beneficent Providence has made not the least common; to find in another heart a perfect and profound sympathy; to unite his existence with one who could share all his joys, soften all his sorrows, aid him in all his projects, respond to all his fancies, counsel him in his cares, and support him in his perils; make life charming by her charms, interesting by her intelligence, and sweet by the vigilant variety of her tenderness; to find your life blessed by such an influence, and to feel that your influence can bless such a life: this lot, the most divine of divine gifts, that power and even fame can never rival in its delights, all this Nature had denied to Sidonia.

With an imagination as fiery as his native Desert, and an intellect as luminous as his native sky, he wanted, like that land, those softening dews without which the soil is barren, and the sunbeam as often a messenger of pestilence as an angel of regenerative grace.

Such a temperament, though rare, is peculiar to the East. It inspired the founders of the great monarchies of antiquity, the prophets that the Desert has sent forth, the Tartar chiefs who have overrun the world; it might be observed in the great Corsican, who, like most of the inhabitants of the Mediterranean isles, had probably Arab blood in his veins. It is a temperament that befits conquerors and legislators, but, in ordinary times and ordinary situations, entails on its possessor only eccentric aberrations or profound melancholy.

The only human quality that interested Sidonia was Intellect. He cared not whence it came; where it was to be found: creed, country, class, character, in this respect, were alike indifferent to him. The author, the artist, the man of science, never appealed to him in vain. Often he anticipated their wants and wishes. He encouraged their society; was as frank in his conversation as he was generous in his contributions; but the instant they ceased to be authors, artists, or philosophers, and their communications arose from anything but the intellectual quality which had originally interested him, the moment they were rash enough to approach intimacy and appealed to the sympathising man instead of the congenial

intelligence, he saw them no more. It was not however intellect merely in these unquestionable shapes that commanded his notice. There was not an adventurer in Europe with whom he was not familiar. No Minister of State had such communication with secret agents and political spies as Sidonia. He held relations with all the clever outcasts of the world. The catalogue of his acquaintance in the shape of Greeks, Armenians, Moors, secret Jews, Tartars, Gipsies, wandering Poles and Carbonari, would throw a curious light on those subterranean agencies of which the world in general knows so little, but which exercise so great an influence on public events. His extensive travels, his knowledge of languages, his daring and adventurous disposition, and his unlimited means, had given him opportunities of becoming acquainted with these characters, in general so difficult to trace, and of gaining their devotion. To these sources he owed that knowledge of strange and hidden things which often startled those who listened to him. Nor was it easy, scarcely possible, to deceive him. Information reached him from so many, and such contrary quarters, that with his discrimination and experience, he could almost instantly distinguish the truth. The secret history of the world was his pastime. His great pleasure was to contrast the hidden motive, with the public pretext, of transactions.

One source of interest Sidonia found in his descent and in the fortunes of his race. As firm in his adherence to the code of the great Legislator as if the trumpet still sounded on Sinai, he might have received in the conviction of divine favour an adequate compensation for human persecution. But there were other and more terrestrial considerations that made Sidonia proud of his origin, and confident in the future of his kind. Sidonia was a great philosopher, who took comprehensive views of human affairs, and surveyed every fact in its relative position to other facts, the only mode of obtaining truth.

Sidonia was well aware that in the five great varieties into which Physiology has divided the human species; to wit, the Caucasian, the Mongolian, the Malayan, the American, the Ethiopian; the Arabian tribes rank in the first and superior class, together, among others, with the Saxon and the Greek. This fact alone is a source of great pride and satisfaction to the animal Man. But Sidonia and his brethren could claim a distinction which the Saxon and the Greek, and the rest of the Caucasian nations, have forfeited. The Hebrew is an unmixed race. Doubtless, among the tribes who inhabit the bosom of the Desert, progenitors alike of the Mosaic and the Mohammedan Arabs, blood may be found as pure as that of the descendants of the Scheik Abraham. But the Mosaic Arabs are the most ancient, if not the only, unmixed blood that dwells in cities.

An unmixed race of a first-rate organisation are the aristocracy of Nature. Such excellence is a positive fact; not an imagination, a ceremony, coined by poets, blazoned by cozening heralds, but perceptible in its physical advantages, and in the vigour of its unsullied idiosyncrasy.

In his comprehensive travels, Sidonia had visited and examined the Hebrew communities of the world. He had found, in general, the lower orders debased; the superior immersed in sordid pursuits; but he perceived that the intellectual development was not impaired. This gave him hope. He was persuaded that organisation would outlive persecution. When he reflected on what they had endured, it was only marvellous that the race had not disappeared. They had defied exile, massacre, spoliation, the degrading influence of the constant pursuit of gain; they had defied Time. For nearly three thousand years, according to Archbishop Usher, they have been dispersed over the globe. To the unpolluted current of their Caucasian structure, and to the segregating genius of their great Law-giver, Sidonia ascribed the fact that they had not been long ago absorbed among those mixed races, who presume to persecute them, but who periodically wear away and disappear, while their victims still flourish in all the primeval vigour of the pure Asian breed.

Shortly after his arrival in England, Sidonia repaired to the principal Courts of Europe, that he might become personally acquainted with the monarchs and ministers of whom he had heard so much. His position insured him a distinguished reception; his personal qualities immediately made him cherished. He could please; he could do more, he could astonish. He could throw out a careless observation which would make the oldest diplomatist start; a winged word that gained him the consideration, sometimes the confidence, of Sovereigns. When he had fathomed the intelligence which governs Europe, and which can only be done by personal acquaintance, he returned to this country.

The somewhat hard and literal character of English life suited one who shrank from sensibility, and often took refuge in sarcasm. Its masculine vigour and active intelligence occupied and interested his mind. Sidonia, indeed, was exactly the character who would be welcomed in our circles. His immense wealth, his unrivalled social knowledge, his clear vigorous intellect, the severe simplicity of his manners, frank, but neither claiming nor brooking familiarity, and his devotion to field sports, which was the safety-valve of his energy, were all circumstances and qualities which the English appreciate and admire; and it may be fairly said of Sidonia that few men were more popular, and none less understood.

CHAPTER XI.

At dinner, Coningsby was seated on the same side as Sidonia, and distant from him. There had been, therefore, no mutual recognition. Another guest had also arrived, Mr. Ormsby. He came straight from London, full of rumours, had seen Tadpole, who, hearing he was on the wing for Coningsby Castle, had taken him into a dark corner of a club, and shown him his book, a safe piece of confidence, as Mr. Ormsby was very near-sighted. It was, however, to be received as an undoubted fact, that all was right, and somehow or other, before very long, there would be national demonstration of the same. This arrival of Mr. Ormsby, and the news that he bore, gave a political turn to the conversation after the ladies had left the room.

'Tadpole wants me to stand for Birmingham,' said Mr. Ormsby, gravely.

'You!' exclaimed Lord Monmouth, and throwing himself back in his chair, he broke into a real, hearty laugh.

'Yes; the Conservatives mean to start two candidates; a manufacturer they have got, and they have written up to Tadpole for a "West-end man."'

'A what?'

'A West-end man, who will make the ladies patronise their fancy articles.'

'The result of the Reform Bill, then,' said Lucian Gay, 'will be to give Manchester a bishop, and Birmingham a dandy.'

'I begin to believe the result will be very different from what we expected,' said Lord Monmouth.

Mr. Rigby shook his head and was going to prophesy, when Lord Eskdale, who liked talk to be short, and was of opinion that Rigby should keep his amplifications for his slashing articles, put in a brief careless observation, which balked his inspiration.

'Certainly,' said Mr. Ormsby, 'when the guns were firing over Vyvyan's last speech and confession, I never expected to be asked to stand for Birmingham.'

'Perhaps you may be called up to the other house by the title,' said

Lucian Gay. 'Who knows?'

'I agree with Tadpole,' said Mr. Ormsby, 'that if we only stick to the Registration the country is saved.'

'Fortunate country!' said Sidonia, 'that can be saved by a good registration!'

'I believe, after all, that with property and pluck,' said Lord Monmouth, 'Parliamentary Reform is not such a very bad thing.'

Here several gentlemen began talking at the same time, all agreeing with their host, and proving in their different ways, the irresistible influence of property and pluck; property in Lord Monmouth's mind meaning vassals, and pluck a total disregard for public opinion. Mr. Guy Flouncey, who wanted to get into parliament, but why nobody knew, who had neither political abilities nor political opinions, but had some floating idea that it would get himself and his wife to some more balls and dinners, and who was duly ticketed for 'a good thing' in the candidate list of the Tadpoles and the Tapers, was of opinion that an immense deal might be done by properly patronising borough races. That was his specific how to prevent revolution.

Taking advantage of a pause, Lord Monmouth said, 'I should like to know what you think of this question, Sidonia?'

'I am scarcely a competent judge,' he said, as if wishing to disclaim any interference in the conversation, and then added, 'but I have been ever of opinion that revolutions are not to be evaded.'

'Exactly my views,' said Mr. Rigby, eagerly; 'I say it now, I have said it a thousand times, you may doctor the registration as you like, but you can never get rid of Schedule A.'

'Is there a person in this room who can now tell us the names of the boroughs in Schedule A?' said Sidonia.

'I am sure I cannot,' said Lord Monmouth, 'though six of them belong to myself.'

'But the principle,' said Mr. Rigby; 'they represented a principle.'

'Nothing else, certainly,' said Lucian Gay.

'And what principle?' inquired Sidonia.

'The principle of nomination.'

'That is a practice, not a principle,' said Sidonia. 'Is it a practice that no longer exists?'

'You think then,' said Lord Eskdale, cutting in before Rigby, 'that the Reform Bill has done us no harm?'

'It is not the Reform Bill that has shaken the aristocracy of this country, but the means by which that Bill was carried,' replied Sidonia.

'Physical force?' said Lord Eskdale.

'Or social power?' said Sidonia.

Upon this, Mr. Rigby, impatient at any one giving the tone in a political discussion but himself, and chafing under the vigilance of Lord Eskdale, which to him ever appeared only fortuitous, violently assaulted the argument, and astonished several country gentlemen present by its volubility. They at length listened to real eloquence. At the end of a long appeal to Sidonia, that gentleman only bowed his head and said, 'Perhaps;' and then, turning to his neighbour, inquired whether birds were plentiful in Lancashire this season; so that Mr. Rigby was reduced to the necessity of forming the political opinions of Mr. Guy Flouncey.

As the gentlemen left the dining-room, Coningsby, though at some distance, was observed by Sidonia, who stopped instantly, then advanced to Coningsby, and extending his hand said, 'I said we should meet again, though I hardly expected so quickly.'

'And I hope we shall not separate so soon,' said Coningsby; 'I was much struck with what you said just now about the Reform Bill. Do you know that the more I think the more I am perplexed by what is meant by Representation?'

'It is a principle of which a limited definition is only current in this country,' said Sidonia, quitting the room with him. 'People may be represented without periodical elections of neighbours who are incapable to maintain their interests, and strangers who are unwilling.'

The entrance of the gentlemen produced the same effect on the saloon as sunrise on the world; universal animation, a general though gentle stir.

The Grand-duke, bowing to every one, devoted himself to the daughter of Lady St. Julians, who herself pinned Lord Beaumanoir before he could reach Mrs. Guy Flouncey. Coningsby instead talked nonsense to that lady. Brilliant cavaliers, including Mr. Melton, addressed a band of beautiful damsels grouped on a large ottoman. Everywhere sounded a delicious murmur, broken occasionally by a silver-sounding laugh not too loud. Sidonia and Lord Eskdale did not join the ladies. They stood for a few moments in conversation, and then threw themselves on a sofa.

'Who is that?' asked Sidonia of his companion rather earnestly, as Coningsby quitted them.

"Tis the grandson of Monmouth; young Coningsby.'

'Ah! The new generation then promises. I met him once before, by chance; he interests me.'

'They tell me he is a lively lad. He is a prodigious favourite here, and I should not be surprised if Monmouth made him his heir.'

'I hope he does not dream of inheritance,' said Sidonia. "Tis the most enervating of visions.'

'Do you admire Lady Augustina St. Julians?' said Mrs. Guy Flouncey to Coningsby.

'I admire no one except yourself.'

'Oh! how very gallant, Mr. Coningsby!'

'When should men be gallant, if not to the brilliant and the beautiful!' said Coningsby.

'Ah! you are laughing at me.'

'No, I am not. I am quite grave.'

'Your eyes laugh. Now tell me, Mr. Coningsby, Lord Henry Sydney is a very great friend of yours?'

'Very.'

'He is very amiable.'

'Very.'

'He does a great deal for the poor at Beaumanoir. A very fine place, is it not?'

'Very.'

'As fine as Coningsby?'

'At present, with Mrs. Guy Flouncey at Coningsby, Beaumanoir would have no chance.'

'Ah! you laugh at me again! Now tell me, Mr. Coningsby, what do you think we shall do to-night? I look upon you, you know, as the real arbiter of our destinies.'

'You shall decide,' said Coningsby.

'Mon cher Harry,' said Madame Colonna, coming up, 'they wish Lucretia to sing and she will not. You must ask her, she cannot refuse you.'

'I assure you she can,' said Coningsby.

'Mon cher Harry, your grandpapa did desire me to beg you to ask her to sing.'

So Coningsby unwillingly approached Lucretia, who was talking with the Russian Ambassador.

'I am sent upon a fruitless mission,' said Coningsby, looking at her, and catching her glance.

'What and why?' she replied.

'The mission is to entreat you to do us all a great favour; and the cause of its failure will be that I am the envoy.'

'If the favour be one to yourself, it is granted; and if you be the envoy, you need never fear failure with me.'

'I must presume then to lead you away,' said Coningsby, bending to the Ambassador.

'Remember,' said Lucretia, as they approached the instrument, 'that I am

singing to you.'

'It is impossible ever to forget it,' said Coningsby, leading her to the piano with great politeness, but only with great politeness.

'Where is Mademoiselle Flora?' she inquired.

Coningsby found La Petite crouching as it were behind some furniture, and apparently looking over some music. She looked up as he approached, and a smile stole over her countenance. 'I am come to ask a favour,' he said, and he named his request.

'I will sing,' she replied; 'but only tell me what you like.'

Coningsby felt the difference between the courtesy of the head and of the heart, as he contrasted the manner of Lucretia and Flora. Nothing could be more exquisitely gracious than the daughter of Colonna was to-night; Flora, on the contrary, was rather agitated and embarrassed; and did not express her readiness with half the facility and the grace of Lucretia; but Flora's arm trembled as Coningsby led her to the piano.

Meantime Lord Eskdale and Sidonia are in deep converse.

'Hah! that is a fine note!' said Sidonia, and he looked round. 'Who is that singing? Some new _protégée_ of Lord Monmouth?'

'Tis the daughter of the Colonnas,' said Lord Eskdale, 'the Princess Lucretia.'

'Why, she was not at dinner to-day.'

'No, she was not there.'

'My favourite voice; and of all, the rarest to be found. When I was a boy, it made me almost in love even with Pisaroni.'

'Well, the Princess is scarcely more lovely. 'Tis a pity the plumage is not as beautiful as the note. She is plain.'

'No; not plain with that brow.'

'Well, I rather admire her myself,' said Lord Eskdale. 'She has fine points.'

'Let us approach,' said Sidonia.

The song ceased, Lord Eskdale advanced, made his compliments, and then said, 'You were not at dinner to-day.'

'Why should I be?' said the Princess.

'For our sakes, for mine, if not for your own,' said Lord Eskdale, smiling. 'Your absence has been remarked, and felt, I assure you, by others as well as myself. There is my friend Sidonia so enraptured with your thrilling tones, that he has abruptly closed a conversation which I have been long counting on. Do you know him? May I present him to you?'

And having obtained a consent, not often conceded, Lord Eskdale looked round, and calling Sidonia, he presented his friend to the Princess.

'You are fond of music, Lord Eskdale tells me?' said Lucretia.

'When it is excellent,' said Sidonia.

'But that is so rare,' said the Princess.

'And precious as Paradise,' said Sidonia. 'As for indifferent music, 'tis Purgatory; but when it is bad, for my part I feel myself--'

'Where?'

said Lord Eskdale.

'In the last circle of the Inferno,' said Sidonia.

Lord Eskdale turned to Flora.

'And in what circle do you place us who are here?' the Princess inquired of Sidonia.

'One too polished for his verse,' replied her companion.

'You mean too insipid,' said the Princess. 'I wish that life were a little more Dantesque.'

'There is not less treasure in the world,' said Sidonia, 'because we use paper currency; and there is not less passion than of old, though it is _bon ton_ to be tranquil.'

'Do you think so?' said the Princess, inquiringly, and then looking round

the apartment. 'Have these automata, indeed, souls?'

'Some of them,' said Sidonia. 'As many as would have had souls in the fourteenth century.'

'I thought they were wound up every day,' said the Princess.

'Some are self-impelling,' said Sidonia.

'And you can tell at a glance?' inquired the Princess. 'You are one of those who can read human nature?'

'Tis a book open to all.'

'But if they cannot read?'

'Those must be your automata.'

'Lord Monmouth tells me you are a great traveller?'

'I have not discovered a new world.'

'But you have visited it?'

'It is getting old.'

'I would sooner recall the old than discover the new,' said the Princess.

'We have both of us cause,' said Sidonia. 'Our names are the names of the Past.'

'I do not love a world of Utility,' said the Princess.

'You prefer to be celebrated to being comfortable,' said Sidonia.

'It seems to me that the world is withering under routine.'

'Tis the inevitable lot of humanity,' said Sidonia. 'Man must ever be the slave of routine: but in old days it was a routine of great thoughts, and now it is a routine of little ones.'

The evening glided on; the dance succeeded the song; the ladies were fast vanishing; Coningsby himself was meditating a movement, when Lord Beaumanoir, as he passed him, said, 'Come to Lucian Gay's room; we are

going to smoke a cigar.'

This was a favourite haunt, towards midnight, of several of the younger members of the party at the Castle, who loved to find relaxation from the decorous gravities of polished life in the fumes of tobacco, the inspiration of whiskey toddy, and the infinite amusement of Lucian Gay's conversation and company. This was the genial hour when the good story gladdened, the pun flashed, and the song sparkled with jolly mirth or saucy mimicry. To-night, being Coningsby's initiation, there was a special general meeting of the Grumpy Club, in which everybody was to say the gayest things with the gravest face, and every laugh carried a forfeit. Lucian was the inimitable president. He told a tale for which he was famous, of 'the very respectable county family who had been established in the shire for several generations, but who, it was a fact, had been ever distinguished by the strange and humiliating peculiarity of being born with sheep's tails.' The remarkable circumstances under which Lucian Gay had become acquainted with this fact; the traditionary mysteries by which the family in question had succeeded for generations in keeping it secret; the decided measures to which the chief of the family had recourse to stop for ever the rumour when it first became prevalent; and finally the origin and result of the legend; were details which Lucian Gay, with the most rueful countenance, loved to expend upon the attentive and expanding intelligence of a new member of the Grumpy Club. Familiar as all present were with the story whose stimulus of agonising risibility they had all in turn experienced, it was with extreme difficulty that any of them could resist the fatal explosion which was to be attended with the dreaded penalty. Lord Beaumanoir looked on the table with desperate seriousness, an ominous pucker quivering round his lip; Mr. Melton crammed his handkerchief into his mouth with one hand, while he lighted the wrong end of a cigar with the other; one youth hung over the back of his chair pinching himself like a faquir, while another hid his countenance on the table.

'It was at the Hunt dinner,' continued Lucian Gay, in an almost solemn tone, 'that an idea for a moment was prevalent, that Sir Mowbray Cholmondeley Fetherstonehaugh, as the head of the family, had resolved to terminate for ever these mysterious aspersions on his race, that had circulated in the county for more than two centuries; I mean that the highly respectable family of the Cholmondeley Fetherstonehaughs had the misfortune to be graced with that appendage to which I have referred. His health being drunk, Sir Mowbray Cholmondeley Fetherstonehaugh rose. He was a little unpopular at the moment, from an ugly story about killing foxes, and the guests were not as quiet as orators generally desire, so the Honourable Baronet prayed particular attention to a matter personal to

himself. Instantly there was a dead silence--' but here Coningsby, who had moved for some time very restlessly on his chair, suddenly started up, and struggling for a moment against the inward convulsion, but in vain, stamped against the floor, and gave a shout.

'A song from Mr. Coningsby,' said the president of the Grumpy Club, amid an universal, and now permissible roar of laughter.

Coningsby could not sing; so he was to favour them as a substitute with a speech or a sentiment. But Lucian Gay always let one off these penalties easily, and, indeed, was ever ready to fulfil them for all. Song, speech, or sentiment, he poured them all forth; nor were pastimes more active wanting. He could dance a Tarantella like a Lazzarone, and execute a Cracovienne with all the mincing graces of a ballet heroine.

His powers of mimicry, indeed, were great and versatile. But in nothing was he so happy as in a Parliamentary debate. And it was remarkable that, though himself a man who on ordinary occasions was quite incapable without infinite perplexity of publicly expressing his sense of the merest courtesy of society, he was not only a master of the style of every speaker of distinction in either house, but he seemed in his imitative play to appropriate their intellectual as well as their physical peculiarities, and presented you with their mind as well as their manner. There were several attempts to-night to induce Lucian to indulge his guests with a debate, but he seemed to avoid the exertion, which was great. As the night grew old, however, and every hour he grew more lively, he suddenly broke without further pressure into the promised diversion; and Coningsby listened really with admiration to a discussion, of which the only fault was that it was more parliamentary than the original, 'plus Arabe que l'Arabie.'

The Duke was never more curt, nor Sir Robert more specious; he was as fiery as Stanley, and as bitter as Graham. Nor did he do their opponents less justice. Lord Palmerston himself never treated a profound subject with a more pleasant volatility; and when Lucian rose at an early hour of morn, in a full house alike exhausted and excited, and after having endured for hours, in sarcastic silence, the menacing finger of Sir Robert, shaking over the green table and appealing to his misdeeds in the irrevocable records of Hansard, Lord John himself could not have afforded a more perfect representative of pluck.

But loud as was the laughter, and vehement the cheering, with which Lucian's performances were received, all these ebullitions sank into insignificance compared with the reception which greeted what he himself

announced was to be the speech of the night. Having quaffed full many a quag of toddy, he insisted on delivering, it on the table, a proposition with which his auditors immediately closed.

The orator appeared, the great man of the night, who was to answer everybody on both sides. Ah! that harsh voice, that arrogant style, that saucy superficiality which decided on everything, that insolent ignorance that contradicted everybody; it was impossible to mistake them! And Coningsby had the pleasure of seeing reproduced before him the guardian of his youth and the patron of the mimic, the Right Honourable Nicholas Rigby!

CHAPTER XII.

Madame Colonna, with that vivacious energy which characterises the south, had no sooner seen Coningsby, and heard his praises celebrated by his grandfather, than she resolved that an alliance should sooner or later take place between him and her step-daughter. She imparted her projects without delay to Lucretia, who received them in a different spirit from that in which they were communicated. Lucretia bore as little resemblance to her step-mother in character, as in person. If she did not possess her beauty, she was born with an intellect of far greater capacity and reach. She had a deep judgment. A hasty alliance with a youth, arranged by their mutual relatives, might suit very well the clime and manners of Italy, but Lucretia was well aware that it was altogether opposed to the habits and feelings of this country. She had no conviction that either Coningsby would wish to marry her, or, if willing, that his grandfather would sanction such a step in one as yet only on the threshold of the world. Lucretia therefore received the suggestions and proposals of Madarne Colonna with coldness and indifference; one might even say contempt, for she neither felt respect for this lady, nor was she sedulous to evince it. Although really younger than Coningsby, Lucretia felt that a woman of eighteen is, in all worldly considerations, ten years older than a youth of the same age. She anticipated that a considerable time might elapse before Coningsby would feel it necessary to seal his destiny by marriage, while, on the other hand, she was not only anxious, but resolved, not to delay on her part her emancipation from the galling position in which she very frequently found herself.

Lucretia felt rather than expressed these ideas and impressions. She was

not naturally communicative, and conversed with no one with less frankness and facility than with her step-mother. Madame Colonna therefore found no reasons in her conversation with Lucretia to change her determination. As her mind was not ingenious she did not see questions in those various lights which make us at the same time infirm of purpose and tolerant. What she fancied ought to be done, she fancied must be done; for she perceived no middle course or alternative. For the rest, Lucretia's carriage towards her gave her little discomfort. Besides, she herself, though good-natured, was obstinate. Her feelings were not very acute; nothing much vexed her. As long as she had fine dresses, good dinners, and opera-boxes, she could bear her plans to be crossed like a philosopher; and her consolation under her unaccomplished devices was her admirable consistency, which always assured her that her projects were wise, though unfulfilled.

She broke her purpose to Mr. Rigby, that she might gain not only his adhesion to her views, but his assistance in achieving them. As Madame Colonna, in Mr. Rigby's estimation, exercised more influence over Lord Monmouth than any other individual, faithful to his policy or practice, he agreed with all Madame Colonna's plans and wishes, and volunteered instantly to further them. As for the Prince, his wife never consulted him on any subject, nor did he wish to be consulted. On the contrary, he had no opinion about anything. All that he required was that he should be surrounded by what contributed to his personal enjoyment, that he should never be troubled, and that he should have billiards. He was not inexpert in field-sports, rode indeed very well for an Italian, but he never cared to be out-of-doors; and there was only one room in the interior which passionately interested him. It was where the echoing balls denoted the sweeping hazard or the effective cannonade. That was the chamber where the Prince Colonna literally existed. Half-an-hour after breakfast he was in the billiard-room; he never quitted it until he dressed for dinner; and he generally contrived, while the world were amused or amusing themselves at the comedy or in the dance, to steal down with some congenial sprites to the magical and illumined chamber, and use his cue until bedtime.

Faithful to her first impressions, Lucretia had made no difference in her demeanour to Coningsby to that which she offered to the other guests. Polite, but uncommunicative; ready to answer, but never originating conversation; she charmed him as little by her manner as by her person; and after some attempts, not very painstaking, to interest her, Coningsby had ceased to address her. The day passed by with only a faint recognition between them; even that sometimes omitted.

When, however, Lucretia observed that Coningsby had become one of the most notable persons in the Castle; when she heard everywhere of his talents

and accomplishments, his beauty and grace and great acquirements, and perceived that he was courted by all; that Lord Monmouth omitted no occasion publicly to evince towards him his regard and consideration; that he seemed generally looked upon in the light of his grandfather's heir; and that Lady St. Julians, more learned in that respect than any lady in the kingdom, was heard more than once to regret that she had not brought another daughter with her, Clara Isabella, as well as Augustina; the Princess Lucretia began to imagine that Madame Colonna, after all, might not be so extravagant in her purpose as she had first supposed. She, therefore, surprised Coningsby with the almost affectionate moroseness with which, while she hated to sing, she yet found pleasure in singing for him alone. And it is impossible to say what might not have been the next move in her tactics in this respect, had not the very night on which she had resolved to commence the enchantment of Coningsby introduced to her Sidonia.

The Princess Lucretia encountered the dark still glance of the friend of Lord Eskdale. He, too, beheld a woman unlike other women, and with his fine experience, both as a man and as a physiologist, felt that he was in the presence of no ordinary organisation. From the evening of his introduction Sidonia sought the society of the Princess Lucretia. He could not complain of her reserve. She threw out her mind in various and highly-cultivated intelligence. He recognised in her a deep and subtle spirit, considerable reading for a woman, habits of thought, and a soul passionate and daring. She resolved to subdue one whose appreciation she had gained, and who had subdued her. The profound meaning and the calm manner of Sidonia combined to quell her spirit. She struggled against the spell. She tried to rival his power; to cope with him, and with the same weapons. But prompt as was her thought and bright as was its expression, her heart beat in tumult; and, with all her apparent serenity, her agitated soul was a prey of absorbing passion. She could not contend with that intelligent, yet inscrutable, eye; with that manner so full of interest and respect, and yet so tranquil. Besides, they were not on equal terms. Here was a girl contending with a man learned in the world's way.

Between Sidonia and Coningsby there at once occurred companionship. The morning after his arrival they went out shooting together. After a long ramble they would stretch themselves on the turf under a shady tree, often by the side of some brook where the cresses grow, that added a luxury to their sporting-meal; and then Coningsby would lead their conversation to some subject on which Sidonia would pour out his mind with all that depth of reflection, variety of knowledge, and richness of illustrative memory, which distinguished him; and which offered so striking a contrast to the sharp talent, the shallow information, and the worldly cunning, that make

a Rigby.

This fellowship between Sidonia and Coningsby elevated the latter still more in the estimation of Lucretia, and rendered her still more desirous of gaining his good will and opinion. A great friendship seemed to have arisen between them, and the world began to believe that there must be some foundation for Madame Colonna's innuendos. That lady herself was not in the least alarmed by the attention which Sidonia paid her step-daughter. It was, of course, well known that Sidonia was not a marrying man. He was, however, a great friend of Mr. Coningsby, his presence and society brought Coningsby and Lucretia more together; and however flattered her daughter might be for the moment by Sidonia's homage, still, as she would ultimately find out, if indeed she ever cared so to do, that Sidonia could only be her admirer, Madame Colonna had no kind of doubt that ultimately Coningsby would be Lucretia's husband, as she had arranged from the first.

The Princess Lucretia was a fine horse-woman, though she rarely joined the various riding-parties that were daily formed at the Castle. Often, indeed, attended only by her groom, she met the equestrians. Now she would ride with Sidonia and Coningsby, and as a female companion was indispensable, she insisted upon La Petite accompanying her. This was a fearful trial for Flora, but she encountered it, encouraged by the kind solicitude of Coningsby, who always seemed her friend.

Very shortly after the arrival of Sidonia, the Grand-duke and his suite quitted the Castle, which had been his Highness' head-quarters during his visit to the manufacturing districts; but no other great change in the assembled company occurred for some little time.

CHAPTER XIII.

'You will observe one curious trait,' said Sidonia to Coningsby, 'in the history of this country: the depository of power is always unpopular; all combine against it; it always falls. Power was deposited in the great Barons; the Church, using the King for its instrument, crushed the great Barons. Power was deposited in the Church; the King, bribing the Parliament, plundered the Church. Power was deposited in the King; the Parliament, using the People, beheaded the King, expelled the King, changed the King, and, finally, for a King substituted an administrative

officer. For one hundred and fifty years Power has been deposited in the Parliament, and for the last sixty or seventy years it has been becoming more and more unpopular. In 1830 it was endeavoured by a reconstruction to regain the popular affection; but, in truth, as the Parliament then only made itself more powerful, it has only become more odious. As we see that the Barons, the Church, the King, have in turn devoured each other, and that the Parliament, the last devourer, remains, it is impossible to resist the impression that this body also is doomed to be destroyed; and he is a sagacious statesman who may detect in what form and in what quarter the great consumer will arise.'

'You take, then, a dark view of our position?'

'Troubled, not dark. I do not ascribe to political institutions that paramount influence which it is the feeling of this age to attribute to them. The Senate that confronted Brennus in the Forum was the same body that registered in an after-age the ribald decrees of a Nero. Trial by jury, for example, is looked upon by all as the Palladium of our liberties; yet a jury, at a very recent period of our own history, the reign of Charles II., was a tribunal as iniquitous as the Inquisition.' And a graver expression stole over the countenance of Sidonia as he remembered what that Inquisition had operated on his own race and his own destiny. 'There are families in this country,' he continued, 'of both the great historical parties, that in the persecution of their houses, the murder and proscription of some of their most illustrious members, found judges as unjust and relentless in an open jury of their countrymen as we did in the conclaves of Madrid and Seville.'

'Where, then, would you look for hope?'

'In what is more powerful than laws and institutions, and without which the best laws and the most skilful institutions may be a dead letter, or the very means of tyranny in the national character. It is not in the increased feebleness of its institutions that I see the peril of England; it is in the decline of its character as a community.'

'And yet you could scarcely describe this as an age of corruption?'

'Not of political corruption. But it is an age of social disorganisation, far more dangerous in its consequences, because far more extensive. You may have a corrupt government and a pure community; you may have a corrupt community and a pure administration. Which would you elect?'

Neither,' said Coningsby; 'I wish to see a people full of faith, and a

government full of duty.'

'Rely upon it,' said Sidonia, 'that England should think more of the community and less of the government.'

'But tell me, what do you understand by the term national character?'

'A character is an assemblage of qualities; the character of England should be an assemblage of great qualities.'

'But we cannot deny that the English have great virtues.'

'The civilisation of a thousand years must produce great virtues; but we are speaking of the decline of public virtue, not its existence.'

'In what, then, do you trace that decline?'

'In the fact that the various classes of this country are arrayed against each other.'

'But to what do you attribute those reciprocal hostilities?'

'Not entirely, not even principally, to those economical causes of which we hear so much. I look upon all such as secondary causes, which, in a certain degree, must always exist, which obtrude themselves in troubled times, and which at all times it is the business of wise statesmen to watch, to regulate, to ameliorate, to modify.'

'I am speaking to elicit truth, not to maintain opinions,' said Coningsby; 'for I have none,' he added, mournfully.

'I think,' said Sidonia, 'that there is no error so vulgar as to believe that revolutions are occasioned by economical causes. They come in, doubtless, very often to precipitate a catastrophe; very rarely do they occasion one. I know no period, for example, when physical comfort was more diffused in England than in 1640. England had a moderate population, a very improved agriculture, a rich commerce; yet she was on the eve of the greatest and most violent changes that she has as yet experienced.'

'That was a religious movement.'

'Admit it; the cause, then, was not physical. The imagination of England rose against the government. It proves, then, that when that faculty is astir in a nation, it will sacrifice even physical comfort to follow its

impulses.'

'Do you think, then, there is a wild desire for extensive political change in the country?'

'Hardly that: England is perplexed at the present moment, not inventive. That will be the next phasis in her moral state, and to that I wish to draw your thoughts. For myself, while I ascribe little influence to physical causes for the production of this perplexity, I am still less of opinion that it can be removed by any new disposition of political power. It would only aggravate the evil. That would be recurring to the old error of supposing you can necessarily find national content in political institutions. A political institution is a machine; the motive power is the national character. With that it rests whether the machine will benefit society, or destroy it. Society in this country is perplexed, almost paralysed; in time it will move, and it will devise. How are the elements of the nation to be again blended together? In what spirit is that reorganisation to take place?'

'To know that would be to know everything.'

'At least let us free ourselves from the double ignorance of the Platonists. Let us not be ignorant that we are ignorant.'

'I have emancipated myself from that darkness for a long time,' said Coningsby. 'Long has my mind been musing over these thoughts, but to me all is still obscurity.'

'In this country,' said Sidonia, 'since the peace, there has been an attempt to advocate a reconstruction of society on a purely rational basis. The principle of Utility has been powerfully developed. I speak not with lightness of the labours of the disciples of that school. I bow to intellect in every form: and we should be grateful to any school of philosophers, even if we disagree with them; doubly grateful in this country, where for so long a period our statesmen were in so pitiable an arrear of public intelligence. There has been an attempt to reconstruct society on a basis of material motives and calculations. It has failed. It must ultimately have failed under any circumstances; its failure in an ancient and densely-peopled kingdom was inevitable. How limited is human reason, the profoundest inquirers are most conscious. We are not indebted to the Reason of man for any of the great achievements which are the landmarks of human action and human progress. It was not Reason that besieged Troy; it was not Reason that sent forth the Saracen from the Desert to conquer the world; that inspired the Crusades; that instituted

the Monastic orders; it was not Reason that produced the Jesuits; above all, it was not Reason that created the French Revolution. Man is only truly great when he acts from the passions; never irresistible but when he appeals to the imagination. Even Mormon counts more votaries than Bentham.'

'And you think, then, that as Imagination once subdued the State, Imagination may now save it?'

'Man is made to adore and to obey: but if you will not command him, if you give him nothing to worship, he will fashion his own divinities, and find a chieftain in his own passions.'

'But where can we find faith in a nation of sectaries? Who can feel loyalty to a sovereign of Downing Street?'

'I speak of the eternal principles of human nature, you answer me with the passing accidents of the hour. Sects rise and sects disappear. Where are the Fifth-Monarchy men? England is governed by Downing Street; once it was governed by Alfred and Elizabeth.'

CHAPTER XIV.

About this time a steeple-chase in the West of England had attracted considerable attention. This sport was then of recent introduction in England, and is, in fact, an importation of Irish growth, although it has flourished in our soil. A young guardsman, who was then a guest at the Castle, and who had been in garrison in Ireland, had some experience of this pastime in the Kildare country, and he proposed that they should have a steeple-chase at Coningsby. This was a suggestion very agreeable to the Marquess of Beaumanoir, celebrated for his feats of horsemanship, and, indeed, to most of the guests. It was agreed that the race should come off at once, before any of the present company, many of whom gave symptoms of being on the wing, had quitted the Castle. The young guardsman and Mr. Guy Flouncey had surveyed the country and had selected a line which they esteemed very appropriate for the scene of action. From a hill of common land you looked down upon the valley of Coningsby, richly cultivated, deeply ditched, and stiffly fenced; the valley was bounded by another rising ground, and the scene was admirably calculated to give an extensive view to a multitude.

The distance along the valley was to be two miles out, and home again; the starting-post being also the winning-post, and the flags, which were placed on every fence which the horses were to pass, were to be passed on the left hand of the rider both going and coming; so that although the horses had to leap the same fences forward and backward, they could not come over the same place twice. In the last field before they turned, was a brook seventeen feet clear from side to side, with good taking off both banks. Here real business commenced.

Lord Monmouth highly approved the scheme, but mentioned that the stakes must be moderate, and open to the whole county. The neighbourhood had a week of preparation, and the entries for the Coningsby steeple-chase were numerous. Lord Monmouth, after a reserve for his own account, placed his stable at the service of his guests. For himself, he offered to back his horse, Sir Robert, which was to be ridden by his grandson.

Now, nothing was spoken or thought of at Coningsby Castle except the coming sport. The ladies shared the general excitement. They embroidered handkerchiefs, and scarfs, and gloves, with the respective colours of the rivals, and tried to make jockey-caps. Lady St. Julians postponed her intended departure in consequence. Madame Colonna wished that some means could be contrived by which they might all win.

Sidonia, with the other competitors, had ridden over the ground and glanced at the brook with the eye of a workman. On his return to the Castle he sent a despatch for some of his stud.

Coningsby was all anxiety to win. He was proud of the confidence of his grandfather in backing him. He had a powerful horse and a first-rate fencer, and he was resolved himself not to flinch. On the night before the race, retiring somewhat earlier than usual to his chamber, he observed on his dressing-table a small packet addressed to his name, and in an unknown handwriting. Opening it, he found a pretty racing-jacket embroidered with his colours of pink and white. This was a perplexing circumstance, but he fancied it on the whole a happy omen. And who was the donor? Certainly not the Princess Lucretia, for he had observed her fashioning some maroon ribbons, which were the colours of Sidonia. It could scarcely be from Mrs. Guy Flouncey. Perhaps Madame Colonna to please the Marquess? Thinking over this incident he fell asleep.

The morning before the race Sidonia's horses arrived. All went to examine them at the stables. Among them was an Arab mare. Coningsby recognised the Daughter of the Star. She was greatly admired for her points; but Guy

Flouncey whispered to Mr. Melton that she never could do the work.

'But Lord Beaumanoir says he is all for speed against strength in these affairs,' said Mr. Melton.

Guy Flouncey smiled incredulously.

The night before the race it rained rather heavily.

'I take it the country will not be very like the Deserts of Arabia,' said Mr. Guy Flouncey, with a knowing look to Mr. Melton, who was noting a bet in his memorandum-book.

The morning was fine, clear, and sunny, with a soft western breeze. The starting-post was about three miles from the Castle; but, long before the hour, the surrounding hills were covered with people; squire and farmer; with no lack of their wives and daughters; many a hind in his smock-frock, and many an 'operative' from the neighbouring factories. The 'gentlemen riders' gradually arrived. The entries were very numerous, though it was understood that not more than a dozen would come to the post, and half of these were the guests of Lord Monmouth. At half-past one the *cortège* from the Castle arrived, and took up the post which had been prepared for them on the summit of the hill. Lord Monmouth was much cheered on his arrival. In the carriage with him were Madame Colonna and Lady St. Julians. The Princess Lucretia, Lady Gaythorp, Mrs. Guy Flouncey, accompanied by Lord Eskdale and other cavaliers, formed a brilliant company. There was scarcely a domestic in the Castle who was not there. The comedians, indeed, did not care to come, but Villebecque prevailed upon Flora to drive with him to the race in a buggy he borrowed of the steward.

The start was to be at two o'clock. The 'gentlemen jockeys' are mustered. Never were riders mounted and appointed in better style. The stewards and the clerk of the course attend them to the starting-post. There they are now assembled. Guy Flouncey takes up his stirrup-leathers a hole; Mr. Melton looks at his girths. In a few moments, the irrevocable monosyllable will be uttered.

The bugle sounds for them to face about; the clerk of the course sings out, 'Gentlemen, are you all ready?' No objection made, the word given to go, and fifteen riders start in excellent style.

Prince Colonna, who rode like Prince Rupert, took the lead, followed close by a stout yeoman on an old white horse of great provincial celebrity, who

made steady running, and, from his appearance and action, an awkward customer. The rest, with two exceptions, followed in a cluster at no great distance, and in this order they continued, with very slight variation, for the first two miles, though there were several ox-fences, and one or two of them remarkably stiff. Indeed, they appeared more like horses running over a course than over a country. The two exceptions were Lord Beaumanoir on his horse Sunbeam, and Sidonia on the Arab. These kept somewhat slightly in the rear.

Almost in this wise they approached the dreaded brook. Indeed, with the exception of the last two riders, who were about thirty yards behind, it seemed that you might have covered the rest of the field with a sheet. They arrived at the brook at the same moment: seventeen feet of water between strong sound banks is no holiday work; but they charged with unfaltering intrepidity. But what a revolution in their spirited order did that instant produce! A masked battery of canister and grape could not have achieved more terrible execution. Coningsby alone clearly lighted on the opposing bank; but, for the rest of them, it seemed for a moment that they were all in the middle of the brook, one over another, splashing, kicking, swearing; every one trying to get out and keep others in. Mr. Melton and the stout yeoman regained their saddles and were soon again in chase. The Prince lost his horse, and was not alone in his misfortune. Mr. Guy Flouncey lay on his back with a horse across his diaphragm; only his head above the water, and his mouth full of chickweed and dockleaves. And if help had not been at hand, he and several others might have remained struggling in their watery bed for a considerable period. In the midst of this turmoil, the Marquess and Sidonia at the same moment cleared the brook.

Affairs now became interesting. Here Coningsby took up the running, Sidonia and the Marquess lying close at his quarters. Mr. Melton had gone the wrong side of a flag, and the stout yeoman, though close at hand, was already trusting much to his spurs. In the extreme distance might be detected three or four stragglers. Thus they continued until within three fields of home. A ploughed field finished the old white horse; the yeoman struck his spurs to the rowels, but the only effect of the experiment was, that the horse stood stock-still. Coningsby, Sidonia, and the Marquess were now all together. The winning-post is in sight, and a high and strong gate leads to the last field. Coningsby, looking like a winner, gallantly dashed forward and sent Sir Robert at the gate, but he had over-estimated his horse's powers at this point of the game, and a rattling fall was the consequence: however, horse and rider were both on the right side, and Coningsby was in his saddle and at work again in a moment. It seemed that the Marquess was winning. There was only one more fence; and that the foot

people had made a breach in by the side of a gate-post, and wide enough, as was said, for a broad-wheeled waggon to travel by. Instead of passing straight over this gap, Sunbeam swerved against the gate and threw his rider. This was decisive. The Daughter of the Star, who was still going beautifully, pulling double, and her jockey sitting still, sprang over the gap and went in first; Coningsby, on Sir Robert, being placed second. The distance measured was about four miles; there were thirty-nine leaps; and it was done under fifteen minutes.

Lord Monmouth was well content with the prowess of his grandson, and his extreme cordiality consoled Coningsby under a defeat which was very vexatious. It was some alleviation that he was beaten by Sidonia. Madame Colonna even shed tears at her young friend's disappointment, and mourned it especially for Lucretia, who had said nothing, though a flush might be observed on her usually pale countenance. Villebecque, who had betted, was so extremely excited by the whole affair, especially during the last three minutes, that he quite forgot his quiet companion, and when he looked round he found Flora fainting.

'You rode well,' said Sidonia to Coningsby; 'but your horse was more strong than swift. After all, this thing is a race; and, notwithstanding Solomon, in a race speed must win.'

CHAPTER XV.

Notwithstanding the fatigues of the morning, the evening was passed with great gaiety at the Castle. The gentlemen all vowed that, far from being inconvenienced by their mishaps, they felt, on the whole, rather better for them. Mr. Guy Flouncey, indeed, did not seem quite so limber and flexible as usual; and the young guardsman, who had previously discoursed in an almost alarming style of the perils and feats of the Kildare country, had subsided into a remarkable reserve. The Provincials were delighted with Sidonia's riding, and even the Leicestershire gentlemen admitted that he was a 'customer.'

Lord Monmouth beckoned to Coningsby to sit by him on the sofa, and spoke of his approaching University life. He gave his grandson a great deal of good advice: told him to avoid drinking, especially if he ever chanced to play cards, which he hoped he never would; urged the expediency of never borrowing money, and of confining his loans to small sums, and then only

to friends of whom he wished to get rid; most particularly impressed on him never to permit his feelings to be engaged by any woman; nobody, he assured Coningsby, despised that weakness more than women themselves. Indeed, feeling of any kind did not suit the present age: it was not *bon ton*; and in some degree always made a man ridiculous. Coningsby was always to have before him the possible catastrophe of becoming ridiculous. It was the test of conduct, Lord Monmouth said; a fear of becoming ridiculous is the best guide in life, and will save a man from all sorts of scrapes. For the rest, Coningsby was to appear at Cambridge as became Lord Monmouth's favourite grandson. His grandfather had opened an account for him with Drummonds', on whom he was to draw for his considerable allowance; and if by any chance he found himself in a scrape, no matter of what kind, he was to be sure to write to his grandfather, who would certainly get him out of it.

'Your departure is sudden,' said the Princess Lucretia, in a low deep tone to Sidonia, who was sitting by her side and screened from general observation by the waltzers who whirled by.

'Departures should be sudden.'

'I do not like departures,' said the Princess.

'Nor did the Queen of Sheba when she quitted Solomon. You know what she did?'

'Tell me.'

'She wept very much, and let one of the King's birds fly into the garden. "You are freed from your cage," she said; "but I am going back to mine."'

'But you never weep?' said the Princess.

'Never.'

'And are always free?'

'So are men in the Desert.'

'But your life is not a Desert?'

'It at least resembles the Desert in one respect: it is useless.'

'The only useless life is woman's.'

'Yet there have been heroines,' said Sidonia.

'The Queen of Sheba,' said the Princess, smiling.

'A favourite of mine,' said Sidonia.

'And why was she a favourite of yours?' rather eagerly inquired Lucretia.

'Because she thought deeply, talked finely, and moved gracefully.'

'And yet might be a very unfeeling dame at the same time,' said the Princess.

'I never thought of that,' said Sidonia.

'The heart, apparently, does not reckon in your philosophy.'

'What we call the heart,' said Sidonia, 'is a nervous sensation, like shyness, which gradually disappears in society. It is fervent in the nursery, strong in the domestic circle, tumultuous at school. The affections are the children of ignorance; when the horizon of our experience expands, and models multiply, love and admiration imperceptibly vanish.'

'I fear the horizon of your experience has very greatly expanded. With your opinions, what charm can there be in life?'

'The sense of existence.'

'So Sidonia is off to-morrow, Monmouth,' said Lord Eskdale.

'Hah!' said the Marquess. 'I must get him to breakfast with me before he goes.'

The party broke up. Coningsby, who had heard Lord Eskdale announce Sidonia's departure, lingered to express his regret, and say farewell.

'I cannot sleep,' said Sidonia, 'and I never smoke in Europe. If you are not stiff with your wounds, come to my rooms.'

This invitation was willingly accepted.

'I am going to Cambridge in a week,' said Coningsby. I was almost in hopes

you might have remained as long.'

'I also; but my letters of this morning demand me. If it had not been for our chase, I should have quitted immediately. The minister cannot pay the interest on the national debt; not an unprecedented circumstance, and has applied to us. I never permit any business of State to be transacted without my personal interposition; and so I must go up to town immediately.'

'Suppose you don't pay it,' said Coningsby, smiling.

'If I followed my own impulse, I would remain here,' said Sidonia. 'Can anything be more absurd than that a nation should apply to an individual to maintain its credit, and, with its credit, its existence as an empire, and its comfort as a people; and that individual one to whom its laws deny the proudest rights of citizenship, the privilege of sitting in its senate and of holding land? for though I have been rash enough to buy several estates, my own opinion is, that, by the existing law of England, an Englishman of Hebrew faith cannot possess the soil.'

'But surely it would be easy to repeal a law so illiberal--'

'Oh! as for illiberality, I have no objection to it if it be an element of power. Eschew political sentimentalism. What I contend is, that if you permit men to accumulate property, and they use that permission to a great extent, power is inseparable from that property, and it is in the last degree impolitic to make it the interest of any powerful class to oppose the institutions under which they live. The Jews, for example, independently of the capital qualities for citizenship which they possess in their industry, temperance, and energy and vivacity of mind, are a race essentially monarchical, deeply religious, and shrinking themselves from converts as from a calamity, are ever anxious to see the religious systems of the countries in which they live flourish; yet, since your society has become agitated in England, and powerful combinations menace your institutions, you find the once loyal Hebrew invariably arrayed in the same ranks as the leveller, and the latitudinarian, and prepared to support the policy which may even endanger his life and property, rather than tamely continue under a system which seeks to degrade him. The Tories lose an important election at a critical moment; 'tis the Jews come forward to vote against them. The Church is alarmed at the scheme of a latitudinarian university, and learns with relief that funds are not forthcoming for its establishment; a Jew immediately advances and endows it. Yet the Jews, Coningsby, are essentially Tories. Toryism, indeed, is but copied from the mighty prototype which has fashioned Europe. And every

generation they must become more powerful and more dangerous to the society which is hostile to them. Do you think that the quiet humdrum persecution of a decorous representative of an English university can crush those who have successively baffled the Pharaohs, Nebuchadnezzar, Rome, and the Feudal ages? The fact is, you cannot destroy a pure race of the Caucasian organisation. It is a physiological fact; a simple law of nature, which has baffled Egyptian and Assyrian Kings, Roman Emperors, and Christian Inquisitors. No penal laws, no physical tortures, can effect that a superior race should be absorbed in an inferior, or be destroyed by it. The mixed persecuting races disappear; the pure persecuted race remains. And at this moment, in spite of centuries, of tens of centuries, of degradation, the Jewish mind exercises a vast influence on the affairs of Europe. I speak not of their laws, which you still obey; of their literature, with which your minds are saturated; but of the living Hebrew intellect.

'You never observe a great intellectual movement in Europe in which the Jews do not greatly participate. The first Jesuits were Jews; that mysterious Russian Diplomacy which so alarms Western Europe is organised and principally carried on by Jews; that mighty revolution which is at this moment preparing in Germany, and which will be, in fact, a second and greater Reformation, and of which so little is as yet known in England, is entirely developing under the auspices of Jews, who almost monopolise the professorial chairs of Germany. Neander, the founder of Spiritual Christianity, and who is Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Berlin, is a Jew. Benary, equally famous, and in the same University, is a Jew. Wehl, the Arabic Professor of Heidelberg, is a Jew. Years ago, when I was in Palestine, I met a German student who was accumulating materials for the History of Christianity, and studying the genius of the place; a modest and learned man. It was Wehl; then unknown, since become the first Arabic scholar of the day, and the author of the life of Mahomet. But for the German professors of this race, their name is Legion. I think there are more than ten at Berlin alone.

'I told you just now that I was going up to town tomorrow, because I always made it a rule to interpose when affairs of State were on the carpet. Otherwise, I never interfere. I hear of peace and war in newspapers, but I am never alarmed, except when I am informed that the Sovereigns want treasure; then I know that monarchs are serious.

'A few years back we were applied, to by Russia. Now, there has been no friendship between the Court of St. Petersburg and my family. It has Dutch connections, which have generally supplied it; and our representations in favour of the Polish Hebrews, a numerous race, but the most suffering and

degraded of all the tribes, have not been very agreeable to the Czar. However, circumstances drew to an approximation between the Romanoffs and the Sidonias. I resolved to go myself to St. Petersburg. I had, on my arrival, an interview with the Russian Minister of Finance, Count Cancrin; I beheld the son of a Lithuanian Jew. The loan was connected with the affairs of Spain; I resolved on repairing to Spain from Russia. I travelled without intermission. I had an audience immediately on my arrival with the Spanish Minister, Senor Mendizabel; I beheld one like myself, the son of a Nuevo Christiano, a Jew of Arragon. In consequence of what transpired at Madrid, I went straight to Paris to consult the President of the French Council; I beheld the son of a French Jew, a hero, an imperial marshal, and very properly so, for who should be military heroes if not those who worship the Lord of Hosts?'

'And is Soult a Hebrew?'

'Yes, and others of the French marshals, and the most famous; Massena, for example; his real name was Manasseh: but to my anecdote. The consequence of our consultations was, that some Northern power should be applied to in a friendly and mediative capacity. We fixed on Prussia; and the President of the Council made an application to the Prussian Minister, who attended a few days after our conference. Count Arnim entered the cabinet, and I beheld a Prussian Jew. So you see, my dear Coningsby, that the world is governed by very different personages from what is imagined by those who are not behind the scenes.'

'You startle, and deeply interest me.'

'You must study physiology, my dear child. Pure races of Caucasus may be persecuted, but they cannot be despised, except by the brutal ignorance of some mongrel breed, that brandishes fagots and howls extermination, but is itself exterminated without persecution, by that irresistible law of Nature which is fatal to curs.'

'But I come also from Caucasus,' said Coningsby.

'Verily; and thank your Creator for such a destiny: and your race is sufficiently pure. You come from the shores of the Northern Sea, land of the blue eye, and the golden hair, and the frank brow: 'tis a famous breed, with whom we Arabs have contended long; from whom we have suffered much: but these Goths, and Saxons, and Normans were doubtless great men.'

'But so favoured by Nature, why has not your race produced great poets, great orators, great writers?'

'Favoured by Nature and by Nature's God, we produced the lyre of David; we gave you Isaiah and Ezekiel; they are our Olynthians, our Philippics. Favoured by Nature we still remain: but in exact proportion as we have been favoured by Nature we have been persecuted by Man. After a thousand struggles; after acts of heroic courage that Rome has never equalled; deeds of divine patriotism that Athens, and Sparta, and Carthage have never excelled; we have endured fifteen hundred years of supernatural slavery, during which, every device that can degrade or destroy man has been the destiny that we have sustained and baffled. The Hebrew child has entered adolescence only to learn that he was the Pariah of that ungrateful Europe that owes to him the best part of its laws, a fine portion of its literature, all its religion. Great poets require a public; we have been content with the immortal melodies that we sung more than two thousand years ago by the waters of Babylon and wept. They record our triumphs; they solace our affliction. Great orators are the creatures of popular assemblies; we were permitted only by stealth to meet even in our temples. And as for great writers, the catalogue is not blank. What are all the schoolmen, Aquinas himself, to Maimonides? And as for modern philosophy, all springs from Spinoza.

'But the passionate and creative genius, that is the nearest link to Divinity, and which no human tyranny can destroy, though it can divert it; that should have stirred the hearts of nations by its inspired sympathy, or governed senates by its burning eloquence; has found a medium for its expression, to which, in spite of your prejudices and your evil passions, you have been obliged to bow. The ear, the voice, the fancy teeming with combinations, the imagination fervent with picture and emotion, that came from Caucasus, and which we have preserved unpolluted, have endowed us with almost the exclusive privilege of Music; that science of harmonious sounds, which the ancients recognised as most divine, and deified in the person of their most beautiful creation. I speak not of the past; though, were I to enter into the history of the lords of melody, you would find it the annals of Hebrew genius. But at this moment even, musical Europe is ours. There is not a company of singers, not an orchestra in a single capital, that is not crowded with our children under the feigned names which they adopt to conciliate the dark aversion which your posterity will some day disclaim with shame and disgust. Almost every great composer, skilled musician, almost every voice that ravishes you with its transporting strains, springs from our tribes. The catalogue is too vast to enumerate; too illustrious to dwell for a moment on secondary names, however eminent. Enough for us that the three great creative minds to whose exquisite inventions all nations at this moment yield, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, are of Hebrew race; and little do your men of

fashion, your muscadins of Paris, and your dandies of London, as they thrill into raptures at the notes of a Pasta or a Grisi, little do they suspect that they are offering their homage to "the sweet singers of Israel!"

CHAPTER XVI.

It was the noon of the day on which Sidonia was to leave the Castle. The wind was high; the vast white clouds scudded over the blue heaven; the leaves yet green, and tender branches snapped like glass, were whirled in eddies from the trees; the grassy sward undulated like the ocean with a thousand tints and shadows. From the window of the music-room Lucretia Colonna gazed on the turbulent sky.

The heaven of her heart, too, was disturbed.

She turned from the agitated external world to ponder over her inward emotion. She uttered a deep sigh.

Slowly she moved towards her harp; wildly, almost unconsciously, she touched with one hand its strings, while her eyes were fixed on the ground. An imperfect melody resounded; yet plaintive and passionate. It seemed to attract her soul. She raised her head, and then, touching the strings with both her hands, she poured forth tones of deep, yet thrilling power.

'I am a stranger in the halls of a stranger! Ah! whither shall I flee?
To the castle of my fathers in the green mountains; to the palace of my
fathers in the ancient city?
There is no flag on the castle of my fathers in the green mountains,
silent is the palace of my fathers in the ancient city.
Is there no home for the homeless? Can the unloved never find love?
Ah! thou fliest away, fleet cloud: he will leave us swifter than thee!
Alas! cutting wind, thy breath is not so cold as his heart!
I am a stranger in the halls of a stranger! Ah! whither shall I flee?'

The door of the music-room slowly opened. It was Sidonia. His hat was in his hand; he was evidently on the point of departure.

'Those sounds assured me,' he said calmly but kindly, as he advanced,

'that I might find you here, on which I scarcely counted at so early an hour.'

'You are going then?' said the Princess.

'My carriage is at the door; the Marquess has delayed me; I must be in London to-night. I conclude more abruptly than I could have wished one of the most agreeable visits I ever made; and I hope you will permit me to express to you how much I am indebted to you for a society which those should deem themselves fortunate who can more frequently enjoy.'

He held forth his hand; she extended hers, cold as marble, which he bent over, but did not press to his lips.

'Lord Monmouth talks of remaining here some time,' he observed; 'but I suppose next year, if not this, we shall all meet in some city of the earth?'

Lucretia bowed; and Sidonia, with a graceful reverence, withdrew.

The Princess Lucretia stood for some moments motionless; a sound attracted her to the window; she perceived the equipage of Sidonia whirling along the winding roads of the park. She watched it till it disappeared; then quitting the window, she threw herself into a chair, and buried her face in her shawl.

END OF BOOK IV.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

An University life did not bring to Coningsby that feeling of emancipation usually experienced by freshmen. The contrast between school and college life is perhaps, under any circumstances, less striking to the Etonian than to others: he has been prepared for becoming his own master by the liberty wisely entrusted to him in his boyhood, and which is, in general, discreetly exercised. But there were also other reasons why Coningsby should have been less impressed with the novelty of his life, and have

encountered less temptations than commonly are met with in the new existence which an University opens to youth. In the interval which had elapsed between quitting Eton and going to Cambridge, brief as the period may comparatively appear, Coningsby had seen much of the world. Three or four months, indeed, may not seem, at the first blush, a course of time which can very materially influence the formation of character; but time must not be counted by calendars, but by sensations, by thought. Coningsby had felt a good deal, reflected more. He had encountered a great number of human beings, offering a vast variety of character for his observation. It was not merely manners, but even the intellectual and moral development of the human mind, which in a great degree, unconsciously to himself, had been submitted to his study and his scrutiny. New trains of ideas had been opened to him; his mind was teeming with suggestions. The horizon of his intelligence had insensibly expanded. He perceived that there were other opinions in the world, besides those to which he had been habituated. The depths of his intellect had been stirred. He was a wiser man.

He distinguished three individuals whose acquaintance had greatly influenced his mind; Eustace Lyle, the elder Millbank, above all, Sidonia. He curiously meditated over the fact, that three English subjects, one of them a principal landed proprietor, another one of the most eminent manufacturers, and the third the greatest capitalist in the kingdom, all of them men of great intelligence, and doubtless of a high probity and conscience, were in their hearts disaffected with the political constitution of the country. Yet, unquestionably, these were the men among whom we ought to seek for some of our first citizens. What, then, was this repulsive quality in those institutions which we persisted in calling national, and which once were so? Here was a great question.

There was another reason, also, why Coningsby should feel a little fastidious among his new habits, and, without being aware of it, a little depressed. For three or four months, and for the first time in his life, he had passed his time in the continual society of refined and charming women. It is an acquaintance which, when habitual, exercises a great influence over the tone of the mind, even if it does not produce any more violent effects. It refines the taste, quickens the perception, and gives, as it were, a grace and flexibility to the intellect. Coningsby in his solitary rooms arranging his books, sighed when he recalled the Lady Everinghams and the Lady Therasas; the gracious Duchess; the frank, good-natured Madame Colonna; that deeply interesting enigma the Princess Lucretia; and the gentle Flora. He thought with disgust of the impending dissipation of an University, which could only be an exaggeration of their coarse frolics at school. It seemed rather vapid this mighty Cambridge, over which they had so often talked in the playing fields of Eton, with

such anticipations of its vast and absorbing interest. And those University honours that once were the great object of his aspirations, they did not figure in that grandeur with which they once haunted his imagination.

What Coningsby determined to conquer was knowledge. He had watched the influence of Sidonia in society with an eye of unceasing vigilance.

Coningsby perceived that all yielded to him; that Lord Monmouth even, who seemed to respect none, gave place to his intelligence; appealed to him, listened to him, was guided by him. What was the secret of this influence? Knowledge. On all subjects, his views were prompt and clear, and this not more from his native sagacity and reach of view, than from the aggregate of facts which rose to guide his judgment and illustrate his meaning, from all countries and all ages, instantly at his command.

The friends of Coningsby were now hourly arriving. It seemed when he met them again, that they had all suddenly become men since they had separated; Buckhurst especially. He had been at Paris, and returned with his mind very much opened, and trousers made quite in a new style. All his thoughts were, how soon he could contrive to get back again; and he told them endless stories of actresses, and dinners at fashionable _cafés_. Vere enjoyed Cambridge most, because he had been staying with his family since he quitted Eton. Henry Sydney was full of church architecture, national sports, restoration of the order of the Peasantry, and was to maintain a constant correspondence on these and similar subjects with Eustace Lyle. Finally, however, they all fell into a very fair, regular, routine life. They all read a little, but not with the enthusiasm which they had once projected. Buckhurst drove four-in-hand, and they all of them sometimes assisted him; but not immoderately. Their suppers were sometimes gay, but never outrageous; and, among all of them, the school friendship was maintained unbroken, and even undisturbed.

The fame of Coningsby preceded him at Cambridge. No man ever went up from whom more was expected in every way. The dons awaited a sucking member for the University, the undergraduates were prepared to welcome a new Alcibiades. He was neither: neither a prig nor a profligate; but a quiet, gentlemanlike, yet spirited young man, gracious to all, but intimate only with his old friends, and giving always an impression in his general tone that his soul was not absorbed in his University.

And yet, perhaps, he might have been coddled into a prig, or flattered into a profligate, had it not been for the intervening experience which he had gained between his school and college life. That had visibly impressed upon him, what before he had only faintly acquired from books, that there

was a greater and more real world awaiting him, than to be found in those bowers of Academus to which youth is apt at first to attribute an exaggerated importance. A world of action and passion, of power and peril; a world for which a great preparation was indeed necessary, severe and profound, but not altogether such an one as was now offered to him. Yet this want must be supplied, and by himself. Coningsby had already acquirements sufficiently considerable, with some formal application, to ensure him at all times his degree. He was no longer engrossed by the intention he once proudly entertained of trying for honours, and he chalked out for himself that range of reading, which, digested by his thought, should furnish him in some degree with that various knowledge of the history of man to which he aspired. No, we must not for a moment believe that accident could have long diverted the course of a character so strong. The same desire that prevented the Castle of his grandfather from proving a Castle of Indolence to him, that saved him from a too early initiation into the seductive distractions of a refined and luxurious society, would have preserved Coningsby from the puerile profligacy of a college life, or from being that idol of private tutors, a young pedant. It was that noble ambition, the highest and the best, that must be born in the heart and organised in the brain, which will not let a man be content, unless his intellectual power is recognised by his race, and desires that it should contribute to their welfare. It is the heroic feeling; the feeling that in old days produced demigods; without which no State is safe; without which political institutions are meat without salt; the Crown a bauble, the Church an establishment, Parliaments debating-clubs, and Civilisation itself but a fitful and transient dream.

CHAPTER II.

Less than a year after the arrival of Coningsby at Cambridge, and which he had only once quitted in the interval, and that to pass a short time in Berkshire with his friend Buckhurst, occurred the death of King William IV. This event necessarily induced a dissolution of the Parliament, elected under the auspices of Sir Robert Peel in 1834, and after the publication of the Tamworth Manifesto.

The death of the King was a great blow to what had now come to be generally styled the 'Conservative Cause.' It was quite unexpected; within a fortnight of his death, eminent persons still believed that 'it was only the hay-fever.' Had his Majesty lived until after the then impending

registration, the Whigs would have been again dismissed. Nor is there any doubt that, under these circumstances, the Conservative Cause would have secured for the new ministers a parliamentary majority. What would have been the consequences to the country, if the four years of Whig rule, from 1837 to 1841, had not occurred? It is easier to decide what would have been the consequences to the Whigs. Some of their great friends might have lacked blue ribbons and lord-lieutenancies, and some of their little friends comfortable places in the Customs and Excise. They would have lost, undoubtedly, the distribution of four years' patronage; we can hardly say the exercise of four years' power; but they would have existed at this moment as the most powerful and popular Opposition that ever flourished in this country, if, indeed, the course of events had not long ere this carried them back to their old posts in a proud and intelligible position. The Reform Bill did not do more injury to the Tories, than the attempt to govern this country without a decided Parliamentary majority did the Whigs. The greatest of all evils is a weak government. They cannot carry good measures, they are forced to carry bad ones.

The death of the King was a great blow to the Conservative Cause; that is to say, it darkened the brow of Tadpole, quailed the heart of Taper, crushed all the rising hopes of those numerous statesmen who believe the country must be saved if they receive twelve hundred a-year. It is a peculiar class, that; 1,200_l._ per annum, paid quarterly, is their idea of political science and human nature. To receive 1,200_l._ per annum is government; to try to receive 1,200_l._ per annum is opposition; to wish to receive 1,200_l._ per annum is ambition. If a man wants to get into Parliament, and does not want to get 1,200_l._ per annum, they look upon him as daft; as a benighted being. They stare in each other's face, and ask, 'What can ***** want to get into Parliament for?' They have no conception that public reputation is a motive power, and with many men the greatest. They have as much idea of fame or celebrity, even of the masculine impulse of an honourable pride, as eunuchs of manly joys.

The twelve-hundred-a-yearers were in despair about the King's death. Their loyal souls were sorely grieved that his gracious Majesty had not outlived the Registration. All their happy inventions about 'hay-fever,' circulated in confidence, and sent by post to chairmen of Conservative Associations, followed by a royal funeral! General election about to take place with the old registration; government boroughs against them, and the young Queen for a cry. What a cry! Youth, beauty, and a Queen! Taper grew pale at the thought. What could they possibly get up to countervail it? Even Church and Corn-laws together would not do; and then Church was sulky, for the Conservative Cause had just made it a present of a commission, and all that the country gentlemen knew of Conservatism was, that it would not

repeal the Malt Tax, and had made them repeal their pledges. Yet a cry must be found. A dissolution without a cry, in the Taper philosophy, would be a world without a sun. A rise might be got by 'Independence of the House of Lords;' and Lord Lyndhurst's summaries might be well circulated at one penny per hundred, large discount allowed to Conservative Associations, and endless credit. Tadpole, however, was never very fond of the House of Lords; besides, it was too limited. Tadpole wanted the young Queen brought in; the rogue! At length, one morning, Taper came up to him with a slip of paper, and a smile of complacent austerity on his dull visage, 'I think, Mr. Tadpole, that will do!'

Tadpole took the paper and read, 'OUR YOUNG QUEEN, AND OUR OLD INSTITUTIONS.'

The eyes of Tadpole sparkled as if they had met a gnomish sentence of Periander or Thales; then turning to Taper, he said,

'What do you think of "ancient," instead of "old"?''

'You cannot have "Our modern Queen and our ancient Institutions,"' said Mr. Taper.

The dissolution was soon followed by an election for the borough of Cambridge. The Conservative Cause candidate was an old Etonian. That was a bond of sympathy which imparted zeal even to those who were a little sceptical of the essential virtues of Conservatism. Every undergraduate especially who remembered 'the distant spires,' became enthusiastic. Buckhurst took a very decided part. He cheered, he canvassed, he brought men to the poll whom none could move; he influenced his friends and his companions. Even Coningsby caught the contagion, and Vere, who had imbibed much of Coningsby's political sentiment, prevailed on himself to be neutral. The Conservative Cause triumphed in the person of its Eton champion. The day the member was chaired, several men in Coningsby's rooms were talking over their triumph.

'By Jove!' said the panting Buckhurst, throwing himself on the sofa, 'it was well done; never was any thing better done. An immense triumph! The greatest triumph the Conservative Cause has had. And yet,' he added, laughing, 'if any fellow were to ask me what the Conservative Cause is, I am sure I should not know what to say.'

'Why, it is the cause of our glorious institutions,' said Coningsby. 'A Crown robbed of its prerogatives; a Church controlled by a commission; and an Aristocracy that does not lead.'

'Under whose genial influence the order of the Peasantry, "a country's pride," has vanished from the face of the land,' said Henry Sydney, 'and is succeeded by a race of serfs, who are called labourers, and who burn ricks.'

'Under which,' continued Coningsby, 'the Crown has become a cipher; the Church a sect; the Nobility drones; and the People drudges.'

'It is the great constitutional cause,' said Lord Vere, 'that refuses everything to opposition; yields everything to agitation; conservative in Parliament, destructive out-of-doors; that has no objection to any change provided only it be effected by unauthorised means.'

'The first public association of men,' said Coningsby, 'who have worked for an avowed end without enunciating a single principle.'

'And who have established political infidelity throughout the land,' said Lord Henry.

'By Jove!' said Buckhurst, 'what infernal fools we have made ourselves this last week!'

'Nay,' said Coningsby, smiling, 'it was our last schoolboy weakness. Floreat Etona, under all circumstances.'

'I certainly, Coningsby,' said Lord Vere, 'shall not assume the Conservative Cause, instead of the cause for which Hampden died in the field, and Sydney on the scaffold.'

'The cause for which Hampden died in the field and Sydney on the scaffold,' said Coningsby, 'was the cause of the Venetian Republic.'

'How, how?' cried Buckhurst.

'I repeat it,' said Coningsby. 'The great object of the Whig leaders in England from the first movement under Hampden to the last most successful one in 1688, was to establish in England a high aristocratic republic on the model of the Venetian, then the study and admiration of all speculative politicians. Read Harrington; turn over Algernon Sydney; then you will see how the minds of the English leaders in the seventeenth century were saturated with the Venetian type. And they at length succeeded. William III. found them out. He told the Whig leaders, "I will not be a Doge." He balanced parties; he baffled them as the Puritans

baffled them fifty years before. The reign of Anne was a struggle between the Venetian and the English systems. Two great Whig nobles, Argyle and Somerset, worthy of seats in the Council of Ten, forced their Sovereign on her deathbed to change the ministry. They accomplished their object. They brought in a new family on their own terms. George I. was a Doge; George II. was a Doge; they were what William III., a great man, would not be. George III. tried not to be a Doge, but it was impossible materially to resist the deeply-laid combination. He might get rid of the Whig magnificoes, but he could not rid himself of the Venetian constitution. And a Venetian constitution did govern England from the accession of the House of Hanover until 1832. Now I do not ask you, Vere, to relinquish the political tenets which in ordinary times would have been your inheritance. All I say is, the constitution introduced by your ancestors having been subverted by their descendants your contemporaries, beware of still holding Venetian principles of government when you have not a Venetian constitution to govern with. Do what I am doing, what Henry Sydney and Buckhurst are doing, what other men that I could mention are doing, hold yourself aloof from political parties which, from the necessity of things, have ceased to have distinctive principles, and are therefore practically only factions; and wait and see, whether with patience, energy, honour, and Christian faith, and a desire to look to the national welfare and not to sectional and limited interests; whether, I say, we may not discover some great principles to guide us, to which we may adhere, and which then, if true, will ultimately guide and control others.'

'The Whigs are worn out,' said Vere, 'Conservatism is a sham, and Radicalism is pollution.'

'I certainly,' said Buckhurst, 'when I get into the House of Commons, shall speak my mind without reference to any party whatever; and all I hope is, we may all come in at the same time, and then we may make a party of our own.'

'I have always heard my father say,' said Vere, 'that there was nothing so difficult as to organise an independent party in the House of Commons.'

'Ay! but that was in the Venetian period, Vere,' said Henry Sydney, smiling.

'I dare say,' said Buckhurst, 'the only way to make a party in the House of Commons is just the one that succeeds anywhere else. Men must associate together. When you are living in the same set, dining together every day, and quizzing the Dons, it is astonishing how well men agree. As for me, I never would enter into a conspiracy, unless the conspirators were fellows

who had been at Eton with me; and then there would be no treachery.'

'Let us think of principles, and not of parties,' said Coningsby.

'For my part,' said Buckhurst, 'whenever a political system is breaking up, as in this country at present, I think the very best thing is to brush all the old Dons off the stage. They never take to the new road kindly. They are always hampered by their exploded prejudices and obsolete traditions. I don't think a single man, Vere, that sat in the Venetian Senate ought to be allowed to sit in the present English House of Commons.'

'Well, no one does in our family except my uncle Philip,' said Lord Henry; 'and the moment I want it, he will resign; for he detests Parliament. It interferes so with his hunting.'

'Well, we all have fair parliamentary prospects,' said Buckhurst. 'That is something. I wish we were in now.'

'Heaven forbid!' said Coningsby. 'I tremble at the responsibility of a seat at any time. With my present unsettled and perplexed views, there is nothing from which I should recoil so much as the House of Commons.'

'I quite agree with you,' said Henry Sydney. 'The best thing we can do is to keep as clear of political party as we possibly can. How many men waste the best part of their lives in painfully apologising for conscientious deviation from a parliamentary course which they adopted when they were boys, without thought, or prompted by some local connection, or interest, to secure a seat.'

It was the midnight following the morning when this conversation took place, that Coningsby, alone, and having just quitted a rather boisterous party of wassailers who had been celebrating at Buckhurst's rooms the triumph of 'Eton Statesmen,' if not of Conservative principles, stopped in the precincts of that Royal College that reminded him of his schooldays, to cool his brow in the summer air, that even at that hour was soft, and to calm his mind in the contemplation of the still, the sacred, and the beautiful scene that surrounded him.

There rose that fane, the pride and boast of Cambridge, not unworthy to rank among the chief temples of Christendom. Its vast form was exaggerated in the uncertain hour; part shrouded in the deepest darkness, while a flood of silver light suffused its southern side, distinguished with revealing beam the huge ribs of its buttresses, and bathed with mild

lustre its airy pinnacles.

'Where is the spirit that raised these walls?' thought Coningsby. 'Is it indeed extinct? Is then this civilisation, so much vaunted, inseparable from moderate feelings and little thoughts? If so, give me back barbarism! But I cannot believe it. Man that is made in the image of the Creator, is made for God-like deeds. Come what come may, I will cling to the heroic principle. It can alone satisfy my soul.'

CHAPTER III.

We must now revert to the family, or rather the household, of Lord Monmouth, in which considerable changes and events had occurred since the visit of Coningsby to the Castle in the preceding autumn.

In the first place, the earliest frost of the winter had carried off the aged proprietor of Hellingsley, that contiguous estate which Lord Monmouth so much coveted, the possession of which was indeed one of the few objects of his life, and to secure which he was prepared to pay far beyond its intrinsic value, great as that undoubtedly was. Yet Lord Monmouth did not become its possessor. Long as his mind had been intent upon the subject, skilful as had been his combinations to secure his prey, and unlimited the means which were to achieve his purpose, another stepped in, and without his privity, without even the consolation of a struggle, stole away the prize; and this too a man whom he hated, almost the only individual out of his own family that he did hate; a man who had crossed him before in similar enterprises; who was his avowed foe; had lavished treasure to oppose him in elections; raised associations against his interest; established journals to assail him; denounced him in public; agitated against him in private; had declared more than once that he would make 'the county too hot for him;' his personal, inveterate, indomitable foe, Mr. Millbank of Millbank.

The loss of Hellingsley was a bitter disappointment to Lord Monmouth; but the loss of it to such an adversary touched him to the quick. He did not seek to control his anger; he could not succeed even in concealing his agitation. He threw upon Rigby that glance so rare with him, but under which men always quailed; that play of the eye which Lord Monmouth shared in common with Henry VIII., that struck awe into the trembling Commons when they had given an obnoxious vote, as the King entered the gallery of

his palace, and looked around him.

It was a look which implied that dreadful question, 'Why have I bought you that such things should happen? Why have I unlimited means and unscrupulous agents?' It made Rigby even feel; even his brazen tones were hushed.

To fly from everything disagreeable was the practical philosophy of Lord Monmouth; but he was as brave as he was sensual. He would not shrink before the new proprietor of Hellingsley. He therefore remained at the Castle with an aching heart, and redoubled his hospitalities. An ordinary mind might have been soothed by the unceasing consideration and the skilful and delicate flattery that ever surrounded Lord Monmouth; but his sagacious intelligence was never for a moment the dupe of his vanity. He had no self-love, and as he valued no one, there were really no feelings to play upon. He saw through everybody and everything; and when he had detected their purpose, discovered their weakness or their vileness, he calculated whether they could contribute to his pleasure or his convenience in a degree that counterbalanced the objections which might be urged against their intentions, or their less pleasing and profitable qualities. To be pleased was always a principal object with Lord Monmouth; but when a man wants vengeance, gay amusement is not exactly a satisfactory substitute.

A month elapsed. Lord Monmouth with a serene or smiling visage to his guests, but in private taciturn and morose, scarcely ever gave a word to Mr. Rigby, but continually bestowed on him glances which painfully affected the appetite of that gentleman. In a hundred ways it was intimated to Mr. Rigby that he was not a welcome guest, and yet something was continually given him to do which rendered it impossible for him to take his departure. In this state of affairs, another event occurred which changed the current of feeling, and by its possible consequences distracted the Marquess from his brooding meditations over his discomfiture in the matter of Hellingsley. The Prince Colonna, who, since the steeple-chase, had imbibed a morbid predilection for such amusements, and indeed for every species of rough-riding, was thrown from his horse and killed on the spot.

This calamity broke up the party at Coningsby, which was not at the moment very numerous. Mr. Rigby, by command, instantly seized the opportunity of preventing the arrival of other guests who were expected. This catastrophe was the cause of Mr. Rigby resuming in a great measure his old position in the Castle. There were a great many things to be done, and all disagreeable; he achieved them all, and studied everybody's convenience.

Coroners' inquests, funerals especially, weeping women, these were all spectacles which Lord Monmouth could not endure, but he was so high-bred, that he would not for the world that there should be in manner or degree the slightest deficiency in propriety or even sympathy. But he wanted somebody to do everything that was proper; to be considerate and consoling and sympathetic. Mr. Rigby did it all; gave evidence at the inquest, was chief mourner at the funeral, and arranged everything so well that not a single emblem of death crossed the sight of Lord Monmouth; while Madame Colonna found submission in his exhortations, and the Princess Lucretia, a little more pale and pensive than usual, listened with tranquillity to his discourse on the vanity of all sublunary things.

When the tumult had subsided, and habits and feelings had fallen into their old routine and relapsed into their ancient channels, the Marquess proposed that they should all return to London, and with great formality, though with warmth, begged that Madame Colonna would ever consider his roof as her own. All were glad to quit the Castle, which now presented a scene so different from its former animation, and Madame Colonna, weeping, accepted the hospitality of her friend, until the impending expansion of the spring would permit her to return to Italy. This notice of her return to her own country seemed to occasion the Marquess great disquietude.

After they had remained about a month in London, Madame Colonna sent for Mr. Rigby one morning to tell him how very painful it was to her feelings to remain under the roof of Monmouth House without the sanction of a husband; that the circumstance of being a foreigner, under such unusual affliction, might have excused, though not authorised, the step at first, and for a moment; but that the continuance of such a course was quite out of the question; that she owed it to herself, to her step-child, no longer to trespass on this friendly hospitality, which, if persisted in, might be liable to misconstruction. Mr. Rigby listened with great attention to this statement, and never in the least interrupted Madame Colonna; and then offered to do that which he was convinced the lady desired, namely, to make the Marquess acquainted with the painful state of her feelings. This he did according to his fashion, and with sufficient dexterity. Mr. Rigby himself was anxious to know which way the wind blew, and the mission with which he had been entrusted, fell in precisely with his inclinations and necessities. The Marquess listened to the communication and sighed, then turned gently round and surveyed himself in the mirror and sighed again, then said to Rigby,

'You understand exactly what I mean, Rigby. It is quite ridiculous their going, and infinitely distressing to me. They must stay.'

Rigby repaired to the Princess full of mysterious bustle, and with a face beaming with importance and satisfaction. He made much of the two sighs; fully justified the confidence of the Marquess in his comprehension of unexplained intentions; prevailed on Madame Colonna to have some regard for the feelings of one so devoted; expatiated on the insignificance of worldly misconstructions, when replied to by such honourable intentions; and fully succeeded in his mission. They did stay. Month after month rolled on, and still they stayed; every month all the family becoming more resigned or more content, and more cheerful. As for the Marquess himself, Mr. Rigby never remembered him more serene and even joyous. His Lordship scarcely ever entered general society. The Colonna family remained in strict seclusion; and he preferred the company of these accomplished and congenial friends to the mob of the great world.

Between Madame Colonna and Mr. Rigby there had always subsisted considerable confidence. Now, that gentleman seemed to have achieved fresh and greater claims to her regard. In the pleasure with which he looked forward to her approaching alliance with his patron, he reminded her of the readiness with which he had embraced her suggestions for the marriage of her daughter with Coningsby. Always obliging, she was never wearied of chanting his praises to her noble admirer, who was apparently much gratified she should have bestowed her esteem on one of whom she would necessarily in after-life see so much. It is seldom the lot of husbands that their confidential friends gain the regards of their brides.

'I am glad you all like Rigby,' said Lord Monmouth, 'as you will see so much of him.'

The remembrance of the Hellingsley failure seemed to be erased from the memory of the Marquess. Rigby never recollected him more cordial and confidential, and more equable in his manner. He told Rigby one day, that he wished that Monmouth House should possess the most sumptuous and the most fanciful boudoir in London or Paris. What a hint for Rigby! That gentleman consulted the first artists, and gave them some hints in return; his researches on domestic decoration ranged through all ages; he even meditated a rapid tour to mature his inventions; but his confidence in his native taste and genius ultimately convinced him that this movement was unnecessary.

The summer advanced; the death of the King occurred; the dissolution summoned Rigby to Coningsby and the borough of Darlford. His success was marked certain in the secret books of Tadpole and Taper. A manufacturing town, enfranchised under the Reform Act, already gained by the Conservative cause! Here was reaction; here influence of property!

Influence of character, too; for no one was so popular as Lord Monmouth; a most distinguished nobleman of strict Conservative principles, who, if he carried the county and the manufacturing borough also, merited the strawberry-leaf.

'There will be no holding Rigby,' said Taper; 'I'm afraid he will be looking for something very high.'

'The higher the better,' rejoined Tadpole, 'and then he will not interfere with us. I like your high-flyers; it is your plodders I detest, wearing old hats and high-lows, speaking in committee, and thinking they are men of business: d---n them!'

Rigby went down, and made some impressive speeches; at least they read very well in some of his second-rate journals, where all the uproar figured as loud cheering, and the interruption of a cabbage-stalk was represented as a question from some intelligent individual in the crowd. The fact is, Rigby bored his audience too much with history, especially with the French Revolution, which he fancied was his 'forte,' so that the people at last, whenever he made any allusion to the subject, were almost as much terrified as if they had seen the guillotine.

Rigby had as yet one great advantage; he had no opponent; and without personal opposition, no contest can be very bitter. It was for some days Rigby _versus_ Liberal principles; and Rigby had much the best of it; for he abused Liberal principles roundly in his harangues, who, not being represented on the occasion, made no reply; while plenty of ale, and some capital songs by Lucian Gay, who went down express, gave the right cue to the mob, who declared in chorus, beneath the windows of Rigby's hotel, that he was 'a fine old English gentleman!'

But there was to be a contest; no question about that, and a sharp one, although Rigby was to win, and well. The Liberal party had been so fastidious about their new candidate, that they had none ready though several biting. Jawster Sharp thought at one time that sheer necessity would give him another chance still; but even Rigby was preferable to Jawster Sharp, who, finding it would not do, published his long-prepared valedictory address, in which he told his constituents, that having long sacrificed his health to their interests, he was now obliged to retire into the bosom of his family. And a very well-provided-for family, too.

All this time the Liberal deputation from Darlford, two aldermen, three town-councillors, and the Secretary of the Reform Association, were walking about London like mad things, eating luncheons and looking for a

candidate. They called at the Reform Club twenty times in the morning, badgered whips and red-tapers; were introduced to candidates, badgered candidates; examined would-be members as if they were at a cattle-show, listened to political pedigrees, dictated political pledges, referred to Hansard to see how men had voted, inquired whether men had spoken, finally discussed terms. But they never could hit the right man. If the principles were right, there was no money; and if money were ready, money would not take pledges. In fact, they wanted a Phoenix: a very rich man, who would do exactly as they liked, with extremely low opinions and with very high connections.

'If he would go for the ballot and had a handle to his name, it would have the best effect,' said the secretary of the Reform Association, 'because you see we are fighting against a Right Honourable, and you have no idea how that takes with the mob.'

The deputation had been three days in town, and urged by despatches by every train to bring affairs to a conclusion; jaded, perplexed, confused, they were ready to fall into the hands of the first jobber or bold adventurer. They discussed over their dinner at a Strand coffee-house the claims of the various candidates who had presented themselves. Mr. Donald Macpherson Macfarlane, who would only pay the legal expenses; he was soon despatched. Mr. Gingerly Browne, of Jermyn Street, the younger son of a baronet, who would go as far as 1000_l._ provided the seat was secured. Mr. Juggins, a distiller, 2000_l._ man; but would not agree to any annual subscriptions. Sir Baptist Placid, vague about expenditure, but repeatedly declaring that 'there could be no difficulty on that head.' He however had a moral objection to subscribing to the races, and that was a great point at Darlford. Sir Baptist would subscribe a guinea per annum to the infirmary, and the same to all religious societies without any distinction of sects; but races, it was not the sum, 100_l._ per annum, but the principle. He had a moral objection.

In short, the deputation began to suspect, what was the truth, that they were a day after the fair, and that all the electioneering rips that swarm in the purlieus of political clubs during an impending dissolution of Parliament, men who become political characters in their small circle because they have been talked of as once having an intention to stand for places for which they never offered themselves, or for having stood for places where they never could by any circumstance have succeeded, were in fact nibbling at their dainty morsel.

At this moment of despair, a ray of hope was imparted to them by a confidential note from a secretary of the Treasury, who wished to see them

at the Reform Club on the morrow. You may be sure they were punctual to their appointment. The secretary received them with great consideration. He had got them a candidate, and one of high mark, the son of a Peer, and connected with the highest Whig houses. Their eyes sparkled. A real honourable. If they liked he would introduce them immediately to the Honourable Alberic de Crecy. He had only to introduce them, as there was no difficulty either as to means or opinions, expenses or pledges.

The secretary returned with a young gentleman, whose diminutive stature would seem, from his smooth and singularly puerile countenance, to be merely the consequence of his very tender years; but Mr. De Crecy was really of age, or at least would be by nomination-day. He did not say a word, but looked like the rosebud which dangled in the button-hole of his frock-coat. The aldermen and town-councillors were what is sometimes emphatically styled flabbergasted; they were speechless from bewilderment. 'Mr. De Crecy will go for the ballot,' said the secretary of the Treasury, with an audacious eye and a demure look, 'and for Total and Immediate, if you press him hard; but don't, if you can help it, because he has an uncle, an old county member, who has prejudices, and might disinherit him. However, we answer for him. And I am very happy that I have been the means of bringing about an arrangement which, I feel, will be mutually advantageous.' And so saying, the secretary effected his escape.

Circumstances, however, retarded for a season the political career of the Honourable Alberic de Crecy. While the Liberal party at Darlford were suffering under the daily inflictions of Mr. Rigby's slashing style, and the post brought them very unsatisfactory prospects of a champion, one offered himself, and in an address which intimated that he was no man of straw, likely to recede from any contest in which he chose to embark. The town was suddenly placarded with a letter to the Independent Electors from Mr. Millbank, the new proprietor of Hellingsley.

He expressed himself as one not anxious to obtrude himself on their attention, and founding no claim to their confidence on his recent acquisition; but at the same time as one resolved that the free and enlightened community, with which he must necessarily hereafter be much connected, should not become the nomination borough of any Peer of the realm without a struggle, if they chose to make one. And so he offered himself if they could not find a better candidate, without waiting for the ceremony of a requisition. He was exactly the man they wanted; and though he had 'no handle to his name,' and was somewhat impracticable about pledges, his fortune was so great, and his character so high, that it might be hoped that the people would be almost as content as if they were appealed to by some obscure scion of factitious nobility, subscribing to

political engagements which he could not comprehend, and which, in general, are vomited with as much facility as they are swallowed.

CHAPTER IV.

The people of Darlford, who, as long as the contest for their representation remained between Mr. Rigby and the abstraction called Liberal Principles, appeared to be very indifferent about the result, the moment they learned that for the phrase had been substituted a substance, and that, too, in the form of a gentleman who was soon to figure as their resident neighbour, became excited, speedily enthusiastic. All the bells of all the churches rang when Mr. Millbank commenced his canvass; the Conservatives, on the alert, if not alarmed, insisted on their champion also showing himself in all directions; and in the course of four-and-twenty hours, such is the contagion of popular feeling, the town was divided into two parties, the vast majority of which were firmly convinced that the country could only be saved by the return of Mr. Rigby, or preserved from inevitable destruction by the election of Mr. Millbank.

The results of the two canvasses were such as had been anticipated from the previous reports of the respective agents and supporters. In these days the personal canvass of a candidate is a mere form. The whole country that is to be invaded has been surveyed and mapped out before entry; every position reconnoitred; the chain of communications complete. In the present case, as was not unusual, both candidates were really supported by numerous and reputable adherents; and both had good grounds for believing that they would be ultimately successful. But there was a body of the electors sufficiently numerous to turn the election, who would not promise their votes: conscientious men who felt the responsibility of the duty that the constitution had entrusted to their discharge, and who would not make up their minds without duly weighing the respective merits of the two rivals. This class of deeply meditative individuals are distinguished not only by their pensive turn of mind, but by a charitable vein that seems to pervade their being. Not only will they think of your request, but for their parts they wish both sides equally well. Decision, indeed, as it must dash the hopes of one of their solicitors, seems infinitely painful to them; they have always a good reason for postponing it. If you seek their suffrage during the canvass, they reply, that the writ not having come down, the day of election is not yet fixed. If you call again to inform them that the writ has arrived, they rejoin, that perhaps after all

there may not be a contest. If you call a third time, half dead with fatigue, to give them friendly notice that both you and your rival have pledged yourselves to go to the poll, they twitch their trousers, rub their hands, and with a dull grin observe,

'Well, sir, we shall see.'

'Come, Mr. Jobson,' says one of the committee, with an insinuating smile, 'give Mr. Millbank one.'

'Jobson, I think you and I know each other,' says a most influential supporter, with a knowing nod.

'Yes, Mr. Smith, I should think we did.'

'Come, come, give us one.'

'Well, I have not made up my mind yet, gentlemen.'

'Jobson!' says a solemn voice, 'didn't you tell me the other night you wished well to this gentleman?'

'So I do; I wish well to everybody,' replies the imperturbable Jobson.

'Well, Jobson,' exclaims another member of the committee, with a sigh, 'who could have supposed that you would have been an enemy?'

'I don't wish to be no enemy to no man, Mr. Trip.'

'Come, Jobson,' says a jolly tanner, 'if I wanted to be a Parliament man, I don't think you could refuse me one!'

'I don't think I could, Mr. Oakfield.'

'Well, then, give it to my friend.'

'Well, sir, I'll think about it.'

'Leave him to me,' says another member of the committee, with a significant look. 'I know how to get round him. It's all right.'

'Yes, leave him to Hayfield, Mr. Millbank; he knows how to manage him.'

But all the same, Jobson continues to look as little tractable and lamb-

like as can be well fancied.

And here, in a work which, in an unpretending shape, aspires to take neither an uninformed nor a partial view of the political history of the ten eventful years of the Reform struggle, we should pause for a moment to observe the strangeness, that only five years after the reconstruction of the electoral body by the Whig party, in a borough called into political existence by their policy, a manufacturing town, too, the candidate comprising in his person every quality and circumstance which could recommend him to the constituency, and his opponent the worst specimen of the Old Generation, a political adventurer, who owed the least disreputable part of his notoriety to his opposition to the Reform Bill; that in such a borough, under such circumstances, there should be a contest, and that, too, one of a very doubtful issue.

What was the cause of this? Are we to seek it in the 'Reaction' of the Tadpoles and the Tapers? That would not be a satisfactory solution. Reaction, to a certain extent, is the law of human existence. In the particular state of affairs before us, England after the Reform Act, it never could be doubtful that Time would gradually, and in some instances rapidly, counteract the national impulse of 1832. There never could have been a question, for example, that the English counties would have reverted to their natural allegiance to their proprietors; but the results of the appeals to the third Estate in 1835 and 1837 are not to be accounted for by a mere readjustment of legitimate influences.

The truth is, that, considerable as are the abilities of the Whig leaders, highly accomplished as many of them unquestionably must be acknowledged in parliamentary debate, experienced in council, sedulous in office, eminent as scholars, powerful from their position, the absence of individual influence, and of the pervading authority of a commanding mind, have been the cause of the fall of the Whig party.

Such a supremacy was generally acknowledged in Lord Grey on the accession of this party to power: but it was the supremacy of a tradition rather than of a fact. Almost at the outset of his authority his successor was indicated. When the crisis arrived, the intended successor was not in the Whig ranks. It is in this virtual absence of a real and recognised leader, almost from the moment that they passed their great measure, that we must seek a chief cause of all that insubordination, all those distempered ambitions, and all those dark intrigues, that finally broke up, not only the Whig government, but the Whig party; demoralised their ranks, and sent them to the country, both in 1835 and 1837, with every illusion, which had operated so happily in their favour in 1832, scattered to the winds. In

all things we trace the irresistible influence of the individual.

And yet the interval that elapsed between 1835 and 1837 proved, that there was all this time in the Whig array one entirely competent to the office of leading a great party, though his capacity for that fulfilment was too tardily recognised.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL has that degree of imagination, which, though evinced rather in sentiment than expression, still enables him to generalise from the details of his reading and experience; and to take those comprehensive views, which, however easily depreciated by ordinary men in an age of routine, are indispensable to a statesman in the conjunctures in which we live. He understands, therefore, his position; and he has the moral intrepidity which prompts him ever to dare that which his intellect assures him is politic. He is consequently, at the same time, sagacious and bold in council. As an administrator he is prompt and indefatigable. He is not a natural orator, and labours under physical deficiencies which even a Demosthenic impulse could scarcely overcome. But he is experienced in debate, quick in reply, fertile in resource, takes large views, and frequently compensates for a dry and hesitating manner by the expression of those noble truths that flash across the fancy, and rise spontaneously to the lip, of men of poetic temperament when addressing popular assemblies. If we add to this, a private life of dignified repute, the accidents of his birth and rank, which never can be severed from the man, the scion of a great historic family, and born, as it were, to the hereditary service of the State, it is difficult to ascertain at what period, or under what circumstances, the Whig party have ever possessed, or could obtain, a more efficient leader.

But we must return to the Darford election. The class of thoughtful voters was sufficiently numerous in that borough to render the result of the contest doubtful to the last; and on the eve of the day of nomination both parties were equally sanguine.

Nomination-day altogether is an unsatisfactory affair. There is little to be done, and that little mere form. The tedious hours remain, and no one can settle his mind to anything. It is not a holiday, for every one is serious; it is not business, for no one can attend to it; it is not a contest, for there is no canvassing; nor an election, for there is no poll. It is a day of lounging without an object, and luncheons without an appetite; of hopes and fears; confidence and dejection; bravado bets and secret hedging; and, about midnight, of furious suppers of grilled bones, brandy-and-water, and recklessness.

The president and vice-president of the Conservative Association, the secretary and the four solicitors who were agents, had impressed upon Mr. Rigby that it was of the utmost importance, and must produce a great moral effect, if he obtain the show of hands. With his powers of eloquence and their secret organisation, they flattered themselves it might be done. With this view, Rigby inflicted a speech of more than two hours' duration on the electors, who bore it very kindly, as the mob likes, above all things, that the ceremonies of nomination-day should not be cut short: moreover, there is nothing that the mob likes so much as a speech. Rigby therefore had, on the whole, a far from unfavourable audience, and he availed himself of their forbearance. He brought in his crack theme, the guillotine, and dilated so elaborately upon its qualities, that one of the gentlemen below could not refrain from exclaiming, 'I wish you may get it.' This exclamation gave Mr. Rigby what is called a great opening, which, like a practised speaker, he immediately seized. He denounced the sentiment as 'un-English,' and got much cheered. Excited by this success, Rigby began to call everything else 'un-English' with which he did not agree, until menacing murmurs began to rise, when he shifted the subject, and rose into a grand peroration, in which he assured them that the eyes of the whole empire were on this particular election; cries of 'That's true,' from all sides; and that England expected every man to do his duty.

'And who do you expect to do yours?' inquired a gentleman below,' about that 'ere pension?'

'Rigby,' screeched a hoarse voice, 'don't you mind; you guv it them well.'

'Rigby, keep up your spirits, old chap: we will have you.'

'Now!' said a stentorian voice; and a man as tall as Saul looked round him. This was the engaged leader of the Conservative mob; the eye of every one of his minions was instantly on him. 'Now! Our young Queen and our Old Institutions! Rigby for ever!'

This was a signal for the instant appearance of the leader of the Liberal mob. Magog Wrath, not so tall as Bully Bluck, his rival, had a voice almost as powerful, a back much broader, and a countenance far more forbidding. 'Now, my boys, the Queen and Millbank for ever!'

These rival cries were the signals for a fight between the two bands of gladiators in the face of the hustings, the body of the people little interfering. Bully Bluck seized Magog Wrath's colours; they wrestled, they seized each other; their supporters were engaged in mutual contest; it appeared to be a most alarming and perilous fray; several ladies from the

windows screamed, one fainted; a band of special constables pushed their way through the mob; you heard their staves resounded on the skulls of all who opposed them, especially the little boys: order was at length restored; and, to tell the truth, the only hurts inflicted were those which came from the special constables. Bully Bluck and Magog Wrath, with all their fierce looks, flaunting colours, loud cheers, and desperate assaults, were, after all, only a couple of Condottieri, who were cautious never to wound each other. They were, in fact, a peaceful police, who kept the town in awe, and prevented others from being mischievous who were more inclined to do harm. Their hired gangs were the safety-valves for all the scamps of the borough, who, receiving a few shillings per head for their nominal service, and as much drink as they liked after the contest, were bribed and organised into peace and sobriety on the days in which their excesses were most to be apprehended.

Now Mr. Millbank came forward: he was brief compared with Mr. Rigby; but clear and terse. No one could misunderstand him. He did not favour his hearers with any history, but gave them his views about taxes, free trade, placemen, and pensioners, whoever and wherever they might be.

'Hilloa, Rigby, about that 'ere pension?'

'Millbank for ever! We will have him.'

'Never mind, Rigby, you'll come in next time.'

Mr. Millbank was energetic about resident representatives, but did not understand that a resident representative meant the nominee of a great Lord, who lived in a great castle; great cheering. There was a Lord once who declared that, if he liked, he would return his negro valet to Parliament; but Mr. Millbank thought those days were over. It remained for the people of Darlford to determine whether he was mistaken.

'Never!' exclaimed the mob. 'Millbank for ever! Rigby in the river! No niggers, no walets!'

'Three groans for Rigby.'

'His language ain't as purty as the Lunnun chap's,' said a critic below; 'but he speaks from his 'art: and give me the man who 'as got a 'art.'

'That's your time of day, Mr. Robinson.'

'Now!' said Magog Wrath, looking around. 'Now, the Queen and Millbank for

ever! Hurrah!

The show of hands was entirely in favour of Mr. Millbank. Scarcely a hand was held up for Mr. Rigby below, except by Bully Bluck and his praetorians. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Association, the Secretary, and the four agents, severally and respectively went up to Mr. Rigby and congratulated him on the result, as it was a known fact, 'that the show of hands never won.'

The eve of polling-day was now at hand. This is the most critical period of an election. All night parties in disguise were perambulating the different wards, watching each other's tactics; masks, wigs, false noses, gentry in livery coats, men in female attire, a silent carnival of manoeuvre, vigilance, anxiety, and trepidation. The thoughtful voters about this time make up their minds; the enthusiasts who have told you twenty times a-day for the last fortnight, that they would get up in the middle of the night to serve you, require the most watchful cooping; all the individuals who have assured you that 'their word is their bond,' change sides.

Two of the Rigbyites met in the market-place about an hour after midnight.

'Well, how goes it?' said one.

'I have been the rounds. The blunt's going like the ward-pump. I saw a man come out of Moffatt's house, muffled up with a mask on. I dodged him. It was Biggs.'

'You don't mean that, do you? D----e, I'll answer for Moffatt.'

'I never thought he was a true man.'

'Told Robins?'

'I could not see him; but I met young Gunning and told him.'

'Young Gunning! That won't do.'

'I thought he was as right as the town clock.'

'So did I, once. Hush! who comes here? The enemy, Franklin and Sampson Potts. Keep close.'

'I'll speak to them. Good night, Potts. Up rather late to-night?'

'All fair election time. You ain't snoring, are you?'

'Well, I hope the best man will win.'

'I am sure he will.'

'You must go for Moffatt early, to breakfast at the White Lion; that's your sort. Don't leave him, and poll him your-self. I am going off to Solomon Lacey's. He has got four Millbankites cooped up very drunk, and I want to get them quietly into the country before daybreak.'

'Tis polling-day! The candidates are roused from their slumbers at an early hour by the music of their own bands perambulating the town, and each playing the 'conquering hero' to sustain the courage of their jaded employers, by depriving them of that rest which can alone tranquillise the nervous system. There is something in that matin burst of music, followed by a shrill cheer from the boys of the borough, the only inhabitants yet up, that is very depressing.

The committee-rooms of each candidate are soon rife with black reports; each side has received fearful bulletins of the preceding night campaign; and its consequences as exemplified in the morning, unprecedented tergiversations, mysterious absences; men who breakfast with one side and vote with the other; men who won't come to breakfast; men who won't leave breakfast.

At ten o'clock Mr. Rigby was in a majority of twenty-eight.

The polling was brisk and equal until the middle of the day, when it became slack. Mr. Rigby kept a majority, but an inconsiderable one. Mr. Millbank's friends were not disheartened, as it was known that the leading members of Mr. Rigby's committee had polled; whereas his opponent's were principally reserved. At a quarter-past two there was great cheering and uproar. The four voters in favour of Millbank, whom Solomon Lacey had cooped up, made drunk, and carried into the country, had recovered their senses, made their escape, and voted as they originally intended. Soon after this, Mr. Millbank was declared by his committee to be in a majority of one, but the committee of Mr. Rigby instantly posted a placard, in large letters, to announce that, on the contrary, their man was in a majority of nine.

'If we could only have got another registration,' whispered the principal agent to Mr. Rigby, at a quarter-past four.

'You think it's all over, then?'

'Why, I do not see now how we can win. We have polled all our dead men, and Millbank is seven ahead.'

'I have no doubt we shall be able to have a good petition,' said the consoling chairman of the Conservative Association.

CHAPTER V.

It was not with feelings of extreme satisfaction that Mr. Rigby returned to London. The loss of Hellingsley, followed by the loss of the borough to Hellingsley's successful master, were not precisely the incidents which would be adduced as evidence of Mr. Rigby's good management or good fortune. Hitherto that gentleman had persuaded the world that he was not only very clever, but that he was also always in luck; a quality which many appreciate more even than capacity. His reputation was unquestionably damaged, both with his patron and his party. But what the Tapers and the Tadpoles thought or said, what even might be the injurious effect on his own career of the loss of this election, assumed an insignificant character when compared with its influence on the temper and disposition of the Marquess of Monmouth.

And yet his carriage is now entering the courtyard of Monmouth House, and, in all probability, a few minutes would introduce him to that presence before which he had, ere this, trembled. The Marquess was at home, and anxious to see Mr. Rigby. In a few minutes that gentleman was ascending the private staircase, entering the antechamber, and waiting to be received in the little saloon, exactly as our Coningsby did more than five years ago, scarcely less agitated, but by feelings of a very different character.

'Well, you made a good fight of it,' exclaimed the Marquess, in a cheerful and cordial tone, as Mr. Rigby entered his dressing-room. 'Patience! We shall win next time.'

This reception instantly reassured the defeated candidate, though its contrast to that which he expected rather perplexed him. He entered into the details of the election, talked rapidly of the next registration, the

propriety of petitioning; accustomed himself to hearing his voice with its habitual volubility in a chamber where he had feared it might not sound for some time.

'D----n politics!' said the Marquess. 'These fellows are in for this Parliament, and I am really weary of the whole affair. I begin to think the Duke was right, and it would have been best to have left them to themselves. I am glad you have come up at once, for I want you. The fact is, I am going to be married.'

This was not a startling announcement to Mr. Rigby; he was prepared for it, though scarcely could have hoped that he would have been favoured with it on the present occasion, instead of a morose comment on his misfortunes. Marriage, then, was the predominant idea of Lord Monmouth at the present moment, in whose absorbing interest all vexations were forgotten. Fortunate Rigby! Disgusted by the failure of his political combinations, his disappointments in not dictating to the county and not carrying the borough, and the slight prospect at present of obtaining the great object of his ambition, Lord Monmouth had resolved to precipitate his fate, was about to marry immediately, and quit England.

'You will be wanted, Rigby,' continued the Marquess. 'We must have a couple of trustees, and I have thought of you as one. You know you are my executor; and it is better not to bring in unnecessarily new names into the management of my affairs. Lord Eskdale will act with you.'

Rigby then, after all, was a lucky man. After such a succession of failures, he had returned only to receive fresh and the most delicate marks of his patron's good feeling and consideration. Lord Monmouth's trustee and executor! 'You know you are my executor.' Sublime truth! It ought to be blazoned in letters of gold in the most conspicuous part of Rigby's library, to remind him perpetually of his great and impending destiny. Lord Monmouth's executor, and very probably one of his residuary legatees! A legatee of some sort he knew he was. What a splendid *memento mori*! What cared Rigby for the borough of Darlford? And as for his political friends, he wished them joy of their barren benches. Nothing was lost by not being in this Parliament.

It was then with sincerity that Rigby offered his congratulations to his patron. He praised the judicious alliance, accompanied by every circumstance conducive to worldly happiness; distinguished beauty, perfect temper, princely rank. Rigby, who had hardly got out of his hustings' vein, was most eloquent in his praises of Madame Colonna.

'An amiable woman,' said Lord Monmouth, 'and very handsome. I always admired her; and an agreeable person too; I dare say a very good temper, but I am not going to marry her.'

'Might I then ask who is--'

'Her step-daughter, the Princess Lucretia,' replied the Marquess, quietly, and looking at his ring.

Here was a thunderbolt! Rigby had made another mistake. He had been working all this time for the wrong woman! The consciousness of being a trustee alone sustained him. There was an inevitable pause. The Marquess would not speak however, and Rigby must. He babbled rather incoherently about the Princess Lucretia being admired by everybody; also that she was the most fortunate of women, as well as the most accomplished; he was just beginning to say he had known her from a child, when discretion stopped his tongue, which had a habit of running on somewhat rashly; but Rigby, though he often blundered in his talk, had the talent of extricating himself from the consequence of his mistakes.

'And Madame must be highly gratified by all this?' observed Mr. Rigby, with an enquiring accent. He was dying to learn how she had first received the intelligence, and congratulated himself that his absence at his contest had preserved him from the storm.

'Madame Colonna knows nothing of our intentions,' said Lord Monmouth. 'And by the bye, that is the very business on which I wish to see you, Rigby. I wish you to communicate them to her. We are to be married, and immediately. It would gratify me that the wife of Lucretia's father should attend our wedding. You understand exactly what I mean, Rigby; I must have no scenes. Always happy to see the Princess Colonna under my roof; but then I like to live quietly, particularly at present; harassed as I have been by the loss of these elections, by all this bad management, and by all these disappointments on subjects in which I was led to believe success was certain. Madame Colonna is at home;' and the Marquess bowed Mr. Rigby out of the room.

CHAPTER VI.

The departure of Sidonia from Coningsby Castle, in the autumn, determined

the Princess Lucretia on a step which had for some time before his arrival occupied her brooding imagination. Nature had bestowed on this lady an ambitious soul and a subtle spirit; she could dare much and could execute finely. Above all things she coveted power; and though not free from the characteristic susceptibility of her sex, the qualities that could engage her passions or fascinate her fancy must partake of that intellectual eminence which distinguished her. Though the Princess Lucretia in a short space of time had seen much of the world, she had as yet encountered no hero. In the admirers whom her rank, and sometimes her intelligence, assembled around her, her master had not yet appeared. Her heart had not trembled before any of those brilliant forms whom she was told her sex admired; nor did she envy any one the homage which she did not appreciate. There was, therefore, no disturbing element in the worldly calculations which she applied to that question which is, to woman, what a career is to man, the question of marriage. She would marry to gain power, and therefore she wished to marry the powerful. Lord Eskdale hovered around her, and she liked him. She admired his incomparable shrewdness; his freedom from ordinary prejudices; his selfishness which was always good-natured, and the imperturbability that was not callous. But Lord Eskdale had hovered round many; it was his easy habit. He liked clever women, young, but who had seen something of the world. The Princess Lucretia pleased him much; with the form and mind of a woman even in the nursery. He had watched her development with interest; and had witnessed her launch in that world where she floated at once with as much dignity and consciousness of superior power, as if she had braved for seasons its waves and its tempests.

Musing over Lord Eskdale, the mind of Lucretia was drawn to the image of his friend; her friend; the friend of her parents. And why not marry Lord Monmouth? The idea pleased her. There was something great in the conception; difficult and strange. The result, if achieved, would give her all that she desired. She devoted her mind to this secret thought. She had no confidants. She concentrated her intellect on one point, and that was to fascinate the grandfather of Coningsby, while her step-mother was plotting that she should marry his grandson. The volition of Lucretia Colonna was, if not supreme, of a power most difficult to resist. There was something charm-like and alluring in the conversation of one who was silent to all others; something in the tones of her low rich voice which acted singularly on the nervous system. It was the voice of the serpent; indeed, there was an undulating movement in Lucretia, when she approached you, which irresistibly reminded you of that mysterious animal.

Lord Monmouth was not insensible to the spell, though totally unconscious of its purpose. He found the society of Lucretia very agreeable to him;

she was animated, intelligent, original; her inquiries were stimulating; her comments on what she saw, and heard, and read, racy and often indicating a fine humour. But all this was reserved for his ear. Before her parents, as before all others, Lucretia was silent, a little scornful, never communicating, neither giving nor seeking amusement, shut up in herself.

Lord Monmouth fell therefore into the habit of riding and driving with Lucretia alone. It was an arrangement which he found made his life more pleasant. Nor was it displeasing to Madame Colonna. She looked upon Lord Monmouth's fancy for Lucretia as a fresh tie for them all. Even the Prince, when his wife called his attention to the circumstance, observed it with satisfaction. It was a circumstance which represented in his mind a continuance of good eating and good drinking, fine horses, luxurious baths, unceasing billiards.

In this state of affairs appeared Sidonia, known before to her step-mother, but seen by Lucretia for the first time. Truly, he came, saw, and conquered. Those eyes that rarely met another's were fixed upon his searching yet unimpassioned glance. She listened to that voice, full of music yet void of tenderness; and the spirit of Lucretia Colonna bowed before an intelligence that commanded sympathy, yet offered none.

Lucretia naturally possessed great qualities as well as great talents. Under a genial influence, her education might have formed a being capable of imparting and receiving happiness. But she found herself without a guide. Her father offered her no love; her step-mother gained from her no respect. Her literary education was the result of her own strong mind and inquisitive spirit. She valued knowledge, and she therefore acquired it. But not a single moral principle or a single religious truth had ever been instilled into her being. Frequent absence from her own country had by degrees broken off even an habitual observance of the forms of her creed; while a life of undisturbed indulgence, void of all anxiety and care, while it preserved her from many of the temptations to vice, deprived her of that wisdom 'more precious than rubies,' which adversity and affliction, the struggles and the sorrows of existence, can alone impart.

Lucretia had passed her life in a refined, but rather dissolute society. Not indeed that a word that could call forth a maiden blush, conduct that could pain the purest feelings, could be heard or witnessed in those polished and luxurious circles. The most exquisite taste pervaded their atmosphere; and the uninitiated who found themselves in those perfumed chambers and those golden saloons, might believe, from all that passed before them, that their inhabitants were as pure, as orderly, and as

irreproachable as their furniture. But among the habitual dwellers in these delicate halls there was a tacit understanding, a prevalent doctrine that required no formal exposition, no proofs and illustrations, no comment and no gloss; which was indeed rather a traditional conviction than an imparted dogma; that the exoteric public were, on many subjects, the victims of very vulgar prejudices, which these enlightened personages wished neither to disturb nor to adopt.

A being of such a temper, bred in such a manner; a woman full of intellect and ambition, daring and lawless, and satiated with prosperity, is not made for equable fortunes and an uniform existence. She would have sacrificed the world for Sidonia, for he had touched the fervent imagination that none before could approach; but that inscrutable man would not read the secret of her heart; and prompted alike by pique, the love of power, and a weariness of her present life, Lucretia resolved on that great result which Mr. Rigby is now about to communicate to the Princess Colonna.

About half-an-hour after Mr. Rigby had entered that lady's apartments it seemed that all the bells of Monmouth House were ringing at the same time. The sound even reached the Marquess in his luxurious recess; who immediately took a pinch of snuff, and ordered his valet to lock the door of the ante-chamber. The Princess Lucretia, too, heard the sounds; she was lying on a sofa, in her boudoir, reading the *_Inferno_*, and immediately mustered her garrison in the form of a French maid, and gave directions that no one should be admitted. Both the Marquess and his intended bride felt that a crisis was at hand, and resolved to participate in no scenes.

The ringing ceased; there was again silence. Then there was another ring; a short, hasty, and violent pull; followed by some slamming of doors. The servants, who were all on the alert, and had advantages of hearing and observation denied to their secluded master, caught a glimpse of Mr. Rigby endeavouring gently to draw back into her apartment Madame Colonna, furious amid his deprecatory exclamations.

'For heaven's sake, my dear Madame; for your own sake; now really; now I assure you; you are quite wrong; you are indeed; it is a complete misapprehension; I will explain everything. I entreat, I implore, whatever you like, just what you please; only listen.'

Then the lady, with a mantling visage and flashing eye, violently closing the door, was again lost to their sight. A few minutes after there was a moderate ring, and Mr. Rigby, coming out of the apartments, with his cravat a little out of order, as if he had had a violent shaking, met the

servant who would have entered.

'Order Madame Colonna's travelling carriage,' he exclaimed in a loud voice, 'and send Mademoiselle Conrad here directly. I don't think the fellow hears me,' added Mr. Rigby, and following the servant, he added in a low tone and with a significant glance, 'no travelling carriage; no Mademoiselle Conrad; order the britska round as usual.'

Nearly another hour passed; there was another ring; very moderate indeed. The servant was informed that Madame Colonna was coming down, and she appeared as usual. In a beautiful morning dress, and leaning on the arm of Mr. Rigby, she descended the stairs, and was handed into her carriage by that gentleman, who, seating himself by her side, ordered them to drive to Richmond.

Lord Monmouth having been informed that all was calm, and that Madame Colonna, attended by Mr. Rigby, had gone to Richmond, ordered his carriage, and accompanied by Lucretia and Lucian Gay, departed immediately for Blackwall, where, in whitebait, a quiet bottle of claret, the society of his agreeable friends, and the contemplation of the passing steamers, he found a mild distraction and an amusing repose.

Mr. Rigby reported that evening to the Marquess on his return, that all was arranged and tranquil. Perhaps he exaggerated the difficulties, to increase the service; but according to his account they were considerable. It required some time to make Madame Colonna comprehend the nature of his communication. All Rigby's diplomatic skill was expended in the gradual development. When it was once fairly put before her, the effect was appalling. That was the first great ringing of bells. Rigby softened a little what he had personally endured; but he confessed she sprang at him like a tigress balked of her prey, and poured forth on him a volume of epithets, many of which Rigby really deserved. But after all, in the present instance, he was not treacherous, only base, which he always was. Then she fell into a passion of tears, and vowed frequently that she was not weeping for herself, but only for that dear Mr. Coningsby, who had been treated so infamously and robbed of Lucretia, and whose heart she knew must break. It seemed that Rigby stemmed the first violence of her emotion by mysterious intimations of an important communication that he had to make; and piquing her curiosity, he calmed her passion. But really having nothing to say, he was nearly involved in fresh dangers. He took refuge in the affectation of great agitation which prevented exposition. The lady then insisted on her travelling carriage being ordered and packed, as she was determined to set out for Rome that afternoon. This little occurrence gave Rigby some few minutes to collect himself, at the

end of which he made the Princess several announcements of intended arrangements, all of which pleased her mightily, though they were so inconsistent with each other, that if she had not been a woman in a passion, she must have detected that Rigby was lying. He assured her almost in the same breath, that she was never to be separated from them, and that she was to have any establishment in any country she liked. He talked wildly of equipages, diamonds, shawls, opera-boxes; and while her mind was bewildered with these dazzling objects, he, with intrepid gravity, consulted her as to the exact amount she would like to have apportioned, independent of her general revenue, for the purposes of charity.

At the end of two hours, exhausted by her rage and soothed by these visions, Madame Colonna having grown calm and reasonable, sighed and murmured a complaint, that Lord Monmouth ought to have communicated this important intelligence in person. Upon this Rigby instantly assured her, that Lord Monmouth had been for some time waiting to do so, but in consequence of her lengthened interview with Rigby, his Lordship had departed for Richmond with Lucretia, where he hoped that Madame Colonna and Mr. Rigby would join him. So it ended, with a morning drive and suburban dinner; Rigby, after what he had gone through, finding no difficulty in accounting for the other guests not being present, and bringing home Madame Colonna in the evening, at times almost as gay and good-tempered as usual, and almost oblivious of her disappointment.

When the Marquess met Madame Colonna he embraced her with great courtliness, and from that time consulted her on every arrangement. He took a very early occasion of presenting her with a diamond necklace of great value. The Marquess was fond of making presents to persons to whom he thought he had not behaved very well, and who yet spared him scenes.

The marriage speedily followed, by special license, at the villa of the Right Hon. Nicholas Rigby, who gave away the bride. The wedding was very select, but brilliant as the diamond necklace: a royal Duke and Duchess, Lady St. Julians, and a few others. Mr. Ormsby presented the bride with a bouquet of precious stones, and Lord Eskdale with a French fan in a diamond frame. It was a fine day; Lord Monmouth, calm as if he were winning the St. Leger; Lucretia, universally recognised as a beauty; all the guests gay, the Princess Colonna especially.

The travelling carriage is at the door which is to bear away the happy pair. Madame Colonna embraces Lucretia; the Marquess gives a grand bow: they are gone. The guests remain awhile. A Prince of the blood will propose a toast; there is another glass of champagne quaffed, another

ortolan devoured; and then they rise and disperse. Madame Colonna leaves with Lady St. Julians, whose guest for a while she is to become. And in a few minutes their host is alone.

Mr. Rigby retired into his library: the repose of the chamber must have been grateful to his feelings after all this distraction. It was spacious, well-stored, classically adorned, and opened on a beautiful lawn. Rigby threw himself into an ample chair, crossed his legs, and resting his head on his arm, apparently fell into deep contemplation.

He had some cause for reflection, and though we did once venture to affirm that Rigby never either thought or felt, this perhaps may be the exception that proves the rule.

He could scarcely refrain from pondering over the strange event which he had witnessed, and at which he had assisted.

It was an incident that might exercise considerable influence over his fortunes. His patron married, and married to one who certainly did not offer to Mr. Rigby such a prospect of easy management as her step-mother! Here were new influences arising; new characters, new situations, new contingencies. Was he thinking of all this? He suddenly jumps up, hurries to a shelf and takes down a volume. It is his interleaved peerage, of which for twenty years he had been threatening an edition. Turning to the Marquisate of Monmouth, he took up his pen and thus made the necessary entry:

'_Married, second time, August 3rd, 1837, The Princess Lucretia Colonna, daughter of Prince Paul Colonna, born at Rome, February 16th, 1819._'

That was what Mr. Rigby called 'a great fact.' There was not a peerage-compiler in England who had that date save himself.

Before we close this slight narrative of the domestic incidents that occurred in the family of his grandfather since Coningsby quitted the Castle, we must not forget to mention what happened to Villebecque and Flora. Lord Monmouth took a great liking to the manager. He found him very clever in many things independently of his profession; he was useful to Lord Monmouth, and did his work in an agreeable manner. And the future Lady Monmouth was accustomed to Flora, and found her useful too, and did not like to lose her. And so the Marquess, turning all the circumstances in his mind, and being convinced that Villebecque could never succeed to any extent in England in his profession, and probably nowhere else, appointed him, to Villebecque's infinite satisfaction, intendant of his

household, with a considerable salary, while Flora still lived with her kind step-father.

CHAPTER VII.

Another year elapsed; not so fruitful in incidents to Coningsby as the preceding ones, and yet not unprofitably passed. It had been spent in the almost unremitting cultivation of his intelligence. He had read deeply and extensively, digested his acquisitions, and had practised himself in surveying them, free from those conventional conclusions and those traditionary inferences that surrounded him. Although he had renounced his once cherished purpose of trying for University honours, an aim which he found discordant with the investigations on which his mind was bent, he had rarely quitted Cambridge. The society of his friends, the great convenience of public libraries, and the general tone of studious life around, rendered an University for him a genial residence. There is a moment in life, when the pride and thirst of knowledge seem to absorb our being, and so it happened now to Coningsby, who felt each day stronger in his intellectual resources, and each day more anxious and avid to increase them. The habits of public discussion fostered by the Debating Society were also for Coningsby no Inconsiderable tie to the University. This was the arena in which he felt himself at home. The promise of his Eton days was here fulfilled. And while his friends listened to his sustained argument or his impassioned declamation, the prompt reply or the apt retort, they looked forward with pride through the vista of years to the time when the hero of the youthful Club should convince or dazzle in the senate. It is probable then that he would have remained at Cambridge with slight intervals until he had taken his degree, had not circumstances occurred which gave altogether a new turn to his thoughts.

When Lord Monmouth had fixed his wedding-day he had written himself to Coningsby to announce his intended marriage, and to request his grandson's presence at the ceremony. The letter was more than kind; it was warm and generous. He assured his grandson that this alliance should make no difference in the very ample provision which he had long intended for him; that he should ever esteem Coningsby his nearest relative; and that, while his death would bring to Coningsby as considerable an independence as an English gentleman need desire, so in his lifetime Coningsby should ever be supported as became his birth, breeding, and future prospects. Lord Monmouth had mentioned to Lucretia, that he was about to invite his

grandson to their wedding, and the lady had received the intimation with satisfaction. It so happened that a few hours after, Lucretia, who now entered the private rooms of Lord Monmouth without previously announcing her arrival, met Villebecque with the letter to Coningsby in his hand. Lucretia took it away from him, and said it should be posted with her own letters. It never reached its destination. Our friend learnt the marriage from the newspapers, which somewhat astounded him; but Coningsby was fond of his grandfather, and he wrote Lord Monmouth a letter of congratulation, full of feeling and ingenuousness, and which, while it much pleased the person to whom it was addressed, unintentionally convinced him that Coningsby had never received his original communication. Lord Monmouth spoke to Villebecque, who could throw sufficient light upon the subject, but it was never mentioned to Lady Monmouth. The Marquess was a man who always found out everything, and enjoyed the secret.

Rather more than a year after the marriage, when Coningsby had completed his twenty-first year, the year which he had passed so quietly at Cambridge, he received a letter from his grandfather, informing him that after a variety of movements Lady Monmouth and himself were established in Paris for the season, and desiring that he would not fail to come over as soon as practicable, and pay them as long a visit as the regulations of the University would permit. So, at the close of the December term, Coningsby quitted Cambridge for Paris.

Passing through London, he made his first visit to his banker at Charing Cross, on whom he had periodically drawn since he commenced his college life. He was in the outer counting-house, making some inquiries about a letter of credit, when one of the partners came out from an inner room, and invited him to enter. This firm had been for generations the bankers of the Coningsby family; and it appeared that there was a sealed box in their possession, which had belonged to the father of Coningsby, and they wished to take this opportunity of delivering it to his son. This communication deeply interested him; and as he was alone in London, at an hotel, and on the wing for a foreign country, he requested permission at once to examine it, in order that he might again deposit it with them: so he was shown into a private room for that purpose. The seal was broken; the box was full of papers, chiefly correspondence: among them was a packet described as letters from 'my dear Helen,' the mother of Coningsby. In the interior of this packet there was a miniature of that mother. He looked at it; put it down; looked at it again and again. He could not be mistaken. There was the same blue fillet in the bright hair. It was an exact copy of that portrait which had so greatly excited his attention when at Millbank! This was a mysterious and singularly perplexing incident. It greatly agitated him. He was alone in the room when he made

the discovery. When he had recovered himself, he sealed up the contents of the box, with the exception of his mother's letters and the miniature, which he took away with him, and then re-delivered it to his banker for custody until his return.

Coningsby found Lord and Lady Monmouth in a splendid hotel in the Faubourg St. Honoré, near the English Embassy. His grandfather looked at him with marked attention, and received him with evident satisfaction. Indeed, Lord Monmouth was greatly pleased that Harry had come to Paris; it was the University of the World, where everybody should graduate. Paris and London ought to be the great objects of all travellers; the rest was mere landscape.

It cannot be denied that between Lucretia and Coningsby there existed from the first a certain antipathy; and though circumstances for a short time had apparently removed or modified the aversion, the manner of the lady when Coningsby was ushered into her boudoir, resplendent with all that Parisian taste and luxury could devise, was characterised by that frigid politeness which had preceded the days of their more genial acquaintance. If the manner of Lucretia were the same as before her marriage, a considerable change might however be observed in her appearance. Her fine form had become more developed; while her dress, that she once neglected, was elaborate and gorgeous, and of the last mode. Lucretia was the fashion of Paris; a great lady, greatly admired. A guest under such a roof, however, Coningsby was at once launched into the most brilliant circles of Parisian society, which he found fascinating.

The art of society is, without doubt, perfectly comprehended and completely practised in the bright metropolis of France. An Englishman cannot enter a saloon without instantly feeling he is among a race more social than his compatriots. What, for example, is more consummate than the manner in which a French lady receives her guests! She unites graceful repose and unaffected dignity, with the most amiable regard for others. She sees every one; she speaks to every one; she sees them at the right moment; she says the right thing; it is utterly impossible to detect any difference in the position of her guests by the spirit in which she welcomes them. There is, indeed, throughout every circle of Parisian society, from the chateau to the cabaret, a sincere homage to intellect; and this without any maudlin sentiment. None sooner than the Parisians can draw the line between factitious notoriety and honest fame; or sooner distinguished between the counterfeit celebrity and the standard reputation. In England, we too often alternate between a supercilious neglect of genius and a rhapsodical pursuit of quacks. In England when a new character appears in our circles, the first question always is, 'Who

is he?' In France it is, 'What is he?' In England, 'How much a-year?' In France, 'What has he done?'

CHAPTER VIII.

About a week after Coningsby's arrival in Paris, as he was sauntering on the soft and sunny Boulevards, soft and sunny though Christmas, he met Sidonia.

'So you are here?' said Sidonia. 'Turn now with me, for I see you are only lounging, and tell me when you came, where you are, and what you have done since we parted. I have been here myself but a few days.'

There was much to tell. And when Coningsby had rapidly related all that had passed, they talked of Paris. Sidonia had offered him hospitality, until he learned that Lord Monmouth was in Paris, and that Coningsby was his guest.

'I am sorry you cannot come to me,' he remarked; 'I would have shown you everybody and everything. But we shall meet often.'

'I have already seen many remarkable things,' said Coningsby; 'and met many celebrated persons. Nothing strikes me more in this brilliant city than the tone of its society, so much higher than our own. What an absence of petty personalities! How much conversation, and how little gossip! Yet nowhere is there less pedantry. Here all women are as agreeable as is the remarkable privilege in London of some half-dozen. Men too, and great men, develop their minds. A great man in England, on the contrary, is generally the dullest dog in company. And yet, how piteous to think that so fair a civilisation should be in such imminent peril!'

'Yes! that is a common opinion: and yet I am somewhat sceptical of its truth,' replied Sidonia. 'I am inclined to believe that the social system of England is in infinitely greater danger than that of France. We must not be misled by the agitated surface of this country. The foundations of its order are deep and sure. Learn to understand France. France is a kingdom with a Republic for its capital. It has been always so, for centuries. From the days of the League to the days of the Sections, to the days of 1830. It is still France, little changed; and only more national, for it is less Frank and more Gallic; as England has become less Norman

and more Saxon.'

'And it is your opinion, then, that the present King may maintain himself?'

'Every movement in this country, however apparently discordant, seems to tend to that inevitable end. He would not be on the throne if the nature of things had not demanded his presence. The Kingdom of France required a Monarch; the Republic of Paris required a Dictator. He comprised in his person both qualifications; lineage and intellect; blood for the provinces, brains for the city.'

'What a position! what an individual!' exclaimed Coningsby. 'Tell me,' he added, eagerly, 'what is he? This Prince of whom one hears in all countries at all hours; on whose existence we are told the tranquillity, almost the civilisation, of Europe depends, yet of whom we receive accounts so conflicting, so contradictory; tell me, you who can tell me, tell me what he is.'

Sidonia smiled at his earnestness. 'I have a creed of mine own,' he remarked, 'that the great characters of antiquity are at rare epochs reproduced for our wonder, or our guidance. Nature, wearied with mediocrity, pours the warm metal into an heroic mould. When circumstances at length placed me in the presence of the King of France, I recognised, ULYSSES!'

'But is there no danger,' resumed Coningsby, after the pause of a few moments, 'that the Republic of Paris may absorb the Kingdom of France?'

'I suspect the reverse,' replied Sidonia. 'The tendency of advanced civilisation is in truth to pure Monarchy. Monarchy is indeed a government which requires a high degree of civilisation for its full development. It needs the support of free laws and manners, and of a widely-diffused intelligence. Political compromises are not to be tolerated except at periods of rude transition. An educated nation recoils from the imperfect vicariate of what is called a representative government. Your House of Commons, that has absorbed all other powers in the State, will in all probability fall more rapidly than it rose. Public opinion has a more direct, a more comprehensive, a more efficient organ for its utterance, than a body of men sectionally chosen. The Printing-press is a political element unknown to classic or feudal times. It absorbs in a great degree the duties of the Sovereign, the Priest, the Parliament; it controls, it educates, it discusses. That public opinion, when it acts, would appear in the form of one who has no class interests. In an enlightened age the

Monarch on the throne, free from the vulgar prejudices and the corrupt interests of the subject, becomes again divine!

At this moment they reached that part of the Boulevards which leads into the Place of the Madeleine, whither Sidonia was bound; and Coningsby was about to quit his companion, when Sidonia said:

'I am only going a step over to the Rue Tronchet to say a few words to a friend of mine, M. P----s. I shall not detain you five minutes; and you should know him, for he has some capital pictures, and a collection of Limoges ware that is the despair of the dilettanti.'

So saying they turned down by the Place of the Madeleine, and soon entered the court of the hotel of M. P----s. That gentleman received them in his gallery. After some general conversation, Coningsby turned towards the pictures, and left Sidonia with their host. The collection was rare, and interested Coningsby, though unacquainted with art. He sauntered on from picture to picture until he reached the end of the gallery, where an open door invited him into a suite of rooms also full of pictures and objects of curiosity and art. As he was entering a second chamber, he observed a lady leaning back in a cushioned chair, and looking earnestly on a picture. His entrance was unheard and unnoticed, for the lady's back was to the door; yet Coningsby, advancing in an angular direction, obtained nearly a complete view of her countenance. It was upraised, gazing on the picture with an expression of delight; the bonnet thrown back, while the large sable cloak of the gazer had fallen partly off. The countenance was more beautiful than the beautiful picture. Those glowing shades of the gallery to which love, and genius, and devotion had lent their inspiration, seemed without life and lustre by the radiant expression and expressive presence which Coningsby now beheld.

The finely-arched brow was a little elevated, the soft dark eyes were fully opened, the nostril of the delicate nose slightly dilated, the small, yet rich, full lips just parted; and over the clear, transparent visage, there played a vivid glance of gratified intelligence.

The lady rose, advanced towards the picture, looked at it earnestly for a few moments, and then, turning in a direction opposite to Coningsby, walked away. She was somewhat above the middle stature, and yet could scarcely be called tall; a quality so rare, that even skilful dancers do not often possess it, was hers; that elastic gait that is so winning, and so often denotes the gaiety and quickness of the spirit.

The fair object of his observation had advanced into other chambers, and

as soon as it was becoming, Coningsby followed her. She had joined a lady and gentleman, who were examining an ancient carving in ivory. The gentleman was middle-aged and portly; the elder lady tall and elegant, and with traces of interesting beauty. Coningsby heard her speak; the words were English, but the accent not of a native.

In the remotest part of the room, Coningsby, apparently engaged in examining some of that famous Limoges ware of which Sidonia had spoken, watched with interest and intentness the beautiful being whom he had followed, and whom he concluded to be the child of her companions. After some little time, they quitted the apartment on their return to the gallery; Coningsby remained behind, caring for none of the rare and fanciful objects that surrounded him, yet compelled, from the fear of seeming obtrusive, for some minutes to remain. Then he too returned to the gallery, and just as he had gained its end, he saw the portly gentleman in the distance shaking hands with Sidonia, the ladies apparently expressing their thanks and gratification to M. P----s, and then all vanishing by the door through which Coningsby had originally entered.

'What a beautiful countrywoman of yours!' said M. P----s, as Coningsby approached him.

'Is she my countrywoman? I am glad to hear it; I have been admiring her,' he replied.

'Yes,' said M. P----s, 'it is Sir Wallinger: one of your deputies; don't you know him?'

'Sir Wallinger!' said Coningsby, 'no, I have not that honour.' He looked at Sidonia.

'Sir Joseph Wallinger,' said Sidonia, 'one of the new Whig baronets, and member for ----. I know him. He married a Spaniard. That is not his daughter, but his niece; the child of his wife's sister. It is not easy to find any one more beautiful.'

END OF BOOK V.

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER I.

The knowledge that Sidonia was in Paris greatly agitated Lady Monmouth. She received the intimation indeed from Coningsby at dinner with sufficient art to conceal her emotion. Lord Monmouth himself was quite pleased at the announcement. Sidonia was his especial favourite; he knew so much, had such an excellent judgment, and was so rich. He had always something to tell you, was the best man in the world to bet on, and never wanted anything. A perfect character according to the Monmouth ethics.

In the evening of the day that Coningsby met Sidonia, Lady Monmouth made a little visit to the charming Duchess de G----t who was 'at home' every other night in her pretty hotel, with its embroidered white satin draperies, its fine old cabinets, and ancestral portraits of famous name, brave marshals and bright princesses of the olden time, on its walls. These receptions without form, yet full of elegance, are what English 'at homes' were before the Continental war, though now, by a curious perversion of terms, the easy domestic title distinguishes in England a formally-prepared and elaborately-collected assembly, in which everything and every person are careful to be as little 'homely' as possible. In France, on the contrary, 'tis on these occasions, and in this manner, that society carries on that degree and kind of intercourse which in England we attempt awkwardly to maintain by the medium of that unpopular species of visitation styled a morning call; which all complain that they have either to make or to endure.

Nowhere was this species of reception more happily conducted than at the Duchess de G----t's. The rooms, though small, decorated with taste, brightly illumined; a handsome and gracious hostess, the Duke the very pearl of gentlemen, and sons and daughters worthy of such parents. Every moment some one came in, and some one went away. In your way from a dinner to a ball, you stopped to exchange agreeable _on dits_. It seemed that every woman was pretty, every man a wit. Sure you were to find yourself surrounded by celebrities, and men were welcomed there, if they were clever, before they were famous, which showed it was a house that regarded intellect, and did not seek merely to gratify its vanity by being surrounded by the distinguished.

Enveloped in a rich Indian shawl, and leaning back on a sofa, Lady Monmouth was engaged in conversation with the courtly and classic Count M----é, when, on casually turning her head, she observed entering the saloon, Sidonia. She just caught his form bowing to the Duchess, and instantly turned her head and replunged into her conversation with

increased interest. Lady Monmouth was a person who had the power of seeing all about her, everything and everybody, without appearing to look. She was conscious that Sidonia was approaching her neighbourhood. Her heart beat in tumult; she dreaded to catch the eye of that very individual whom she was so anxious to meet. He was advancing towards the sofa. Instinctively, Lady Monmouth turned from the Count, and began speaking earnestly to her other neighbour, a young daughter of the house, innocent and beautiful, not yet quite fledged, trying her wings in society under the maternal eye. She was surprised by the extreme interest which her grand neighbour suddenly took in all her pursuits, her studies, her daily walks in the Bois de Boulogne. Sidonia, as the Marchioness had anticipated, had now reached the sofa. But no, it was to the Count, and not to Lady Monmouth that he was advancing; and they were immediately engaged in conversation. After some little time, when she had become accustomed to his voice, and found her own heart throbbing with less violence, Lucretia turned again, as if by accident, to the Count, and met the glance of Sidonia. She meant to have received him with haughtiness, but her self-command deserted her; and slightly rising from the sofa, she welcomed him with a countenance of extreme pallor and with some awkwardness.

His manner was such as might have assisted her, even had she been more troubled. It was marked by a degree of respectful friendliness. He expressed without reserve his pleasure at meeting her again; inquired much how she had passed her time since they last parted; asked more than once after the Marquess. The Count moved away; Sidonia took his seat. His ease and homage combined greatly relieved her. She expressed to him how kind her Lord would consider his society, for the Marquess had suffered in health since Sidonia last saw him. His periodical gout had left him, which made him ill and nervous. The Marquess received his friends at dinner every day. Sidonia, particularly amiable, offered himself as a guest for the following one.

'And do you go to the great ball to-morrow?' inquired Lucretia, delighted with all that had occurred.

'I always go to their balls,' said Sidonia, 'I have promised.'

There was a momentary pause; Lucretia happier than she had been for a long time, her face a little flushed, and truly in a secret tumult of sweet thoughts, remembered she had been long there, and offering her hand to Sidonia, bade him adieu until to-morrow, while he, as was his custom, soon repaired to the refined circle of the Countess de C-s-l-ne, a lady whose manners he always mentioned as his fair ideal, and whose house was his

favourite haunt.

Before to-morrow comes, a word or two respecting two other characters of this history connected with the family of Lord Monmouth. And first of Flora. La Petite was neither very well nor very happy. Her hereditary disease developed itself; gradually, but in a manner alarming to those who loved her. She was very delicate, and suffered so much from the weakness of her chest, that she was obliged to relinquish singing. This was really the only tie between her and the Marchioness, who, without being a petty tyrant, treated her often with unfeeling haughtiness. She was, therefore, now rarely seen in the chambers of the great. In her own apartments she found, indeed, some distraction in music, for which she had a natural predisposition, but this was a pursuit that only fed the morbid passion of her tender soul. Alone, listening only to sweet sounds, or indulging in soft dreams that never could be realised, her existence glided away like a vision, and she seemed to become every day more fair and fragile. Alas! hers was the sad and mystic destiny to love one whom she never met, and by whom, if she met him, she would scarcely, perhaps, be recognised. Yet in that passion, fanciful, almost ideal, her life was absorbed; nor for her did the world contain an existence, a thought, a sensation, beyond those that sprang from the image of the noble youth who had sympathised with her in her sorrows, and had softened the hard fortunes of dependence by his generous sensibility. Happy that, with many mortifications, it was still her lot to live under the roof of one who bore his name, and in whose veins flowed the same blood! She felt indeed for the Marquess, whom she so rarely saw, and from whom she had never received much notice, prompted, it would seem, by her fantastic passion, a degree of reverence, almost of affection, which seemed occasionally, even to herself, as something inexplicable and without reason.

As for her fond step-father, M. Villebecque, the world fared very differently with him. His lively and enterprising genius, his ready and multiform talents, and his temper which defied disturbance, had made their way. He had become the very right hand of Lord Monmouth; his only counsellor, his only confidant; his secret agent; the minister of his will. And well did Villebecque deserve this trust, and ably did he maintain himself in the difficult position which he achieved. There was nothing which Villebecque did not know, nothing which he could not do, especially at Paris. He was master of his subject; in all things the secret of success, and without which, however they may from accident dazzle the world, the statesman, the orator, the author, all alike feel the damning consciousness of being charlatans.

Coningsby had made a visit to M. Villebecque and Flora the day after his

arrival. It was a recollection and a courtesy that evidently greatly gratified them. Villebecque talked very much and amusingly; and Flora, whom Coningsby frequently addressed, very little, though she listened with great earnestness. Coningsby told her that he thought, from all he heard, she was too much alone, and counselled her to gaiety. But nature, that had made her mild, had denied her that constitutional liveliness of being which is the graceful property of French women. She was a lily of the valley, that loved seclusion and the tranquillity of virgin glades. Almost every day, as he passed their _entresol_, Coningsby would look into Villebecque's apartments for a moment, to ask after Flora.

CHAPTER II.

Sidonia was to dine at Lord Monmouth's the day after he met Lucretia, and afterwards they were all to meet at a ball much talked of, and to which invitations were much sought; and which was to be given that evening by the Baroness S. de R----d.

Lord Monmouth's dinners at Paris were celebrated. It was generally agreed that they had no rivals; yet there were others who had as skilful cooks, others who, for such a purpose, were equally profuse in their expenditure. What, then, was the secret spell of his success? The simplest in the world, though no one seemed aware of it. His Lordship's plates were always hot: whereas at Paris, in the best appointed houses, and at dinners which, for costly materials and admirable art in their preparation, cannot be surpassed, the effect is always considerably lessened, and by a mode the most mortifying: by the mere circumstance that every one at a French dinner is served on a cold plate. The reason of a custom, or rather a necessity, which one would think a nation so celebrated for their gastronomical taste would recoil from, is really, it is believed, that the ordinary French porcelain is so very inferior that it cannot endure the preparatory heat for dinner. The common white pottery, for example, which is in general use, and always found at the cafés, will not bear vicinage to a brisk kitchen fire for half-an-hour. Now, if we only had that treaty of commerce with France which has been so often on the point of completion, the fabrics of our unrivalled potteries, in exchange for their capital wines, would be found throughout France. The dinners of both nations would be improved: the English would gain a delightful beverage, and the French, for the first time in their lives, would dine off hot plates. An unanswerable instance of the advantages of commercial

reciprocity.

The guests at Lord Monmouth's to-day were chiefly Carlists, individuals bearing illustrious names, that animate the page of history, and are indissolubly bound up with the glorious annals of their great country. They are the phantoms of a past, but real Aristocracy; an Aristocracy that was founded on an intelligible principle; which claimed great privileges for great purposes; whose hereditary duties were such, that their possessors were perpetually in the eye of the nation, and who maintained, and, in a certain point of view justified, their pre-eminence by constant illustration.

It pleased Lord Monmouth to show great courtesies to a fallen race with whom he sympathised; whose fathers had been his friends in the days of his hot youth; whose mothers he had made love to; whose palaces had been his home; whose brilliant fêtes he remembered; whose fanciful splendour excited his early imagination; and whose magnificent and wanton luxury had developed his own predisposition for boundless enjoyment. Soubise and his suppers; his cutlets and his mistresses; the profuse and embarrassed De Lauragais, who sighed for 'entire ruin,' as for a strange luxury, which perpetually eluded his grasp; these were the heroes of the olden time that Lord Monmouth worshipped; the wisdom of our ancestors which he appreciated; and he turned to their recollection for relief from the vulgar prudence of the degenerate days on which he had fallen: days when nobles must be richer than other men, or they cease to have any distinction.

It was impossible not to be struck by the effective appearance of Lady Monmouth as she received her guests in grand toilet preparatory to the ball; white satin and minever, a brilliant tiara. Her fine form, her costume of a fashion as perfect as its materials were sumptuous, and her presence always commanding and distinguished, produced a general effect to which few could be insensible. It was the triumph of mien over mere beauty of countenance.

The hotel of Madame S. de R----d is not more distinguished by its profuse decoration, than by the fine taste which has guided the vast expenditure. Its halls of arabesque are almost without a rival; there is not the slightest embellishment in which the hand and feeling of art are not recognised. The rooms were very crowded; everybody distinguished in Paris was there: the lady of the Court, the duchess of the Faubourg, the wife of the financier, the constitutional Throne, the old Monarchy, the modern Bourse, were alike represented. Marshals of the Empire, Ministers of the Crown, Dukes and Marquesses, whose ancestors lounged in the Oeil de Boeuf;

diplomats of all countries, eminent foreigners of all nations, deputies who led sections, members of learned and scientific academies, occasionally a stray poet; a sea of sparkling tiaras, brilliant bouquets, glittering stars, and glowing ribbons, many beautiful faces, many famous ones: unquestionably the general air of a first-rate Parisian saloon, on a great occasion, is not easily equalled. In London there is not the variety of guests; nor the same size and splendour of saloons. Our houses are too small for reception.

Coningsby, who had stolen away from his grandfather's before the rest of the guests, was delighted with the novelty of the splendid scene. He had been in Paris long enough to make some acquaintances, and mostly with celebrated personages. In his long fruitless endeavour to enter the saloon in which they danced, he found himself hustled against the illustrious Baron von H---t, whom he had sat next to at dinner a few days before at Count M---é's.

'It is more difficult than cutting through the Isthmus of Panama, Baron,' said Coningsby, alluding to a past conversation.

'Infinitely,' replied M. de H., smiling; 'for I would undertake to cut through the Isthmus, and I cannot engage that I shall enter this ball-room.'

Time, however, brought Coningsby into that brilliant chamber. What a blaze of light and loveliness! How coquettish are the costumes! How vivid the flowers! To sounds of stirring melody, beautiful beings move with grace. Grace, indeed, is beauty in action.

Here, where all are fair and everything is attractive, his eye is suddenly arrested by one object, a form of surpassing grace among the graceful, among the beautiful a countenance of unrivalled beauty.

She was young among the youthful; a face of sunshine amid all that artificial light; her head placed upon her finely-moulded shoulders with a queen-like grace; a coronet of white roses on her dark brown hair; her only ornament. It was the beauty of the picture-gallery.

The eye of Coningsby never quitted her. When the dance ceased, he had an opportunity of seeing her nearer. He met her walking with her cavalier, and he was conscious that she observed him. Finally he remarked that she resumed a seat next to the lady whom he had mistaken for her mother, but had afterwards understood to be Lady Wallinger.

Coningsby returned to the other saloons: he witnessed the entrance and reception of Lady Monmouth, who moved on towards the ball-room. Soon after this, Sidonia arrived; he came in with the still handsome and ever courteous Duke D----s. Observing Coningsby, he stopped to present him to the Duke. While thus conversing, the Duke, who is fond of the English, observed, 'See, here is your beautiful countrywoman that all the world are talking of. That is her uncle. He brings to me letters from one of your lords, whose name I cannot recollect.'

And Sir Joseph and his lovely niece veritably approached. The Duke addressed them: asked them in the name of his Duchess to a concert on the next Thursday; and, after a thousand compliments, moved on. Sidonia stopped; Coningsby could not refrain from lingering, but stood a little apart, and was about to move away, when there was a whisper, of which, without hearing a word, he could not resist the impression that he was the subject. He felt a little embarrassed, and was retiring, when he heard Sidonia reply to an inquiry of the lady, 'The same,' and then, turning to Coningsby, said aloud, 'Coningsby, Miss Millbank says that you have forgotten her.'

Coningsby started, advanced, coloured a little, could not conceal his surprise. The lady, too, though more prepared, was not without confusion, and for an instant looked down. Coningsby recalled at that moment the long dark eyelashes, and the beautiful, bashful countenance that had so charmed him at Millbank; but two years had otherwise effected a wonderful change in the sister of his school-day friend, and transformed the silent, embarrassed girl into a woman of surpassing beauty and of the most graceful and impressive mien.

'It is not surprising that Mr. Coningsby should not recollect my niece,' said Sir Joseph, addressing Sidonia, and wishing to cover their mutual embarrassment; 'but it is impossible for her, or for anyone connected with her, not to be anxious at all times to express to him our sense of what we all owe him.'

Coningsby and Miss Millbank were now in full routine conversation, consisting of questions; how long she had been at Paris; when she had heard last from Millbank; how her father was; also, how was her brother. Sidonia made an observation to Sir Joseph on a passer-by, and then himself moved on; Coningsby accompanying his new friends, in a contrary direction, to the refreshment-room, to which they were proceeding.

'And you have passed a winter at Rome,' said Coningsby. 'How I envy you! I feel that I shall never be able to travel.'

'And why not?'

'Life has become so stirring, that there is ever some great cause that keeps one at home.'

'Life, on the contrary, so swift, that all may see now that of which they once could only read.'

'The golden and silver sides of the shield,' said Coningsby, with a smile.

'And you, like a good knight, will maintain your own.'

'No, I would follow yours.'

'You have not heard lately from Oswald?'

'Oh, yes; I think there are no such faithful correspondents as we are; I only wish we could meet.'

'You will soon; but he is such a devotee of Oxford; quite a monk; and you, too, Mr. Coningsby, are much occupied.'

'Yes, and at the same time as Millbank. I was in hopes, when I once paid you a visit, I might have found your brother.'

'But that was such a rapid visit,' said Miss Millbank.

'I always remember it with delight,' said Coningsby.

'You were willing to be pleased; but Millbank, notwithstanding Rome, commands my affections, and in spite of this surrounding splendour, I could have wished to have passed my Christmas in Lancashire.'

'Mr. Millbank has lately purchased a very beautiful place in the county. I became acquainted with Hellingsley when staying at my grandfather's.'

'Ah! I have never seen it; indeed, I was much surprised that papa became its purchaser, because he never will live there; and Oswald, I am sure, could never be tempted to quit Millbank. You know what enthusiastic ideas he has of his order?'

'Like all his ideas, sound, and high, and pure. I always duly appreciated your brother's great abilities, and, what is far more important, his lofty

mind. When I recollect our Eton days, I cannot understand how more than two years have passed away without our being together. I am sure the fault is mine. I might now have been at Oxford instead of Paris. And yet,' added Coningsby, 'that would have been a sad mistake, since I should not have had the happiness of being here.

'Oh, yes, that would have been a sad mistake,' said Miss Millbank.

'Edith,' said Sir Joseph, rejoining his niece, from whom he had been momentarily separated, 'Edith, that is Monsieur Thiers.'

In the meantime Sidonia reached the ball-room, and sitting near the entrance was Lady Monmouth, who immediately addressed him. He was, as usual, intelligent and unimpassioned, and yet not without a delicate deference which is flattering to women, especially if not altogether unworthy of it. Sidonia always admired Lucretia, and preferred her society to that of most persons. But the Lady was in error in supposing that she had conquered or could vanquish his heart. Sidonia was one of those men, not so rare as may be supposed, who shrink, above all things, from an adventure of gallantry with a woman in a position. He had neither time nor temper for sentimental circumvolutions. He detested the diplomacy of passion: protocols, protracted negotiations, conferences, correspondence, treaties projected, ratified, violated. He had no genius for the tactics of intrigue; your reconnoiterings, and marchings, and countermarchings, sappings, and minings, assaults, sometimes surrenders, and sometimes repulses. All the solemn and studied hypocrisies were to him infinitely wearisome; and if the movements were not merely formal, they irritated him, distracted his feelings, disturbed the tenor of his mind, deranged his nervous system. Something of the old Oriental vein influenced him in his carriage towards women. He was oftener behind the scenes of the Opera-house than in his box; he delighted, too, in the society of _etairai_; Aspasia was his heroine. Obligated to appear much in what is esteemed pure society, he cultivated the acquaintance of clever women, because they interested him; but in such saloons his feminine acquaintances were merely psychological. No lady could accuse him of trifling with her feelings, however decided might be his predilection for her conversation. He yielded at once to an admirer; never trespassed by any chance into the domain of sentiment; never broke, by any accident or blunder, into the irregular paces of flirtation; was a man who notoriously would never diminish by marriage the purity of his race; and one who always maintained that passion and polished life were quite incompatible. He liked the drawing-room, and he liked the Desert, but he would not consent that either should trench on their mutual privileges.

The Princess Lucretia had yielded herself to the spell of Sidonia's society at Coningsby Castle, when she knew that marriage was impossible. But she loved him; and with an Italian spirit. Now they met again, and she was the Marchioness of Monmouth, a very great lady, very much admired, and followed, and courted, and very powerful. It is our great moralist who tells us, in the immortal page, that an affair of gallantry with a great lady is more delightful than with ladies of a lower degree. In this he contradicts the good old ballad; but certain it is that Dr. Johnson announced to Boswell, 'Sir, in the case of a Countess the imagination is more excited.'

But Sidonia was a man on whom the conventional superiorities of life produced as little effect as a flake falling on the glaciers of the high Alps. His comprehension of the world and human nature was too vast and complete; he understood too well the relative value of things to appreciate anything but essential excellence; and that not too much. A charming woman was not more charming to him because she chanced to be an empress in a particular district of one of the smallest planets; a charming woman under any circumstances was not an unique animal. When Sidonia felt a disposition to be spellbound, he used to review in his memory all the charming women of whom he had read in the books of all literatures, and whom he had known himself in every court and clime, and the result of his reflections ever was, that the charming woman in question was by no means the paragon, which some who had read, seen, and thought less, might be inclined to esteem her. There was, indeed, no subject on which Sidonia discoursed so felicitously as on woman, and none on which Lord Eskdale more frequently endeavoured to attract him. He would tell you Talmudical stories about our mother Eve and the Queen of Sheba, which would have astonished you. There was not a free lady of Greece, Leontium and Phryne, Lais, Danae, and Lamia, the Egyptian girl Thonis, respecting whom he could not tell you as many diverting tales as if they were ladies of Loretto; not a nook of Athenseus, not an obscure scholiast, not a passage in a Greek orator, that could throw light on these personages, which was not at his command. What stories he would tell you about Marc Antony and the actress Cytheris in their chariot drawn by tigers! What a character would he paint of that Flora who gave her gardens to the Roman people! It would draw tears to your eyes. No man was ever so learned in the female manners of the last centuries of polytheism as Sidonia. You would have supposed that he had devoted his studies peculiarly to that period if you had not chanced to draw him to the Italian middle ages. And even these startling revelations were almost eclipsed by his anecdotes of the Court of Henry III. of France, with every character of which he was as familiar as with the brilliant groups that at this moment filled the saloons of Madame de R----d.

CHAPTER III.

The image of Edith Millbank was the last thought of Coningsby, as he sank into an agitated slumber. To him had hitherto in general been accorded the precious boon of dreamless sleep. Homer tells us these phantasms come from Jove; they are rather the children of a distracted soul. Coningsby this night lived much in past years, varied by painful perplexities of the present, which he could neither subdue nor comprehend. The scene flitted from Eton to the castle of his grandfather; and then he found himself among the pictures of the Rue de Tronchet, but their owner bore the features of the senior Millbank. A beautiful countenance that was alternately the face in the mysterious picture, and then that of Edith, haunted him under all circumstances. He woke little refreshed; restless, and yet sensible of some secret joy.

He woke to think of her of whom he had dreamed. The light had dawned on his soul. Coningsby loved.

Ah! what is that ambition that haunts our youth, that thirst for power or that lust of fame that forces us from obscurity into the sunblaze of the world, what are these sentiments so high, so vehement, so ennobling? They vanish, and in an instant, before the glance of a woman!

Coningsby had scarcely quitted her side the preceding eve. He hung upon the accents of that clear sweet voice, and sought, with tremulous fascination, the gleaming splendour of those soft dark eyes. And now he sat in his chamber, with his eyes fixed on vacancy. All thoughts and feelings, pursuits, desires, life, merge in one absorbing sentiment.

It is impossible to exist without seeing her again, and instantly. He had requested and gained permission to call on Lady Wallinger; he would not lose a moment in availing himself of it. As early as was tolerably decorous, and before, in all probability, they could quit their hotel, Coningsby repaired to the Rue de Rivoli to pay his respects to his new friends.

As he walked along, he indulged in fanciful speculations which connected Edith and the mysterious portrait of his mother. He felt himself, as it were, near the fulfilment of some fate, and on the threshold of some critical discovery. He recalled the impatient, even alarmed, expressions

of Rigby at Montem six years ago, when he proposed to invite young Millbank to his grandfather's dinner; the vindictive feud that existed between the two families, and for which political opinion, or even party passion, could not satisfactorily account; and he reasoned himself into a conviction, that the solution of many perplexities was at hand, and that all would be consummated to the satisfaction of every one, by his unexpected but inevitable agency.

Coningsby found Sir Joseph alone. The worthy Baronet was at any rate no participator in Mr. Millbank's vindictive feelings against Lord Monmouth. On the contrary, he had a very high respect for a Marquess, whatever might be his opinions, and no mean consideration for a Marquess' grandson.

Sir Joseph had inherited a large fortune made by commerce, and had increased it by the same means. He was a middle-class Whig, had faithfully supported that party in his native town during the days they wandered in the wilderness, and had well earned his share of the milk and honey when they had vanquished the promised land. In the springtide of Liberalism, when the world was not analytical of free opinions, and odious distinctions were not drawn between Finality men and progressive Reformers, Mr. Wallinger had been the popular leader of a powerful body of his fellow-citizens, who had returned him to the first Reformed Parliament, and where, in spite of many a menacing registration, he had contrived to remain. He had never given a Radical vote without the permission of the Secretary of the Treasury, and was not afraid of giving an unpopular one to serve his friends. He was not like that distinguished Liberal, who, after dining with the late Whig Premier, expressed his gratification and his gratitude, by assuring his Lordship that he might count on his support on all popular questions.

'I want men who will support the government on all unpopular questions,' replied the witty statesman.

Mr. Wallinger was one of these men. His high character and strong purse were always in the front rank in the hour of danger. His support in the House was limited to his votes; but in other places equally important, at a meeting at a political club, or in Downing Street, he could find his tongue, take what is called a 'practical' view of a question, adopt what is called an 'independent tone,' reanimate confidence in ministers, check mutiny, and set a bright and bold example to the wavering. A man of his property, and high character, and sound views, so practical and so independent, this was evidently the block from which a Baronet should be cut, and in due time he figured Sir Joseph.

A Spanish gentleman of ample means, and of a good Catalan family, flying during a political convulsion to England, arrived with his two daughters at Liverpool, and bore letters of introduction to the house of Wallinger. Some little time after this, by one of those stormy vicissitudes of political fortune, of late years not unusual in the Peninsula, he returned to his native country, and left his children, and the management of that portion of his fortune that he had succeeded in bringing with him, under the guardianship of the father of the present Sir Joseph. This gentleman was about again to become an exile, when he met with an untimely end in one of those terrible tumults of which Barcelona is the frequent scene.

The younger Wallinger was touched by the charms of one of his father's wards. Her beauty of a character to which he was unaccustomed, her accomplishments of society, and the refinement of her manners, conspicuous in the circle in which he lived, captivated him; and though they had no heir, the union had been one of great felicity. Sir Joseph was proud of his wife; he secretly considered himself, though his 'tone' was as liberal and independent as in old days, to be on the threshold of aristocracy, and was conscious that Lady Wallinger played her part not unworthily in the elevated circles in which they now frequently found themselves. Sir Joseph was fond of great people, and not averse to travel; because, bearing a title, and being a member of the British Parliament, and always moving with the appendages of wealth, servants, carriages, and couriers, and fortified with no lack of letters from the Foreign Office, he was everywhere acknowledged, and received, and treated as a personage; was invited to court-balls, dined with ambassadors, and found himself and his lady at every festival of distinction.

The elder Millbank had been Joseph Wallinger's youthful friend. Different as were their dispositions and the rate of their abilities, their political opinions were the same; and commerce habitually connected their interests. During a visit to Liverpool, Millbank had made the acquaintance of the sister of Lady Wallinger, and had been a successful suitor for her hand. This lady was the mother of Edith and of the schoolfellow of Coningsby. It was only within a very few years that she had died; she had scarcely lived long enough to complete the education of her daughter, to whom she was devoted, and on whom she lavished the many accomplishments that she possessed. Lady Wallinger having no children, and being very fond of her niece, had watched over Edith with infinite solicitude, and finally had persuaded Mr. Millbank, that it would be well that his daughter should accompany them in their somewhat extensive travels. It was not, therefore, only that nature had developed a beautiful woman out of a bashful girl since Coningsby's visit to Millbank; but really, every means and every opportunity that could contribute to render an individual capable of

adorning the most accomplished circles of life, had naturally, and without effort, fallen to the fortunate lot of the manufacturer's daughter. Edith possessed an intelligence equal to those occasions. Without losing the native simplicity of her character, which sprang from the heart, and which the strong and original bent of her father's mind had fostered, she had imbibed all the refinement and facility of the polished circles in which she moved. She had a clear head, a fine taste, and a generous spirit; had received so much admiration, that, though by no means insensible to homage, her heart was free; was strongly attached to her family; and, notwithstanding all the splendour of Rome, and the brilliancy of Paris, her thoughts were often in her Saxon valley, amid the green hills and busy factories of Millbank.

Sir Joseph, finding himself alone with the grandson of Lord Monmouth, was not very anxious that the ladies should immediately appear. He thought this a good opportunity of getting at what are called 'the real feelings of the Tory party;' and he began to pump with a seductive semblance of frankness. For his part, he had never doubted that a Conservative government was ultimately inevitable; had told Lord John so two years ago, and, between themselves, Lord John was of the same opinion. The present position of the Whigs was the necessary fate of all progressive parties; could not see exactly how it would end; thought sometimes it must end in a fusion of parties; but could not well see how that could be brought about, at least at present. For his part, should be happy to witness an union of the best men of all parties, for the preservation of peace and order, without any reference to any particular opinions. And, in that sense of the word, it was not at all impossible he might find it his duty some day to support a Conservative government.

Sir Joseph was much astonished when Coningsby, who being somewhat impatient for the entrance of the ladies was rather more abrupt than his wont, told the worthy Baronet that he looked, upon a government without distinct principles of policy as only a stop-gap to a wide-spread and demoralising anarchy; that he for one could not comprehend how a free government could endure without national opinions to uphold it; and that governments for the preservation of peace and order, and nothing else, had better be sought in China, or among the Austrians, the Chinese of Europe. As for Conservative government, the natural question was, What do you mean to conserve? Do you mean to conserve things or only names, realities or merely appearances? Or, do you mean to continue the system commenced in 1834, and, with a hypocritical reverence for the principles, and a superstitious adhesion to the forms, of the old exclusive constitution, carry on your policy by latitudinarian practice?

Sir Joseph stared; it was the first time that any inkling of the views of the New Generation had caught his ear. They were strange and unaccustomed accents. He was extremely perplexed; could by no means make out what his companion was driving at; at length, with a rather knowing smile, expressive as much of compassion as comprehension, he remarked,

'Ah! I see; you are a regular Orangeman.'

'I look upon an Orangeman,' said Coningsby, 'as a pure Whig; the only professor and practiser of unadulterated Whiggism.'

This was too much for Sir Joseph, whose political knowledge did not reach much further back than the ministry of the Mediocrities; hardly touched the times of the Corresponding Society. But he was a cautious man, and never replied in haste. He was about feeling his way, when he experienced the golden advantage of gaining time, for the ladies entered.

The heart of Coningsby throbbed as Edith appeared. She extended to him her hand; her face radiant with kind expression. Lady Wallinger seemed gratified also by his visit. She had much elegance in her manner; a calm, soft address; and she spoke English with a sweet Doric irregularity. They all sat down, talked of the last night's ball, of a thousand things. There was something animating in the frank, cheerful spirit of Edith. She had a quick eye both for the beautiful and the ridiculous, and threw out her observations in terse and vivid phrases. An hour, and more than an hour, passed away, and Coningsby still found some excuse not to depart. It seemed that on this morning they were about to make an expedition into the antique city of Paris, to visit some old hotels which retained their character; especially they had heard much of the hotel of the Archbishop of Sens, with its fortified courtyard. Coningsby expressed great interest in the subject, and showed some knowledge. Sir Joseph invited him to join the party, which of all things in the world was what he most desired.

CHAPTER IV.

Not a day elapsed without Coningsby being in the company of Edith. Time was precious for him, for the spires and pinnacles of Cambridge already began to loom in the distance, and he resolved to make the most determined efforts not to lose a day of his liberty. And yet to call every morning in the Rue de Rivoli was an exploit which surpassed even the audacity of

love! More than once, making the attempt, his courage failed him, and he turned into the gardens of the Tuileries, and only watched the windows of the house. Circumstances, however, favoured him: he received a letter from Oswald Millbank; he was bound to communicate in person this evidence of his friend's existence; and when he had to reply to the letter, he must necessarily inquire whether his friend's relatives had any message to transmit to him. These, however, were only slight advantages. What assisted Coningsby in his plans and wishes was the great pleasure which Sidonia, with whom he passed a great deal of his time, took in the society of the Wallingers and their niece. Sidonia presented Lady Wallinger with his opera-box during her stay at Paris; invited them frequently to his agreeable dinner-parties; and announced his determination to give a ball, which Lady Wallinger esteemed a delicate attention to Edith; while Lady Monmouth flattered herself that the festival sprang from the desire she had expressed of seeing the celebrated hotel of Sidonia to advantage.

Coningsby was very happy. His morning visits to the Rue de Rivoli seemed always welcome, and seldom an evening elapsed in which he did not find himself in the society of Edith. She seemed not to wish to conceal that his presence gave her pleasure, and though she had many admirers, and had an airy graciousness for all of them, Coningsby sometimes indulged the exquisite suspicion that there was a flattering distinction in her carriage to himself. Under the influence of these feelings, he began daily to be more conscious that separation would be an intolerable calamity; he began to meditate upon the feasibility of keeping a half term, and of postponing his departure to Cambridge to a period nearer the time when Edith would probably return to England.

In the meanwhile, the Parisian world talked much of the grand fete which was about to be given by Sidonia. Coningsby heard much of it one day when dining at his grandfather's. Lady Monmouth seemed very intent on the occasion. Even Lord Monmouth half talked of going, though, for his part, he wished people would come to him, and never ask him to their houses. That was his idea of society. He liked the world, but he liked to find it under his own roof. He grudged them nothing, so that they would not insist upon the reciprocity of cold-catching, and would eat his good dinners instead of insisting on his eating their bad ones.

'But Monsieur Sidonia's cook is a gem, they say,' observed an Attaché of an embassy.

'I have no doubt of it; Sidonia is a man of sense, almost the only man of sense I know. I never caught him tripping. He never makes a false move. Sidonia is exactly the sort of man I like; you know you cannot deceive

him, and that he does not want to deceive you. I wish he liked a rubber more. Then he would be perfect.'

'They say he is going to be married,' said the Attaché.

'Poh!' said Lord Monmouth.

'Married!' exclaimed Lady Monmouth. 'To whom?'

'To your beautiful countrywoman, "la belle Anglaise," that all the world talks of,' said the Attaché.

'And who may she be, pray?' said the Marquess. 'I have so many beautiful countrywomen.'

'Mademoiselle Millbank,' said the Attaché.

'Millbank!' said the Marquess, with a lowering brow. 'There are so many Millbanks. Do you know what Millbank this is, Harry?' he inquired of his grandson, who had listened to the conversation with a rather embarrassed and even agitated spirit.

'What, sir; yes, Millbank?' said Coningsby.

'I say, do you know who this Millbank is?'

'Oh! Miss Millbank: yes, I believe, that is, I know a daughter of the gentleman who purchased some property near you.'

'Oh! that fellow! Has he got a daughter here?'

'The most beautiful girl in Paris,' said the Attaché.

'Lady Monmouth, have you seen this beauty, that Sidonia is going to marry?' he added, with a fiendish laugh.

'I have seen the young lady,' said Lady Monmouth; 'but I had not heard that Monsieur Sidonia was about to marry her.'

'Is she so very beautiful?' inquired another gentleman.

'Yes,' said Lady Monmouth, calm, but pale.

'Poh!' said the Marquess again.

'I assure you that it is a fact,' said the Attaché, 'not at least an _on-dit_. I have it from a quarter that could not well be mistaken.'

Behold a little snatch of ordinary dinner gossip that left a very painful impression on the minds of three individuals who were present.

The name of Millbank revived in Lord Monmouth's mind a sense of defeat, discomfiture, and disgust; Hellingsley, lost elections, and Mr. Rigby; three subjects which Lord Monmouth had succeeded for a time in expelling from his sensations. His lordship thought that, in all probability, this beauty of whom they spoke so highly was not really the daughter of his foe; that it was some confusion which had arisen from the similarity of names: nor did he believe that Sidonia was going to marry her, whoever she might be; but a variety of things had been said at dinner, and a number of images had been raised in his mind that touched his spleen. He took his wine freely, and, the usual consequence of that proceeding with Lord Monmouth, became silent and sullen. As for Lady Monmouth, she had learnt that Sidonia, whatever might be the result, was paying very marked attention to another woman, for whom undoubtedly he was giving that very ball which she had flattered herself was a homage to her wishes, and for which she had projected a new dress of eclipsing splendour.

Coningsby felt quite sure that the story of Sidonia's marriage with Edith was the most ridiculous idea that ever entered into the imagination of man; at least he thought he felt quite sure. But the idlest and wildest report that the woman you love is about to marry another is not comfortable. Besides, he could not conceal from himself that, between the Wallingers and Sidonia there existed a remarkable intimacy, fully extended to their niece. He had seen her certainly on more than one occasion in lengthened and apparently earnest conversation with Sidonia, who, by-the-by, spoke with her often in Spanish, and never concealed his admiration of her charms or the interest he found in her society. And Edith; what, after all, had passed between Edith and himself which should at all gainsay this report, which he had been particularly assured was not a mere report, but came from a quarter that could not well be mistaken? She had received him with kindness. And how should she receive one who was the friend and preserver of her only brother, and apparently the intimate and cherished acquaintance of her future husband? Coningsby felt that sickness of the heart that accompanies one's first misfortune. The illusions of life seemed to dissipate and disappear. He was miserable; he had no confidence in himself, in his future. After all, what was he? A dependent on a man of very resolute will and passions. Could he forget the glance with which Lord Monmouth caught the name of Millbank, and received the

intimation of Hellingsley? It was a glance for a Spagnoletto or a Caravaggio to catch and immortalise. Why, if Edith were not going to marry Sidonia, how was he ever to marry her, even if she cared for him? Oh! what a future of unbroken, continuous, interminable misery awaited him! Was there ever yet born a being with a destiny so dark and dismal? He was the most forlorn of men, utterly wretched! He had entirely mistaken his own character. He had no energy, no abilities, not a single eminent quality. All was over!

CHAPTER V.

It was fated that Lady Monmouth should not be present at that ball, the anticipation of which had occasioned her so much pleasure and some pangs.

On the morning after that slight conversation, which had so disturbed the souls, though unconsciously to each other, of herself and Coningsby, the Marquess was driving Lucretia up the avenue Marigny in his phaeton. About the centre of the avenue the horses took fright, and started off at a wild pace. The Marquess was an experienced whip, calm, and with exertion still very powerful. He would have soon mastered the horses, had not one of the reins unhappily broken. The horses swerved; the Marquess kept his seat; Lucretia, alarmed, sprang up, the carriage was dashed against the trunk of a tree, and she was thrown out of it, at the very instant that one of the outriders had succeeded in heading the equipage and checking the horses.

The Marchioness was senseless. Lord Monmouth had descended from the phaeton; several passengers had assembled; the door of a contiguous house was opened; there were offers of service, sympathy, inquiries, a babble of tongues, great confusion.

'Get surgeons and send for her maid,' said Lord Monmouth to one of his servants.

In the midst of this distressing tumult, Sidonia, on horseback, followed by a groom, came up the avenue from the Champs Elysées. The empty phaeton, reins broken, horses held by strangers, all the appearances of a misadventure, attracted him. He recognised the livery. He instantly dismounted. Moving aside the crowd, he perceived Lady Monmouth senseless and prostrate, and her husband, without assistance, restraining the injudicious efforts of the bystanders.

'Let us carry her in, Lord Monmouth,' said Sidonia, exchanging a recognition as he took Lucretia in his arms, and bore her into the dwelling that was at hand. Those who were standing at the door assisted him. The woman of the house and Lord Monmouth only were present.

'I would hope there is no fracture,' said Sidonia, placing her on a sofa, 'nor does it appear to me that the percussion of the head, though considerable, could have been fatally violent. I have caught her pulse. Keep her in a horizontal position, and she will soon come to herself.'

The Marquess seated himself in a chair by the side of the sofa, which Sidonia had advanced to the middle of the room. Lord Monmouth was silent and very serious. Sidonia opened the window, and touched the brow of Lucretia with water. At this moment M. Villebecque and a surgeon entered the chamber.

'The brain cannot be affected, with that pulse,' said the surgeon; 'there is no fracture.'

'How pale she is!' said Lord Monmouth, as if he were examining a picture.

'The colour seems to me to return,' said Sidonia.

The surgeon applied some restoratives which he had brought with him. The face of the Marchioness showed signs of life; she stirred.

'She revives,' said the surgeon.

The Marchioness breathed with some force; again; then half-opened her eyes, and then instantly closed them.

'If I could but get her to take this draught,' said the surgeon.

'Stop! moisten her lips first,' said Sidonia.

They placed the draught to her mouth; in a moment she put forth her hand as if to repress them, then opened her eyes again, and sighed.

'She is herself,' said the surgeon.

'Lucretia!' said the Marquess.

'Sidonia!' said the Marchioness.

Lord Monmouth looked round to invite his friend to come forward.

'Lady Monmouth!' said Sidonia, in a gentle voice.

She started, rose a little on the sofa, stared around her. 'Where am I?' she exclaimed.

'With me,' said the Marquess; and he bent forward to her, and took her hand.

'Sidonia!' she again exclaimed, in a voice of inquiry.

'Is here,' said Lord Monmouth. 'He carried you in after our accident.'

'Accident! Why is he going to marry?'

The Marquess took a pinch of snuff.

There was an awkward pause in the chamber.

'I think now,' said Sidonia to the surgeon, 'that Lady Monmouth would take the draught.'

She refused it.

'Try you, Sidonia,' said the Marquess, rather dryly.

'You feel yourself again?' said Sidonia, advancing.

'Would I did not!' said the Marchioness, with an air of stupor. 'What has happened? Why am I here? Are you married?'

'She wanders a little,' said Sidonia.

The Marquess took another pinch of snuff.

'I could have borne even repulsion,' said Lady Monmouth, in a voice of desolation, 'but not for another!'

'M. Villebecque!' said the Marquess.

'My Lord?'

Lord Monmouth looked at him with that irresistible scrutiny which would daunt a galley-slave; and then, after a short pause, said, 'The carriage should have arrived by this time. Let us get home.'

CHAPTER VI.

After the conversation at dinner which we have noticed, the restless and disquieted Coningsby wandered about Paris, vainly seeking in the distraction of a great city some relief from the excitement of his mind. His first resolution was immediately to depart for England; but when, on reflection, he was mindful that, after all, the assertion which had so agitated him might really be without foundation, in spite of many circumstances that to his regardful fancy seemed to accredit it, his firm resolution began to waver.

These were the first pangs of jealousy that Coningsby had ever experienced, and they revealed to him the immensity of the stake which he was hazarding on a most uncertain die.

The next morning he called in the Rue Rivoli, and was informed that the family were not at home. He was returning under the arcades, towards the Rue St. Florentin, when Sidonia passed him in an opposite direction, on horseback, and at a rapid rate. Coningsby, who was not observed by him, could not resist a strange temptation to watch for a moment his progress. He saw him enter the court of the hotel where the Wallinger family were staying. Would he come forth immediately? No. Coningsby stood still and pale. Minute followed minute. Coningsby flattered himself that Sidonia was only speaking to the porter. Then he would fain believe Sidonia was writing a note. Then, crossing the street, he mounted by some steps the terrace of the Tuileries, nearly opposite the Hotel of the Minister of Finance, and watched the house. A quarter of an hour elapsed; Sidonia did not come forth. They were at home to him; only to him. Sick at heart, infinitely wretched, scarcely able to guide his steps, dreading even to meet an acquaintance, and almost feeling that his tongue would refuse the office of conversation, he contrived to reach his grandfather's hotel, and was about to bury himself in his chamber, when on the staircase he met Flora.

Coningsby had not seen her for the last fortnight. Seeing her now, his heart smote him for his neglect, excusable as it really was. Any one else

at this time he would have hurried by without a recognition, but the gentle and suffering Flora was too meek to be rudely treated by so kind a heart as Coningsby's.

He looked at her; she was pale and agitated. Her step trembled, while she still hastened on.

'What is the matter?' inquired Coningsby.

'My Lord, the Marchioness, are in danger, thrown from their carriage.' Briefly she detailed to Coningsby all that had occurred; that M. Villebecque had already repaired to them; that she herself only this moment had learned the intelligence that seemed to agitate her to the centre. Coningsby instantly turned with her; but they had scarcely emerged from the courtyard when the carriage approached that brought Lord and Lady Monmouth home. They followed it into the court. They were immediately at its door.

'All is right, Harry,' said the Marquess, calm and grave.

Coningsby pressed his grandfather's hand. Then he assisted Lucretia to alight.

'I am quite well,' she said, 'now.'

'But you must lean on me, dearest Lady Monmouth,' Coningsby said in a tone of tenderness, as he felt Lucretia almost sinking from him. And he supported her into the hall of the hotel.

Lord Monmouth had lingered behind. Flora crept up to him, and with unwonted boldness offered her arm to the Marquess. He looked at her with a glance of surprise, and then a softer expression, one indeed of an almost winning sweetness, which, though rare, was not a stranger to his countenance, melted his features, and taking the arm so humbly presented, he said,

'Ma Petite, you look more frightened than any of us. Poor child!'

He had reached the top of the flight of steps; he withdrew his arm from Flora, and thanked her with all his courtesy.

'You are not hurt, then, sir?' she ventured to ask with a look that expressed the infinite solicitude which her tongue did not venture to convey.

'By no means, my good little girl;' and he extended his hand to her, which she reverently bent over and embraced.

CHAPTER VII.

When Coningsby had returned to his grandfather's hotel that morning, it was with a determination to leave Paris the next day for England; but the accident to Lady Monmouth, though, as it ultimately appeared, accompanied by no very serious consequences, quite dissipated this intention. It was impossible to quit them so crudely at such a moment. So he remained another day, and that was the day preceding Sidonia's fête, which he particularly resolved not to attend. He felt it quite impossible that he could again endure the sight of either Sidonia or Edith. He looked upon them as persons who had deeply injured him; though they really were individuals who had treated him with invariable kindness. But he felt their existence was a source of mortification and misery to him. With these feelings, sauntering away the last hours at Paris, disquieted, uneasy; no present, no future; no enjoyment, no hope; really, positively, undeniably unhappy; unhappy too for the first time in his life; the first unhappiness; what a companion piece for the first love! Coningsby, of all places in the world, in the gardens of the Luxembourg, encountered Sir Joseph Wallinger and Edith.

To avoid them was impossible; they met face to face; and Sir Joseph stopped, and immediately reminded him that it was three days since they had seen him, as if to reproach him for so unprecedented a neglect. And it seemed that Edith, though she said not as much, felt the same. And Coningsby turned round and walked with them. He told them he was going to leave Paris on the morrow.

'And miss Monsieur de Sidonia's fête, of which we have all talked so much!' said Edith, with unaffected surprise, and an expression of disappointment which she in vain attempted to conceal.

'The festival will not be less gay for my absence,' said Coningsby, with that plaintive moroseness not unusual to despairing lovers.

'If we were all to argue from the same premises, and act accordingly,' said Edith, 'the saloons would be empty. But if any person's absence would

be remarked, I should really have thought it would be yours. I thought you were one of Monsieur de Sidonia's great friends?'

'He has no friends,' said Coningsby. 'No wise man has. What are friends? Traitors.'

Edith looked much astonished. And then she said,

'I am sure you have not quarrelled with Monsieur de Sidonia, for we have just parted with him.'

'I have no doubt you have,' thought Coningsby.

'And it is impossible to speak of another in higher terms than he spoke of you.' Sir Joseph observed how unusual it was for Monsieur de Sidonia to express himself so warmly.

'Sidonia is a great man, and carries everything before him,' said Coningsby. 'I am nothing; I cannot cope with him; I retire from the field.'

'What field?' inquired Sir Joseph, who did not clearly catch the drift of these observations. 'It appears to me that a field for action is exactly what Sidonia wants. There is no vent for his abilities and intelligence. He wastes his energy in travelling from capital to capital like a King's messenger. The morning after his fête he is going to Madrid.'

This brought some reference to their mutual movements. Edith spoke of her return to Lancashire, of her hope that Mr. Coningsby would soon see Oswald; but Mr. Coningsby informed her that though he was going to leave Paris, he had no intention of returning to England; that he had not yet quite made up his mind whither he should go; but thought that he should travel direct to St. Petersburg. He wished to travel overland to Astrachan. That was the place he was particularly anxious to visit.

After this incomprehensible announcement, they walked on for some minutes in silence, broken only by occasional monosyllables, with which Coningsby responded at hazard to the sound remarks of Sir Joseph. As they approached the Palace a party of English who were visiting the Chamber of Peers, and who were acquainted with the companions of Coningsby, encountered them. Amid the mutual recognitions, Coningsby, was about to take his leave somewhat ceremoniously, but Edith held forth her hand, and said,

'Is this indeed farewell?'

His heart was agitated, his countenance changed; he retained her hand amid the chattering tourists, too full of their criticisms and their egotistical commonplaces to notice what was passing. A sentimental ebullition seemed to be on the point of taking place. Their eyes met. The look of Edith was mournful and inquiring.

'We will say farewell at the ball,' said Coningsby, and she rewarded him with a radiant smile.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sidonia lived in the Faubourg St. Germain, in a large hotel that, in old days, had belonged to the Crillons; but it had received at his hands such extensive alterations, that nothing of the original decoration, and little of its arrangement, remained.

A flight of marble steps, ascending from a vast court, led into a hall of great dimensions, which was at the same time an orangery and a gallery of sculpture. It was illumined by a distinct, yet soft and subdued light, which harmonised with the beautiful repose of the surrounding forms, and with the exotic perfume that was wafted about. A gallery led from this hall to an inner hall of quite a different character; fantastic, glittering, variegated; full of strange shapes and dazzling objects.

The roof was carved and gilt in that honeycomb style prevalent in the Saracenic buildings; the walls were hung with leather stamped in rich and vivid patterns; the floor was a flood of mosaic; about were statues of negroes of human size with faces of wild expression, and holding in their outstretched hands silver torches that blazed with an almost painful brilliancy.

From this inner hall a double staircase of white marble led to the grand suite of apartments.

These saloons, lofty, spacious, and numerous, had been decorated principally in encaustic by the most celebrated artists of Munich. The three principal rooms were only separated from each other by columns, covered with rich hangings, on this night drawn aside. The decoration of each chamber was appropriate to its purpose. On the walls of the ball-room

nymphs and heroes moved in measure in Sicilian landscapes, or on the azure shores of Aegean waters. From the ceiling beautiful divinities threw garlands on the guests, who seemed surprised that the roses, unwilling to quit Olympus, would not descend on earth. The general effect of this fair chamber was heightened, too, by that regulation of the house which did not permit any benches in the ball-room. That dignified assemblage who are always found ranged in precise discipline against the wall, did not here mar the flowing grace of the festivity. The chaperons had no cause to complain. A large saloon abounded in ottomans and easy chairs at their service, where their delicate charges might rest when weary, or find distraction when not engaged.

All the world were at this fête of Sidonia. It exceeded in splendour and luxury every entertainment that had yet been given. The highest rank, even Princes of the blood, beauty, fashion, fame, all assembled in a magnificent and illuminated palace, resounding with exquisite melody.

Coningsby, though somewhat depressed, was not insensible to the magic of the scene. Since the passage in the gardens of the Luxembourg, that tone, that glance, he had certainly felt much relieved, happier. And yet if all were, with regard to Sidonia, as unfounded as he could possibly desire, where was he then? Had he forgotten his grandfather, that fell look, that voice of intense detestation? What was Millbank to him? Where, what was the mystery? for of some he could not doubt. The Spanish parentage of Edith had only more perplexed Coningsby. It offered no solution. There could be no connection between a Catalan family and his mother, the daughter of a clergyman in a midland county. That there was any relationship between the Millbank family and his mother was contradicted by the conviction in which he had been brought up, that his mother had no relations; that she returned to England utterly friendless; without a relative, a connection, an acquaintance to whom she could appeal. Her complete forlornness was stamped upon his brain. Tender as were his years when he was separated from her, he could yet recall the very phrases in which she deplored her isolation; and there were numerous passages in her letters which alluded to it. Coningsby had taken occasion to sound the Wallingers on this subject; but he felt assured, from the manner in which his advances were met, that they knew nothing of his mother, and attributed the hostility of Mr. Millbank to his grandfather, solely to political emulation and local rivalries. Still there were the portrait and the miniature. That was a fact; a clue which ultimately, he was persuaded, must lead to some solution.

Coningsby had met with great social success at Paris. He was at once a favourite. The Parisian dames decided in his favour. He was a specimen of

the highest style of English beauty, which is popular in France. His air was acknowledged as distinguished. The men also liked him; he had not quite arrived at that age when you make enemies. The moment, therefore, that he found himself in the saloons of Sidonia, he was accosted by many whose notice was flattering; but his eye wandered, while he tried to be courteous and attempted to be sprightly. Where was she? He had nearly reached the ball-room when he met her. She was on the arm of Lord Beaumanoir, who had made her acquaintance at Rome, and originally claimed it as the member of a family who, as the reader may perhaps not forget, had experienced some kindnesses from the Millbanks.

There were mutual and hearty recognitions between the young men; great explanations where they had been, what they were doing, where they were going. Lord Beaumanoir told Coningsby he had introduced steeple-chases at Rome, and had parted with Sunbeam to the nephew of a Cardinal. Coningsby securing Edith's hand for the next dance, they all moved on together to her aunt.

Lady Wallinger was indulging in some Roman reminiscences with the Marquess.

'And you are not going to Astrachan to-morrow?' said Edith.

'Not to-morrow,' said Coningsby.

'You know that you said once that life was too stirring in these days to permit travel to a man?'

'I wish nothing was stirring,' said Coningsby. 'I wish nothing to change. All that I wish is, that this fête should never end.'

'Is it possible that you can be capricious? You perplex me very much.'

'Am I capricious because I dislike change?'

'But Astrachan?'

'It was the air of the Luxembourg that reminded me of the Desert,' said Coningsby.

Soon after this Coningsby led Edith to the dance. It was at a ball that he had first met her at Paris, and this led to other reminiscences; all most interesting. Coningsby was perfectly happy. All mysteries, all difficulties, were driven from his recollection; he lived only in the

exciting and enjoyable present. Twenty-one and in love!

Some time after this, Coningsby, who was inevitably separated from Edith, met his host.

'Where have you been, child,' said Sidonia, 'that I have not seen you for some days? I am going to Madrid tomorrow.'

'And I must think, I suppose, of Cambridge.'

'Well, you have seen something; you will find it more profitable when you have digested it: and you will have opportunity. That's the true spring of wisdom: meditate over the past. Adventure and Contemplation share our being like day and night.'

The resolute departure for England on the morrow had already changed into a supposed necessity of thinking of returning to Cambridge. In fact, Coningsby felt that to quit Paris and Edith was an impossibility. He silenced the remonstrance of his conscience by the expedient of keeping a half-term, and had no difficulty in persuading himself that a short delay in taking his degree could not really be of the slightest consequence.

It was the hour for supper. The guests at a French ball are not seen to advantage at this period. The custom of separating the sexes for this refreshment, and arranging that the ladies should partake of it by themselves, though originally founded in a feeling of consideration and gallantry, and with the determination to secure, under all circumstances, the convenience and comfort of the fair sex, is really, in its appearance and its consequences, anything but European, and produces a scene which rather reminds one of the harem of a sultan than a hall of chivalry. To judge from the countenances of the favoured fair, they are not themselves particularly pleased; and when their repast is over they necessarily return to empty halls, and are deprived of the dance at the very moment when they may feel most inclined to participate in its graceful excitement.

These somewhat ungracious circumstances, however, were not attendant on the festival of this night. There was opened in the Hotel of Sidonia for the first time a banqueting-room which could contain with convenience all the guests. It was a vast chamber of white marble, the golden panels of the walls containing festive sculptures by Schwanthaler, relieved by encaustic tinting. In its centre was a fountain, a group of Bacchantes encircling Dionysos; and from this fountain, as from a star, diverged the various tables from which sprang orange-trees in fruit and flower.

The banquet had but one fault; Coningsby was separated from Edith. The Duchess of Grand Cairo, the beautiful wife of the heir of one of the Imperial illustrations, had determined to appropriate Coningsby as her cavalier for the moment. Distracted, he made his escape; but his wandering eye could not find the object of its search; and he fell prisoner to the charming Princess de Petitpoix, a Carlist chieftain, whose witty words avenged the cause of fallen dynasties and a cashiered nobility.

Behold a scene brilliant in fancy, magnificent in splendour! All the circumstances of his life at this moment were such as acted forcibly on the imagination of Coningsby. Separated from Edith, he had still the delight of seeing her the paragon of that bright company, the consummate being whom he adored! and who had spoken to him in a voice sweeter than a serenade, and had bestowed on him a glance softer than moonlight! The lord of the palace, more distinguished even for his capacity than his boundless treasure, was his chosen friend; gained under circumstances of romantic interest, when the reciprocal influence of their personal qualities was affected by no accessory knowledge of their worldly positions. He himself was in the very bloom of youth and health; the child of a noble house, rich for his present wants, and with a future of considerable fortunes. Entrancing love and dazzling friendship, a high ambition and the pride of knowledge, the consciousness of a great prosperity, the vague, daring energies of the high pulse of twenty-one, all combined to stimulate his sense of existence, which, as he looked around him at the beautiful objects and listened to the delicious sounds, seemed to him a dispensation of almost supernatural ecstasy.

About an hour after this, the ball-room still full, but the other saloons gradually emptying, Coningsby entered a chamber which seemed deserted. Yet he heard sounds, as it were, of earnest conversation. It was the voice that invited his progress; he advanced another step, then suddenly stopped. There were two individuals in the room, by whom he was unnoticed. They were Sidonia and Miss Millbank. They were sitting on a sofa, Sidonia holding her hand and endeavouring, as it seemed, to soothe her. Her tones were tremulous; but the expression of her face was fond and confiding. It was all the work of a moment. Coningsby instantly withdrew, yet could not escape hearing an earnest request from Edith to her companion that he would write to her.

In a few seconds Coningsby had quitted the hotel of Sidonia, and the next day found him on his road to England.

END OF BOOK VI.

BOOK VII.

CHAPTER I.

It was one of those gorgeous and enduring sunsets that seemed to linger as if they wished to celebrate the mid-period of the year. Perhaps the beautiful hour of impending twilight never exercises a more effective influence on the soul than when it descends on the aspect of some distant and splendid city. What a contrast between the serenity and repose of our own bosoms and the fierce passions and destructive cares that in the walls of that multitude whose domes and towers rise in purple lustre against the resplendent horizon!

And yet the disturbing emotions of existence and the bitter inheritance of humanity should exercise but a modified sway, and entail but a light burden, within the circle of the city into which the next scene of our history leads us. For it is the sacred city of study, of learning, and of faith; and the declining beam is resting on the dome of the Radcliffe, lingering on the towers of Christchurch and Magdalen, sanctifying the spires and pinnacles of holy St. Mary's.

A young Oxonian, who had for some time been watching the city in the sunset, from a rising ground in its vicinity, lost, as it would seem, in meditation, suddenly rose, and looking at his watch, as if reminded of some engagement, hastened his return at a rapid pace. He reached the High Street as the Blenheim light post coach dashed up to the Star Hotel, with that brilliant precision which even the New Generation can remember, and yet which already ranks among the traditions of English manners. A peculiar and most animating spectacle used to be the arrival of a first-rate light coach in a country town! The small machine, crowded with so many passengers, the foaming and curvetting leaders, the wheelers more steady and glossy, as if they had not done their ten miles in the hour, the triumphant bugle of the guard, and the haughty routine with which the driver, as he reached his goal, threw his whip to the obedient ostlers in attendance; and, not least, the staring crowd, a little awestruck, and looking for the moment at the lowest official of the stable with considerable respect, altogether made a picture which one recollects with cheerfulness, and misses now in many a dreary market-town.

Our Oxonian was a young man about the middle height, and naturally of a thoughtful expression and rather reserved mien. The general character of his countenance was, indeed, a little stern, but it broke into an almost bewitching smile, and a blush suffused his face, as he sprang forward and welcomed an individual about the same age, who had jumped off the Blenheim.

'Well, Coningsby!' he exclaimed, extending both his hands.

'By Jove! my dear Millbank, we have met at last,' said his friend.

And here we must for a moment revert to what had occurred to Coningsby since he so suddenly quitted Paris at the beginning of the year. The wound he had received was deep to one unused to wounds. Yet, after all, none had outraged his feelings, no one had betrayed his hopes. He had loved one who had loved another. Misery, but scarcely humiliation. And yet 'tis a bitter pang under any circumstances to find another preferred to yourself. It is about the same blow as one would probably feel if falling from a balloon. Your Icarian flight melts into a grovelling existence, scarcely superior to that of a sponge or a coral, or redeemed only from utter insensibility by your frank detestation of your rival. It is quite impossible to conceal that Coningsby had imbibed for Sidonia a certain degree of aversion, which, in these days of exaggerated phrase, might even be described as hatred. And Edith was so beautiful! And there had seemed between them a sympathy so native and spontaneous, creating at once the charm of intimacy without any of the disenchanting attributes that are occasionally its consequence. He would recall the tones of her voice, the expression of her soft dark eye, the airy spirit and frank graciousness, sometimes even the flattering blush, with which she had ever welcomed one of whom she had heard so long and so kindly. It seemed, to use a sweet and homely phrase, that they were made for each other; the circumstances of their mutual destinies might have combined into one enchanting fate.

And yet, had she accorded him that peerless boon, her heart, with what aspect was he to communicate this consummation of all his hopes to his grandfather, ask Lord Monmouth for his blessing, and the gracious favour of an establishment for the daughter of his foe, of a man whose name was never mentioned except to cloud his visage? Ah! what was that mystery that connected the haughty house of Coningsby with the humble blood of the Lancashire manufacturer? Why was the portrait of his mother beneath the roof of Millbank? Coningsby had delicately touched upon the subject both with Edith and the Wallingers, but the result of his inquiries only involved the question in deeper gloom. Edith had none but maternal

relatives: more than once she had mentioned this, and the Wallingers, on other occasions, had confirmed the remark. Coningsby had sometimes drawn the conversation to pictures, and he would remind her with playfulness of their first unconscious meeting in the gallery of the Rue Tronchet; then he remembered that Mr. Millbank was fond of pictures; then he recollected some specimens of Mr. Millbank's collection, and after touching on several which could not excite suspicion, he came to 'a portrait, a portrait of a lady; was it a portrait or an ideal countenance?'

Edith thought she had heard it was a portrait, but she was by no means certain, and most assuredly was quite unacquainted with the name of the original, if there were an original.

Coningsby addressed himself to the point with Sir Joseph. He inquired of the uncle explicitly whether he knew anything on the subject. Sir Joseph was of opinion that it was something that Millbank had somewhere 'picked up.' Millbank used often to 'pick up' pictures.

Disappointed in his love, Coningsby sought refuge in the excitement of study, and in the brooding imagination of an aspiring spirit. The softness of his heart seemed to have quitted him for ever. He recurred to his habitual reveries of political greatness and public distinction. And as it ever seemed to him that no preparation could be complete for the career which he planned for himself, he devoted himself with increased ardour to that digestion of knowledge which converts it into wisdom. His life at Cambridge was now a life of seclusion. With the exception of a few Eton friends, he avoided all society. And, indeed, his acquisitions during this term were such as few have equalled, and could only have been mastered by a mental discipline of a severe and exalted character. At the end of the term Coningsby took his degree, and in a few days was about to quit that university where, on the whole, he had passed three serene and happy years in the society of fond and faithful friends, and in ennobling pursuits. He had many plans for his impending movements, yet none of them very mature ones. Lord Vere wished Coningsby to visit his family in the north, and afterwards to go to Scotland together: Coningsby was more inclined to travel for a year. Amid this hesitation a circumstance occurred which decided him to adopt neither of these courses.

It was Commencement, and coming out of the quadrangle of St. John's, Coningsby came suddenly upon Sir Joseph and Lady Wallinger, who were visiting the marvels and rarities of the university. They were alone. Coningsby was a little embarrassed, for he could not forget the abrupt manner in which he had parted from them; but they greeted him with so much cordiality that he instantly recovered himself, and, turning, became their

companion. He hardly ventured to ask after Edith: at length, in a depressed tone and a hesitating manner, he inquired whether they had lately seen Miss Millbank. He was himself surprised at the extreme light-heartedness which came over him the moment he heard she was in England, at Millbank, with her family. He always very much liked Lady Wallinger, but this morning he hung over her like a lover, lavished on her unceasing and the most delicate attentions, seemed to exist only in the idea of making the Wallingers enjoy and understand Cambridge; and no one else was to be their guide at any place or under any circumstances. He told them exactly what they were to see; how they were to see it; when they were to see it. He told them of things which nobody did see, but which they should. He insisted that Sir Joseph should dine with him in hall; Sir Joseph could not think of leaving Lady Wallinger; Lady Wallinger could not think of Sir Joseph missing an opportunity that might never offer again. Besides, they might both join her after dinner. Except to give her husband a dinner, Coningsby evidently intended never to leave her side.

And the next morning, the occasion favourable, being alone with the lady, Sir Joseph bustling about a carriage, Coningsby said suddenly, with a countenance a little disturbed, and in a low voice, 'I was pleased, I mean surprised, to hear that there was still a Miss Millbank; I thought by this time she might have borne another name?'

Lady Wallinger looked at him with an expression of some perplexity, and then said, 'Yes, Edith was much admired; but she need not be precipitate in marrying. Marriage is for a woman _the_ event. Edith is too precious to be carelessly bestowed.'

'But I understood,' said Coningsby, 'when I left Paris,' and here, he became very confused, 'that Miss Millbank was engaged, on the point of marriage.'

'With whom?'

'Our friend Sidonia.'

'I am sure that Edith would never marry Monsieur de Sidonia, nor Monsieur de Sidonia, Edith. 'Tis a preposterous idea!' said Lady Wallinger.

'But he very much admired her?' said Coningsby with a searching eye.

'Possibly,' said Lady Wallinger; 'but he never even intimated his admiration.'

'But he was very attentive to Miss Millbank?'

'Not more than our intimate friendship authorised, and might expect.'

'You have known Sidonia a long time?'

'It was Monsieur de Sidonia's father who introduced us to the care of Mr. Wallinger,' said Lady Wallinger, 'and therefore I have ever entertained for his son a sincere regard. Besides, I look upon him as a compatriot. Recently he has been even more than usually kind to us, especially to Edith. While we were at Paris he recovered for her a great number of jewels which had been left to her by her uncle in Spain; and, what she prized infinitely more, the whole of her mother's correspondence which she maintained with this relative since her marriage. Nothing but the influence of Sidonia could have effected this. Therefore, of course, Edith is attached to him almost as much as I am. In short, he is our dearest friend; our counsellor in all our cares. But as for marrying him, the idea is ridiculous to those who know Monsieur Sidonia. No earthly consideration would ever induce him to impair that purity of race on which he prides himself. Besides, there are other obvious objections which would render an alliance between him and my niece utterly impossible: Edith is quite as devoted to her religion as Monsieur Sidonia can be to his race.'

A ray of light flashed on the brain of Coningsby as Lady Wallinger said these words. The agitated interview, which never could be explained away, already appeared in quite a different point of view. He became pensive, remained silent, was relieved when Sir Joseph, whose return he had hitherto deprecated, reappeared. Coningsby learnt in the course of the day that the Wallingers were about to make, and immediately, a visit to Hellingsley; their first visit; indeed, this was the first year that Mr. Millbank had taken up his abode there. He did not much like the change of life, Sir Joseph told Coningsby, but Edith was delighted with Hellingsley, which Sir Joseph understood was a very distinguished place, with fine gardens, of which his niece was particularly fond.

When Coningsby returned to his rooms, those rooms which he was soon about to quit for ever, in arranging some papers preparatory to his removal, his eye lighted on a too-long unanswered letter of Oswald Millbank. Coningsby had often projected a visit to Oxford, which he much desired to make, but hitherto it had been impossible for him to effect it, except in the absence of Millbank; and he had frequently postponed it that he might combine his first visit to that famous seat of learning with one to his old schoolfellow and friend. Now that was practicable. And immediately Coningsby wrote to apprise Millbank that he had taken his degree, was

free, and prepared to pay him immediately the long-projected visit. Three years and more had elapsed since they had quitted Eton. How much had happened in the interval! What new ideas, new feelings, vast and novel knowledge! Though they had not met, they were nevertheless familiar with the progress and improvement of each other's minds. Their suggestive correspondence was too valuable to both of them to have been otherwise than cherished. And now they were to meet on the eve of entering that world for which they had made so sedulous a preparation.

CHAPTER II.

There are few things in life more interesting than an unrestrained interchange of ideas with a congenial spirit, and there are few things more rare. How very seldom do you encounter in the world a man of great abilities, acquirements, experience, who will unmask his mind, unbutton his brains, and pour forth in careless and picturesque phrase all the results of his studies and observation; his knowledge of men, books, and nature. On the contrary, if a man has by any chance what he conceives an original idea, he hoards it as if it were old gold; and rather avoids the subject with which he is most conversant, from fear that you may appropriate his best thoughts. One of the principal causes of our renowned dulness in conversation is our extreme intellectual jealousy. It must be admitted that in this respect authors, but especially poets, bear the palm. They never think they are sufficiently appreciated, and live in tremor lest a brother should distinguish himself. Artists have the repute of being nearly as bad. And as for a small rising politician, a clever speech by a supposed rival or suspected candidate for office destroys his appetite and disturbs his slumbers.

One of the chief delights and benefits of travel is, that one is perpetually meeting men of great abilities, of original mind, and rare acquirements, who will converse without reserve. In these discourses the intellect makes daring leaps and marvellous advances. The tone that colours our afterlife is often caught in these chance colloquies, and the bent given that shapes a career.

And yet perhaps there is no occasion when the heart is more open, the brain more quick, the memory more rich and happy, or the tongue more prompt and eloquent, than when two school-day friends, knit by every sympathy of intelligence and affection, meet at the close of their college

careers, after a long separation, hesitating, as it were, on the verge of active life, and compare together their conclusions of the interval; impart to each other all their thoughts and secret plans and projects; high fancies and noble aspirations; glorious visions of personal fame and national regeneration.

Ah! why should such enthusiasm ever die! Life is too short to be little. Man is never so manly as when he feels deeply, acts boldly, and expresses himself with frankness and with fervour.

Most assuredly there never was a congress of friendship wherein more was said and felt than in this meeting, so long projected, and yet perhaps on the whole so happily procrastinated, between Coningsby and Millbank. In a moment they seemed as if they had never parted. Their faithful correspondence indeed had maintained the chain of sentiment unbroken. But details are only for conversation. Each poured forth his mind without stint. Not an author that had influenced their taste or judgment but was canvassed and criticised; not a theory they had framed or a principle they had adopted that was not confessed. Often, with boyish glee still lingering with their earnest purpose, they shouted as they discovered that they had formed the same opinion or adopted the same conclusion. They talked all day and late into the night. They condensed into a week the poignant conclusions of three years of almost unbroken study. And one night, as they sat together in Millbank's rooms at Oriel, their conversation having for some time taken a political colour, Millbank said,

'Now tell me, Coningsby, exactly what you conceive to be the state of parties in this country; for it seems to me that if we penetrate the surface, the classification must be more simple than their many names would intimate.'

'The principle of the exclusive constitution of England having been conceded by the Acts of 1827-8-32,' said Coningsby, 'a party has arisen in the State who demand that the principle of political liberalism shall consequently be carried to its extent; which it appears to them is impossible without getting rid of the fragments of the old constitution that remain. This is the destructive party; a party with distinct and intelligible principles. They seek a specific for the evils of our social system in the general suffrage of the population.'

'They are resisted by another party, who, having given up exclusion, would only embrace as much liberalism as is necessary for the moment; who, without any embarrassing promulgation of principles, wish to keep things as they find them as long as they can, and then will manage them as they

find them as well as they can; but as a party must have the semblance of principles, they take the names of the things that they have destroyed. Thus they are devoted to the prerogatives of the Crown, although in truth the Crown has been stripped of every one of its prerogatives; they affect a great veneration for the constitution in Church and State, though every one knows that the constitution in Church and State no longer exists; they are ready to stand or fall with the "independence of the Upper House of Parliament", though, in practice, they are perfectly aware that, with their sanction, "the Upper House" has abdicated its initiatory functions, and now serves only as a court of review of the legislation of the House of Commons. Whenever public opinion, which this party never attempts to form, to educate, or to lead, falls into some violent perplexity, passion, or caprice, this party yields without a struggle to the impulse, and, when the storm has passed, attempts to obstruct and obviate the logical and, ultimately, the inevitable results of the very measures they have themselves originated, or to which they have consented. This is the Conservative party.

'I care not whether men are called Whigs or Tories, Radicals or Chartists, or by what nickname a bustling and thoughtless race may designate themselves; but these two divisions comprehend at present the English nation.

'With regard to the first school, I for one have no faith in the remedial qualities of a government carried on by a neglected democracy, who, for three centuries, have received no education. What prospect does it offer us of those high principles of conduct with which we have fed our imaginations and strengthened our will? I perceive none of the elements of government that should secure the happiness of a people and the greatness of a realm.

'But in my opinion, if Democracy be combated only by Conservatism, Democracy must triumph, and at no distant date. This, then, is our position. The man who enters public life at this epoch has to choose between Political Infidelity and a Destructive Creed.'

'This, then,' said Millbank, 'is the dilemma to which we are brought by nearly two centuries of Parliamentary Monarchy and Parliamentary Church.'

"Tis true," said Coningsby. 'We cannot conceal it from ourselves, that the first has made Government detested, and the second Religion disbelieved.'

'Many men in this country,' said Millbank, 'and especially in the class to

which I belong, are reconciled to the contemplation of democracy; because they have accustomed themselves to believe, that it is the only power by which we can sweep away those sectional privileges and interests that impede the intelligence and industry of the community.'

'And yet,' said Coningsby, 'the only way to terminate what, in the language of the present day, is called Class Legislation, is not to entrust power to classes. You would find a Locofoco majority as much addicted to Class Legislation as a factitious aristocracy. The only power that has no class sympathy is the Sovereign.'

'But suppose the case of an arbitrary Sovereign, what would be your check against him?'

'The same as against an arbitrary Parliament.'

'But a Parliament is responsible.'

'To whom?'

'To their constituent body.'

'Suppose it was to vote itself perpetual?'

'But public opinion would prevent that.'

'And is public opinion of less influence on an individual than on a body?'

'But public opinion may be indifferent. A nation may be misled, may be corrupt.'

'If the nation that elects the Parliament be corrupt, the elected body will resemble it. The nation that is corrupt deserves to fall. But this only shows that there is something to be considered beyond forms of government, national character. And herein mainly should we repose our hopes. If a nation be led to aim at the good and the great, depend upon it, whatever be its form, the government will respond to its convictions and its sentiments.'

'Do you then declare against Parliamentary government.'

'Far from it: I look upon political change as the greatest of evils, for it comprehends all. But if we have no faith in the permanence of the existing settlement, if the very individuals who established it are, year

after year, proposing their modifications or their reconstructions; so also, while we uphold what exists, ought we to prepare ourselves for the change we deem impending?

'Now I would not that either ourselves, or our fellow-citizens, should be taken unawares as in 1832, when the very men who opposed the Reform Bill offered contrary objections to it which destroyed each other, so ignorant were they of its real character, its historical causes, its political consequences. We should now so act that, when the occasion arrives, we should clearly comprehend what we want, and have formed an opinion as to the best means by which that want can be supplied.

'For this purpose I would accustom the public mind to the contemplation of an existing though torpid power in the constitution, capable of removing our social grievances, were we to transfer to it those prerogatives which the Parliament has gradually usurped, and used in a manner which has produced the present material and moral disorganisation. The House of Commons is the house of a few; the Sovereign is the sovereign of all. The proper leader of the people is the individual who sits upon the throne.'

'Then you abjure the Representative principle?'

'Why so? Representation is not necessarily, or even in a principal sense, Parliamentary. Parliament is not sitting at this moment, and yet the nation is represented in its highest as well as in its most minute interests. Not a grievance escapes notice and redress. I see in the newspaper this morning that a pedagogue has brutally chastised his pupil. It is a fact known over all England. We must not forget that a principle of government is reserved for our days that we shall not find in our Aristotles, or even in the forests of Tacitus, nor in our Saxon Wittenagemotes, nor in our Plantagenet parliaments. Opinion is now supreme, and Opinion speaks in print. The representation of the Press is far more complete than the representation of Parliament. Parliamentary representation was the happy device of a ruder age, to which it was admirably adapted: an age of semi-civilisation, when there was a leading class in the community; but it exhibits many symptoms of desuetude. It is controlled by a system of representation more vigorous and comprehensive; which absorbs its duties and fulfils them more efficiently, and in which discussion is pursued on fairer terms, and often with more depth and information.'

'And to what power would you entrust the function of Taxation?'

'To some power that would employ it more discreetly than in creating our

present amount of debt, and in establishing our present system of imposts.

'In a word, true wisdom lies in the policy that would effect its ends by the influence of opinion, and yet by the means of existing forms. Nevertheless, if we are forced to revolutions, let us propose to our consideration the idea of a free monarchy, established on fundamental laws, itself the apex of a vast pile of municipal and local government, ruling an educated people, represented by a free and intellectual press. Before such a royal authority, supported by such a national opinion, the sectional anomalies of our country would disappear. Under such a system, where qualification would not be parliamentary, but personal, even statesmen would be educated; we should have no more diplomatists who could not speak French, no more bishops ignorant of theology, no more generals-in-chief who never saw a field.

'Now there is a polity adapted to our laws, our institutions, our feelings, our manners, our traditions; a polity capable of great ends and appealing to high sentiments; a polity which, in my opinion, would render government an object of national affection, which would terminate sectional anomalies, assuage religious heats, and extinguish Chartism.'

'You said to me yesterday,' said Millbank after a pause, 'quoting the words of another, which you adopted, that Man was made to adore and to obey. Now you have shown to me the means by which you deem it possible that government might become no longer odious to the subject; you have shown how man may be induced to obey. But there are duties and interests for man beyond political obedience, and social comfort, and national greatness, higher interests and greater duties. How would you deal with their spiritual necessities? You think you can combat political infidelity in a nation by the principle of enlightened loyalty; how would you encounter religious infidelity in a state? By what means is the principle of profound reverence to be revived? How, in short, is man to be led to adore?'

'Ah! that is a subject which I have not forgotten,' replied Coningsby. 'I know from your letters how deeply it has engaged your thoughts. I confess to you that it has often filled mine with perplexity and depression. When we were at Eton, and both of us impregnated with the contrary prejudices in which we had been brought up, there was still between us one common ground of sympathy and trust; we reposed with confidence and affection in the bosom of our Church. Time and thought, with both of us, have only matured the spontaneous veneration of our boyhood. But time and thought have also shown me that the Church of our heart is not in a position, as regards the community, consonant with its original and essential

character, or with the welfare of the nation.'

'The character of a Church is universality,' replied Millbank. 'Once the Church in this country was universal in principle and practice; when wedded to the State, it continued at least universal in principle, if not in practice. What is it now? All ties between the State and the Church are abolished, except those which tend to its danger and degradation.'

'What can be more anomalous than the present connection between State and Church? Every condition on which it was originally consented to has been cancelled. That original alliance was, in my view, an equal calamity for the nation and the Church; but, at least, it was an intelligible compact. Parliament, then consisting only of members of the Established Church, was, on ecclesiastical matters, a lay synod, and might, in some points of view, be esteemed a necessary portion of Church government. But you have effaced this exclusive character of Parliament; you have determined that a communion with the Established Church shall no longer be part of the qualification for sitting in the House of Commons. There is no reason, so far as the constitution avails, why every member of the House of Commons should not be a dissenter. But the whole power of the country is concentrated in the House of Commons. The House of Lords, even the Monarch himself, has openly announced and confessed, within these ten years, that the will of the House of Commons is supreme. A single vote of the House of Commons, in 1832, made the Duke of Wellington declare, in the House of Lords, that he was obliged to abandon his sovereign in "the most difficult and distressing circumstances." The House of Commons is absolute. It is the State. "L'Etat c'est moi." The House of Commons virtually appoints the bishops. A sectarian assembly appoints the bishops of the Established Church. They may appoint twenty Hoadleys. James II was expelled the throne because he appointed a Roman Catholic to an Anglican see. A Parliament might do this to-morrow with impunity. And this is the constitution in Church and State which Conservative dinners toast! The only consequences of the present union of Church and State are, that, on the side of the State, there is perpetual interference in ecclesiastical government, and on the side of the Church a sedulous avoidance of all those principles on which alone Church government can be established, and by the influence of which alone can the Church of England again become universal.'

'But it is urged that the State protects its revenues?'

'No ecclesiastical revenues should be safe that require protection. Modern history is a history of Church spoliation. And by whom? Not by the people; not by the democracy. No; it is the emperor, the king, the feudal baron, the court minion. The estate of the Church is the estate of the people, so

long as the Church is governed on its real principles. The Church is the medium by which the despised and degraded classes assert the native equality of man, and vindicate the rights and power of intellect. It made, in the darkest hour of Norman rule, the son of a Saxon pedlar Primate of England, and placed Nicholas Breakspear, a Hertfordshire peasant, on the throne of the Caesars. It would do as great things now, if it were divorced from the degrading and tyrannical connection that enchains it. You would have other sons of peasants Bishops of England, instead of men appointed to that sacred office solely because they were the needy scions of a factitious aristocracy; men of gross ignorance, profligate habits, and grinding extortion, who have disgraced the episcopal throne, and profaned the altar.'

'But surely you cannot justly extend such a description to the present bench?'

'Surely not: I speak of the past, of the past that has produced so much present evil. We live in decent times; frigid, latitudinarian, alarmed, decorous. A priest is scarcely deemed in our days a fit successor to the authors of the gospels, if he be not the editor of a Greek play; and he who follows St. Paul must now at least have been private tutor of some young nobleman who has taken a good degree! And then you are all astonished that the Church is not universal! Why! nothing but the indestructibleness of its principles, however feebly pursued, could have maintained even the disorganised body that still survives.

'And yet, my dear Coningsby, with all its past errors and all its present deficiencies, it is by the Church; I would have said until I listened to you to-night; by the Church alone that I see any chance of regenerating the national character. The parochial system, though shaken by the fatal poor-law, is still the most ancient, the most comprehensive, and the most popular institution of the country; the younger priests are, in general, men whose souls are awake to the high mission which they have to fulfil, and which their predecessors so neglected; there is, I think, a rising feeling in the community, that parliamentary intercourse in matters ecclesiastical has not tended either to the spiritual or the material elevation of the humbler orders. Divorce the Church from the State, and the spiritual power that struggled against the brute force of the dark ages, against tyrannical monarchs and barbarous barons, will struggle again in opposition to influences of a different form, but of a similar tendency; equally selfish, equally insensible, equally barbarising. The priests of God are the tribunes of the people. O, ignorant! that with such a mission they should ever have cringed in the antechambers of ministers, or bowed before parliamentary committees!'

'The Utilitarian system is dead,' said Coningsby. 'It has passed through the heaven of philosophy like a hailstorm, cold, noisy, sharp, and peppering, and it has melted away. And yet can we wonder that it found some success, when we consider the political ignorance and social torpor which it assailed? Anointed kings turned into chief magistrates, and therefore much overpaid; estates of the realm changed into parliaments of virtual representation, and therefore requiring real reform; holy Church transformed into national establishment, and therefore grumbled at by all the nation for whom it was not supported. What an inevitable harvest of sedition, radicalism, infidelity! I really think there is no society, however great its resources, that could long resist the united influences of chief magistrate, virtual representation, and Church establishment!'

'I have immense faith in the new generation,' said Millbank, eagerly.

'It is a holy thing to see a state saved by its youth,' said Coningsby; and then he added, in a tone of humility, if not of depression, 'But what a task! What a variety of qualities, what a combination of circumstances is requisite! What bright abilities and what noble patience! What confidence from the people, what favour from the Most High!'

'But He will favour us,' said Millbank. 'And I say to you as Nathan said unto David, "Thou art the man!" You were our leader at Eton; the friends of your heart and boyhood still cling and cluster round you! they are all men whose position forces them into public life. It is a nucleus of honour, faith, and power. You have only to dare. And will you not dare? It is our privilege to live in an age when the career of the highest ambition is identified with the performance of the greatest good. Of the present epoch it may be truly said, "Who dares to be good, dares to be great."'

'Heaven is above all,' said Coningsby. 'The curtain of our fate is still undrawn. We are happy in our friends, dear Millbank, and whatever lights, we will stand together. For myself, I prefer fame to life; and yet, the consciousness of heroic deeds to the most wide-spread celebrity.'

CHAPTER III.

The beautiful light of summer had never shone on a scene and surrounding landscape which recalled happier images of English nature, and better

recollections of English manners, than that to which we would now introduce our readers. One of those true old English Halls, now unhappily so rare, built in the time of the Tudors, and in its elaborate timber-framing and decorative woodwork indicating, perhaps, the scarcity of brick and stone at the period of its structure, as much as the grotesque genius of its fabricator, rose on a terrace surrounded by ancient and very formal gardens. The hall itself, during many generations, had been vigilantly and tastefully preserved by its proprietors. There was not a point which was not as fresh as if it had been renovated but yesterday. It stood a huge and strange blending of Grecian, Gothic, and Italian architecture, with a wild dash of the fantastic in addition. The lantern watch-towers of a baronial castle were placed in juxtaposition with Doric columns employed for chimneys, while under oriel windows might be observed Italian doorways with Grecian pediments. Beyond the extensive gardens an avenue of Spanish chestnuts at each point of the compass approached the mansion, or led into a small park which was table-land, its limits opening on all sides to beautiful and extensive valleys, sparkling with cultivation, except at one point, where the river Darl formed the boundary of the domain, and then spread in many a winding through the rich country beyond.

Such was Hellingsley, the new home that Oswald Millbank was about to visit for the first time. Coningsby and himself had travelled together as far as Darlford, where their roads diverged, and they had separated with an engagement on the part of Coningsby to visit Hellingsley on the morrow. As they had travelled along, Coningsby had frequently led the conversation to domestic topics; gradually he had talked, and talked much of Edith. Without an obtrusive curiosity, he extracted, unconsciously to his companion, traits of her character and early days, which filled him with a wild and secret interest. The thought that in a few hours he was to meet her again, infused into his being a degree of transport, which the very necessity of repressing before his companion rendered more magical and thrilling. How often it happens in life that we have with a grave face to discourse of ordinary topics, while all the time our heart and memory are engrossed with some enchanting secret!

The castle of his grandfather presented a far different scene on the arrival of Coningsby from that which it had offered on his first visit. The Marquess had given him a formal permission to repair to it at his pleasure, and had instructed the steward accordingly. But he came without notice, at a season of the year when the absence of all sports made his arrival unexpected. The scattered and sauntering household roused themselves into action, and contemplated the conviction that it might be necessary to do some service for their wages. There was a stir in that vast, sleepy castle. At last the steward was found, and came forward to

welcome their young master, whose simple wants were limited to the rooms he had formerly occupied.

Coningsby reached the castle a little before sunset, almost the same hour that he had arrived there more than three years ago. How much had happened in the interval! Coningsby had already lived long enough to find interest in pondering over the past. That past too must inevitably exercise a great influence over his present. He recalled his morning drive with his grandfather, to the brink of that river which was the boundary between his own domain and Hellingsley. Who dwelt at Hellingsley now?

Restless, excited, not insensible to the difficulties, perhaps the dangers of his position, yet full of an entrancing emotion in which all thoughts and feelings seemed to merge, Coningsby went forth into the fair gardens to muse over his love amid objects as beautiful. A rosy light hung over the rare shrubs and tall fantastic trees; while a rich yet darker tint suffused the distant woods. This euthanasia of the day exercises a strange influence on the hearts of those who love. Who has not felt it? Magical emotions that touch the immortal part!

But as for Coningsby, the mitigating hour that softens the heart made his spirit brave. Amid the ennobling sympathies of nature, the pursuits and purposes of worldly prudence and conventional advantage subsided into their essential nothingness. He willed to blend his life and fate with a being beautiful as that nature that subdued him, and he felt in his own breast the intrinsic energies that in spite of all obstacles should mould such an imagination into reality.

He descended the slopes, now growing dimmer in the fleeting light, into the park. The stillness was almost supernatural; the jocund sounds of day had died, and the voices of the night had not commenced. His heart too was still. A sacred calm had succeeded to that distraction of emotion which had agitated him the whole day, while he had mused over his love and the infinite and insurmountable barriers that seemed to oppose his will. Now he felt one of those strong groundless convictions that are the inspirations of passion, that all would yield to him as to one holding an enchanted wand.

Onward he strolled; it seemed without purpose, yet always proceeding. A pale and then gleaming tint stole over the masses of mighty timber; and soon a glittering light flooded the lawns and glades. The moon was high in her summer heaven, and still Coningsby strolled on. He crossed the broad lawns, he traversed the bright glades: amid the gleaming and shadowy woods, he traced his prescient way.

He came to the bank of a rushing river, foaming in the moonlight, and wafting on its blue breast the shadow of a thousand stars.

'O river!' he said, 'that rollest to my mistress, bear her, bear her my heart!'

CHAPTER IV.

Lady Wallinger and Edith were together in the morning room of Hellingsley, the morrow after the arrival of Oswald. Edith was arranging flowers in a vase, while her aunt was embroidering a Spanish peasant in correct costume. The daughter of Millbank looked as bright and fragrant as the fair creations that surrounded her. Beautiful to watch her as she arranged their forms and composed their groups; to mark her eye glance with gratification at some happy combination of colour, or to listen to her delight as they wafted to her in gratitude their perfume. Oswald and Sir Joseph were surveying the stables; Mr. Millbank, who had been daily expected for the last week from the factories, had not yet arrived.

'I must say he gained my heart from the first,' said Lady Wallinger.

'I wish the gardener would send us more roses,' said Edith.

'He is so very superior to any young man I ever met,' continued Lady Wallinger.

'I think we must have this vase entirely of roses; don't you think so, aunt?' inquired her niece.

'I am fond of roses,' said Lady Wallinger. 'What beautiful bouquets Mr. Coningsby gave us at Paris, Edith!'

'Beautiful!'

'I must say, I was very happy when I met Mr. Coningsby again at Cambridge,' said Lady Wallinger. 'It gave me much greater pleasure than seeing any of the colleges.'

'How delighted Oswald seems at having Mr. Coningsby for a companion

again!' said Edith.

'And very naturally,' said Lady Wallinger. 'Oswald ought to deem himself fortunate in having such a friend. I am sure the kindness of Mr. Coningsby when we met him at Cambridge is what I never shall forget. But he always was my favourite from the first time I saw him at Paris. Do you know, Edith, I liked him best of all your admirers.'

'Oh! no, aunt,' said Edith, smiling, 'not more than Lord Beaumanoir; you forget your great favourite, Lord Beaumanoir.'

'But I did not know Mr. Coningsby at Rome,' said Lady Wallinger; 'I cannot agree that anybody is equal to Mr. Coningsby. I cannot tell you how pleased I am that he is our neighbour!'

As Lady Wallinger gave a finishing stroke to the jacket of her Andalusian, Edith, vividly blushing, yet speaking in a voice of affected calmness, said,

'Here is Mr. Coningsby, aunt.'

And, truly, at this moment our hero might be discerned, approaching the hall by one of the avenues; and in a few minutes there was a ringing at the hall bell, and then, after a short pause, the servants announced Mr. Coningsby, and ushered him into the morning room.

Edith was embarrassed; the frankness and the gaiety of her manner had deserted her; Coningsby was rather earnest than self-possessed. Each felt at first that the presence of Lady Wallinger was a relief. The ordinary topics of conversation were in sufficient plenty; reminiscences of Paris, impressions of Hellingsley, his visit to Oxford, Lady Wallinger's visit to Cambridge. In ten minutes their voices seemed to sound to each other as they did in the Rue de Rivoli, and their mutual perplexity had in a great degree subsided.

Oswald and Sir Joseph now entered the room, and the conversation became general. Hellingsley was the subject on which Coningsby dwelt; he was charmed with all that he had seen! wished to see more. Sir Joseph was quite prepared to accompany him; but Lady Wallinger, who seemed to read Coningsby's wishes in his eyes, proposed that the inspection should be general; and in the course of half an hour Coningsby was walking by the side of Edith, and sympathising with all the natural charms to which her quick taste and lively expression called his notice and appreciation. Few things more delightful than a country ramble with a sweet companion!

Exploring woods, wandering over green commons, loitering in shady lanes, resting on rural stiles; the air full of perfume, the heart full of bliss!

It seemed to Coningsby that he had never been happy before. A thrilling joy pervaded his being. He could have sung like a bird. His heart was as sunny as the summer scene. Past and Future were absorbed in the flowing hour; not an allusion to Paris, not a speculation on what might arrive; but infinite expressions of agreement, sympathy; a multitude of slight phrases, that, however couched, had but one meaning, congeniality. He felt each moment his voice becoming more tender; his heart gushing in soft expressions; each moment he was more fascinated; her step was grace, her glance was beauty. Now she touched him by some phrase of sweet simplicity; or carried him spell-bound by her airy merriment.

Oswald assumed that Coningsby remained to dine with them. There was not even the ceremony of invitation. Coningsby could not but remember his dinner at Millbank, and the timid hostess whom he then addressed so often in vain, as he gazed upon the bewitching and accomplished woman whom he now passionately loved. It was a most agreeable dinner. Oswald, happy in his friend being his guest, under his own roof, indulged in unwonted gaiety.

The ladies withdrew; Sir Joseph began to talk politics, although the young men had threatened their fair companions immediately to follow them. This was the period of the Bed-Chamber Plot, when Sir Robert Peel accepted and resigned power in the course of three days. Sir Joseph, who had originally made up his mind to support a Conservative government when he deemed it inevitable, had for the last month endeavoured to compensate for this trifling error by vindicating the conduct of his friends, and reprobating the behaviour of those who would deprive her Majesty of the 'friends-of-her-youth.' Sir Joseph was a most chivalrous champion of the 'friends-of-her-youth' principle. Sir Joseph, who was always moderate and conciliatory in his talk, though he would go, at any time, any lengths for his party, expressed himself to-day with extreme sobriety, as he was determined not to hurt the feelings of Mr. Coningsby, and he principally confined himself to urging temperate questions, somewhat in the following fashion:--

'I admit that, on the whole, under ordinary circumstances, it would perhaps have been more convenient that these appointments should have remained with Sir Robert; but don't you think that, under the peculiar circumstances, being friends of her Majesty's youth?' &c. &c.

Sir Joseph was extremely astonished when Coningsby replied that he thought, under no circumstances, should any appointment in the Royal

Household be dependent on the voice of the House of Commons, though he was far from admiring the 'friends-of-her-youth' principle, which he looked upon as impertinent.

'But surely,' said Sir Joseph, 'the Minister being responsible to Parliament, it must follow that all great offices of State should be filled at his discretion.'

'But where do you find this principle of Ministerial responsibility?' inquired Coningsby.

'And is not a Minister responsible to his Sovereign?' inquired Millbank.

Sir Joseph seemed a little confused. He had always heard that Ministers were responsible to Parliament; and he had a vague conviction, notwithstanding the reanimating loyalty of the Bed-Chamber Plot, that the Sovereign of England was a nonentity. He took refuge in indefinite expressions, and observed, 'The Responsibility of Ministers is surely a constitutional doctrine.'

'The Ministers of the Crown are responsible to their master; they are not the Ministers of Parliament.'

'But then you know virtually,' said Sir Joseph, 'the Parliament, that is, the House of Commons, governs the country.'

'It did before 1832,' said Coningsby; 'but that is all past now. We got rid of that with the Venetian Constitution.'

'The Venetian Constitution!' said Sir Joseph.

'To be sure,' said Millbank. 'We were governed in this country by the Venetian Constitution from the accession of the House of Hanover. But that yoke is past. And now I hope we are in a state of transition from the Italian Dogeship to the English Monarchy.'

'King, Lords, and Commons, the Venetian Constitution!' exclaimed Sir Joseph.

'But they were phrases,' said Coningsby, 'not facts. The King was a Doge; the Cabinet the Council of Ten. Your Parliament, that you call Lords and Commons, was nothing more than the Great Council of Nobles.'

'The resemblance was complete,' said Millbank, 'and no wonder, for it was

not accidental; the Venetian Constitution was intentionally copied.'

'We should have had the Venetian Republic in 1640,' said Coningsby, 'had it not been for the Puritans. Geneva beat Venice.'

'I am sure these ideas are not very generally known,' said Sir Joseph, bewildered.

'Because you have had your history written by the Venetian party,' said Coningsby, 'and it has been their interest to conceal them.'

'I will venture to say that there are very few men on our side in the House of Commons,' said Sir Joseph, 'who are aware that they were born under a Venetian Constitution.'

'Let us go to the ladies,' said Millbank, smiling.

Edith was reading a letter as they entered.

'A letter from papa,' she exclaimed, looking up at her brother with great animation. 'We may expect him every day; and yet, alas! he cannot fix one.'

They now all spoke of Millbank, and Coningsby was happy that he was familiar with the scene. At length he ventured to say to Edith, 'You once made me a promise which you never fulfilled. I shall claim it to-night.'

'And what can that be?'

'The song that you promised me at Millbank more than three years ago.'

'Your memory is good.'

'It has dwelt upon the subject.'

Then they spoke for a while of other recollections, and then Coningsby appealing to Lady Wallinger for her influence, Edith rose and took up her guitar. Her voice was rich and sweet; the air she sang gay, even fantastically frolic, such as the girls of Granada chaunt trooping home from some country festival; her soft, dark eye brightened with joyous sympathy; and ever and anon, with an arch grace, she beat the guitar, in chorus, with her pretty hand.

The moon wanes; and Coningsby must leave these enchanted halls. Oswald

walked homeward with him until he reached the domain of his grandfather. Then mounting his horse, Coningsby bade his friend farewell till the morrow, and made his best way to the Castle.

CHAPTER V.

There is a romance in every life. The emblazoned page of Coningsby's existence was now open. It had been prosperous before, with some moments of excitement, some of delight; but they had all found, as it were, their origin in worldly considerations, or been inevitably mixed up with them. At Paris, for example, he loved, or thought he loved. But there not an hour could elapse without his meeting some person, or hearing something, which disturbed the beauty of his emotions, or broke his spell-bound thoughts. There was his grandfather hating the Millbanks, or Sidonia loving them; and common people, in the common world, making common observations on them; asking who they were, or telling who they were; and brushing the bloom off all life's fresh delicious fancies with their coarse handling.

But now his feelings were ethereal. He loved passionately, and he loved in a scene and in a society as sweet, as pure, and as refined as his imagination and his heart. There was no malicious gossip, no callous chatter to profane his ear and desecrate his sentiment. All that he heard or saw was worthy of the summer sky, the still green woods, the gushing river, the gardens and terraces, the stately and fantastic dwellings, among which his life now glided as in some dainty and gorgeous masque.

All the soft, social, domestic sympathies of his nature, which, however abundant, had never been cultivated, were developed by the life he was now leading. It was not merely that he lived in the constant presence, and under the constant influence of one whom he adored, that made him so happy. He was surrounded by beings who found felicity in the interchange of kind feelings and kind words, in the cultivation of happy talents and refined tastes, and the enjoyment of a life which their own good sense and their own good hearts made them both comprehend and appreciate. Ambition lost much of its splendour, even his lofty aspirations something of their hallowing impulse of paramount duty, when Coningsby felt how much ennobling delight was consistent with the seclusion of a private station; and mused over an existence to be passed amid woods and waterfalls with a fair hand locked in his, or surrounded by his friends in some ancestral

hall.

The morning after his first visit to Hellingsley Coningsby rejoined his friends, as he had promised Oswald at their breakfast-table; and day after day he came with the early sun, and left them only when the late moon silvered the keep of Coningsby Castle. Mr. Millbank, who wrote daily, and was daily to be expected, did not arrive. A week, a week of unbroken bliss, had vanished away, passed in long rides and longer walks, sunset saunterings, and sometimes moonlit strolls; talking of flowers, and thinking of things even sweeter; listening to delicious songs, and sometimes reading aloud some bright romance or some inspiring lay.

One day Coningsby, who arrived at the hall unexpectedly late; indeed it was some hours past noon, for he had been detained by despatches which arrived at the Castle from Mr. Rigby, and which required his interposition; found the ladies alone, and was told that Sir Joseph and Oswald were at the fishing-cottage where they wished him to join them. He was in no haste to do this; and Lady Wallinger proposed that when they felt inclined to ramble they should all walk down to the fishing-cottage together. So, seating himself by the side of Edith, who was tinting a sketch which she had made of a rich oriel of Hellingsley, the morning passed away in that slight and yet subtle talk in which a lover delights, and in which, while asking a thousand questions, that seem at the first glance sufficiently trifling, he is indeed often conveying a meaning that is not expressed, or attempting to discover a feeling that is hidden. And these are occasions when glances meet and glances are withdrawn: the tongue may speak idly, the eye is more eloquent, and often more true.

Coningsby looked up; Lady Wallinger, who had more than once announced that she was going to put on her bonnet, was gone. Yet still he continued to talk trifles; and still Edith listened.

'Of all that you have told me,' said Edith, 'nothing pleases me so much as your description of St. Geneviève. How much I should like to catch the deer at sunset on the heights! What a pretty drawing it would make!'

'You would like Eustace Lyle,' said Coningsby. 'He is so shy and yet so ardent.'

'You have such a band of friends! Oswald was saying this morning there was no one who had so many devoted friends.'

'We are all united by sympathy. It is the only bond of friendship; and yet friendship--'

'Edith,' said Lady Wallinger, looking into the room from the garden, with her bonnet on, 'you will find me roaming on the terrace.'

'We come, dear aunt.'

And yet they did not move. There were yet a few pencil touches to be given to the tinted sketch; Coningsby would cut the pencils.

'Would you give me,' he said, 'some slight memorial of Hellingsley and your art? I would not venture to hope for anything half so beautiful as this; but the slightest sketch. It would make me so happy when away to have it hanging in my room.'

A blush suffused the cheek of Edith; she turned her head a little aside, as if she were arranging some drawings. And then she said, in a somewhat hushed and hesitating voice,

'I am sure I will do so; and with pleasure. A view of the Hall itself; I think that would be the best memorial. Where shall we take it from? We will decide in our walk?' and she rose, and promised immediately to return, left the room.

Coningsby leant over the mantel-piece in deep abstraction, gazing vacantly on a miniature of the father of Edith. A light step roused him; she had returned. Unconsciously he greeted her with a glance of ineffable tenderness.

They went forth; it was a grey, sultry day. Indeed it was the covered sky which had led to the fishing scheme of the morning. Sir Joseph was an expert and accomplished angler, and the Darl was renowned for its sport. They lingered before they reached the terrace where they were to find Lady Wallinger, observing the different points of view which the Hall presented, and debating which was to form the subject of Coningsby's drawing; for already it was to be not merely a sketch, but a drawing, the most finished that the bright and effective pencil of Edith could achieve. If it really were to be placed in his room, and were to be a memorial of Hellingsley, her artistic reputation demanded a masterpiece.

They reached the terrace: Lady Wallinger was not there, nor could they observe her in the vicinity. Coningsby was quite certain that she had gone onward to the fishing-cottage, and expected them to follow her; and he convinced Edith of the justness of his opinion. To the fishing-cottage, therefore, they bent their steps. They emerged from the gardens into the

park, sauntering over the table-land, and seeking as much as possible the shade, in the soft but oppressive atmosphere. At the limit of the table-land their course lay by a wild but winding path through a gradual and wooded declivity. While they were yet in this craggy and romantic woodland, the big fervent drops began to fall. Coningsby urged Edith to seek at once a natural shelter; but she, who knew the country, assured him that the fishing-cottage was close by, and that they might reach it before the rain could do them any harm.

And truly, at this moment emerging from the wood, they found themselves in the valley of the Darl. The river here was narrow and winding, but full of life; rushing, and clear but for the dark sky it reflected; with high banks of turf and tall trees; the silver birch, above all others, in clustering groups; infinitely picturesque. At the turn of the river, about two hundred yards distant, Coningsby observed the low, dark roof of the fishing-cottage on its banks. They descended from the woods to the margin of the stream by a flight of turfen steps, Coningsby holding Edith's hand as he guided her progress.

The drops became thicker. They reached, at a rapid pace, the cottage. The absent boat indicated that Sir Joseph and Oswald were on the river. The cottage was an old building of rustic logs, with a shelving roof, so that you might obtain sufficient shelter without entering its walls. Coningsby found a rough garden seat for Edith. The shower was now violent.

Nature, like man, sometimes weeps from gladness. It is the joy and tenderness of her heart that seek relief; and these are summer showers. In this instance the vehemence of her emotion was transient, though the tears kept stealing down her cheek for a long time, and gentle sighs and sobs might for some period be distinguished. The oppressive atmosphere had evaporated; the grey, sullen tint had disappeared; a soft breeze came dancing up the stream; a glowing light fell upon the woods and waters; the perfume of trees and flowers and herbs floated around. There was a carolling of birds; a hum of happy insects in the air; freshness and stir, and a sense of joyous life, pervaded all things; it seemed that the heart of all creation opened.

Coningsby, after repeatedly watching the shower with Edith, and speculating on its progress, which did not much annoy them, had seated himself on a log almost at her feet. And assuredly a maiden and a youth more beautiful and engaging had seldom met before in a scene more fresh and fair. Edith on her rustic seat watched the now blue and foaming river, and the birch-trees with a livelier tint, and quivering in the sunset air; an expression of tranquil bliss suffused her beautiful brow, and spoke

from the thrilling tenderness of her soft dark eye. Coningsby gazed on that countenance with a glance of entranced rapture. His cheek was flushed, his eye gleamed with dazzling lustre. She turned her head; she met that glance, and, troubled, she withdrew her own.

'Edith!' he said in a tone of tremulous passion, 'Let me call you Edith! Yes,' he continued, gently taking her hand, 'let me call you my Edith! I love you!'

She did not withdraw her hand; but turned away a face flushed as the impending twilight.

CHAPTER VI.

It was past the dinner hour when Edith and Coningsby reached the Hall; an embarrassing circumstance, but mitigated by the conviction that they had not to encounter a very critical inspection. What, then, were their feelings when the first servant that they met informed them that Mr. Millbank had arrived! Edith never could have believed that the return of her beloved father to his home could ever have been to her other than a cause of delight. And yet now she trembled when she heard the announcement. The mysteries of love were fast involving her existence. But this was not the season of meditation. Her heart was still agitated by the tremulous admission that she responded to that fervent and adoring love whose eloquent music still sounded in her ear, and the pictures of whose fanciful devotion flitted over her agitated vision. Unconsciously she pressed the arm of Coningsby as the servant spoke, and then, without looking into his face, whispering him to be quick, she sprang away.

As for Coningsby, notwithstanding the elation of his heart, and the ethereal joy which flowed in all his veins, the name of Mr. Millbank sounded, something like a knell. However, this was not the time to reflect. He obeyed the hint of Edith; made the most rapid toilet that ever was consummated by a happy lover, and in a few minutes entered the drawing-room of Hellingsley, to encounter the gentleman whom he hoped by some means or other, quite inconceivable, might some day be transformed into his father-in-law, and the fulfilment of his consequent duties towards whom he had commenced by keeping him waiting for dinner.

'How do you do, sir,' said Mr. Millbank, extending his hand to Coningsby.

'You seem to have taken a long walk.'

Coningsby looked round to the kind Lady Wallinger, and half addressed his murmured answer to her, explaining how they had lost her, and their way, and were caught in a storm or a shower, which, as it terminated about three hours back, and the fishing-cottage was little more than a mile from the Hall, very satisfactorily accounted for their not being in time for dinner.

Lady Wallinger then said something about the lowering clouds having frightened her from the terrace, and Sir Joseph and Oswald talked a little of their sport, and of their having seen an otter; but there was, or at least there seemed to Coningsby, a tone of general embarrassment which distressed him. The fact is, keeping people from dinner under any circumstances is distressing. They are obliged to talk at the very moment when they wish to use their powers of expression for a very different purpose. They are faint, and conversation makes them more exhausted. A gentleman, too, fond of his family, who in turn are devoted to him, making a great and inconvenient effort to reach them by dinner time, to please and surprise them; and finding them all dispersed, dinner so late that he might have reached home in good time without any great inconvenient effort; his daughter, whom he had wished a thousand times to embrace, taking a singularly long ramble with no other companion than a young gentleman, whom he did not exactly expect to see; all these are circumstances, individually perhaps slight, and yet, encountered collectively, it may be doubted they would not a little ruffle even the sweetest temper.

Mr. Millbank, too, had not the sweetest temper, though not a bad one; a little quick and fiery. But then he had a kind heart. And when Edith, who had providentially sent down a message to order dinner, entered and embraced him at the very moment that dinner was announced, her father forgot everything in his joy in seeing her, and his pleasure in being surrounded by his friends. He gave his hand to Lady Wallinger, and Sir Joseph led away his niece. Coningsby put his arm around the astonished neck of Oswald, as if they were once more in the playing fields of Eton.

'By Jove! my dear fellow,' he exclaimed, 'I am so sorry we kept your father from dinner.'

As Edith headed her father's table, according to his rigid rule, Coningsby was on one side of her. They never spoke so little; Coningsby would have never unclosed his lips, had he followed his humour. He was in a stupor of happiness; the dining room took the appearance of the fishing-cottage; and

he saw nothing but the flowing river. Lady Wallinger was however next to him, and that was a relief; for he felt always she was his friend. Sir Joseph, a good-hearted man, and on subjects with which he was acquainted full of sound sense, was invaluable to-day, for he entirely kept up the conversation, speaking of things which greatly interested Mr. Millbank. And so their host soon recovered his good temper; he addressed several times his observations to Coningsby, and was careful to take wine with him. On the whole, affairs went on flowingly enough. The gentlemen, indeed, stayed much longer over their wine than on the preceding days, and Coningsby did not venture on the liberty of quitting the room before his host. It was as well. Edith required repose. She tried to seek it on the bosom of her aunt, as she breathed to her the delicious secret of her life. When the gentlemen returned to the drawing-room the ladies were not there.

This rather disturbed Mr. Millbank again; he had not seen enough of his daughter; he wished to hear her sing. But Edith managed to reappear; and even to sing. Then Coningsby went up to her and asked her to sing the song of the Girls of Granada. She said in a low voice, and with a fond yet serious look,

'I am not in the mood for such a song, but if you wish me--'

She sang it, and with inexpressible grace, and with an arch vivacity, that to a fine observer would have singularly contrasted with the almost solemn and even troubled expression of her countenance a moment afterwards.

The day was about to die; the day the most important, the most precious in the lives of Harry Coningsby and Edith Millbank. Words had been spoken, vows breathed, which were to influence their careers for ever. For them hereafter there was to be but one life, one destiny, one world. Each of them was still in such a state of tremulous excitement, that neither had found time or occasion to ponder over the mighty result. They both required solitude; they both longed to be alone. Coningsby rose to depart. He pressed the soft hand of Edith, and his glance spoke his soul.

'We shall see you at breakfast to-morrow, Coningsby!' said Oswald, very loud, knowing that the presence of his father would make Coningsby hesitate about coming. Edith's heart fluttered; but she said nothing. It was with delight she heard her father, after a moment's pause, say,

'Oh! I beg we may have that pleasure.'

'Not quite at so early an hour,' said Coningsby; 'but if you will permit

me, I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you to-morrow, sir, that your journey has not fatigued you.'

CHAPTER VII.

To be alone; to have no need of feigning a tranquillity he could not feel; of coining common-place courtesy when his heart was gushing with rapture; this was a great relief to Coningsby, though gained by a separation from Edith.

The deed was done; he had breathed his long-brooding passion, he had received the sweet expression of her sympathy, he had gained the long-coveted heart. Youth, beauty, love, the innocence of unsophisticated breasts, and the inspiration of an exquisite nature, combined to fashion the spell that now entranced his life. He turned to gaze upon the moonlit towers and peaked roofs of Hellingsley. Silent and dreamlike, the picturesque pile rested on its broad terrace flooded with the silver light and surrounded by the quaint bowers of its fantastic gardens tipped with the glittering beam. Half hid in deep shadow, half sparkling in the midnight blaze, he recognised the oriel window that had been the subject of the morning's sketch. Almost he wished there should be some sound to assure him of his reality. But nothing broke the all-pervading stillness. Was his life to be as bright and as tranquil? And what was to be his life?

Whither was he to bear the beautiful bride he had gained? Were the portals of Coningsby the proud and hospitable gates that were to greet her? How long would they greet him after the achievement of the last four-and-twenty hours was known to their lord? Was this the return for the confiding kindness of his grandsire? That he should pledge his troth to the daughter of that grandsire's foe?

Away with such dark and scaring visions! Is it not the noon of a summer night fragrant with the breath of gardens, bright with the beam that lovers love, and soft with the breath of Ausonian breezes? Within that sweet and stately residence, dwells there not a maiden fair enough to revive chivalry; who is even now thinking of him as she leans on her pensive hand, or, if perchance she dream, recalls him in her visions? And himself, is he one who would cry craven with such a lot? What avail his golden youth, his high blood, his daring and devising spirit, and all his stores of wisdom, if they help not now? Does not he feel the energy divine

that can confront Fate and carve out fortunes? Besides it is nigh
Midsummer Eve, and what should fairies reign for but to aid such a bright
pair as this?

He recalls a thousand times the scene, the moment, in which but a few
hours past he dared to tell her that he loved; he recalls a thousand times
the still, small voice, that murmured her agitated felicity: more than a
thousand times, for his heart clenched the idea as a diver grasps a gem,
he recalls the enraptured yet gentle embrace, that had sealed upon her
blushing cheek his mystical and delicious sovereignty.

CHAPTER VIII

The morning broke lowering and thunderous; small white clouds, dull and
immovable, studded the leaden sky; the waters of the rushing Darl seemed
to have become black and almost stagnant; the terraces of Hellingsley
looked like the hard lines of a model; and the mansion itself had a harsh
and metallic character. Before the chief portal of his Hall, the elder
Millbank, with an air of some anxiety, surveyed the landscape and the
heavens, as if he were speculating on the destiny of the day.

Often his eye wandered over the park; often with an uneasy and restless
step he paced the raised walk before him. The clock of Hellingsley church
had given the chimes of noon. His son and Coningsby appeared at the end of
one of the avenues. His eye lightened; his lip became compressed; he
advanced to meet them.

'Are you going to fish to-day, Oswald?' he inquired of his son.

'We had some thoughts of it, sir.'

'A fine day for sport, I should think,' he observed, as he turned towards
the Hall with them.

Coningsby remarked the fanciful beauty of the portal; its twisted columns,
and Caryatides carved in dark oak.

'Yes, it's very well,' said Millbank; 'but I really do not know why I came
here; my presence is an effort. Oswald does not care for the place; none
of us do, I believe.'

'Oh! I like it now, father; and Edith doats on it.'

'She was very happy at Millbank,' said the father, rather sharply.

'We are all of us happy at Millbank,' said Oswald.

'I was much struck with the valley and the whole settlement when I first saw it,' said Coningsby.

'Suppose you go and see about the tackle, Oswald,' said Mr. Millbank, 'and Mr. Coningsby and I will take a stroll on the terrace in the meantime.'

The habit of obedience, which was supreme in this family, instantly carried Oswald away, though he was rather puzzled why his father should be so anxious about the preparation of the fishing-tackle, as he rarely used it. His son had no sooner departed than Mr. Millbank turned to Coningsby, and said very abruptly,

'You have never seen my own room here, Mr. Coningsby; step in, for I wish to say a word to you.' And thus speaking, he advanced before the astonished, and rather agitated Coningsby, and led the way through a door and long passage to a room of moderate dimensions, partly furnished as a library, and full of parliamentary papers and blue-books. Shutting the door with some earnestness and pointing to a chair, he begged his guest to be seated. Both in their chairs, Mr. Millbank, clearing his throat, said without preface, 'I have reason to believe, Mr. Coningsby, that you are attached to my daughter?'

'I have been attached to her for a long time most ardently,' replied Coningsby, in a calm and rather measured tone, but looking very pale.

'And I have reason to believe that she returns your attachment?' said Mr. Millbank.

'I believe she deigns not to disregard it,' said Coningsby, his white cheek becoming scarlet.

'It is then a mutual attachment, which, if cherished, must produce mutual unhappiness,' said Mr. Millbank.

'I would fain believe the reverse,' said Coningsby.

'Why?' inquired Mr. Millbank.

'Because I believe she possesses every charm, quality, and virtue, that can bless man; and because, though I can make her no equivalent return, I have a heart, if I know myself, that would struggle to deserve her.'

'I know you to be a man of sense; I believe you to be a man of honour,' replied Mr. Millbank. 'As the first, you must feel that an union between you and my daughter is impossible; what then should be your duty as a man of correct principle is obvious.'

'I could conceive that our union might be attended with difficulties,' said Coningsby, in a somewhat deprecating tone.

'Sir, it is impossible,' repeated Mr. Millbank, interrupting him, though not with harshness; 'that is to say, there is no conceivable marriage which could be effected at greater sacrifices, and which would occasion greater misery.'

'The sacrifices are more apparent to me than the misery,' said Coningsby, 'and even they may be imaginary.'

'The sacrifices and the misery are certain and inseparable,' said Mr. Millbank. 'Come now, see how we stand! I speak without reserve, for this is a subject which cannot permit misconception, but with no feelings towards you, sir, but fair and friendly ones. You are the grandson of my Lord Monmouth; at present enjoying his favour, but dependent on his bounty. You may be the heir of his wealth to-morrow, and to-morrow you may be the object of his hatred and persecution. Your grandfather and myself are foes; bitter, irreclaimable, to the death. It is idle to mince phrases; I do not vindicate our mutual feelings, I may regret that they have ever arisen; I may regret it especially at this exigency. They are not the feelings of good Christians; they may be altogether to be deplored and unjustifiable; but they exist, mutually exist; and have not been confined to words. Lord Monmouth would crush me, had he the power, like a worm; and I have curbed his proud fortunes often. Were it not for this feeling I should not be here; I purchased this estate merely to annoy him, as I have done a thousand other acts merely for his discomfiture and mortification. In our long encounter I have done him infinitely more injury than he could do me; I have been on the spot, I am active, vigilant, the maker of my fortunes. He is an epicurean, continually in foreign parts, obliged to leave the fulfilment of his will to others. But, for these very reasons, his hate is more intense. I can afford to hate him less than he hates me; I have injured him more. Here are feelings to exist between human beings! But they do exist; and now you are to go to this

man, and ask his sanction to marry my daughter!

'But I would appease these hatreds; I would allay these dark passions, the origin of which I know not, but which never could justify the end, and which lead to so much misery. I would appeal to my grandfather; I would show him Edith.'

'He has looked upon as fair even as Edith,' said Mr. Millbank, rising suddenly from his seat, and pacing the room, 'and did that melt his heart? The experience of your own lot should have guarded you from the perils that you have so rashly meditated encountering, and the misery which you have been preparing for others besides yourself. Is my daughter to be treated like your mother? And by the same hand? Your mother's family were not Lord Monmouth's foes. They were simple and innocent people, free from all the bad passions of our nature, and ignorant of the world's ways. But because they were not noble, because they could trace no mystified descent from a foreign invader, or the sacrilegious minion of some spoliating despot, their daughter was hunted from the family which should have exulted to receive her, and the land of which she was the native ornament. Why should a happier lot await you than fell to your parents? You are in the same position as your father; you meditate the same act. The only difference being aggravating circumstances in your case, which, even if I were a member of the same order as my Lord Monmouth, would prevent the possibility of a prosperous union. Marry Edith, and you blast all the prospects of your life, and entail on her a sense of unceasing humiliation. Would you do this? Should I permit you to do this?'

Coningsby, with his head resting on his arm, his face a little shaded, his eyes fixed on the ground, listened in silence. There was a pause; broken by Coningsby, as in a low voice, without changing his posture or raising his glance, he said, 'It seems, sir, that you were acquainted with my mother!'

'I knew sufficient of her,' replied Mr. Millbank, with a kindling cheek, 'to learn the misery that a woman may entail on herself by marrying out of her condition. I have bred my children in a respect for their class. I believe they have imbibed my feeling; though it is strange how in the commerce of the world, chance, in their friendships, has apparently baffled my designs.'

'Oh! do not say it is chance, sir,' said Coningsby, looking up, and speaking with much fervour. 'The feelings that animate me towards your family are not the feelings of chance: they are the creation of sympathy; tried by time, tested by thought. And must they perish? Can they perish?'

They were inevitable; they are indestructible. Yes, sir, it is in vain to speak of the enmities that are fostered between you and my grandfather; the love that exists between your daughter and myself is stronger than all your hatreds.'

'You speak like a young man, and a young man that is in love,' said Mr. Millbank. 'This is mere rhapsody; it will vanish in an instant before the reality of life. And you have arrived at that reality,' he continued, speaking with emphasis, leaning over the back of his chair, and looking steadily at Coningsby with his grey, sagacious eye; 'my daughter and yourself can meet no more.'

'It is impossible you can be so cruel!' exclaimed Coningsby.

'So kind; kind to you both; for I wish to be kind to you as well as to her. You are entitled to kindness from us all; though I will tell you now, that, years ago, when the news arrived that my son's life had been saved, and had been saved by one who bore the name of Coningsby, I had a presentiment, great as was the blessing, that it might lead to unhappiness.'

'I can answer for the misery of one,' said Coningsby, in a tone of great despondency. 'I feel as if my sun were set. Oh! why should there be such wretchedness? Why are there family hatreds and party feuds? Why am I the most wretched of men?'

'My good young friend, you will live, I doubt not, to be a happy one. Happiness is not, as we are apt to fancy, entirely dependent on these contingencies. It is the lot of most men to endure what you are now suffering, and they can look back to such conjunctures through the vista of years with calmness.'

'I may see Edith now?'

'Frankly, I should say, no. My daughter is in her room; I have had some conversation with her. Of course she suffers not less than yourself. To see her again will only aggravate woe. You leave under this roof, sir, some sad memories, but no unkind ones. It is not likely that I can serve you, or that you may want my aid; but whatever may be in my power, remember you may command it; without reserve and without restraint. If I control myself now, it is not because I do not respect your affliction, but because, in the course of my life, I have felt too much not to be able to command my feelings.'

'You never could have felt what I feel now,' said Coningsby, in a tone of anguish.

'You touch on delicate ground,' said Millbank; 'yet from me you may learn to suffer. There was a being once, not less fair than the peerless girl that you would fain call your own, and her heart was my proud possession. There were no family feuds to baffle our union, nor was I dependent on anything, but the energies which had already made me flourishing. What happiness was mine! It was the first dream of my life, and it was the last; my solitary passion, the memory of which softens my heart. Ah! you dreaming scholars, and fine gentlemen who saunter through life, you think there is no romance in the loves of a man who lives in the toil and turmoil of business. You are in deep error. Amid my career of travail, there was ever a bright form which animated exertion, inspired my invention, nerved my energy, and to gain whose heart and life I first made many of those discoveries, and entered into many of those speculations, that have since been the foundation of my wide prosperity.'

'Her faith was pledged to me; I lived upon her image; the day was even talked of when I should bear her to the home that I had proudly prepared for her.'

'There came a young noble, a warrior who had never seen war, glittering with gewgaws. He was quartered in the town where the mistress of my heart, who was soon to share my life and my fortunes, resided. The tale is too bitter not to be brief. He saw her, he sighed; I will hope that he loved her; she gave him with rapture the heart which perhaps she found she had never given to me; and instead of bearing the name I had once hoped to have called her by, she pledged her faith at the altar to one who, like you, was called, CONINGSBY.'

'My mother!'

'You see, I too have had my griefs.'

'Dear sir,' said Coningsby, rising and taking Mr. Millbank's hand, 'I am most wretched; and yet I wish to part from you even with affection. You have explained circumstances that have long perplexed me. A curse, I fear, is on our families. I have not mind enough at this moment even to ponder on my situation. My head is a chaos. I go; yes, I quit this Hellingsley, where I came to be so happy, where I have been so happy. Nay, let me go, dear sir! I must be alone, I must try to think. And tell her, no, tell her nothing. God will guard over us!'

Proceeding down the avenue with a rapid and distempered step, his countenance lost, as it were, in a wild abstraction, Coningsby encountered Oswald Millbank. He stopped, collected his turbulent thoughts, and throwing on Oswald one look that seemed at the same time to communicate woe and to demand sympathy, flung himself into his arms.

'My friend!' he exclaimed, and then added, in a broken voice, 'I need a friend.'

Then in a hurried, impassioned, and somewhat incoherent strain, leaning on Oswald's arm, as they walked on together, he poured forth all that had occurred, all of which he had dreamed; his baffled bliss, his actual despair. Alas! there was little room for solace, and yet all that earnest affection could inspire, and a sagacious brain and a brave spirit, were offered for his support, if not his consolation, by the friend who was devoted to him.

In the midst of this deep communion, teeming with every thought and sentiment that could enchain and absorb the spirit of man, they came to one of the park-gates of Coningsby. Millbank stopped. The command of his father was peremptory, that no member of his family, under any circumstances, or for any consideration, should set his foot on that domain. Lady Wallinger had once wished to have seen the Castle, and Coningsby was only too happy in the prospect of escorting her and Edith over the place; but Oswald had then at once put his veto on the project, as a thing forbidden; and which, if put in practice, his father would never pardon. So it passed off, and now Oswald himself was at the gates of that very domain with his friend who was about to enter them, his friend whom he might never see again; that Coningsby who, from their boyish days, had been the idol of his life; whom he had lived to see appeal to his affections and his sympathy, and whom Oswald was now going to desert in the midst of his lonely and unsoled woe.

'I ought not to enter here,' said Oswald, holding the hand of Coningsby as he hesitated to advance; 'and yet there are duties more sacred even than obedience to a father. I cannot leave you thus, friend of my best heart!'

The morning passed away in unceasing yet fruitless speculation on the future. One moment something was to happen, the next nothing could occur. Sometimes a beam of hope flashed over the fancy of Coningsby, and jumping up from the turf, on which they were reclining, he seemed to exult in his renovated energies; and then this sanguine paroxysm was succeeded by a fit of depression so dark and dejected that nothing but the presence of Oswald seemed to prevent Coningsby from flinging himself into the waters of the

Darl.

The day was fast declining, and the inevitable moment of separation was at hand. Oswald wished to appear at the dinner-table of Hellingsley, that no suspicion might arise in the mind of his father of his having accompanied Coningsby home. But just as he was beginning to mention the necessity of his departure, a flash of lightning seemed to transfix the heavens. The sky was very dark; though studded here and there with dingy spots. The young men sprang up at the same time.

'We had better get out of these trees,' said Oswald.

'We had better get to the Castle,' said Coningsby.

A clap of thunder that seemed to make the park quake broke over their heads, followed by some thick drops. The Castle was close at hand; Oswald had avoided entering it; but the impending storm was so menacing that, hurried on by Coningsby, he could make no resistance; and, in a few minutes, the companions were watching the tempest from the windows of a room in Coningsby Castle.

The fork-lightning flashed and scintillated from every quarter of the horizon: the thunder broke over the Castle, as if the keep were rocking with artillery: amid the momentary pauses of the explosion, the rain was heard descending like dissolving water-spouts.

Nor was this one of those transient tempests that often agitate the summer. Time advanced, and its fierceness was little mitigated. Sometimes there was a lull, though the violence of the rain never appeared to diminish; but then, as in some pitched fight between contending hosts, when the fervour of the field seems for a moment to allay, fresh squadrons arrive and renew the hottest strife, so a low moaning wind that was now at intervals faintly heard bore up a great reserve of electric vapour, that formed, as it were, into field in the space between the Castle and Hellingsley, and then discharged its violence on that fated district.

Coningsby and Oswald exchanged looks. 'You must not think of going home at present, my dear fellow,' said the first. 'I am sure your father would not be displeased. There is not a being here who even knows you, and if they did, what then?'

The servant entered the room, and inquired whether the gentlemen were ready for dinner.

'By all means; come, my dear Millbank, I feel reckless as the tempest; let us drown our cares in wine!'

Coningsby, in fact, was exhausted by all the agitation of the day, and all the harassing spectres of the future. He found wine a momentary solace. He ordered the servants away, and for a moment felt a degree of wild satisfaction in the company of the brother of Edith.

Thus they sat for a long time, talking only of one subject, and repeating almost the same things, yet both felt happier in being together. Oswald had risen, and opening the window, examined the approaching night. The storm had lulled, though the rain still fell; in the west was a streak of light. In a quarter of an hour, he calculated on departing. As he was watching the wind he thought he heard the sound of wheels, which reminded him of Coningsby's promise to lend him a light carriage for his return.

They sat down once more; they had filled their glasses for the last time; to pledge to their faithful friendship, and the happiness of Coningsby and Edith; when the door of the room opened, and there appeared, MR. RIGBY!

END OF BOOK VII.

BOOK VIII.

CHAPTER I.

It was the heart of the London season, nearly four years ago, twelve months having almost elapsed since the occurrence of those painful passages at Hellingsley which closed the last book of this history, and long lines of carriages an hour before midnight, up the classic mount of St. James and along Piccadilly, intimated that the world were received at some grand entertainment in Arlington Street.

It was the town mansion of the noble family beneath whose roof at Beaumanoir we have more than once introduced the reader, to gain whose courtyard was at this moment the object of emulous coachmen, and to enter whose saloons was to reward the martyr-like patience of their lords and ladies.

Among the fortunate who had already succeeded in bowing to their hostess were two gentlemen, who, ensconced in a good position, surveyed the scene, and made their observations on the passing guests. They were gentlemen who, to judge from their general air and the great consideration with which they were treated by those who were occasionally in their vicinity, were personages whose criticism bore authority.

'I say, Jemmy,' said the eldest, a dandy who had dined with the Regent, but who was still a dandy, and who enjoyed life almost as much as in the days when Carlton House occupied the terrace which still bears its name. 'I say, Jemmy, what a load of young fellows there are! Don't know their names at all. Begin to think fellows are younger than they used to be. Amazing load of young fellows, indeed!'

At this moment an individual who came under the fortunate designation of a young fellow, but whose assured carriage hardly intimated that this was his first season in London, came up to the junior of the two critics, and said, 'A pretty turn you played us yesterday at White's, Melton. We waited dinner nearly an hour.'

'My dear fellow, I am infinitely sorry; but I was obliged to go down to Windsor, and I missed the return train. A good dinner? Who had you?'

'A capital party, only you were wanted. We had Beaumanoir and Vere, and Jack Tufon and Spraggs.'

'Was Spraggs rich?'

'Wasn't he! I have not done laughing yet. He told us a story about the little Biron who was over here last year; I knew her at Paris; and an Indian screen. Killing! Get him to tell it you. The richest thing you ever heard!'

'Who's your friend?' inquired Mr. Melton's companion, as the young man moved away.

'Sir Charles Buckhurst.'

'A--h! That is Sir Charles Buckhurst. Glad to have seen him. They say he is going it.'

'He knows what he is about.'

'Egad! so they all do. A young fellow now of two or three and twenty knows

the world as men used to do after as many years of scrapes. I wonder where there is such a thing as a greenhorn. Effie Crabbs says the reason he gives up his house is, that he has cleaned out the old generation, and that the new generation would clean him.'

'Buckhurst is not in that sort of way: he swears by Henry Sydney, a younger son of the Duke, whom you don't know; and young Coningsby; a sort of new set; new ideas and all that sort of thing. Beau tells me a good deal about it; and when I was staying with the Everinghams, at Easter, they were full of it. Coningsby had just returned from his travels, and they were quite on the _qui vive_. Lady Everingham is one of their set. I don't know what it is exactly; but I think we shall hear more of it.'

'A sort of animal magnetism, or unknown tongues, I take it from your description,' said his companion.

'Well, I don't know what it is,' said Mr. Melton; 'but it has got hold of all the young fellows who have just come out. Beau is a little bit himself. I had some idea of giving my mind to it, they made such a fuss about it at Everingham; but it requires a devilish deal of history, I believe, and all that sort of thing.'

'Ah! that's a bore,' said his companion. 'It is difficult to turn to with a new thing when you are not in the habit of it. I never could manage charades.'

Mr. Ormsby, passing by, stopped. 'They told me you had the gout, Cassilis?' he said to Mr. Melton's companion.

'So I had; but I have found out a fellow who cures the gout instanter. Tom Needham sent him to me. A German fellow. Pumicestone pills; sort of a charm, I believe, and all that kind of thing: they say it rubs the gout out of you. I sent him to Luxborough, who was very bad; cured him directly. Luxborough swears by him.'

'Luxborough believes in the Millennium,' said Mr. Ormsby.

'But here's a new thing that Melton has been telling me of, that all the world is going to believe in,' said Mr. Cassilis, 'something patronised by Lady Everingham.'

'A very good patroness,' said Mr. Ormsby.

'Have you heard anything about it?' continued Mr. Cassilis. 'Young

Coningsby brought it from abroad; didn't you you say so, Jemmy?'

'No, no, my dear fellow; it is not at all that sort of thing.'

'But they say it requires a deuced deal of history,' continued Mr. Cassilis. 'One must brush up one's Goldsmith. Canterton used to be the fellow for history at White's. He was always boring one with William the Conqueror, Julius Caesar, and all that sort of thing.'

'I tell you what,' said Mr. Ormsby, looking both sly and solemn, 'I should not be surprised if, some day or another, we have a history about Lady Everingham and young Coningsby.'

'Poh!' said Mr. Melton; 'he is engaged to be married to her sister, Lady Theresa.'

'The deuce!' said Mr. Ormsby; 'well, you are a friend of the family, and I suppose you know.'

'He is a devilish good-looking fellow, that young Coningsby,' said Mr. Cassilis. 'All the women are in love with him, they say. Lady Eleanor Ducie quite raves about him.'

'By-the-bye, his grandfather has been very unwell,' said Mr. Ormsby, looking mysteriously.

'I saw Lady Monmouth here just now,' said Mr. Melton.

'Oh! he is quite well again,' said Mr. Ormsby.

'Got an odd story at White's that Lord Monmouth was going to separate from her,' said Mr. Cassilis.

'No foundation,' said Mr. Ormsby, shaking his head.

'They are not going to separate, I believe,' said Mr. Melton; 'but I rather think there was a foundation for the rumour.'

Mr. Ormsby still shook his head.

'Well,' continued Mr. Melton, 'all I know is, that it was looked upon last winter at Paris as a settled thing.'

'There was some story about some Hungarian,' said Mr. Cassilis.

'No, that blew over,' said Mr. Melton; 'it was Trautsmansdorff the row was about.'

All this time Mr. Ormsby, as the friend of Lord and Lady Monmouth, remained shaking his head; but as a member of society, and therefore delighting in small scandal, appropriating the gossip with the greatest avidity.

'I should think old Monmouth was not the sort of fellow to blow up a woman,' said Mr. Cassilis.

'Provided she would leave him quietly,' said Mr. Melton.

'Yes, Lord Monmouth never could live with a woman more than two years,' said Mr. Ormsby, pensively. 'And that I thought at the time rather an objection to his marriage.'

We must now briefly revert to what befell our hero after those unhappy occurrences in the midst of whose first woe we left him.

The day after the arrival of Mr. Rigby at the Castle, Coningsby quitted it for London, and before a week had elapsed had embarked for Cadiz. He felt a romantic interest in visiting the land to which Edith owed some blood, and in acquiring the language which he had often admired as she spoke it. A favourable opportunity permitted him in the autumn to visit Athens and the AEgean, which he much desired. In the pensive beauties of that delicate land, where perpetual autumn seems to reign, Coningsby found solace. There is something in the character of Grecian scenery which blends with the humour of the melancholy and the feelings of the sorrowful. Coningsby passed his winter at Rome. The wish of his grandfather had rendered it necessary for him to return to England somewhat abruptly. Lord Monmouth had not visited his native country since his marriage; but the period that had elapsed since that event had considerably improved the prospects of his party. The majority of the Whig Cabinet in the House of Commons by 1840 had become little more than nominal; and though it was circulated among their friends, as if from the highest authority, that 'one was enough,' there seemed daily a better chance of their being deprived even of that magical unit. For the first time in the history of this country since the introduction of the system of parliamentary sovereignty, the Government of England depended on the fate of single elections; and indeed, by a single vote, it is remarkable to observe, the fate of the Whig Government was ultimately decided.

This critical state of affairs, duly reported to Lord Monmouth, revived his political passions, and offered him that excitement which he was ever seeking, and yet for which he had often sighed. The Marquess, too, was weary of Paris. Every day he found it more difficult to be amused. Lucretia had lost her charm. He, from whom nothing could be concealed, perceived that often, while she elaborately attempted to divert him, her mind was wandering elsewhere. Lord Monmouth was quite superior to all petty jealousy and the vulgar feelings of inferior mortals, but his sublime selfishness required devotion. He had calculated that a wife or a mistress who might be in love with another man, however powerfully their interests might prompt them, could not be so agreeable or amusing to their friends and husbands as if they had no such distracting hold upon their hearts or their fancy. Latterly at Paris, while Lucretia became each day more involved in the vortex of society, where all admired and some adored her, Lord Monmouth fell into the easy habit of dining in his private rooms, sometimes tête-à-tête with Villebecque, whose inexhaustible tales and adventures about a kind of society which Lord Monmouth had always preferred infinitely to the polished and somewhat insipid circles in which he was born, had rendered him the prime favourite of his great patron. Sometimes Villebecque, too, brought a friend, male or otherwise, whom he thought invested with the rare faculty of distraction: Lord Monmouth cared not who or what they were, provided they were diverting.

Villebecque had written to Coningsby at Rome, by his grandfather's desire, to beg him to return to England and meet Lord Monmouth there. The letter was couched with all the respect and good feeling which Villebecque really entertained for him whom he addressed; still a letter on such a subject from such a person was not agreeable to Coningsby, and his reply to it was direct to his grandfather; Lord Monmouth, however, had entirely given over writing letters.

Coningsby had met at Paris, on his way to England, Lord and Lady Everingham, and he had returned with them. This revival of an old acquaintance was both agreeable and fortunate for our hero. The vivacity of a clever and charming woman pleasantly disturbed the brooding memory of Coningsby. There is no mortification however keen, no misery however desperate, which the spirit of woman cannot in some degree lighten or alleviate. About, too, to make his formal entrance into the great world, he could not have secured a more valuable and accomplished female friend. She gave him every instruction, every intimation that was necessary; cleared the social difficulties which in some degree are experienced on their entrance into the world even by the most highly connected, unless they have this benign assistance; planted him immediately in the position which was expedient; took care that he was invited at once to the right

houses; and, with the aid of her husband, that he should become a member of the right clubs.

'And who is to have the blue ribbon, Lord Eskdale?' said the Duchess to that nobleman, as he entered and approached to pay his respects.

'If I were Melbourne, I would keep it open,' replied his Lordship. 'It is a mistake to give away too quickly.'

'But suppose they go out,' said her Grace.

'Oh! there is always a last day to clear the House. But they will be in another year. The cliff will not be sapped before then. We made a mistake last year about the ladies.'

'I know you always thought so.'

'Quarrels about women are always a mistake. One should make it a rule to give up to them, and then they are sure to give up to us.'

'You have no great faith in our firmness?'

'Male firmness is very often obstinacy: women have always something better, worth all qualities; they have tact.'

'A compliment to the sex from so finished a critic as Lord Eskdale is appreciated.'

But at this moment the arrival of some guests terminated the conversation, and Lord Eskdale moved away, and approached a group which Lady Everingham was enlightening.

'My dear Lord Fitz-booby,' her Ladyship observed, 'in politics we require faith as well as in all other things.'

Lord Fitz-booby looked rather perplexed; but, possessed of considerable official experience, having held high posts, some in the cabinet, for nearly a quarter of a century, he was too versed to acknowledge that he had not understood a single word that had been addressed to him for the last ten minutes. He looked on with the same grave, attentive stolidity, occasionally nodding his head, as he was wont of yore when he received a deputation on sugar duties or joint-stock banks, and when he made, as was his custom when particularly perplexed, an occasional note on a sheet of foolscap paper.

'An Opposition in an age of revolution,' continued Lady Everingham, 'must be founded on principles. It cannot depend on mere personal ability and party address taking advantage of circumstances. You have not enunciated a principle for the last ten years; and when you seemed on the point of acceding to power, it was not on a great question of national interest, but a technical dispute respecting the constitution of an exhausted sugar colony.'

'If you are a Conservative party, we wish to know what you want to conserve,' said Lord Vere.

'If it had not been for the Whig abolition of slavery,' said Lord Fitz-booby, goaded into repartee, 'Jamaica would not have been an exhausted sugar colony.'

'Then what you do want to conserve is slavery?' said Lord Vere.

'No,' said Lord Fitz-booby, 'I am never for retracing our steps.'

'But will you advance, will you move? And where will you advance, and how will you move?' said Lady Everingham.

'I think we have had quite enough of advancing,' said his Lordship. 'I had no idea your Ladyship was a member of the Movement party,' he added, with a sarcastic grin.

'But if it were bad, Lord Fitz-booby, to move where we are, as you and your friends have always maintained, how can you reconcile it to principle to remain there?' said Lord Vere.

'I would make the best of a bad bargain,' said Lord Fitz-booby. 'With a Conservative government, a reformed Constitution would be less dangerous.'

'Why?' said Lady Everingham. 'What are your distinctive principles that render the peril less?'

'I appeal to Lord Eskdale,' said Lord Fitz-booby; 'there is Lady Everingham turned quite a Radical, I declare. Is not your Lordship of opinion that the country must be safer with a Conservative government than with a Liberal?'

'I think the country is always tolerably secure,' said Lord Eskdale.

Lady Theresa, leaning on the arm of Mr. Lyle, came up at this moment, and unconsciously made a diversion in favour of Lord Fitz-booby.

'Pray, Theresa,' said Lady Everingham, 'where is Mr. Coningsby?'

Let us endeavour to ascertain. It so happened that on this day Coningsby and Henry Sydney dined at Grillion's, at an university club, where, among many friends whom Coningsby had not met for a long time, and among delightful reminiscences, the unconscious hours stole on. It was late when they quitted Grillion's, and Coningsby's brougham was detained for a considerable time before its driver could insinuate himself into the line, which indeed he would never have succeeded in doing had not he fortunately come across the coachman of the Duke of Agincourt, who being of the same politics as himself, belonging to the same club, and always black-balling the same men, let him in from a legitimate party feeling; so they arrived in Arlington Street at a very late hour.

Coningsby was springing up the staircase, now not so crowded as it had been, and met a retiring party; he was about to say a passing word to a gentleman as he went by, when, suddenly, Coningsby turned deadly pale. The gentleman could hardly be the cause, for it was the gracious and handsome presence of Lord Beaumanoir: the lady resting on his arm was Edith. They moved on while he was motionless; yet Edith and himself had exchanged glances. His was one of astonishment; but what was the expression of hers? She must have recognised him before he had observed her. She was collected, and she expressed the purpose of her mind in a distant and haughty recognition. Coningsby remained for a moment stupefied; then suddenly turning back, he bounded downstairs and hurried into the cloak-room. He met Lady Wallinger; he spoke rapidly, he held her hand, did not listen to her answers, his eyes wandered about. There were many persons present, at length he recognised Edith enveloped in her mantle. He went forward, he looked at her, as if he would have read her soul; he said something. She changed colour as he addressed her, but seemed instantly by an effort to rally and regain her equanimity; replied to his inquiries with extreme brevity, and Lady Wallinger's carriage being announced, moved away with the same slight haughty salute as before, on the arm of Lord Beaumanoir.

CHAPTER II.

Sadness fell over the once happy family of Millbank after the departure of Coningsby from Hellingsley. When the first pang was over, Edith had found some solace in the sympathy of her aunt, who had always appreciated and admired Coningsby; but it was a sympathy which aspired only to soften sorrow, and not to create hope. But Lady Wallinger, though she lengthened her visit for the sake of her niece, in time quitted them; and then the name of Coningsby was never heard by Edith. Her brother, shortly after the sorrowful and abrupt departure of his friend, had gone to the factories, where he remained, and of which, in future, it was intended that he should assume the principal direction. Mr. Millbank himself, sustained at first by the society of his friend Sir Joseph, to whom he was attached, and occupied with daily reports from his establishment and the transaction of the affairs with his numerous and busy constituents, was for a while scarcely conscious of the alteration which had taken place in the demeanour of his daughter. But when they were once more alone together, it was impossible any longer to be blind to the great change. That happy and equable gaiety of spirit, which seemed to spring from an innocent enjoyment of existence, and which had ever distinguished Edith, was wanting. Her sunny glance was gone. She was not indeed always moody and dispirited, but she was fitful, unequal in her tone. That temper whose sweetness had been a domestic proverb had become a little uncertain. Not that her affection for her father was diminished, but there were snatches of unusual irritability which momentarily escaped her, followed by bursts of tenderness that were the creatures of compunction. And often, after some hasty word, she would throw her arms round her father's neck with the fondness of remorse. She pursued her usual avocations, for she had really too well-regulated a mind, she was in truth a person of too strong an intellect, to neglect any source of occupation and distraction. Her flowers, her pencil, and her books supplied her with these; and music soothed, and at times beguiled, her agitated thoughts. But there was no joy in the house, and in time Mr. Millbank felt it.

Mr. Millbank was vexed, irritated, grieved. Edith, his Edith, the pride and delight of his existence, who had been to him only a source of exultation and felicity, was no longer happy, was perhaps pining away; and there was the appearance, the unjust appearance that he, her fond father, was the cause and occasion of all this wretchedness. It would appear that the name of Coningsby, to which he now owed a great debt of gratitude, was still doomed to bear him mortification and misery. Truly had the young man said that there was a curse upon their two families. And yet, on reflection, it still seemed to Mr. Millbank that he had acted with as much wisdom and real kindness as decision. How otherwise was he to have acted? The union was impossible; the speedier their separation, therefore, clearly the better. Unfortunate, indeed, had been his absence from

Hellingsley; unquestionably his presence might have prevented the catastrophe. Oswald should have hindered all this. And yet Mr. Millbank could not shut his eyes to the devotion of his son to Coningsby. He felt he could count on no assistance in this respect from that quarter. Yet how hard upon him that he should seem to figure as a despot or a tyrant to his own children, whom he loved, when he had absolutely acted in an inevitable manner! Edith seemed sad, Oswald sullen; all was changed. All the objects for which this clear-headed, strong-minded, kind-hearted man had been working all his life, seemed to be frustrated. And why? Because a young man had made love to his daughter, who was really in no manner entitled to do so.

As the autumn drew on, Mr. Millbank found Hellingsley, under existing circumstances, extremely wearisome; and he proposed to his daughter that they should pay a visit to their earlier home. Edith assented without difficulty, but without interest. And yet, as Mr. Millbank immediately perceived, the change was a judicious one; for certainly the spirits of Edith seemed to improve after her return to their valley. There were more objects of interest: change, too, is always beneficial. If Mr. Millbank had been aware that Oswald had received a letter from Coningsby, written before he quitted Spain, perhaps he might have recognised a more satisfactory reason for the transient liveliness of his daughter which had so greatly gratified him.

About a month after Christmas, the meeting of Parliament summoned Mr. Millbank up to London; and he had wished Edith to accompany him. But London in February to Edith, without friends or connections, her father always occupied and absent from her day and night, seemed to them all, on reflection, to be a life not very conducive to health or cheerfulness, and therefore she remained with her brother. Oswald had heard from Coningsby again from Rome; but at the period he wrote he did not anticipate his return to England. His tone was affectionate, but dispirited.

Lady Wallinger went up to London after Easter for the season, and Mr. Millbank, now that there was a constant companion for his daughter, took a house and carried Edith back with him to London. Lady Wallinger, who had great wealth and great tact, had obtained by degrees a not inconsiderable position in society. She had a fine house in a fashionable situation, and gave profuse entertainments. The Whigs were under obligations to her husband, and the great Whig ladies were gratified to find in his wife a polished and pleasing person, to whom they could be courteous without any annoyance. So that Edith, under the auspices of her aunt, found herself at once in circles which otherwise she might not easily have entered, but which her beauty, grace, and experience of the most refined society of the

Continent, qualified her to shine in. One evening they met the Marquis of Beaumanoir, their friend of Rome and Paris, and admirer of Edith, who from that time was seldom from their side. His mother, the Duchess, immediately called both on the Millbanks and the Wallingers; glad, not only to please her son, but to express that consideration for Mr. Millbank which the Duke always wished to show. It was, however, of no use; nothing would induce Mr. Millbank ever to enter what he called aristocratic society. He liked the House of Commons; never paired off; never missed a moment of it; worked at committees all the morning, listened attentively to debates all the night; always dined at Bellamy's when there was a house; and when there was not, liked dining at the Fishmongers' Company, the Russia Company, great Emigration banquets, and other joint-stock festivities. That was his idea of rational society; business and pleasure combined; a good dinner, and good speeches afterwards.

Edith was aware that Coningsby had returned to England, for her brother had heard from him on his arrival; but Oswald had not heard since. A season in London only represented in the mind of Edith the chance, perhaps the certainty, of meeting Coningsby again; of communing together over the catastrophe of last summer; of soothing and solacing each other's unhappiness, and perhaps, with the sanguine imagination of youth, foreseeing a more felicitous future. She had been nearly a fortnight in town, and though moving frequently in the same circles as Coningsby, they had not yet met. It was one of those results which could rarely occur; but even chance enters too frequently in the league against lovers. The invitation to the assembly at ---- House was therefore peculiarly gratifying to Edith, since she could scarcely doubt that if Coningsby were in town, which her casual inquiries of Lord Beaumanoir induced her to believe was the case, he would be present. Never, therefore, had she repaired to an assembly with such a flattering spirit; and yet there was a fascinating anxiety about it that bewilders the young heart.

In vain Edith surveyed the rooms to catch the form of that being, whom for a moment she had never ceased to cherish and muse over. He was not there; and at the very moment when, disappointed and mortified, she most required solace, she learned from Mr. Melton that Lady Theresa Sydney, whom she chanced to admire, was going to be married, and to Mr. Coningsby!

What a revelation! His silence, perhaps his shunning of her were no longer inexplicable. What a return for all her romantic devotion in her sad solitude at Hellingsley. Was this the end of their twilight rambles, and the sweet pathos of their mutual loves? There seemed to be no truth in man, no joy in life! All the feelings that she had so generously lavished, all returned upon herself. She could have burst into a passion of tears

and buried herself in a cloister.

Instead of that, civilisation made her listen with a serene though tortured countenance; but as soon as it was in her power, pleading a headache to Lady Wallinger, she effected, or thought she had effected, her escape from a scene which harrowed her heart.

As for Coningsby, he passed a sleepless night, agitated by the unexpected presence of Edith and distracted by the manner in which she had received him. To say that her appearance had revived all his passionate affection for her would convey an unjust impression of the nature of his feelings. His affection had never for a moment swerved; it was profound and firm. But unquestionably this sudden vision had brought before him, in startling and more vivid colours, the relations that subsisted between them. There was the being whom he loved and who loved him; and whatever were the barriers which the circumstances of life placed against their union, they were partakers of the solemn sacrament of an unpolled heart.

Coningsby, as we have mentioned, had signified to Oswald his return to England: he had hitherto omitted to write again; not because his spirit faltered, but he was wearied of whispering hope without foundation, and mourning over his chagrined fortunes. Once more in England, once more placed in communication with his grandfather, he felt with increased conviction the difficulties which surrounded him. The society of Lady Everingham and her sister, who had been at the same time her visitor, had been a relaxation, and a beneficial one, to a mind suffering too much from the tension of one idea. But Coningsby had treated the matrimonial project of his gay-minded hostess with the courteous levity in which he believed it had first half originated. He admired and liked Lady Theresa; but there was a reason why he should not marry her, even had his own heart not been absorbed by one of those passions from which men of deep and earnest character never emancipate themselves.

After musing and meditating again and again over everything that had occurred, Coningsby fell asleep when the morning had far advanced, resolved to rise when a little refreshed and find out Lady Wallinger, who, he felt sure, would receive him with kindness.

Yet it was fated that this step should not be taken, for while he was at breakfast, his servant brought him a letter from Monmouth House, apprising him that his grandfather wished to see him as soon as possible on urgent business.

CHAPTER III.

Lord Monmouth was sitting in the same dressing-room in which he was first introduced to the reader; on the table were several packets of papers that were open and in course of reference; and he dictated his observations to Monsieur Villebecque, who was writing at his left hand.

Thus were they occupied when Coningsby was ushered into the room.

'You see, Harry,' said Lord Monmouth, 'that I am much occupied to-day, yet the business on which I wish to communicate with you is so pressing that it could not be postponed.' He made a sign to Villebecque, and his secretary instantly retired.

'I was right in pressing your return to England,' continued Lord Monmouth to his grandson, who was a little anxious as to the impending communication, which he could not in any way anticipate. 'These are not times when young men should be out of sight. Your public career will commence immediately. The Government have resolved on a dissolution. My information is from the highest quarter. You may be astonished, but it is a fact. They are going to dissolve their own House of Commons. Notwithstanding this and the Queen's name, we can beat them; but the race requires the finest jockeying. We can't give a point. Tadpole has been here to me about Darlford; he came specially with a message, I may say an appeal, from one to whom I can refuse nothing; the Government count on the seat, though with the new Registration 'tis nearly a tie. If we had a good candidate we could win. But Rigby won't do. He is too much of the old clique; used up; a hack; besides, a beaten horse. We are assured the name of Coningsby would be a host; there is a considerable section who support the present fellow who will not vote against a Coningsby. They have thought of you as a fit person, and I have approved of the suggestion. You will, therefore, be the candidate for Darlford with my entire sanction and support, and I have no doubt you will be successful. You may be sure I shall spare nothing: and it will be very gratifying to me, after being robbed of all our boroughs, that the only Coningsby who cares to enter Parliament, should nevertheless be able to do so as early as I could fairly desire.'

Coningsby the rival of Mr. Millbank on the hustings of Darlford!
Vanquished or victorious, equally a catastrophe! The fierce passions, the gross insults, the hot blood and the cool lies, the ruffianism and the

ribaldry, perhaps the domestic discomfiture and mortification, which he was about to be the means of bringing on the roof he loved best in the world, occurred to him with anguish. The countenance of Edith, haughty and mournful last night, rose to him again. He saw her canvassing for her father, and against him. Madness! And for what was he to make this terrible and costly sacrifice For his ambition? Not even for that Divinity or Daemon for which we all immolate so much! Mighty ambition, forsooth, to succeed to the Rigbys! To enter the House of Commons a slave and a tool; to move according to instructions, and to labour for the low designs of petty spirits, without even the consolation of being a dupe. What sympathy could there exist between Coningsby and the 'great Conservative party,' that for ten years in an age of revolution had never promulgated a principle; whose only intelligible and consistent policy seemed to be an attempt, very grateful of course to the feelings of an English Royalist, to revive Irish Puritanism; who when in power in 1835 had used that power only to evince their utter ignorance of Church principles; and who were at this moment, when Coningsby was formally solicited to join their ranks, in open insurrection against the prerogatives of the English Monarchy?

'Do you anticipate then an immediate dissolution, sir?' inquired Coningsby after a moment's pause.

'We must anticipate it; though I think it doubtful. It may be next month; it may be in the autumn; they may tide over another year, as Lord Eskdale thinks, and his opinion always weighs with me. He is very safe. Tadpole believes they will dissolve at once. But whether they dissolve now, or in a month's time, or in the autumn, or next year, our course is clear. We must declare our intentions immediately. We must hoist our flag. Monday next, there is a great Conservative dinner at Darlford. You must attend it; that will be the finest opportunity in the world for you to announce yourself.'

'Don't you think, sir,' said Coningsby, 'that such an announcement would be rather premature? It is, in fact, embarking in a contest which may last a year; perhaps more.'

'What you say is very true,' said Lord Monmouth; 'no doubt it is very troublesome; very disgusting; any canvassing is. But we must take things as we find them. You cannot get into Parliament now in the good old gentlemanlike way; and we ought to be thankful that this interest has been fostered for our purpose.'

Coningsby looked on the carpet, cleared his throat as if about to speak, and then gave something like a sigh.

'I think you had better be off the day after to-morrow,' said Lord Monmouth. 'I have sent instructions to the steward to do all he can in so short a time, for I wish you to entertain the principal people.'

'You are most kind, you are always most kind to me, dear sir,' said Coningsby, in a hesitating tone, and with an air of great embarrassment, 'but, in truth, I have no wish to enter Parliament.'

'What?' said Lord Monmouth.

'I feel that I am not sufficiently prepared for so great a responsibility as a seat in the House of Commons,' said Coningsby.

'Responsibility!' said Lord Monmouth, smiling. 'What responsibility is there? How can any one have a more agreeable seat? The only person to whom you are responsible is your own relation, who brings you in. And I don't suppose there can be any difference on any point between us. You are certainly still young; but I was younger by nearly two years when I first went in; and I found no difficulty. There can be no difficulty. All you have got to do is to vote with your party. As for speaking, if you have a talent that way, take my advice; don't be in a hurry. Learn to know the House; learn the House to know you. If a man be discreet, he cannot enter Parliament too soon.'

'It is not exactly that, sir,' said Coningsby.

'Then what is it, my dear Harry? You see to-day I have much to do; yet as your business is pressing, I would not postpone seeing you an hour. I thought you would have been very much gratified.'

'You mentioned that I had nothing to do but to vote with my party, sir,' replied Coningsby. 'You mean, of course, by that term what is understood by the Conservative party.'

'Of course; our friends.'

'I am sorry,' said Coningsby, rather pale, but speaking with firmness, 'I am sorry that I could not support the Conservative party.'

'By ----!' exclaimed Lord Monmouth, starting in his seat, 'some woman has got hold of him, and made him a Whig!'

'No, my dear grandfather,' said Coningsby, scarcely able to repress a

smile, serious as the interview was becoming, 'nothing of the kind, I assure you. No person can be more anti-Whig.'

'I don't know what you are driving at, sir,' said Lord Monmouth, in a hard, dry tone.

'I wish to be frank, sir,' said Coningsby, 'and am very sensible of your goodness in permitting me to speak to you on the subject. What I mean to say is, that I have for a long time looked upon the Conservative party as a body who have betrayed their trust; more from ignorance, I admit, than from design; yet clearly a body of individuals totally unequal to the exigencies of the epoch, and indeed unconscious of its real character.'

'You mean giving up those Irish corporations?' said Lord Monmouth. 'Well, between ourselves, I am quite of the same opinion. But we must mount higher; we must go to '28 for the real mischief. But what is the use of lamenting the past? Peel is the only man; suited to the times and all that; at least we must say so, and try to believe so; we can't go back. And it is our own fault that we have let the chief power out of the hands of our own order. It was never thought of in the time of your great-grandfather, sir. And if a commoner were for a season permitted to be the nominal Premier to do the detail, there was always a secret committee of great 1688 nobles to give him his instructions.'

'I should be very sorry to see secret committees of great 1688 nobles again,' said Coningsby.

'Then what the devil do you want to see?' said Lord Monmouth.

'Political faith,' said Coningsby, 'instead of political infidelity.'

'Hem!' said Lord Monmouth.

'Before I support Conservative principles,' continued Coningsby, 'I merely wish to be informed what those principles aim to conserve. It would not appear to be the prerogative of the Crown, since the principal portion of a Conservative oration now is an invective against a late royal act which they describe as a Bed-chamber plot. Is it the Church which they wish to conserve? What is a threatened Appropriation Clause against an actual Church Commission in the hands of Parliamentary Laymen? Could the Long Parliament have done worse? Well, then, if it is neither the Crown nor the Church, whose rights and privileges this Conservative party propose to vindicate, is it your House, the House of Lords, whose powers they are prepared to uphold? Is it not notorious that the very man whom you have

elected as your leader in that House, declares among his Conservative adherents, that henceforth the assembly that used to furnish those very Committees of great revolution nobles that you mention, is to initiate nothing; and, without a struggle, is to subside into that undisturbed repose which resembles the Imperial tranquillity that secured the frontiers by paying tribute?'

'All this is vastly fine,' said Lord Monmouth; 'but I see no means by which I can attain my object but by supporting Peel. After all, what is the end of all parties and all politics? To gain your object. I want to turn our coronet into a ducal one, and to get your grandmother's barony called out of abeyance in your favour. It is impossible that Peel can refuse me. I have already purchased an ample estate with the view of entailing it on you and your issue. You will make a considerable alliance; you may marry, if you please, Lady Theresa Sydney. I hear the report with pleasure. Count on my at once entering into any arrangement conducive to your happiness.'

'My dear grandfather, you have ever been to me only too kind and generous.'

'To whom should I be kind but to you, my own blood, that has never crossed me, and of whom I have reason to be proud? Yes, Harry, it gratifies me to hear you admired and to learn your success. All I want now is to see you in Parliament. A man should be in Parliament early. There is a sort of stiffness about every man, no matter what may be his talents, who enters Parliament late in life; and now, fortunately, the occasion offers. You will go down on Friday; feed the notabilities well; speak out; praise Peel; abuse O'Connell and the ladies of the Bed-chamber; anathematise all waverers; say a good deal about Ireland; stick to the Irish Registration Bill, that's a good card; and, above all, my dear Harry, don't spare that fellow Millbank. Remember, in turning him out you not only gain a vote for the Conservative cause and our coronet, but you crush my foe. Spare nothing for that object; I count on you, boy.'

'I should grieve to be backward in anything that concerned your interest or your honour, sir,' said Coningsby, with an air of great embarrassment.

'I am sure you would, I am sure you would,' said Lord Monmouth, in a tone of some kindness.

'And I feel at this moment,' continued Coningsby, 'that there is no personal sacrifice which I am not prepared to make for them, except one. My interests, my affections, they should not be placed in the balance, if

yours, sir, were at stake, though there are circumstances which might involve me in a position of as much mental distress as a man could well endure; but I claim for my convictions, my dear grandfather, a generous tolerance.'

'I can't follow you, sir,' said Lord Monmouth, again in his hard tone. 'Our interests are inseparable, and therefore there can never be any sacrifice of conduct on your part. What you mean by sacrifice of affections, I don't comprehend; but as for your opinions, you have no business to have any other than those I uphold. You are too young to form opinions.'

'I am sure I wish to express them with no unbecoming confidence,' replied Coningsby; 'I have never intruded them on your ear before; but this being an occasion when you yourself said, sir, I was about to commence my public career, I confess I thought it was my duty to be frank; I would not entail on myself long years of mortification by one of those ill-considered entrances into political life which so many public men have cause to deplore.'

'You go with your family, sir, like a gentleman; you are not to consider your opinions, like a philosopher or a political adventurer.'

'Yes, sir,' said Coningsby, with animation, 'but men going with their families like gentlemen, and losing sight of every principle on which the society of this country ought to be established, produced the Reform Bill.'

'D---- the Reform Bill!' said Lord Monmouth; 'if the Duke had not quarrelled with Lord Grey on a Coal Committee, we should never have had the Reform Bill. And Grey would have gone to Ireland.'

'You are in as great peril now as you were in 1830,' said Coningsby.

'No, no, no,' said Lord Monmouth; 'the Tory party is organised now; they will not catch us napping again: these Conservative Associations have done the business.'

'But what are they organised for?' said Coningsby. 'At the best to turn out the Whigs. And when you have turned out the Whigs, what then? You may get your ducal coronet, sir. But a duke now is not so great a man as a baron was but a century back. We cannot struggle against the irresistible stream of circumstances. Power has left our order; this is not an age for factitious aristocracy. As for my grandmother's barony, I should look upon

the termination of its abeyance in my favour as the act of my political extinction. What we want, sir, is not to fashion new dukes and furbish up old baronies, but to establish great principles which may maintain the realm and secure the happiness of the people. Let me see authority once more honoured; a solemn reverence again the habit of our lives; let me see property acknowledging, as in the old days of faith, that labour is his twin brother, and that the essence of all tenure is the performance of duty; let results such as these be brought about, and let me participate, however feebly, in the great fulfilment, and public life then indeed becomes a noble career, and a seat in Parliament an enviable distinction.'

'I tell you what it is, Harry,' said Lord Monmouth, very drily, 'members of this family may think as they like, but they must act as I please. You must go down on Friday to Darford and declare yourself a candidate for the town, or I shall reconsider our mutual positions. I would say, you must go to-morrow; but it is only courteous to Rigby to give him a previous intimation of your movement. And that cannot be done to-day. I sent for Rigby this morning on other business which now occupies me, and find he is out of town. He will return to-morrow; and will be here at three o'clock, when you can meet him. You will meet him, I doubt not, like a man of sense,' added Lord Monmouth, looking at Coningsby with a glance such as he had never before encountered, 'who is not prepared to sacrifice all the objects of life for the pursuit of some fantastical puerilities.'

His Lordship rang a bell on his table for Villebecque; and to prevent any further conversation, resumed his papers.

CHAPTER IV.

It would have been difficult for any person, unconscious of crime, to have felt more dejected than Coningsby when he rode out of the court-yard of Monmouth House. The love of Edith would have consoled him for the destruction of his prosperity; the proud fulfilment of his ambition might in time have proved some compensation for his crushed affections; but his present position seemed to offer no single source of solace. There came over him that irresistible conviction that is at times the dark doom of all of us, that the bright period of our life is past; that a future awaits us only of anxiety, failure, mortification, despair; that none of our resplendent visions can ever be realised: and that we add but one more victim to the long and dreary catalogue of baffled aspirations.

Nor could he indeed by any combination see the means to extricate himself from the perils that were encompassing him. There was something about his grandfather that defied persuasion. Prone as eloquent youth generally is to believe in the resistless power of its appeals, Coningsby despaired at once of ever moving Lord Monmouth. There had been a callous dryness in his manner, an unswerving purpose in his spirit, that at once baffled all attempts at influence. Nor could Coningsby forget the look he received when he quitted the room. There was no possibility of mistaking it; it said at once, without periphrasis, 'Cross my purpose, and I will crush you!'

This was the moment when the sympathy, if not the counsels, of friendship might have been grateful. A clever woman might have afforded even more than sympathy; some happy device that might have even released him from the mesh in which he was involved. And once Coningsby had turned his horse's head to Park Lane to call on Lady Everingham. But surely if there were a sacred secret in the world, it was the one which subsisted between himself and Edith. No, that must never be violated. Then there was Lady Wallinger; he could at least speak with freedom to her. He resolved to tell her all. He looked in for a moment at a club to take up the 'Court Guide' and find her direction. A few men were standing in a bow window. He heard Mr. Cassilis say,

'So Beau, they say, is booked at last; the new beauty, have you heard?'

'I saw him very sweet on her last night,' rejoined his companion. 'Has she any tin?'

'Deuced deal, they say,' replied Mr. Cassilis. 'The father is a cotton lord, and they all have loads of tin, you know. Nothing like them now.'

'He is in Parliament, is not he?'

'Gad, I believe he is,' said Mr. Cassilis; 'I never know who is in Parliament in these days. I remember when there were only ten men in the House of Commons who were not either members of Brookes' or this place. Everything is so deuced changed.'

'I hear 'tis an old affair of Beau,' said another gentleman. 'It was all done a year ago at Rome or Paris.'

'They say she refused him then,' said Mr. Cassilis.

'Well, that is tolerably cool for a manufacturer's daughter,' said his friend. 'What next?'

'I wonder how the Duke likes it?' said Mr. Cassilis.

'Or the Duchess?' added one of his friends.

'Or the Everinghams?' added the other.

'The Duke will be deuced glad to see Beau settled, I take it,' said Mr. Cassilis.

'A good deal depends on the tin,' said his friend.

Coningsby threw down the 'Court Guide' with a sinking heart. In spite of every insuperable difficulty, hitherto the end and object of all his aspirations and all his exploits, sometimes even almost unconsciously to himself, was Edith. It was over. The strange manner of last night was fatally explained. The heart that once had been his was now another's. To the man who still loves there is in that conviction the most profound and desolate sorrow of which our nature is capable. All the recollection of the past, all the once-cherished prospects of the future, blend into one bewildering anguish. Coningsby quitted the club, and mounting his horse, rode rapidly out of town, almost unconscious of his direction. He found himself at length in a green lane near Willesden, silent and undisturbed; he pulled up his horse, and summoned all his mind to the contemplation of his prospects.

Edith was lost. Now, should he return to his grandfather, accept his mission, and go down to Darford on Friday? Favour and fortune, power, prosperity, rank, distinction would be the consequence of this step; might not he add even vengeance? Was there to be no term to his endurance? Might not he teach this proud, prejudiced manufacturer, with all his virulence and despotic caprices, a memorable lesson? And his daughter, too, this betrothed, after all, of a young noble, with her flush futurity of splendour and enjoyment, was she to hear of him only, if indeed she heard of him at all, as of one toiling or trifling in the humbler positions of existence; and wonder, with a blush, that he ever could have been the hero of her romantic girlhood? What degradation in the idea? His cheek burnt at the possibility of such ignominy!

It was a conjuncture in his life that required decision. He thought of his companions who looked up to him with such ardent anticipations of his fame, of delight in his career, and confidence in his leading; were all

these high and fond fancies to be balked? On the very threshold of life was he to blunder? 'Tis the first step that leads to all, and his was to be a wilful error. He remembered his first visit to his grandfather, and the delight of his friends at Eton at his report on his return. After eight years of initiation was he to lose that favour then so highly prized, when the results which they had so long counted on were on the very eve of accomplishment? Parliament and riches, and rank and power; these were facts, realities, substances, that none could mistake. Was he to sacrifice them for speculations, theories, shadows, perhaps the vapours of a green and conceited brain? No, by heaven, no! He was like Caesar by the starry river's side, watching the image of the planets on its fatal waters. The die was cast.

The sun set; the twilight spell fell upon his soul; the exaltation of his spirit died away. Beautiful thoughts, full of sweetness and tranquillity and consolation, came clustering round his heart like seraphs. He thought of Edith in her hours of fondness; he thought of the pure and solemn moments when to mingle his name with the heroes of humanity was his aspiration, and to achieve immortal fame the inspiring purpose of his life. What were the tawdry accidents of vulgar ambition to him? No domestic despot could deprive him of his intellect, his knowledge, the sustaining power of an unpolluted conscience. If he possessed the intelligence in which he had confidence, the world would recognise his voice even if not placed upon a pedestal. If the principles of his philosophy were true, the great heart of the nation would respond to their expression. Coningsby felt at this moment a profound conviction which never again deserted him, that the conduct which would violate the affections of the heart, or the dictates of the conscience, however it may lead to immediate success, is a fatal error. Conscious that he was perhaps verging on some painful vicissitude of his life, he devoted himself to a love that seemed hopeless, and to a fame that was perhaps a dream.

It was under the influence of these solemn resolutions that he wrote, on his return home, a letter to Lord Monmouth, in which he expressed all that affection which he really felt for his grandfather, and all the pangs which it cost him to adhere to the conclusions he had already announced. In terms of tenderness, and even humility, he declined to become a candidate for Darford, or even to enter Parliament, except as the master of his own conduct.

CHAPTER V.

Lady Monmouth was reclining on a sofa in that beautiful boudoir which had been fitted up under the superintendence of Mr. Rigby, but as he then believed for the Princess Colonna. The walls were hung with amber satin, painted by Delaroche with such subjects as might be expected from his brilliant and picturesque pencil. Fair forms, heroes and heroines in dazzling costume, the offspring of chivalry merging into what is commonly styled civilisation, moved in graceful or fantastic groups amid palaces and gardens. The ceiling, carved in the deep honeycomb fashion of the Saracens, was richly gilt and picked out in violet. Upon a violet carpet of velvet was represented the marriage of Cupid and Psyche.

It was about two hours after Coningsby had quitted Monmouth House, and Flora came in, sent for by Lady Monmouth as was her custom, to read to her as she was employed with some light work.

"Tis a new book of Sue,' said Lucretia. 'They say it is good.'

Flora, seated by her side, began to read. Reading was an accomplishment which distinguished Flora; but to-day her voice faltered, her expression was uncertain; she seemed but imperfectly to comprehend her page. More than once Lady Monmouth looked round at her with an inquisitive glance. Suddenly Flora stopped and burst into tears.

'O! madam,' she at last exclaimed, 'if you would but speak to Mr. Coningsby, all might be right!'

'What is this?' said Lady Monmouth, turning quickly on the sofa; then, collecting herself in an instant, she continued with less abruptness, and more suavity than usual, 'Tell me, Flora, what is it; what is the matter?'

'My Lord,' sobbed Flora, 'has quarrelled with Mr. Coningsby.'

An expression of eager interest came over the countenance of Lucretia.

'Why have they quarrelled?'

'I do not know they have quarrelled; it is not, perhaps, a right term; but my Lord is very angry with Mr. Coningsby.'

'Not very angry, I should think, Flora; and about what?'

'Oh! very angry, madam,' said Flora, shaking her head mournfully. 'My Lord

told M. Villebecque that perhaps Mr. Coningsby would never enter the house again.'

'Was it to-day?' asked Lucretia.

'This morning. Mr. Coningsby has only left this hour or two. He will not do what my Lord wishes, about some seat in the Chamber. I do not know exactly what it is; but my Lord is in one of his moods of terror: my father is frightened even to go into his room when he is so.'

'Has Mr. Rigby been here to-day?' asked Lucretia.

'Mr. Rigby is not in town. My father went for Mr. Rigby this morning before Mr. Coningsby came, and he found that Mr. Rigby was not in town. That is why I know it.'

Lady Monmouth rose from her sofa, and walked once or twice up and down the room. Then turning to Flora, she said, 'Go away now: the book is stupid; it does not amuse me. Stop: find out all you can for me about the quarrel before I speak to Mr. Coningsby.'

Flora quitted the room. Lucretia remained for some time in meditation; then she wrote a few lines, which she despatched at once to Mr. Rigby.

CHAPTER VI.

What a great man was the Right Honourable Nicholas Rigby! Here was one of the first peers of England, and one of the finest ladies in London, both waiting with equal anxiety his return to town; and unable to transact two affairs of vast importance, yet wholly unconnected, without his interposition! What was the secret of the influence of this man, confided in by everybody, trusted by none? His counsels were not deep, his expedients were not felicitous; he had no feeling, and he could create no sympathy. It is that, in most of the transactions of life, there is some portion which no one cares to accomplish, and which everybody wishes to be achieved. This was always the portion of Mr. Rigby. In the eye of the world he had constantly the appearance of being mixed up with high dealings, and negotiations and arrangements of fine management, whereas in truth, notwithstanding his splendid livery and the airs he gave himself in the servants' hall, his real business in life had ever been, to do the

dirty work.

Mr. Rigby had been shut up much at his villa of late. He was concocting, you could not term it composing, an article, a 'very slashing article,' which was to prove that the penny postage must be the destruction of the aristocracy. It was a grand subject, treated in his highest style. His parallel portraits of Rowland Hill the conqueror of Almaraz and Rowland Hill the deviser of the cheap postage were enormously fine. It was full of passages in italics, little words in great capitals, and almost drew tears. The statistical details also were highly interesting and novel. Several of the old postmen, both twopenny and general, who had been in office with himself, and who were inspired with an equal zeal against that spirit of reform of which they had alike been victims, supplied him with information which nothing but a breach of ministerial duty could have furnished. The prophetic peroration as to the irresistible progress of democracy was almost as powerful as one of Rigby's speeches on Aldborough or Amersham. There never was a fellow for giving a good hearty kick to the people like Rigby. Himself sprung from the dregs of the populace, this was disinterested. What could be more patriotic and magnanimous than his Jeremiads over the fall of the Montmorencis and the Crillons, or the possible catastrophe of the Percys and the Manners! The truth of all this hullabaloo was that Rigby had a sly pension which, by an inevitable association of ideas, he always connected with the maintenance of an aristocracy. All his rigmarole dissertations on the French revolution were impelled by this secret influence; and when he wailed over 'la guerre aux châteaux,' and moaned like a mandrake over Nottingham Castle in flames, the rogue had an eye all the while to quarter-day!

Arriving in town the day after Coningsby's interview with his grandfather, Mr. Rigby found a summons to Monmouth House waiting him, and an urgent note from Lucretia begging that he would permit nothing to prevent him seeing her for a few minutes before he called on the Marquess.

Lucretia, acting on the unconscious intimation of Flora, had in the course of four-and-twenty hours obtained pretty ample and accurate details of the cause of contention between Coningsby and her husband. She could inform Mr. Rigby not only that Lord Monmouth was highly incensed against his grandson, but that the cause of their misunderstanding arose about a seat in the House of Commons, and that seat too the one which Mr. Rigby had long appropriated to himself, and over whose registration he had watched with such affectionate solicitude.

Lady Monmouth arranged this information like a first-rate artist, and gave it a grouping and a colour which produced the liveliest effect upon her

confederate. The countenance of Rigby was almost ghastly as he received the intelligence; a grin, half of malice, half of terror, played over his features.

'I told you to beware of him long ago,' said Lady Monmouth. 'He is, he has ever been, in the way of both of us.'

'He is in my power,' said Rigby. 'We can crush him!'

'How?'

'He is in love with the daughter of Millbank, the man who bought Hellingsley.'

'Hah!' exclaimed Lady Monmouth, in a prolonged tone.

'He was at Coningsby all last summer, hanging about her. I found the younger Millbank quite domiciliated at the Castle; a fact which, of itself, if known to Lord Monmouth, would ensure the lad's annihilation.'

'And you kept this fine news for a winter campaign, my good Mr. Rigby,' said Lady Monmouth, with a subtle smile. 'It was a weapon of service. I give you my compliments.'

'The time is not always ripe,' said Mr. Rigby.

'But it is now most mature. Let us not conceal it from ourselves that, since his first visit to Coningsby, we have neither of us really been in the same position which we then occupied, or believed we should occupy. My Lord, though you would scarcely believe it, has a weakness for this boy; and though I by my marriage, and you by your zealous ability, have apparently secured a permanent hold upon his habits, I have never doubted that when the crisis comes we shall find that the golden fruit is plucked by one who has not watched the garden. You take me? There is no reason why we two should clash together: we can both of us find what we want, and more securely if we work in company.'

'I trust my devotion to you has never been doubted, dear madam.'

'Nor to yourself, dear Mr. Rigby. Go now: the game is before you. Rid me of this Coningsby, and I will secure you all that you want. Doubt not me. There is no reason. I want a firm ally. There must be two.'

'It shall be done,' said Rigby; 'it must be done. If once the notion gets

wind that one of the Castle family may perchance stand for Darlford, all the present combinations will be disorganised. It must be done at once. I know that the Government will dissolve.'

'So I hear for certain,' said Lucretia. 'Be sure there is no time to lose. What does he want with you to-day?'

'I know not: there are so many things.'

'To be sure; and yet I cannot doubt he will speak of this quarrel. Let not the occasion be lost. Whatever his mood, the subject may be introduced. If good, you will guide him more easily; if dark, the love for the Hellingsley girl, the fact of the brother being in his castle, drinking his wine, riding his horses, ordering about his servants; you will omit no details: a Millbank quite at home at Coningsby will lash him to madness! 'Tis quite ripe. Not a word that you have seen me. Go, go, or he may hear that you have arrived. I shall be at home all the morning. It will be but gallant that you should pay me a little visit when you have transacted your business. You understand. *Au revoir!*'

Lady Monmouth took up again her French novel; but her eyes soon glanced over the page, unattached by its contents. Her own existence was too interesting to find any excitement in fiction. It was nearly three years since her marriage; that great step which she ever had a conviction was to lead to results still greater. Of late she had often been filled with a presentiment that they were near at hand; never more so than on this day. Irresistible was the current of associations that led her to meditate on freedom, wealth, power; on a career which should at the same time dazzle the imagination and gratify her heart. Notwithstanding the gossip of Paris, founded on no authentic knowledge of her husband's character or information, based on the haphazard observations of the floating multitude, Lucretia herself had no reason to fear that her influence over Lord Monmouth, if exerted, was materially diminished. But satisfied that he had formed no other tie, with her ever the test of her position, she had not thought it expedient, and certainly would have found it irksome, to maintain that influence by any ostentatious means. She knew that Lord Monmouth was capricious, easily wearied, soon palled; and that on men who have no affections, affection has no hold. Their passions or their fancies, on the contrary, as it seemed to her, are rather stimulated by neglect or indifference, provided that they are not systematic; and the circumstance of a wife being admired by one who is not her husband sometimes wonderfully revives the passion or renovates the respect of him who should be devoted to her.

The health of Lord Monmouth was the subject which never was long absent from the vigilance or meditation of Lucretia. She was well assured that his life was no longer secure. She knew that after their marriage he had made a will, which secured to her a large portion of his great wealth in case of their having no issue, and after the accident at Paris all hope in that respect was over. Recently the extreme anxiety which Lord Monmouth had evinced about terminating the abeyance of the barony to which his first wife was a co-heiress in favour of his grandson, had alarmed Lucretia. To establish in the land another branch of the house of Coningsby was evidently the last excitement of Lord Monmouth, and perhaps a permanent one. If the idea were once accepted, notwithstanding the limit to its endowment which Lord Monmouth might at the first start contemplate, Lucretia had sufficiently studied his temperament to be convinced that all his energies and all his resources would ultimately be devoted to its practical fulfilment. Her original prejudice against Coningsby and jealousy of his influence had therefore of late been considerably aggravated; and the intelligence that for the first time there was a misunderstanding between Coningsby and her husband filled her with excitement and hope. She knew her Lord well enough to feel assured that the cause for displeasure in the present instance could not be a light one; she resolved instantly to labour that it should not be transient; and it so happened that she had applied for aid in this endeavour to the very individual in whose power it rested to accomplish all her desire, while in doing so he felt at the same time he was defending his own position and advancing his own interests.

Lady Monmouth was now waiting with some excitement the return of Mr. Rigby. His interview with his patron was of unusual length. An hour, and more than an hour, had elapsed. Lady Monmouth again threw aside the book which more than once she had discarded. She paced the room, restless rather than disquieted. She had complete confidence in Rigby's ability for the occasion; and with her knowledge of Lord Monmouth's character, she could not contemplate the possibility of failure, if the circumstances were adroitly introduced to his consideration. Still time stole on: the harassing and exhausting process of suspense was acting on her nervous system. She began to think that Rigby had not found the occasion favourable for the catastrophe; that Lord Monmouth, from apprehension of disturbing Rigby and entailing explanations on himself, had avoided the necessary communication; that her skilful combination for the moment had missed. Two hours had now elapsed, and Lucretia, in a state of considerable irritation, was about to inquire whether Mr. Rigby were with his Lordship when the door of her boudoir opened, and that gentleman appeared.

'How long you have been!' exclaimed Lady Monmouth. 'Now sit down and tell me what has passed.'

Lady Monmouth pointed to the seat which Flora had occupied.

'I thank your Ladyship,' said Mr. Rigby, with a somewhat grave and yet perplexed expression of countenance, and seating himself at some little distance from his companion, 'but I am very well here.'

There was a pause. Instead of responding to the invitation of Lady Monmouth to communicate with his usual readiness and volubility, Mr. Rigby was silent, and, if it were possible to use such an expression with regard to such a gentleman, apparently embarrassed.

'Well,' said Lady Monmouth, 'does he know about the Millbanks?'

'Everything,' said Mr. Rigby.

'And what did he say?'

'His Lordship was greatly shocked,' replied Mr. Rigby, with a pious expression of features. 'Such monstrous ingratitude! As his Lordship very justly observed, "It is impossible to say what is going on under my own roof, or to what I can trust."'

'But he made an exception in your favour, I dare say, my dear Mr. Rigby,' said Lady Monmouth.

'Lord Monmouth was pleased to say that I possessed his entire confidence,' said Mr. Rigby, 'and that he looked to me in his difficulties.'

'Very sensible of him. And what is to become of Mr. Coningsby?'

'The steps which his Lordship is about to take with reference to the establishment generally,' said Mr. Rigby, 'will allow the connection that at present subsists between that gentleman and his noble relative, now that Lord Monmouth's eyes are open to his real character, to terminate naturally, without the necessity of any formal explanation.'

'But what do you mean by the steps he is going to take in his establishment generally?'

'Lord Monmouth thinks he requires change of scene.'

'Oh! is he going to drag me abroad again?' exclaimed Lady Monmouth, with great impatience.

'Why, not exactly,' said Mr. Rigby, rather demurely.

'I hope he is not going again to that dreadful castle in Lancashire.'

'Lord Monmouth was thinking that, as you were tired of Paris, you might find some of the German Baths agreeable.'

'Why, there is nothing that Lord Monmouth dislikes so much as a German bathing-place!'

'Exactly,' said Mr. Rigby.

'Then how capricious in him wanting to go to them?'

'He does not want to go to them!'

'What do you mean, Mr. Rigby?' said Lady Monmouth, in a lower voice, and looking him full in the face with a glance seldom bestowed.

There was a churlish and unusual look about Rigby. It was as if malignant, and yet at the same time a little frightened, he had screwed himself into doggedness.

'I mean what Lord Monmouth means. He suggests that if your Ladyship were to pass the summer at Kissengen, for example, and a paragraph in the Morning Post were to announce that his Lordship was about to join you there, all awkwardness would be removed; and no one could for a moment take the liberty of supposing, even if his Lordship did not ultimately reach you, that anything like a separation had occurred.'

'A separation!' said Lady Monmouth.

'Quite amicable,' said Mr. Rigby. 'I would never have consented to interfere in the affair, but to secure that most desirable point.'

'I will see Lord Monmouth at once,' said Lucretia, rising, her natural pallor aggravated into a ghoul-like tint.

'His Lordship has gone out,' said Mr. Rigby, rather stubbornly.

'Our conversation, sir, then finishes; I wait his return.' She bowed

haughtily.

'His Lordship will never return to Monmouth House again.'

Lucretia sprang from the sofa.

'Miserable craven!' she exclaimed. 'Has the cowardly tyrant fled? And he really thinks that I am to be crushed by such an instrument as this! Pah! He may leave Monmouth House, but I shall not. Begone, sir!'

'Still anxious to secure an amicable separation,' said Mr. Rigby, 'your Ladyship must allow me to place the circumstances of the case fairly before your excellent judgment. Lord Monmouth has decided upon a course: you know as well as I that he never swerves from his resolutions. He has left peremptory instructions, and he will listen to no appeal. He has empowered me to represent to your Ladyship that he wishes in every way to consider your convenience. He suggests that everything, in short, should be arranged as if his Lordship were himself unhappily no more; that your Ladyship should at once enter into your jointure, which shall be made payable quarterly to your order, provided you can find it convenient to live upon the Continent,' added Mr. Rigby, with some hesitation.

'And suppose I cannot?'

'Why, then, we will leave your Ladyship to the assertion of your rights.'

'We!'

'I beg your Ladyship's pardon. I speak as the friend of the family, the trustee of your marriage settlement, well known also as Lord Monmouth's executor,' said Mr. Rigby, his countenance gradually regaining its usual callous confidence, and some degree of self-complacency, as he remembered the good things which he enumerated.

'I have decided,' said Lady Monmouth. 'I will assert my rights. Your master has mistaken my character and his own position. He shall rue the day that he assailed me.'

'I should be sorry if there were any violence,' said Mr. Rigby, 'especially as everything is left to my management and control. An office, indeed, which I only accepted for your mutual advantage. I think, upon reflection, I might put before your Ladyship some considerations which might induce you, on the whole, to be of opinion that it will be better for us to draw together in this business, as we have hitherto, indeed,

throughout an acquaintance now of some years.' Rigby was assuming all his usual tone of brazen familiarity.

'Your self-confidence exceeds even Lord Monmouth's estimate of it,' said Lucretia.

'Now, now, you are unkind. Your Ladyship mistakes my position. I am interfering in this business for your sake. I might have refused the office. It would have fallen to another, who would have fulfilled it without any delicacy and consideration for your feelings. View my interposition in that light, my dear Lady Monmouth, and circumstances will assume altogether a new colour.'

'I beg that you will quit the house, sir.'

Mr. Rigby shook his head. 'I would with pleasure, to oblige you, were it in my power; but Lord Monmouth has particularly desired that I should take up my residence here permanently. The servants are now my servants. It is useless to ring the bell. For your Ladyship's sake, I wish everything to be accomplished with tranquillity, and, if possible, friendliness and good feeling. You can have even a week for the preparations for your departure, if necessary. I will take that upon myself. Any carriages, too, that you desire; your jewels, at least all those that are not at the bankers'. The arrangement about your jointure, your letters of credit, even your passport, I will attend to myself; only too happy if, by this painful interference, I have in any way contributed to soften the annoyance which, at the first blush, you may naturally experience, but which, like everything else, take my word, will wear off.'

'I shall send for Lord Eskdale,' said Lady Monmouth. 'He is a gentleman.'

'I am quite sure,' said Mr. Rigby, 'that Lord Eskdale will give you the same advice as myself, if he only reads your Ladyship's letters,' he added slowly, 'to Prince Trautsmansdorff.'

'My letters?' said Lady Monmouth.

'Pardon me,' said Rigby, putting his hand in his pocket, as if to guard some treasure, 'I have no wish to revive painful associations; but I have them, and I must act upon them, if you persist in treating me as a foe, who am in reality your best friend; which indeed I ought to be, having the honour of acting as trustee under your marriage settlement, and having known you so many years.'

'Leave me for the present alone,' said Lady Monmouth. 'Send me my servant, if I have one. I shall not remain here the week which you mention, but quit at once this house, which I wish I had never entered. Adieu! Mr. Rigby, you are now lord of Monmouth House, and yet I cannot help feeling you too will be discharged before he dies.'

Mr. Rigby made Lady Monmouth a bow such as became the master of the house, and then withdrew.

CHAPTER VII.

A paragraph in the *Morning Post*, a few days after his interview with his grandfather, announcing that Lord and Lady Monmouth had quitted town for the baths of Kissengen, startled Coningsby, who called the same day at Monmouth House in consequence. There he learnt more authentic details of their unexpected movements. It appeared that Lady Monmouth had certainly departed; and the porter, with a rather sceptical visage, informed Coningsby that Lord Monmouth was to follow; but when, he could not tell. At present his Lordship was at Brighton, and in a few days was about to take possession of a villa at Richmond, which had for some time been fitting up for him under the superintendence of Mr. Rigby, who, as Coningsby also learnt, now permanently resided at Monmouth House. All this intelligence made Coningsby ponder. He was sufficiently acquainted with the parties concerned to feel assured that he had not learnt the whole truth. What had really taken place, and what was the real cause of the occurrences, were equally mystical to him: all he was convinced of was, that some great domestic revolution had been suddenly effected.

Coningsby entertained for his grandfather a sincere affection. With the exception of their last unfortunate interview, he had experienced from Lord Monmouth nothing but kindness both in phrase and deed. There was also something in Lord Monmouth, when he pleased it, rather fascinating to young men; and as Coningsby had never occasioned him any feelings but pleasurable ones, he was always disposed to make himself delightful to his grandson. The experience of a consummate man of the world, advanced in life, detailed without rigidity to youth, with frankness and facility, is bewitching. Lord Monmouth was never garrulous: he was always pithy, and could be picturesque. He revealed a character in a sentence, and detected the ruling passion with the hand of a master. Besides, he had seen everybody and had done everything; and though, on the whole, too indolent

for conversation, and loving to be talked to, these were circumstances which made his too rare communications the more precious.

With these feelings, Coningsby resolved, the moment that he learned that his grandfather was established at Richmond, to pay him a visit. He was informed that Lord Monmouth was at home, and he was shown into a drawing-room, where he found two French ladies in their bonnets, whom he soon discovered to be actresses. They also had come down to pay a visit to his grandfather, and were by no means displeased to pass the interval that must elapse before they had that pleasure in chatting with his grandson. Coningsby found them extremely amusing; with the finest spirits in the world, imperturbable good temper, and an unconscious practical philosophy that defied the devil Care and all his works. And well it was that he found such agreeable companions, for time flowed on, and no summons arrived to call him to his grandfather's presence, and no herald to announce his grandfather's advent. The ladies and Coningsby had exhausted badinage; they had examined and criticised all the furniture, had rifled the vases of their prettiest flowers; and Clotilde, who had already sung several times, was proposing a duet to Ermengarde, when a servant entered, and told the ladies that a carriage was in attendance to give them an airing, and after that Lord Monmouth hoped they would return and dine with him; then turning to Coningsby, he informed him, with his lord's compliments, that Lord Monmouth was sorry he was too much engaged to see him.

Nothing was to be done but to put a tolerably good face upon it. 'Embrace Lord Monmouth for me,' said Coningsby to his fair friends, 'and tell him I think it very unkind that he did not ask me to dinner with you.'

Coningsby said this with a gay air, but really with a depressed spirit. He felt convinced that his grandfather was deeply displeased with him; and as he rode away from the villa, he could not resist the strong impression that he was destined never to re-enter it. Yet it was decreed otherwise. It so happened that the idle message which Coningsby had left for his grandfather, and which he never seriously supposed for a moment that his late companions would have given their host, operated entirely in his favour. Whatever were the feelings with respect to Coningsby at the bottom of Lord Monmouth's heart, he was actuated in his refusal to see him not more from displeasure than from an anticipatory horror of something like a scene. Even a surrender from Coningsby without terms, and an offer to declare himself a candidate for Darford, or to do anything else that his grandfather wished, would have been disagreeable to Lord Monmouth in his present mood. As in politics a revolution is often followed by a season of torpor, so in the case of Lord Monmouth the separation from his wife,

which had for a long period occupied his meditation, was succeeded by a vein of mental dissipation. He did not wish to be reminded by anything or any person that he had still in some degree the misfortune of being a responsible member of society. He wanted to be surrounded by individuals who were above or below the conventional interests of what is called 'the World.' He wanted to hear nothing of those painful and embarrassing influences which from our contracted experience and want of enlightenment we magnify into such undue importance. For this purpose he wished to have about him persons whose knowledge of the cares of life concerned only the means of existence, and whose sense of its objects referred only to the sources of enjoyment; persons who had not been educated in the idolatry of Respectability; that is to say, of realising such an amount of what is termed character by a hypocritical deference to the prejudices of the community as may enable them, at suitable times, and under convenient circumstances and disguises, to plunder the public. This was the Monmouth Philosophy.

With these feelings, Lord Monmouth recoiled at this moment from grandsons and relations and ties of all kinds. He did not wish to be reminded of his identity, but to swim unmolested and undisturbed in his Epicurean dream. When, therefore, his fair visitors; Clotilde, who opened her mouth only to breathe roses and diamonds, and Ermengarde, who was so good-natured that she sacrificed even her lovers to her friends; saw him merely to exclaim at the same moment, and with the same voices of thrilling joyousness,--

'Why did not you ask him to dinner?'

And then, without waiting for his reply, entered with that rapidity of elocution which Frenchwomen can alone command into the catalogue of his charms and accomplishments, Lord Monmouth began to regret that he really had not seen Coningsby, who, it appeared, might have greatly contributed to the pleasure of the day. The message, which was duly given, however, settled the business. Lord Monmouth felt that any chance of explanations, or even allusions to the past, was out of the question; and to defend himself from the accusations of his animated guests, he said,

'Well, he shall come to dine with you next time.'

There is no end to the influence of woman on our life. It is at the bottom of everything that happens to us. And so it was, that, in spite of all the combinations of Lucretia and Mr. Rigby, and the mortification and resentment of Lord Monmouth, the favourable impression he casually made on a couple of French actresses occasioned Coningsby, before a month had elapsed since his memorable interview at Monmouth House, to receive an

invitation again to dine with his grandfather.

The party was agreeable. Clotilde and Ermengarde had wits as sparkling as their eyes. There was a manager of the Opera, a great friend of Villebecque, and his wife, a splendid lady, who had been a prima donna of celebrity, and still had a commanding voice for a chamber; a Carlist nobleman who lived upon his traditions, and who, though without a sou, could tell of a festival given by his family, before the revolution, which had cost a million of francs; and a Neapolitan physician, in whom Lord Monmouth had great confidence, and who himself believed in the elixir vitae, made up the party, with Lucian Gay, Coningsby, and Mr. Rigby. Our hero remarked that Villebecque on this occasion sat at the bottom of the table, but Flora did not appear.

In the meantime, the month which brought about this satisfactory and at one time unexpected result was fruitful also in other circumstances still more interesting. Coningsby and Edith met frequently, if to breathe the same atmosphere in the same crowded saloons can be described as meeting; ever watching each other's movements, and yet studious never to encounter each other's glance. The charms of Miss Millbank had become an universal topic, they were celebrated in ball-rooms, they were discussed at clubs: Edith was the beauty of the season. All admired her, many sighed even to express their admiration; but the devotion of Lord Beaumanoir, who always hovered about her, deterred them from a rivalry which might have made the boldest despair. As for Coningsby, he passed his life principally with the various members of the Sydney family, and was almost daily riding with Lady Everingham and her sister, generally accompanied by Lord Henry and his friend Eustace Lyle, between whom, indeed, and Coningsby there were relations of intimacy scarcely less inseparable. Coningsby had spoken to Lady Everingham of the rumoured marriage of her elder brother, and found, although the family had not yet been formally apprised of it, she entertained little doubt of its ultimate occurrence. She admired Miss Millbank, with whom her acquaintance continued slight; and she wished, of course, that her brother should marry and be happy. 'But Percy is often in love,' she would add, 'and never likes us to be very intimate with his innamoratas. He thinks it destroys the romance; and that domestic familiarity may compromise his heroic character. However,' she added, 'I really believe that will be a match.'

On the whole, though he bore a serene aspect to the world, Coningsby passed this month in a state of restless misery. His soul was brooding on one subject, and he had no confidant: he could not resist the spell that impelled him to the society where Edith might at least be seen, and the circle in which he lived was one in which her name was frequently

mentioned. Alone, in his solitary rooms in the Albany, he felt all his desolation; and often a few minutes before he figured in the world, apparently followed and courted by all, he had been plunged in the darkest fits of irremediable wretchedness.

He had, of course, frequently met Lady Wallinger, but their salutations, though never omitted, and on each side cordial, were brief. There seemed to be a tacit understanding between them not to refer to a subject fruitful in painful reminiscences.

The season waned. In the fulfilment of a project originally formed in the playing-fields of Eton, often recurred to at Cambridge, and cherished with the fondness with which men cling to a scheme of early youth, Coningsby, Henry Sydney, Vere, and Buckhurst had engaged some moors together this year; and in a few days they were about to quit town for Scotland. They had pressed Eustace Lyle to accompany them, but he, who in general seemed to have no pleasure greater than their society, had surprised them by declining their invitation, with some vague mention that he rather thought he should go abroad.

It was the last day of July, and all the world were at a breakfast given, at a fanciful cottage situate in beautiful gardens on the banks of the Thames, by Lady Everingham. The weather was as bright as the romances of Boccaccio; there were pyramids of strawberries, in bowls colossal enough to hold orange-trees; and the choicest band filled the air with enchanting strains, while a brilliant multitude sauntered on turf like velvet, or roamed in desultory existence amid the quivering shades of winding walks.

'My fête was prophetic,' said Lady Everingham, when she saw Coningsby. 'I am glad it is connected with an incident. It gives it a point.'

'You are mystical as well as prophetic. Tell me what we are to celebrate.'

'Theresa is going to be married.'

'Then I, too, will prophesy, and name the hero of the romance, Eustace Lyle.'

'You have been more prescient than I,' said Lady Everingham, 'perhaps because I was thinking too much of some one else.'

'It seems to me an union which all must acknowledge perfect. I hardly know which I love best. I have had my suspicions a long time; and when Eustace refused to go to the moors with us, though I said nothing, I was

convinced.'

'At any rate,' said Lady Everingham, sighing, with a rather smiling face, 'we are kinsfolk, Mr. Coningsby; though I would gladly have wished to have been more.'

'Were those your thoughts, dear lady? Ever kind to me! Happiness,' he added, in a mournful tone, 'I fear can never be mine.'

'And why?'

'Ah! 'tis a tale too strange and sorrowful for a day when, like Seged, we must all determine to be happy.'

'You have already made me miserable.'

'Here comes a group that will make you gay,' said Coningsby as he moved on. Edith and the Wallingers, accompanied by Lord Beaumanoir, Mr. Melton, and Sir Charles Buckhurst, formed the party. They seemed profuse in their congratulations to Lady Everingham, having already learnt the intelligence from her brother.

Coningsby stopped to speak to Lady St. Julians, who had still a daughter to marry. Both Augustina, who was at Coningsby Castle, and Clara Isabella, who ought to have been there, had each secured the right man. But Adelaide Victoria had now appeared, and Lady St. Julians had a great regard for the favourite grandson of Lord Monmouth, and also for the influential friend of Lord Vere and Sir Charles Buckhurst. In case Coningsby did not determine to become her son-in-law himself, he might counsel either of his friends to a judicious decision on an inevitable act.

'Strawberries and cream?' said Lord Eskdale to Mr. Ormsby, who seemed occupied with some delicacies.

'Egad! no, no, no; those days are passed. I think there is a little easterly wind with all this fine appearance.'

'I am for in-door nature myself,' said Lord Eskdale. 'Do you know, I do not half like the way Monmouth is going on? He never gets out of that villa of his. He should change his air more. Tell him.'

'It is no use telling him anything. Have you heard anything of Miladi?'

'I had a letter from her to-day: she writes in good spirits. I am sorry it

broke up, and yet I never thought it would last so long.'

'I gave them two years,' said Mr. Ormsby. 'Lord Monmouth lived with his first wife two years. And afterwards with the Mirandola at Milan, at least nearly two years; it was a year and ten months. I must know, for he called me in to settle affairs. I took the lady to the baths at Lucca, on the pretence that Monmouth would meet us there. He went to Paris. All his great affairs have been two years. I remember I wanted to bet Cassilis, at White's, on it when he married; but I thought, being his intimate friend; the oldest friend he has, indeed, and one of his trustees; it was perhaps as well not to do it.'

'You should have made the bet with himself,' said Lord Eskdale, 'and then there never would have been a separation.'

'Hah, hah, hah! Do you know, I feel the wind?'

About an hour after this, Coningsby, who had just quitted the Duchess, met, on a terrace by the river, Lady Wallinger, walking with Mrs. Guy Flouney and a Russian Prince, whom that lady was enchanting. Coningsby was about to pass with some slight courtesy, but Lady Wallinger stopped and would speak to him, on slight subjects, the weather and the fête, but yet adroitly enough managed to make him turn and join her. Mrs. Guy Flouney walked on a little before with her Russian admirer. Lady Wallinger followed with Coningsby.

'The match that has been proclaimed to-day has greatly surprised me,' said Lady Wallinger.

'Indeed!' said Coningsby: 'I confess I was long prepared for it. And it seems to me the most natural alliance conceivable, and one that every one must approve.'

'Lady Everingham seems much surprised at it.'

'Ah! Lady Everingham is a brilliant personage, and cannot deign to observe obvious circumstances.'

'Do you know, Mr. Coningsby, that I always thought you were engaged to Lady Theresa?'

'!!'

'Indeed, we were informed more than a month ago that you were positively

going to be married to her.'

'I am not one of those who can shift their affections with such rapidity, Lady Wallinger.'

Lady Wallinger looked distressed. 'You remember our meeting you on the stairs at ---- House, Mr. Coningsby?'

'Painfully. It is deeply graven on my brain.'

'Edith had just been informed that you were going to be married to Lady Theresa.'

'Not surely by him to whom she is herself going to be married?' said Coningsby, reddening.

'I am not aware that she is going to be married to any one. Lord Beaumanoir admires her, has always admired her. But Edith has given him no encouragement, at least gave him no encouragement as long as she believed; but why dwell on such an unhappy subject, Mr. Coningsby? I am to blame; I have been to blame perhaps before, but indeed I think it cruel, very cruel, that Edith and you are kept asunder.'

'You have always been my best, my dearest friend, and are the most amiable and admirable of women. But tell me, is it indeed true that Edith is not going to be married?'

At this moment Mrs. Guy Flouncey turned round, and assuring Lady Wallinger that the Prince and herself had agreed to refer some point to her about the most transcendental ethics of flirtation, this deeply interesting conversation was arrested, and Lady Wallinger, with becoming suavity, was obliged to listen to the lady's lively appeal of exaggerated nonsense and the Prince's affected protests, while Coningsby walked by her side, pale and agitated, and then offered his arm to Lady Wallinger, which she accepted with an affectionate pressure. At the end of the terrace they met some other guests, and soon were immersed in the multitude that thronged the lawn.

'There is Sir Joseph,' said Lady Wallinger, and Coningsby looked up, and saw Edith on his arm. They were unconsciously approaching them. Lord Beaumanoir was there, but he seemed to shrink into nothing to-day before Buckhurst, who was captivated for the moment by Edith, and hearing that no knight was resolute enough to try a fall with the Marquess, was impelled by his talent for action to enter the lists. He had talked down everybody,

unhorsed every cavalier. Nobody had a chance against him: he answered all your questions before you asked them; contradicted everybody with the intrepidity of a Rigby; annihilated your anecdotes by historiettes infinitely more piquant; and if anybody chanced to make a joke which he could not excel, declared immediately that it was a Joe Miller. He was absurd, extravagant, grotesque, noisy; but he was young, rattling, and interesting, from his health and spirits. Edith was extremely amused by him, and was encouraging by her smile his spiritual excesses, when they all suddenly met Lady Wallinger and Coningsby.

The eyes of Edith and Coningsby met for the first time since they so cruelly encountered on the staircase of ---- House. A deep, quick blush suffused her face, her eyes gleamed with a sudden coruscation; suddenly and quickly she put forth her hand.

Yes! he presses once more that hand which permanently to retain is the passion of his life, yet which may never be his! It seemed that for the ravishing delight of that moment he could have borne with cheerfulness all the dark and harrowing misery of the year that had passed away since he embraced her in the woods of Hellingsley, and pledged his faith by the waters of the rushing Darl.

He seized the occasion which offered itself, a moment to walk by her side, and to snatch some brief instants of unreserved communion.

'Forgive me!' she said.

'Ah! how could you ever doubt me?' said Coningsby.

'I was unhappy.'

'And now we are to each other as before?'

'And will be, come what come may.'

END OF BOOK VIII.

BOOK IX.

CHAPTER I.

It was merry Christmas at St. Geneviève. There was a yule log blazing on every hearth in that wide domain, from the hall of the squire to the peasant's roof. The Buttery Hatch was open for the whole week from noon to sunset; all comers might take their fill, and each carry away as much bold beef, white bread, and jolly ale as a strong man could bear in a basket with one hand. For every woman a red cloak, and a coat of broadcloth for every man. All day long, carts laden with fuel and warm raiment were traversing the various districts, distributing comfort and dispensing cheer. For a Christian gentleman of high degree was Eustace Lyle.

Within his hall, too, he holds his revel, and his beauteous bride welcomes their guests, from her noble parents to the faithful tenants of the house. All classes are mingled in the joyous equality that becomes the season, at once sacred and merry. There are carols for the eventful eve, and mummers for the festive day.

The Duke and Duchess, and every member of the family, had consented this year to keep their Christmas with the newly-married couple. Coningsby, too, was there, and all his friends. The party was numerous, gay, hearty, and happy; for they were all united by sympathy.

They were planning that Henry Sydney should be appointed Lord of Misrule, or ordained Abbot of Unreason at the least, so successful had been his revival of the Mummers, the Hobby-horse not forgotten. Their host had entrusted to Lord Henry the restoration of many old observances; and the joyous feeling which this celebration of Christmas had diffused throughout an extensive district was a fresh argument in favour of Lord Henry's principle, that a mere mechanical mitigation of the material necessities of the humbler classes, a mitigation which must inevitably be limited, can never alone avail sufficiently to ameliorate their condition; that their condition is not merely 'a knife and fork question,' to use the coarse and shallow phrase of the Utilitarian school; that a simple satisfaction of the grosser necessities of our nature will not make a happy people; that you must cultivate the heart as well as seek to content the belly; and that the surest means to elevate the character of the people is to appeal to their affections.

There is nothing more interesting than to trace predisposition. An indefinite, yet strong sympathy with the peasantry of the realm had been one of the characteristic sensibilities of Lord Henry at Eton. Yet a schoolboy, he had busied himself with their pastimes and the details of their cottage economy. As he advanced in life the horizon of his views

expanded with his intelligence and his experience; and the son of one of the noblest of our houses, to whom the delights of life are offered with fatal facility, on the very threshold of his career he devoted his time and thought, labour and life, to one vast and noble purpose, the elevation of the condition of the great body of the people.

'I vote for Buckhurst being Lord of Misrule,' said Lord Henry: 'I will be content with being his gentleman usher.'

'It shall be put to the vote,' said Lord Vere.

'No one has a chance against Buckhurst,' said Coningsby.

'Now, Sir Charles,' said Lady Everingham, 'your absolute sway is about to commence. And what is your will?'

'The first thing must be my formal installation,' said Buckhurst. 'I vote the Boar's head be carried in procession thrice round the hall, and Beau shall be the champion to challenge all who may question my right. Duke, you shall be my chief butler, the Duchess my herb-woman. She is to walk before me, and scatter rosemary. Coningsby shall carry the Boar's head; Lady Theresa and Lady Everingham shall sing the canticle; Lord Everingham shall be marshal of the lists, and put all in the stocks who are found sober and decorous; Lyle shall be the palmer from the Holy Land, and Vere shall ride the Hobby-horse. Some must carry cups of Hippocras, some lighted tapers; all must join in chorus.'

He ceased his instructions, and all hurried away to carry them into effect. Some hastily arrayed themselves in fanciful dresses, the ladies in robes of white, with garlands of flowers; some drew pieces of armour from the wall, and decked themselves with helm and hauberk; others waved ancient banners. They brought in the Boar's head on a large silver dish, and Coningsby raised it aloft. They formed into procession, the Duchess distributing rosemary; Buckhurst swaggering with all the majesty of Tamerlane, his mock court irresistibly humorous with their servility; and the sweet voice of Lady Everingham chanting the first verse of the canticle, followed in the second by the rich tones of Lady Theresa:

I.

Caput Apri defero

Reddens laudes Domino.

The Boar's heade in hande bring I,

With garlandes gay and rosemary:

I pray you all singe merrily,

Qui estis in convivio.

II.

Caput Apri defero

Reddens laudes Domino.

The Boar's heade I understande

Is the chief servyce in this lande

Loke whereever it be fande,

Servite cum cantico.

The procession thrice paraded the hall. Then they stopped; and the Lord of Misrule ascended his throne, and his courtiers formed round him in circle. Behind him they held the ancient banners and waved their glittering arms, and placed on a lofty and illuminated pedestal the Boar's head covered with garlands. It was a good picture, and the Lord of Misrule sustained his part with untiring energy. He was addressing his court in a pompous rhapsody of merry nonsense, when a servant approached Coningsby, and told him that he was wanted without.

Our hero retired unperceived. A despatch had arrived for him from London. Without any prescience of its purpose, he nevertheless broke the seal with a trembling hand. His presence was immediately desired in town: Lord Monmouth was dead.

CHAPTER II.

This was a crisis in the life of Coningsby; yet, like many critical epochs, the person most interested in it was not sufficiently aware of its character. The first feeling which he experienced at the intelligence was sincere affliction. He was fond of his grandfather; had received great kindness from him, and at a period of life when it was most welcome. The neglect and hardships of his early years, instead of leaving a prejudice against one who, by some, might be esteemed their author, had by their contrast only rendered Coningsby more keenly sensible of the solicitude and enjoyment which had been lavished on his happy youth.

The next impression on his mind was undoubtedly a natural and reasonable speculation on the effect of this bereavement on his fortunes. Lord Monmouth had more than once assured Coningsby that he had provided for him as became a near relative to whom he was attached, and in a manner which

ought to satisfy the wants and wishes of an English gentleman. The allowance which Lord Monmouth had made him, as considerable as usually accorded to the eldest sons of wealthy peers, might justify him in estimating his future patrimony as extremely ample. He was aware, indeed, that at a subsequent period his grandfather had projected for him fortunes of a still more elevated character. He looked to Coningsby as the future representative of an ancient barony, and had been purchasing territory with the view of supporting the title. But Coningsby did not by any means firmly reckon on these views being realised. He had a suspicion that in thwarting the wishes of his grandfather in not becoming a candidate for Darlford, he had at the moment arrested arrangements which, from the tone of Lord Monmouth's communication, he believed were then in progress for that purpose; and he thought it improbable, with his knowledge of his grandfather's habits, that Lord Monmouth had found either time or inclination to resume before his decease the completion of these plans. Indeed there was a period when, in adopting the course which he pursued with respect to Darlford, Coningsby was well aware that he perilled more than the large fortune which was to accompany the barony. Had not a separation between Lord Monmouth and his wife taken place simultaneously with Coningsby's difference with his grandfather, he was conscious that the consequences might have been even altogether fatal to his prospects; but the absence of her evil influence at such a conjuncture, its permanent removal, indeed, from the scene, coupled with his fortunate though not formal reconciliation with Lord Monmouth, had long ago banished from his memory all those apprehensions to which he had felt it impossible at the time to shut his eyes. Before he left town for Scotland he had made a farewell visit to his grandfather, who, though not as cordial as in old days, had been gracious; and Coningsby, during his excursion to the moors, and his various visits to the country, had continued at intervals to write to his grandfather, as had been for some years his custom. On the whole, with an indefinite feeling which, in spite of many a rational effort, did nevertheless haunt his mind, that this great and sudden event might exercise a vast and beneficial influence on his worldly position, Coningsby could not but feel some consolation in the affliction which he sincerely experienced, in the hope that he might at all events now offer to Edith a home worthy of her charms, her virtues, and her love.

Although he had not seen her since their hurried yet sweet reconciliation in the gardens of Lady Everingham, Coningsby was never long without indirect intelligence of the incidents of her life; and the correspondence between Lady Everingham and Henry Sydney, while they were at the moors, had apprised him that Lord Beaumanoir's suit had terminated unsuccessfully almost immediately after his brother had quitted London.

It was late in the evening when Coningsby arrived in town: he called at once on Lord Eskdale, who was one of Lord Monmouth's executors; and he persuaded Coningsby, whom he saw depressed, to dine with him alone.

'You should not be seen at a club,' said the good-natured peer; 'and I remember myself in old days what was the wealth of an Albanian larder.'

Lord Eskdale, at dinner, talked frankly of the disposition of Lord Monmouth's property. He spoke as a matter of course that Coningsby was his grandfather's principal heir.

'I don't know whether you will be happier with a large fortune?' said Lord Eskdale. 'It is a troublesome thing: nobody is satisfied with what you do with it; very often not yourself. To maintain an equable expenditure; not to spend too much on one thing, too little on another, is an art. There must be a harmony, a keeping, in disbursement, which very few men have. Great wealth wearies. The thing to have is about ten thousand a year, and the world to think you have only five. There is some enjoyment then; one is let alone. But the instant you have a large fortune, duties commence. And then impudent fellows borrow your money; and if you ask them for it again, they go about town saying you are a screw.'

Lord Monmouth had died suddenly at his Richmond villa, which latterly he never quitted, at a little supper, with no persons near him but those who were amusing. He suddenly found he could not lift his glass to his lips, and being extremely polite, waited a few minutes before he asked Clotilde, who was singing a sparkling drinking-song, to do him that service. When, in accordance with his request, she reached him, it was too late. The ladies shrieked, being frightened: at first they were in despair, but, after reflection, they evinced some intention of plundering the house. Villebecque, who was absent at the moment, arrived in time; and everybody became orderly and broken-hearted.

The body had been removed to Monmouth House, where it had been embalmed and laid in state. The funeral was not numerously attended. There was nobody in town; some distinguished connections, however, came up from the country, though it was a period inconvenient for such movements. After the funeral, the will was to be read in the principal saloon of Monmouth House, one of those gorgeous apartments that had excited the boyish wonder of Coningsby on his first visit to that paternal roof, and now hung in black, adorned with the escutcheon of the deceased peer.

The testamentary dispositions of the late lord were still unknown, though the names of his executors had been announced by his family solicitor, in

whose custody the will and codicils had always remained. The executors under the will were Lord Eskdale, Mr. Ormsby, and Mr. Rigby. By a subsequent appointment Sidonia had been added. All these individuals were now present. Coningsby, who had been chief mourner, stood on the right hand of the solicitor, who sat at the end of a long table, round which, in groups, were ranged all who had attended the funeral, including several of the superior members of the household, among them M. Villebecque.

The solicitor rose and explained that though Lord Monmouth had been in the habit of very frequently adding codicils to his will, the original will, however changed or modified, had never been revoked; it was therefore necessary to commence by reading that instrument. So saying, he sat down, and breaking the seals of a large packet, he produced the will of Philip Augustus, Marquess of Monmouth, which had been retained in his custody since its execution.

By this will, of the date of 1829, the sum of 10,000_l._ was left to Coningsby, then unknown to his grandfather; the same sum to Mr. Rigby. There was a great number of legacies, none of superior amount, most of them of less: these were chiefly left to old male companions, and women in various countries. There was an almost inconceivable number of small annuities to faithful servants, decayed actors, and obscure foreigners. The residue of his personal estate was left to four gentlemen, three of whom had quitted this world before the legator; the bequests, therefore, had lapsed. The fourth residuary legatee, in whom, according to the terms of the will, all would have consequently centred, was Mr. Rigby.

There followed several codicils which did not materially affect the previous disposition; one of them leaving a legacy of 20,000_l._ to the Princess Colonna; until they arrived at the latter part of the year 1832, when a codicil increased the 10,000_l._ left under the will to Coningsby to 50,000_l._.

After Coningsby's visit to the Castle in 1836 a very important change occurred in the disposition of Lord Monmouth's estate. The legacy of 50,000_l._ in his favour was revoked, and the same sum left to the Princess Lucretia. A similar amount was bequeathed to Mr. Rigby; and Coningsby was left sole residuary legatee.

The marriage led to a considerable modification. An estate of about nine thousand a year, which Lord Monmouth had himself purchased, and was therefore in his own disposition, was left to Coningsby. The legacy to Mr. Rigby was reduced to 20,000_l._, and the whole of his residue left to his issue by Lady Monmouth. In case he died without issue, the estate

bequeathed to Coningsby to be taken into account, and the residue then to be divided equally between Lady Monmouth and his grandson. It was under this instrument that Sidonia had been appointed an executor and to whom Lord Monmouth left, among others, the celebrated picture of the Holy Family by Murillo, as his friend had often admired it. To Lord Eskdale he left all his female miniatures, and to Mr. Ormsby his rare and splendid collection of French novels, and all his wines, except his Tokay, which he left, with his library, to Sir Robert Peel; though this legacy was afterwards revoked, in consequence of Sir Robert's conduct about the Irish corporations.

The solicitor paused and begged permission to send for a glass of water. While this was arranging there was a murmur at the lower part of the room, but little disposition to conversation among those in the vicinity of the lawyer. Coningsby was silent, his brow a little knit. Mr. Rigby was pale and restless, but said nothing. Mr. Ormsby took a pinch of snuff, and offered his box to Lord Eskdale, who was next to him. They exchanged glances, and made some observation about the weather. Sidonia stood apart, with his arms folded. He had not, of course attended the funeral, nor had he as yet exchanged any recognition with Coningsby.

'Now, gentlemen,' said the solicitor, 'if you please, I will proceed.'

They came to the year 1839, the year Coningsby was at Hellingsley. This appeared to be a critical period in the fortunes of Lady Monmouth; while Coningsby's reached to the culminating point. Mr. Rigby was reduced to his original legacy under the will of 10,000_l._; a sum of equal amount was bequeathed to Armand Villebecque, in acknowledgment of faithful services; all the dispositions in favour of Lady Monmouth were revoked, and she was limited to her moderate jointure of 3,000_l._ per annum, under the marriage settlement; while everything, without reserve, was left absolutely to Coningsby.

A subsequent codicil determined that the 10,000_l._ left to Mr. Rigby should be equally divided between him and Lucian Gay; but as some compensation Lord Monmouth left to the Right Honourable Nicholas Rigby the bust of that gentleman, which he had himself presented to his Lordship, and which, at his desire, had been placed in the vestibule at Coningsby Castle, from the amiable motive that after Lord Monmouth's decease Mr. Rigby might wish, perhaps, to present it to some other friend.

Lord Eskdale and Mr. Ormsby took care not to catch the eye of Mr. Rigby. As for Coningsby, he saw nobody. He maintained, during the extraordinary situation in which he was placed, a firm demeanour; but serene and

regulated as he appeared to the spectators, his nerves were really strung to a high pitch.

There was yet another codicil. It bore the date of June 1840, and was made at Brighton, immediately after the separation with Lady Monmouth. It was the sight of this instrument that sustained Rigby at this great emergency. He had a wild conviction that, after all, it must set all right. He felt assured that, as Lady Monmouth had already been disposed of, it must principally refer to the disinheritance of Coningsby, secured by Rigby's well-timed and malignant misrepresentations of what had occurred in Lancashire during the preceding summer. And then to whom could Lord Monmouth leave his money? However he might cut and carve up his fortunes, Rigby, and especially at a moment when he had so served him, must come in for a considerable slice.

His prescient mind was right. All the dispositions in favour of 'my grandson Harry Coningsby' were revoked; and he inherited from his grandfather only the interest of the sum of 10,000_l_ which had been originally bequeathed to him in his orphan boyhood. The executors had the power of investing the principal in any way they thought proper for his advancement in life, provided always it was not placed in 'the capital stock of any manufactory.'

Coningsby turned pale; he lost his abstracted look; he caught the eye of Rigby; he read the latent malice of that nevertheless anxious countenance. What passed through the mind and being of Coningsby was thought and sensation enough for a year; but it was as the flash that reveals a whole country, yet ceases to be ere one can say it lightens. There was a revelation to him of an inward power that should baffle these conventional calamities, a natural and sacred confidence in his youth and health, and knowledge and convictions. Even the recollection of Edith was not unaccompanied with some sustaining associations. At least the mightiest foe to their union was departed.

All this was the impression of an instant, simultaneous with the reading of the words of form with which the last testamentary disposition of the Marquess of Monmouth left the sum of 30,000_l_ to Armand Villebecque; and all the rest, residue, and remainder of his unentailed property, wheresoever and whatsoever it might be, amounting in value to nearly a million sterling, was given, devised, and bequeathed to Flora, commonly called Flora Villebecque, the step-child of the said Armand Villebecque, 'but who is my natural daughter by Marie Estelle Matteau, an actress at the Théâtre Français in the years 1811-15, by the name of Stella.'

CHAPTER III.

'This is a crash!' said Coningsby, with a grave rather than agitated countenance, to Sidonia, as his friend came up to greet him, without, however, any expression of condolence.

'This time next year you will not think so,' said Sidonia.

Coningsby shrugged his shoulders.

'The principal annoyance of this sort of miscarriage,' said Sidonia, 'is the condolence of the gentle world. I think we may now depart. I am going home to dine. Come, and discuss your position. For the present we will not speak of it.' So saying, Sidonia good-naturedly got Coningsby out of the room.

They walked together to Sidonia's house in Carlton Gardens, neither of them making the slightest allusion to the catastrophe; Sidonia inquiring where he had been, what he had been doing, since they last met, and himself conversing in his usual vein, though with a little more feeling in his manner than was his custom. When they had arrived there, Sidonia ordered their dinner instantly, and during the interval between the command and its appearance, he called Coningsby's attention to an old German painting he had just received, its brilliant colouring and quaint costumes.

'Eat, and an appetite will come,' said Sidonia, when he observed Coningsby somewhat reluctant. 'Take some of that Chablis: it will put you right; you will find it delicious.'

In this way some twenty minutes passed; their meal was over, and they were alone together.

'I have been thinking all this time of your position,' said Sidonia.

'A sorry one, I fear,' said Coningsby.

'I really cannot see that,' said his friend. 'You have experienced this morning a disappointment, but not a calamity. If you had lost your eye it would have been a calamity: no combination of circumstances could have

given you another. There are really no miseries except natural miseries; conventional misfortunes are mere illusions. What seems conventionally, in a limited view, a great misfortune, if subsequently viewed in its results, is often the happiest incident in one's life.'

'I hope the day may come when I may feel this.'

'Now is the moment when philosophy is of use; that is to say, now is the moment when you should clearly comprehend the circumstances which surround you. Holiday philosophy is mere idleness. You think, for example, that you have just experienced a great calamity, because you have lost the fortune on which you counted?'

'I must say I do.'

'I ask you again, which would you have rather lost, your grandfather's inheritance or your right leg?'

'Most certainly my inheritance,'

'Or your left arm?'

'Still the inheritance.'

'Would you have received the inheritance on condition that your front teeth should be knocked out?'

'No.'

'Would you have given up a year of your life for that fortune trebled?'

'Even at twenty-three I would have refused the terms.'

'Come, come, Coningsby, the calamity cannot be very great.'

'Why, you have put it in an ingenious point of view; and yet it is not so easy to convince a man, that he should be content who has lost everything.'

'You have a great many things at this moment that you separately prefer to the fortune that you have forfeited. How then can you be said to have lost everything?'

'What have I?' said Coningsby, despondingly.

'You have health, youth, good looks, great abilities, considerable knowledge, a fine courage, a lofty spirit, and no contemptible experience. With each of these qualities one might make a fortune; the combination ought to command the highest.'

'You console me,' said Coningsby, with a faint blush and a fainter smile.

'I teach you the truth. That is always solacing. I think you are a most fortunate young man; I should not have thought you more fortunate if you had been your grandfather's heir; perhaps less so. But I wish you to comprehend your position: if you understand it you will cease to lament.'

'But what should I do?'

'Bring your intelligence to bear on the right object. I make you no offers of fortune, because I know you would not accept them, and indeed I have no wish to see you a loungeur in life. If you had inherited a great patrimony, it is possible your natural character and previous culture might have saved you from its paralysing influence; but it is a question, even with you. Now you are free; that is to say, you are free, if you are not in debt. A man who has not seen the world, whose fancy is harassed with glittering images of pleasures he has never experienced, cannot live on 300_l_ per annum; but you can. You have nothing to haunt your thoughts, or disturb the abstraction of your studies. You have seen the most beautiful women; you have banqueted in palaces; you know what heroes, and wits, and statesmen are made of: and you can draw on your memory instead of your imagination for all those dazzling and interesting objects that make the inexperienced restless, and are the cause of what are called scrapes. But you can do nothing if you be in debt. You must be free. Before, therefore, we proceed, I must beg you to be frank on this head. If you have any absolute or contingent incumbrances, tell me of them without reserve, and permit me to clear them at once to any amount. You will sensibly oblige me in so doing: because I am interested in watching your career, and if the racer start with a clog my psychological observations will be imperfect.'

'You are, indeed, a friend; and had I debts I would ask you to pay them. I have nothing of the kind. My grandfather was so lavish in his allowance to me that I never got into difficulties. Besides, there are horses and things without end which I must sell, and money at Drummonds.'

'That will produce your outfit, whatever the course you adopt. I conceive there are two careers which deserve your consideration. In the first place

there is Diplomacy. If you decide upon that, I can assist you. There exist between me and the Minister such relations that I can at once secure you that first step which is so difficult to obtain. After that, much, if not all, depends on yourself. But I could advance you, provided you were capable. You should, at least, not languish for want of preferment. In an important post, I could throw in your way advantages which would soon permit you to control cabinets. Information commands the world. I doubt not your success, and for such a career, speedy. Let us assume it as a fact. Is it a result satisfactory? Suppose yourself in a dozen years a Plenipotentiary at a chief court, or at a critical post, with a red ribbon and the Privy Council in immediate perspective; and, after a lengthened career, a pension and a peerage. Would that satisfy you? You don't look excited. I am hardly surprised. In your position it would not satisfy me. A Diplomatist is, after all, a phantom. There is a want of nationality about his being. I always look upon Diplomatists as the Hebrews of politics; without country, political creeds, popular convictions, that strong reality of existence which pervades the career of an eminent citizen in a free and great country.'

'You read my thoughts,' said Coningsby. 'I should be sorry to sever myself from England.'

'There remains then the other, the greater, the nobler career,' said Sidonia, 'which in England may give you all, the Bar. I am absolutely persuaded that with the requisite qualifications, and with perseverance, success at the Bar is certain. It may be retarded or precipitated by circumstances, but cannot be ultimately affected. You have a right to count with your friends on no lack of opportunities when you are ripe for them. You appear to me to have all the qualities necessary for the Bar; and you may count on that perseverance which is indispensable, for the reason I have before mentioned, because it will be sustained by your experience.'

'I have resolved,' said Coningsby; 'I will try for the Great Seal.'

CHAPTER IV.

Alone in his chambers, no longer under the sustaining influence of Sidonia's converse and counsel, the shades of night descending and bearing gloom to the gloomy, all the excitement of his spirit evaporated, the

heart of Coningsby sank. All now depended on himself, and in that self he had no trust. Why should he succeed? Success was the most rare of results. Thousands fail; units triumph. And even success could only be conducted to him by the course of many years. His career, even if prosperous, was now to commence by the greatest sacrifice which the heart of man could be called upon to sustain. Upon the stern altar of his fortunes he must immolate his first and enduring love. Before, he had a perilous position to offer Edith; now he had none. The future might then have aided them; there was no combination which could improve his present. Under any circumstances he must, after all his thoughts and studies, commence a new novitiate, and before he could enter the arena must pass years of silent and obscure preparation. 'Twas very bitter. He looked up, his eye caught that drawing of the towers of Hellingsley which she had given him in the days of their happy hearts. That was all that was to remain of their loves. He was to bear it to the future scene of his labours, to remind him through revolving years of toil and routine, that he too had had his romance, had roamed in fair gardens, and whispered in willing ears the secrets of his passion. That drawing was to become the altar-piece of his life.

Coningsby passed an agitated night of broken sleep, waking often with a consciousness of having experienced some great misfortune, yet with an indefinite conception of its nature. He woke exhausted and dispirited. It was a gloomy day, a raw north-easter blowing up the cloisters of the Albany, in which the fog was lingering, the newspaper on his breakfast-table, full of rumoured particulars of his grandfather's will, which had of course been duly digested by all who knew him. What a contrast to St. Geneviève! To the bright, bracing morn of that merry Christmas! That radiant and cheerful scene, and those gracious and beaming personages, seemed another world and order of beings to the one he now inhabited, and the people with whom he must now commune. The Great Seal indeed! It was the wild excitement of despair, the frenzied hope that blends inevitably with absolute ruin, that could alone have inspired such a hallucination! His unstrung heart deserted him. His energies could rally no more. He gave orders that he was at home to no one; and in his morning gown and slippers, with his feet resting on the fireplace, the once high-souled and noble-hearted Coningsby delivered himself up to despair.

The day passed in a dark trance rather than a reverie. Nothing rose to his consciousness. He was like a particle of chaos; at the best, a glimmering entity of some shadowy Hades. Towards evening the wind changed, the fog dispersed, there came a clear starry night, brisk and bright. Coningsby roused himself, dressed, and wrapping his cloak around him, sallied forth. Once more in the mighty streets, surrounded by millions, his petty griefs

and personal fortunes assumed their proper position. Well had Sidonia taught him, view everything in its relation to the rest. 'Tis the secret of all wisdom. Here was the mightiest of modern cities; the rival even of the most celebrated of the ancient. Whether he inherited or forfeited fortunes, what was it to the passing throng? They would not share his splendour, or his luxury, or his comfort. But a word from his lip, a thought from his brain, expressed at the right time, at the right place, might turn their hearts, might influence their passions, might change their opinions, might affect their destiny. Nothing is great but the personal. As civilisation advances, the accidents of life become each day less important. The power of man, his greatness and his glory, depend on essential qualities. Brains every day become more precious than blood. You must give men new ideas, you must teach them new words, you must modify their manners, you must change their laws, you must root out prejudices, subvert convictions, if you wish to be great. Greatness no longer depends on rentals, the world is too rich; nor on pedigrees, the world is too knowing.

'The greatness of this city destroys my misery,' said Coningsby, 'and my genius shall conquer its greatness.'

This conviction of power in the midst of despair was a revelation of intrinsic strength. It is indeed the test of a creative spirit. From that moment all petty fears for an ordinary future quitted him. He felt that he must be prepared for great sacrifices, for infinite suffering; that there must devolve on him a bitter inheritance of obscurity, struggle, envy, and hatred, vulgar prejudice, base criticism, petty hostilities, but the dawn would break, and the hour arrive, when the welcome morning hymn of his success and his fame would sound and be re-echoed.

He returned to his rooms; calm, resolute. He slept the deep sleep of a man void of anxiety, that has neither hope nor fear to haunt his visions, but is prepared to rise on the morrow collected for the great human struggle.

And the morning came. Fresh, vigorous, not rash or precipitate, yet determined to lose no time in idle meditation, Coningsby already resolved at once to quit his present residence, was projecting a visit to some legal quarter, where he intended in future to reside, when his servant brought him a note. The handwriting was feminine. The note was from Flora. The contents were brief. She begged Mr. Coningsby, with great earnestness, to do her the honour and the kindness of calling on her at his earliest convenience, at the hotel in Brook Street where she now resided.

It was an interview which Coningsby would rather have avoided; yet it

seemed to him, after a moment's reflection, neither just, nor kind, nor manly, to refuse her request. Flora had not injured him. She was, after all, his kin. Was it for a moment to be supposed that he was envious of her lot? He replied, therefore, that in an hour he would wait upon her.

In an hour, then, two individuals are to be brought together whose first meeting was held under circumstances most strangely different. Then Coningsby was the patron, a generous and spontaneous one, of a being obscure, almost friendless, and sinking under bitter mortification. His favour could not be the less appreciated because he was the chosen relative of a powerful noble. That noble was no more; his vast inheritance had devolved on the disregarded, even despised actress, whose suffering emotions Coningsby had then soothed, and whose fortune had risen on the destruction of all his prospects, and the balk of all his aspirations.

Flora was alone when Coningsby was ushered into the room. The extreme delicacy of her appearance was increased by her deep mourning; and seated in a cushioned chair, from which she seemed to rise with an effort, she certainly presented little of the character of a fortunate and prosperous heiress.

'You are very good to come to me,' she said, faintly smiling.

Coningsby extended his hand to her affectionately, in which she placed her own, looking down much embarrassed.

'You have an agreeable situation here,' said Coningsby, trying to break the first awkwardness of their meeting.

'Yes; but I hope not to stop here long?'

'You are going abroad?'

'No; I hope never to leave England!'

There was a slight pause; and then Flora sighed and said,

'I wish to speak to you on a subject that gives me pain; yet of which I must speak. You think I have injured you?'

'I am sure,' said Coningsby, in a tone of great kindness, 'that you could injure no one.'

'I have robbed you of your inheritance.'

'It was not mine by any right, legal or moral. There were others who might have urged an equal claim to it; and there are many who will now think that you might have preferred a superior one.'

'You had enemies; I was not one. They sought to benefit themselves by injuring you. They have not benefited themselves; let them not say that they have at least injured you.'

'We will not care what they say,' said Coningsby; 'I can sustain my lot.'

'Would that I could mine!' said Flora. She sighed again with a downcast glance. Then looking up embarrassed and blushing deeply, she added, 'I wish to restore to you that fortune of which I have unconsciously and unwillingly deprived you.'

'The fortune is yours, dear Flora, by every right,' said Coningsby, much moved; 'and there is no one who wishes more fervently that it may contribute to your happiness than I do.'

'It is killing me,' said Flora, mournfully; then speaking with unusual animation, with a degree of excitement, she continued, 'I must tell what I feel. This fortune is yours. I am happy in the inheritance, if you generously receive it from me, because Providence has made me the means of baffling your enemies. I never thought to be so happy as I shall be if you will generously accept this fortune, always intended for you. I have lived then for a purpose; I have not lived in vain; I have returned to you some service, however humble, for all your goodness to me in my unhappiness.'

'You are, as I have ever thought you, the kindest and most tender-hearted of beings. But you misconceive our mutual positions, my gentle Flora. The custom of the world does not permit such acts to either of us as you contemplate. The fortune is yours. It is left you by one on whose affections you had the highest claim. I will not say that so large an inheritance does not bring with it an alarming responsibility; but you are not unequal to it. Have confidence in yourself. You have a good heart; you have good sense; you have a well-principled being. Your spirit will mount with your fortunes, and blend with them. You will be happy.'

'And you?'

'I shall soon learn to find content, if not happiness, from other sources,' said Coningsby; 'and mere riches, however vast, could at no time have secured my felicity.'

'But they may secure that which brings felicity,' said Flora, speaking in a choking voice, and not meeting the glance of Coningsby. 'You had some views in life which displeased him who has done all this; they may be, they must be, affected by this fatal caprice. Speak to me, for I cannot speak, dear Mr. Coningsby; do not let me believe that I, who would sacrifice my life for your happiness, am the cause of such calamities!'

'Whatever be my lot, I repeat I can sustain it,' said Coningsby, with a cheek of scarlet.

'Ah! he is angry with me,' exclaimed Flora; 'he is angry with me!' and the tears stole down her pale cheek.

'No, no, no! dear Flora; I have no other feelings to you than those of affection and respect,' and Coningsby, much agitated, drew his chair nearer to her, and took her hand. 'I am gratified by these kind wishes, though they are utterly impracticable; but they are the witnesses of your sweet disposition and your noble spirit. There never shall exist between us, under any circumstances, other feelings than those of kin and kindness.'

He rose as if to depart. When she saw that, she started, and seemed to summon all her energies.

'You are going,' she exclaimed, 'and I have said nothing, I have said nothing; and I shall never see you again. Let me tell you what I mean. This fortune is yours; it must be yours. It is an arrow in my heart. Do not think I am speaking from a momentary impulse. I know myself. I have lived so much alone, I have had so little to deceive or to delude me, that I know myself. If you will not let me do justice you declare my doom. I cannot live if my existence is the cause of all your prospects being blasted, and the sweetest dreams of your life being defeated. When I die, these riches will be yours; that you cannot prevent. Refuse my present offer, and you seal the fate of that unhappy Flora whose fragile life has hung for years on the memory of your kindness.'

'You must not say these words, dear Flora; you must not indulge in these gloomy feelings. You must live, and you must live happily. You have every charm and virtue which should secure happiness. The duties and the affections of existence will fall to your lot. It is one that will always interest me, for I shall ever be your friend. You have conferred on me one of the most delightful of feelings, gratitude, and for that I bless you. I will soon see you again.' Mournfully he bade her farewell.

CHAPTER V.

About a week after this interview with Flora, as Coningsby one morning was about to sally forth from the Albany to visit some chambers in the Temple, to which his notice had been attracted, there was a loud ring, a bustle in the hall, and Henry Sydney and Buckhurst were ushered in.

There never was such a cordial meeting; and yet the faces of his friends were serious. The truth is, the paragraphs in the newspapers had circulated in the country, they had written to Coningsby, and after a brief delay he had confirmed their worst apprehensions. Immediately they came up to town. Henry Sydney, a younger son, could offer little but sympathy, but he declared it was his intention also to study for the bar, so that they should not be divided. Buckhurst, after many embraces and some ordinary talk, took Coningsby aside, and said, 'My dear fellow, I have no objection to Henry Sydney hearing everything I say, but still these are subjects which men like to be discussed in private. Of course I expect you to share my fortune. There is enough for both. We will have an exact division.'

There was something in Buckhurst's fervent resolution very lovable and a little humorous, just enough to put one in good temper with human nature and life. If there were any fellow's fortune in the world that Coningsby would share, Buckhurst's would have had the preference; but while he pressed his hand, and with a glance in which a tear and a smile seemed to contend for mastery, he gently indicated why such arrangements were, with our present manners, impossible.

'I see,' said Buckhurst, after a moment's thought, 'I quite agree with you. The thing cannot be done; and, to tell you the truth, a fortune is a bore. What I vote that we three do at once is, to take plenty of ready-money, and enter the Austrian service. By Jove! it is the only thing to do.'

'There is something in that,' said Coningsby. 'In the meantime, suppose you two fellows walk with me to the Temple, for I have an appointment to look at some chambers.'

It was a fine day, and it was by no means a gloomy walk. Though the two

friends had arrived full of indignation against Lord Monmouth, and miserable about their companion, once more in his society, and finding little difference in his carriage, they assumed unconsciously their habitual tone. As for Buckhurst, he was delighted with the Temple, which he visited for the first time. The name enchanted him. The tombs in the church convinced him that the Crusades were the only career. He would have himself become a law student if he might have prosecuted his studies in chain armour. The calmer Henry Sydney was consoled for the misfortunes of Coningsby by a fanciful project himself to pass a portion of his life amid these halls and courts, gardens and terraces, that maintain in the heart of a great city in the nineteenth century, so much of the grave romance and picturesque decorum of our past manners. Henry Sydney was sanguine; he was reconciled to the disinheritance of Coningsby by the conviction that it was a providential dispensation to make him a Lord Chancellor.

These faithful friends remained in town with Coningsby until he was established in Paper Buildings, and had become a pupil of a celebrated special pleader. They would have remained longer had not he himself suggested that it was better that they should part. It seemed a terrible catastrophe after all the visions of their boyish days, their college dreams, and their dazzling adventures in the world.

'And this is the end of Coningsby, the brilliant Coningsby, that we all loved, that was to be our leader!' said Buckhurst to Lord Henry as they quitted him. 'Well, come what may, life has lost something of its bloom.'

'The great thing now,' said Lord Henry, 'is to keep up the chain of our friendship. We must write to him very often, and contrive to be frequently together. It is dreadful to think that in the ways of life our hearts may become estranged. I never felt more wretched than I do at this moment, and yet I have faith that we shall not lose him.'

'Amen!' said Buckhurst; 'but I feel my plan about the Austrian service was, after all, the only thing. The Continent offers a career. He might have been prime minister; several strangers have been; and as for war, look at Brown and Laudohn, and half a hundred others. I had a much better chance of being a field-marshal than he has of being a Lord Chancellor.'

'I feel quite convinced that Coningsby will be Lord Chancellor,' said Henry Sydney, gravely.

This change of life for Coningsby was a great social revolution. It was sudden and complete. Within a month after the death of his grandfather his name had been erased from all his fashionable clubs, and his horses and

carriages sold, and he had become a student of the Temple. He entirely devoted himself to his new pursuit. His being was completely absorbed in it. There was nothing to haunt his mind; no unexperienced scene or sensation of life to distract his intelligence. One sacred thought alone indeed there remained, shrined in the innermost sanctuary of his heart and consciousness. But it was a tradition, no longer a hope. The moment that he had fairly recovered from the first shock of his grandfather's will; had clearly ascertained the consequences to himself, and had resolved on the course to pursue; he had communicated unreservedly with Oswald Millbank, and had renounced those pretensions to the hand of his sister which it ill became the destitute to prefer.

His letter was answered in person. Millbank met Henry Sydney and Buckhurst at the chambers of Coningsby. Once more they were all four together; but under what different circumstances, and with what different prospects from those which attended their separation at Eton! Alone with Coningsby, Millbank spoke to him things which letters could not convey. He bore to him all the sympathy and devotion of Edith; but they would not conceal from themselves that, at this moment, and in the present state of affairs, all was hopeless. In no way did Coningsby ever permit himself to intimate to Oswald the cause of his disinheritance. He was, of course, silent on it to his other friends; as any communication of the kind must have touched on a subject that was consecrated in his inmost soul.

CHAPTER VI.

The state of political parties in England in the spring of 1841 offered a most remarkable contrast to their condition at the period commemorated in the first chapter of this work. The banners of the Conservative camp at this moment lowered on the Whig forces, as the gathering host of the Norman invader frowned on the coast of Sussex. The Whigs were not yet conquered, but they were doomed; and they themselves knew it. The mistake which was made by the Conservative leaders in not retaining office in 1839; and, whether we consider their conduct in a national and constitutional light, or as a mere question of political tactics and party prudence, it was unquestionably a great mistake; had infused into the corps of Whig authority a kind of galvanic action, which only the superficial could mistake for vitality. Even to form a basis for their future operations, after the conjuncture of '39, the Whigs were obliged to make a fresh inroad on the revenue, the daily increasing debility of which

was now arresting attention and exciting public alarm. It was clear that the catastrophe of the government would be financial.

Under all the circumstances of the case, the conduct of the Whig Cabinet, in their final propositions, cannot be described as deficient either in boldness or prudence. The policy which they recommended was in itself a sagacious and spirited policy; but they erred in supposing that, at the period it was brought forward, any measure promoted by the Whigs could have obtained general favour in the country. The Whigs were known to be feeble; they were looked upon as tricksters. The country knew they were opposed by a powerful party; and though there certainly never was any authority for the belief, the country did believe that that powerful party were influenced by great principles; had in their view a definite and national policy; and would secure to England, instead of a feeble administration and fluctuating opinions, energy and a creed.

The future effect of the Whig propositions of '41 will not be detrimental to that party, even if in the interval they be appropriated piecemeal, as will probably be the case, by their Conservative successors. But for the moment, and in the plight in which the Whig party found themselves, it was impossible to have devised measures more conducive to their precipitate fall. Great interests were menaced by a weak government. The consequence was inevitable. Tadpole and Taper saw it in a moment. They snuffed the factious air, and felt the coming storm. Notwithstanding the extreme congeniality of these worthies, there was a little latent jealousy between them. Tadpole worshipped Registration: Taper, adored a Cry. Tadpole always maintained that it was the winnowing of the electoral lists that could alone gain the day; Taper, on the contrary, faithful to ancient traditions, was ever of opinion that the game must ultimately be won by popular clamour. It always seemed so impossible that the Conservative party could ever be popular; the extreme graciousness and personal popularity of the leaders not being sufficiently apparent to be esteemed an adequate set-off against the inveterate odium that attached to their opinions; that the Tadpole philosophy was the favoured tenet in high places; and Taper had had his knuckles well rapped more than once for manoeuvring too actively against the New Poor-law, and for hiring several link-boys to bawl a much-wronged lady's name in the Park when the Court prorogued Parliament.

And now, after all, in 1841, it seemed that Taper was right. There was a great clamour in every quarter, and the clamour was against the Whigs and in favour of Conservative principles. What Canadian timber-merchants meant by Conservative principles, it is not difficult to conjecture; or West Indian planters. It was tolerably clear on the hustings what squires and

farmers, and their followers, meant by Conservative principles. What they mean by Conservative principles now is another question: and whether Conservative principles mean something higher than a perpetuation of fiscal arrangements, some of them impolitic, none of them important. But no matter what different bodies of men understood by the cry in which they all joined, the Cry existed. Taper beat Tadpole; and the great Conservative party beat the shattered and exhausted Whigs.

Notwithstanding the abstraction of his legal studies, Coningsby could not be altogether insensible to the political crisis. In the political world of course he never mixed, but the friends of his boyhood were deeply interested in affairs, and they lost no opportunity which he would permit them, of cultivating his society. Their occasional fellowship, a visit now and then to Sidonia, and a call sometimes on Flora, who lived at Richmond, comprised his social relations. His general acquaintance did not desert him, but he was out of sight, and did not wish to be remembered. Mr. Ormsby asked him to dinner, and occasionally mourned over his fate in the bow window of White's; while Lord Eskdale even went to see him in the Temple, was interested in his progress, and said, with an encouraging look, that, when he was called to the bar, all his friends must join and get up the steam. Coningsby had once met Mr. Rigby, who was walking with the Duke of Agincourt, which was probably the reason he could not notice a lawyer. Mr. Rigby cut Coningsby.

Lord Eskdale had obtained from Villebecque accurate details as to the cause of Coningsby being disinherited. Our hero, if one in such fallen fortunes may still be described as a hero, had mentioned to Lord Eskdale his sorrow that his grandfather had died in anger with him; but Lord Eskdale, without dwelling on the subject, had assured him that he had reason to believe that if Lord Monmouth had lived, affairs would have been different. He had altered the disposition of his property at a moment of great and general irritation and excitement; and had been too indolent, perhaps really too indisposed, which he was unwilling ever to acknowledge, to recur to a calmer and more equitable settlement. Lord Eskdale had been more frank with Sidonia, and had told him all about the refusal to become a candidate for Darford against Mr. Millbank; the communication of Rigby to Lord Monmouth, as to the presence of Oswald Millbank at the castle, and the love of Coningsby for his sister; all these details, furnished by Villebecque to Lord Eskdale, had been truly transferred by that nobleman to his co-executor; and Sidonia, when he had sufficiently digested them, had made Lady Wallinger acquainted with the whole history.

The dissolution of the Whig Parliament by the Whigs, the project of which had reached Lord Monmouth a year before, and yet in which nobody believed

to the last moment, at length took place. All the world was dispersed in the heart of the season, and our solitary student of the Temple, in his lonely chambers, notwithstanding all his efforts, found his eye rather wander over the pages of Tidd and Chitty as he remembered that the great event to which he had so looked forward was now occurring, and he, after all, was no actor in the mighty drama. It was to have been the epoch of his life; when he was to have found himself in that proud position for which all the studies, and meditations, and higher impulses of his nature had been preparing him. It was a keen trial of a man. Every one of his friends and old companions were candidates, and with sanguine prospects. Lord Henry was certain for a division of his county; Buckhurst harangued a large agricultural borough in his vicinity; Eustace Lyle and Vere stood in coalition for a Yorkshire town; and Oswald Millbank solicited the suffrages of an important manufacturing constituency. They sent their addresses to Coningsby. He was deeply interested as he traced in them the influence of his own mind; often recognised the very expressions to which he had habituated them. Amid the confusion of a general election, no unimpassioned critic had time to canvass the language of an address to an isolated constituency; yet an intelligent speculator on the movements of political parties might have detected in these public declarations some intimation of new views, and of a tone of political feeling that has unfortunately been too long absent from the public life of this country.

It was the end of a sultry July day, the last ray of the sun shooting down Pall Mall sweltering with dust; there was a crowd round the doors of the Carlton and the Reform Clubs, and every now and then an express arrived with the agitating bulletin of a fresh defeat or a new triumph. Coningsby was walking up Pall Mall. He was going to dine at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, the only club on whose list he had retained his name, that he might occasionally have the pleasure of meeting an Eton or Cambridge friend without the annoyance of encountering any of his former fashionable acquaintances. He lighted in his walk on Mr. Tadpole and Mr. Taper, both of whom he knew. The latter did not notice him, but Mr. Tadpole, more good-natured, bestowed on him a rough nod, not unmarked by a slight expression of coarse pity.

Coningsby ordered his dinner, and then took up the evening papers, where he learnt the return of Vere and Lyle; and read a speech of Buckhurst denouncing the Venetian Constitution, to the amazement of several thousand persons, apparently not a little terrified by this unknown danger, now first introduced to their notice. Being true Englishmen, they were all against Buckhurst's opponent, who was of the Venetian party, and who ended by calling out Buckhurst for his personalities.

Coningsby had dined, and was reading in the library, when a waiter brought up a third edition of the *Sun*, with electioneering bulletins from the manufacturing districts to the very latest hour. Some large letters which expressed the name of Darlford caught his eye. There seemed great excitement in that borough; strange proceedings had happened. The column was headed, 'Extraordinary Affair! Withdrawal of the Liberal Candidate! Two Tory Candidates in the field!!!'

His eye glanced over an animated speech of Mr. Millbank, his countenance changed, his heart palpitated. Mr. Millbank had resigned the representation of the town, but not from weakness; his avocations demanded his presence; he had been requested to let his son supply his place, but his son was otherwise provided for; he should always take a deep interest in the town and trade of Darlford; he hoped that the link between the borough and Hellingsley would be ever cherished; loud cheering; he wished in parting from them to take a step which should conciliate all parties, put an end to local heats and factious contentions, and secure the town an able and worthy representative. For these reasons he begged to propose to them a gentleman who bore a name which many of them greatly honoured; for himself, he knew the individual, and it was his firm opinion that whether they considered his talents, his character, or the ancient connection of his family with the district, he could not propose a candidate more worthy of their confidence than HARRY CONINGSBY, ESQ.

This proposition was received with that wild enthusiasm which occasionally bursts out in the most civilised communities. The contest between Millbank and Rigby was equally balanced, neither party was over-confident. The Conservatives were not particularly zealous in behalf of their champion; there was no Marquess of Monmouth and no Coningsby Castle now to back him; he was fighting on his own resources, and he was a beaten horse. The Liberals did not like the prospect of a defeat, and dreaded the mortification of Rigby's triumph. The Moderate men, who thought more of local than political circumstances, liked the name of Coningsby. Mr. Millbank had dexterously prepared his leading supporters for the substitution. Some traits of the character and conduct of Coningsby had been cleverly circulated. Thus there was a combination of many favourable causes in his favour. In half an hour's time his image was stamped on the brain of every inhabitant of the borough as an interesting and accomplished youth, who had been wronged, and who deserved to be rewarded. It was whispered that Rigby was his enemy. Magog Wrath and his mob offered Mr. Millbank's committee to throw Mr. Rigby into the river, or to burn down his hotel, in case he was prudent enough not to show. Mr. Rigby determined to fight to the last. All his hopes were now staked on the successful result of this contest. It were impossible if he were returned

that his friends could refuse him high office. The whole of Lord Monmouth's reduced legacy was devoted to this end. The third edition of the *Sun* left Mr. Rigby in vain attempting to address an infuriated populace.

Here was a revolution in the fortunes of our forlorn Coningsby! When his grandfather first sent for him to Monmouth House, his destiny was not verging on greater vicissitudes. He rose from his seat, and was surprised that all the silent gentlemen who were about him did not mark his agitation. Not an individual there that he knew. It was now an hour to midnight, and to-morrow the almost unconscious candidate was to go to the poll. In a tumult of suppressed emotion, Coningsby returned to his chambers. He found a letter in his box from Oswald Millbank, who had been twice at the Temple. Oswald had been returned without a contest, and had reached Darford in time to hear Coningsby nominated. He set off instantly to London, and left at his friend's chambers a rapid narrative of what had happened, with information that he should call on him again on the morrow at nine o'clock, when they were to repair together immediately to Darford in time for Coningsby to be chaired, for no one entertained a doubt of his triumph.

Coningsby did not sleep a wink that night, and yet when he rose early felt fresh enough for any exploit, however difficult or hazardous. He felt as an Egyptian does when the Nile rises after its elevation had been despaired of. At the very lowest ebb of his fortunes, an event had occurred which seemed to restore all. He dared not contemplate the ultimate result of all these wonderful changes. Enough for him, that when all seemed dark, he was about to be returned to Parliament by the father of Edith, and his vanquished rival who was to bite the dust before him was the author of all his misfortunes. Love, Vengeance, Justice, the glorious pride of having acted rightly, the triumphant sense of complete and absolute success, here were chaotic materials from which order was at length evolved; and all subsided in an overwhelming feeling of gratitude to that Providence that had so signally protected him.

There was a knock at the door. It was Oswald. They embraced. It seemed that Oswald was as excited as Coningsby. His eye sparkled, his manner was energetic.

'We must talk it all over during our journey. We have not a minute to spare.'

During that journey Coningsby learned something of the course of affairs which gradually had brought about so singular a revolution in his favour.

We mentioned that Sidonia had acquired a thorough knowledge of the circumstances which had occasioned and attended the disinheritance of Coningsby. These he had told to Lady Wallinger, first by letter, afterwards in more detail on her arrival in London. Lady Wallinger had conferred with her husband. She was not surprised at the goodness of Coningsby, and she sympathised with all his calamities. He had ever been the favourite of her judgment, and her romance had always consisted in blending his destinies with those of her beloved Edith. Sir Joseph was a judicious man, who never cared to commit himself; a little selfish, but good, just, and honourable, with some impulses, only a little afraid of them; but then his wife stepped in like an angel, and gave them the right direction. They were both absolutely impressed with Coningsby's admirable conduct, and Lady Wallinger was determined that her husband should express to others the convictions which he acknowledged in unison with herself. Sir Joseph spoke to Mr. Millbank, who stared; but Sir Joseph spoke feebly. Lady Wallinger conveyed all this intelligence, and all her impressions, to Oswald and Edith. The younger Millbank talked with his father, who, making no admissions, listened with interest, inveighed against Lord Monmouth, and condemned his will.

After some time, Mr. Millbank made inquiries about Coningsby, took an interest in his career, and, like Lord Eskdale, declared that when he was called to the bar, his friends would have an opportunity to evince their sincerity. Affairs remained in this state, until Oswald thought that circumstances were sufficiently ripe to urge his father on the subject. The position which Oswald had assumed at Millbank had necessarily made him acquainted with the affairs and fortune of his father. When he computed the vast wealth which he knew was at his parent's command, and recalled Coningsby in his humble chambers, toiling after all his noble efforts without any results, and his sister pining in a provincial solitude, Oswald began to curse wealth, and to ask himself what was the use of all their marvellous industry and supernatural skill? He addressed his father with that irresistible frankness which a strong faith can alone inspire. What are the objects of wealth, if not to bless those who possess our hearts? The only daughter, the friend to whom the only son was indebted for his life, here are two beings surely whom one would care to bless, and both are unhappy. Mr. Millbank listened without prejudice, for he was already convinced. But he felt some interest in the present conduct of Coningsby. A Coningsby working for his bread was a novel incident for him. He wished to be assured of its authenticity. He was resolved to convince himself of the fact. And perhaps he would have gone on yet for a little time, and watched the progress of the experiment, already interested and delighted by what had reached him, had not the dissolution brought affairs to a crisis. The misery of Oswald at the position of Coningsby, the silent

sadness of Edith, his own conviction, which assured him that he could do nothing wiser or better than take this young man to his heart, so ordained it that Mr. Millbank, who was after all the creature of impulse, decided suddenly, and decided rightly. Never making a single admission to all the representations of his son, Mr. Millbank in a moment did all that his son could have dared to desire.

This is a very imperfect and crude intimation of what had occurred at Millbank and Hellingsley; yet it conveys a faint sketch of the enchanting intelligence that Oswald conveyed to Coningsby during their rapid travel. When they arrived at Birmingham, they found a messenger and a despatch, informing Coningsby, that at mid-day, at Darford, he was at the head of the poll by an overwhelming majority, and that Mr. Rigby had resigned. He was, however, requested to remain at Birmingham, as they did not wish him to enter Darford, except to be chaired, so he was to arrive there in the morning. At Birmingham, therefore, they remained.

There was Oswald's election to talk of as well as Coningsby's. They had hardly had time for this. Now they were both Members of Parliament. Men must have been at school together, to enjoy the real fun of meeting thus, and realising boyish dreams. Often, years ago, they had talked of these things, and assumed these results; but those were words and dreams, these were positive facts; after some doubts and struggles, in the freshness of their youth, Oswald Millbank and Harry Coningsby were members of the British Parliament; public characters, responsible agents, with a career.

This afternoon, at Birmingham, was as happy an afternoon as usually falls to the lot of man. Both of these companions were labouring under that degree of excitement which is necessary to felicity. They had enough to talk about. Edith was no longer a forbidden or a sorrowful subject. There was rapture in their again meeting under such circumstances. Then there were their friends; that dear Buckhurst, who had just been called out for styling his opponent a Venetian, and all their companions of early days. What a sudden and marvellous change in all their destinies! Life was a pantomime; the wand was waved, and it seemed that the schoolfellows had of a sudden become elements of power, springs of the great machine.

A train arrived; restless they sallied forth, to seek diversion in the dispersion of the passengers. Coningsby and Millbank, with that glance, a little inquisitive, even impertinent, if we must confess it, with which one greets a stranger when he emerges from a public conveyance, were lounging on the platform. The train arrived; stopped; the doors were thrown open, and from one of them emerged Mr. Rigby! Coningsby, who had dined, was greatly tempted to take off his hat and make him a bow, but he

refrained. Their eyes met. Rigby was dead beat. He was evidently used up; a man without a resource; the sight of Coningsby his last blow; he had met his fate.

'My dear fellow,' said Coningsby, 'I remember I wanted you to dine with my grandfather at Montem, and that fellow would not ask you. Such is life!'

About eleven o'clock the next morning they arrived at the Darlford station. Here they were met by an anxious deputation, who received Coningsby as if he were a prophet, and ushered him into a car covered with satin and blue ribbons, and drawn by six beautiful grey horses, caparisoned in his colours, and ridden by postilions, whose very whips were blue and white. Triumphant music sounded; banners waved; the multitude were marshalled; the Freemasons, at the first opportunity, fell into the procession; the Odd Fellows joined it at the nearest corner. Preceded and followed by thousands, with colours flying, trumpets sounding, and endless huzzas, flags and handkerchiefs waving from every window, and every balcony filled with dames and maidens bedecked with his colours, Coningsby was borne through enthusiastic Darlford like Paulus Emilius returning from Macedon. Uncovered, still in deep mourning, his fine figure, and graceful bearing, and his intelligent brow, at once won every female heart.

The singularity was, that all were of the same opinion: everybody cheered him, every house was adorned with his colours. His triumphal return was no party question. Magog Wrath and Bully Bluck walked together like lambs at the head of his procession.

The car stopped before the principal hotel in the High Street. It was Mr. Millbank's committee. The broad street was so crowded, that, as every one declared, you might have walked on the heads of the people. Every window was full; the very roofs were peopled. The car stopped, and the populace gave three cheers for Mr. Millbank. Their late member, surrounded by his friends, stood in the balcony, which was fitted up with Coningsby's colours, and bore his name on the hangings in gigantic letters formed of dahlias. The flashing and inquiring eye of Coningsby caught the form of Edith, who was leaning on her father's arm.

The hustings were opposite the hotel, and here, after a while, Coningsby was carried, and, stepping from his car, took up his post to address, for the first time, a public assembly. Anxious as the people were to hear him, it was long before their enthusiasm could subside into silence. At length that silence was deep and absolute. He spoke; his powerful and rich tones reached every ear. In five minutes' time every one looked at his neighbour, and without speaking they agreed that there never was anything

like this heard in Darlford before.

He addressed them for a considerable time, for he had a great deal to say; not only to express his gratitude for the unprecedented manner in which he had become their representative, and for the spirit in which they had greeted him, but he had to offer them no niggard exposition of the views and opinions of the member whom they had so confidently chosen, without even a formal declaration of his sentiments.

He did this with so much clearness, and in a manner so pointed and popular, that the deep attention of the multitude never wavered. His lively illustrations kept them often in continued merriment. But when, towards his close, he drew some picture of what he hoped might be the character of his future and lasting connection with the town, the vast throng was singularly affected. There were a great many present at that moment who, though they had never seen Coningsby before, would willingly have then died for him. Coningsby had touched their hearts, for he had spoken from his own. His spirit had entirely magnetised them. Darlford believed in Coningsby: and a very good creed.

And now Coningsby was conducted to the opposite hotel. He walked through the crowd. The progress was slow, as every one wished to shake hands with him. His friends, however, at last safely landed him. He sprang up the stairs; he was met by Mr. Millbank, who welcomed him with the greatest warmth, and offered his hearty congratulations.

'It is to you, dear sir, that I am indebted for all this,' said Coningsby.

'No,' said Mr. Millbank, 'it is to your own high principles, great talents, and good heart.'

After he had been presented by the late member to the principal personages in the borough, Mr. Millbank said,

'I think we must now give Mr. Coningsby a little rest. Come with me,' he added, 'here is some one who will be very glad to see you.'

Speaking thus, he led our hero a little away, and placing his arm in Coningsby's with great affection opened the door of an apartment. There was Edith, radiant with loveliness and beaming with love. Their agitated hearts told at a glance the tumult of their joy. The father joined their hands, and blessed them with words of tenderness.

CHAPTER VII.

The marriage of Coningsby and Edith took place early in the autumn. It was solemnised at Millbank, and they passed their first moon at Hellingsley, which place was in future to be the residence of the member for Darford. The estate was to devolve to Coningsby after the death of Mr. Millbank, who in the meantime made arrangements which permitted the newly-married couple to reside at the Hall in a manner becoming its occupants. All these settlements, as Mr. Millbank assured Coningsby, were effected not only with the sanction, but at the express instance, of his son.

An event, however, occurred not very long after the marriage of Coningsby, which rendered this generous conduct of his father-in-law no longer necessary to his fortunes, though he never forgot its exercise. The gentle and unhappy daughter of Lord Monmouth quitted a scene with which her spirit had never greatly sympathised. Perhaps she might have lingered in life for yet a little while, had it not been for that fatal inheritance which disturbed her peace and embittered her days, haunting her heart with the recollection that she had been the unconscious instrument of injuring the only being whom she loved, and embarrassing and encumbering her with duties foreign to her experience and her nature. The marriage of Coningsby had greatly affected her, and from that day she seemed gradually to decline. She died towards the end of the autumn, and, subject to an ample annuity to Villebecque, she bequeathed the whole of her fortune to the husband of Edith. Gratifying as it was to him to present such an inheritance to his wife, it was not without a pang that he received the intelligence of the death of Flora. Edith sympathised in his affectionate feelings, and they raised a monument to her memory in the gardens of Hellingsley.

Coningsby passed his next Christmas in his own hall with his beautiful and gifted wife by his side, and surrounded by the friends of his heart and his youth.

They stand now on the threshold of public life. They are in the leash, but in a moment they will be slipped. What will be their fate? Will they maintain in august assemblies and high places the great truths which, in study and in solitude, they have embraced? Or will their courage exhaust itself in the struggle, their enthusiasm evaporate before hollow-hearted ridicule, their generous impulses yield with a vulgar catastrophe to the tawdry temptations of a low ambition? Will their skilled intelligence

subside into being the adroit tool of a corrupt party? Will Vanity confound their fortunes, or Jealousy wither their sympathies? Or will they remain brave, single, and true; refuse to bow before shadows and worship phrases; sensible of the greatness of their position, recognise the greatness of their duties; denounce to a perplexed and disheartened world the frigid theories of a generalising age that have destroyed the individuality of man, and restore the happiness of their country by believing in their own energies, and daring to be great?

A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS

By HENRY D. THOREAU,

AUTHOR OF "WALDEN," ETC.

[page]

Where'er thou sail'st who sailed with me,
Though now thou climbest loftier mounts,
And fairer rivers dost ascend,
Be thou my Muse, my Brother--.

[page]

I am bound, I am bound, for a distant shore,
By a lonely isle, by a far Azore,
There it is, there it is, the treasure I seek,
On the barren sands of a desolate creek.

[page]

I sailed up a river with a pleasant wind,

New lands, new people, and new thoughts to find;
Many fair reaches and headlands appeared,
And many dangers were there to be feared;
But when I remember where I have been,
And the fair landscapes that I have seen,
^Thou^ seemest the only permanent shore,
The cape never rounded, nor wandered o'er.

[page]

Fluminaque obliquis cinxit declivia ripis;
Quae, diversa locis, partim sorbentur ab ipsa;
In mare perveniunt partim, campoque recepta
Liberioris aquae, pro ripis litora pulsant.

^Ovid^, Met. I. 39

He confined the rivers within their sloping banks,
Which in different places are part absorbed by the earth,
Part reach the sea, and being received within the plain
Of its freer waters, beat the shore for banks.

[page]

CONCORD RIVER.

"Beneath low hills, in the broad interval
Through which at will our Indian rivulet
Winds mindful still of sannup and of squaw,
Whose pipe and arrow oft the plough unburies,
Here, in pine houses, built of new-fallen trees,
Supplanters of the tribe, the farmers dwell."

^Emerson^.

The Musketaquid, or Grass-ground River, though probably as old as the Nile or Euphrates, did not begin to have a place in civilized history, until the fame of its grassy meadows and its fish

attracted settlers out of England in 1635, when it received the other but kindred name of ^Concord^ from the first plantation on its banks, which appears to have been commenced in a spirit of peace and harmony. It will be Grass-ground River as long as grass grows and water runs here; it will be Concord River only while men lead peaceable lives on its banks. To an extinct race it was grass-ground, where they hunted and fished, and it is still perennial grass-ground to Concord farmers, who own the Great Meadows, and get the hay from year to year. "One branch of it," according to the historian of Concord, for I love to quote so good authority, "rises in the south part of Hopkinton, and another from a pond and a large cedar-swamp in Westborough," and flowing between Hopkinton and Southborough, through Framingham, and between Sudbury and Wayland, where it is sometimes called Sudbury River, it enters Concord at the south part of the town, and after receiving the North or Assabeth River, which has its source a little farther to the north and west, goes out at the northeast angle, and flowing between Bedford and Carlisle, and through Billerica, empties into the Merrimack at Lowell. In Concord it is, in summer, from four to fifteen feet deep, and from one hundred to three hundred feet wide, but in the spring freshets, when it overflows its banks, it is in some places nearly a mile wide. Between Sudbury and Wayland the meadows acquire their greatest breadth, and when covered with water, they form a handsome chain of shallow vernal lakes, resorted to by numerous gulls and ducks. Just above Sherman's Bridge, between these towns, is the largest expanse, and when the wind blows freshly in a raw March day, heaving up the surface into dark and sober billows or regular swells, skirted as it is in the distance with alder-swamps and smoke-like maples, it looks like a smaller Lake Huron, and is very pleasant and exciting for a landsman to row or sail over. The farm-houses along the Sudbury shore, which rises gently to a considerable height, command fine water prospects at this season. The shore is more flat on the Wayland side, and this town is the greatest loser by the flood. Its farmers tell me that thousands of acres are flooded now, since the dams have been erected, where they remember to have seen the white honeysuckle or clover growing once, and they could go dry with shoes only in summer. Now there is nothing but blue-joint and sedge and cut-grass there, standing in water all the year round. For a long time, they made the most of the driest season to get their hay, working sometimes till nine o'clock at night, sedulously paring with their scythes in the twilight round the hummocks left by the ice; but now it is not worth the getting

when they can come at it, and they look sadly round to their wood-lots and upland as a last resource.

It is worth the while to make a voyage up this stream, if you go no farther than Sudbury, only to see how much country there is in the rear of us; great hills, and a hundred brooks, and farm-houses, and barns, and haystacks, you never saw before, and men everywhere, Sudbury, that is Southborough men, and Wayland, and Nine-Acre-Corner men, and Bound Rock, where four towns bound on a rock in the river, Lincoln, Wayland, Sudbury, Concord. Many waves are there agitated by the wind, keeping nature fresh, the spray blowing in your face, reeds and rushes waving; ducks by the hundred, all uneasy in the surf, in the raw wind, just ready to rise, and now going off with a clatter and a whistling like riggers straight for Labrador, flying against the stiff gale with reefed wings, or else circling round first, with all their paddles briskly moving, just over the surf, to reconnoitre you before they leave these parts; gulls wheeling overhead, muskrats swimming for dear life, wet and cold, with no fire to warm them by that you know of; their labored homes rising here and there like haystacks; and countless mice and moles and winged titmice along the sunny windy shore; cranberries tossed on the waves and heaving up on the beach, their little red skiffs beating about among the alders;--such healthy natural tumult as proves the last day is not yet at hand. And there stand all around the alders, and birches, and oaks, and maples full of glee and sap, holding in their buds until the waters subside. You shall perhaps run aground on Cranberry Island, only some spires of last year's pipe-grass above water, to show where the danger is, and get as good a freezing there as anywhere on the Northwest Coast. I never voyaged so far in all my life. You shall see men you never heard of before, whose names you don't know, going away down through the meadows with long ducking-guns, with water-tight boots wading through the fowl-meadow grass, on bleak, wintry, distant shores, with guns at half-cock, and they shall see teal, blue-winged, green-winged, shelldrakes, whistlers, black ducks, ospreys, and many other wild and noble sights before night, such as they who sit in parlors never dream of. You shall see rude and sturdy, experienced and wise men, keeping their castles, or teaming up their summer's wood, or chopping alone in the woods, men fuller of talk and rare adventure in the sun and wind and rain, than a chestnut is of meat; who were out not only in '75 and 1812, but have been out every day of their lives; greater men than Homer, or Chaucer, or Shakespeare, only they never got time to say so;

they never took to the way of writing. Look at their fields, and imagine what they might write, if ever they should put pen to paper. Or what have they not written on the face of the earth already, clearing, and burning, and scratching, and harrowing, and ploughing, and subsoiling, in and in, and out and out, and over and over, again and again, erasing what they had already written for want of parchment.

As yesterday and the historical ages are past, as the work of to-day is present, so some flitting perspectives, and demi-experiences of the life that is in nature are in time veritably future, or rather outside to time, perennial, young, divine, in the wind and rain which never die.

The respectable folks,--
Where dwell they?
They whisper in the oaks,
And they sigh in the hay;
Summer and winter, night and day,
Out on the meadow, there dwell they.
They never die,
Nor snivel, nor cry,
Nor ask our pity
With a wet eye.
A sound estate they ever mend
To every asker readily lend;
To the ocean wealth,
To the meadow health,
To Time his length,
To the rocks strength,
To the stars light,
To the weary night,
To the busy day,
To the idle play;
And so their good cheer never ends,
For all are their debtors, and all their friends.

Concord River is remarkable for the gentleness of its current, which is scarcely perceptible, and some have referred to its influence the proverbial moderation of the inhabitants of Concord, as exhibited in the Revolution, and on later occasions. It has been proposed, that the town should adopt for its coat of arms a field verdant, with the Concord circling nine times round. I have read that a descent of an eighth of an inch in a mile is

sufficient to produce a flow. Our river has, probably, very near the smallest allowance. The story is current, at any rate, though I believe that strict history will not bear it out, that the only bridge ever carried away on the main branch, within the limits of the town, was driven up stream by the wind. But wherever it makes a sudden bend it is shallower and swifter, and asserts its title to be called a river. Compared with the other tributaries of the Merrimack, it appears to have been properly named Musketaquid, or Meadow River, by the Indians. For the most part, it creeps through broad meadows, adorned with scattered oaks, where the cranberry is found in abundance, covering the ground like a moss-bed. A row of sunken dwarf willows borders the stream on one or both sides, while at a greater distance the meadow is skirted with maples, alders, and other fluvial trees, overrun with the grape-vine, which bears fruit in its season, purple, red, white, and other grapes. Still farther from the stream, on the edge of the firm land, are seen the gray and white dwellings of the inhabitants. According to the valuation of 1831, there were in Concord two thousand one hundred and eleven acres, or about one seventh of the whole territory in meadow; this standing next in the list after pasturage and unimproved lands, and, judging from the returns of previous years, the meadow is not reclaimed so fast as the woods are cleared.

Let us here read what old Johnson says of these meadows in his "Wonder-working Providence," which gives the account of New England from 1628 to 1652, and see how matters looked to him. He says of the Twelfth Church of Christ gathered at Concord: "This town is seated upon a fair fresh river, whose rivulets are filled with fresh marsh, and her streams with fish, it being a branch of that large river of Merrimack. Allwives and shad in their season come up to this town, but salmon and dace cannot come up, by reason of the rocky falls, which causeth their meadows to lie much covered with water, the which these people, together with their neighbor town, have several times essayed to cut through but cannot, yet it may be turned another way with an hundred pound charge as it appeared." As to their farming he says: "Having laid out their estate upon cattle at 5 to 20 pound a cow, when they came to winter them with inland hay, and feed upon such wild fother as was never cut before, they could not hold out the winter, but, ordinarily the first or second year after their coming up to a new plantation, many of their cattle died." And this from the same author "Of the Planting of the 19th Church in

the Massachusetts' Government, called Sudbury": "This year [does he mean 1654] the town and church of Christ at Sudbury began to have the first foundation stones laid, taking up her station in the inland country, as her elder sister Concord had formerly done, lying further up the same river, being furnished with great plenty of fresh marsh, but, it lying very low is much indamaged with land floods, insomuch that when the summer proves wet they lose part of their hay; yet are they so sufficiently provided that they take in cattle of other towns to winter."

The sluggish artery of the Concord meadows steals thus unobserved through the town, without a murmur or a pulse-beat, its general course from southwest to northeast, and its length about fifty miles; a huge volume of matter, ceaselessly rolling through the plains and valleys of the substantial earth with the moccasoned tread of an Indian warrior, making haste from the high places of the earth to its ancient reservoir. The murmurs of many a famous river on the other side of the globe reach even to us here, as to more distant dwellers on its banks; many a poet's stream floating the helms and shields of heroes on its bosom. The Xanthus or Scamander is not a mere dry channel and bed of a mountain torrent, but fed by the everflowing springs of fame;--

"And thou Simois, that as an arrowe, clere
Through Troy rennest, aie downward to the sea";--

and I trust that I may be allowed to associate our muddy but much abused Concord River with the most famous in history.

"Sure there are poets which did never dream
Upon Parnassus, nor did taste the stream
Of Helicon; we therefore may suppose
Those made not poets, but the poets those."

The Mississippi, the Ganges, and the Nile, those journeying atoms from the Rocky Mountains, the Himmaleh, and Mountains of the Moon, have a kind of personal importance in the annals of the world. The heavens are not yet drained over their sources, but the Mountains of the Moon still send their annual tribute to the Pasha without fail, as they did to the Pharaohs, though he must collect the rest of his revenue at the point of the sword.

Rivers must have been the guides which conducted the footsteps of the first travellers. They are the constant lure, when they flow by our doors, to distant enterprise and adventure, and, by a

natural impulse, the dwellers on their banks will at length accompany their currents to the lowlands of the globe, or explore at their invitation the interior of continents. They are the natural highways of all nations, not only levelling the ground and removing obstacles from the path of the traveller, quenching his thirst and bearing him on their bosoms, but conducting him through the most interesting scenery, the most populous portions of the globe, and where the animal and vegetable kingdoms attain their greatest perfection.

I had often stood on the banks of the Concord, watching the lapse of the current, an emblem of all progress, following the same law with the system, with time, and all that is made; the weeds at the bottom gently bending down the stream, shaken by the watery wind, still planted where their seeds had sunk, but ere long to die and go down likewise; the shining pebbles, not yet anxious to better their condition, the chips and weeds, and occasional logs and stems of trees that floated past, fulfilling their fate, were objects of singular interest to me, and at last I resolved to launch myself on its bosom and float whither it would bear me.

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SATURDAY.

"Come, come, my lovely fair, and let us try
Those rural delicacies."

Christ's Invitation to the Soul. ^Quarles^

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SATURDAY.

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At length, on Saturday, the last day of August, 1839, we two, brothers, and natives of Concord, weighed anchor in this river port; for Concord, too, lies under the sun, a port of entry and departure for the bodies as well as the souls of men; one shore at least exempted from all duties but such as an honest man will gladly discharge. A warm drizzling rain had obscured the morning, and threatened to delay our voyage, but at length the leaves and grass were dried, and it came out a mild afternoon, as serene and fresh as if Nature were maturing some greater scheme of her own. After this long dripping and oozing from every pore, she began to respire again more healthily than ever. So with a vigorous shove we launched our boat from the bank, while the flags and bulrushes courtesied a God-speed, and dropped silently down the stream.

Our boat, which had cost us a week's labor in the spring, was in form like a fisherman's dory, fifteen feet long by three and a half in breadth at the widest part, painted green below, with a border of blue, with reference to the two elements in which it was to spend its existence. It had been loaded the evening before at our door, half a mile from the river, with potatoes and melons from a patch which we had cultivated, and a few utensils, and was provided with wheels in order to be rolled around falls, as well as with two sets of oars, and several slender poles for shoving in shallow places, and also two masts, one of which served for a tent-pole at night; for a buffalo-skin was to be our bed, and a tent of cotton cloth our roof. It was strongly built, but heavy, and hardly of better model than usual. If rightly made, a boat would be a sort of amphibious animal, a creature of two elements, related by one half its structure to some swift and shapely fish, and by the other to some strong-winged and graceful bird. The fish shows where there should be the greatest breadth of beam and depth in the hold; its fins direct where to set the oars, and the tail gives some hint for the form and position of the rudder. The bird shows how to rig and trim the sails, and what form to give to the prow that it may balance the boat, and divide the air and water best. These hints we had but partially obeyed. But the eyes, though they are no sailors, will never be satisfied with any model, however fashionable, which does not answer all the requisitions of art. However, as art is all of a ship but the wood, and yet the wood alone will rudely serve the purpose of a ship, so our boat, being of wood, gladly availed itself of the old law that the heavier shall float the lighter, and though a dull water-fowl, proved a sufficient buoy for our purpose.

"Were it the will of Heaven, an osier bough
Were vessel safe enough the seas to plough."

Some village friends stood upon a promontory lower down the stream to wave us a last farewell; but we, having already performed these shore rites, with excusable reserve, as befits those who are embarked on unusual enterprises, who behold but speak not, silently glided past the firm lands of Concord, both peopled cape and lonely summer meadow, with steady sweeps. And yet we did unbend so far as to let our guns speak for us, when at length we had swept out of sight, and thus left the woods to ring again with their echoes; and it may be many russet-clad children, lurking in those broad meadows, with the bittern and the woodcock and the rail, though wholly concealed by brakes and hardhack and meadow-sweet, heard our salute that afternoon.

We were soon floating past the first regular battle ground of the Revolution, resting on our oars between the still visible abutments of that "North Bridge," over which in April, 1775, rolled the first faint tide of that war, which ceased not, till, as we read on the stone on our right, it "gave peace to these United States." As a Concord poet has sung:--

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

"The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps."

Our reflections had already acquired a historical remoteness from the scenes we had left, and we ourselves essayed to sing.

Ah, 't is in vain the peaceful din
That wakes the ignoble town,
Not thus did braver spirits win
A patriot's renown.

There is one field beside this stream,
Wherein no foot does fall,

But yet it beareth in my dream
A richer crop than all.

Let me believe a dream so dear,
Some heart beat high that day,
Above the petty Province here,
And Britain far away;

Some hero of the ancient mould,
Some arm of knightly worth,
Of strength unbought, and faith unsold,
Honored this spot of earth;

Who sought the prize his heart described,
And did not ask release,
Whose free-born valor was not bribed
By prospect of a peace.

The men who stood on yonder height
That day are long since gone;
Not the same hand directs the fight
And monumental stone.

Ye were the Grecian cities then,
The Romes of modern birth,
Where the New England husbandmen
Have shown a Roman worth.

In vain I search a foreign land
To find our Bunker Hill,
And Lexington and Concord stand
By no Laconian rill.

With such thoughts we swept gently by this now peaceful
pasture-ground, on waves of Concord, in which was long since
drowned the din of war.

But since we sailed
Some things have failed,
And many a dream
Gone down the stream.

Here then an aged shepherd dwelt,
Who to his flock his substance dealt,

And ruled them with a vigorous crook,
By precept of the sacred Book;
But he the pierless bridge passed o'er,
And solitary left the shore.

Anon a youthful pastor came,
Whose crook was not unknown to fame,
His lambs he viewed with gentle glance,
Spread o'er the country's wide expanse,
And fed with "Mosses from the Manse."
Here was our Hawthorne in the dale,
And here the shepherd told his tale.

That slight shaft had now sunk behind the hills, and we had floated round the neighboring bend, and under the new North Bridge between Ponkawtasset and the Poplar Hill, into the Great Meadows, which, like a broad moccason print, have levelled a fertile and juicy place in nature.

On Ponkawtasset, since, we took our way,
Down this still stream to far Billericay,
A poet wise has settled, whose fine ray
Doth often shine on Concord's twilight day.

Like those first stars, whose silver beams on high,
Shining more brightly as the day goes by,
Most travellers cannot at first descry,
But eyes that wont to range the evening sky,

And know celestial lights, do plainly see,
And gladly hail them, numbering two or three;
For lore that's deep must deeply studied be,
As from deep wells men read star-poetry.

These stars are never paled, though out of sight,
But like the sun they shine forever bright;
Ay, they are suns, though earth must in its flight
Put out its eyes that it may see their light.

Who would neglect the least celestial sound,
Or faintest light that falls on earthly ground,
If he could know it one day would be found
That star in Cygnus whither we are bound,
And pale our sun with heavenly radiance round?

Gradually the village murmur subsided, and we seemed to be embarked on the placid current of our dreams, floating from past to future as silently as one awakes to fresh morning or evening thoughts. We glided noiselessly down the stream, occasionally driving a pickerel or a bream from the covert of the pads, and the smaller bittern now and then sailed away on sluggish wings from some recess in the shore, or the larger lifted itself out of the long grass at our approach, and carried its precious legs away to deposit them in a place of safety. The tortoises also rapidly dropped into the water, as our boat ruffled the surface amid the willows, breaking the reflections of the trees. The banks had passed the height of their beauty, and some of the brighter flowers showed by their faded tints that the season was verging towards the afternoon of the year; but this sombre tinge enhanced their sincerity, and in the still unabated heats they seemed like the mossy brink of some cool well. The narrow-leaved willow (*Salix Purshiana*) lay along the surface of the water in masses of light green foliage, interspersed with the large balls of the button-bush. The small rose-colored polygonum raised its head proudly above the water on either hand, and flowering at this season and in these localities, in front of dense fields of the white species which skirted the sides of the stream, its little streak of red looked very rare and precious. The pure white blossoms of the arrow-head stood in the shallower parts, and a few cardinals on the margin still proudly surveyed themselves reflected in the water, though the latter, as well as the pickerel-weed, was now nearly out of blossom. The snake-head, *Chelone glabra*, grew close to the shore, while a kind of coreopsis, turning its brazen face to the sun, full and rank, and a tall dull red flower, *Eupatorium purpureum*, or trumpet-weed, formed the rear rank of the fluvial array. The bright blue flowers of the soap-wort gentian were sprinkled here and there in the adjacent meadows, like flowers which Proserpine had dropped, and still farther in the fields or higher on the bank were seen the purple Gerardia, the Virginian rhexia, and drooping neottia or ladies'-tresses; while from the more distant waysides which we occasionally passed, and banks where the sun had lodged, was reflected still a dull yellow beam from the ranks of tansy, now past its prime. In short, Nature seemed to have adorned herself for our departure with a profusion of fringes and curls, mingled with the bright tints of flowers, reflected in the water. But we missed the white water-lily, which is the queen of river flowers, its reign being over for this season. He makes

his voyage too late, perhaps, by a true water clock who delays so long. Many of this species inhabit our Concord water. I have passed down the river before sunrise on a summer morning between fields of lilies still shut in sleep; and when, at length, the flakes of sunlight from over the bank fell on the surface of the water, whole fields of white blossoms seemed to flash open before me, as I floated along, like the unfolding of a banner, so sensible is this flower to the influence of the sun's rays.

As we were floating through the last of these familiar meadows, we observed the large and conspicuous flowers of the hibiscus, covering the dwarf willows, and mingled with the leaves of the grape, and wished that we could inform one of our friends behind of the locality of this somewhat rare and inaccessible flower before it was too late to pluck it; but we were just gliding out of sight of the village spire before it occurred to us that the farmer in the adjacent meadow would go to church on the morrow, and would carry this news for us; and so by the Monday, while we should be floating on the Merrimack, our friend would be reaching to pluck this blossom on the bank of the Concord.

After a pause at Ball's Hill, the St. Ann's of Concord voyageurs, not to say any prayer for the success of our voyage, but to gather the few berries which were still left on the hills, hanging by very slender threads, we weighed anchor again, and were soon out of sight of our native village. The land seemed to grow fairer as we withdrew from it. Far away to the southwest lay the quiet village, left alone under its elms and buttonwoods in mid afternoon; and the hills, notwithstanding their blue, ethereal faces, seemed to cast a saddened eye on their old playfellows; but, turning short to the north, we bade adieu to their familiar outlines, and addressed ourselves to new scenes and adventures. Naught was familiar but the heavens, from under whose roof the voyageur never passes; but with their countenance, and the acquaintance we had with river and wood, we trusted to fare well under any circumstances.

From this point, the river runs perfectly straight for a mile or more to Carlisle Bridge, which consists of twenty wooden piers, and when we looked back over it, its surface was reduced to a line's breadth, and appeared like a cobweb gleaming in the sun. Here and there might be seen a pole sticking up, to mark the place where some fisherman had enjoyed unusual luck, and in return had consecrated his rod to the deities who preside over

these shallows. It was full twice as broad as before, deep and tranquil, with a muddy bottom, and bordered with willows, beyond which spread broad lagoons covered with pads, bulrushes, and flags.

Late in the afternoon we passed a man on the shore fishing with a long birch pole, its silvery bark left on, and a dog at his side, rowing so near as to agitate his cork with our oars, and drive away luck for a season; and when we had rowed a mile as straight as an arrow, with our faces turned towards him, and the bubbles in our wake still visible on the tranquil surface, there stood the fisher still with his dog, like statues under the other side of the heavens, the only objects to relieve the eye in the extended meadow; and there would he stand abiding his luck, till he took his way home through the fields at evening with his fish. Thus, by one bait or another, Nature allures inhabitants into all her recesses. This man was the last of our townsmen whom we saw, and we silently through him bade adieu to our friends.

The characteristics and pursuits of various ages and races of men are always existing in epitome in every neighborhood. The pleasures of my earliest youth have become the inheritance of other men. This man is still a fisher, and belongs to an era in which I myself have lived. Perchance he is not confounded by many knowledges, and has not sought out many inventions, but how to take many fishes before the sun sets, with his slender birchen pole and flaxen line, that is invention enough for him. It is good even to be a fisherman in summer and in winter. Some men are judges these August days, sitting on benches, even till the court rises; they sit judging there honorably, between the seasons and between meals, leading a civil politic life, arbitrating in the case of Spaulding _versus_ Cummings, it may be, from highest noon till the red vesper sinks into the west. The fisherman, meanwhile, stands in three feet of water, under the same summer's sun, arbitrating in other cases between muckworm and shiner, amid the fragrance of water-lilies, mint, and pontederia, leading his life many rods from the dry land, within a pole's length of where the larger fishes swim. Human life is to him very much like a river,

"renning aie downward to the sea."

This was his observation. His honor made a great discovery in bailments.

I can just remember an old brown-coated man who was the Walton of this stream, who had come over from Newcastle, England, with his son,--the latter a stout and hearty man who had lifted an anchor in his day. A straight old man he was who took his way in silence through the meadows, having passed the period of communication with his fellows; his old experienced coat, hanging long and straight and brown as the yellow-pine bark, glittering with so much smothered sunlight, if you stood near enough, no work of art but naturalized at length. I often discovered him unexpectedly amid the pads and the gray willows when he moved, fishing in some old country method,--for youth and age then went a fishing together,--full of incommunicable thoughts, perchance about his own Tyne and Northumberland. He was always to be seen in serene afternoons haunting the river, and almost rustling with the sedge; so many sunny hours in an old man's life, entrapping silly fish; almost grown to be the sun's familiar; what need had he of hat or raiment any, having served out his time, and seen through such thin disguises? I have seen how his coeval fates rewarded him with the yellow perch, and yet I thought his luck was not in proportion to his years; and I have seen when, with slow steps and weighed down with aged thoughts, he disappeared with his fish under his low-roofed house on the skirts of the village. I think nobody else saw him; nobody else remembers him now, for he soon after died, and migrated to new Tyne streams. His fishing was not a sport, nor solely a means of subsistence, but a sort of solemn sacrament and withdrawal from the world, just as the aged read their Bibles.

Whether we live by the seaside, or by the lakes and rivers, or on the prairie, it concerns us to attend to the nature of fishes, since they are not phenomena confined to certain localities only, but forms and phases of the life in nature universally dispersed. The countless shoals which annually coast the shores of Europe and America are not so interesting to the student of nature, as the more fertile law itself, which deposits their spawn on the tops of mountains, and on the interior plains; the fish principle in nature, from which it results that they may be found in water in so many places, in greater or less numbers. The natural historian is not a fisherman, who prays for cloudy days and good luck merely, but as fishing has been styled "a contemplative

man's recreation," introducing him profitably to woods and water, so the fruit of the naturalist's observations is not in new genera or species, but in new contemplations still, and science is only a more contemplative man's recreation. The seeds of the life of fishes are everywhere disseminated, whether the winds waft them, or the waters float them, or the deep earth holds them; wherever a pond is dug, straightway it is stocked with this vivacious race. They have a lease of nature, and it is not yet out. The Chinese are bribed to carry their ova from province to province in jars or in hollow reeds, or the water-birds to transport them to the mountain tarns and interior lakes. There are fishes wherever there is a fluid medium, and even in clouds and in melted metals we detect their semblance. Think how in winter you can sink a line down straight in a pasture through snow and through ice, and pull up a bright, slippery, dumb, subterranean silver or golden fish! It is curious, also, to reflect how they make one family, from the largest to the smallest. The least minnow that lies on the ice as bait for pickerel, looks like a huge sea-fish cast up on the shore. In the waters of this town there are about a dozen distinct species, though the inexperienced would expect many more.

It enhances our sense of the grand security and serenity of nature, to observe the still undisturbed economy and content of the fishes of this century, their happiness a regular fruit of the summer. The Fresh-Water Sun-Fish, Bream, or Ruff, *Pomotis vulgaris*, as it were, without ancestry, without posterity, still represents the Fresh-Water Sun-Fish in nature. It is the most common of all, and seen on every urchin's string; a simple and inoffensive fish, whose nests are visible all along the shore, hollowed in the sand, over which it is steadily poised through the summer hours on waving fin. Sometimes there are twenty or thirty nests in the space of a few rods, two feet wide by half a foot in depth, and made with no little labor, the weeds being removed, and the sand shoved up on the sides, like a bowl. Here it may be seen early in summer assiduously brooding, and driving away minnows and larger fishes, even its own species, which would disturb its ova, pursuing them a few feet, and circling round swiftly to its nest again: the minnows, like young sharks, instantly entering the empty nests, meanwhile, and swallowing the spawn, which is attached to the weeds and to the bottom, on the sunny side. The spawn is exposed to so many dangers, that a very small proportion can ever become fishes, for beside being the

constant prey of birds and fishes, a great many nests are made so near the shore, in shallow water, that they are left dry in a few days, as the river goes down. These and the lamprey's are the only fishes' nests that I have observed, though the ova of some species may be seen floating on the surface. The breams are so careful of their charge that you may stand close by in the water and examine them at your leisure. I have thus stood over them half an hour at a time, and stroked them familiarly without frightening them, suffering them to nibble my fingers harmlessly, and seen them erect their dorsal fins in anger when my hand approached their ova, and have even taken them gently out of the water with my hand; though this cannot be accomplished by a sudden movement, however dexterous, for instant warning is conveyed to them through their denser element, but only by letting the fingers gradually close about them as they are poised over the palm, and with the utmost gentleness raising them slowly to the surface. Though stationary, they keep up a constant sculling or waving motion with their fins, which is exceedingly graceful, and expressive of their humble happiness; for unlike ours, the element in which they live is a stream which must be constantly resisted. From time to time they nibble the weeds at the bottom or overhanging their nests, or dart after a fly or a worm. The dorsal fin, besides answering the purpose of a keel, with the anal, serves to keep the fish upright, for in shallow water, where this is not covered, they fall on their sides. As you stand thus stooping over the bream in its nest, the edges of the dorsal and caudal fins have a singular dusty golden reflection, and its eyes, which stand out from the head, are transparent and colorless. Seen in its native element, it is a very beautiful and compact fish, perfect in all its parts, and looks like a brilliant coin fresh from the mint. It is a perfect jewel of the river, the green, red, coppery, and golden reflections of its mottled sides being the concentration of such rays as struggle through the floating pads and flowers to the sandy bottom, and in harmony with the sunlit brown and yellow pebbles. Behind its watery shield it dwells far from many accidents inevitable to human life.

There is also another species of bream found in our river, without the red spot on the operculum, which, according to M. Agassiz, is undescribed.

The Common Perch, *Perca flavescens*, which name describes well the gleaming, golden reflections of its scales as it is drawn out of

the water, its red gills standing out in vain in the thin element, is one of the handsomest and most regularly formed of our fishes, and at such a moment as this reminds us of the fish in the picture which wished to be restored to its native element until it had grown larger; and indeed most of this species that are caught are not half grown. In the ponds there is a light-colored and slender kind, which swim in shoals of many hundreds in the sunny water, in company with the shiner, averaging not more than six or seven inches in length, while only a few larger specimens are found in the deepest water, which prey upon their weaker brethren. I have often attracted these small perch to the shore at evening, by rippling the water with my fingers, and they may sometimes be caught while attempting to pass inside your hands. It is a tough and heedless fish, biting from impulse, without nibbling, and from impulse refraining to bite, and sculling indifferently past. It rather prefers the clear water and sandy bottoms, though here it has not much choice. It is a true fish, such as the angler loves to put into his basket or hang at the top of his willow twig, in shady afternoons along the banks of the stream. So many unquestionable fishes he counts, and so many shiners, which he counts and then throws away. Old Josselyn in his "New England's Rarities," published in 1672, mentions the Perch or River Partridge.

The Chivin, Dace, Roach, Cousin Trout, or whatever else it is called, *Leuciscus pulchellus*, white and red, always an unexpected prize, which, however, any angler is glad to hook for its rarity. A name that reminds us of many an unsuccessful ramble by swift streams, when the wind rose to disappoint the fisher. It is commonly a silvery soft-scaled fish, of graceful, scholarlike, and classical look, like many a picture in an English book. It loves a swift current and a sandy bottom, and bites inadvertently, yet not without appetite for the bait. The minnows are used as bait for pickerel in the winter. The red chivin, according to some, is still the same fish, only older, or with its tints deepened as they think by the darker water it inhabits, as the red clouds swim in the twilight atmosphere. He who has not hooked the red chivin is not yet a complete angler. Other fishes, methinks, are slightly amphibious, but this is a denizen of the water wholly. The cork goes dancing down the swift-rushing stream, amid the weeds and sands, when suddenly, by a coincidence never to be remembered, emerges this fabulous inhabitant of another element, a thing heard of but not seen, as if it were the instant creation of an eddy, a true product of the

running stream. And this bright cupreous dolphin was spawned and has passed its life beneath the level of your feet in your native fields. Fishes too, as well as birds and clouds, derive their armor from the mine. I have heard of mackerel visiting the copper banks at a particular season; this fish, perchance, has its habitat in the Coppermine River. I have caught white chivin of great size in the Aboljacknagesic, where it empties into the Penobscot, at the base of Mount Ktaadn, but no red ones there. The latter variety seems not to have been sufficiently observed.

The Dace, *Leuciscus argenteus*, is a slight silvery minnow, found generally in the middle of the stream, where the current is most rapid, and frequently confounded with the last named.

The Shiner, *Leuciscus crysoleucas*, is a soft-scaled and tender fish, the victim of its stronger neighbors, found in all places, deep and shallow, clear and turbid; generally the first nibbler at the bait, but, with its small mouth and nibbling propensities, not easily caught. It is a gold or silver bit that passes current in the river, its limber tail dimpling the surface in sport or flight. I have seen the fry, when frightened by something thrown into the water, leap out by dozens, together with the dace, and wreck themselves upon a floating plank. It is the little light-infant of the river, with body armor of gold or silver spangles, slipping, gliding its life through with a quirk of the tail, half in the water, half in the air, upward and ever upward with flitting fin to more crystalline tides, yet still abreast of us dwellers on the bank. It is almost dissolved by the summer heats. A slighter and lighter colored shiner is found in one of our ponds.

The Pickerel, *Esox reticulatus*, the swiftest, wariest, and most ravenous of fishes, which Josselyn calls the Fresh-Water or River Wolf, is very common in the shallow and weedy lagoons along the sides of the stream. It is a solemn, stately, ruminant fish, lurking under the shadow of a pad at noon, with still, circumspect, voracious eye, motionless as a jewel set in water, or moving slowly along to take up its position, darting from time to time at such unlucky fish or frog or insect as comes within its range, and swallowing it at a gulp. I have caught one which had swallowed a brother pickerel half as large as itself, with the tail still visible in its mouth, while the head was already digested in its stomach. Sometimes a striped snake, bound to

greener meadows across the stream, ends its undulatory progress in the same receptacle. They are so greedy and impetuous that they are frequently caught by being entangled in the line the moment it is cast. Fishermen also distinguish the brook pickerel, a shorter and thicker fish than the former.

The Horned Pout, *Pimelodus nebulosus*, sometimes called Minister, from the peculiar squeaking noise it makes when drawn out of the water, is a dull and blundering fellow, and like the eel vespertinal in his habits, and fond of the mud. It bites deliberately as if about its business. They are taken at night with a mass of worms strung on a thread, which catches in their teeth, sometimes three or four, with an eel, at one pull. They are extremely tenacious of life, opening and shutting their mouths for half an hour after their heads have been cut off. A bloodthirsty and bullying race of rangers, inhabiting the fertile river bottoms, with ever a lance in rest, and ready to do battle with their nearest neighbor. I have observed them in summer, when every other one had a long and bloody scar upon his back, where the skin was gone, the mark, perhaps, of some fierce encounter. Sometimes the fry, not an inch long, are seen darkening the shore with their myriads.

The Suckers, *Catostomi Bostoniensis* and *tuberculati*, Common and Horned, perhaps on an average the largest of our fishes, may be seen in shoals of a hundred or more, stemming the current in the sun, on their mysterious migrations, and sometimes sucking in the bait which the fisherman suffers to float toward them. The former, which sometimes grow to a large size, are frequently caught by the hand in the brooks, or like the red chivin, are jerked out by a hook fastened firmly to the end of a stick, and placed under their jaws. They are hardly known to the mere angler, however, not often biting at his baits, though the spearer carries home many a mess in the spring. To our village eyes, these shoals have a foreign and imposing aspect, realizing the fertility of the seas.

The Common Eel, too, *Muraena Bostoniensis*, the only species of eel known in the State, a slimy, squirming creature, informed of mud, still squirming in the pan, is speared and hooked up with various success. Methinks it too occurs in picture, left after the deluge, in many a meadow high and dry.

In the shallow parts of the river, where the current is rapid,

and the bottom pebbly, you may sometimes see the curious circular nests of the Lamprey Eel, *Petromyzon Americanus*, the American Stone-Sucker, as large as a cart-wheel, a foot or two in height, and sometimes rising half a foot above the surface of the water. They collect these stones, of the size of a hen's egg, with their mouths, as their name implies, and are said to fashion them into circles with their tails. They ascend falls by clinging to the stones, which may sometimes be raised, by lifting the fish by the tail. As they are not seen on their way down the streams, it is thought by fishermen that they never return, but waste away and die, clinging to rocks and stumps of trees for an indefinite period; a tragic feature in the scenery of the river bottoms worthy to be remembered with Shakespeare's description of the sea-floor. They are rarely seen in our waters at present, on account of the dams, though they are taken in great quantities at the mouth of the river in Lowell. Their nests, which are very conspicuous, look more like art than anything in the river.

If we had leisure this afternoon, we might turn our prow up the brooks in quest of the classical trout and the minnows. Of the last alone, according to M. Agassiz, several of the species found in this town are yet undescribed. These would, perhaps, complete the list of our finny contemporaries in the Concord waters.

Salmon, Shad, and Alewives were formerly abundant here, and taken in weirs by the Indians, who taught this method to the whites, by whom they were used as food and as manure, until the dam, and afterward the canal at Billerica, and the factories at Lowell, put an end to their migrations hitherward; though it is thought that a few more enterprising shad may still occasionally be seen in this part of the river. It is said, to account for the destruction of the fishery, that those who at that time represented the interests of the fishermen and the fishes, remembering between what dates they were accustomed to take the grown shad, stipulated, that the dams should be left open for that season only, and the fry, which go down a month later, were consequently stopped and destroyed by myriads. Others say that the fish-ways were not properly constructed. Perchance, after a few thousands of years, if the fishes will be patient, and pass their summers elsewhere, meanwhile, nature will have levelled the Billerica dam, and the Lowell factories, and the Grass-ground River run clear again, to be explored by new migratory shoals, even as far as the Hopkinton pond and Westborough swamp.

One would like to know more of that race, now extinct, whose seines lie rotting in the garrets of their children, who openly professed the trade of fishermen, and even fed their townsmen creditably, not skulking through the meadows to a rainy afternoon sport. Dim visions we still get of miraculous draughts of fishes, and heaps uncountable by the river-side, from the tales of our seniors sent on horseback in their childhood from the neighboring towns, perched on saddle-bags, with instructions to get the one bag filled with shad, the other with alewives. At least one memento of those days may still exist in the memory of this generation, in the familiar appellation of a celebrated train-band of this town, whose untrained ancestors stood creditably at Concord North Bridge. Their captain, a man of piscatory tastes, having duly warned his company to turn out on a certain day, they, like obedient soldiers, appeared promptly on parade at the appointed time, but, unfortunately, they went undrilled, except in the manoeuvres of a soldier's wit and unlicensed jesting, that May day; for their captain, forgetting his own appointment, and warned only by the favorable aspect of the heavens, as he had often done before, went a-fishing that afternoon, and his company thenceforth was known to old and young, grave and gay, as "The Shad," and by the youths of this vicinity this was long regarded as the proper name of all the irregular militia in Christendom. But, alas! no record of these fishers' lives remains that we know, unless it be one brief page of hard but unquestionable history, which occurs in Day Book No. 4, of an old trader of this town, long since dead, which shows pretty plainly what constituted a fisherman's stock in trade in those days. It purports to be a Fisherman's Account Current, probably for the fishing season of the year 1805, during which months he purchased daily rum and sugar, sugar and rum, N. E. and W. I., "one cod line," "one brown mug," and "a line for the seine"; rum and sugar, sugar and rum, "good loaf sugar," and "good brown," W. I. and N. E., in short and uniform entries to the bottom of the page, all carried out in pounds, shillings, and pence, from March 25th to June 5th, and promptly settled by receiving "cash in full" at the last date. But perhaps not so settled altogether. These were the necessaries of life in those days; with salmon, shad, and alewives, fresh and pickled, he was thereafter independent on the groceries. Rather a preponderance of the fluid elements; but such is the fisherman's nature. I can faintly remember to have seen this same fisher in my earliest youth, still as near the river as he could get, with uncertain undulatory step, after so many things had gone down stream,

swinging a scythe in the meadow, his bottle like a serpent hid in the grass; himself as yet not cut down by the Great Mower.

Surely the fates are forever kind, though Nature's laws are more immutable than any despot's, yet to man's daily life they rarely seem rigid, but permit him to relax with license in summer weather. He is not harshly reminded of the things he may not do. She is very kind and liberal to all men of vicious habits, and certainly does not deny them quarter; they do not die without priest. Still they maintain life along the way, keeping this side the Styx, still hearty, still resolute, "never better in their lives"; and again, after a dozen years have elapsed, they start up from behind a hedge, asking for work and wages for able-bodied men. Who has not met such

"a beggar on the way,
Who sturdily could gang?
Who cared neither for wind nor wet,
In lands where'er he past?"

"That bold adopts each house he views, his own;
Makes every pulse his checquer, and, at pleasure,
Walks forth, and taxes all the world, like Caesar";--

as if consistency were the secret of health, while the poor inconsistent aspirant man, seeking to live a pure life, feeding on air, divided against himself, cannot stand, but pines and dies after a life of sickness, on beds of down.

The unwise are accustomed to speak as if some were not sick; but methinks the difference between men in respect to health is not great enough to lay much stress upon. Some are reputed sick and some are not. It often happens that the sicker man is the nurse to the sounder.

Shad are still taken in the basin of Concord River at Lowell, where they are said to be a month earlier than the Merrimack shad, on account of the warmth of the water. Still patiently, almost pathetically, with instinct not to be discouraged, not to be _reasoned_ with, revisiting their old haunts, as if their stern fates would relent, and still met by the Corporation with its dam. Poor shad! where is thy redress? When Nature gave thee instinct, gave she thee the heart to bear thy fate? Still wandering the sea in thy scaly armor to inquire humbly at the

mouths of rivers if man has perchance left them free for thee to enter. By countless shoals loitering uncertain meanwhile, merely stemming the tide there, in danger from sea foes in spite of thy bright armor, awaiting new instructions, until the sands, until the water itself, tell thee if it be so or not. Thus by whole migrating nations, full of instinct, which is thy faith, in this backward spring, turned adrift, and perchance knowest not where men do not dwell, where there are not factories, in these days. Armed with no sword, no electric shock, but mere Shad, armed only with innocence and a just cause, with tender dumb mouth only forward, and scales easy to be detached. I for one am with thee, and who knows what may avail a crow-bar against that Billerica dam?--Not despairing when whole myriads have gone to feed those sea monsters during thy suspense, but still brave, indifferent, on easy fin there, like shad reserved for higher destinies. Willing to be decimated for man's behoof after the spawning season. Away with the superficial and selfish phil-anthropy of men,--who knows what admirable virtue of fishes may be below low-water-mark, bearing up against a hard destiny, not admired by that fellow-creature who alone can appreciate it! Who hears the fishes when they cry? It will not be forgotten by some memory that we were contemporaries. Thou shalt ere long have thy way up the rivers, up all the rivers of the globe, if I am not mistaken. Yea, even thy dull watery dream shall be more than realized. If it were not so, but thou wert to be overlooked at first and at last, then would not I take their heaven. Yes, I say so, who think I know better than thou canst. Keep a stiff fin then, and stem all the tides thou mayst meet.

At length it would seem that the interests, not of the fishes only, but of the men of Wayland, of Sudbury, of Concord, demand the levelling of that dam. Innumerable acres of meadow are waiting to be made dry land, wild native grass to give place to English. The farmers stand with scythes whet, waiting the subsiding of the waters, by gravitation, by evaporation or otherwise, but sometimes their eyes do not rest, their wheels do not roll, on the quaking meadow ground during the haying season at all. So many sources of wealth inaccessible. They rate the loss hereby incurred in the single town of Wayland alone as equal to the expense of keeping a hundred yoke of oxen the year round. One year, as I learn, not long ago, the farmers standing ready to drive their teams afield as usual, the water gave no signs of falling; without new attraction in the heavens, without freshet or visible cause, still standing stagnant at an

unprecedented height. All hydrometers were at fault; some trembled for their English even. But speedy emissaries revealed the unnatural secret, in the new float-board, wholly a foot in width, added to their already too high privileges by the dam proprietors. The hundred yoke of oxen, meanwhile, standing patient, gazing wishfully meadowward, at that inaccessible waving native grass, uncut but by the great mower Time, who cuts so broad a swathe, without so much as a wisp to wind about their horns.

That was a long pull from Ball's Hill to Carlisle Bridge, sitting with our faces to the south, a slight breeze rising from the north, but nevertheless water still runs and grass grows, for now, having passed the bridge between Carlisle and Bedford, we see men haying far off in the meadow, their heads waving like the grass which they cut. In the distance the wind seemed to bend all alike. As the night stole over, such a freshness was wafted across the meadow that every blade of cut grass seemed to teem with life. Faint purple clouds began to be reflected in the water, and the cow-bells tinkled louder along the banks, while, like sly water-rats, we stole along nearer the shore, looking for a place to pitch our camp.

At length, when we had made about seven miles, as far as Billerica, we moored our boat on the west side of a little rising ground which in the spring forms an island in the river. Here we found huckleberries still hanging upon the bushes, where they seemed to have slowly ripened for our especial use. Bread and sugar, and cocoa boiled in river water, made our repast, and as we had drunk in the fluvial prospect all day, so now we took a draft of the water with our evening meal to propitiate the river gods, and whet our vision for the sights it was to behold. The sun was setting on the one hand, while our eminence was contributing its shadow to the night, on the other. It seemed insensibly to grow lighter as the night shut in, and a distant and solitary farm-house was revealed, which before lurked in the shadows of the noon. There was no other house in sight, nor any cultivated field. To the right and left, as far as the horizon, were straggling pine woods with their plumes against the sky, and across the river were rugged hills, covered with shrub oaks, tangled with grape-vines and ivy, with here and there a gray rock jutting out from the maze. The sides of these cliffs, though a quarter of a mile distant, were almost heard to rustle while we

looked at them, it was such a leafy wilderness; a place for fauns and satyrs, and where bats hung all day to the rocks, and at evening flitted over the water, and fire-flies husbanded their light under the grass and leaves against the night. When we had pitched our tent on the hillside, a few rods from the shore, we sat looking through its triangular door in the twilight at our lonely mast on the shore, just seen above the alders, and hardly yet come to a stand-still from the swaying of the stream; the first encroachment of commerce on this land. There was our port, our Ostia. That straight geometrical line against the water and the sky stood for the last refinements of civilized life, and what of sublimity there is in history was there symbolized.

For the most part, there was no recognition of human life in the night, no human breathing was heard, only the breathing of the wind. As we sat up, kept awake by the novelty of our situation, we heard at intervals foxes stepping about over the dead leaves, and brushing the dewy grass close to our tent, and once a musquash fumbling among the potatoes and melons in our boat, but when we hastened to the shore we could detect only a ripple in the water ruffling the disk of a star. At intervals we were serenaded by the song of a dreaming sparrow or the throttled cry of an owl, but after each sound which near at hand broke the stillness of the night, each crackling of the twigs, or rustling among the leaves, there was a sudden pause, and deeper and more conscious silence, as if the intruder were aware that no life was rightfully abroad at that hour. There was a fire in Lowell, as we judged, this night, and we saw the horizon blazing, and heard the distant alarm-bells, as it were a faint tinkling music borne to these woods. But the most constant and memorable sound of a summer's night, which we did not fail to hear every night afterward, though at no time so incessantly and so favorably as now, was the barking of the house-dogs, from the loudest and hoarsest bark to the faintest aerial palpitation under the eaves of heaven, from the patient but anxious mastiff to the timid and wakeful terrier, at first loud and rapid, then faint and slow, to be imitated only in a whisper; wow-wow-wow-wow--wo--wo--w--w. Even in a retired and uninhabited district like this, it was a sufficiency of sound for the ear of night, and more impressive than any music. I have heard the voice of a hound, just before daylight, while the stars were shining, from over the woods and river, far in the horizon, when it sounded as sweet and melodious as an instrument. The hounding of a dog pursuing a fox or other animal in the horizon, may have first suggested the notes of the

hunting-horn to alternate with and relieve the lungs of the dog. This natural bugle long resounded in the woods of the ancient world before the horn was invented. The very dogs that sullenly bay the moon from farm-yards in these nights excite more heroism in our breasts than all the civil exhortations or war sermons of the age. "I would rather be a dog, and bay the moon," than many a Roman that I know. The night is equally indebted to the clarion of the cock, with wakeful hope, from the very setting of the sun, prematurely ushering in the dawn. All these sounds, the crowing of cocks, the baying of dogs, and the hum of insects at noon, are the evidence of nature's health or _sound_ state. Such is the never-failing beauty and accuracy of language, the most perfect art in the world; the chisel of a thousand years retouches it.

At length the antepenultimate and drowsy hours drew on, and all sounds were denied entrance to our ears.

Who sleeps by day and walks by night,
Will meet no spirit but some sprite.

[page]

SUNDAY.

"The river calmly flows,
Through shining banks, through lonely glen,
Where the owl shrieks, though ne'er the cheer of men
Has stirred its mute repose,
Still if you should walk there, you would go there again."

^CHANNING.^

[page]

"The Indians tell us of a beautiful River lying far to the south,
which they call Merrimack."

[page]

SUNDAY.

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In the morning the river and adjacent country were covered with a dense fog, through which the smoke of our fire curled up like a still subtler mist; but before we had rowed many rods, the sun arose and the fog rapidly dispersed, leaving a slight steam only to curl along the surface of the water. It was a quiet Sunday morning, with more of the auroral rosy and white than of the yellow light in it, as if it dated from earlier than the fall of man, and still preserved a heathenish integrity:--

An early unconverted Saint,
Free from noontide or evening taint,
Heathen without reproach,
That did upon the civil day encroach,
And ever since its birth
Had trod the outskirts of the earth.

But the impressions which the morning makes vanish with its dews, and not even the most "persevering mortal" can preserve the memory of its freshness to mid-day. As we passed the various islands, or what were islands in the spring, rowing with our backs down stream, we gave names to them. The one on which we had camped we called Fox Island, and one fine densely wooded island surrounded by deep water and overrun by grape-vines, which looked like a mass of verdure and of flowers cast upon the waves, we named Grape Island. From Ball's Hill to Billerica meeting-house, the river was still twice as broad as in Concord, a deep, dark, and dead stream, flowing between gentle hills and sometimes cliffs, and well wooded all the way. It was a long woodland lake bordered with willows. For long reaches we could see neither house nor cultivated field, nor any sign of the vicinity of man. Now we coasted along some shallow shore by the edge of a dense palisade of bulrushes, which straightly bounded the water

as if clipt by art, reminding us of the reed forts of the East-Indians, of which we had read; and now the bank slightly raised was overhung with graceful grasses and various species of brake, whose downy stems stood closely grouped and naked as in a vase, while their heads spread several feet on either side. The dead limbs of the willow were rounded and adorned by the climbing mikania, *Mikania scandens*, which filled every crevice in the leafy bank, contrasting agreeably with the gray bark of its supporter and the balls of the button-bush. The water willow, *Salix Purshiana*, when it is of large size and entire, is the most graceful and ethereal of our trees. Its masses of light green foliage, piled one upon another to the height of twenty or thirty feet, seemed to float on the surface of the water, while the slight gray stems and the shore were hardly visible between them. No tree is so wedded to the water, and harmonizes so well with still streams. It is even more graceful than the weeping willow, or any pendulous trees, which dip their branches in the stream instead of being buoyed up by it. Its limbs curved outward over the surface as if attracted by it. It had not a New England but an Oriental character, reminding us of trim Persian gardens, of Haroun Alraschid, and the artificial lakes of the East.

As we thus dipped our way along between fresh masses of foliage overrun with the grape and smaller flowering vines, the surface was so calm, and both air and water so transparent, that the flight of a kingfisher or robin over the river was as distinctly seen reflected in the water below as in the air above. The birds seemed to flit through submerged groves, alighting on the yielding sprays, and their clear notes to come up from below. We were uncertain whether the water floated the land, or the land held the water in its bosom. It was such a season, in short, as that in which one of our Concord poets sailed on its stream, and sung its quiet glories.

"There is an inward voice, that in the stream
Sends forth its spirit to the listening ear,
And in a calm content it floweth on,
Like wisdom, welcome with its own respect.
Clear in its breast lie all these beauteous thoughts,
It doth receive the green and graceful trees,
And the gray rocks smile in its peaceful arms."

And more he sung, but too serious for our page. For every oak and birch too growing on the hill-top, as well as for these elms and

willows, we knew that there was a graceful ethereal and ideal tree making down from the roots, and sometimes Nature in high tides brings her mirror to its foot and makes it visible. The stillness was intense and almost conscious, as if it were a natural Sabbath, and we fancied that the morning was the evening of a celestial day. The air was so elastic and crystalline that it had the same effect on the landscape that a glass has on a picture, to give it an ideal remoteness and perfection. The landscape was clothed in a mild and quiet light, in which the woods and fences checkered and partitioned it with new regularity, and rough and uneven fields stretched away with lawn-like smoothness to the horizon, and the clouds, finely distinct and picturesque, seemed a fit drapery to hang over fairy-land. The world seemed decked for some holiday or prouder pageantry, with silken streamers flying, and the course of our lives to wind on before us like a green lane into a country maze, at the season when fruit-trees are in blossom.

Why should not our whole life and its scenery be actually thus fair and distinct? All our lives want a suitable background. They should at least, like the life of the anchorite, be as impressive to behold as objects in the desert, a broken shaft or crumbling mound against a limitless horizon. Character always secures for itself this advantage, and is thus distinct and unrelated to near or trivial objects, whether things or persons. On this same stream a maiden once sailed in my boat, thus unattended but by invisible guardians, and as she sat in the prow there was nothing but herself between the steersman and the sky. I could then say with the poet,--

"Sweet falls the summer air
Over her frame who sails with me;
Her way like that is beautifully free,
Her nature far more rare,
And is her constant heart of virgin purity."

At evening still the very stars seem but this maiden's emissaries and reporters of her progress.

Low in the eastern sky
Is set thy glancing eye;
And though its gracious light
Ne'er riseth to my sight,
Yet every star that climbs

Above the gnarled limbs
Of yonder hill,
Conveys thy gentle will.

Believe I knew thy thought,
And that the zephyrs brought
Thy kindest wishes through,
As mine they bear to you,
That some attentive cloud
Did pause amid the crowd
Over my head,
While gentle things were said.

Believe the thrushes sung,
And that the flower-bells rung,
That herbs exhaled their scent,
And beasts knew what was meant,
The trees a welcome waved,
And lakes their margins laved,
When thy free mind
To my retreat did wind.

It was a summer eve,
The air did gently heave
While yet a low-hung cloud
Thy eastern skies did shroud;
The lightning's silent gleam,
Startling my drowsy dream,
Seemed like the flash
Under thy dark eyelash.

Still will I strive to be
As if thou wert with me;
Whatever path I take,
It shall be for thy sake,
Of gentle slope and wide,
As thou wert by my side,
Without a root
To trip thy gentle foot.

I'll walk with gentle pace,
And choose the smoothest place
And careful dip the oar,
And shun the winding shore,

And gently steer my boat
Where water-lilies float,
And cardinal flowers
Stand in their sylvan bowers.

It required some rudeness to disturb with our boat the mirror-like surface of the water, in which every twig and blade of grass was so faithfully reflected; too faithfully indeed for art to imitate, for only Nature may exaggerate herself. The shallowest still water is unfathomable. Wherever the trees and skies are reflected, there is more than Atlantic depth, and no danger of fancy running aground. We notice that it required a separate intention of the eye, a more free and abstracted vision, to see the reflected trees and the sky, than to see the river bottom merely; and so are there manifold visions in the direction of every object, and even the most opaque reflect the heavens from their surface. Some men have their eyes naturally intended to the one and some to the other object.

"A man that looks on glass,
On it may stay his eye,
Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass,
And the heavens espy."

Two men in a skiff, whom we passed hereabouts, floating buoyantly amid the reflections of the trees, like a feather in mid-air, or a leaf which is wafted gently from its twig to the water without turning over, seemed still in their element, and to have very delicately availed themselves of the natural laws. Their floating there was a beautiful and successful experiment in natural philosophy, and it served to ennoble in our eyes the art of navigation; for as birds fly and fishes swim, so these men sailed. It reminded us how much fairer and nobler all the actions of man might be, and that our life in its whole economy might be as beautiful as the fairest works of art or nature.

The sun lodged on the old gray cliffs, and glanced from every pad; the bulrushes and flags seemed to rejoice in the delicious light and air; the meadows were a-drinking at their leisure; the frogs sat meditating, all sabbath thoughts, summing up their week, with one eye out on the golden sun, and one toe upon a reed, eying the wondrous universe in which they act their part; the fishes swam more staid and soberly, as maidens go to church; shoals of golden and silver minnows rose to the surface to behold

the heavens, and then sheered off into more sombre aisles; they swept by as if moved by one mind, continually gliding past each other, and yet preserving the form of their battalion unchanged, as if they were still embraced by the transparent membrane which held the spawn; a young band of brethren and sisters trying their new fins; now they wheeled, now shot ahead, and when we drove them to the shore and cut them off, they dexterously tacked and passed underneath the boat. Over the old wooden bridges no traveller crossed, and neither the river nor the fishes avoided to glide between the abutments.

Here was a village not far off behind the woods, Billerica, settled not long ago, and the children still bear the names of the first settlers in this late "howling wilderness"; yet to all intents and purposes it is as old as Fernay or as Mantua, an old gray town where men grow old and sleep already under moss-grown monuments,—outgrow their usefulness. This is ancient Billerica, (Villarica?) now in its dotage, named from the English Billericay, and whose Indian name was Shawshine. I never heard that it was young. See, is not nature here gone to decay, farms all run out, meeting-house grown gray and racked with age? If you would know of its early youth, ask those old gray rocks in the pasture. It has a bell that sounds sometimes as far as Concord woods; I have heard that,—ay, hear it now. No wonder that such a sound startled the dreaming Indian, and frightened his game, when the first bells were swung on trees, and sounded through the forest beyond the plantations of the white man. But to-day I like best the echo amid these cliffs and woods. It is no feeble imitation, but rather its original, or as if some rural Orpheus played over the strain again to show how it should sound.

Dong, sounds the brass in the east,
As if to a funeral feast,
But I like that sound the best
Out of the fluttering west.

The steeple ringeth a knell,
But the fairies' silvery bell
Is the voice of that gentle folk,
Or else the horizon that spoke.

Its metal is not of brass,
But air, and water, and glass,
And under a cloud it is swung,

And by the wind it is rung.

When the steeple tolleth the noon,
It soundeth not so soon,
Yet it rings a far earlier hour,
And the sun has not reached its tower.

On the other hand, the road runs up to Carlisle, city of the woods, which, if it is less civil, is the more natural. It does well hold the earth together. It gets laughed at because it is a small town, I know, but nevertheless it is a place where great men may be born any day, for fair winds and foul blow right on over it without distinction. It has a meeting-house and horse-sheds, a tavern and a blacksmith's shop, for centre, and a good deal of wood to cut and cord yet. And

"Bedford, most noble Bedford,
I shall not thee forget."

History has remembered thee; especially that meek and humble petition of thy old planters, like the wailing of the Lord's own people, "To the gentlemen, the selectmen" of Concord, praying to be erected into a separate parish. We can hardly credit that so plaintive a psalm resounded but little more than a century ago along these Babylonish waters. "In the extreme difficult seasons of heat and cold," said they, "we were ready to say of the Sabbath, Behold what a weariness is it."--"Gentlemen, if our seeking to draw off proceed from any disaffection to our present Reverend Pastor, or the Christian Society with whom we have taken such sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company, then hear us not this day, but we greatly desire, if God please, to be eased of our burden on the Sabbath, the travel and fatigue thereof, that the word of God may be nigh to us, near to our houses and in our hearts, that we and our little ones may serve the Lord. We hope that God, who stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to set forward temple work, has stirred us up to ask, and will stir you up to grant, the prayer of our petition; so shall your humble petitioners ever pray, as in duty bound--" And so the temple work went forward here to a happy conclusion. Yonder in Carlisle the building of the temple was many wearisome years delayed, not that there was wanting of Shittim wood, or the gold of Ophir, but a site therefor convenient to all the worshippers; whether on "Buttrick's Plain," or rather on "Poplar Hill."--It was a tedious question.

In this Billerica solid men must have lived, select from year to year; a series of town clerks, at least; and there are old records that you may search. Some spring the white man came, built him a house, and made a clearing here, letting in the sun, dried up a farm, piled up the old gray stones in fences, cut down the pines around his dwelling, planted orchard seeds brought from the old country, and persuaded the civil apple-tree to blossom next to the wild pine and the juniper, shedding its perfume in the wilderness. Their old stocks still remain. He culled the graceful elm from out the woods and from the river-side, and so refined and smoothed his village plot. He rudely bridged the stream, and drove his team afield into the river meadows, cut the wild grass, and laid bare the homes of beaver, otter, muskrat, and with the whetting of his scythe scared off the deer and bear. He set up a mill, and fields of English grain sprang in the virgin soil. And with his grain he scattered the seeds of the dandelion and the wild trefoil over the meadows, mingling his English flowers with the wild native ones. The bristling burdock, the sweet-scented catnip, and the humble yarrow planted themselves along his woodland road, they too seeking "freedom to worship God" in their way. And thus he plants a town. The white man's mullein soon reigned in Indian cornfields, and sweet-scented English grasses clothed the new soil. Where, then, could the Red Man set his foot? The honey-bee hummed through the Massachusetts woods, and sipped the wild-flowers round the Indian's wigwam, perchance unnoticed, when, with prophetic warning, it stung the Red child's hand, forerunner of that industrious tribe that was to come and pluck the wild-flower of his race up by the root.

The white man comes, pale as the dawn, with a load of thought, with a slumbering intelligence as a fire raked up, knowing well what he knows, not guessing but calculating; strong in community, yielding obedience to authority; of experienced race; of wonderful, wonderful common sense; dull but capable, slow but persevering, severe but just, of little humor but genuine; a laboring man, despising game and sport; building a house that endures, a framed house. He buys the Indian's moccasins and baskets, then buys his hunting-grounds, and at length forgets where he is buried and ploughs up his bones. And here town records, old, tattered, time-worn, weather-stained chronicles, contain the Indian sachim's mark perchance, an arrow or a beaver, and the few fatal words by which he deeded his hunting-grounds

away. He comes with a list of ancient Saxon, Norman, and Celtic names, and strews them up and down this river,--Framingham, Sudbury, Bedford, Carlisle, Billerica, Chelmsford,--and this is New Angle-land, and these are the New West Saxons whom the Red Men call, not Angle-ish or English, but Yengeese, and so at last they are known for Yankees.

When we were opposite to the middle of Billerica, the fields on either hand had a soft and cultivated English aspect, the village spire being seen over the copses which skirt the river, and sometimes an orchard straggled down to the water-side, though, generally, our course this forenoon was the wildest part of our voyage. It seemed that men led a quiet and very civil life there. The inhabitants were plainly cultivators of the earth, and lived under an organized political government. The school-house stood with a meek aspect, entreating a long truce to war and savage life. Every one finds by his own experience, as well as in history, that the era in which men cultivate the apple, and the amenities of the garden, is essentially different from that of the hunter and forest life, and neither can displace the other without loss. We have all had our day-dreams, as well as more prophetic nocturnal vision; but as for farming, I am convinced that my genius dates from an older era than the agricultural. I would at least strike my spade into the earth with such careless freedom but accuracy as the woodpecker his bill into a tree. There is in my nature, methinks, a singular yearning toward all wildness. I know of no redeeming qualities in myself but a sincere love for some things, and when I am reproved I fall back on to this ground. What have I to do with ploughs? I cut another furrow than you see. Where the off ox treads, there is it not, it is farther off; where the nigh ox walks, it will not be, it is nigher still. If corn fails, my crop fails not, and what are drought and rain to me? The rude Saxon pioneer will sometimes pine for that refinement and artificial beauty which are English, and love to hear the sound of such sweet and classical names as the Pentland and Malvern Hills, the Cliffs of Dover and the Trosachs, Richmond, Derwent, and Winandermere, which are to him now instead of the Acropolis and Parthenon, of Baiae, and Athens with its sea-walls, and Arcadia and Tempe.

Greece, who am I that should remember thee,
Thy Marathon and thy Thermopylae?
Is my life vulgar, my fate mean,

Which on these golden memories can lean?

We are apt enough to be pleased with such books as Evelyn's *Sylva*, *Acetarium*, and *Kalendarium Hortense*, but they imply a relaxed nerve in the reader. Gardening is civil and social, but it wants the vigor and freedom of the forest and the outlaw. There may be an excess of cultivation as well as of anything else, until civilization becomes pathetic. A highly cultivated man,—all whose bones can be bent! whose heaven-born virtues are but good manners! The young pines springing up in the cornfields from year to year are to me a refreshing fact. We talk of civilizing the Indian, but that is not the name for his improvement. By the wary independence and aloofness of his dim forest life he preserves his intercourse with his native gods, and is admitted from time to time to a rare and peculiar society with Nature. He has glances of starry recognition to which our saloons are strangers. The steady illumination of his genius, dim only because distant, is like the faint but satisfying light of the stars compared with the dazzling but ineffectual and short-lived blaze of candles. The Society-Islanders had their day-born gods, but they were not supposed to be "of equal antiquity with the *_atua fauau po_*, or night-born gods." It is true, there are the innocent pleasures of country life, and it is sometimes pleasant to make the earth yield her increase, and gather the fruits in their season, but the heroic spirit will not fail to dream of remoter retirements and more rugged paths. It will have its garden-plots and its *_parterres_* elsewhere than on the earth, and gather nuts and berries by the way for its subsistence, or orchard fruits with such heedlessness as berries. We would not always be soothing and taming nature, breaking the horse and the ox, but sometimes ride the horse wild and chase the buffalo. The Indian's intercourse with Nature is at least such as admits of the greatest independence of each. If he is somewhat of a stranger in her midst, the gardener is too much of a familiar. There is something vulgar and foul in the latter's closeness to his mistress, something noble and cleanly in the former's distance. In civilization, as in a southern latitude, man degenerates at length, and yields to the incursion of more northern tribes,

"Some nation yet shut in
With hills of ice."

There are other, savager, and more primeval aspects of nature

than our poets have sung. It is only white man's poetry. Homer and Ossian even can never revive in London or Boston. And yet behold how these cities are refreshed by the mere tradition, or the imperfectly transmitted fragrance and flavor of these wild fruits. If we could listen but for an instant to the chant of the Indian muse, we should understand why he will not exchange his savageness for civilization. Nations are not whimsical. Steel and blankets are strong temptations; but the Indian does well to continue Indian.

After sitting in my chamber many days, reading the poets, I have been out early on a foggy morning, and heard the cry of an owl in a neighboring wood as from a nature behind the common, unexplored by science or by literature. None of the feathered race has yet realized my youthful conceptions of the woodland depths. I had seen the red Election-bird brought from their recesses on my comrades' string, and fancied that their plumage would assume stranger and more dazzling colors, like the tints of evening, in proportion as I advanced farther into the darkness and solitude of the forest. Still less have I seen such strong and wilderness tints on any poet's string.

These modern ingenious sciences and arts do not affect me as those more venerable arts of hunting and fishing, and even of husbandry in its primitive and simple form; as ancient and honorable trades as the sun and moon and winds pursue, coeval with the faculties of man, and invented when these were invented. We do not know their John Gutenberg, or Richard Arkwright, though the poets would fain make them to have been gradually learned and taught. According to Gower,--

"And Iadahal, as saith the boke,
Firste made nette, and fishes toke.
Of huntynge eke he fond the chace,
Whiche nowe is knowe in many place;
A tent of clothe, with corde and stake,
He sette up first, and did it make."

Also, Lydgate says:--

"Jason first sayled, in story it is tolde,
Toward Colchos, to wynne the flees of golde,
Ceres the Goddess fond first the tilthe of londe;

* * * * *

Also, Aristeus fonde first the usage
Of mylke, and cruddis, and of honey swote;
Peryodes, for grete avauntage,
From flyntes smote fuyre, daryng in the roote."

We read that Aristeus "obtained of Jupiter and Neptune, that the pestilential heat of the dog-days, wherein was great mortality, should be mitigated with wind." This is one of those dateless benefits conferred on man, which have no record in our vulgar day, though we still find some similitude to them in our dreams, in which we have a more liberal and juster apprehension of things, unconstrained by habit, which is then in some measure put off, and divested of memory, which we call history.

According to fable, when the island of AEGina was depopulated by sickness, at the instance of AEacus, Jupiter turned the ants into men, that is, as some think, he made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like ants. This is perhaps the fullest history of those early days extant.

The fable which is naturally and truly composed, so as to satisfy the imagination, ere it addresses the understanding, beautiful though strange as a wild-flower, is to the wise man an apothegm, and admits of his most generous interpretation. When we read that Bacchus made the Tyrrhenian mariners mad, so that they leapt into the sea, mistaking it for a meadow full of flowers, and so became dolphins, we are not concerned about the historical truth of this, but rather a higher poetical truth. We seem to hear the music of a thought, and care not if the understanding be not gratified. For their beauty, consider the fables of Narcissus, of Endymion, of Memnon son of Morning, the representative of all promising youths who have died a premature death, and whose memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning; the beautiful stories of Phaeton, and of the Sirens whose isle shone afar off white with the bones of unburied men; and the pregnant ones of Pan, Prometheus, and the Sphinx; and that long list of names which have already become part of the universal language of civilized men, and from proper are becoming common names or nouns,--the Sibyls, the Eumenides, the Parcae, the Graces, the Muses, Nemesis, &c.

It is interesting to observe with what singular unanimity the farthest sundered nations and generations consent to give

completeness and roundness to an ancient fable, of which they indistinctly appreciate the beauty or the truth. By a faint and dream-like effort, though it be only by the vote of a scientific body, the dullest posterity slowly add some trait to the mythus. As when astronomers call the lately discovered planet Neptune; or the asteroid Astraea, that the Virgin who was driven from earth to heaven at the end of the golden age, may have her local habitation in the heavens more distinctly assigned her,--for the slightest recognition of poetic worth is significant. By such slow aggregation has mythology grown from the first. The very nursery tales of this generation, were the nursery tales of primeval races. They migrate from east to west, and again from west to east; now expanded into the "tale divine" of bards, now shrunk into a popular rhyme. This is an approach to that universal language which men have sought in vain. This fond reiteration of the oldest expressions of truth by the latest posterity, content with slightly and religiously retouching the old material, is the most impressive proof of a common humanity.

All nations love the same jests and tales, Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, and the same translated suffice for all. All men are children, and of one family. The same tale sends them all to bed, and wakes them in the morning. Joseph Wolff, the missionary, distributed copies of Robinson Crusoe, translated into Arabic, among the Arabs, and they made a great sensation. "Robinson Crusoe's adventures and wisdom," says he, "were read by Mahometans in the market-places of Sanaa, Hodyeda, and Loheya, and admired and believed!" On reading the book, the Arabians exclaimed, "O, that Robinson Crusoe must have been a great prophet!"

To some extent, mythology is only the most ancient history and biography. So far from being false or fabulous in the common sense, it contains only enduring and essential truth, the I and you, the here and there, the now and then, being omitted. Either time or rare wisdom writes it. Before printing was discovered, a century was equal to a thousand years. The poet is he who can write some pure mythology to-day without the aid of posterity. In how few words, for instance, the Greeks would have told the story of Abelard and Heloise, making but a sentence for our classical dictionary,--and then, perchance, have stuck up their names to shine in some corner of the firmament. We moderns, on the other hand, collect only the raw materials of biography and history, "memoirs to serve for a history," which itself is but

materials to serve for a mythology. How many volumes folio would the Life and Labors of Prometheus have filled, if perchance it had fallen, as perchance it did first, in days of cheap printing! Who knows what shape the fable of Columbus will at length assume, to be confounded with that of Jason and the expedition of the Argonauts. And Franklin,--there may be a line for him in the future classical dictionary, recording what that demigod did, and referring him to some new genealogy. "Son of----and----. He aided the Americans to gain their independence, instructed mankind in economy, and drew down lightning from the clouds."

The hidden significance of these fables which is sometimes thought to have been detected, the ethics running parallel to the poetry and history, are not so remarkable as the readiness with which they may be made to express a variety of truths. As if they were the skeletons of still older and more universal truths than any whose flesh and blood they are for the time made to wear. It is like striving to make the sun, or the wind, or the sea symbols to signify exclusively the particular thoughts of our day. But what signifies it? In the mythus a superhuman intelligence uses the unconscious thoughts and dreams of men as its hieroglyphics to address men unborn. In the history of the human mind, these glowing and ruddy fables precede the noonday thoughts of men, as Aurora the sun's rays. The matutine intellect of the poet, keeping in advance of the glare of philosophy, always dwells in this auroral atmosphere.

As we said before, the Concord is a dead stream, but its scenery is the more suggestive to the contemplative voyager, and this day its water was fuller of reflections than our pages even. Just before it reaches the falls in Billerica, it is contracted, and becomes swifter and shallower, with a yellow pebbly bottom, hardly passable for a canal-boat, leaving the broader and more stagnant portion above like a lake among the hills. All through the Concord, Bedford, and Billerica meadows we had heard no murmur from its stream, except where some tributary runnel tumbled in,--

Some tumultuous little rill,
Purling round its storied pebble,
Tinkling to the selfsame tune,
From September until June,
Which no drought doth e'er enfeeble.

Silent flows the parent stream,
And if rocks do lie below,
Smothers with her waves the din,
As it were a youthful sin,
Just as still, and just as slow.

But now at length we heard this staid and primitive river rushing to her fall, like any rill. We here left its channel, just above the Billerica Falls, and entered the canal, which runs, or rather is conducted, six miles through the woods to the Merrimack, at Middlesex, and as we did not care to loiter in this part of our voyage, while one ran along the tow-path drawing the boat by a cord, the other kept it off the shore with a pole, so that we accomplished the whole distance in little more than an hour. This canal, which is the oldest in the country, and has even an antique look beside the more modern railroads, is fed by the Concord, so that we were still floating on its familiar waters. It is so much water which the river lets for the advantage of commerce. There appeared some want of harmony in its scenery, since it was not of equal date with the woods and meadows through which it is led, and we missed the conciliatory influence of time on land and water; but in the lapse of ages, Nature will recover and indemnify herself, and gradually plant fit shrubs and flowers along its borders. Already the kingfisher sat upon a pine over the water, and the bream and pickerel swam below. Thus all works pass directly out of the hands of the architect into the hands of Nature, to be perfected.

It was a retired and pleasant route, without houses or travellers, except some young men who were lounging upon a bridge in Chelmsford, who leaned impudently over the rails to pry into our concerns, but we caught the eye of the most forward, and looked at him till he was visibly discomfited. Not that there was any peculiar efficacy in our look, but rather a sense of shame left in him which disarmed him.

It is a very true and expressive phrase, "He looked daggers at me," for the first pattern and prototype of all daggers must have been a glance of the eye. First, there was the glance of Jove's eye, then his fiery bolt, then, the material gradually hardening, tridents, spears, javelins, and finally, for the convenience of private men, daggers, krisses, and so forth, were invented. It is wonderful how we get about the streets without being wounded

by these delicate and glancing weapons, a man can so nimbly whip out his rapier, or without being noticed carry it unsheathed. Yet it is rare that one gets seriously looked at.

As we passed under the last bridge over the canal, just before reaching the Merrimack, the people coming out of church paused to look at us from above, and apparently, so strong is custom, indulged in some heathenish comparisons; but we were the truest observers of this sunny day. According to Hesiod,

"The seventh is a holy day,
For then Latona brought forth golden-rayed Apollo,"

and by our reckoning this was the seventh day of the week, and not the first. I find among the papers of an old Justice of the Peace and Deacon of the town of Concord, this singular memorandum, which is worth preserving as a relic of an ancient custom. After reforming the spelling and grammar, it runs as follows: "Men that travelled with teams on the Sabbath, Dec. 18th, 1803, were Jeremiah Richardson and Jonas Parker, both of Shirley. They had teams with rigging such as is used to carry barrels, and they were travelling westward. Richardson was questioned by the Hon. Ephraim Wood, Esq., and he said that Jonas Parker was his fellow-traveller, and he further said that a Mr. Longley was his employer, who promised to bear him out." We were the men that were gliding northward, this Sept. 1st, 1839, with still team, and rigging not the most convenient to carry barrels, unquestioned by any Squire or Church Deacon and ready to bear ourselves out if need were. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, according to the historian of Dunstable, "Towns were directed to erect 'a cage' near the meeting-house, and in this all offenders against the sanctity of the Sabbath were confined." Society has relaxed a little from its strictness, one would say, but I presume that there is not less religion than formerly. If the ligature is found to be loosened in one part, it is only drawn the tighter in another.

You can hardly convince a man of an error in a lifetime, but must content yourself with the reflection that the progress of science is slow. If he is not convinced, his grandchildren may be. The geologists tell us that it took one hundred years to prove that fossils are organic, and one hundred and fifty more, to prove that they are not to be referred to the Noachian deluge. I am not sure but I should betake myself in extremities to the liberal

divinities of Greece, rather than to my country's God. Jehovah, though with us he has acquired new attributes, is more absolute and unapproachable, but hardly more divine, than Jove. He is not so much of a gentleman, not so gracious and catholic, he does not exert so intimate and genial an influence on nature, as many a god of the Greeks. I should fear the infinite power and inflexible justice of the almighty mortal, hardly as yet apotheosized, so wholly masculine, with no Sister Juno, no Apollo, no Venus, nor Minerva, to intercede for me, <thum_o*i phyle'ousa' te, k_edome'h_e te>. The Grecian are youthful and erring and fallen gods, with the vices of men, but in many important respects essentially of the divine race. In my Pantheon, Pan still reigns in his pristine glory, with his ruddy face, his flowing beard, and his shaggy body, his pipe and his crook, his nymph Echo, and his chosen daughter lambe; for the great god Pan is not dead, as was rumored. No god ever dies. Perhaps of all the gods of New England and of ancient Greece, I am most constant at his shrine.

It seems to me that the god that is commonly worshipped in civilized countries is not at all divine, though he bears a divine name, but is the overwhelming authority and respectability of mankind combined. Men reverence one another, not yet God. If I thought that I could speak with discrimination and impartiality of the nations of Christendom, I should praise them, but it tasks me too much. They seem to be the most civil and humane, but I may be mistaken. Every people have gods to suit their circumstances; the Society Islanders had a god called Toahitu, "in shape like a dog; he saved such as were in danger of falling from rocks and trees." I think that we can do without him, as we have not much climbing to do. Among them a man could make himself a god out of a piece of wood in a few minutes, which would frighten him out of his wits.

I fancy that some indefatigable spinster of the old school, who had the supreme felicity to be born in "days that tried men's souls," hearing this, may say with Nestor, another of the old school, "But you are younger than I. For time was when I conversed with greater men than you. For not at any time have I seen such men, nor shall see them, as Perithous, and Dryas, and <poimena la_on>," that is probably Washington, sole "Shepherd of the People." And when Apollo has now six times rolled westward, or seemed to roll, and now for the seventh time shows his face in the east, eyes wellnigh glazed, long glassed, which have

fluctuated only between lamb's wool and worsted, explore ceaselessly some good sermon book. For six days shalt thou labor and do all thy knitting, but on the seventh, forsooth, thy reading. Happy we who can bask in this warm September sun, which illumines all creatures, as well when they rest as when they toil, not without a feeling of gratitude; whose life is as blameless, how blameworthy soever it may be, on the Lord's Mona-day as on his Suna-day.

There are various, nay, incredible faiths; why should we be alarmed at any of them? What man believes, God believes. Long as I have lived, and many blasphemers as I have heard and seen, I have never yet heard or witnessed any direct and conscious blasphemy or irreverence; but of indirect and habitual, enough. Where is the man who is guilty of direct and personal insolence to Him that made him?

One memorable addition to the old mythology is due to this era,—the Christian fable. With what pains, and tears, and blood these centuries have woven this and added it to the mythology of mankind. The new Prometheus. With what miraculous consent, and patience, and persistency has this mythus been stamped on the memory of the race! It would seem as if it were in the progress of our mythology to dethrone Jehovah, and crown Christ in his stead.

If it is not a tragical life we live, then I know not what to call it. Such a story as that of Jesus Christ,—the history of Jerusalem, say, being a part of the Universal History. The naked, the embalmed, unburied death of Jerusalem amid its desolate hills,—think of it. In Tasso's poem I trust some things are sweetly buried. Consider the snappish tenacity with which they preach Christianity still. What are time and space to Christianity, eighteen hundred years, and a new world?—that the humble life of a Jewish peasant should have force to make a New York bishop so bigoted. Forty-four lamps, the gift of kings, now burning in a place called the Holy Sepulchre;—a church-bell ringing;—some unaffected tears shed by a pilgrim on Mount Calvary within the week.—

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, when I forget thee, may my right hand forget her cunning."

"By the waters of Babylon there we sat down, and we wept when we

remembered Zion."

I trust that some may be as near and dear to Buddha, or Christ, or Swedenborg, who are without the pale of their churches. It is necessary not to be Christian to appreciate the beauty and significance of the life of Christ. I know that some will have hard thoughts of me, when they hear their Christ named beside my Buddha, yet I am sure that I am willing they should love their Christ more than my Buddha, for the love is the main thing, and I like him too. "God is the letter Ku, as well as Khu." Why need Christians be still intolerant and superstitious? The simple-minded sailors were unwilling to cast overboard Jonah at his own request.--

"Where is this love become in later age?
Alas! 'tis gone in endless pilgrimage
From hence, and never to return, I doubt,
Till revolution wheel those times about."

One man says,--

"The world's a popular disease, that reigns
Within the froward heart and frantic brains
Of poor distempered mortals."

Another, that

"all the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

The world is a strange place for a playhouse to stand within it. Old Drayton thought that a man that lived here, and would be a poet, for instance, should have in him certain "brave, translunary things," and a "fine madness" should possess his brain. Certainly it were as well, that he might be up to the occasion. That is a superfluous wonder, which Dr. Johnson expresses at the assertion of Sir Thomas Browne that "his life has been a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not history but a piece of poetry, and would sound like a fable." The wonder is, rather, that all men do not assert as much. That would be a rare praise, if it were true, which was addressed to Francis Beaumont,--"Spectators sate part in your tragedies."

Think what a mean and wretched place this world is; that half the

time we have to light a lamp that we may see to live in it. This is half our life. Who would undertake the enterprise if it were all? And, pray, what more has day to offer? A lamp that burns more clear, a purer oil, say winter-strained, that so we may pursue our idleness with less obstruction. Bribed with a little sunlight and a few prismatic tints, we bless our Maker, and stave off his wrath with hymns.

I make ye an offer,
Ye gods, hear the scoffer,
The scheme will not hurt you,
If ye will find goodness, I will find virtue.
Though I am your creature,
And child of your nature,
I have pride still unbended,
And blood undescended,
Some free independence,
And my own descendants.
I cannot toil blindly,
Though ye behave kindly,
And I swear by the rood,
I'll be slave to no God.
If ye will deal plainly,
I will strive mainly,
If ye will discover,
Great plans to your lover,
And give him a sphere
Somewhat larger than here.

"Verily, my angels! I was abashed on account of my servant, who had no Providence but me; therefore did I pardon him."--_The Gulistan of Sadi._

Most people with whom I talk, men and women even of some originality and genius, have their scheme of the universe all cut and dried,--very _dry_, I assure you, to hear, dry enough to burn, dry-rotted and powder-post, methinks,--which they set up between you and them in the shortest intercourse; an ancient and tottering frame with all its boards blown off. They do not walk without their bed. Some, to me, seemingly very unimportant and unsubstantial things and relations, are for them everlastingly settled,--as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the like. These are like the everlasting hills to them. But in all my wanderings

I never came across the least vestige of authority for these things. They have not left so distinct a trace as the delicate flower of a remote geological period on the coal in my grate. The wisest man preaches no doctrines; he has no scheme; he sees no rafter, not even a cobweb, against the heavens. It is clear sky. If I ever see more clearly at one time than at another, the medium through which I see is clearer. To see from earth to heaven, and see there standing, still a fixture, that old Jewish scheme! What right have you to hold up this obstacle to my understanding you, to your understanding me! You did not invent it; it was imposed on you. Examine your authority. Even Christ, we fear, had his scheme, his conformity to tradition, which slightly vitiates his teaching. He had not swallowed all formulas. He preached some mere doctrines. As for me, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are now only the subtlest imaginable essences, which would not stain the morning sky. Your scheme must be the framework of the universe; all other schemes will soon be ruins. The perfect God in his revelations of himself has never got to the length of one such proposition as you, his prophets, state. Have you learned the alphabet of heaven and can count three? Do you know the number of God's family? Can you put mysteries into words? Do you presume to fable of the ineffable? Pray, what geographer are you, that speak of heaven's topography? Whose friend are you that speak of God's personality? Do you, Miles Howard, think that he has made you his confidant? Tell me of the height of the mountains of the moon, or of the diameter of space, and I may believe you, but of the secret history of the Almighty, and I shall pronounce thee mad. Yet we have a sort of family history of our God,--so have the Tahitians of theirs,--and some old poet's grand imagination is imposed on us as adamantine everlasting truth, and God's own word! Pythagoras says, truly enough, "A true assertion respecting God, is an assertion of God"; but we may well doubt if there is any example of this in literature.

The New Testament is an invaluable book, though I confess to having been slightly prejudiced against it in my very early days by the church and the Sabbath school, so that it seemed, before I read it, to be the yellowest book in the catalogue. Yet I early escaped from their meshes. It was hard to get the commentaries out of one's head and taste its true flavor.--I think that Pilgrim's Progress is the best sermon which has been preached from this text; almost all other sermons that I have heard, or heard of, have been but poor imitations of this.--It would be a

poor story to be prejudiced against the Life of Christ because the book has been edited by Christians. In fact, I love this book rarely, though it is a sort of castle in the air to me, which I am permitted to dream. Having come to it so recently and freshly, it has the greater charm, so that I cannot find any to talk with about it. I never read a novel, they have so little real life and thought in them. The reading which I love best is the scriptures of the several nations, though it happens that I am better acquainted with those of the Hindoos, the Chinese, and the Persians, than of the Hebrews, which I have come to last. Give me one of these Bibles and you have silenced me for a while. When I recover the use of my tongue, I am wont to worry my neighbors with the new sentences; but commonly they cannot see that there is any wit in them. Such has been my experience with the New Testament. I have not yet got to the crucifixion, I have read it over so many times. I should love dearly to read it aloud to my friends, some of whom are seriously inclined; it is so good, and I am sure that they have never heard it, it fits their case exactly, and we should enjoy it so much together,--but I instinctively despair of getting their ears. They soon show, by signs not to be mistaken, that it is inexpressibly wearisome to them. I do not mean to imply that I am any better than my neighbors; for, alas! I know that I am only as good, though I love better books than they.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the universal favor with which the New Testament is outwardly received, and even the bigotry with which it is defended, there is no hospitality shown to, there is no appreciation of, the order of truth with which it deals. I know of no book that has so few readers. There is none so truly strange, and heretical, and unpopular. To Christians, no less than Greeks and Jews, it is foolishness and a stumbling-block. There are, indeed, severe things in it which no man should read aloud more than once.--"Seek first the kingdom of heaven."--"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth."--"If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven."--"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"--Think of this, Yankees!--"Verily, I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."--Think of repeating these things to a New England audience! thirdly, fourthly, fifteenthly, till there are

three barrels of sermons! Who, without cant, can read them aloud? Who, without cant, can hear them, and not go out of the meeting-house? They never were read, they never were heard. Let but one of these sentences be rightly read, from any pulpit in the land, and there would not be left one stone of that meeting-house upon another.

Yet the New Testament treats of man and man's so-called spiritual affairs too exclusively, and is too constantly moral and personal, to alone content me, who am not interested solely in man's religious or moral nature, or in man even. I have not the most definite designs on the future. Absolutely speaking, Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you, is by no means a golden rule, but the best of current silver. An honest man would have but little occasion for it. It is golden not to have any rule at all in such a case. The book has never been written which is to be accepted without any allowance. Christ was a sublime actor on the stage of the world. He knew what he was thinking of when he said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." I draw near to him at such a time. Yet he taught mankind but imperfectly how to live; his thoughts were all directed toward another world. There is another kind of success than his. Even here we have a sort of living to get, and must buffet it somewhat longer. There are various tough problems yet to solve, and we must make shift to live, betwixt spirit and matter, such a human life as we can.

A healthy man, with steady employment, as wood-chopping at fifty cents a cord, and a camp in the woods, will not be a good subject for Christianity. The New Testament may be a choice book to him on some, but not on all or most of his days. He will rather go a-fishing in his leisure hours. The Apostles, though they were fishers too, were of the solemn race of sea-fishers, and never trolled for pickerel on inland streams.

Men have a singular desire to be good without being good for anything, because, perchance, they think vaguely that so it will be good for them in the end. The sort of morality which the priests inculcate is a very subtle policy, far finer than the politicians, and the world is very successfully ruled by them as the policemen. It is not worth the while to let our imperfections disturb us always. The conscience really does not, and ought not to monopolize the whole of our lives, any more than the heart or the head. It is as liable to disease as any other part. I have

seen some whose consciences, owing undoubtedly to former indulgence, had grown to be as irritable as spoiled children, and at length gave them no peace. They did not know when to swallow their cud, and their lives of course yielded no milk.

Conscience is instinct bred in the house,
Feeling and Thinking propagate the sin
By an unnatural breeding in and in.
I say, Turn it out doors,
Into the moors.
I love a life whose plot is simple,
And does not thicken with every pimple,
A soul so sound no sickly conscience binds it,
That makes the universe no worse than 't finds it.
I love an earnest soul,
Whose mighty joy and sorrow
Are not drowned in a bowl,
And brought to life to-morrow;
That lives one tragedy,
And not seventy;
A conscience worth keeping,
Laughing not weeping;
A conscience wise and steady,
And forever ready;
Not changing with events,
Dealing in compliments;
A conscience exercised about
Large things, where one _may_ doubt.
I love a soul not all of wood,
Predestinated to be good,
But true to the backbone
Unto itself alone,
And false to none;
Born to its own affairs,
Its own joys and own cares;
By whom the work which God begun
Is finished, and not undone;
Taken up where he left off,
Whether to worship or to scoff;
If not good, why then evil,
If not good god, good devil.
Goodness!--you hypocrite, come out of that,
Live your life, do your work, then take your hat.
I have no patience towards

Such conscientious cowards.
Give me simple laboring folk,
Who love their work,
Whose virtue is a song
To cheer God along.

I was once reproved by a minister who was driving a poor beast to some meeting-house horse-sheds among the hills of New Hampshire, because I was bending my steps to a mountain-top on the Sabbath, instead of a church, when I would have gone farther than he to hear a true word spoken on that or any day. He declared that I was "breaking the Lord's fourth commandment," and proceeded to enumerate, in a sepulchral tone, the disasters which had befallen him whenever he had done any ordinary work on the Sabbath. He really thought that a god was on the watch to trip up those men who followed any secular work on this day, and did not see that it was the evil conscience of the workers that did it. The country is full of this superstition, so that when one enters a village, the church, not only really but from association, is the ugliest looking building in it, because it is the one in which human nature stoops the lowest and is most disgraced. Certainly, such temples as these shall ere long cease to deform the landscape. There are few things more disheartening and disgusting than when you are walking the streets of a strange village on the Sabbath, to hear a preacher shouting like a boatswain in a gale of wind, and thus harshly profaning the quiet atmosphere of the day. You fancy him to have taken off his coat, as when men are about to do hot and dirty work.

If I should ask the minister of Middlesex to let me speak in his pulpit on a Sunday, he would object, because I do not pray as he does, or because I am not ordained. What under the sun are these things?

Really, there is no infidelity, now-a-days, so great as that which prays, and keeps the Sabbath, and rebuilds the churches. The sealer of the South Pacific preaches a truer doctrine. The church is a sort of hospital for men's souls, and as full of quackery as the hospital for their bodies. Those who are taken into it live like pensioners in their Retreat or Sailor's Sung Harbor, where you may see a row of religious cripples sitting outside in sunny weather. Let not the apprehension that he may one day have to occupy a ward therein, discourage the cheerful labors of the able-souled man. While he remembers the sick in

their extremities, let him not look thither as to his goal. One is sick at heart of this pagoda worship. It is like the beating of gongs in a Hindoo subterranean temple. In dark places and dungeons the preacher's words might perhaps strike root and grow, but not in broad daylight in any part of the world that I know. The sound of the Sabbath bell far away, now breaking on these shores, does not awaken pleasing associations, but melancholy and sombre ones rather. One involuntarily rests on his oar, to humor his unusually meditative mood. It is as the sound of many catechisms and religious books twanging a canting peal round the earth, seeming to issue from some Egyptian temple and echo along the shore of the Nile, right opposite to Pharaoh's palace and Moses in the bulrushes, startling a multitude of storks and alligators basking in the sun.

Everywhere "good men" sound a retreat, and the word has gone forth to fall back on innocence. Fall forward rather on to whatever there is there. Christianity only hopes. It has hung its harp on the willows, and cannot sing a song in a strange land. It has dreamed a sad dream, and does not yet welcome the morning with joy. The mother tells her falsehoods to her child, but, thank Heaven, the child does not grow up in its parent's shadow. Our mother's faith has not grown with her experience. Her experience has been too much for her. The lesson of life was too hard for her to learn.

It is remarkable, that almost all speakers and writers feel it to be incumbent on them, sooner or later, to prove or to acknowledge the personality of God. Some Earl of Bridgewater, thinking it better late than never, has provided for it in his will. It is a sad mistake. In reading a work on agriculture, we have to skip the author's moral reflections, and the words "Providence" and "He" scattered along the page, to come at the profitable level of what he has to say. What he calls his religion is for the most part offensive to the nostrils. He should know better than expose himself, and keep his foul sores covered till they are quite healed. There is more religion in men's science than there is science in their religion. Let us make haste to the report of the committee on swine.

A man's real faith is never contained in his creed, nor is his creed an article of his faith. The last is never adopted. This it is that permits him to smile ever, and to live even as bravely as he does. And yet he clings anxiously to his creed, as to a

straw, thinking that that does him good service because his sheet anchor does not drag.

In most men's religion, the ligature, which should be its umbilical cord connecting them with divinity, is rather like that thread which the accomplices of Cylon held in their hands when they went abroad from the temple of Minerva, the other end being attached to the statue of the goddess. But frequently, as in their case, the thread breaks, being stretched, and they are left without an asylum.

"A good and pious man reclined his head on the bosom of contemplation, and was absorbed in the ocean of a reverie. At the instant when he awaked from his vision, one of his friends, by way of pleasantry, said, What rare gift have you brought us from that garden, where you have been recreating? He replied, I fancied to myself and said, when I can reach the rose-bower, I will fill my lap with the flowers, and bring them as a present to my friends; but when I got there, the fragrance of the roses so intoxicated me, that the skirt dropped from my hands.----`O bird of dawn! learn the warmth of affection from the moth; for that scorched creature gave up the ghost, and uttered not a groan: These vain pretenders are ignorant of him they seek after; for of him that knew him we never heard again:--O thou! who towerest above the flights of conjecture, opinion, and comprehension; whatever has been reported of thee we have heard and read; the congregation is dismissed, and life drawn to a close; and we still rest at our first encomium of thee!"--_Sadi_.

By noon we were let down into the Merrimack through the locks at Middlesex, just above Pawtucket Falls, by a serene and liberal-minded man, who came quietly from his book, though his duties, we supposed, did not require him to open the locks on Sundays. With him we had a just and equal encounter of the eyes, as between two honest men.

The movements of the eyes express the perpetual and unconscious courtesy of the parties. It is said, that a rogue does not look you in the face, neither does an honest man look at you as if he had his reputation to establish. I have seen some who did not know when to turn aside their eyes in meeting yours. A truly confident and magnanimous spirit is wiser than to contend for the mastery in such encounters. Serpents alone conquer by the

steadiness of their gaze. My friend looks me in the face and sees me, that is all.

The best relations were at once established between us and this man, and though few words were spoken, he could not conceal a visible interest in us and our excursion. He was a lover of the higher mathematics, as we found, and in the midst of some vast sunny problem, when we overtook him and whispered our conjectures. By this man we were presented with the freedom of the Merrimack. We now felt as if we were fairly launched on the ocean-stream of our voyage, and were pleased to find that our boat would float on Merrimack water. We began again busily to put in practice those old arts of rowing, steering, and paddling. It seemed a strange phenomenon to us that the two rivers should mingle their waters so readily, since we had never associated them in our thoughts.

As we glided over the broad bosom of the Merrimack, between Chelmsford and Dracut, at noon, here a quarter of a mile wide, the rattling of our oars was echoed over the water to those villages, and their slight sounds to us. Their harbors lay as smooth and fairy-like as the Lido, or Syracuse, or Rhodes, in our imagination, while, like some strange roving craft, we flitted past what seemed the dwellings of noble home-staying men, seemingly as conspicuous as if on an eminence, or floating upon a tide which came up to those villagers' breasts. At a third of a mile over the water we heard distinctly some children repeating their catechism in a cottage near the shore, while in the broad shallows between, a herd of cows stood lashing their sides, and waging war with the flies.

Two hundred years ago other catechizing than this was going on here; for here came the Sachem Wannalancet, and his people, and sometimes Tahatawan, our Concord Sachem, who afterwards had a church at home, to catch fish at the falls; and here also came John Eliot, with the Bible and Catechism, and Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, and other tracts, done into the Massachusetts tongue, and taught them Christianity meanwhile. "This place," says Gookin, referring to Wamesit,

"being an ancient and capital seat of Indians, they come to fish; and this good man takes this opportunity to spread the net of the gospel, to fish for their souls."--"May 5th, 1674," he continues, "according to our usual custom, Mr. Eliot and myself took our journey to Wamesit, or Pawtucket; and arriving

there that evening, Mr. Eliot preached to as many of them as could be got together, out of Matt. xxii. 1-14, the parable of the marriage of the king's son. We met at the wigwam of one called Wannalancet, about two miles from the town, near Pawtucket falls, and bordering upon Merrimack river. This person, Wannalancet, is the eldest son of old Pasaconaway, the chiefest sachem of Pawtucket. He is a sober and grave person, and of years, between fifty and sixty. He hath been always loving and friendly to the English." As yet, however, they had not prevailed on him to embrace the Christian religion. "But at this time," says Gookin, "May 6, 1674,"--"after some deliberation and serious pause, he stood up, and made a speech to this effect:--`I must acknowledge I have, all my days, used to pass in an old canoe, (alluding to his frequent custom to pass in a canoe upon the river,) and now you exhort me to change and leave my old canoe, and embark in a new canoe, to which I have hitherto been unwilling; but now I yield up myself to your advice, and enter into a new canoe, and do engage to pray to God hereafter.'" One "Mr. Richard Daniel, a gentleman that lived in Billerica," who with other "persons of quality" was present, "desired brother Eliot to tell the sachem from him, that it may be, while he went in his old canoe, he passed in a quiet stream; but the end thereof was death and destruction to soul and body. But now he went into a new canoe, perhaps he would meet with storms and trials, but yet he should be encouraged to persevere, for the end of his voyage would be everlasting rest."--"Since that time, I hear this sachem doth persevere, and is a constant and diligent hearer of God's word, and sanctifieth the Sabbath, though he doth travel to Wamesit meeting every Sabbath, which is above two miles; and though sundry of his people have deserted him, since he subjected to the gospel, yet he continues and persists."--_Gookin's Hist. Coll. of the Indians in New England_, 1674.

Already, as appears from the records, "At a General Court held at Boston in New England, the 7th of the first month, 1643-4."--"Wassamequin, Nashoonon, Kutchamaquin, Massaconomet, and Squaw Sachem, did voluntarily submit themselves" to the English; and among other things did "promise to be willing from time to time to be instructed in the knowledge of God." Being asked "Not to do any unnecessary work on the Sabbath day, especially within the gates of Christian towns," they answered, "It is easy to them; they have not much to do on any day, and they can well take their rest on that day."--"So," says Winthrop,

in his Journal, "we causing them to understand the articles, and all the ten commandments of God, and they freely assenting to all, they were solemnly received, and then presented the Court with twenty-six fathom more of wampom; and the Court gave each of them a coat of two yards of cloth, and their dinner; and to them and their men, every of them, a cup of sack at their departure; so they took leave and went away."

What journeyings on foot and on horseback through the wilderness, to preach the Gospel to these minks and muskrats! who first, no doubt, listened with their red ears out of a natural hospitality and courtesy, and afterward from curiosity or even interest, till at length there were "praying Indians," and, as the General Court wrote to Cromwell, the "work is brought to this perfection, that some of the Indians themselves can pray and prophesy in a comfortable manner."

It was in fact an old battle and hunting ground through which we had been floating, the ancient dwelling-place of a race of hunters and warriors. Their weirs of stone, their arrowheads and hatchets, their pestles, and the mortars in which they pounded Indian corn before the white man had tasted it, lay concealed in the mud of the river bottom. Tradition still points out the spots where they took fish in the greatest numbers, by such arts as they possessed. It is a rapid story the historian will have to put together. Miantonimo,--Winthrop,--Webster. Soon he comes from Montaup to Bunker Hill, from bear-skins, parched corn, bows and arrows, to tiled roofs, wheat-fields, guns and swords. Pawtucket and Wamesit, where the Indians resorted in the fishing season, are now Lowell, the city of spindles and Manchester of America, which sends its cotton cloth round the globe. Even we youthful voyagers had spent a part of our lives in the village of Chelmsford, when the present city, whose bells we heard, was its obscure north district only, and the giant weaver was not yet fairly born. So old are we; so young is it.

We were thus entering the State of New Hampshire on the bosom of the flood formed by the tribute of its innumerable valleys. The river was the only key which could unlock its maze, presenting its hills and valleys, its lakes and streams, in their natural order and position. The MERRIMACK, or Sturgeon River, is formed by the confluence of the Pemigewasset, which rises near the Notch of the White Mountains, and the Winnipiseogee, which drains the

lake of the same name, signifying "The Smile of the Great Spirit." From their junction it runs south seventy-eight miles to Massachusetts, and thence east thirty-five miles to the sea. I have traced its stream from where it bubbles out of the rocks of the White Mountains above the clouds, to where it is lost amid the salt billows of the ocean on Plum Island beach. At first it comes on murmuring to itself by the base of stately and retired mountains, through moist primitive woods whose juices it receives, where the bear still drinks it, and the cabins of settlers are far between, and there are few to cross its stream; enjoying in solitude its cascades still unknown to fame; by long ranges of mountains of Sandwich and of Squam, slumbering like tumuli of Titans, with the peaks of Moosehillock, the Haystack, and Kearsarge reflected in its waters; where the maple and the raspberry, those lovers of the hills, flourish amid temperate dews;--flowing long and full of meaning, but untranslatable as its name Pemigewasset, by many a pastured Pelion and Ossa, where unnamed muses haunt, tended by Oreads, Dryads, Naiads, and receiving the tribute of many an untasted Hippocrene. There are earth, air, fire, and water,--very well, this is water, and down it comes.

Such water do the gods distil,
And pour down every hill
For their New England men;
A draught of this wild nectar bring,
And I'll not taste the spring
Of Helicon again.

Falling all the way, and yet not discouraged by the lowest fall.
By the law of its birth never to become stagnant, for it has come out of the clouds, and down the sides of precipices worn in the flood, through beaver-dams broke loose, not splitting but splicing and mending itself, until it found a breathing-place in this low land. There is no danger now that the sun will steal it back to heaven again before it reach the sea, for it has a warrant even to recover its own dews into its bosom again with interest at every eve.

It was already the water of Squam and Newfound Lake and Winnipiseogee, and White Mountain snow dissolved, on which we were floating, and Smith's and Baker's and Mad Rivers, and Nashua and Souhegan and Piscataquoag, and Suncook and Soucook and Contoocook, mingled in incalculable proportions, still fluid,

yellowish, restless all, with an ancient, ineradicable inclination to the sea.

So it flows on down by Lowell and Haverhill, at which last place it first suffers a sea change, and a few masts betray the vicinity of the ocean. Between the towns of Amesbury and Newbury it is a broad commercial river, from a third to half a mile in width, no longer skirted with yellow and crumbling banks, but backed by high green hills and pastures, with frequent white beaches on which the fishermen draw up their nets. I have passed down this portion of the river in a steamboat, and it was a pleasant sight to watch from its deck the fishermen dragging their seines on the distant shore, as in pictures of a foreign strand. At intervals you may meet with a schooner laden with lumber, standing up to Haverhill, or else lying at anchor or aground, waiting for wind or tide; until, at last, you glide under the famous Chain Bridge, and are landed at Newburyport. Thus she who at first was "poore of waters, naked of renowne," having received so many fair tributaries, as was said of the Forth,

"Doth grow the greater still, the further downe;
Till that abounding both in power and fame,
She long doth strive to give the sea her name";

or if not her name, in this case, at least the impulse of her stream. From the steeples of Newburyport you may review this river stretching far up into the country, with many a white sail glancing over it like an inland sea, and behold, as one wrote who was born on its head-waters, "Down out at its mouth, the dark inky main blending with the blue above. Plum Island, its sand ridges scolloping along the horizon like the sea-serpent, and the distant outline broken by many a tall ship, leaning, still, against the sky."

Rising at an equal height with the Connecticut, the Merrimack reaches the sea by a course only half as long, and hence has no leisure to form broad and fertile meadows, like the former, but is hurried along rapids, and down numerous falls, without long delay. The banks are generally steep and high, with a narrow interval reaching back to the hills, which is only rarely or partially overflowed at present, and is much valued by the farmers. Between Chelmsford and Concord, in New Hampshire, it varies from twenty to seventy-five rods in width. It is probably

wider than it was formerly, in many places, owing to the trees having been cut down, and the consequent wasting away of its banks. The influence of the Pawtucket Dam is felt as far up as Cromwell's Falls, and many think that the banks are being abraded and the river filled up again by this cause. Like all our rivers, it is liable to freshets, and the Pemigewasset has been known to rise twenty-five feet in a few hours. It is navigable for vessels of burden about twenty miles; for canal-boats, by means of locks, as far as Concord in New Hampshire, about seventy-five miles from its mouth; and for smaller boats to Plymouth, one hundred and thirteen miles. A small steamboat once plied between Lowell and Nashua, before the railroad was built, and one now runs from Newburyport to Haverhill.

Unfitted to some extent for the purposes of commerce by the sand-bar at its mouth, see how this river was devoted from the first to the service of manufactures. Issuing from the iron region of Franconia, and flowing through still uncut forests, by inexhaustible ledges of granite, with Squam, and Winnipiseogee, and Newfound, and Massabesic Lakes for its mill-ponds, it falls over a succession of natural dams, where it has been offering its _privileges_ in vain for ages, until at last the Yankee race came to _improve_ them. Standing at its mouth, look up its sparkling stream to its source,--a silver cascade which falls all the way from the White Mountains to the sea,--and behold a city on each successive plateau, a busy colony of human beaver around every fall. Not to mention Newburyport and Haverhill, see Lawrence, and Lowell, and Nashua, and Manchester, and Concord, gleaming one above the other. When at length it has escaped from under the last of the factories, it has a level and unmolested passage to the sea, a mere _waste water_, as it were, bearing little with it but its fame; its pleasant course revealed by the morning fog which hangs over it, and the sails of the few small vessels which transact the commerce of Haverhill and Newburyport. But its real vessels are railroad cars, and its true and main stream, flowing by an iron channel farther south, may be traced by a long line of vapor amid the hills, which no morning wind ever disperses, to where it empties into the sea at Boston. This side is the louder murmur now. Instead of the scream of a fish-hawk scaring the fishes, is heard the whistle of the steam-engine, arousing a country to its progress.

This river too was at length discovered by the white man,

"trending up into the land," he knew not how far, possibly an inlet to the South Sea. Its valley, as far as the Winnipiseogee, was first surveyed in 1652. The first settlers of Massachusetts supposed that the Connecticut, in one part of its course, ran northwest, "so near the great lake as the Indians do pass their canoes into it over land." From which lake and the "hideous swamps" about it, as they supposed, came all the beaver that was traded between Virginia and Canada,--and the Potomac was thought to come out of or from very near it. Afterward the Connecticut came so near the course of the Merrimack that, with a little pains, they expected to divert the current of the trade into the latter river, and its profits from their Dutch neighbors into their own pockets.

Unlike the Concord, the Merrimack is not a dead but a living stream, though it has less life within its waters and on its banks. It has a swift current, and, in this part of its course, a clayey bottom, almost no weeds, and comparatively few fishes. We looked down into its yellow water with the more curiosity, who were accustomed to the Nile-like blackness of the former river. Shad and alewives are taken here in their season, but salmon, though at one time more numerous than shad, are now more rare. Bass, also, are taken occasionally; but locks and dams have proved more or less destructive to the fisheries. The shad make their appearance early in May, at the same time with the blossoms of the pyrus, one of the most conspicuous early flowers, which is for this reason called the shad-blossom. An insect called the shad-fly also appears at the same time, covering the houses and fences. We are told that "their greatest run is when the apple-trees are in full blossom. The old shad return in August; the young, three or four inches long, in September. These are very fond of flies." A rather picturesque and luxurious mode of fishing was formerly practised on the Connecticut, at Bellows Falls, where a large rock divides the stream. "On the steep sides of the island rock," says Belknap, "hang several arm-chairs, fastened to ladders, and secured by a counterpoise, in which fishermen sit to catch salmon and shad with dipping nets." The remains of Indian weirs, made of large stones, are still to be seen in the Winnipiseogee, one of the head-waters of this river.

It cannot but affect our philosophy favorably to be reminded of these shoals of migratory fishes, of salmon, shad, alewives, marsh-bankers, and others, which penetrate up the innumerable

rivers of our coast in the spring, even to the interior lakes, their scales gleaming in the sun; and again, of the fry which in still greater numbers wend their way downward to the sea. "And is it not pretty sport," wrote Captain John Smith, who was on this coast as early as 1614, "to pull up twopence, sixpence, and twelvepence, as fast as you can haul and veer a line?"--"And what sport doth yield a more pleasing content, and less hurt or charge, than angling with a hook, and crossing the sweet air from isle to isle, over the silent streams of a calm sea."

On the sandy shore, opposite the Glass-house village in Chelmsford, at the Great Bend where we landed to rest us and gather a few wild plums, we discovered the *Campanula rotundifolia*, a new flower to us, the harebell of the poets, which is common to both hemispheres, growing close to the water. Here, in the shady branches of an apple-tree on the sand, we took our nooning, where there was not a zephyr to disturb the repose of this glorious Sabbath day, and we reflected serenely on the long past and successful labors of Latona.

"So silent is the cessile air,
That every cry and call,
The hills, and dales, and forest fair
Again repeats them all.

"The herds beneath some leafy trees,
Amidst the flowers they lie,
The stable ships upon the seas
Tend up their sails to dry."

As we thus rested in the shade, or rowed leisurely along, we had recourse, from time to time, to the *Gazetteer*, which was our *Navigator*, and from its bald natural facts extracted the pleasure of poetry. Beaver River comes in a little lower down, draining the meadows of Pelham, Windham, and Londonderry. The Scotch-Irish settlers of the latter town, according to this authority, were the first to introduce the potato into New England, as well as the manufacture of linen cloth.

Everything that is printed and bound in a book contains some echo at least of the best that is in literature. Indeed, the best books have a use, like sticks and stones, which is above or beside their design, not anticipated in the preface, nor

concluded in the appendix. Even Virgil's poetry serves a very different use to me to-day from what it did to his contemporaries. It has often an acquired and accidental value merely, proving that man is still man in the world. It is pleasant to meet with such still lines as,

"Jam laeto turgent in palmitum gemmae";
Now the buds swell on the joyful stem.

"Strata jacent passim sua quaeque sub arbore poma";
The apples lie scattered everywhere, each under its tree.

In an ancient and dead language, any recognition of living nature attracts us. These are such sentences as were written while grass grew and water ran. It is no small recommendation when a book will stand the test of mere unobstructed sunshine and daylight.

What would we not give for some great poem to read now, which would be in harmony with the scenery,—for if men read aright, methinks they would never read anything but poems. No history nor philosophy can supply their place.

The wisest definition of poetry the poet will instantly prove false by setting aside its requisitions. We can, therefore, publish only our advertisement of it.

There is no doubt that the loftiest written wisdom is either rhymed, or in some way musically measured,—is, in form as well as substance, poetry; and a volume which should contain the condensed wisdom of mankind need not have one rhythmless line.

Yet poetry, though the last and finest result, is a natural fruit. As naturally as the oak bears an acorn, and the vine a gourd, man bears a poem, either spoken or done. It is the chief and most memorable success, for history is but a prose narrative of poetic deeds. What else have the Hindoos, the Persians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians done, that can be told? It is the simplest relation of phenomena, and describes the commonest sensations with more truth than science does, and the latter at a distance slowly mimics its style and methods. The poet sings how the blood flows in his veins. He performs his functions, and is so well that he needs such stimulus to sing only as plants to put forth leaves and blossoms. He would strive in vain to modulate the remote and transient music which he sometimes hears, since

his song is a vital function like breathing, and an integral result like weight. It is not the overflowing of life but its subsidence rather, and is drawn from under the feet of the poet. It is enough if Homer but say the sun sets. He is as serene as nature, and we can hardly detect the enthusiasm of the bard. It is as if nature spoke. He presents to us the simplest pictures of human life, so the child itself can understand them, and the man must not think twice to appreciate his naturalness. Each reader discovers for himself that, with respect to the simpler features of nature, succeeding poets have done little else than copy his similes. His more memorable passages are as naturally bright as gleams of sunshine in misty weather. Nature furnishes him not only with words, but with stereotyped lines and sentences from her mint.

"As from the clouds appears the full moon,
All shining, and then again it goes behind the shadowy clouds,
So Hector, at one time appeared among the foremost,
And at another in the rear, commanding; and all with brass
He shone, like to the lightning of aegis-bearing Zeus."

He conveys the least information, even the hour of the day, with such magnificence and vast expense of natural imagery, as if it were a message from the gods.

"While it was dawn, and sacred day was advancing,
For that space the weapons of both flew fast, and the people fell;
But when now the woodcutter was preparing his morning meal,
In the recesses of the mountain, and had wearied his hands
With cutting lofty trees, and satiety came to his mind,
And the desire of sweet food took possession of his thoughts;
Then the Danaans, by their valor, broke the phalanxes,
Shouting to their companions from rank to rank."

When the army of the Trojans passed the night under arms, keeping watch lest the enemy should re-embark under cover of the dark,

"They, thinking great things, upon the neutral ground of war
Sat all the night; and many fires burned for them.
As when in the heavens the stars round the bright moon
Appear beautiful, and the air is without wind;
And all the heights, and the extreme summits,
And the wooded sides of the mountains appear; and from the
heavens an Infinite ether is diffused,

And all the stars are seen, and the shepherd rejoices in his heart;
So between the ships and the streams of Xanthus
Appeared the fires of the Trojans before Ilium.
A thousand fires burned on the plain, and by each
Sat fifty, in the light of the blazing fire;
And horses eating white barley and corn,
Standing by the chariots, awaited fair-throned Aurora."

The "white-armed goddess Juno," sent by the Father of gods and men for Iris and Apollo,

"Went down the Idaean mountains to far Olympus,
As when the mind of a man, who has come over much earth,
Sallies forth, and he reflects with rapid thoughts,
There was I, and there, and remembers many things;
So swiftly the august Juno hastening flew through the air,
And came to high Olympus."

His scenery is always true, and not invented. He does not leap in imagination from Asia to Greece, through mid air,

<epej_e` ma'la polla` metaxy'
Ourea' te skioe'nta, thala'ssa te _ech_e'essa.>

for there are very many
Shady mountains and resounding seas between.

If his messengers repair but to the tent of Achilles, we do not wonder how they got there, but accompany them step by step along the shore of the resounding sea. Nestor's account of the march of the Pylians against the Epeians is extremely lifelike:--

"Then rose up to them sweet-worded Nestor, the shrill orator of the Pylians,
And words sweeter than honey flowed from his tongue."

This time, however, he addresses Patroclus alone: "A certain river, Minyas by name, leaps seaward near to Arene, where we Pylians wait the dawn, both horse and foot. Thence with all haste we sped us on the morrow ere 't was noonday, accoutred for the fight, even to Alpheus's sacred source," &c. We fancy that we hear the subdued murmuring of the Minyas discharging its

waters into the main the livelong night, and the hollow sound of the waves breaking on the shore,--until at length we are cheered at the close of a toilsome march by the gurgling fountains of Alpheus.

There are few books which are fit to be remembered in our wisest hours, but the Iliad is brightest in the serenest days, and embodies still all the sunlight that fell on Asia Minor. No modern joy or ecstasy of ours can lower its height or dim its lustre, but there it lies in the east of literature, as it were the earliest and latest production of the mind. The ruins of Egypt oppress and stifle us with their dust, foulness preserved in cassia and pitch, and swathed in linen; the death of that which never lived. But the rays of Greek poetry struggle down to us, and mingle with the sunbeams of the recent day. The statue of Memnon is cast down, but the shaft of the Iliad still meets the sun in his rising.

"Homer is gone; and where is Jove? and where
The rival cities seven? His song outlives
Time, tower, and god,--all that then was, save Heaven."

So too, no doubt, Homer had his Homer, and Orpheus his Orpheus, in the dim antiquity which preceded them. The mythological system of the ancients, and it is still the mythology of the moderns, the poem of mankind, interwoven so wonderfully with their astronomy, and matching in grandeur and harmony the architecture of the heavens themselves, seems to point to a time when a mightier genius inhabited the earth. But, after all, man is the great poet, and not Homer nor Shakespeare; and our language itself, and the common arts of life, are his work. Poetry is so universally true and independent of experience, that it does not need any particular biography to illustrate it, but we refer it sooner or later to some Orpheus or Linus, and after ages to the genius of humanity and the gods themselves.

It would be worth the while to select our reading, for books are the society we keep; to read only the serenely true; never statistics, nor fiction, nor news, nor reports, nor periodicals, but only great poems, and when they failed, read them again, or perchance write more. Instead of other sacrifice, we might offer up our perfect (<telei'a>) thoughts to the gods daily, in hymns or psalms. For we should be at the helm at least once a day. The

whole of the day should not be daytime; there should be one hour, if no more, which the day did not bring forth. Scholars are wont to sell their birthright for a mess of learning. But is it necessary to know what the speculator prints, or the thoughtless study, or the idle read, the literature of the Russians and the Chinese, or even French philosophy and much of German criticism. Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all. "There are the worshippers with offerings, and the worshippers with mortifications; and again the worshippers with enthusiastic devotion; so there are those the wisdom of whose reading is their worship, men of subdued passions and severe manners;--This world is not for him who doth not worship; and where, O Arjoon, is there another?" Certainly, we do not need to be soothed and entertained always like children. He who resorts to the easy novel, because he is languid, does no better than if he took a nap. The front aspect of great thoughts can only be enjoyed by those who stand on the side whence they arrive. Books, not which afford us a cowering enjoyment, but in which each thought is of unusual daring; such as an idle man cannot read, and a timid one would not be entertained by, which even make us dangerous to existing institutions,--such call I good books.

All that are printed and bound are not books; they do not necessarily belong to letters, but are oftener to be ranked with the other luxuries and appendages of civilized life. Base wares are palmed off under a thousand disguises. "The way to trade," as a pedler once told me, "is to _put it right through_," no matter what it is, anything that is agreed on.

"You grov'ling worldlings, you whose wisdom trades
Where light ne'er shot his golden ray."

By dint of able writing and pen-craft, books are cunningly compiled, and have their run and success even among the learned, as if they were the result of a new man's thinking, and their birth were attended with some natural throes. But in a little while their covers fall off, for no binding will avail, and it appears that they are not Books or Bibles at all. There are new and patented inventions in this shape, purporting to be for the elevation of the race, which many a pure scholar and genius who has learned to read is for a moment deceived by, and finds himself reading a horse-rake, or spinning-jenny, or wooden nutmeg, or oak-leaf cigar, or steam-power press, or kitchen

range, perchance, when he was seeking serene and biblical truths.

"Merchants, arise,
And mingle conscience with your merchandise."

Paper is cheap, and authors need not now erase one book before they write another. Instead of cultivating the earth for wheat and potatoes, they cultivate literature, and fill a place in the Republic of Letters. Or they would fain write for fame merely, as others actually raise crops of grain to be distilled into brandy. Books are for the most part wilfully and hastily written, as parts of a system, to supply a want real or imagined. Books of natural history aim commonly to be hasty schedules, or inventories of God's property, by some clerk. They do not in the least teach the divine view of nature, but the popular view, or rather the popular method of studying nature, and make haste to conduct the persevering pupil only into that dilemma where the professors always dwell.

"To Athens gowned he goes, and from that school
Returns unsped, a more instructed fool."

They teach the elements really of ignorance, not of knowledge, for, to speak deliberately and in view of the highest truths, it is not easy to distinguish elementary knowledge. There is a chasm between knowledge and ignorance which the arches of science can never span. A book should contain pure discoveries, glimpses of *terra firma*, though by shipwrecked mariners, and not the art of navigation by those who have never been out of sight of land. *They* must not yield wheat and potatoes, but must themselves be the unconstrained and natural harvest of their author's lives.

"What I have learned is mine; I've had my thought,
And me the Muses noble truths have taught."

We do not learn much from learned books, but from true, sincere, human books, from frank and honest biographies. The life of a good man will hardly improve us more than the life of a freebooter, for the inevitable laws appear as plainly in the infringement as in the observance, and our lives are sustained by a nearly equal expense of virtue of some kind. The decaying tree, while yet it lives, demands sun, wind, and rain no less than the green one. It secretes sap and performs the functions of health. If we choose, we may study the alburnum only. The

gnarled stump has as tender a bud as the sapling.

At least let us have healthy books, a stout horse-rake or a kitchen range which is not cracked. Let not the poet shed tears only for the public weal. He should be as vigorous as a sugar-maple, with sap enough to maintain his own verdure, beside what runs into the troughs, and not like a vine, which being cut in the spring bears no fruit, but bleeds to death in the endeavor to heal its wounds. The poet is he that hath fat enough, like bears and marmots, to suck his claws all winter. He hibernates in this world, and feeds on his own marrow. We love to think in winter, as we walk over the snowy pastures, of those happy dreamers that lie under the sod, of dormice and all that race of dormant creatures, which have such a superfluity of life enveloped in thick folds of fur, impervious to cold. Alas, the poet too is, in one sense, a sort of dormouse gone into winter quarters of deep and serene thoughts, insensible to surrounding circumstances; his words are the relation of his oldest and finest memory, a wisdom drawn from the remotest experience. Other men lead a starved existence, meanwhile, like hawks, that would fain keep on the wing, and trust to pick up a sparrow now and then.

There are already essays and poems, the growth of this land, which are not in vain, all which, however, we could conveniently have stowed in the till of our chest. If the gods permitted their own inspiration to be breathed in vain, these might be overlooked in the crowd, but the accents of truth are as sure to be heard at last on earth as in heaven. They already seem ancient, and in some measure have lost the traces of their modern birth. Here are they who

"ask for that which is our whole life's light,
For the perpetual, true and clear insight."

I remember a few sentences which spring like the sward in its native pasture, where its roots were never disturbed, and not as if spread over a sandy embankment; answering to the poet's prayer,

"Let us set so just
A rate on knowledge, that the world may trust
The poet's sentence, and not still aver

Each art is to itself a flatterer."

But, above all, in our native port, did we not frequent the peaceful games of the Lyceum, from which a new era will be dated to New England, as from the games of Greece. For if Herodotus carried his history to Olympia to read, after the cestus and the race, have we not heard such histories recited there, which since our countrymen have read, as made Greece sometimes to be forgotten?--Philosophy, too, has there her grove and portico, not wholly unfrequented in these days.

Lately the victor, whom all Pindars praised, has won another palm, contending with

"Olympian bards who sung
Divine ideas below,
Which always find us young,
And always keep us so."

What earth or sea, mountain or stream, or Muses' spring or grove,
is safe from his all-searching ardent eye, who drives off
Phoebus' beaten track, visits unwonted zones, makes the gelid
Hyperboreans glow, and the old polar serpent writhe, and many a
Nile flow back and hide his head!

That Phaeton of our day,
Who'd make another milky way,
And burn the world up with his ray;

By us an undisputed seer,--
Who'd drive his flaming car so near
Unto our shuddering mortal sphere,

Disgracing all our slender worth,
And scorching up the living earth,
To prove his heavenly birth.

The silver spokes, the golden tire,
Are glowing with unwonted fire,
And ever nigher roll and nigher;

The pins and axle melted are,
The silver radii fly afar,
Ah, he will spoil his Father's car!

Who let him have the steeds he cannot steer?
Henceforth the sun will not shine for a year;
And we shall Ethiops all appear.

From his

"lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle."

And yet, sometimes,

We should not mind if on our ear there fell
Some less of cunning, more of oracle.

It is Apollo shining in your face. O rare Contemporary, let us
have far-off heats. Give us the subtler, the heavenlier though
fleeting beauty, which passes through and through, and dwells not
in the verse; even pure water, which but reflects those tints
which wine wears in its grain. Let epic trade-winds blow, and
cease this waltz of inspirations. Let us oftener feel even the
gentle southwest wind upon our cheeks blowing from the Indian's
heaven. What though we lose a thousand meteors from the sky, if
skyey depths, if star-dust and undissolvable nebulae remain?
What though we lose a thousand wise responses of the oracle, if
we may have instead some natural acres of Ionian earth?

Though we know well,

"That't is not in the power of kings [or presidents] to raise
A spirit for verse that is not born thereto,
Nor are they born in every prince's days";

yet spite of all they sang in praise of their "Eliza's reign," we
have evidence that poets may be born and sing in our day, in
the presidency of James K. Polk,

"And that the utmost powers of English rhyme,"
Were not "within her peaceful reign confined."

The prophecy of the poet Daniel is already how much more than
fulfilled!

"And who in time knows whither we may vent

The treasure of our tongue? To what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent,
T' enrich unknowing nations with our stores?
What worlds in th' yet unformed occident,
May come refined with the accents that are ours."

Enough has been said in these days of the charm of fluent writing. We hear it complained of some works of genius, that they have fine thoughts, but are irregular and have no flow. But even the mountain peaks in the horizon are, to the eye of science, parts of one range. We should consider that the flow of thought is more like a tidal wave than a prone river, and is the result of a celestial influence, not of any declivity in its channel. The river flows because it runs down hill, and flows the faster the faster it descends. The reader who expects to float down stream for the whole voyage, may well complain of nauseating swells and choppings of the sea when his frail shore-craft gets amidst the billows of the ocean stream, which flows as much to sun and moon as lesser streams to it. But if we would appreciate the flow that is in these books, we must expect to feel it rise from the page like an exhalation, and wash away our critical brains like burr millstones, flowing to higher levels above and behind ourselves. There is many a book which ripples on like a freshet, and flows as glibly as a mill-stream sucking under a causeway; and when their authors are in the full tide of their discourse, Pythagoras and Plato and Jamblichus halt beside them. Their long, stringy, slimy sentences are of that consistency that they naturally flow and run together. They read as if written for military men, for men of business, there is such a despatch in them. Compared with these, the grave thinkers and philosophers seem not to have got their swaddling-clothes off; they are slower than a Roman army in its march, the rear camping to-night where the van camped last night. The wise Jamblichus eddies and gleams like a watery slough.

"How many thousands never heard the name
Of Sidney, or of Spenser, or their books?
And yet brave fellows, and presume of fame,
And seem to bear down all the world with looks."

The ready writer seizes the pen, and shouts, Forward! Alamo and Fanning! and after rolls the tide of war. The very walls and fences seem to travel. But the most rapid trot is no flow after all; and thither, reader, you and I, at least, will not follow.

A perfectly healthy sentence, it is true, is extremely rare. For the most part we miss the hue and fragrance of the thought; as if we could be satisfied with the dews of the morning or evening without their colors, or the heavens without their azure. The most attractive sentences are, perhaps, not the wisest, but the surest and roundest. They are spoken firmly and conclusively, as if the speaker had a right to know what he says, and if not wise, they have at least been well learned. Sir Walter Raleigh might well be studied if only for the excellence of his style, for he is remarkable in the midst of so many masters. There is a natural emphasis in his style, like a man's tread, and a breathing space between the sentences, which the best of modern writing does not furnish. His chapters are like English parks, or say rather like a Western forest, where the larger growth keeps down the underwood, and one may ride on horseback through the openings. All the distinguished writers of that period possess a greater vigor and naturalness than the more modern,—for it is allowed to slander our own time,—and when we read a quotation from one of them in the midst of a modern author, we seem to have come suddenly upon a greener ground, a greater depth and strength of soil. It is as if a green bough were laid across the page, and we are refreshed as by the sight of fresh grass in midwinter or early spring. You have constantly the warrant of life and experience in what you read. The little that is said is eked out by implication of the much that was done. The sentences are verdurous and blooming as evergreen and flowers, because they are rooted in fact and experience, but our false and florid sentence have only the tints of flowers without their sap or roots. All men are really most attracted by the beauty of plain speech, and they even write in a florid style in imitation of this. They prefer to be misunderstood rather than to come short of its exuberance. Hussein Effendi praised the epistolary style of Ibrahim Pasha to the French traveller Botta, because of "the difficulty of understanding it; there was," he said, "but one person at Jidda, who was capable of understanding and explaining the Pasha's correspondence." A man's whole life is taxed for the least thing well done. It is its net result.

Every sentence is the result of a long probation. Where shall we look for standard English, but to the words of a standard man?

The word which is best said came nearest to not being spoken at all, for it is cousin to a deed which the speaker could have better done. Nay, almost it must have taken the place of a deed by some urgent necessity, even by some misfortune, so that the

truest writer will be some captive knight, after all. And perhaps the fates had such a design, when, having stored Raleigh so richly with the substance of life and experience, they made him a fast prisoner, and compelled him to make his words his deeds, and transfer to his expression the emphasis and sincerity of his action.

Men have a respect for scholarship and learning greatly out of proportion to the use they commonly serve. We are amused to read how Ben Jonson engaged, that the dull masks with which the royal family and nobility were to be entertained should be "grounded upon antiquity and solid learning." Can there be any greater reproach than an idle learning? Learn to split wood, at least. The necessity of labor and conversation with many men and things, to the scholar is rarely well remembered; steady labor with the hands, which engrosses the attention also, is unquestionably the best method of removing palaver and sentimentality out of one's style, both of speaking and writing. If he has worked hard from morning till night, though he may have grieved that he could not be watching the train of his thoughts during that time, yet the few hasty lines which at evening record his day's experience will be more musical and true than his freest but idle fancy could have furnished. Surely the writer is to address a world of laborers, and such therefore must be his own discipline. He will not idly dance at his work who has wood to cut and cord before nightfall in the short days of winter; but every stroke will be husbanded, and ring soberly through the wood; and so will the strokes of that scholar's pen, which at evening record the story of the day, ring soberly, yet cheerily, on the ear of the reader, long after the echoes of his axe have died away. The scholar may be sure that he writes the tougher truth for the calluses on his palms. They give firmness to the sentence. Indeed, the mind never makes a great and successful effort, without a corresponding energy of the body. We are often struck by the force and precision of style to which hard-working men, unpractised in writing, easily attain when required to make the effort. As if plainness, and vigor, and sincerity, the ornaments of style, were better learned on the farm and in the workshop, than in the schools. The sentences written by such rude hands are nervous and tough, like hardened thongs, the sinews of the deer, or the roots of the pine. As for the graces of expression, a great thought is never found in a mean dress; but though it proceed from the lips of the Woloffs, the nine Muses and the three Graces will have conspired to clothe it in fit phrase. Its

education has always been liberal, and its implied wit can endow a college. The world, which the Greeks called Beauty, has been made such by being gradually divested of every ornament which was not fitted to endure. The Sibyl, "speaking with inspired mouth, smileless, inornate, and unperfumed, pierces through centuries by the power of the god." The scholar might frequently emulate the propriety and emphasis of the farmer's call to his team, and confess that if that were written it would surpass his labored sentences. Whose are the truly _labored_ sentences? From the weak and flimsy periods of the politician and literary man, we are glad to turn even to the description of work, the simple record of the month's labor in the farmer's almanac, to restore our tone and spirits. A sentence should read as if its author, had he held a plough instead of a pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight to the end. The scholar requires hard and serious labor to give an impetus to his thought. He will learn to grasp the pen firmly so, and wield it gracefully and effectively, as an axe or a sword. When we consider the weak and nerveless periods of some literary men, who perchance in feet and inches come up to the standard of their race, and are not deficient in girth also, we are amazed at the immense sacrifice of thews and sinews. What! these proportions,--these bones,--and this their work! Hands which could have felled an ox have hewed this fragile matter which would not have tasked a lady's fingers! Can this be a stalwart man's work, who has a marrow in his back and a tendon Achilles in his heel? They who set up the blocks of Stonehenge did somewhat, if they only laid out their strength for once, and stretched themselves.

Yet, after all, the truly efficient laborer will not crowd his day with work, but will saunter to his task surrounded by a wide halo of ease and leisure, and then do but what he loves best. He is anxious only about the fruitful kernels of time. Though the hen should sit all day, she could lay only one egg, and, besides, would not have picked up materials for another. Let a man take time enough for the most trivial deed, though it be but the paring of his nails. The buds swell imperceptibly, without hurry or confusion, as if the short spring days were an eternity.

Then spend an age in whetting thy desire,
Thou needs't not _hasten_ if thou dost _stand fast_.

Some hours seem not to be occasion for any deed, but for resolves to draw breath in. We do not directly go about the execution of

the purpose that thrills us, but shut our doors behind us and ramble with prepared mind, as if the half were already done. Our resolution is taking root or hold on the earth then, as seeds first send a shoot downward which is fed by their own albumen, ere they send one upward to the light.

There is a sort of homely truth and naturalness in some books which is very rare to find, and yet looks cheap enough. There may be nothing lofty in the sentiment, or fine in the expression, but it is careless country talk. Homeliness is almost as great a merit in a book as in a house, if the reader would abide there. It is next to beauty, and a very high art. Some have this merit only. The scholar is not apt to make his most familiar experience come gracefully to the aid of his expression. Very few men can speak of Nature, for instance, with any truth. They overstep her modesty, somehow or other, and confer no favor. They do not speak a good word for her. Most cry better than they speak, and you can get more nature out of them by pinching than by addressing them. The surliness with which the woodchopper speaks of his woods, handling them as indifferently as his axe, is better than the mealy-mouthed enthusiasm of the lover of nature. Better that the primrose by the river's brim be a yellow primrose, and nothing more, than that it be something less. Aubrey relates of Thomas Fuller that his was "a very working head, insomuch that, walking and meditating before dinner, he would eat up a penny loaf, not knowing that he did it. His natural memory was very great, to which he added the art of memory. He would repeat to you forwards and backwards all the signs from Ludgate to Charing Cross." He says of Mr. John Hales, that, "He loved Canarie," and was buried "under an altar monument of black marble-----with a too long epitaph"; of Edmund Halley, that he "at sixteen could make a dial, and then, he said, he thought himself a brave fellow"; of William Holder, who wrote a book upon his curing one Popham who was deaf and dumb, "he was beholding to no author; did only consult with nature." For the most part, an author consults only with all who have written before him upon a subject, and his book is but the advice of so many. But a good book will never have been forestalled, but the topic itself will in one sense be new, and its author, by consulting with nature, will consult not only with those who have gone before, but with those who may come after. There is always room and occasion enough for a true book on any subject; as there is room for more light the brightest day and more rays will not

interfere with the first.

We thus worked our way up this river, gradually adjusting our thoughts to novelties, beholding from its placid bosom a new nature and new works of men, and, as it were with increasing confidence, finding nature still habitable, genial, and propitious to us; not following any beaten path, but the windings of the river, as ever the nearest way for us. Fortunately we had no business in this country. The Concord had rarely been a river, or *_rivus_*, but barely *_fluvius_*, or between *_fluvius_* and *_lacus_*. This Merrimack was neither *_rivus_* nor *_fluvius_* nor *_lacus_*, but rather *_amnis_* here, a gently swelling and stately rolling flood approaching the sea. We could even sympathize with its buoyant tide, going to seek its fortune in the ocean, and, anticipating the time when "being received within the plain of its freer water," it should "beat the shores for banks,"--

"campoque recepta

Liberioris aquae, pro ripis litora pulsant."

At length we doubled a low shrubby islet, called Rabbit Island, subjected alternately to the sun and to the waves, as desolate as if it lay some leagues within the icy sea, and found ourselves in a narrower part of the river, near the sheds and yards for picking the stone known as the Chelmsford granite, which is quarried in Westford and the neighboring towns. We passed Wicasuck Island, which contains seventy acres or more, on our right, between Chelmsford and Tyngsborough. This was a favorite residence of the Indians. According to the History of Dunstable, "About 1663, the eldest son of Passaconaway [Chief of the Penacooks] was thrown into jail for a debt of £45, due to John Tinker, by one of his tribe, and which he had promised verbally should be paid. To relieve him from his imprisonment, his brother Wannalancet and others, who owned Wicasuck Island, sold it and paid the debt." It was, however, restored to the Indians by the General Court in 1665. After the departure of the Indians in 1683, it was granted to Jonathan Tyng in payment for his services to the colony, in maintaining a garrison at his house. Tyng's house stood not far from Wicasuck Falls. Gookin, who, in his Epistle Dedicatory to Robert Boyle, apologizes for presenting his "matter clothed in a wilderness dress," says that on the breaking out of Philip's war in 1675, there were taken up by the Christian Indians and the English in Marlborough, and sent to Cambridge, seven "Indians belonging to Narragansett, Long Island,

and Pequod, who had all been at work about seven weeks with one Mr. Jonathan Tyng, of Dunstable, upon Merrimack River; and, hearing of the war, they reckoned with their master, and getting their wages, conveyed themselves away without his privity, and, being afraid, marched secretly through the woods, designing to go to their own country." However, they were released soon after. Such were the hired men in those days. Tyng was the first permanent settler of Dunstable, which then embraced what is now Tyngsborough and many other towns. In the winter of 1675, in Philip's war, every other settler left the town, but "he," says the historian of Dunstable, "fortified his house; and, although 'obliged to send to Boston for his food,' sat himself down in the midst of his savage enemies, alone, in the wilderness, to defend his home. Deeming his position an important one for the defence of the frontiers, in February, 1676, he petitioned the Colony for aid, "humbly showing, as his petition runs, that, as he lived "in the uppermost house on Merrimac river, lying open to ye enemy, yet being so seated that it is, as it were, a watch-house to the neighboring towns, "he could render important service to his country if only he had some assistance," there being, "he said," never an inhabitant left in the town but myself." Wherefore he requests that their "Honors would be pleased to order him _three or four men_ to help garrison his said house," which they did. But methinks that such a garrison would be weakened by the addition of a man.

"Make bandog thy scout watch to bark at a thief,
Make courage for life, to be capitain chief;
Make trap-door thy bulwark, make bell to begin,
Make gunstone and arrow show who is within."

Thus he earned the title of first permanent settler. In 1694 a law was passed "that every settler who deserted a town for fear of the Indians should forfeit all his rights therein." But now, at any rate, as I have frequently observed, a man may desert the fertile frontier territories of truth and justice, which are the State's best lands, for fear of far more insignificant foes, without forfeiting any of his civil rights therein. Nay, townships are granted to deserters, and the General Court, as I am sometimes inclined to regard it, is but a deserters' camp itself.

As we rowed along near the shore of Wicasuck Island, which was then covered with wood, in order to avoid the current, two men,

who looked as if they had just run out of Lowell, where they had been waylaid by the Sabbath, meaning to go to Nashua, and who now found themselves in the strange, natural, uncultivated, and unsettled part of the globe which intervenes, full of walls and barriers, a rough and uncivil place to them, seeing our boat moving so smoothly up the stream, called out from the high bank above our heads to know if we would take them as passengers, as if this were the street they had missed; that they might sit and chat and drive away the time, and so at last find themselves in Nashua. This smooth way they much preferred. But our boat was crowded with necessary furniture, and sunk low in the water, and moreover required to be worked, for even it did not progress against the stream without effort; so we were obliged to deny them passage. As we glided away with even sweeps, while the fates scattered oil in our course, the sun now sinking behind the alders on the distant shore, we could still see them far off over the water, running along the shore and climbing over the rocks and fallen trees like insects,--for they did not know any better than we that they were on an island,--the unsympathizing river ever flowing in an opposite direction; until, having reached the entrance of the island brook, which they had probably crossed upon the locks below, they found a more effectual barrier to their progress. They seemed to be learning much in a little time. They ran about like ants on a burning brand, and once more they tried the river here, and once more there, to see if water still indeed was not to be walked on, as if a new thought inspired them, and by some peculiar disposition of the limbs they could accomplish it. At length sober common sense seemed to have resumed its sway, and they concluded that what they had so long heard must be true, and resolved to ford the shallower stream. When nearly a mile distant we could see them stripping off their clothes and preparing for this experiment; yet it seemed likely that a new dilemma would arise, they were so thoughtlessly throwing away their clothes on the wrong side of the stream, as in the case of the countryman with his corn, his fox, and his goose, which had to be transported one at a time. Whether they got safely through, or went round by the locks, we never learned. We could not help being struck by the seeming, though innocent indifference of Nature to these men's necessities, while elsewhere she was equally serving others. Like a true benefactress, the secret of her service is unchangeableness. Thus is the busiest merchant, though within sight of his Lowell, put to pilgrim's shifts, and soon comes to staff and scrip and scallop shell.

We, too, who held the middle of the stream, came near experiencing a pilgrim's fate, being tempted to pursue what seemed a sturgeon or larger fish, for we remembered that this was the Sturgeon River, its dark and monstrous back alternately rising and sinking in mid-stream. We kept falling behind, but the fish kept his back well out, and did not dive, and seemed to prefer to swim against the stream, so, at any rate, he would not escape us by going out to sea. At length, having got as near as was convenient, and looking out not to get a blow from his tail, now the bow-gunner delivered his charge, while the stern-man held his ground. But the halibut-skinned monster, in one of these swift-gliding pregnant moments, without ever ceasing his bobbing up and down, saw fit, without a chuckle or other prelude, to proclaim himself a huge imprisoned spar, placed there as a buoy, to warn sailors of sunken rocks. So, each casting some blame upon the other, we withdrew quickly to safer waters.

The Scene-shifter saw fit here to close the drama, of this day, without regard to any unities which we mortals prize. Whether it might have proved tragedy, or comedy, or tragi-comedy, or pastoral, we cannot tell. This Sunday ended by the going down of the sun, leaving us still on the waves. But they who are on the water enjoy a longer and brighter twilight than they who are on the land, for here the water, as well as the atmosphere, absorbs and reflects the light, and some of the day seems to have sunk down into the waves. The light gradually forsook the deep water, as well as the deeper air, and the gloaming came to the fishes as well as to us, and more dim and gloomy to them, whose day is a perpetual twilight, though sufficiently bright for their weak and watery eyes. Vespers had already rung in many a dim and watery chapel down below, where the shadows of the weeds were extended in length over the sandy floor. The vespertine pout had already begun to flit on leathern fin, and the finny gossips withdrew from the fluvial street to creeks and coves, and other private haunts, excepting a few of stronger fin, which anchored in the stream, stemming the tide even in their dreams. Meanwhile, like a dark evening cloud, we were wafted over the cope of their sky, deepening the shadows on their deluged fields.

Having reached a retired part of the river where it spread out to sixty rods in width, we pitched our tent on the east side, in Tyngsborough, just above some patches of the beach plum, which was now nearly ripe, where the sloping bank was a sufficient

pillow, and with the bustle of sailors making the land, we transferred such stores as were required from boat to tent, and hung a lantern to the tent-pole, and so our house was ready. With a buffalo spread on the grass, and a blanket for our covering our bed was soon made. A fire crackled merrily before the entrance, so near that we could tend it without stepping abroad, and when we had supped, we put out the blaze, and closed the door, and with the semblance of domestic comfort, sat up to read the Gazetteer, to learn our latitude and longitude, and write the journal of the voyage, or listened to the wind and the rippling of the river till sleep overtook us. There we lay under an oak on the bank of the stream, near to some farmer's cornfield, getting sleep, and forgetting where we were; a great blessing, that we are obliged to forget our enterprises every twelve hours. Minks, muskrats, meadow-mice, woodchucks, squirrels, skunks, rabbits, foxes, and weasels, all inhabit near, but keep very close while you are there. The river sucking and eddying away all night down toward the marts and the seaboard, a great wash and freshet, and no small enterprise to reflect on. Instead of the Scythian vastness of the Billerica night, and its wild musical sounds, we were kept awake by the boisterous sport of some Irish laborers on the railroad, wafted to us over the water, still unwearied and unresting on this seventh day, who would not have done with whirling up and down the track with ever increasing velocity and still reviving shouts, till late in the night.

One sailor was visited in his dreams this night by the Evil Destinies, and all those powers that are hostile to human life, which constrain and oppress the minds of men, and make their path seem difficult and narrow, and beset with dangers, so that the most innocent and worthy enterprises appear insolent and a tempting of fate, and the gods go not with us. But the other happily passed a serene and even ambrosial or immortal night, and his sleep was dreamless, or only the atmosphere of pleasant dreams remained, a happy natural sleep until the morning; and his cheerful spirit soothed and reassured his brother, for whenever they meet, the Good Genius is sure to prevail.

MONDAY.

"I thynke for to touche also
The worlde whiche neweth everie daie,
So as I can, so as I maie."

^Gower^.

"The hie sheryfe of Notynghame,
Hym holde in your mynd."
Robin Hood Ballads.

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"His shoote it was but loosely shott,
Yet flewe not the arrowe in vaine,
For it mett one of the sheriffe's men,
And William a Trent was slaine."
Robin Hood Ballads.

"Gazed on the heavens for what he missed on Earth."
Britania's Pastorale.

[page]

MONDAY.

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When the first light dawned on the earth and the birds, awoke,
and the brave river was heard rippling confidently seaward, and
the nimble early rising wind rustled the oak leaves about our
tent, all men having reinforced their bodies and their souls with
sleep, and cast aside doubt and fear, were invited to unattempted
adventures.

"All courageous knichtis
Agains the day dichtis
The breest-plate that bricht is,
 To feght with their foue.
The stoned steed stampis
Throw curage and crampis,
Syne on the land lampis;
 The night is neir gone."

One of us took the boat over to the opposite shore, which was flat and accessible, a quarter of a mile distant, to empty it of water and wash out the clay, while the other kindled a fire and got breakfast ready. At an early hour we were again on our way, rowing through the fog as before, the river already awake, and a million crisped waves come forth to meet the sun when he should show himself. The countrymen, recruited by their day of rest, were already stirring, and had begun to cross the ferry on the business of the week. This ferry was as busy as a beaver dam, and all the world seemed anxious to get across the Merrimack River at this particular point, waiting to get set over,—children with their two cents done up in paper, jail-birds broke loose and constable with warrant, travellers from distant lands to distant lands, men and women to whom the Merrimack River was a bar. There stands a gig in the gray morning, in the mist, the impatient traveller pacing the wet shore with whip in hand, and shouting through the fog after the regardless Charon and his retreating ark, as if he might throw that passenger overboard and return forthwith for himself; he will compensate him. He is to break his fast at some unseen place on the opposite side. It may be Ledyard or the Wandering Jew. Whence, pray, did he come out of the foggy night? and whither through the sunny day will he go? We observe only his transit; important to us, forgotten by him, transiting all day. There are two of them. May be, they are Virgil and Dante. But when they crossed the Styx, none were seen bound up or down the stream, that I remember. It is only a *_transjectus_*, a transitory voyage, like life itself, none but the long-lived gods bound up or down the stream. Many of these Monday men are ministers, no doubt, reseeking their parishes with hired horses, with sermons in their valises all read and gutted, the day after never with them. They cross each other's routes all the country over like woof and warp, making a garment of loose texture; vacation now for six days. They stop to pick nuts and berries, and gather apples by the wayside at their leisure.

Good religious men, with the love of men in their hearts, and the means to pay their toll in their pockets. We got over this ferry chain without scraping, rowing athwart the tide of travel,--no toll for us that day.

The fog dispersed and we rowed leisurely along through Tyngsborough, with a clear sky and a mild atmosphere, leaving the habitations of men behind and penetrating yet farther into the territory of ancient Dunstable. It was from Dunstable, then a frontier town, that the famous Captain Lovewell, with his company, marched in quest of the Indians on the 18th of April, 1725. He was the son of "an ensign in the army of Oliver Cromwell, who came to this country, and settled at Dunstable, where he died at the great age of one hundred and twenty years." In the words of the old nursery tale, sung about a hundred years ago,--

"He and his valiant soldiers did range the woods full wide,
And hardships they endured to quell the Indian's pride."

In the shaggy pine forest of Pequawket they met the "rebel Indians," and prevailed, after a bloody fight, and a remnant returned home to enjoy the fame of their victory. A township called Lovewell's Town, but now, for some reason, or perhaps without reason, Pembroke, was granted them by the State.

"Of all our valiant English, there were but thirty-four,
And of the rebel Indians, there were about four-score;
And sixteen of our English did safely home return,
The rest were killed and wounded, for which we all must mourn.

"Our worthy Capt. Lovewell among them there did die,
They killed Lieut. Robbins, and wounded good young Frye,
Who was our English Chaplin; he many Indians slew,
And some of them he scalped while bullets round him flew."

Our brave forefathers have exterminated all the Indians, and their degenerate children no longer dwell in garrisoned houses nor hear any war-whoop in their path. It would be well, perchance, if many an "English Chaplin" in these days could exhibit as unquestionable trophies of his valor as did "good young Frye." We have need to be as sturdy pioneers still as Miles Standish, or Church, or Lovewell. We are to follow on another trail, it is true, but one as convenient for ambushes.

What if the Indians are exterminated, are not savages as grim
prowling about the clearings to-day?--

"And braving many dangers and hardships in the way,
They safe arrived at Dunstable the thirteenth (?) day of May."

But they did not all "safe arrive in Dunstable the thirteenth,"
or the fifteenth, or the thirtieth "day of May." Eleazer Davis
and Josiah Jones, both of Concord, for our native town had seven
men in this fight, Lieutenant Farwell, of Dunstable, and Jonathan
Frye, of Andover, who were all wounded, were left behind,
creeping toward the settlements. "After travelling several
miles, Frye was left and lost," though a more recent poet has
assigned him company in his last hours.

"A man he was of comely form,
Polished and brave, well learned and kind;
Old Harvard's learned halls he left
Far in the wilds a grave to find.

"Ah! now his blood-red arm he lifts;
His closing lids he tries to raise;
And speak once more before he dies,
In supplication and in praise.

"He prays kind Heaven to grant success,
Brave Lovewell's men to guide and bless,
And when they've shed their heart-blood true,
To raise them all to happiness."

* * * * *

"Lieutenant Farwell took his hand,
His arm around his neck he threw,
And said, 'Brave Chaplain, I could wish
That Heaven had made me die for you.'"

* * * * *

Farwell held out eleven days. "A tradition says," as we learn
from the History of Concord, "that arriving at a pond with
Lieut. Farwell, Davis pulled off one of his moccasins, cut it in
strings, on which he fastened a hook, caught some fish, fried and
ate them. They refreshed him, but were injurious to Farwell, who
died soon after." Davis had a ball lodged in his body, and his
right hand shot off; but on the whole, he seems to have been less

damaged than his companion. He came into Berwick after being out fourteen days. Jones also had a ball lodged in his body, but he likewise got into Saco after fourteen days, though not in the best condition imaginable. "He had subsisted," says an old journal, "on the spontaneous vegetables of the forest; and cranberries which he had eaten came out of wounds he had received in his body." This was also the case with Davis. The last two reached home at length, safe if not sound, and lived many years in a crippled state to enjoy their pension.

But alas! of the crippled Indians, and their adventures in the woods,--

"For as we are informed, so thick and fast they fell,
Scarce twenty of their number at night did get home well,"--

how many balls lodged with them, how fared their cranberries, what Berwick or Saco they got into, and finally what pension or township was granted them, there is no journal to tell.

It is stated in the History of Dunstable, that just before his last march, Lovewell was warned to beware of the ambuscades of the enemy, but "he replied, 'that he did not care for them,' and bending down a small elm beside which he was standing into a bow, declared 'that he would treat the Indians in the same way.' This elm is still standing [in Nashua], a venerable and magnificent tree."

Meanwhile, having passed the Horseshoe Interval in Tyngsborough, where the river makes a sudden bend to the northwest,--for our reflections have anticipated our progress somewhat,--we were advancing farther into the country and into the day, which last proved almost as golden as the preceding, though the slight bustle and activity of the Monday seemed to penetrate even to this scenery. Now and then we had to muster all our energy to get round a point, where the river broke rippling over rocks, and the maples trailed their branches in the stream, but there was generally a backwater or eddy on the side, of which we took advantage. The river was here about forty rods wide and fifteen feet deep. Occasionally one ran along the shore, examining the country, and visiting the nearest farm-houses, while the other followed the windings of the stream alone, to meet his companion at some distant point, and hear the report of his adventures; how

the farmer praised the coolness of his well, and his wife offered the stranger a draught of milk, or the children quarrelled for the only transparency in the window that they might get sight of the man at the well. For though the country seemed so new, and no house was observed by us, shut in between the banks that sunny day, we did not have to travel far to find where men inhabited, like wild bees, and had sunk wells in the loose sand and loam of the Merrimack. There dwelt the subject of the Hebrew scriptures, and the Esprit des Lois, where a thin vaporous smoke curled up through the noon. All that is told of mankind, of the inhabitants of the Upper Nile, and the Sunderbunds, and Timbuctoo, and the Orinoko, was experience here. Every race and class of men was represented. According to Belknap, the historian of New Hampshire, who wrote sixty years ago, here too, perchance, dwelt "new lights," and free thinking men even then. "The people in general throughout the State," it is written, "are professors of the Christian religion in some form or other. There is, however, a sort of _wise men_ who pretend to reject it; but they have not yet been able to substitute a better in its place."

The other voyageur, perhaps, would in the mean while have seen a brown hawk, or a woodchuck, or a musquash creeping under the alders.

We occasionally rested in the shade of a maple or a willow, and drew forth a melon for our refreshment, while we contemplated at our leisure the lapse of the river and of human life; and as that current, with its floating twigs and leaves, so did all things pass in review before us, while far away in cities and marts on this very stream, the old routine was proceeding still. There is, indeed, a tide in the affairs of men, as the poet says, and yet as things flow they circulate, and the ebb always balances the flow. All streams are but tributary to the ocean, which itself does not stream, and the shores are unchanged, but in longer periods than man can measure. Go where we will, we discover infinite change in particulars only, not in generals. When I go into a museum and see the mummies wrapped in their linen bandages, I see that the lives of men began to need reform as long ago as when they walked the earth. I come out into the streets, and meet men who declare that the time is near at hand for the redemption of the race. But as men lived in Thebes, so do they live in Dunstable to-day. "Time drinketh up the essence of every great and noble action which ought to be performed, and is delayed in the execution." So says Veeshnoo Sarma; and we

perceive that the schemers return again and again to common sense and labor. Such is the evidence of history.

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the Suns."

There are secret articles in our treaties with the gods, of more importance than all the rest, which the historian can never know.

There are many skilful apprentices, but few master workmen. On every hand we observe a truly wise practice, in education, in morals, and in the arts of life, the embodied wisdom of many an ancient philosopher. Who does not see that heresies have some time prevailed, that reforms have already taken place? All this worldly wisdom might be regarded as the once unamiable heresy of some wise man. Some interests have got a footing on the earth which we have not made sufficient allowance for. Even they who first built these barns and cleared the land thus, had some valor. The abrupt epochs and chasms are smoothed down in history as the inequalities of the plain are concealed by distance. But unless we do more than simply learn the trade of our time, we are but apprentices, and not yet masters of the art of life.

Now that we are casting away these melon seeds, how can we help feeling reproach? He who eats the fruit, should at least plant the seed; aye, if possible, a better seed than that whose fruit he has enjoyed. Seeds! there are seeds enough which need only to be stirred in with the soil where they lie, by an inspired voice or pen, to bear fruit of a divine flavor. O thou spendthrift! Defray thy debt to the world; eat not the seed of institutions, as the luxurious do, but plant it rather, while thou devourest the pulp and tuber for thy subsistence; that so, perchance, one variety may at last be found worthy of preservation.

There are moments when all anxiety and stated toil are becalmed in the infinite leisure and repose of nature. All laborers must have their nooning, and at this season of the day, we are all, more or less, Asiatics, and give over all work and reform. While lying thus on our oars by the side of the stream, in the heat of the day, our boat held by an osier put through the staple in its prow, and slicing the melons, which are a fruit of the East, our thoughts reverted to Arabia, Persia, and Hindostan, the lands of contemplation and dwelling-places of the ruminant nations. In

the experience of this noontide we could find some apology even for the instinct of the opium, betel, and tobacco chewers. Mount Saber, according to the French traveller and naturalist, Botta, is celebrated for producing the Kat-tree, of which "the soft tops of the twigs and tender leaves are eaten," says his reviewer, "and produce an agreeable soothing excitement, restoring from fatigue, banishing sleep, and disposing to the enjoyment of conversation." We thought that we might lead a dignified Oriental life along this stream as well, and the maple and alders would be our Kat-trees.

It is a great pleasure to escape sometimes from the restless class of Reformers. What if these grievances exist? So do you and I. Think you that sitting hens are troubled with ennui these long summer days, sitting on and on in the crevice of a hay-loft, without active employment? By the faint cackling in distant barns, I judge that dame Nature is interested still to know how many eggs her hens lay. The Universal Soul, as it is called, has an interest in the stacking of hay, the foddering of cattle, and the draining of peat-meadows. Away in Scythia, away in India, it makes butter and cheese. Suppose that all farms _are_ run out, and we youths must buy old land and bring it to, still everywhere the relentless opponents of reform bear a strange resemblance to ourselves; or, perchance, they are a few old maids and bachelors, who sit round the kitchen hearth and listen to the singing of the kettle. "The oracles often give victory to our choice, and not to the order alone of the mundane periods. As, for instance, when they say that our voluntary sorrows germinate in us as the growth of the particular life we lead." The reform which you talk about can be undertaken any morning before unbarring our doors. We need not call any convention. When two neighbors begin to eat corn bread, who before ate wheat, then the gods smile from ear to ear, for it is very pleasant to them. Why do you not try it? Don't let me hinder you.

There are theoretical reformers at all times, and all the world over, living on anticipation. Wolff, travelling in the deserts of Bokhara, says, "Another party of derveeshes came to me and observed, 'The time will come when there shall be no difference between rich and poor, between high and low, when property will be in common, even wives and children.'" But forever I ask of such, What then? The derveeshes in the deserts of Bokhara and the reformers in Marlboro' Chapel sing the same song. "There's a good time coming, boys," but, asked one of the audience, in good

faith, "Can you fix the date?" Said I, "Will you help it along?"

The nonchalance and *_dolce-far-niente_* air of nature and society hint at infinite periods in the progress of mankind. The States have leisure to laugh from Maine to Texas at some newspaper joke, and New England shakes at the double-entendres of Australian circles, while the poor reformer cannot get a hearing.

Men do not fail commonly for want of knowledge, but for want of prudence to give wisdom the preference. What we need to know in any case is very simple. It is but too easy to establish another durable and harmonious routine. Immediately all parts of nature consent to it. Only make something to take the place of something, and men will behave as if it was the very thing they wanted. They *_must_* behave, at any rate, and will work up any material. There is always a present and extant life, be it better or worse, which all combine to uphold. We should be slow to mend, my friends, as slow to require mending, "Not hurling, according to the oracle, a transcendent foot towards piety." The language of excitement is at best picturesque merely. You must be calm before you can utter oracles. What was the excitement of the Delphic priestess compared with the calm wisdom of Socrates?--or whoever it was that was wise.--Enthusiasm is a supernatural serenity.

"Men find that action is another thing
Than what they in discoursing papers read;
The world's affairs require in managing
More arts than those wherein you clerks proceed."

As in geology, so in social institutions, we may discover the causes of all past change in the present invariable order of society. The greatest appreciable physical revolutions are the work of the light-footed air, the stealthy-paced water, and the subterranean fire. Aristotle said, "As time never fails, and the universe is eternal, neither the Tanais nor the Nile can have flowed forever." We are independent of the change we detect. The longer the lever the less perceptible its motion. It is the slowest pulsation which is the most vital. The hero then will know how to wait, as well as to make haste. All good abides with him who waiteth *_wisely_*; we shall sooner overtake the dawn by remaining here than by hurrying over the hills of the west. Be assured that every man's success is in proportion to his *_average_* ability. The meadow flowers spring and bloom where the

waters annually deposit their slime, not where they reach in some freshet only. A man is not his hope, nor his despair, nor yet his past deed. We know not yet what we have done, still less what we are doing. Wait till evening, and other parts of our day's work will shine than we had thought at noon, and we shall discover the real purport of our toil. As when the farmer has reached the end of the furrow and looks back, he can tell best where the pressed earth shines most.

To one who habitually endeavors to contemplate the true state of things, the political state can hardly be said to have any existence whatever. It is unreal, incredible, and insignificant to him, and for him to endeavor to extract the truth from such lean material is like making sugar from linen rags, when sugar-cane may be had. Generally speaking, the political news, whether domestic or foreign, might be written to-day for the next ten years, with sufficient accuracy. Most revolutions in society have not power to interest, still less alarm us; but tell me that our rivers are drying up, or the genus pine dying out in the country, and I might attend. Most events recorded in history are more remarkable than important, like eclipses of the sun and moon, by which all are attracted, but whose effects no one takes the trouble to calculate.

But will the government never be so well administered, inquired one, that we private men shall hear nothing about it? "The king answered: At all events, I require a prudent and able man, who is capable of managing the state affairs of my kingdom. The ex-minister said: The criterion, O Sire! of a wise and competent man is, that he will not meddle with such like matters." Alas that the ex-minister should have been so nearly right!

In my short experience of human life, the outward obstacles, if there were any such, have not been living men, but the institutions of the dead. It is grateful to make one's way through this latest generation as through dewy grass. Men are as innocent as the morning to the unsuspecting.

"And round about good morrows fly,
As if day taught humanity."

Not being Reve of this Shire,

"The early pilgrim blithe he hailed,
That o'er the hills did stray,
And many an early husbandman,
That he met on the way";--

thieves and robbers all, nevertheless. I have not so surely foreseen that any Cossack or Chippeway would come to disturb the honest and simple commonwealth, as that some monster institution would at length embrace and crush its free members in its scaly folds; for it is not to be forgotten, that while the law holds fast the thief and murderer, it lets itself go loose. When I have not paid the tax which the State demanded for that protection which I did not want, itself has robbed me; when I have asserted the liberty it presumed to declare, itself has imprisoned me. Poor creature! if it knows no better I will not blame it. If it cannot live but by these means, I can. I do not wish, it happens, to be associated with Massachusetts, either in holding slaves or in conquering Mexico. I am a little better than herself in these respects.--As for Massachusetts, that huge she Briareus, Argus and Colchian Dragon conjoined, set to watch the Heifer of the Constitution and the Golden Fleece, we would not warrant our respect for her, like some compositions, to preserve its qualities through all weathers.--Thus it has happened, that not the Arch Fiend himself has been in my way, but these toils which tradition says were originally spun to obstruct him. They are cobwebs and trifling obstacles in an earnest man's path, it is true, and at length one even becomes attached to his unswept and undusted garret. I love man--kind, but I hate the institutions of the dead un-kind. Men execute nothing so faithfully as the wills of the dead, to the last codicil and letter. _They_ rule this world, and the living are but their executors. Such foundation too have our lectures and our sermons, commonly. They are all _Dudleian;_ and piety derives its origin still from that exploit of _pius Aeneas_, who bore his father, Anchises, on his shoulders from the ruins of Troy. Or rather, like some Indian tribes, we bear about with us the mouldering relics of our ancestors on our shoulders. If, for instance, a man asserts the value of individual liberty over the merely political commonweal, his neighbor still tolerates him, that he who is _living near_ him, sometimes even sustains him, but never the State. Its officer, as a living man, may have human virtues and a thought in his brain, but as the tool of an institution, a jailer or constable it may be, he is not a whit superior to his prison key or his staff. Herein is the tragedy;

that men doing outrage to their proper natures, even those called wise and good, lend themselves to perform the office of inferior and brutal ones. Hence come war and slavery in; and what else may not come in by this opening? But certainly there are modes by which a man may put bread into his mouth which will not prejudice him as a companion and neighbor.

"Now turn again, turn again, said the pinder,
For a wrong way you have gone,
For you have forsaken the king's highway,
And made a path over the corn."

Undoubtedly, countless reforms are called for, because society is not animated, or instinct enough with life, but in the condition of some snakes which I have seen in early spring, with alternate portions of their bodies torpid and flexible, so that they could wriggle neither way. All men are partially buried in the grave of custom, and of some we see only the crown of the head above ground. Better are the physically dead, for they more lively rot. Even virtue is no longer such if it be stagnant. A man's life should be constantly as fresh as this river. It should be the same channel, but a new water every instant.

"Virtues as rivers pass,
But still remains that virtuous man there was."

Most men have no inclination, no rapids, no cascades, but marshes, and alligators, and miasma instead. We read that when in the expedition of Alexander, Onesicritus was sent forward to meet certain of the Indian sect of Gymnosophists, and he had told them of those new philosophers of the West, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Diogenes, and their doctrines, one of them named Dandamis answered, that "They appeared to him to have been men of genius, but to have lived with too passive a regard for the laws." The philosophers of the West are liable to this rebuke still. "They say that Lieou-hia-hoei, and Chao-lien did not sustain to the end their resolutions, and that they dishonored their character. Their language was in harmony with reason and justice; while their acts were in harmony with the sentiments of men."

Chateaubriand said: "There are two things which grow stronger in the breast of man, in proportion as he advances in years: the love of country and religion. Let them be never so much forgotten in youth, they sooner or later present themselves to us

arrayed in all their charms, and excite in the recesses of our hearts an attachment justly due to their beauty." It may be so. But even this infirmity of noble minds marks the gradual decay of youthful hope and faith. It is the allowed infidelity of age. There is a saying of the Yolooffs, "He who was born first has the greatest number of old clothes," consequently M. Chateaubriand has more old clothes than I have. It is comparatively a faint and reflected beauty that is admired, not an essential and intrinsic one. It is because the old are weak, feel their mortality, and think that they have measured the strength of man. They will not boast; they will be frank and humble. Well, let them have the few poor comforts they can keep. Humility is still a very human virtue. They look back on life, and so see not into the future. The prospect of the young is forward and unbounded, mingling the future with the present. In the declining day the thoughts make haste to rest in darkness, and hardly look forward to the ensuing morning. The thoughts of the old prepare for night and slumber. The same hopes and prospects are not for him who stands upon the rosy mountain-tops of life, and him who expects the setting of his earthly day.

I must conclude that Conscience, if that be the name of it, was not given us for no purpose, or for a hinderance. However flattering order and expediency may look, it is but the repose of a lethargy, and we will choose rather to be awake, though it be stormy, and maintain ourselves on this earth and in this life, as we may, without signing our death-warrant. Let us see if we cannot stay here, where He has put us, on his own conditions. Does not his law reach as far as his light? The expedients of the nations clash with one another, only the absolutely right is expedient for all.

There are some passages in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, well known to scholars, of which I am reminded in this connection. *Antigone* has resolved to sprinkle sand on the dead body of her brother *Polynices*, notwithstanding the edict of King *Creon* condemning to death that one who should perform this service, which the Greeks deemed so important, for the enemy of his country; but *Ismene*, who is of a less resolute and noble spirit, declines taking part with her sister in this work, and says,--

"I, therefore, asking those under the earth to consider me, that I am compelled to do thus, will obey those who are placed in office; for to do extreme things is not wise."

ANTIGONE

"I would not ask you, nor would you, if you still wished, do it joyfully with me. Be such as seems good to you. But I will bury him. It is glorious for me doing this to die. I beloved will lie with him beloved, having, like a criminal, done what is holy; since the time is longer which it is necessary for me to please those below, than those here, for there I shall always lie. But if it seems good to you, hold in dishonor things which are honored by the gods."

ISMENE

"I indeed do not hold them in dishonor; but to act in opposition to the citizens I am by nature unable."

Antigone being at length brought before King Creon, he asks,--

"Did you then dare to transgress these laws?"

ANTIGONE

"For it was not Zeus who proclaimed these to me, nor Justice who dwells with the gods below; it was not they who established these laws among men. Nor did I think that your proclamations were so strong, as, being a mortal, to be able to transcend the unwritten and immovable laws of the gods. For not something now and yesterday, but forever these live, and no one knows from what time they appeared. I was not about to pay the penalty of violating these to the gods, fearing the presumption of any man. For I well knew that I should die, and why not? even if you had not proclaimed it."

This was concerning the burial of a dead body.

The wisest conservatism is that of the Hindoos. "Immemorial custom is transcendent law," says Menu. That is, it was the custom of the gods before men used it. The fault of our New

England custom is that it is memorial. What is morality but immemorial custom? Conscience is the chief of conservatives. "Perform the settled functions," says Kreeشنا in the Bhagvat-Geeta; "action is preferable to inaction. The journey of thy mortal frame may not succeed from inaction."--"A man's own calling with all its faults, ought not to be forsaken. Every undertaking is involved in its faults as the fire in its smoke."--"The man who is acquainted with the whole, should not drive those from their works who are slow of comprehension, and less experienced than himself."--"Wherefore, O Arjoon, resolve to fight," is the advice of the God to the irresolute soldier who fears to slay his best friends. It is a sublime conservatism; as wide as the world, and as unwearied as time; preserving the universe with Asiatic anxiety, in that state in which it appeared to their minds. These philosophers dwell on the inevitability and unchangeableness of laws, on the power of temperament and constitution, the three goon or qualities, and the circumstances of birth and affinity. The end is an immense consolation; eternal absorption in Brahma. Their speculations never venture beyond their own table-lands, though they are high and vast as they. Buoyancy, freedom, flexibility, variety, possibility, which also are qualities of the Unnamed, they deal not with. The undeserved reward is to be earned by an everlasting moral drudgery; the incalculable promise of the morrow is, as it were, weighed. And who will say that their conservatism has not been effectual? "Assuredly," says a French translator, speaking of the antiquity and durability of the Chinese and Indian nations, and of the wisdom of their legislators, "there are there some vestiges of the eternal laws which govern the world."

Christianity, on the other hand, is humane, practical, and, in a large sense, radical. So many years and ages of the gods those Eastern sages sat contemplating Brahm, uttering in silence the mystic "Om," being absorbed into the essence of the Supreme Being, never going out of themselves, but subsiding farther and deeper within; so infinitely wise, yet infinitely stagnant; until, at last, in that same Asia, but in the western part of it, appeared a youth, wholly unforetold by them,--not being absorbed into Brahm, but bringing Brahm down to earth and to mankind; in whom Brahm had awaked from his long sleep, and exerted himself, and the day began,--a new avatar. The Brahman had never thought to be a brother of mankind as well as a child of God. Christ is the prince of Reformers and Radicals. Many expressions in the New Testament come naturally to the lips of all Protestants, and

it furnishes the most pregnant and practical texts. There is no harmless dreaming, no wise speculation in it, but everywhere a substratum of good sense. It never *_reflects_*, but it *_repents_*. There is no poetry in it, we may say nothing regarded in the light of beauty merely, but moral truth is its object. All mortals are convicted by its conscience.

The New Testament is remarkable for its pure morality; the best of the Hindo Scripture, for its pure intellectuality. The reader is nowhere raised into and sustained in a higher, purer, or *_rarer_* region of thought than in the Bhagvat-Geeta. Warren Hastings, in his sensible letter recommending the translation of this book to the Chairman of the East India Company, declares the original to be "of a sublimity of conception, reasoning, and diction almost unequalled," and that the writings of the Indian philosophers "will survive when the British dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist, and when the sources which it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance." It is unquestionably one of the noblest and most sacred scriptures which have come down to us. Books are to be distinguished by the grandeur of their topics, even more than by the manner in which they are treated. The Oriental philosophy approaches, easily, loftier themes than the modern aspires to; and no wonder if it sometimes prattle about them. *_It_* only assigns their due rank respectively to Action and Contemplation, or rather does full justice to the latter. Western philosophers have not conceived of the significance of Contemplation in their sense. Speaking of the spiritual discipline to which the Brahmans subjected themselves, and the wonderful power of abstraction to which they attained, instances of which had come under his notice, Hastings says:--

"To those who have never been accustomed to the separation of the mind from the notices of the senses, it may not be easy to conceive by what means such a power is to be attained; since even the most studious men of our hemisphere will find it difficult so to restrain their attention, but that it will wander to some object of present sense or recollection; and even the buzzing of a fly will sometimes have the power to disturb it. But if we are told that there have been men who were successively, for ages past, in the daily habit of abstracted contemplation, begun in the earliest period of youth, and continued in many to the maturity of age, each adding some portion of knowledge to the store accumulated by his predecessors; it is not assuming too much to conclude, that

as the mind ever gathers strength, like the body, by exercise, so in such an exercise it may in each have acquired the faculty to which they aspired, and that their collective studies may have led them to the discovery of new tracts and combinations of sentiment, totally different from the doctrines with which the learned of other nations are acquainted; doctrines which, however speculative and subtle, still as they possess the advantage of being derived from a source so free from every adventitious mixture, may be equally founded in truth with the most simple of our own."

"The forsaking of works" was taught by Kreeshna to the most ancient of men, and handed down from age to age,

"until at length, in the course of time, the mighty art was lost.

"In wisdom is to be found every work without exception," says Kreeshna.

"Although thou wert the greatest of all offenders, thou shalt be able to cross the gulf of sin with the bark of wisdom."

"There is not anything in this world to be compared with wisdom for purity."

"The action stands at a distance inferior to the application of wisdom."

The wisdom of a Moonee "is confirmed, when, like the tortoise, he can draw in all his members, and restrain them from their wonted purposes."

"Children only, and not the learned, speak of the speculative and the practical doctrines as two. They are but one. For both obtain the selfsame end, and the place which is gained by the followers of the one is gained by the followers of the other."

"The man enjoyeth not freedom from action, from the non-commencement of that which he hath to do; nor doth he obtain happiness from a total inactivity. No one ever resteth a moment inactive. Every man is involuntarily urged to act by those principles which are inherent in his nature. The man who restraineth his active faculties, and sitteth down with his

mind attentive to the objects of his senses, is called one of an astrayed soul, and the practiser of deceit. So the man is praised, who, having subdued all his passions, performeth with his active faculties all the functions of life, unconcerned about the event."

"Let the motive be in the deed and not in the event. Be not one whose motive for action is the hope of reward. Let not thy life be spent in inaction."

"For the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without affection, obtaineth the Supreme."

"He who may behold, as it were inaction in action, and action in inaction, is wise amongst mankind. He is a perfect performer of all duty."

"Wise men call him a Pandeet, whose every undertaking is free from the idea of desire, and whose actions are consumed by the fire of wisdom. He abandoneth the desire of a reward of his actions; he is always contented and independent; and although he may be engaged in a work, he, as it were, doeth nothing."

"He is both a Yogee and a Sannyasee who performeth that which he hath to do independent of the fruit thereof; not he who liveth without the sacrificial fire and without action."

"He who enjoyeth but the Amreeta which is left of his offerings, obtaineth the eternal spirit of Brahm, the Supreme."

What, after all, does the practicalness of life amount to? The things immediate to be done are very trivial. I could postpone them all to hear this locust sing. The most glorious fact in my experience is not anything that I have done or may hope to do, but a transient thought, or vision, or dream, which I have had. I would give all the wealth of the world, and all the deeds of all the heroes, for one true vision. But how can I communicate with the gods who am a pencil-maker on the earth, and not be insane?

"I am the same to all mankind," says Kreesna; "there is not one who is worthy of my love or hatred."

This teaching is not practical in the sense in which the New Testament is. It is not always sound sense in practice. The Brahman never proposes courageously to assault evil, but patiently to starve it out. His active faculties are paralyzed by the idea of cast, of impassable limits, of destiny and the tyranny of time. Kreeshna's argument, it must be allowed, is defective. No sufficient reason is given why Arjoon should fight. Arjoon may be convinced, but the reader is not, for his judgment is not "formed upon the speculative doctrines of the Sankhya Sastra." "Seek an asylum in wisdom alone"; but what is wisdom to a Western mind? The duty of which he speaks is an arbitrary one. When was it established? The Brahman's virtue consists in doing, not right, but arbitrary things. What is that which a man "hath to do"? What is "action"? What are the "settled functions"? What is "a man's own religion," which is so much better than another's? What is "a man's own particular calling"? What are the duties which are appointed by one's birth? It is a defence of the institution of casts, of what is called the "natural duty" of the Kshetree, or soldier, "to attach himself to the discipline," "not to flee from the field," and the like. But they who are unconcerned about the consequences of their actions are not therefore unconcerned about their actions.

Behold the difference between the Oriental and the Occidental. The former has nothing to do in this world; the latter is full of activity. The one looks in the sun till his eyes are put out; the other follows him prone in his westward course. There is such a thing as caste, even in the West; but it is comparatively faint; it is conservatism here. It says, forsake not your calling, outrage no institution, use no violence, rend no bonds; the State is thy parent. Its virtue or manhood is wholly filial. There is a struggle between the Oriental and Occidental in every nation; some who would be forever contemplating the sun, and some who are hastening toward the sunset. The former class says to the latter, When you have reached the sunset, you will be no nearer to the sun. To which the latter replies, But we so prolong the day. The former "walketh but in that night, when all things go to rest the night of time." The contemplative Moonee sleepeth but in the day of time, when all things wake."

To conclude these extracts, I can say, in the words of Sanjay, "As, O mighty Prince! I recollect again and again this holy and wonderful dialogue of Kreeshna and Arjoon, I continue more and more to rejoice; and as I recall to my memory the more than

miraculous form of Haree, my astonishment is great, and I marvel and rejoice again and again! Wherever Kreeshna the God of devotion may be, wherever Arjoon the mighty bowman may be, there too, without doubt, are fortune, riches, victory, and good conduct. This is my firm belief."

I would say to the readers of Scriptures, if they wish for a good book, read the Bhagvat-Geeta, an episode to the Mahabharat, said to have been written by Kreeshna Dwypayen Veias,--known to have been written by----, more than four thousand years ago,--it matters not whether three or four, or when,--translated by Charles Wilkins. It deserves to be read with reverence even by Yankees, as a part of the sacred writings of a devout people; and the intelligent Hebrew will rejoice to find in it a moral grandeur and sublimity akin to those of his own Scriptures.

To an American reader, who, by the advantage of his position, can see over that strip of Atlantic coast to Asia and the Pacific, who, as it were, sees the shore slope upward over the Alps to the Himmaleh Mountains, the comparatively recent literature of Europe often appears partial and clannish, and, notwithstanding the limited range of his own sympathies and studies, the European writer who presumes that he is speaking for the world, is perceived by him to speak only for that corner of it which he inhabits. One of the rarest of England's scholars and critics, in his classification of the worthies of the world, betrays the narrowness of his European culture and the exclusiveness of his reading. None of her children has done justice to the poets and philosophers of Persia or of India. They have even been better known to her merchant scholars than to her poets and thinkers by profession. You may look in vain through English poetry for a single memorable verse inspired by these themes. Nor is Germany to be excepted, though her philological industry is indirectly serving the cause of philosophy and poetry. Even Goethe wanted that universality of genius which could have appreciated the philosophy of India, if he had more nearly approached it. His genius was more practical, dwelling much more in the regions of the understanding, and was less native to contemplation than the genius of those sages. It is remarkable that Homer and a few Hebrews are the most Oriental names which modern Europe, whose literature has taken its rise since the decline of the Persian, has admitted into her list of Worthies, and perhaps the worthiest of mankind, and the fathers of modern thinking,--for the contemplations of those Indian sages have influenced, and still

influence, the intellectual development of mankind,--whose works even yet survive in wonderful completeness, are, for the most part, not recognized as ever having existed. If the lions had been the painters it would have been otherwise. In every one's youthful dreams philosophy is still vaguely but inseparably, and with singular truth, associated with the East, nor do after years discover its local habitation in the Western world. In comparison with the philosophers of the East, we may say that modern Europe has yet given birth to none. Beside the vast and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagvat-Geeta, even our Shakespeare seems sometimes youthfully green and practical merely. Some of these sublime sentences, as the Chaldaean oracles of Zoroaster, still surviving after a thousand revolutions and translations, alone make us doubt if the poetic form and dress are not transitory, and not essential to the most effective and enduring expression of thought. *Ex oriente lux* may still be the motto of scholars, for the Western world has not yet derived from the East all the light which it is destined to receive thence.

It would be worthy of the age to print together the collected Scriptures or Sacred Writings of the several nations, the Chinese, the Hindoos, the Persians, the Hebrews, and others, as the Scripture of mankind. The New Testament is still, perhaps, too much on the lips and in the hearts of men to be called a Scripture in this sense. Such a juxtaposition and comparison might help to liberalize the faith of men. This is a work which Time will surely edit, reserved to crown the labors of the printing-press. This would be the Bible, or Book of Books, which let the missionaries carry to the uttermost parts of the earth.

While engaged in these reflections, thinking ourselves the only navigators of these waters, suddenly a canal-boat, with its sail set, glided round a point before us, like some huge river beast, and changed the scene in an instant; and then another and another glided into sight, and we found ourselves in the current of commerce once more. So we threw our rinds in the water for the fishes to nibble, and added our breath to the life of living men. Little did we think, in the distant garden in which we had planted the seed and reared this fruit, where it would be eaten. Our melons lay at home on the sandy bottom of the Merrimack, and our potatoes in the sun and water at the bottom of the boat looked like a fruit of the country. Soon, however, we were delivered from this fleet of junks, and possessed the river in

solitude, once more rowing steadily upward through the noon, between the territories of Nashua on the one hand, and Hudson, once Nottingham, on the other. From time to time we scared up a kingfisher or a summer duck, the former flying rather by vigorous impulses than by steady and patient steering with that short rudder of his, sounding his rattle along the fluvial street.

Erelong another scow hove in sight, creeping down the river; and hailing it, we attached ourselves to its side, and floated back in company, chatting with the boatmen, and obtaining a draught of cooler water from their jug. They appeared to be green hands from far among the hills, who had taken this means to get to the seaboard, and see the world; and would possibly visit the Falkland Isles, and the China seas, before they again saw the waters of the Merrimack, or, perchance, they would not return this way forever. They had already embarked the private interests of the landsman in the larger venture of the race, and were ready to mess with mankind, reserving only the till of a chest to themselves. But they too were soon lost behind a point, and we went croaking on our way alone. What grievance has its root among the New Hampshire hills? we asked; what is wanting to human life here, that these men should make such haste to the antipodes? We prayed that their bright anticipations might not be rudely disappointed.

Though all the fates should prove unkind,
Leave not your native land behind.
The ship, becalmed, at length stands still;
The steed must rest beneath the hill;
But swiftly still our fortunes pace
To find us out in every place.

The vessel, though her masts be firm,
Beneath her copper bears a worm;
Around the cape, across the line,
Till fields of ice her course confine;
It matters not how smooth the breeze,
How shallow or how deep the seas,
Whether she bears Manilla twine,
Or in her hold Madeira wine,
Or China teas, or Spanish hides,
In port or quarantine she rides;
Far from New England's blustering shore,
New England's worm her hulk shall bore,

And sink her in the Indian seas,
Twine, wine, and hides, and China teas.

We passed a small desert here on the east bank, between Tyngsborough and Hudson, which was interesting and even refreshing to our eyes in the midst of the almost universal greenness. This sand was indeed somewhat impressive and beautiful to us. A very old inhabitant, who was at work in a field on the Nashua side, told us that he remembered when corn and grain grew there, and it was a cultivated field. But at length the fishermen, for this was a fishing place, pulled up the bushes on the shore, for greater convenience in hauling their seines, and when the bank was thus broken, the wind began to blow up the sand from the shore, until at length it had covered about fifteen acres several feet deep. We saw near the river, where the sand was blown off down to some ancient surface, the foundation of an Indian wigwam exposed, a perfect circle of burnt stones, four or five feet in diameter, mingled with fine charcoal, and the bones of small animals which had been preserved in the sand. The surrounding sand was sprinkled with other burnt stones on which their fires had been built, as well as with flakes of arrow-head stone, and we found one perfect arrow-head. In one place we noticed where an Indian had sat to manufacture arrow-heads out of quartz, and the sand was sprinkled with a quart of small glass-like chips about as big as a fourpence, which he had broken off in his work. Here, then, the Indians must have fished before the whites arrived. There was another similar sandy tract about half a mile above this.

Still the noon prevailed, and we turned the prow aside to bathe, and recline ourselves under some buttonwoods, by a ledge of rocks, in a retired pasture sloping to the water's edge, and skirted with pines and hazels, in the town of Hudson. Still had India, and that old noontide philosophy, the better part of our thoughts.

It is always singular, but encouraging, to meet with common sense in very old books, as the Heetopades of Veeshnoo Sarma; a playful wisdom which has eyes behind as well as before, and oversees itself. It asserts their health and independence of the experience of later times. This pledge of sanity cannot be spared in a book, that it sometimes pleasantly reflect upon itself. The story and fabulous portion of this book winds

loosely from sentence to sentence as so many oases in a desert, and is as indistinct as a camel's track between Mourzouk and Darfour. It is a comment on the flow and freshness of modern books. The reader leaps from sentence to sentence, as from one stepping-stone to another, while the stream of the story rushes past unregarded. The Bhagvat-Geeta is less sententious and poetic, perhaps, but still more wonderfully sustained and developed. Its sanity and sublimity have impressed the minds even of soldiers and merchants. It is the characteristic of great poems that they will yield of their sense in due proportion to the hasty and the deliberate reader. To the practical they will be common sense, and to the wise wisdom; as either the traveller may wet his lips, or an army may fill its water-casks at a full stream.

One of the most attractive of those ancient books that I have met with is the Laws of Menu. According to Sir William Jones, "Vyasa, the son of Parasara, has decided that the Veda, with its Angas, or the six compositions deduced from it, the revealed system of medicine, the Puranas or sacred histories, and the code of Menu, were four works of supreme authority, which ought never to be shaken by arguments merely human." The last is believed by the Hindoos "to have been promulged in the beginning of time, by Menu, son or grandson of Brahma," and "first of created beings"; and Brahma is said to have "taught his laws to Menu in a hundred thousand verses, which Menu explained to the primitive world in the very words of the book now translated." Others affirm that they have undergone successive abridgments for the convenience of mortals, "while the gods of the lower heaven and the band of celestial musicians are engaged in studying the primary code."—"A number of glosses or comments on Menu were composed by the Munis, or old philosophers, whose treatises, together with that before us, constitute the Dherma Sastra, in a collective sense, or Body of Law." Culluca Bhatta was one of the more modern of these.

Every sacred book, successively, has been accepted in the faith that it was to be the final resting-place of the sojourning soul; but after all, it was but a caravansary which supplied refreshment to the traveller, and directed him farther on his way to Isphahan or Bagdat. Thank God, no Hindoo tyranny prevailed at the framing of the world, but we are freemen of the universe, and not sentenced to any caste.

I know of no book which has come down to us with grander pretensions than this, and it is so impersonal and sincere that it is never offensive nor ridiculous. Compare the modes in which modern literature is advertised with the prospectus of this book, and think what a reading public it addresses, what criticism it expects. It seems to have been uttered from some eastern summit, with a sober morning prescience in the dawn of time, and you cannot read a sentence without being elevated as upon the table-land of the Ghauts. It has such a rhythm as the winds of the desert, such a tide as the Ganges, and is as superior to criticism as the Himmaleh Mountains. Its tone is of such unrelaxed fibre, that even at this late day, unworn by time, it wears the English and the Sanscrit dress indifferently; and its fixed sentences keep up their distant fires still, like the stars, by whose dissipated rays this lower world is illumined. The whole book by noble gestures and inclinations renders many words unnecessary. English sense has toiled, but Hindoo wisdom never perspired. Though the sentences open as we read them, unexpensively, and at first almost unmeaningly, as the petals of a flower, they sometimes startle us with that rare kind of wisdom which could only have been learned from the most trivial experience; but it comes to us as refined as the porcelain earth which subsides to the bottom of the ocean. They are clean and dry as fossil truths, which have been exposed to the elements for thousands of years, so impersonally and scientifically true that they are the ornament of the parlor and the cabinet. Any moral philosophy is exceedingly rare. This of Menu addresses our privacy more than most. It is a more private and familiar, and, at the same time, a more public and universal word, than is spoken in parlor or pulpit now-a-days. As our domestic fowls are said to have their original in the wild pheasant of India, so our domestic thoughts have their prototypes in the thoughts of her philosophers. We are dabbling in the very elements of our present conventional and actual life; as if it were the primeval conventicle where how to eat, and to drink, and to sleep, and maintain life with adequate dignity and sincerity, were the questions to be decided. It is later and more intimate with us even than the advice of our nearest friends. And yet it is true for the widest horizon, and read out of doors has relation to the dim mountain line, and is native and aboriginal there. Most books belong to the house and street only, and in the fields their leaves feel very thin. They are bare and obvious, and have no halo nor haze about them. Nature lies far and fair behind them all. But this, as it proceeds from, so it addresses, what

is deepest and most abiding in man. It belongs to the noontide of the day, the midsummer of the year, and after the snows have melted, and the waters evaporated in the spring, still its truth speaks freshly to our experience. It helps the sun to shine, and his rays fall on its page to illustrate it. It spends the mornings and the evenings, and makes such an impression on us overnight as to awaken us before dawn, and its influence lingers around us like a fragrance late into the day. It conveys a new gloss to the meadows and the depths of the wood, and its spirit, like a more subtle ether, sweeps along with the prevailing winds of a country. The very locusts and crickets of a summer day are but later or earlier glosses on the Dherma Sastra of the Hindoos, a continuation of the sacred code. As we have said, there is an orientalism in the most restless pioneer, and the farthest west is but the farthest east. While we are reading these sentences, this fair modern world seems only a reprint of the Laws of Menu with the gloss of Culluca. Tried by a New England eye, or the mere practical wisdom of modern times, they are the oracles of a race already in its dotage, but held up to the sky, which is the only impartial and incorruptible ordeal, they are of a piece with its depth and serenity, and I am assured that they will have a place and significance as long as there is a sky to test them by.

Give me a sentence which no intelligence can understand. There must be a kind of life and palpitation to it, and under its words a kind of blood must circulate forever. It is wonderful that this sound should have come down to us from so far, when the voice of man can be heard so little way, and we are not now within ear-shot of any contemporary. The woodcutters have here felled an ancient pine forest, and brought to light to these distant hills a fair lake in the southwest; and now in an instant it is distinctly shown to these woods as if its image had travelled hither from eternity. Perhaps these old stumps upon the knoll remember when anciently this lake gleamed in the horizon. One wonders if the bare earth itself did not experience emotion at beholding again so fair a prospect. That fair water lies there in the sun thus revealed, so much the prouder and fairer because its beauty needed not to be seen. It seems yet lonely, sufficient to itself, and superior to observation.--So are these old sentences like serene lakes in the southwest, at length revealed to us, which have so long been reflecting our own sky in their bosom.

The great plain of India lies as in a cup between the Himmaleh and

the ocean on the north and south, and the Brahmapootra and Indus, on the east and west, wherein the primeval race was received. We will not dispute the story. We are pleased to read in the natural history of the country, of the "pine, larch, spruce, and silver fir," which cover the southern face of the Himmaleh range; of the "gooseberry, raspberry, strawberry," which from an imminent temperate zone overlook the torrid plains. So did this active modern life have even then a foothold and lurking-place in the midst of the stateliness and contemplativeness of those Eastern plains. In another era the "lily of the valley, cowslip, dandelion," were to work their way down into the plain, and bloom in a level zone of their own reaching round the earth. Already has the era of the temperate zone arrived, the era of the pine and the oak, for the palm and the banian do not supply the wants of this age. The lichens on the summits of the rocks will perchance find their level ere long.

As for the tenets of the Brahmans, we are not so much concerned to know what doctrines they held, as that they were held by any. We can tolerate all philosophies, Atomists, Pneumatologists, Atheists, Theists,--Plato, Aristotle, Leucippus, Democritus, Pythagoras, Zoroaster, and Confucius. It is the attitude of these men, more than any communication which they make, that attracts us. Between them and their commentators, it is true, there is an endless dispute. But if it comes to this, that you compare notes, then you are all wrong. As it is, each takes us up into the serene heavens, whither the smallest bubble rises as surely as the largest, and paints earth and sky for us. Any sincere thought is irresistible. The very austerity of the Brahmans is tempting to the devotional soul, as a more refined and nobler luxury. Wants so easily and gracefully satisfied seem like a more refined pleasure. Their conception of creation is peaceful as a dream. "When that power awakes, then has this world its full expansion; but when he slumbers with a tranquil spirit, then the whole system fades away." In the very indistinctness of their theogony a sublime truth is implied. It hardly allows the reader to rest in any supreme first cause, but directly it hints at a supreamer still which created the last, and the Creator is still behind in create.

Nor will we disturb the antiquity of this Scripture; "From fire, from air, and from the sun," it was "milked out." One might as well investigate the chronology of light and heat. Let the sun shine. Menu understood this matter best, when he said, "Those

best know the divisions of days and nights who understand that the day of Brahma, which endures to the end of a thousand such ages, [infinite ages, nevertheless, according to mortal reckoning,] gives rise to virtuous exertions; and that his night endures as long as his day." Indeed, the Mussulman and Tartar dynasties are beyond all dating. Methinks I have lived under them myself. In every man's brain is the Sanscrit. The Vedas and their Angas are not so ancient as serene contemplation. Why will we be imposed on by antiquity? Is the babe young? When I behold it, it seems more venerable than the oldest man; it is more ancient than Nestor or the Sibyls, and bears the wrinkles of father Saturn himself. And do we live but in the present? How broad a line is that? I sit now on a stump whose rings number centuries of growth. If I look around I see that the soil is composed of the remains of just such stumps, ancestors to this. The earth is covered with mould. I thrust this stick many aeons deep into its surface, and with my heel make a deeper furrow than the elements have ploughed here for a thousand years. If I listen, I hear the peep of frogs which is older than the slime of Egypt, and the distant drumming of a partridge on a log, as if it were the pulse-beat of the summer air. I raise my fairest and freshest flowers in the old mould. Why, what we would fain call new is not skin deep; the earth is not yet stained by it. It is not the fertile ground which we walk on, but the leaves which flutter over our heads. The newest is but the oldest made visible to our senses. When we dig up the soil from a thousand feet below the surface, we call it new, and the plants which spring from it; and when our vision pierces deeper into space, and detects a remoter star, we call that new also. The place where we sit is called Hudson,--once it was Nottingham,--once --

We should read history as little critically as we consider the landscape, and be more interested by the atmospheric tints and various lights and shades which the intervening spaces create, than by its groundwork and composition. It is the morning now turned evening and seen in the west,--the same sun, but a new light and atmosphere. Its beauty is like the sunset; not a fresco painting on a wall, flat and bounded, but atmospheric and roving or free. In reality, history fluctuates as the face of the landscape from morning to evening. What is of moment is its hue and color. Time hides no treasures; we want not its _then_, but its _now_. We do not complain that the mountains in the horizon are blue and indistinct; they are the more like the

heavens.

Of what moment are facts that can be lost,--which need to be commemorated? The monument of death will outlast the memory of the dead. The pyramids do not tell the tale which was confided to them; the living fact commemorates itself. Why look in the dark for light? Strictly speaking, the historical societies have not recovered one fact from oblivion, but are themselves, instead of the fact, that is lost. The researcher is more memorable than the researched. The crowd stood admiring the mist and the dim outlines of the trees seen through it, when one of their number advanced to explore the phenomenon, and with fresh admiration all eyes were turned on his dimly retreating figure. It is astonishing with how little co-operation of the societies the past is remembered. Its story has indeed had another muse than has been assigned it. There is a good instance of the manner in which all history began, in Alwakidis' Arabian Chronicle: "I was informed by _Ahmed Almatin Aljorhami_, who had it from _Rephaa Ebn Kais Alamiri_, who had it from _Saiph Ebn Fabalah Alchatquarmi_, who had it from _Thabet Ebn Alkamah_, who said he was present at the action." These fathers of history were not anxious to preserve, but to learn the fact; and hence it was not forgotten. Critical acumen is exerted in vain to uncover the past; the _past_ cannot be _presented_; we cannot know what we are not. But one veil hangs over past, present, and future, and it is the province of the historian to find out, not what was, but what is. Where a battle has been fought, you will find nothing but the bones of men and beasts; where a battle is being fought, there are hearts beating. We will sit on a mound and muse, and not try to make these skeletons stand on their legs again. Does Nature remember, think you, that they _were_ men, or not rather that they _are_ bones?

Ancient history has an air of antiquity. It should be more modern. It is written as if the spectator should be thinking of the backside of the picture on the wall, or as if the author expected that the dead would be his readers, and wished to detail to them their own experience. Men seem anxious to accomplish an orderly retreat through the centuries, earnestly rebuilding the works behind, as they are battered down by the encroachments of time; but while they loiter, they and their works both fall a prey to the arch enemy. History has neither the venerableness of antiquity, nor the freshness of the modern. It does as if it would go to the beginning of things, which natural history might with reason assume to do; but consider the Universal History, and

then tell us,--when did burdock and plantain sprout first? It has been so written for the most part, that the times it describes are with remarkable propriety called dark ages. They are dark, as one has observed, because we are so in the dark about them. The sun rarely shines in history, what with the dust and confusion; and when we meet with any cheering fact which implies the presence of this luminary, we excerpt and modernize it. As when we read in the history of the Saxons that Edwin of Northumbria "caused stakes to be fixed in the highways where he had seen a clear spring," and "brazen dishes were chained to them to refresh the weary sojourner, whose fatigues Edwin had himself experienced." This is worth all Arthur's twelve battles.

"Through the shadow of the world we sweep into the younger day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."
Than fifty years of Europe better one New England ray!

Biography, too, is liable to the same objection; it should be autobiography. Let us not, as the Germans advise, endeavor to go abroad and vex our bowels that we may be somebody else to explain him. If I am not I, who will be?

But it is fit that the Past should be dark; though the darkness is not so much a quality of the past as of tradition. It is not a distance of time, but a distance of relation, which makes thus dusky its memorials. What is near to the heart of this generation is fair and bright still. Greece lies outspread fair and sunshiny in floods of light, for there is the sun and daylight in her literature and art. Homer does not allow us to forget that the sun shone,--nor Phidias, nor the Parthenon. Yet no era has been wholly dark, nor will we too hastily submit to the historian, and congratulate ourselves on a blaze of light. If we could pierce the obscurity of those remote years, we should find it light enough; only there is not our day. Some creatures are made to see in the dark. There has always been the same amount of light in the world. The new and missing stars, the comets and eclipses, do not affect the general illumination, for only our glasses appreciate them. The eyes of the oldest fossil remains, they tell us, indicate that the same laws of light prevailed then as now. Always the laws of light are the same, but the modes and degrees of seeing vary. The gods are partial to no era, but steadily shines their light in the heavens, while the eye of the beholder is turned to stone. There was but the sun and the eye from the first. The ages have not

added a new ray to the one, nor altered a fibre of the other.

If we will admit time into our thoughts at all, the mythologies, those vestiges of ancient poems, wrecks of poems, so to speak, the world's inheritance, still reflecting some of their original splendor, like the fragments of clouds tinted by the rays of the departed sun; reaching into the latest summer day, and allying this hour to the morning of creation; as the poet sings:--

"Fragments of the lofty strain
Float down the tide of years,
As buoyant on the stormy main
A parted wreck appears."

These are the materials and hints for a history of the rise and progress of the race; how, from the condition of ants, it arrived at the condition of men, and arts were gradually invented. Let a thousand surmises shed some light on this story. We will not be confined by historical, even geological periods which would allow us to doubt of a progress in human affairs. If we rise above this wisdom for the day, we shall expect that this morning of the race, in which it has been supplied with the simplest necessities, with corn, and wine, and honey, and oil, and fire, and articulate speech, and agricultural and other arts, reared up by degrees from the condition of ants to men, will be succeeded by a day of equally progressive splendor; that, in the lapse of the divine periods, other divine agents and godlike men will assist to elevate the race as much above its present condition.

But we do not know much about it.

Thus did one voyageur waking dream, while his companion slumbered on the bank. Suddenly a boatman's horn was heard echoing from shore to shore, to give notice of his approach to the farmer's wife with whom he was to take his dinner, though in that place only muskrats and kingfishers seemed to hear. The current of our reflections and our slumbers being thus disturbed, we weighed anchor once more.

As we proceeded on our way in the afternoon, the western bank became lower, or receded farther from the channel in some places, leaving a few trees only to fringe the water's edge; while the eastern rose abruptly here and there into wooded hills fifty or

sixty feet high. The bass, *Tilia Americana*, also called the lime or linden, which was a new tree to us, overhung the water with its broad and rounded leaf, interspersed with clusters of small hard berries now nearly ripe, and made an agreeable shade for us sailors. The inner bark of this genus is the bast, the material of the fisherman's matting, and the ropes and peasant's shoes of which the Russians make so much use, and also of nets and a coarse cloth in some places. According to poets, this was once Philyra, one of the Oceanides. The ancients are said to have used its bark for the roofs of cottages, for baskets, and for a kind of paper called Philyra. They also made bucklers of its wood, "on account of its flexibility, lightness, and resiliency." It was once much used for carving, and is still in demand for sounding-boards of piano-fortes and panels of carriages, and for various uses for which toughness and flexibility are required. Baskets and cradles are made of the twigs. Its sap affords sugar, and the honey made from its flowers is said to be preferred to any other. Its leaves are in some countries given to cattle, a kind of chocolate has been made of its fruit, a medicine has been prepared from an infusion of its flowers, and finally, the charcoal made of its wood is greatly valued for gunpowder.

The sight of this tree reminded us that we had reached a strange land to us. As we sailed under this canopy of leaves we saw the sky through its chinks, and, as it were, the meaning and idea of the tree stamped in a thousand hieroglyphics on the heavens. The universe is so aptly fitted to our organization that the eye wanders and reposes at the same time. On every side there is something to soothe and refresh this sense. Look up at the tree-tops and see how finely Nature finishes off her work there. See how the pines spire without end higher and higher, and make a graceful fringe to the earth. And who shall count the finer cobwebs that soar and float away from their utmost tops, and the myriad insects that dodge between them. Leaves are of more various forms than the alphabets of all languages put together; of the oaks alone there are hardly two alike, and each expresses its own character.

In all her products Nature only develops her simplest germs. One would say that it was no great stretch of invention to create birds. The hawk, which now takes his flight over the top of the wood, was at first, perchance, only a leaf which fluttered in its aisles. From rustling leaves she came in the course of ages to

the loftier flight and clear carol of the bird.

Salmon Brook comes in from the west under the railroad, a mile and a half below the village of Nashua. We rowed up far enough into the meadows which border it to learn its piscatorial history from a haymaker on its banks. He told us that the silver eel was formerly abundant here, and pointed to some sunken creels at its mouth. This man's memory and imagination were fertile in fishermen's tales of floating isles in bottomless ponds, and of lakes mysteriously stocked with fishes, and would have kept us till nightfall to listen, but we could not afford to loiter in this roadstead, and so stood out to our sea again. Though we never trod in those meadows, but only touched their margin with our hands, we still retain a pleasant memory of them.

Salmon Brook, whose name is said to be a translation from the Indian, was a favorite haunt of the aborigines. Here, too, the first white settlers of Nashua planted, and some dents in the earth where their houses stood and the wrecks of ancient apple-trees are still visible. About one mile up this stream stood the house of old John Lovewell, who was an ensign in the army of Oliver Cromwell, and the father of "famous Captain Lovewell." He settled here before 1690, and died about 1754, at the age of one hundred and twenty years. He is thought to have been engaged in the famous Narragansett swamp fight, which took place in 1675, before he came here. The Indians are said to have spared him in succeeding wars on account of his kindness to them. Even in 1700 he was so old and gray-headed that his scalp was worth nothing, since the French Governor offered no bounty for such. I have stood in the dent of his cellar on the bank of the brook, and talked there with one whose grandfather had, whose father might have, talked with Lovewell. Here also he had a mill in his old age, and kept a small store. He was remembered by some who were recently living, as a hale old man who drove the boys out of his orchard with his cane. Consider the triumphs of the mortal man, and what poor trophies it would have to show, to wit:--He cobbled shoes without glasses at a hundred, and cut a handsome swath at a hundred and five! Lovewell's house is said to have been the first which Mrs. Dustan reached on her escape from the Indians. Here probably the hero of Pequawket was born and bred. Close by may be seen the cellar and the gravestone of Joseph Hassell, who, as is elsewhere recorded, with his wife Anna, and son Benjamin, and Mary Marks, "were slain by our Indian enemies on September 2d, [1691,] in the evening." As Gookin

observed on a previous occasion, "The Indian rod upon the English backs had not yet done God's errand." Salmon Brook near its mouth is still a solitary stream, meandering through woods and meadows, while the then uninhabited mouth of the Nashua now resounds with the din of a manufacturing town.

A stream from Otternic Pond in Hudson comes in just above Salmon Brook, on the opposite side. There was a good view of Uncannunuc, the most conspicuous mountain in these parts, from the bank here, seen rising over the west end of the bridge above. We soon after passed the village of Nashua, on the river of the same name, where there is a covered bridge over the Merrimack. The Nashua, which is one of the largest tributaries, flows from Wachusett Mountain, through Lancaster, Groton, and other towns, where it has formed well-known elm-shaded meadows, but near its mouth it is obstructed by falls and factories, and did not tempt us to explore it.

Far away from here, in Lancaster, with another companion, I have crossed the broad valley of the Nashua, over which we had so long looked westward from the Concord hills without seeing it to the blue mountains in the horizon. So many streams, so many meadows and woods and quiet dwellings of men had lain concealed between us and those Delectable Mountains;--from yonder hill on the road to Tyngsborough you may get a good view of them. There where it seemed uninterrupted forest to our youthful eyes, between two neighboring pines in the horizon, lay the valley of the Nashua, and this very stream was even then winding at its bottom, and then, as now, it was here silently mingling its waters with the Merrimack. The clouds which floated over its meadows and were born there, seen far in the west, gilded by the rays of the setting sun, had adorned a thousand evening skies for us. But as it were, by a turf wall this valley was concealed, and in our journey to those hills it was first gradually revealed to us. Summer and winter our eyes had rested on the dim outline of the mountains, to which distance and indistinctness lent a grandeur not their own, so that they served to interpret all the allusions of poets and travellers. Standing on the Concord Cliffs we thus spoke our mind to them:--

With frontier strength ye stand your ground,
With grand content ye circle round,
Tumultuous silence for all sound,
Ye distant nursery of rills,

Monadnock and the Peterborough Hills;--
Firm argument that never stirs,
Outcircling the philosophers,--
Like some vast fleet,
Sailing through rain and sleet,
Through winter's cold and summer's heat;
Still holding on upon your high emprise,
Until ye find a shore amid the skies;
Not skulking close to land,
With cargo contraband,
For they who sent a venture out by ye
Have set the Sun to see
Their honesty.
Ships of the line, each one,
Ye westward run,
Convoying clouds,
Which cluster in your shrouds,
Always before the gale,
Under a press of sail,
With weight of metal all untold,--
I seem to feel ye in my firm seat here,
Immeasurable depth of hold,
And breadth of beam, and length of running gear

Methinks ye take luxurious pleasure
In your novel western leisure;
So cool your brows and freshly blue,
As Time had naught for ye to do;
For ye lie at your length,
An unappropriated strength,
Unhewn primeval timber,
For knees so stiff, for masts so limber;
The stock of which new earths are made,
One day to be our _western_ trade,
Fit for the stanchions of a world
Which through the seas of space is hurled.

While we enjoy a lingering ray,
Ye still o'ertop the western day,
Reposing yonder on God's croft
Like solid stacks of hay;
So bold a line as ne'er was writ
On any page by human wit;
The forest glows as if

An enemy's camp-fires shone
Along the horizon,
Or the day's funeral pyre
Were lighted there;
Edged with silver and with gold,
The clouds hang o'er in damask fold,
And with such depth of amber light
The west is dight,
Where still a few rays slant,
That even Heaven seems extravagant.

Watatic Hill

Lies on the horizon's sill
Like a child's toy left overnight,
And other duds to left and right,
On the earth's edge, mountains and trees
Stand as they were on air graven,
Or as the vessels in a haven
Await the morning breeze.
I fancy even
Through your defiles windeth the way to heaven;
And yonder still, in spite of history's page,
Linger the golden and the silver age;
Upon the laboring gale
The news of future centuries is brought,
And of new dynasties of thought,
From your remotest vale.

But special I remember thee,
Wachusett, who like me
Standest alone without society.
Thy far blue eye,
A remnant of the sky,
Seen through the clearing or the gorge,
Or from the windows of the forge,
Doth leaven all it passes by.
Nothing is true
But stands 'tween me and you,
Thou western pioneer,
Who know'st not shame nor fear,
By venturous spirit driven
Under the eaves of heaven;
And canst expand thee there,
And breathe enough of air?
Even beyond the West

Thou migratest,
Into unclouded tracts,
Without a pilgrim's axe,
Cleaving thy road on high
With thy well-tempered brow,
And mak'st thyself a clearing in the sky.
Upholding heaven, holding down earth,
Thy pastime from thy birth;
Not steadied by the one, nor leaning on the other,
May I approve myself thy worthy brother!

At length, like Rasselas and other inhabitants of happy valleys, we had resolved to scale the blue wall which bounded the western horizon, though not without misgivings that thereafter no visible fairy-land would exist for us. But it would be long to tell of our adventures, and we have no time this afternoon, transporting ourselves in imagination up this hazy Nashua valley, to go over again that pilgrimage. We have since made many similar excursions to the principal mountains of New England and New York, and even far in the wilderness, and have passed a night on the summit of many of them. And now, when we look again westward from our native hills, Wachusett and Monadnock have retreated once more among the blue and fabulous mountains in the horizon, though our eyes rest on the very rocks on both of them, where we have pitched our tent for a night, and boiled our hasty-pudding amid the clouds.

As late as 1724 there was no house on the north side of the Nashua, but only scattered wigwams and grisly forests between this frontier and Canada. In September of that year, two men who were engaged in making turpentine on that side, for such were the first enterprises in the wilderness, were taken captive and carried to Canada by a party of thirty Indians. Ten of the inhabitants of Dunstable, going to look for them, found the hoops of their barrel cut, and the turpentine spread on the ground. I have been told by an inhabitant of Tyngsborough, who had the story from his ancestors, that one of these captives, when the Indians were about to upset his barrel of turpentine, seized a pine knot and flourishing it, swore so resolutely that he would kill the first who touched it, that they refrained, and when at length he returned from Canada he found it still standing. Perhaps there was more than one barrel. However this may have been, the scouts knew by marks on the trees, made with coal mixed

with grease, that the men were not killed, but taken prisoners. One of the company, named Farwell, perceiving that the turpentine had not done spreading, concluded that the Indians had been gone but a short time, and they accordingly went in instant pursuit. Contrary to the advice of Farwell, following directly on their trail up the Merrimack, they fell into an ambush near Thornton's Ferry, in the present town of Merrimack, and nine were killed, only one, Farwell, escaping after a vigorous pursuit. The men of Dunstable went out and picked up their bodies, and carried them all down to Dunstable and buried them. It is almost word for word as in the Robin Hood ballad:--

"They carried these foresters into fair Nottingham,
As many there did know,
They digged them graves in their churchyard,
And they buried them all a-row."

Nottingham is only the other side of the river, and they were not exactly all a-row. You may read in the churchyard at Dunstable, under the "Memento Mori," and the name of one of them, how they "departed this life," and

"This man with seven more that lies in
this grave was slew all in a day by
the Indians."

The stones of some others of the company stand around the common grave with their separate inscriptions. Eight were buried here, but nine were killed, according to the best authorities.

"Gentle river, gentle river,
Lo, thy streams are stained with gore,
Many a brave and noble captain
Floats along thy willowed shore.

"All beside thy limpid waters,
All beside thy sands so bright,
Indian Chiefs and Christian warriors
Joined in fierce and mortal fight."

It is related in the History of Dunstable, that on the return of Farwell the Indians were engaged by a fresh party which they compelled to retreat, and pursued as far as the Nashua, where they fought across the stream at its mouth. After the departure

of the Indians, the figure of an Indian's head was found carved by them on a large tree by the shore, which circumstance has given its name to this part of the village of Nashville,--the "Indian Head." "It was observed by some judicious," says Gookin, referring to Philip's war, "that at the beginning of the war the English soldiers made a nothing of the Indians, and many spake words to this effect: that one Englishman was sufficient to chase ten Indians; many reckoned it was no other but _Veni, vidi, vici._" But we may conclude that the judicious would by this time have made a different observation.

Farwell appears to have been the only one who had studied his profession, and understood the business of hunting Indians. He lived to fight another day, for the next year he was Lovewell's lieutenant at Pequawket, but that time, as we have related, he left his bones in the wilderness. His name still reminds us of twilight days and forest scouts on Indian trails, with an uneasy scalp;--an indispensable hero to New England. As the more recent poet of Lovewell's fight has sung, halting a little but bravely still:--

"Then did the crimson streams that flowed
Seem like the waters of the brook,
That brightly shine, that loudly dash,
Far down the cliffs of Agiochook."

These battles sound incredible to us. I think that posterity will doubt if such things ever were; if our bold ancestors who settled this land were not struggling rather with the forest shadows, and not with a copper-colored race of men. They were vapors, fever and ague of the unsettled woods. Now, only a few arrow-heads are turned up by the plough. In the Pelasgic, the Etruscan, or the British story, there is nothing so shadowy and unreal.

It is a wild and antiquated looking graveyard, overgrown with bushes, on the high-road, about a quarter of a mile from and overlooking the Merrimack, with a deserted mill-stream bounding it on one side, where lie the earthly remains of the ancient inhabitants of Dunstable. We passed it three or four miles below here. You may read there the names of Lovewell, Farwell, and many others whose families were distinguished in Indian warfare. We noticed there two large masses of granite more than a foot thick and rudely squared, lying flat on the ground over the

remains of the first pastor and his wife.

It is remarkable that the dead lie everywhere under stones,--

"Strata jacent passim _suo_ quseque sub" _lapide_--

corpora, we might say, if the measure allowed. When the stone is a slight one, it does not oppress the spirits of the traveller to meditate by it; but these did seem a little heathenish to us; and so are all large monuments over men's bodies, from the pyramids down. A monument should at least be "star-y-pointing," to indicate whither the spirit is gone, and not prostrate, like the body it has deserted. There have been some nations who could do nothing but construct tombs, and these are the only traces which they have left. They are the heathen. But why these stones, so upright and emphatic, like exclamation-points? What was there so remarkable that lived? Why should the monument be so much more enduring than the fame which it is designed to perpetuate,--a stone to a bone? "Here lies,"--"Here lies";--why do they not sometimes write, There rises? Is it a monument to the body only that is intended? "Having reached the term of his _natural_ life";--would it not be truer to say, Having reached the term of his _unnatural_ life? The rarest quality in an epitaph is truth. If any character is given, it should be as severely true as the decision of the three judges below, and not the partial testimony of friends. Friends and contemporaries should supply only the name and date, and leave it to posterity to write the epitaph.

Here lies an honest man,
Rear-Admiral Van.

Faith, then ye have
Two in one grave,
For in his favor,
Here too lies the Engraver.

Fame itself is but an epitaph; as late, as false, as true. But they only are the true epitaphs which Old Mortality retouches.

A man might well pray that he may not taboo or curse any portion

of nature by being buried in it. For the most part, the best man's spirit makes a fearful sprite to haunt his grave, and it is therefore much to the credit of Little John, the famous follower of Robin Hood, and reflecting favorably on his character, that his grave was "long celebrated for the yielding of excellent whetstones." I confess that I have but little love for such collections as they have at the Catacombs, Pere la Chaise, Mount Auburn, and even this Dunstable graveyard. At any rate, nothing but great antiquity can make graveyards interesting to me. I have no friends there. It may be that I am not competent to write the poetry of the grave. The farmer who has skimmed his farm might perchance leave his body to Nature to be ploughed in, and in some measure restore its fertility. We should not retard but forward her economies.

Soon the village of Nashua was out of sight, and the woods were gained again, and we rowed slowly on before sunset, looking for a solitary place in which to spend the night. A few evening clouds began to be reflected in the water and the surface was dimpled only here and there by a muskrat crossing the stream. We camped at length near Penichook Brook, on the confines of what is now Nashville, by a deep ravine, under the skirts of a pine wood, where the dead pine-leaves were our carpet, and their tawny boughs stretched overhead. But fire and smoke soon tamed the scene; the rocks consented to be our walls, and the pines our roof. A woodside was already the fittest locality for us.

The wilderness is near as well as dear to every man. Even the oldest villages are indebted to the border of wild wood which surrounds them, more than to the gardens of men. There is something indescribably inspiring and beautiful in the aspect of the forest skirting and occasionally jutting into the midst of new towns, which, like the sand-heaps of fresh fox-burrows, have sprung up in their midst. The very uprightness of the pines and maples asserts the ancient rectitude and vigor of nature. Our lives need the relief of such a background, where the pine flourishes and the jay still screams.

We had found a safe harbor for our boat, and as the sun was setting carried up our furniture, and soon arranged our house upon the bank, and while the kettle steamed at the tent door, we chatted of distant friends and of the sights which we were to behold, and wondered which way the towns lay from us. Our cocoa was soon boiled, and supper set upon our chest, and we lengthened

out this meal, like old voyageurs, with our talk. Meanwhile we spread the map on the ground, and read in the Gazetteer when the first settlers came here and got a township granted. Then, when supper was done and we had written the journal of our voyage, we wrapped our buffaloes about us and lay down with our heads pillowed on our arms listening awhile to the distant baying of a dog, or the murmurs of the river, or to the wind, which had not gone to rest:--

The western wind came lumbering in,
Bearing a faint Pacific din,
Our evening mail, swift at the call
Of its Postmaster General;
Laden with news from Californ',
Whate'er transpired hath since morn,
How wags the world by brier and brake
From hence to Athabasca Lake;--

or half awake and half asleep, dreaming of a star which glimmered through our cotton roof. Perhaps at midnight one was awakened by a cricket shrilly singing on his shoulder, or by a hunting spider in his eye, and was lulled asleep again by some streamlet purling its way along at the bottom of a wooded and rocky ravine in our neighborhood. It was pleasant to lie with our heads so low in the grass, and hear what a tinkling ever-busy laboratory it was. A thousand little artisans beat on their anvils all night long.

Far in the night as we were falling asleep on the bank of the Merrimack, we heard some tyro beating a drum incessantly, in preparation for a country muster, as we learned, and we thought of the line,--

"When the drum beat at dead of night."

We could have assured him that his beat would be answered, and the forces be mustered. Fear not, thou drummer of the night, we too will be there. And still he drummed on in the silence and the dark. This stray sound from a far-off sphere came to our ears from time to time, far, sweet, and significant, and we listened with such an unprejudiced sense as if for the first time we heard at all. No doubt he was an insignificant drummer enough, but his music afforded us a prime and leisure hour, and we felt that we were in season wholly. These simple sounds related us to the stars. Ay, there was a logic in them so

convincing that the combined sense of mankind could never make me doubt their conclusions. I stop my habitual thinking, as if the plough had suddenly run deeper in its furrow through the crust of the world. How can I go on, who have just stepped over such a bottomless skylight in the bog of my life. Suddenly old Time winked at me,—Ah, you know me, you rogue,—and news had come that IT was well. That ancient universe is in such capital health, I think undoubtedly it will never die. Heal yourselves, doctors; by God, I live.

Then idle Time ran gadding by
And left me with Eternity alone;
I hear beyond the range of sound,
I see beyond the verge of sight,—

I see, smell, taste, hear, feel, that everlasting Something to which we are allied, at once our maker, our abode, our destiny, our very Selves; the one historic truth, the most remarkable fact which can become the distinct and uninvited subject of our thought, the actual glory of the universe; the only fact which a human being cannot avoid recognizing, or in some way forget or dispense with.

It doth expand my privacies
To all, and leave me single in the crowd.

I have seen how the foundations of the world are laid, and I have not the least doubt that it will stand a good while.

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
And only now my prime of life.
I will not doubt the love untold,
Which not my worth nor want hath bought,
Which wooed me young and woos me old,
And to this evening hath me brought.

What are ears? what is Time? that this particular series of sounds called a strain of music, an invisible and fairy troop which never brushed the dew from any mead, can be wafted down through the centuries from Homer to me, and he have been conversant with that same aerial and mysterious charm which now so tingles my ears? What a fine communication from age to age, of the fairest and noblest thoughts, the aspirations of ancient men, even such as were never communicated by speech, is music!

It is the flower of language, thought colored and curved, fluent and flexible, its crystal fountain tinged with the sun's rays, and its purling ripples reflecting the grass and the clouds. A strain of music reminds me of a passage of the Vedas, and I associate with it the idea of infinite remoteness, as well as of beauty and serenity, for to the senses that is farthest from us which addresses the greatest depth within us. It teaches us again and again to trust the remotest and finest as the divinest instinct, and makes a dream our only real experience. We feel a sad cheer when we hear it, perchance because we that hear are not one with that which is heard.

Therefore a torrent of sadness deep,
Through the strains of thy triumph is heard to sweep.

The sadness is ours. The Indian poet Calidas says in the Sacontala: "Perhaps the sadness of men on seeing beautiful forms and hearing sweet music arises from some faint remembrance of past joys, and the traces of connections in a former state of existence." As polishing expresses the vein in marble, and grain in wood, so music brings out what of heroic lurks anywhere. The hero is the sole patron of music. That harmony which exists naturally between the hero's moods and the universe the soldier would fain imitate with drum and trumpet. When we are in health all sounds fife and drum for us; we hear the notes of music in the air, or catch its echoes dying away when we awake in the dawn. Marching is when the pulse of the hero beats in unison with the pulse of Nature, and he steps to the measure of the universe; then there is true courage and invincible strength.

Plutarch says that "Plato thinks the gods never gave men music, the science of melody and harmony, for mere delectation or to tickle the ear; but that the discordant parts of the circulations and beautiful fabric of the soul, and that of it that roves about the body, and many times, for want of tune and air, breaks forth into many extravagances and excesses, might be sweetly recalled and artfully wound up to their former consent and agreement."

Music is the sound of the universal laws promulgated. It is the only assured tone. There are in it such strains as far surpass any man's faith in the loftiness of his destiny. Things are to be learned which it will be worth the while to learn. Formerly I heard these

^Rumors from an Aeolian Harp^.

There is a vale which none hath seen,
Where foot of man has never been,
Such as here lives with toil and strife,
An anxious and a sinful life.

There every virtue has its birth,
Ere it descends upon the earth,
And thither every deed returns,
Which in the generous bosom burns.

There love is warm, and youth is young,
And poetry is yet unsung,
For Virtue still adventures there,
And freely breathes her native air.

And ever, if you hearken well,
You still may hear its vesper bell,
And tread of high-souled men go by,
Their thoughts conversing with the sky.

According to Jamblichus, "Pythagoras did not procure for himself a thing of this kind through instruments or the voice, but employing a certain ineffable divinity, and which it is difficult to apprehend, he extended his ears and fixed his intellect in the sublime symphonies of the world, he alone hearing and understanding, as it appears, the universal harmony and consonance of the spheres, and the stars that are moved through them, and which produce a fuller and more intense melody than anything effected by mortal sounds."

Travelling on foot very early one morning due east from here about twenty miles, from Caleb Harriman's tavern in Hampstead toward Haverhill, when I reached the railroad in Plaistow, I heard at some distance a faint music in the air like an Aeolian harp, which I immediately suspected to proceed from the cord of the telegraph vibrating in the just awakening morning wind, and applying my ear to one of the posts I was convinced that it was so. It was the telegraph harp singing its message through the country, its message sent not by men, but by gods. Perchance, like the statue of Memnon, it resounds only in the morning, when the first rays of the sun fall on it. It was like the first lyre or shell heard on the sea-shore,—that vibrating cord high in the

air over the shores of earth. So have all things their higher and their lower uses. I heard a fairer news than the journals ever print. It told of things worthy to hear, and worthy of the electric fluid to carry the news of, not of the price of cotton and flour, but it hinted at the price of the world itself and of things which are priceless, of absolute truth and beauty.

Still the drum rolled on, and stirred our blood to fresh extravagance that night. The clarion sound and clang of corselet and buckler were heard from many a hamlet of the soul, and many a knight was arming for the fight behind the encamped stars.

"Before each van
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of Heaven the welkin burns."

Away! away! away! away!
Ye have not kept your secret well,
I will abide that other day,
Those other lands ye tell.

Has time no leisure left for these,
The acts that ye rehearse?
Is not eternity a lease
For better deeds than verse?

'T is sweet to hear of heroes dead,
To know them still alive,
But sweeter if we earn their bread,
And in us they survive.

Our life should feed the springs of fame
With a perennial wave.
As ocean feeds the babbling founts
Which find in it their grave.

Ye skies drop gently round my breast,
And be my corselet blue,
Ye earth receive my lance in rest,
My faithful charger you;

Ye stars my spear-heads in the sky,
My arrow-tips ye are;
I see the routed foemen fly,
My bright spears fixed are.

Give me an angel for a foe,
Fix now the place and time,
And straight to meet him I will go
Above the starry chime.

And with our clashing bucklers' clang
The heavenly spheres shall ring,
While bright the northern lights shall hang
Beside our tourneying.

And if she lose her champion true,
Tell Heaven not despair,
For I will be her champion new,
Her fame I will repair.

There was a high wind this night, which we afterwards learned had been still more violent elsewhere, and had done much injury to the cornfields far and near; but we only heard it sigh from time to time, as if it had no license to shake the foundations of our tent; the pines murmured, the water rippled, and the tent rocked a little, but we only laid our ears closer to the ground, while the blast swept on to alarm other men, and long before sunrise we were ready to pursue our voyage as usual.

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TUESDAY.

"On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the fields the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot."

[page]

TUESDAY.

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Long before daylight we ranged abroad, hatchet in hand, in search of fuel, and made the yet slumbering and dreaming wood resound with our blows. Then with our fire we burned up a portion of the loitering night, while the kettle sang its homely strain to the morning star. We tramped about the shore, waked all the muskrats, and scared up the bittern and birds that were asleep upon their roosts; we hauled up and upset our boat and washed it and rinsed out the clay, talking aloud as if it were broad day, until at length, by three o'clock, we had completed our preparations and were ready to pursue our voyage as usual; so, shaking the clay from our feet, we pushed into the fog.

Though we were enveloped in mist as usual, we trusted that there was a bright day behind it.

Ply the oars! away! away!
In each dew-drop of the morning
Lies the promise of a day.

Rivers from the sunrise flow,
Springing with the dewy morn;
Voyageurs 'gainst time do row,
Idle noon nor sunset know,
Ever even with the dawn.

Belknap, the historian of this State, says that, "In the neighborhood of fresh rivers and ponds, a whitish fog in the morning lying over the water is a sure indication of fair weather for that day; and when no fog is seen, rain is expected before night." That which seemed to us to invest the world was only a narrow and shallow wreath of vapor stretched over the channel of the Merrimack from the seaboard to the mountains. More extensive

fogs, however, have their own limits. I once saw the day break from the top of Saddle-back Mountain in Massachusetts, above the clouds. As we cannot distinguish objects through this dense fog, let me tell this story more at length.

I had come over the hills on foot and alone in serene summer days, plucking the raspberries by the wayside, and occasionally buying a loaf of bread at a farmer's house, with a knapsack on my back which held a few traveller's books and a change of clothing, and a staff in my hand. I had that morning looked down from the Hoosack Mountain, where the road crosses it, on the village of North Adams in the valley three miles away under my feet, showing how uneven the earth may sometimes be, and making it seem an accident that it should ever be level and convenient for the feet of man. Putting a little rice and sugar and a tin cup into my knapsack at this village, I began in the afternoon to ascend the mountain, whose summit is three thousand six hundred feet above the level of the sea, and was seven or eight miles distant by the path. My route lay up a long and spacious valley called the Bellows, because the winds rush up or down it with violence in storms, sloping up to the very clouds between the principal range and a lower mountain. There were a few farms scattered along at different elevations, each commanding a fine prospect of the mountains to the north, and a stream ran down the middle of the valley on which near the head there was a mill. It seemed a road for the pilgrim to enter upon who would climb to the gates of heaven. Now I crossed a hay-field, and now over the brook on a slight bridge, still gradually ascending all the while with a sort of awe, and filled with indefinite expectations as to what kind of inhabitants and what kind of nature I should come to at last. It now seemed some advantage that the earth was uneven, for one could not imagine a more noble position for a farm-house than this vale afforded, farther from or nearer to its head, from a glen-like seclusion overlooking the country at a great elevation between these two mountain walls.

It reminded me of the homesteads of the Huguenots, on Staten Island, off the coast of New Jersey. The hills in the interior of this island, though comparatively low, are penetrated in various directions by similar sloping valleys on a humble scale, gradually narrowing and rising to the centre, and at the head of these the Huguenots, who were the first settlers, placed their houses quite within the land, in rural and sheltered places, in

leafy recesses where the breeze played with the poplar and the gum-tree, from which, with equal security in calm and storm, they looked out through a widening vista, over miles of forest and stretching salt marsh, to the Huguenot's Tree, an old elm on the shore at whose root they had landed, and across the spacious outer bay of New York to Sandy Hook and the Highlands of Neversink, and thence over leagues of the Atlantic, perchance to some faint vessel in the horizon, almost a day's sail on her voyage to that Europe whence they had come. When walking in the interior there, in the midst of rural scenery, where there was as little to remind me of the ocean as amid the New Hampshire hills, I have suddenly, through a gap, a cleft or "clove road," as the Dutch settlers called it, caught sight of a ship under full sail, over a field of corn, twenty or thirty miles at sea. The effect was similar, since I had no means of measuring distances, to seeing a painted ship passed backwards and forwards through a magic-lantern.

But to return to the mountain. It seemed as if he must be the most singular and heavenly minded man whose dwelling stood highest up the valley. The thunder had rumbled at my heels all the way, but the shower passed off in another direction, though if it had not, I half believed that I should get above it. I at length reached the last house but one, where the path to the summit diverged to the right, while the summit itself rose directly in front. But I determined to follow up the valley to its head, and then find my own route up the steep as the shorter and more adventurous way. I had thoughts of returning to this house, which was well kept and so nobly placed, the next day, and perhaps remaining a week there, if I could have entertainment. Its mistress was a frank and hospitable young woman, who stood before me in a dishabille, busily and unconcernedly combing her long black hair while she talked, giving her head the necessary toss with each sweep of the comb, with lively, sparkling eyes, and full of interest in that lower world from which I had come, talking all the while as familiarly as if she had known me for years, and reminding me of a cousin of mine. She at first had taken me for a student from Williamstown, for they went by in parties, she said, either riding or walking, almost every pleasant day, and were a pretty wild set of fellows; but they never went by the way I was going. As I passed the last house, a man called out to know what I had to sell, for seeing my knapsack, he thought that I might be a pedler who was taking this unusual route over the ridge of the valley into South Adams. He

told me that it was still four or five miles to the summit by the path which I had left, though not more than two in a straight line from where I was, but that nobody ever went this way; there was no path, and I should find it as steep as the roof of a house. But I knew that I was more used to woods and mountains than he, and went along through his cow-yard, while he, looking at the sun, shouted after me that I should not get to the top that night. I soon reached the head of the valley, but as I could not see the summit from this point, I ascended a low mountain on the opposite side, and took its bearing with my compass. I at once entered the woods, and began to climb the steep side of the mountain in a diagonal direction, taking the bearing of a tree every dozen rods. The ascent was by no means difficult or unpleasant, and occupied much less time than it would have taken to follow the path. Even country people, I have observed, magnify the difficulty of travelling in the forest, and especially among mountains. They seem to lack their usual common sense in this. I have climbed several higher mountains without guide or path, and have found, as might be expected, that it takes only more time and patience commonly than to travel the smoothest highway. It is very rare that you meet with obstacles in this world which the humblest man has not faculties to surmount. It is true we may come to a perpendicular precipice, but we need not jump off nor run our heads against it. A man may jump down his own cellar stairs or dash his brains out against his chimney, if he is mad. So far as my experience goes, travellers generally exaggerate the difficulties of the way. Like most evil, the difficulty is imaginary; for what's the hurry? If a person lost would conclude that after all he is not lost, he is not beside himself, but standing in his own old shoes on the very spot where he is, and that for the time being he will live there; but the places that have known him, they are lost,--how much anxiety and danger would vanish. I am not alone if I stand by myself. Who knows where in space this globe is rolling? Yet we will not give ourselves up for lost, let it go where it will.

I made my way steadily upward in a straight line through a dense undergrowth of mountain laurel, until the trees began to have a scraggy and infernal look, as if contending with frost goblins, and at length I reached the summit, just as the sun was setting. Several acres here had been cleared, and were covered with rocks and stumps, and there was a rude observatory in the middle which overlooked the woods. I had one fair view of the country before

the sun went down, but I was too thirsty to waste any light in viewing the prospect, and set out directly to find water. First, going down a well-beaten path for half a mile through the low scrubby wood, till I came to where the water stood in the tracks of the horses which had carried travellers up, I lay down flat, and drank these dry, one after another, a pure, cold, spring-like water, but yet I could not fill my dipper, though I contrived little siphons of grass-stems, and ingenious aqueducts on a small scale; it was too slow a process. Then remembering that I had passed a moist place near the top, on my way up, I returned to find it again, and here, with sharp stones and my hands, in the twilight, I made a well about two feet deep, which was soon filled with pure cold water, and the birds too came and drank at it. So I filled my dipper, and, making my way back to the observatory, collected some dry sticks, and made a fire on some flat stones which had been placed on the floor for that purpose, and so I soon cooked my supper of rice, having already whittled a wooden spoon to eat it with.

I sat up during the evening, reading by the light of the fire the scraps of newspapers in which some party had wrapped their luncheon; the prices current in New York and Boston, the advertisements, and the singular editorials which some had seen fit to publish, not foreseeing under what critical circumstances they would be read. I read these things at a vast advantage there, and it seemed to me that the advertisements, or what is called the business part of a paper, were greatly the best, the most useful, natural, and respectable. Almost all the opinions and sentiments expressed were so little considered, so shallow and flimsy, that I thought the very texture of the paper must be weaker in that part and tear the more easily. The advertisements and the prices current were more closely allied to nature, and were respectable in some measure as tide and meteorological tables are; but the reading-matter, which I remembered was most prized down below, unless it was some humble record of science, or an extract from some old classic, struck me as strangely whimsical, and crude, and one-idea'd, like a school-boy's theme, such as youths write and after burn. The opinions were of that kind that are doomed to wear a different aspect to-morrow, like last year's fashions; as if mankind were very green indeed, and would be ashamed of themselves in a few years, when they had outgrown this verdant period. There was, moreover, a singular disposition to wit and humor, but rarely the slightest real success; and the apparent success was a terrible satire on the

attempt; the Evil Genius of man laughed the loudest at his best jokes. The advertisements, as I have said, such as were serious, and not of the modern quack kind, suggested pleasing and poetic thoughts; for commerce is really as interesting as nature. The very names of the commodities were poetic, and as suggestive as if they had been inserted in a pleasing poem,--Lumber, Cotton, Sugar, Hides, Guano, Logwood. Some sober, private, and original thought would have been grateful to read there, and as much in harmony with the circumstances as if it had been written on a mountain-top; for it is of a fashion which never changes, and as respectable as hides and logwood, or any natural product. What an inestimable companion such a scrap of paper would have been, containing some fruit of a mature life. What a relic! What a recipe! It seemed a divine invention, by which not mere shining coin, but shining and current thoughts, could be brought up and left there.

As it was cold, I collected quite a pile of wood and lay down on a board against the side of the building, not having any blanket to cover me, with my head to the fire, that I might look after it, which is not the Indian rule. But as it grew colder towards midnight, I at length encased myself completely in boards, managing even to put a board on top of me, with a large stone on it, to keep it down, and so slept comfortably. I was reminded, it is true, of the Irish children, who inquired what their neighbors did who had no door to put over them in winter nights as they had; but I am convinced that there was nothing very strange in the inquiry. Those who have never tried it can have no idea how far a door, which keeps the single blanket down, may go toward making one comfortable. We are constituted a good deal like chickens, which taken from the hen, and put in a basket of cotton in the chimney-corner, will often peep till they die, nevertheless, but if you put in a book, or anything heavy, which will press down the cotton, and feel like the hen, they go to sleep directly. My only companions were the mice, which came to pick up the crumbs that had been left in those scraps of paper; still, as everywhere, pensioners on man, and not unwisely improving this elevated tract for their habitation. They nibbled what was for them; I nibbled what was for me. Once or twice in the night, when I looked up, I saw a white cloud drifting through the windows, and filling the whole upper story.

This observatory was a building of considerable size, erected by the students of Williamstown College, whose buildings might be

seen by daylight gleaming far down in the valley. It would be no small advantage if every college were thus located at the base of a mountain, as good at least as one well-endowed professorship. It were as well to be educated in the shadow of a mountain as in more classical shades. Some will remember, no doubt, not only that they went to the college, but that they went to the mountain. Every visit to its summit would, as it were, generalize the particular information gained below, and subject it to more catholic tests.

I was up early and perched upon the top of this tower to see the daybreak, for some time reading the names that had been engraved there, before I could distinguish more distant objects. An "untamable fly" buzzed at my elbow with the same nonchalance as on a molasses hogshead at the end of Long Wharf. Even there I must attend to his stale humdrum. But now I come to the pith of this long digression.--As the light increased I discovered around me an ocean of mist, which by chance reached up exactly to the base of the tower, and shut out every vestige of the earth, while I was left floating on this fragment of the wreck of a world, on my carved plank, in cloudland; a situation which required no aid from the imagination to render it impressive. As the light in the east steadily increased, it revealed to me more clearly the new world into which I had risen in the night, the new _terra firma_ perchance of my future life. There was not a crevice left through which the trivial places we name Massachusetts or Vermont or New York could be seen, while I still inhaled the clear atmosphere of a July morning,--if it were July there. All around beneath me was spread for a hundred miles on every side, as far as the eye could reach, an undulating country of clouds, answering in the varied swell of its surface to the terrestrial world it veiled. It was such a country as we might see in dreams, with all the delights of paradise. There were immense snowy pastures, apparently smooth-shaven and firm, and shady vales between the vaporous mountains; and far in the horizon I could see where some luxurious misty timber jutted into the prairie, and trace the windings of a water-course, some unimagined Amazon or Orinoko, by the misty trees on its brink. As there was wanting the symbol, so there was not the substance of impurity, no spot nor stain. It was a favor for which to be forever silent to be shown this vision. The earth beneath had become such a flitting thing of lights and shadows as the clouds had been before. It was not merely veiled to me, but it had passed away like the phantom of a shadow, <skia's o'nar>, and

this new platform was gained. As I had climbed above storm and cloud, so by successive days' journeys I might reach the region of eternal day, beyond the tapering shadow of the earth; ay,

"Heaven itself shall slide,
And roll away, like melting stars that glide
Along their oily threads."

But when its own sun began to rise on this pure world, I found myself a dweller in the dazzling halls of Aurora, into which poets have had but a partial glance over the eastern hills, drifting amid the saffron-colored clouds, and playing with the rosy fingers of the Dawn, in the very path of the Sun's chariot, and sprinkled with its dewy dust, enjoying the benignant smile, and near at hand the far-darting glances of the god. The inhabitants of earth behold commonly but the dark and shadowy under-side of heaven's pavement; it is only when seen at a favorable angle in the horizon, morning or evening, that some faint streaks of the rich lining of the clouds are revealed. But my muse would fail to convey an impression of the gorgeous tapestry by which I was surrounded, such as men see faintly reflected afar off in the chambers of the east. Here, as on earth, I saw the gracious god

"Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
.
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

But never here did "Heaven's sun" stain himself.

But, alas, owing, as I think, to some unworthiness in myself, my private sun did stain himself, and

"Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly wrack on his celestial face,"--

for before the god had reached the zenith the heavenly pavement rose and embraced my wavering virtue, or rather I sank down again into that "forlorn world," from which the celestial sun had hid his visage,--

"How may a worm that crawls along the dust,
Clamber the azure mountains, thrown so high,
And fetch from thence thy fair idea just,

That in those sunny courts doth hidden lie,
Clothed with such light as blinds the angel's eye?
How may weak mortal ever hope to file
His unsmooth tongue, and his deprostrate style?
O, raise thou from his corse thy now entombed exile!"

In the preceding evening I had seen the summits of new and yet higher mountains, the Catskills, by which I might hope to climb to heaven again, and had set my compass for a fair lake in the southwest, which lay in my way, for which I now steered, descending the mountain by my own route, on the side opposite to that by which I had ascended, and soon found myself in the region of cloud and drizzling rain, and the inhabitants affirmed that it had been a cloudy and drizzling day wholly.

But now we must make haste back before the fog disperses to the blithe Merrimack water.

Since that first "Away! away!"
Many a lengthy reach we've rowed,
Still the sparrow on the spray
Hastes to usher in the day
With her simple stanza'd ode.

We passed a canal-boat before sunrise, groping its way to the seaboard, and, though we could not see it on account of the fog, the few dull, thumping, stertorous sounds which we heard, impressed us with a sense of weight and irresistible motion. One little rill of commerce already awake on this distant New Hampshire river. The fog, as it required more skill in the steering, enhanced the interest of our early voyage, and made the river seem indefinitely broad. A slight mist, through which objects are faintly visible, has the effect of expanding even ordinary streams, by a singular mirage, into arms of the sea or inland lakes. In the present instance it was even fragrant and invigorating, and we enjoyed it as a sort of earlier sunshine, or dewy and embryo light.

Low-anchored cloud,
Newfoundland air,
Fountain-head and source of rivers,
Dew-cloth, dream drapery,
And napkin spread by fays;
Drifting meadow of the air,

Where bloom the daisied banks and violets,
And in whose fenny labyrinth
The bittern booms and heron wades;
Spirit of lakes and seas and rivers,
Bear only perfumes and the scent
Of healing herbs to just men's fields!

The same pleasant and observant historian whom we quoted above says, that, "In the mountainous parts of the country, the ascent of vapors, and their formation into clouds, is a curious and entertaining object. The vapors are seen rising in small columns like smoke from many chimneys. When risen to a certain height, they spread, meet, condense, and are attracted to the mountains, where they either distil in gentle dews, and replenish the springs, or descend in showers, accompanied with thunder. After short intermissions, the process is repeated many times in the course of a summer day, affording to travellers a lively illustration of what is observed in the Book of Job, 'They are wet with the showers of the mountains.'"

Fogs and clouds which conceal the overshadowing mountains lend the breadth of the plains to mountain vales. Even a small-featured country acquires some grandeur in stormy weather when clouds are seen drifting between the beholder and the neighboring hills. When, in travelling toward Haverhill through Hampstead in this State, on the height of land between the Merrimack and the Piscataqua or the sea, you commence the descent eastward, the view toward the coast is so distant and unexpected, though the sea is invisible, that you at first suppose the unobstructed atmosphere to be a fog in the lowlands concealing hills of corresponding elevation to that you are upon; but it is the mist of prejudice alone, which the winds will not disperse. The most stupendous scenery ceases to be sublime when it becomes distinct, or in other words limited, and the imagination is no longer encouraged to exaggerate it. The actual height and breadth of a mountain or a waterfall are always ridiculously small; they are the imagined only that content us. Nature is not made after such a fashion as we would have her. We piously exaggerate her wonders, as the scenery around our home.

Such was the heaviness of the dews along this river that we were generally obliged to leave our tent spread over the bows of the boat till the sun had dried it, to avoid mildew. We passed the mouth of Penichook Brook, a wild salmon-stream, in the fog,

without seeing it. At length the sun's rays struggled through the mist and showed us the pines on shore dripping with dew, and springs trickling from the moist banks,--

"And now the taller sons, whom Titan warms,
Of unshorn mountains blown with easy winds,
Dandle the morning's childhood in their arms,
And, if they chanced to slip the prouder pines,
The under corylets did catch their shines,
To gild their leaves."

We rowed for some hours between glistening banks before the sun had dried the grass and leaves, or the day had established its character. Its serenity at last seemed the more profound and secure for the denseness of the morning's fog. The river became swifter, and the scenery more pleasing than before. The banks were steep and clayey for the most part, and trickling with water, and where a spring oozed out a few feet above the river the boatmen had cut a trough out of a slab with their axes, and placed it so as to receive the water and fill their jugs conveniently. Sometimes this purer and cooler water, bursting out from under a pine or a rock, was collected into a basin close to the edge of and level with the river, a fountain-head of the Merrimack. So near along life's stream are the fountains of innocence and youth making fertile its sandy margin; and the voyageur will do well to replenish his vessels often at these uncontaminated sources. Some youthful spring, perchance, still empties with tinkling music into the oldest river, even when it is falling into the sea, and we imagine that its music is distinguished by the river-gods from the general lapse of the stream, and falls sweeter on their ears in proportion as it is nearer to the ocean. As the evaporations of the river feed thus these unsuspected springs which filter through its banks, so, perchance, our aspirations fall back again in springs on the margin of life's stream to refresh and purify it. The yellow and tepid river may float his scow, and cheer his eye with its reflections and its ripples, but the boatman quenches his thirst at this small rill alone. It is this purer and cooler element that chiefly sustains his life. The race will long survive that is thus discreet.

Our course this morning lay between the territories of Merrimack, on the west, and Litchfield, once called Brenton's Farm, on the east, which townships were anciently the Indian Naticook.

Brenton was a fur-trader among the Indians, and these lands were granted to him in 1656. The latter township contains about five hundred inhabitants, of whom, however, we saw none, and but few of their dwellings. Being on the river, whose banks are always high and generally conceal the few houses, the country appeared much more wild and primitive than to the traveller on the neighboring roads. The river is by far the most attractive highway, and those boatmen who have spent twenty or twenty-five years on it must have had a much fairer, more wild, and memorable experience than the dusty and jarring one of the teamster who has driven, during the same time, on the roads which run parallel with the stream. As one ascends the Merrimack he rarely sees a village, but for the most part alternate wood and pasture lands, and sometimes a field of corn or potatoes, of rye or oats or English grass, with a few straggling apple-trees, and, at still longer intervals, a farmer's house. The soil, excepting the best of the interval, is commonly as light and sandy as a patriot could desire. Sometimes this forenoon the country appeared in its primitive state, and as if the Indian still inhabited it, and, again, as if many free, new settlers occupied it, their slight fences straggling down to the water's edge; and the barking of dogs, and even the prattle of children, were heard, and smoke was seen to go up from some hearthstone, and the banks were divided into patches of pasture, mowing, tillage, and woodland. But when the river spread out broader, with an uninhabited islet, or a long, low sandy shore which ran on single and devious, not answering to its opposite, but far off as if it were sea-shore or single coast, and the land no longer nursed the river in its bosom, but they conversed as equals, the rustling leaves with rippling waves, and few fences were seen, but high oak woods on one side, and large herds of cattle, and all tracks seemed a point to one centre behind some statelier grove,--we imagined that the river flowed through an extensive manor, and that the few inhabitants were retainers to a lord, and a feudal state of things prevailed.

When there was a suitable reach, we caught sight of the Goffstown mountain, the Indian Uncannunuc, rising before us on the west side. It was a calm and beautiful day, with only a slight zephyr to ripple the surface of the water, and rustle the woods on shore, and just warmth enough to prove the kindly disposition of Nature to her children. With buoyant spirits and vigorous impulses we tossed our boat rapidly along into the very middle of this forenoon. The fish-hawk sailed and screamed overhead. The

chipping or striped squirrel, *Sciurus striatus* (*Tamias Lysteri*, Aud.), sat upon the end of some Virginia fence or rider reaching over the stream, twirling a green nut with one paw, as in a lathe, while the other held it fast against its incisors as chisels. Like an independent russet leaf, with a will of its own, rustling whither it could; now under the fence, now over it, now peeping at the voyageurs through a crack with only its tail visible, now at its lunch deep in the toothsome kernel, and now a rod off playing at hide-and-seek, with the nut stowed away in its chops, where were half a dozen more besides, extending its cheeks to a ludicrous breadth,--as if it were devising through what safe valve of frisk or somerset to let its superfluous life escape; the stream passing harmlessly off, even while it sits, in constant electric flashes through its tail. And now with a chuckling squeak it dives into the root of a hazel, and we see no more of it. Or the larger red squirrel or chickaree, sometimes called the Hudson Bay squirrel (*Sciurus Hudsonius*), gave warning of our approach by that peculiar alarum of his, like the winding up of some strong clock, in the top of a pine-tree, and dodged behind its stem, or leaped from tree to tree with such caution and adroitness, as if much depended on the fidelity of his scout, running along the white-pine boughs sometimes twenty rods by our side, with such speed, and by such unerring routes, as if it were some well-worn familiar path to him; and presently, when we have passed, he returns to his work of cutting off the pine-cones, and letting them fall to the ground.

We passed Cromwell's Falls, the first we met with on this river, this forenoon, by means of locks, without using our wheels. These falls are the Nesenkeag of the Indians. Great Nesenkeag Stream comes in on the right just above, and Little Nesenkeag some distance below, both in Litchfield. We read in the Gazetteer, under the head of Merrimack, that "The first house in this town was erected on the margin of the river [soon after 1665] for a house of traffic with the Indians. For some time one Cromwell carried on a lucrative trade with them, weighing their furs with his foot, till, enraged at his supposed or real deception, they formed the resolution to murder him. This intention being communicated to Cromwell, he buried his wealth and made his escape. Within a few hours after his flight, a party of the Penacook tribe arrived, and, not finding the object of their resentment, burnt his habitation." Upon the top of the high bank here, close to the river, was still to be seen his cellar, now overgrown with trees. It was a convenient spot for

such a traffic, at the foot of the first falls above the settlements, and commanding a pleasant view up the river, where he could see the Indians coming down with their furs. The lock-man told us that his shovel and tongs had been ploughed up here, and also a stone with his name on it. But we will not vouch for the truth of this story. In the New Hampshire Historical Collections for 1815 it says, "Some time after pewter was found in the well, and an iron pot and trammel in the sand; the latter are preserved." These were the traces of the white trader. On the opposite bank, where it jutted over the stream cape-wise, we picked up four arrow-heads and a small Indian tool made of stone, as soon as we had climbed it, where plainly there had once stood a wigwam of the Indians with whom Cromwell traded, and who fished and hunted here before he came.

As usual the gossips have not been silent respecting Cromwell's buried wealth, and it is said that some years ago a farmer's plough, not far from here, slid over a flat stone which emitted a hollow sound, and, on its being raised, a small hole six inches in diameter was discovered, stoned about, from which a sum of money was taken. The lock-man told us another similar story about a farmer in a neighboring town, who had been a poor man, but who suddenly bought a good farm, and was well to do in the world, and, when he was questioned, did not give a satisfactory account of the matter; how few, alas, could! This caused his hired man to remember that one day, as they were ploughing together, the plough struck something, and his employer, going back to look, concluded not to go round again, saying that the sky looked rather lowering, and so put up his team. The like urgency has caused many things to be remembered which never transpired. The truth is, there is money buried everywhere, and you have only to go to work to find it.

Not far from these falls stands an oak-tree, on the interval, about a quarter of a mile from the river, on the farm of a Mr. Lund, which was pointed out to us as the spot where French, the leader of the party which went in pursuit of the Indians from Dunstable, was killed. Farwell dodged them in the thick woods near. It did not look as if men had ever had to run for their lives on this now open and peaceful interval.

Here too was another extensive desert by the side of the road in Litchfield, visible from the bank of the river. The sand was blown off in some places to the depth of ten or twelve feet,

leaving small grotesque hillocks of that height, where there was a clump of bushes firmly rooted. Thirty or forty years ago, as we were told, it was a sheep-pasture, but the sheep, being worried by the fleas, began to paw the ground, till they broke the sod, and so the sand began to blow, till now it had extended over forty or fifty acres. This evil might easily have been remedied, at first, by spreading birches with their leaves on over the sand, and fastening them down with stakes, to break the wind. The fleas bit the sheep, and the sheep bit the ground, and the sore had spread to this extent. It is astonishing what a great sore a little scratch breedeth. Who knows but Sahara, where caravans and cities are buried, began with the bite of an African flea? This poor globe, how it must itch in many places! Will no god be kind enough to spread a salve of birches over its sores? Here too we noticed where the Indians had gathered a heap of stones, perhaps for their council-fire, which, by their weight having prevented the sand under them from blowing away, were left on the summit of a mound. They told us that arrow-heads, and also bullets of lead and iron, had been found here. We noticed several other sandy tracts in our voyage; and the course of the Merrimack can be traced from the nearest mountain by its yellow sandbanks, though the river itself is for the most part invisible. Lawsuits, as we hear, have in some cases grown out of these causes. Railroads have been made through certain irritable districts, breaking their sod, and so have set the sand to blowing, till it has converted fertile farms into deserts, and the company has had to pay the damages.

This sand seemed to us the connecting link between land and water. It was a kind of water on which you could walk, and you could see the ripple-marks on its surface, produced by the winds, precisely like those at the bottom of a brook or lake. We had read that Mussulmen are permitted by the Koran to perform their ablutions in sand when they cannot get water, a necessary indulgence in Arabia, and we now understood the propriety of this provision.

Plum Island, at the mouth of this river, to whose formation, perhaps, these very banks have sent their contribution, is a similar desert of drifting sand, of various colors, blown into graceful curves by the wind. It is a mere sand-bar exposed, stretching nine miles parallel to the coast, and, exclusive of the marsh on the inside, rarely more than half a mile wide. There are but half a dozen houses on it, and it is almost without

a tree, or a sod, or any green thing with which a countryman is familiar. The thin vegetation stands half buried in sand, as in drifting snow. The only shrub, the beach-plum, which gives the island its name, grows but a few feet high; but this is so abundant that parties of a hundred at once come from the main-land and down the Merrimack, in September, pitch their tents, and gather the plums, which are good to eat raw and to preserve. The graceful and delicate beach-pea, too, grows abundantly amid the sand, and several strange, moss-like and succulent plants. The island for its whole length is scalloped into low hills, not more than twenty feet high, by the wind, and, excepting a faint trail on the edge of the marsh, is as trackless as Sahara. There are dreary bluffs of sand and valleys ploughed by the wind, where you might expect to discover the bones of a caravan. Schooners come from Boston to load with the sand for masons' uses, and in a few hours the wind obliterates all traces of their work. Yet you have only to dig a foot or two anywhere to come to fresh water; and you are surprised to learn that woodchucks abound here, and foxes are found, though you see not where they can burrow or hide themselves. I have walked down the whole length of its broad beach at low tide, at which time alone you can find a firm ground to walk on, and probably Massachusetts does not furnish a more grand and dreary walk. On the seaside there are only a distant sail and a few coots to break the grand monotony. A solitary stake stuck up, or a sharper sand-hill than usual, is remarkable as a landmark for miles; while for music you hear only the ceaseless sound of the surf, and the dreary peep of the beach-birds.

There were several canal-boats at Cromwell's Falls passing through the locks, for which we waited. In the forward part of one stood a brawny New Hampshire man, leaning on his pole, bareheaded and in shirt and trousers only, a rude Apollo of a man, coming down from that "vast uplandish country" to the main; of nameless age, with flaxen hair, and vigorous, weather-bleached countenance, in whose wrinkles the sun still lodged, as little touched by the heats and frosts and withering cares of life as a maple of the mountain; an undressed, unkempt, uncivil man, with whom we parleyed awhile, and parted not without a sincere interest in one another. His humanity was genuine and instinctive, and his rudeness only a manner. He inquired, just as we were passing out of earshot, if we had killed anything, and we shouted after him that we had shot a buoy, and could see him

for a long while scratching his head in vain to know if he had heard aright.

There is reason in the distinction of civil and uncivil. The manners are sometimes so rough a rind that we doubt whether they cover any core or sap-wood at all. We sometimes meet uncivil men, children of Amazons, who dwell by mountain paths, and are said to be inhospitable to strangers; whose salutation is as rude as the grasp of their brawny hands, and who deal with men as unceremoniously as they are wont to deal with the elements. They need only to extend their clearings, and let in more sunlight, to seek out the southern slopes of the hills, from which they may look down on the civil plain or ocean, and temper their diet duly with the cereal fruits, consuming less wild meat and acorns, to become like the inhabitants of cities. A true politeness does not result from any hasty and artificial polishing, it is true, but grows naturally in characters of the right grain and quality, through a long fronting of men and events, and rubbing on good and bad fortune. Perhaps I can tell a tale to the purpose while the lock is filling,--for our voyage this forenoon furnishes but few incidents of importance.

Early one summer morning I had left the shores of the Connecticut, and for the livelong day travelled up the bank of a river, which came in from the west; now looking down on the stream, foaming and rippling through the forest a mile off, from the hills over which the road led, and now sitting on its rocky brink and dipping my feet in its rapids, or bathing adventurously in mid-channel. The hills grew more and more frequent, and gradually swelled into mountains as I advanced, hemming in the course of the river, so that at last I could not see where it came from, and was at liberty to imagine the most wonderful meanderings and descents. At noon I slept on the grass in the shade of a maple, where the river had found a broader channel than usual, and was spread out shallow, with frequent sand-bars exposed. In the names of the towns I recognized some which I had long ago read on teamsters' wagons, that had come from far up country; quiet, uplandish towns, of mountainous fame. I walked along, musing and enchanted, by rows of sugar-maples, through the small and uninquisitive villages, and sometimes was pleased with the sight of a boat drawn up on a sand-bar, where there appeared no inhabitants to use it. It seemed, however, as essential to the river as a fish, and to lend a certain dignity to it. It was

like the trout of mountain streams to the fishes of the sea, or like the young of the land-crab born far in the interior, who have never yet heard the sound of the ocean's surf. The hills approached nearer and nearer to the stream, until at last they closed behind me, and I found myself just before nightfall in a romantic and retired valley, about half a mile in length, and barely wide enough for the stream at its bottom. I thought that there could be no finer site for a cottage among mountains. You could anywhere run across the stream on the rocks, and its constant murmuring would quiet the passions of mankind forever. Suddenly the road, which seemed aiming for the mountain-side, turned short to the left, and another valley opened, concealing the former, and of the same character with it. It was the most remarkable and pleasing scenery I had ever seen. I found here a few mild and hospitable inhabitants, who, as the day was not quite spent, and I was anxious to improve the light, directed me four or five miles farther on my way to the dwelling of a man whose name was Rice, who occupied the last and highest of the valleys that lay in my path, and who, they said, was a rather rude and uncivil man. But "what is a foreign country to those who have science? Who is a stranger to those who have the habit of speaking kindly?"

At length, as the sun was setting behind the mountains in a still darker and more solitary vale, I reached the dwelling of this man. Except for the narrowness of the plain, and that the stones were solid granite, it was the counterpart of that retreat to which Belphoebe bore the wounded Timias,--

"In a pleasant glade,
With mountains round about environed,
And mighty woods, which did the valley shade,
And like a stately theatre it made,
Spreading itself into a spacious plain;
And in the midst a little river played
Amongst the pumy stones which seemed to plain,
With gentle murmur, that his course they did restrain."

I observed, as I drew near, that he was not so rude as I had anticipated, for he kept many cattle, and dogs to watch them, and I saw where he had made maple-sugar on the sides of the mountains, and above all distinguished the voices of children mingling with the murmur of the torrent before the door. As I passed his stable I met one whom I supposed to be a hired man,

attending to his cattle, and I inquired if they entertained travellers at that house. "Sometimes we do," he answered, gruffly, and immediately went to the farthest stall from me, and I perceived that it was Rice himself whom I had addressed. But pardoning this incivility to the wildness of the scenery, I bent my steps to the house. There was no sign-post before it, nor any of the usual invitations to the traveller, though I saw by the road that many went and came there, but the owner's name only was fastened to the outside; a sort of implied and sullen invitation, as I thought. I passed from room to room without meeting any one, till I came to what seemed the guests' apartment, which was neat, and even had an air of refinement about it, and I was glad to find a map against the wall which would direct me on my journey on the morrow. At length I heard a step in a distant apartment, which was the first I had entered, and went to see if the landlord had come in; but it proved to be only a child, one of those whose voices I had heard, probably his son, and between him and me stood in the doorway a large watch-dog, which growled at me, and looked as if he would presently spring, but the boy did not speak to him; and when I asked for a glass of water, he briefly said, "It runs in the corner." So I took a mug from the counter and went out of doors, and searched round the corner of the house, but could find neither well nor spring, nor any water but the stream which ran all along the front. I came back, therefore, and, setting down the mug, asked the child if the stream was good to drink; whereupon he seized the mug, and, going to the corner of the room, where a cool spring which issued from the mountain behind trickled through a pipe into the apartment, filled it, and drank, and gave it to me empty again, and, calling to the dog, rushed out of doors. Ere long some of the hired men made their appearance, and drank at the spring, and lazily washed themselves and combed their hair in silence, and some sat down as if weary, and fell asleep in their seats. But all the while I saw no women, though I sometimes heard a bustle in that part of the house from which the spring came.

At length Rice himself came in, for it was now dark, with an ox-whip in his hand, breathing hard, and he too soon settled down into his seat not far from me, as if, now that his day's work was done, he had no farther to travel, but only to digest his supper at his leisure. When I asked him if he could give me a bed, he said there was one ready, in such a tone as implied that I ought to have known it, and the less said about that the better. So far so good. And yet he continued to look at me as if he would

fain have me say something further like a traveller. I remarked, that it was a wild and rugged country he inhabited, and worth coming many miles to see. "Not so very rough neither," said he, and appealed to his men to bear witness to the breadth and smoothness of his fields, which consisted in all of one small interval, and to the size of his crops; "and if we have some hills," added he, "there's no better pasturage anywhere." I then asked if this place was the one I had heard of, calling it by a name I had seen on the map, or if it was a certain other; and he answered, gruffly, that it was neither the one nor the other; that he had settled it and cultivated it, and made it what it was, and I could know nothing about it. Observing some guns and other implements of hunting hanging on brackets around the room, and his hounds now sleeping on the floor, I took occasion to change the discourse, and inquired if there was much game in that country, and he answered this question more graciously, having some glimmering of my drift; but when I inquired if there were any bears, he answered impatiently that he was no more in danger of losing his sheep than his neighbors; he had tamed and civilized that region. After a pause, thinking of my journey on the morrow, and the few hours of daylight in that hollow and mountainous country, which would require me to be on my way betimes, I remarked that the day must be shorter by an hour there than on the neighboring plains; at which he gruffly asked what I knew about it, and affirmed that he had as much daylight as his neighbors; he ventured to say, the days were longer there than where I lived, as I should find if I stayed; that in some way, I could not be expected to understand how, the sun came over the mountains half an hour earlier, and stayed half an hour later there than on the neighboring plains. And more of like sort he said. He was, indeed, as rude as a fabled satyr. But I suffered him to pass for what he was,—for why should I quarrel with nature?—and was even pleased at the discovery of such a singular natural phenomenon. I dealt with him as if to me all manners were indifferent, and he had a sweet, wild way with him. I would not question nature, and I would rather have him as he was than as I would have him. For I had come up here not for sympathy, or kindness, or society, but for novelty and adventure, and to see what nature had produced here. I therefore did not repel his rudeness, but quite innocently welcomed it all, and knew how to appreciate it, as if I were reading in an old drama a part well sustained. He was indeed a coarse and sensual man, and, as I have said, uncivil, but he had his just quarrel with nature and mankind, I have no doubt, only he had no artificial covering to

his ill-humors. He was earthy enough, but yet there was good soil in him, and even a long-suffering Saxon probity at bottom. If you could represent the case to him, he would not let the race die out in him, like a red Indian.

At length I told him that he was a fortunate man, and I trusted that he was grateful for so much light; and, rising, said I would take a lamp, and that I would pay him then for my lodging, for I expected to recommence my journey even as early as the sun rose in his country; but he answered in haste, and this time civilly, that I should not fail to find some of his household stirring, however early, for they were no sluggards, and I could take my breakfast with them before I started, if I chose; and as he lighted the lamp I detected a gleam of true hospitality and ancient civility, a beam of pure and even gentle humanity, from his bleared and moist eyes. It was a look more intimate with me, and more explanatory, than any words of his could have been if he had tried to his dying day. It was more significant than any Rice of those parts could even comprehend, and long anticipated this man's culture,--a glance of his pure genius, which did not much enlighten him, but did impress and rule him for the moment, and faintly constrain his voice and manner. He cheerfully led the way to my apartment, stepping over the limbs of his men, who were asleep on the floor in an intervening chamber, and showed me a clean and comfortable bed. For many pleasant hours after the household was asleep I sat at the open window, for it was a sultry night, and heard the little river

"Amongst the pumy stones, which seemed to plain,
With gentle murmur, that his course they did restrain."

But I arose as usual by starlight the next morning, before my host, or his men, or even his dogs, were awake; and, having left a ninepence on the counter, was already half-way over the mountain with the sun before they had broken their fast.

Before I had left the country of my host, while the first rays of the sun slanted over the mountains, as I stopped by the wayside to gather some raspberries, a very old man, not far from a hundred, came along with a milking-pail in his hand, and turning aside began to pluck the berries near me:--

"His reverend locks
In comely curls did wave;

And on his aged temples grew
The blossoms of the grave."

But when I inquired the way, he answered in a low, rough voice, without looking up or seeming to regard my presence, which I imputed to his years; and presently, muttering to himself, he proceeded to collect his cows in a neighboring pasture; and when he had again returned near to the wayside, he suddenly stopped, while his cows went on before, and, uncovering his head, prayed aloud in the cool morning air, as if he had forgotten this exercise before, for his daily bread, and also that He who letteth his rain fall on the just and on the unjust, and without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground, would not neglect the stranger (meaning me), and with even more direct and personal applications, though mainly according to the long-established formula common to lowlanders and the inhabitants of mountains. When he had done praying, I made bold to ask him if he had any cheese in his hut which he would sell me, but he answered without looking up, and in the same low and repulsive voice as before, that they did not make any, and went to milking. It is written, "The stranger who turneth away from a house with disappointed hopes, leaveth there his own offences, and departeth, taking with him all the good actions of the owner."

Being now fairly in the stream of this week's commerce, we began to meet with boats more frequently, and hailed them from time to time with the freedom of sailors. The boatmen appeared to lead an easy and contented life, and we thought that we should prefer their employment ourselves to many professions which are much more sought after. They suggested how few circumstances are necessary to the well-being and serenity of man, how indifferent all employments are, and that any may seem noble and poetic to the eyes of men, if pursued with sufficient buoyancy and freedom. With liberty and pleasant weather, the simplest occupation, any unquestioned country mode of life which detains us in the open air, is alluring. The man who picks peas steadily for a living is more than respectable, he is even envied by his shop-worn neighbors. We are as happy as the birds when our Good Genius permits us to pursue any out-door work, without a sense of dissipation. Our penknife glitters in the sun; our voice is echoed by yonder wood; if an oar drops, we are fain to let it drop again.

The canal-boat is of very simple construction, requiring but little ship-timber, and, as we were told, costs about two hundred dollars. They are managed by two men. In ascending the stream they use poles fourteen or fifteen feet long, pointed with iron, walking about one third the length of the boat from the forward end. Going down, they commonly keep in the middle of the stream, using an oar at each end; or if the wind is favorable they raise their broad sail, and have only to steer. They commonly carry down wood or bricks,--fifteen or sixteen cords of wood, and as many thousand bricks, at a time,--and bring back stores for the country, consuming two or three days each way between Concord and Charlestown. They sometimes pile the wood so as to leave a shelter in one part where they may retire from the rain. One can hardly imagine a more healthful employment, or one more favorable to contemplation and the observation of nature. Unlike the mariner, they have the constantly varying panorama of the shore to relieve the monotony of their labor, and it seemed to us that as they thus glided noiselessly from town to town, with all their furniture about them, for their very homestead is a movable, they could comment on the character of the inhabitants with greater advantage and security to themselves than the traveller in a coach, who would be unable to indulge in such broadsides of wit and humor in so small a vessel for fear of the recoil. They are not subject to great exposure, like the lumberers of Maine, in any weather, but inhale the healthfullest breezes, being slightly encumbered with clothing, frequently with the head and feet bare. When we met them at noon as they were leisurely descending the stream, their busy commerce did not look like toil, but rather like some ancient Oriental game still played on a large scale, as the game of chess, for instance, handed down to this generation. From morning till night, unless the wind is so fair that his single sail will suffice without other labor than steering, the boatman walks backwards and forwards on the side of his boat, now stooping with his shoulder to the pole, then drawing it back slowly to set it again, meanwhile moving steadily forward through an endless valley and an everchanging scenery, now distinguishing his course for a mile or two, and now shut in by a sudden turn of the river in a small woodland lake. All the phenomena which surround him are simple and grand, and there is something impressive, even majestic, in the very motion he causes, which will naturally be communicated to his own character, and he feels the slow, irresistible movement under him with pride, as if it were his own energy.

The news spread like wildfire among us youths, when formerly, once in a year or two, one of these boats came up the Concord River, and was seen stealing mysteriously through the meadows and past the village. It came and departed as silently as a cloud, without noise or dust, and was witnessed by few. One summer day this huge traveller might be seen moored at some meadow's wharf, and another summer day it was not there. Where precisely it came from, or who these men were who knew the rocks and soundings better than we who bathed there, we could never tell. We knew some river's bay only, but they took rivers from end to end. They were a sort of fabulous river-men to us. It was inconceivable by what sort of mediation any mere landsman could hold communication with them. Would they heave to, to gratify his wishes? No, it was favor enough to know faintly of their destination, or the time of their possible return. I have seen them in the summer when the stream ran low, mowing the weeds in mid-channel, and with hayers' jests cutting broad swaths in three feet of water, that they might make a passage for their scow, while the grass in long windrows was carried down the stream, undried by the rarest hay-weather. We admired unweariedly how their vessel would float, like a huge chip, sustaining so many casks of lime, and thousands of bricks, and such heaps of iron ore, with wheelbarrows aboard, and that, when we stepped on it, it did not yield to the pressure of our feet. It gave us confidence in the prevalence of the law of buoyancy, and we imagined to what infinite uses it might be put. The men appeared to lead a kind of life on it, and it was whispered that they slept aboard. Some affirmed that it carried sail, and that such winds blew here as filled the sails of vessels on the ocean; which again others much doubted. They had been seen to sail across our Fair Haven bay by lucky fishers who were out, but unfortunately others were not there to see. We might then say that our river was navigable,--why not? In after-years I read in print, with no little satisfaction, that it was thought by some that, with a little expense in removing rocks and deepening the channel, "there might be a profitable inland navigation." _I_ then lived some-where to tell of.

Such is Commerce, which shakes the cocoa-nut and bread-fruit tree in the remotest isle, and sooner or later dawns on the duskiest and most simple-minded savage. If we may be pardoned the digression, who can help being affected at the thought of the very fine and slight, but positive relation, in which the savage inhabitants of some remote isle stand to the mysterious white

mariner, the child of the sun?--as if we were to have dealings with an animal higher in the scale of being than ourselves. It is a barely recognized fact to the natives that he exists, and has his home far away somewhere, and is glad to buy their fresh fruits with his superfluous commodities. Under the same catholic sun glances his white ship over Pacific waves into their smooth bays, and the poor savage's paddle gleams in the air.

Man's little acts are grand,
Beheld from land to land,
There as they lie in time,
Within their native clime
 Ships with the noontide weigh,
 And glide before its ray
 To some retired bay,
 Their haunt,
 Whence, under tropic sun,
 Again they run,
 Bearing gum Senegal and Tragacant.
For this was ocean meant,
For this the sun was sent,
And moon was lent,
And winds in distant caverns pent.

Since our voyage the railroad on the bank has been extended, and there is now but little boating on the Merrimack. All kinds of produce and stores were formerly conveyed by water, but now nothing is carried up the stream, and almost wood and bricks alone are carried down, and these are also carried on the railroad. The locks are fast wearing out, and will soon be impassable, since the tolls will not pay the expense of repairing them, and so in a few years there will be an end of boating on this river. The boating at present is principally between Merrimack and Lowell, or Hooksett and Manchester. They make two or three trips in a week, according to wind and weather, from Merrimack to Lowell and back, about twenty-five miles each way. The boatman comes singing in to shore late at night, and moors his empty boat, and gets his supper and lodging in some house near at hand, and again early in the morning, by starlight perhaps, he pushes away up stream, and, by a shout, or the fragment of a song, gives notice of his approach to the lock-man, with whom he is to take his breakfast. If he gets up to his wood-pile before noon he proceeds to load his boat, with the help of his single "hand," and is on his way down again before night.

When he gets to Lowell he unloads his boat, and gets his receipt for his cargo, and, having heard the news at the public house at Middlesex or elsewhere, goes back with his empty boat and his receipt in his pocket to the owner, and to get a new load. We were frequently advertised of their approach by some faint sound behind us, and looking round saw them a mile off, creeping stealthily up the side of the stream like alligators. It was pleasant to hail these sailors of the Merrimack from time to time, and learn the news which circulated with them. We imagined that the sun shining on their bare heads had stamped a liberal and public character on their most private thoughts.

The open and sunny interval still stretched away from the river sometimes by two or more terraces, to the distant hill-country, and when we climbed the bank we commonly found an irregular copse-wood skirting the river, the primitive having floated down-stream long ago to---the "King's navy." Sometimes we saw the river-road a quarter or half a mile distant, and the particolored Concord stage, with its cloud of dust, its van of earnest travelling faces, and its rear of dusty trunks, reminding us that the country had its places of rendezvous for restless Yankee men. There dwelt along at considerable distances on this interval a quiet agricultural and pastoral people, with every house its well, as we sometimes proved, and every household, though never so still and remote it appeared in the noontide, its dinner about these times. There they lived on, those New England people, farmer lives, father and grandfather and great-grandfather, on and on without noise, keeping up tradition, and expecting, beside fair weather and abundant harvests, we did not learn what. They were contented to live, since it was so contrived for them, and where their lines had fallen.

Our uninquiring corpses lie more low
Than our life's curiosity doth go.

Yet these men had no need to travel to be as wise as Solomon in all his glory, so similar are the lives of men in all countries, and fraught with the same homely experiences. One half the world _knows_ how the other half lives.

About noon we passed a small village in Merrimack at Thornton's Ferry, and tasted of the waters of Naticook Brook on the same side, where French and his companions, whose grave we saw in Dunstable, were ambuscaded by the Indians. The humble village of

Litchfield, with its steepleless meeting-house, stood on the opposite or east bank, near where a dense grove of willows backed by maples skirted the shore. There also we noticed some shagbark-trees, which, as they do not grow in Concord, were as strange a sight to us as the palm would be, whose fruit only we have seen. Our course now curved gracefully to the north, leaving a low, flat shore on the Merrimack side, which forms a sort of harbor for canal-boats. We observed some fair elms and particularly large and handsome white-maples standing conspicuously on this interval; and the opposite shore, a quarter of a mile below, was covered with young elms and maples six inches high, which had probably sprung from the seeds which had been washed across.

Some carpenters were at work here mending a scow on the green and sloping bank. The strokes of their mallets echoed from shore to shore, and up and down the river, and their tools gleamed in the sun a quarter of a mile from us, and we realized that boat-building was as ancient and honorable an art as agriculture, and that there might be a naval as well as a pastoral life. The whole history of commerce was made manifest in that scow turned bottom upward on the shore. Thus did men begin to go down upon the sea in ships; *quaeque diu steterant in montibus altis, Fluctibus ignotis insultavere carinae;* "and keels which had long stood on high mountains careered insultingly (*insultavere*) over unknown waves." (Ovid, *Met.* I. 133.) We thought that it would be well for the traveller to build his boat on the bank of a stream, instead of finding a ferry or a bridge. In the *Adventures of Henry the fur-trader*, it is pleasant to read that when with his Indians he reached the shore of Ontario, they consumed two days in making two canoes of the bark of the elm-tree, in which to transport themselves to Fort Niagara. It is a worthy incident in a journey, a delay as good as much rapid travelling. A good share of our interest in Xenophon's story of his retreat is in the manoeuvres to get the army safely over the rivers, whether on rafts of logs or fagots, or sheep-skins blown up. And where could they better afford to tarry meanwhile than on the banks of a river?

As we glided past at a distance, these out-door workmen appeared to have added some dignity to their labor by its very publicness. It was a part of the industry of nature, like the work of hornets and mud-wasps.

The waves slowly beat,
Just to keep the noon sweet,
And no sound is floated o'er,
Save the mallet on shore,
Which echoing on high
Seems a-calking the sky.

The haze, the sun's dust of travel, had a Lethean influence on the land and its inhabitants, and all creatures resigned themselves to float upon the inappreciable tides of nature.

Woof of the sun, ethereal gauze,
Woven of Nature's richest stuffs,
Visible heat, air-water, and dry sea,
Last conquest of the eye;
Toil of the day displayed sun-dust,
Aerial surf upon the shores of earth.
Ethereal estuary, frith of light,
Breakers of air, billows of heat
Fine summer spray on inland seas;
Bird of the sun, transparent-winged
Owlet of noon, soft-pinioned,
From heath or stubble rising without song;
Establish thy serenity o'er the fields

The routine which is in the sunshine and the finest days, as that which has conquered and prevailed, commends itself to us by its very antiquity and apparent solidity and necessity. Our weakness needs it, and our strength uses it. We cannot draw on our boots without bracing ourselves against it. If there were but one erect and solid standing tree in the woods, all creatures would go to rub against it and make sure of their footing. During the many hours which we spend in this waking sleep, the hand stands still on the face of the clock, and we grow like corn in the night. Men are as busy as the brooks or bees, and postpone everything to their business; as carpenters discuss politics between the strokes of the hammer while they are shingling a roof.

This noontide was a fit occasion to make some pleasant harbor, and there read the journal of some voyageur like ourselves, not

too moral nor inquisitive, and which would not disturb the noon;
or else some old classic, the very flower of all reading, which
we had postponed to such a season

"Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure."

But, alas, our chest, like the cabin of a coaster, contained only
its well-thumbed "Navigator" for all literature, and we were
obliged to draw on our memory for these things.

We naturally remembered Alexander Henry's Adventures here, as a
sort of classic among books of American travel. It contains
scenery and rough sketching of men and incidents enough to
inspire poets for many years, and to my fancy is as full of
sounding names as any page of history,--Lake Winnipeg, Hudson
Bay, Ottaway, and portages innumerable; Chipeways, Gens de
Terres, Les Pilleurs, The Weepers; with reminiscences of Hearne's
journey, and the like; an immense and shaggy but sincere country,
summer and winter, adorned with chains of lakes and rivers,
covered with snows, with hemlocks, and fir-trees. There is a
naturalness, an unpretending and cold life in this traveller, as
in a Canadian winter, what life was preserved through low
temperatures and frontier dangers by furs within a stout heart.
He has truth and moderation worthy of the father of history,
which belong only to an intimate experience, and he does not
defer too much to literature. The unlearned traveller may quote
his single line from the poets with as good right as the scholar.
He too may speak of the stars, for he sees them shoot perhaps
when the astronomer does not. The good sense of this author is
very conspicuous. He is a traveller who does not exaggerate, but
writes for the information of his readers, for science, and for
history. His story is told with as much good faith and
directness as if it were a report to his brother traders, or the
Directors of the Hudson Bay Company, and is fitly dedicated to
Sir Joseph Banks. It reads like the argument to a great poem on
the primitive state of the country and its inhabitants, and the
reader imagines what in each case, with the invocation of the
Muse, might be sung, and leaves off with suspended interest, as
if the full account were to follow. In what school was this
fur-trader educated? He seems to travel the immense snowy

country with such purpose only as the reader who accompanies him, and to the latter's imagination, it is, as it were, momentarily created to be the scene of his adventures. What is most interesting and valuable in it, however, is not the materials for the history of Pontiac, or Braddock, or the Northwest, which it furnishes; not the annals of the country, but the natural facts, or perennials, which are ever without date. When out of history the truth shall be extracted, it will have shed its dates like withered leaves.

The Souhegan, or Crooked River, as some translate it, comes in from the west about a mile and a half above Thornton's Ferry. Babboosuck Brook empties into it near its mouth. There are said to be some of the finest water privileges in the country still unimproved on the former stream, at a short distance from the Merrimack. One spring morning, March 22, in the year 1677, an incident occurred on the banks of the river here, which is interesting to us as a slight memorial of an interview between two ancient tribes of men, one of which is now extinct, while the other, though it is still represented by a miserable remnant, has long since disappeared from its ancient hunting-grounds. A Mr. James Parker, at "Mr. Hinchmanne's ferme ner Meremack," wrote thus "to the Honred Governer and Council at Bostown, Hast, Post Hast":_--

"Sagamore Wanalancet come this morning to informe me, and then went to Mr. Tyng's to informe him, that his son being on ye other sid of Meremack river over against Souhegan upon the 22 day of this instant, about tene of the clock in the morning, he discovered 15 Indians on this sid the river, which he sposed to be Mohokes by ther spech. He called to them; they answered, but he could not understand ther spech; and he having a conow ther in the river, he went to breck his conow that they might not have ani ues of it. In the mean time they shot about thirty guns at him, and he being much frighted fled, and come home forthwith to Nahamcock [Pawtucket Falls or Lowell], wher ther wigowames now stand."

Penacooks and Mohawks! ubique gentium sunt? In the year 1670, a

Mohawk warrior scalped a Naamkeak or else a Wamesit Indian maiden near where Lowell now stands. She, however, recovered. Even as late as 1685, John Hogkins, a Penacook Indian, who describes his grandfather as having lived "at place called Malamake river, other name chef Natukkog and Panukkog, that one river great many names," wrote thus to the governor:--

"May 15th, 1685.

"Honor governor my friend,--

"You my friend I desire your worship and your power, because I hope you can do some great matters this one. I am poor and naked and I have no men at my place because I am afraid allways Mohogs he will kill me every day and night. If your worship when please pray help me you no let Mohogs kill me at my place at Malamake river called Pannukkog and Natukkog, I will submit your worship and your power. And now I want powder and such alminishon shatt and guns, because I have forth at my hom and I plant there.

"This all Indian hand, but pray you do consider your humble servant,

^John Hogkins^."

Signed also by Simon Detogkom, King Hary, Sam Linis, Mr. Jorge Rodunnonukgus, John Owamosimmin, and nine other Indians, with their marks against their names.

But now, one hundred and fifty-four years having elapsed since the date of this letter, we went unalarmed on our way without "brecking" our "conow," reading the New England Gazetteer, and seeing no traces of "Mohogs" on the banks.

The Souhegan, though a rapid river, seemed to-day to have borrowed its character from the noon.

Where gleaming fields of haze
Meet the voyageur's gaze,

And above, the heated air
Seems to make a river there,
The pines stand up with pride
By the Souhegan's side,
And the hemlock and the larch
With their triumphal arch
Are waving o'er its march
 To the sea.

No wind stirs its waves,
But the spirits of the braves
 Hov'ring o'er,
Whose antiquated graves
Its still water laves
 On the shore.

With an Indian's stealthy tread
It goes sleeping in its bed,
Without joy or grief,
Or the rustle of a leaf,
Without a ripple or a billow,
Or the sigh of a willow,
From the Lyndeboro' hills
To the Merrimack mills.
With a louder din
Did its current begin,
When melted the snow
On the far mountain's brow,
And the drops came together
In that rainy weather.

Experienced river,
Hast thou flowed forever?
Souhegan soundeth old,
But the half is not told,
What names hast thou borne,
In the ages far gone,
When the Xanthus and Meander
Commenced to wander,
Ere the black bear haunted
 Thy red forest-floor,
Or Nature had planted
 The pines by thy shore?

During the heat of the day, we rested on a large island a mile above the mouth of this river, pastured by a herd of cattle, with steep banks and scattered elms and oaks, and a sufficient channel for canal-boats on each side. When we made a fire to boil some rice for our dinner, the flames spreading amid the dry grass, and the smoke curling silently upward and casting grotesque shadows on the ground, seemed phenomena of the noon, and we fancied that we progressed up the stream without effort, and as naturally as the wind and tide went down, not outraging the calm days by unworthy bustle or impatience. The woods on the neighboring shore were alive with pigeons, which were moving south, looking for mast, but now, like ourselves, spending their noon in the shade. We could hear the slight, wiry, winnowing sound of their wings as they changed their roosts from time to time, and their gentle and tremulous cooing. They sojourned with us during the noontide, greater travellers far than we. You may frequently discover a single pair sitting upon the lower branches of the white-pine in the depths of the wood, at this hour of the day, so silent and solitary, and with such a hermit-like appearance, as if they had never strayed beyond its skirts, while the acorn which was gathered in the forests of Maine is still undigested in their crops. We obtained one of these handsome birds, which lingered too long upon its perch, and plucked and broiled it here with some other game, to be carried along for our supper; for, beside the provisions which we carried with us, we depended mainly on the river and forest for our supply. It is true, it did not seem to be putting this bird to its right use to pluck off its feathers, and extract its entrails, and broil its carcass on the coals; but we heroically persevered, nevertheless, waiting for further information. The same regard for Nature which excited our sympathy for her creatures nerved our hands to carry through what we had begun. For we would be honorable to the party we deserted; we would fulfil fate, and so at length, perhaps, detect the secret innocence of these incessant tragedies which Heaven allows.

"Too quick resolves do resolution wrong,
What, part so soon to be divorced so long?
Things to be done are long to be debated;

Heaven is not day'd, Repentance is not dated."

We are double-edged blades, and every time we whet our virtue the return stroke straps our vice. Where is the skilful swordsman who can give clean wounds, and not rip up his work with the other edge?

Nature herself has not provided the most graceful end for her creatures. What becomes of all these birds that people the air and forest for our solacement? The sparrows seem always _chipper_, never infirm. We do not see their bodies lie about. Yet there is a tragedy at the end of each one of their lives. They must perish miserably; not one of them is translated. True, "not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Heavenly Father's knowledge," but they do fall, nevertheless.

The carcasses of some poor squirrels, however, the same that frisked so merrily in the morning, which we had skinned and embowelled for our dinner, we abandoned in disgust, with tardy humanity, as too wretched a resource for any but starving men. It was to perpetuate the practice of a barbarous era. If they had been larger, our crime had been less. Their small red bodies, little bundles of red tissue, mere gobbets of venison, would not have "fattened fire." With a sudden impulse we threw them away, and washed our hands, and boiled some rice for our dinner. "Behold the difference between the one who eateth flesh, and him to whom it belonged! The first hath a momentary enjoyment, whilst the latter is deprived of existence!" "Who would commit so great a crime against a poor animal, who is fed only by the herbs which grow wild in the woods, and whose belly is burnt up with hunger?" We remembered a picture of mankind in the hunter age, chasing hares down the mountains; O me miserable! Yet sheep and oxen are but larger squirrels, whose hides are saved and meat is salted, whose souls perchance are not so large in proportion to their bodies.

There should always be some flowering and maturing of the fruits of nature in the cooking process. Some simple dishes recommend themselves to our imaginations as well as palates. In parched corn, for instance, there is a manifest sympathy between the

bursting seed and the more perfect developments of vegetable life. It is a perfect flower with its petals, like the houstonia or anemone. On my warm hearth these cereal blossoms expanded; here is the bank whereon they grew. Perhaps some such visible blessing would always attend the simple and wholesome repast.

Here was that "pleasant harbor" which we had sighed for, where the weary voyageur could read the journal of some other sailor, whose bark had ploughed, perchance, more famous and classic seas. At the tables of the gods, after feasting follow music and song; we will recline now under these island trees, and for our minstrel call on

ANACREON.

"Nor has he ceased his charming song, for still that lyre,
Though he is dead, sleeps not in Hades."

Simonides' Epigram on Anacreon.

I lately met with an old volume from a London bookshop, containing the Greek Minor Poets, and it was a pleasure to read once more only the words, Orpheus, Linus, Musaeus,--those faint poetic sounds and echoes of a name, dying away on the ears of us modern men; and those hardly more substantial sounds, Mimnermus, Ibycus, Alcaeus, Stesichorus, Menander. They lived not in vain. We can converse with these bodiless fames without reserve or personality.

I know of no studies so composing as those of the classical scholar. When we have sat down to them, life seems as still and serene as if it were very far off, and I believe it is not habitually seen from any common platform so truly and unexaggerated as in the light of literature. In serene hours we contemplate the tour of the Greek and Latin authors with more pleasure than the traveller does the fairest scenery of Greece or Italy. Where shall we find a more refined society? That highway down from Homer and Hesiod to Horace and Juvenal is more attractive than the Appian. Reading the classics, or conversing with those old Greeks and Latins in their surviving works, is like walking amid the stars and constellations, a high and by way serene to

travel. Indeed, the true scholar will be not a little of an astronomer in his habits. Distracting cares will not be allowed to obstruct the field of his vision, for the higher regions of literature, like astronomy, are above storm and darkness.

But passing by these rumors of bards, let us pause for a moment at the Teian poet.

There is something strangely modern about him. He is very easily turned into English. Is it that our lyric poets have resounded but that lyre, which would sound only light subjects, and which Simonides tells us does not sleep in Hades? His odes are like gems of pure ivory. They possess an ethereal and evanescent beauty like summer evenings, <ho chr_e' se noei~n no'ou a'nthei,>--_which you must perceive with the flower of the mind_--and show how slight a beauty could be expressed. You have to consider them, as the stars of lesser magnitude, with the side of the eye, and look aside from them to behold them. They charm us by their serenity and freedom from exaggeration and passion, and by a certain flower-like beauty, which does not propose itself, but must be approached and studied like a natural object. But perhaps their chief merit consists in the lightness and yet security of their tread;

"The young and tender stalk
Ne'er bends when _they_ do walk."

True, our nerves are never strung by them; it is too constantly the sound of the lyre, and never the note of the trumpet; but they are not gross, as has been presumed, but always elevated above the sensual.

These are some of the best that have come down to us.

ON HIS LYRE.

I wish to sing the Atridae,
And Cadmus I wish to sing;
But my lyre sounds

Only love with its chords.
Lately I changed the strings
And all the lyre;
And I began to sing the labors
Of Hercules; but my lyre
Resounded loves.
Farewell, henceforth, for me,
Heroes! for my lyre
Sings only loves.

TO A SWALLOW.

Thou indeed, dear swallow,
Yearly going and coming,
In summer weavest thy nest,
And in winter go'st disappearing
Either to Nile or to Memphis.
But Love always weaveth
His nest in my heart....

ON A SILVER CUP.

Turning the silver,
Vulcan, make for me,
Not indeed a panoply,
For what are battles to me?
But a hollow cup,
As deep as thou canst
And make for me in it
Neither stars, nor wagons,
Nor sad Orion;
What are the Pleiades to me?
What the shining Bootes?
Make vines for me,
And clusters of grapes in it,
And of gold Love and Bathyllus
Treading the grapes
With the fair Lyaeus

ON HIMSELF.

Thou sing'st the affairs of Thebes,
And he the battles of Troy,
But I of my own defeats.
No horse have wasted me,
Nor foot, nor ships;
But a new and different host,
From eyes smiting me.

TO A DOVE

Lovely dove,
Whence, whence dost thou fly?
Whence, running on air,
Dost thou waft and diffuse
So many sweet ointments?
Who art? What thy errand?--
Anacreon sent me
To a boy, to Bathyllus,
Who lately is ruler and tyrant of all.
Cythere has sold me
For one little song,
And I'm doing this service
For Anacreon.
And now, as you see,
I bear letters from him.
And he says that directly
He'll make me free,
But though he release me,
His slave I will tarry with him.
For why should I fly
Over mountains and fields,
And perch upon trees,
Eating some wild thing?
Now indeed I eat bread,
Plucking it from the hands
Of Anacreon himself;
And he gives me to drink
The wine which he tastes,

And drinking, I dance,
And shadow my master's
Face with my wings;
And, going to rest,
On the lyre itself I sleep.
That is all; get thee gone.
Thou hast made me more talkative,
Man, than a crow.

ON LOVE.

Love walking swiftly,
With hyacinthine staff,
Bade me to take a run with him;
And hastening through swift torrents,
And woody places, and over precipices,
A water-snake stung me.
And my heart leaped up to
My mouth, and I should have fainted;
But Love fanning my brows
With his soft wings, said,
Surely, thou art not able to love.

ON WOMEN.

Nature has given horns
To bulls, and hoofs to horses,
Swiftness to hares,
To lions yawning teeth,
To fishes swimming,
To birds flight,
To men wisdom.
For woman she had nothing beside;
What then does she give? Beauty,--
Instead of all sheilds,
Instead of all spears;
And she conquers even iron
And fire, who is beautiful.

ON LOVERS.

Horses have the mark
Of fire on their sides,
And some have distinguished
The Parthian men by their crests;
So I, seeing lovers,
Know them at once,
For they have a certain slight
Brand on their hearts.

TO A SWALLOW.

What dost thou wish me to do to thee,--
What, thou loquacious swallow?
Dost thou wish me taking thee
Thy light pinions to clip?
Or rather to pluck out
Thy tongue from within,
As that Tereus did?
Why with thy notes in the dawn
Hast thou plundered Bathyllus
From my beautiful dreams?

TO A COLT.

Thracian colt, why at me
Looking aslant with thy eyes,
Dost thou cruelly flee,
And think that I know nothing wise?
Know I could well
Put the bridle on thee,
And holding the reins, turn
Round the bounds of the course.
But now thou browses the meads,
And gambolling lightly dost play,
For thou hast no skilful horseman
Mounted upon thy back.

CUPID WOUNDED.

Love once among roses
Saw not
A sleeping bee, but was stung;
And being wounded in the finger
Of his hand, cried for pain.
Running as well as flying
To the beautiful Venus,
I am killed, mother, said he,
I am killed, and I die.
A little serpent has stung me,
Winged, which they call
A bee,--the husbandmen.
And she said, If the sting
Of a bee afflicts you,
How, think you, are they afflicted,
Love, whom you smite?

Late in the afternoon, for we had lingered long on the island, we raised our sail for the first time, and for a short hour the southwest wind was our ally; but it did not please Heaven to abet us along. With one sail raised we swept slowly up the eastern side of the stream, steering clear of the rocks, while, from the top of a hill which formed the opposite bank, some lumberers were rolling down timber to be rafted down the stream. We could see their axes and levers gleaming in the sun, and the logs came down with a dust and a rumbling sound, which was reverberated through the woods beyond us on our side, like the roar of artillery. But Zephyr soon took us out of sight and hearing of this commerce. Having passed Read's Ferry, and another island called McGaw's Island, we reached some rapids called Moore's Falls, and entered on "that section of the river, nine miles in extent, converted, by law, into the Union Canal, comprehending in that space six distinct falls; at each of which, and at several intermediate places, work has been done." After passing Moore's Falls by means of locks, we again had recourse to our oars, and went merrily on our way, driving the small sandpiper from rock to rock

before us, and sometimes rowing near enough to a cottage on the bank, though they were few and far between, to see the sunflowers, and the seed vessels of the poppy, like small goblets filled with the water of Lethe, before the door, but without disturbing the sluggish household behind. Thus we held on, sailing or dipping our way along with the paddle up this broad river, smooth and placid, flowing over concealed rocks, where we could see the pickerel lying low in the transparent water, eager to double some distant cape, to make some great bend as in the life of man, and see what new perspective would open; looking far into a new country, broad and serene, the cottages of settlers seen afar for the first time, yet with the moss of a century on their roofs, and the third or fourth generation in their shadows. Strange was it to consider how the sun and the summer, the buds of spring and the seared leaves of autumn, were related to these cabins along the shore; how all the rays which paint the landscape radiate from them, and the flight of the crow and the gyrations of the hawk have reference to their roofs. Still the ever rich and fertile shores accompanied us, fringed with vines and alive with small birds and frisking squirrels, the edge of some farmer's field or widow's wood-lot, or wilder, perchance, where the muskrat, the little medicine of the river, drags itself along stealthily over the alder-leaves and muscle-shells, and man and the memory of man are banished far.

At length the unwearied, never-sinking shore, still holding on without break, with its cool copses and serene pasture-grounds, tempted us to disembark; and we adventurously landed on this remote coast, to survey it, without the knowledge of any human inhabitant probably to this day. But we still remember the gnarled and hospitable oaks which grew even there for our entertainment, and were no strangers to us, the lonely horse in his pasture, and the patient cows, whose path to the river, so judiciously chosen to overcome the difficulties of the way, we followed, and disturbed their ruminations in the shade; and, above all, the cool, free aspect of the wild apple-trees, generously proffering their fruit to us, though still green and crude,—the hard, round, glossy fruit, which, if not ripe, still was not poison, but New-English too, brought hither its ancestors by ours once. These gentler trees imparted a half-civilized and

twilight aspect to the otherwise barbarian land. Still farther on we scrambled up the rocky channel of a brook, which had long served nature for a sluice there, leaping like it from rock to rock through tangled woods, at the bottom of a ravine, which grew darker and darker, and more and more hoarse the murmurs of the stream, until we reached the ruins of a mill, where now the ivy grew, and the trout glanced through the crumbling flume; and there we imagined what had been the dreams and speculations of some early settler. But the waning day compelled us to embark once more, and redeem this wasted time with long and vigorous sweeps over the rippling stream.

It was still wild and solitary, except that at intervals of a mile or two the roof of a cottage might be seen over the bank. This region, as we read, was once famous for the manufacture of straw bonnets of the Leghorn kind, of which it claims the invention in these parts; and occasionally some industrious damsel tripped down to the water's edge, to put her straw a-soak, as it appeared, and stood awhile to watch the retreating voyageurs, and catch the fragment of a boat-song which we had made, wafted over the water.

Thus, perchance, the Indian hunter,
Many a lagging year ago,
Gliding o'er thy rippling waters,
Lowly hummed a natural song.

Now the sun's behind the willows,
Now he gleams along the waves,
Faintly o'er the wearied billows
Come the spirits of the braves.

Just before sundown we reached some more falls in the town of Bedford, where some stone-masons were employed repairing the locks in a solitary part of the river. They were interested in our adventure, especially one young man of our own age, who inquired at first if we were bound up to "Skeag"; and when he had heard our story, and examined our outfit, asked us other questions, but temperately still, and always turning to his work again, though as if it were become his duty. It was plain that

he would like to go with us, and, as he looked up the river, many a distant cape and wooded shore were reflected in his eye, as well as in his thoughts. When we were ready he left his work, and helped us through the locks with a sort of quiet enthusiasm, telling us that we were at Coos Falls, and we could still distinguish the strokes of his chisel for many sweeps after we had left him.

We wished to camp this night on a large rock in the middle of the stream, just above these falls, but the want of fuel, and the difficulty of fixing our tent firmly, prevented us; so we made our bed on the main-land opposite, on the west bank, in the town of Bedford, in a retired place, as we supposed, there being no house in sight.

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WEDNESDAY

"Man is man's foe and destiny."
^Cotton.^

[page]

WEDNESDAY.

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Early this morning, as we were rolling up our buffaloes and loading our boat amid the dew, while our embers were still smoking, the masons who worked at the locks, and whom we had seen

crossing the river in their boat the evening before while we were examining the rock, came upon us as they were going to their work, and we found that we had pitched our tent directly in the path to their boat. This was the only time that we were observed on our camping-ground. Thus, far from the beaten highways and the dust and din of travel, we beheld the country privately, yet freely, and at our leisure. Other roads do some violence to Nature, and bring the traveller to stare at her, but the river steals into the scenery it traverses without intrusion, silently creating and adorning it, and is as free to come and go as the zephyr.

As we shoved away from this rocky coast, before sunrise, the smaller bittern, the genius of the shore, was moping along its edge, or stood probing the mud for its food, with ever an eye on us, though so demurely at work, or else he ran along over the wet stones like a wrecker in his storm-coat, looking out for wrecks of snails and cockles. Now away he goes, with a limping flight, uncertain where he will alight, until a rod of clear sand amid the alders invites his feet; and now our steady approach compels him to seek a new retreat. It is a bird of the oldest Thalesian school, and no doubt believes in the priority of water to the other elements; the relic of a twilight antediluvian age which yet inhabits these bright American rivers with us Yankees. There is something venerable in this melancholy and contemplative race of birds, which may have trodden the earth while it was yet in a slimy and imperfect state. Perchance their tracks too are still visible on the stones. It still lingers into our glaring summers, bravely supporting its fate without sympathy from man, as if it looked forward to some second advent of which he has no assurance. One wonders if, by its patient study by rocks and sandy capes, it has wrested the whole of her secret from Nature yet. What a rich experience it must have gained, standing on one leg and looking out from its dull eye so long on sunshine and rain, moon and stars! What could it tell of stagnant pools and reeds and dank night-fogs! It would be worth the while to look closely into the eye which has been open and seeing at such hours, and in such solitudes, its dull, yellowish, greenish eye. Methinks my own soul must be a bright invisible green. I have seen these birds stand by the half-dozen together in the

shallower water along the shore, with their bills thrust into the mud at the bottom, probing for food, the whole head being concealed, while the neck and body formed an arch above the water.

Cohass Brook, the outlet of Massabesic Pond,--which last is five or six miles distant, and contains fifteen hundred acres, being the largest body of fresh water in Rockingham County,--comes in near here from the east. Rowing between Manchester and Bedford, we passed, at an early hour, a ferry and some falls, called Goff's Falls, the Indian Cohasset, where there is a small village, and a handsome green islet in the middle of the stream. From Bedford and Merrimack have been boated the bricks of which Lowell is made. About twenty years before, as they told us, one Moore, of Bedford, having clay on his farm, contracted to furnish eight millions of bricks to the founders of that city within two years. He fulfilled his contract in one year, and since then bricks have been the principal export from these towns. The farmers found thus a market for their wood, and when they had brought a load to the kilns, they could cart a load of bricks to the shore, and so make a profitable day's work of it. Thus all parties were benefited. It was worth the while to see the place where Lowell was "dug out." So likewise Manchester is being built of bricks made still higher up the river at Hooksett.

There might be seen here on the bank of the Merrimack, near Goff's Falls, in what is now the town of Bedford, famous "for hops and for its fine domestic manufactures," some graves of the aborigines. The land still bears this scar here, and time is slowly crumbling the bones of a race. Yet, without fail, every spring, since they first fished and hunted here, the brown thrasher has heralded the morning from a birch or alder spray, and the undying race of reed-birds still rustles through the withering grass. But these bones rustle not. These mouldering elements are slowly preparing for another metamorphosis, to serve new masters, and what was the Indian's will ere long be the white man's sinew.

We learned that Bedford was not so famous for hops as formerly, since the price is fluctuating, and poles are now scarce. Yet if

the traveller goes back a few miles from the river, the hop-kilns will still excite his curiosity.

There were few incidents in our voyage this forenoon, though the river was now more rocky and the falls more frequent than before. It was a pleasant change, after rowing incessantly for many hours, to lock ourselves through in some retired place,--for commonly there was no lock-man at hand,--one sitting in the boat, while the other, sometimes with no little labor and heave-yo-ing, opened and shut the gates, waiting patiently to see the locks fill. We did not once use the wheels which we had provided. Taking advantage of the eddy, we were sometimes floated up to the locks almost in the face of the falls; and, by the same cause, any floating timber was carried round in a circle and repeatedly drawn into the rapids before it finally went down the stream. These old gray structures, with their quiet arms stretched over the river in the sun, appeared like natural objects in the scenery, and the kingfisher and sandpiper alighted on them as readily as on stakes or rocks.

We rowed leisurely up the stream for several hours, until the sun had got high in the sky, our thoughts monotonously beating time to our oars. For outward variety there was only the river and the receding shores, a vista continually opening behind and closing before us, as we sat with our backs up-stream; and, for inward, such thoughts as the muses grudgingly lent us. We were always passing some low, inviting shore, or some overhanging bank, on which, however, we never landed.

Such near aspects had we
Of our life's scenery.

It might be seen by what tenure men held the earth. The smallest stream is _mediterranean_ sea, a smaller ocean creek within the land, where men may steer by their farm-bounds and cottage-lights. For my own part, but for the geographers, I should hardly have known how large a portion of our globe is water, my life has chiefly passed within so deep a cove. Yet I have sometimes ventured as far as to the mouth of my Snug Harbor. From an old ruined fort on Staten Island, I have loved to watch all day some

vessel whose name I had read in the morning through the telegraph-glass, when she first came upon the coast, and her hull heaved up and glistened in the sun, from the moment when the pilot and most adventurous news-boats met her, past the Hook, and up the narrow channel of the wide outer bay, till she was boarded by the health-officer, and took her station at Quarantine, or held on her unquestioned course to the wharves of New York. It was interesting, too, to watch the less adventurous newsman, who made his assault as the vessel swept through the Narrows, defying plague and quarantine law, and, fastening his little cockboat to her huge side, clambered up and disappeared in the cabin. And then I could imagine what momentous news was being imparted by the captain, which no American ear had ever heard, that Asia, Africa, Europe--were all sunk; for which at length he pays the price, and is seen descending the ship's side with his bundle of newspapers, but not where he first got up, for these arrivers do not stand still to gossip; and he hastes away with steady sweeps to dispose of his wares to the highest bidder, and we shall ere long read something startling,--"By the latest arrival,"--"by the good ship----." On Sunday I beheld, from some interior hill, the long procession of vessels getting to sea, reaching from the city wharves through the Narrows, and past the Hook, quite to the ocean stream, far as the eye could reach, with stately march and silken sails, all counting on lucky voyages, but each time some of the number, no doubt, destined to go to Davy's locker, and never come on this coast again. And, again, in the evening of a pleasant day, it was my amusement to count the sails in sight. But as the setting sun continually brought more and more to light, still farther in the horizon, the last count always had the advantage, till, by the time the last rays streamed over the sea, I had doubled and trebled my first number; though I could no longer class them all under the several heads of ships, barks, brigs, schooners, and sloops, but most were faint generic _vessels_ only. And then the temperate twilight light, perchance, revealed the floating home of some sailor whose thoughts were already alienated from this American coast, and directed towards the Europe of our dreams. I have stood upon the same hill-top when a thunder-shower, rolling down from the Catskills and Highlands, passed over the island, deluging the land; and, when it had suddenly left us in sunshine, have seen it overtake

successively, with its huge shadow and dark, descending wall of rain, the vessels in the bay. Their bright sails were suddenly drooping and dark, like the sides of barns, and they seemed to shrink before the storm; while still far beyond them on the sea, through this dark veil, gleamed the sunny sails of those vessels which the storm had not yet reached. And at midnight, when all around and overhead was darkness, I have seen a field of trembling, silvery light far out on the sea, the reflection of the moonlight from the ocean, as if beyond the precincts of our night, where the moon traversed a cloudless heaven,--and sometimes a dark speck in its midst, where some fortunate vessel was pursuing its happy voyage by night.

But to us river sailors the sun never rose out of ocean waves, but from some green coppice, and went down behind some dark mountain line. We, too, were but dwellers on the shore, like the bittern of the morning; and our pursuit, the wrecks of snails and cockles. Nevertheless, we were contented to know the better one fair particular shore.

My life is like a stroll upon the beach,
As near the ocean's edge as I can go,
My tardy steps its waves sometimes o'erreach,
Sometimes I stay to let them overflow.

My sole employment 't is, and scrupulous care,
To place my gains beyond the reach of tides,
Each smoother pebble, and each shell more rare,
Which ocean kindly to my hand confides.

I have but few companions on the shore,
They scorn the strand who sail upon the sea,
Yet oft I think the ocean they've sailed o'er
Is deeper known upon the strand to me.

The middle sea contains no crimson dulse,
Its deeper waves cast up no pearls to view,
Along the shore my hand is on its pulse,
And I converse with many a shipwrecked crew.

The small houses which were scattered along the river at intervals of a mile or more were commonly out of sight to us, but sometimes, when we rowed near the shore, we heard the peevish note of a hen, or some slight domestic sound, which betrayed them. The lock-men's houses were particularly well placed, retired, and high, always at falls or rapids, and commanding the pleasantest reaches of the river,--for it is generally wider and more lake-like just above a fall,--and there they wait for boats. These humble dwellings, homely and sincere, in which a hearth was still the essential part, were more pleasing to our eyes than palaces or castles would have been. In the noon of these days, as we have said, we occasionally climbed the banks and approached these houses, to get a glass of water and make acquaintance with their inhabitants. High in the leafy bank, surrounded commonly by a small patch of corn and beans, squashes and melons, with sometimes a graceful hop-yard on one side, and some running vine over the windows, they appeared like beehives set to gather honey for a summer. I have not read of any Arcadian life which surpasses the actual luxury and serenity of these New England dwellings. For the outward gilding, at least, the age is golden enough. As you approach the sunny doorway, awakening the echoes by your steps, still no sound from these barracks of repose, and you fear that the gentlest knock may seem rude to the Oriental dreamers. The door is opened, perchance, by some Yankee-Hindoo woman, whose small-voiced but sincere hospitality, out of the bottomless depths of a quiet nature, has travelled quite round to the opposite side, and fears only to obtrude its kindness. You step over the white-scoured floor to the bright "dresser" lightly, as if afraid to disturb the devotions of the household,--for Oriental dynasties appear to have passed away since the dinner-table was last spread here,--and thence to the frequented curb, where you see your long-forgotten, unshaven face at the bottom, in juxtaposition with new-made butter and the trout in the well. "Perhaps you would like some molasses and ginger," suggests the faint noon voice. Sometimes there sits the brother who follows the sea, their representative man; who knows only how far it is to the nearest port, no more distances, all the rest is sea and distant capes,--patting the dog, or dandling the kitten in arms that were stretched by the cable and the oar, pulling against Boreas or the trade-winds. He looks up at the

stranger, half pleased, half astonished, with a mariner's eye, as if he were a dolphin within cast. If men will believe it, _sua si bona norint_, there are no more quiet Tempes, nor more poetic and Arcadian lives, than may be lived in these New England dwellings. We thought that the employment of their inhabitants by day would be to tend the flowers and herds, and at night, like the shepherds of old, to cluster and give names to the stars from the river banks.

We passed a large and densely wooded island this forenoon, between Short's and Griffith's Falls, the fairest which we had met with, with a handsome grove of elms at its head. If it had been evening we should have been glad to camp there. Not long after, one or two more were passed. The boatmen told us that the current had recently made important changes here. An island always pleases my imagination, even the smallest, as a small continent and integral portion of the globe. I have a fancy for building my hut on one. Even a bare, grassy isle, which I can see entirely over at a glance, has some undefined and mysterious charm for me. There is commonly such a one at the junction of two rivers, whose currents bring down and deposit their respective sands in the eddy at their confluence, as it were the womb of a continent. By what a delicate and far-stretched contribution every island is made! What an enterprise of Nature thus to lay the foundations of and to build up the future continent, of golden and silver sands and the ruins of forests, with ant-like industry! Pindar gives the following account of the origin of Thera, whence, in after times, Libyan Cyrene was settled by Battus. Triton, in the form of Eurypylus, presents a clod to Euphemus, one of the Argonauts, as they are about to return home.

"He knew of our haste,
And immediately seizing a clod
With his right hand, strove to give it
As a chance stranger's gift.
Nor did the hero disregard him, but leaping on the shore,
Stretching hand to hand,
Received the mystic clod.
But I hear it sinking from the deck,

Go with the sea brine
At evening, accompanying the watery sea.
Often indeed I urged the careless
Menials to guard it, but their minds forgot.
And now in this island the imperishable seed of spacious Libya
Is spilled before its hour."

It is a beautiful fable, also related by Pindar, how Helios, or
the Sun, looked down into the sea one day,--when perchance his
rays were first reflected from some increasing glittering
sandbar,--and saw the fair and fruitful island of Rhodes

"springing up from the bottom,
Capable of feeding many men, and suitable for flocks;

and at the nod of Zeus,

"The island sprang from the watery
Sea; and the genial Father of penetrating beams,
Ruler of fire-breathing horses, has it."

The shifting islands! who would not be willing that his house
should be undermined by such a foe! The inhabitant of an island
can tell what currents formed the land which he cultivates; and
his earth is still being created or destroyed. There before his
door, perchance, still empties the stream which brought down the
material of his farm ages before, and is still bringing it down
or washing it away,--the graceful, gentle robber!

Not long after this we saw the Piscataquoag, or Sparkling Water,
emptying in on our left, and heard the Falls of Amoskeag above.
Large quantities of lumber, as we read in the Gazetteer, were
still annually floated down the Piscataquoag to the Merrimack,
and there are many fine mill privileges on it. Just above the
mouth of this river we passed the artificial falls where the
canals of the Manchester Manufacturing Company discharge
themselves into the Merrimack. They are striking enough to have
a name, and, with the scenery of a Bashpish, would be visited
from far and near. The water falls thirty or forty feet over
seven or eight steep and narrow terraces of stone, probably to

break its force, and is converted into one mass of foam. This canal-water did not seem to be the worse for the wear, but foamed and fumed as purely, and boomed as savagely and impressively, as a mountain torrent, and, though it came from under a factory, we saw a rainbow here. These are now the Amoskeag Falls, removed a mile down-stream. But we did not tarry to examine them minutely, making haste to get past the village here collected, and out of hearing of the hammer which was laying the foundation of another Lowell on the banks. At the time of our voyage Manchester was a village of about two thousand inhabitants, where we landed for a moment to get some cool water, and where an inhabitant told us that he was accustomed to go across the river into Goffstown for his water. But now, as I have been told, and indeed have witnessed, it contains fourteen thousand inhabitants. From a hill on the road between Goffstown and Hooksett, four miles distant, I have seen a thunder-shower pass over, and the sun break out and shine on a city there, where I had landed nine years before in the fields; and there was waving the flag of its Museum, where "the only perfect skeleton of a Greenland or river whale in the United States" was to be seen, and I also read in its directory of a "Manchester Athenaeum and Gallery of the Fine Arts."

According to the Gazetteer, the descent of Amoskeag Falls, which are the most considerable in the Merrimack, is fifty-four feet in half a mile. We locked ourselves through here with much ado, surmounting the successive watery steps of this river's staircase in the midst of a crowd of villagers, jumping into the canal to their amusement, to save our boat from upsetting, and consuming much river-water in our service. Amoskeag, or Namaskeak, is said to mean "great fishing-place." It was hereabouts that the Sachem Wannalancet resided. Tradition says that his tribe, when at war with the Mohawks, concealed their provisions in the cavities of the rocks in the upper part of these falls. The Indians, who hid their provisions in these holes, and affirmed "that God had cut them out for that purpose," understood their origin and use better than the Royal Society, who in their Transactions, in the last century, speaking of these very holes, declare that "they seem plainly to be artificial." Similar "pot-holes" may be seen at the Stone Flume on this river, on the Ottaway, at Bellows'

Falls on the Connecticut, and in the limestone rock at Shelburne Falls on Deerfield River in Massachusetts, and more or less generally about all falls. Perhaps the most remarkable curiosity of this kind in New England is the well-known Basin on the Pemigewasset, one of the head-waters of this river, twenty by thirty feet in extent and proportionably deep, with a smooth and rounded brim, and filled with a cold, pellucid, and greenish water. At Amoskeag the river is divided into many separate torrents and trickling rills by the rocks, and its volume is so much reduced by the drain of the canals that it does not fill its bed. There are many pot-holes here on a rocky island which the river washes over in high freshets. As at Shelburne Falls, where I first observed them, they are from one foot to four or five in diameter, and as many in depth, perfectly round and regular, with smooth and gracefully curved brims, like goblets. Their origin is apparent to the most careless observer. A stone which the current has washed down, meeting with obstacles, revolves as on a pivot where it lies, gradually sinking in the course of centuries deeper and deeper into the rock, and in new freshets receiving the aid of fresh stones, which are drawn into this trap and doomed to revolve there for an indefinite period, doing Sisyphus-like penance for stony sins, until they either wear out, or wear through the bottom of their prison, or else are released by some revolution of nature. There lie the stones of various sizes, from a pebble to a foot or two in diameter, some of which have rested from their labor only since the spring, and some higher up which have lain still and dry for ages,--we noticed some here at least sixteen feet above the present level of the water,--while others are still revolving, and enjoy no respite at any season. In one instance, at Shelburne Falls, they have worn quite through the rock, so that a portion of the river leaks through in anticipation of the fall. Some of these pot-holes at Amoskeag, in a very hard brown-stone, had an oblong, cylindrical stone of the same material loosely fitting them. One, as much as fifteen feet deep and seven or eight in diameter, which was worn quite through to the water, had a huge rock of the same material, smooth but of irregular form, lodged in it. Everywhere there were the rudiments or the wrecks of a dimple in the rock; the rocky shells of whirlpools. As if by force of example and sympathy after so many lessons, the rocks, the hardest material,

had been endeavoring to whirl or flow into the forms of the most fluid. The finest workers in stone are not copper or steel tools, but the gentle touches of air and water working at their leisure with a liberal allowance of time.

Not only have some of these basins been forming for countless ages, but others exist which must have been completed in a former geological period. In deepening the Pawtucket Canal, in 1822, the workmen came to ledges with pot-holes in them, where probably was once the bed of the river, and there are some, we are told, in the town of Canaan in this State, with the stones still in them, on the height of land between the Merrimack and Connecticut, and nearly a thousand feet above these rivers, proving that the mountains and the rivers have changed places. There lie the stones which completed their revolutions perhaps before thoughts began to revolve in the brain of man. The periods of Hindoo and Chinese history, though they reach back to the time when the race of mortals is confounded with the race of gods, are as nothing compared with the periods which these stones have inscribed. That which commenced a rock when time was young, shall conclude a pebble in the unequal contest. With such expense of time and natural forces are our very paving-stones produced. They teach us lessons, these dumb workers; verily there are "sermons in stones, and books in the running streams." In these very holes the Indians hid their provisions; but now there is no bread, but only its old neighbor stones at the bottom. Who knows how many races they have served thus? By as simple a law, some accidental by-law, perchance, our system itself was made ready for its inhabitants.

These, and such as these, must be our antiquities, for lack of human vestiges. The monuments of heroes and the temples of the gods which may once have stood on the banks of this river are now, at any rate, returned to dust and primitive soil. The murmur of unchronicled nations has died away along these shores, and once more Lowell and Manchester are on the trail of the Indian.

The fact that Romans once inhabited her reflects no little dignity on Nature herself; that from some particular hill the

Roman once looked out on the sea. She need not be ashamed of the vestiges of her children. How gladly the antiquary informs us that their vessels penetrated into this frith, or up that river of some remote isle! Their military monuments still remain on the hills and under the sod of the valleys. The oft-repeated Roman story is written in still legible characters in every quarter of the Old World, and but to-day, perchance, a new coin is dug up whose inscription repeats and confirms their fame. Some "Judaea Capta," with a woman mourning under a palm-tree, with silent argument and demonstration confirms the pages of history.

"Rome living was the world's sole ornament;
And dead is now the world's sole monument.

.
With her own weight down pressed now she lies,
And by her heaps her hugeness testifies."

If one doubts whether Grecian valor and patriotism are not a fiction of the poets, he may go to Athens and see still upon the walls of the temple of Minerva the circular marks made by the shields taken from the enemy in the Persian war, which were suspended there. We have not far to seek for living and unquestionable evidence. The very dust takes shape and confirms some story which we had read. As Fuller said, commenting on the zeal of Camden, "A broken urn is a whole evidence; or an old gate still surviving out of which the city is run out." When Solon endeavored to prove that Salamis had formerly belonged to the Athenians, and not to the Megareans, he caused the tombs to be opened, and showed that the inhabitants of Salamis turned the faces of their dead to the same side with the Athenians, but the Megareans to the opposite side. There they were to be interrogated.

Some minds are as little logical or argumentative as nature; they can offer no reason or "guess," but they exhibit the solemn and incontrovertible fact. If a historical question arises, they cause the tombs to be opened. Their silent and practical logic convinces the reason and the understanding at the same time. Of such sort is always the only pertinent question and the only

satisfactory reply.

Our own country furnishes antiquities as ancient and durable, and as useful, as any; rocks at least as well covered with lichens, and a soil which, if it is virgin, is but virgin mould, the very dust of nature. What if we cannot read Rome, or Greece, Etruria, or Carthage, or Egypt, or Babylon, on these; are our cliffs bare? The lichen on the rocks is a rude and simple shield which beginning and imperfect Nature suspended there. Still hangs her wrinkled trophy. And here too the poet's eye may still detect the brazen nails which fastened Time's inscriptions, and if he has the gift, decipher them by this clew. The walls that fence our fields, as well as modern Rome, and not less the Parthenon itself, are all built of _ruins_. Here may be heard the din of rivers, and ancient winds which have long since lost their names sough through our woods;--the first faint sounds of spring, older than the summer of Athenian glory, the titmouse lispings in the wood, the jay's scream, and blue-bird's warble, and the hum of

"bees that fly

About the laughing blossoms of willow."

Here is the gray dawn for antiquity, and our to-morrow's future should be at least paulo-post to theirs which we have put behind us. There are the red-maple and birchen leaves, old runes which are not yet deciphered; catkins, pine-cones, vines, oak-leaves, and acorns; the very things themselves, and not their forms in stone,--so much the more ancient and venerable. And even to the current summer there has come down tradition of a hoary-headed master of all art, who once filled every field and grove with statues and god-like architecture, of every design which Greece has lately copied; whose ruins are now mingled with the dust, and not one block remains upon another. The century sun and unwearied rain have wasted them, till not one fragment from that quarry now exists; and poets perchance will feign that gods sent down the material from heaven.

What though the traveller tell us of the ruins of Egypt, are we so sick or idle, that we must sacrifice our America and to-day to some man's ill-remembered and indolent story? Carnac and Luxor

are but names, or if their skeletons remain, still more desert sand, and at length a wave of the Mediterranean Sea are needed to wash away the filth that attaches to their grandeur. Carnac! Carnac! here is Carnac for me. I behold the columns of a larger and purer temple.

This is my Carnac, whose unmeasured dome
Shelters the measuring art and measurer's home.
Behold these flowers, let us be up with time,
Not dreaming of three thousand years ago,
Erect ourselves and let those columns lie,
Not stoop to raise a foil against the sky.
Where is the spirit of that time but in
This present day, perchance the present line?
Three thousand years ago are not agone,
They are still lingering in this summer morn,
And Memnon's Mother sprightly greets us now,
Wearing her youthful radiance on her brow.
If Carnac's columns still stand on the plain,
To enjoy our opportunities they remain.

In these parts dwelt the famous Sachem Pasaconaway, who was seen by Gookin "at Pawtucket, when he was about one hundred and twenty years old." He was reputed a wise man and a powwow, and restrained his people from going to war with the English. They believed "that he could make water burn, rocks move, and trees dance, and metamorphose himself into a flaming man; that in winter he could raise a green leaf out of the ashes of a dry one, and produce a living snake from the skin of a dead one, and many similar miracles." In 1660, according to Gookin, at a great feast and dance, he made his farewell speech to his people, in which he said, that as he was not likely to see them met together again, he would leave them this word of advice, to take heed how they quarrelled with their English neighbors, for though they might do them much mischief at first, it would prove the means of their own destruction. He himself, he said, had been as much an enemy to the English at their first coming as any, and had used all his arts to destroy them, or at least to prevent their settlement, but could by no means effect it. Gookin thought that he "possibly might have such a kind of spirit upon him as was upon

Balaam, who in xxiii. Numbers, 23, said `Surely, there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel.'" His son Wannalancet carefully followed his advice, and when Philip's War broke out, he withdrew his followers to Penacook, now Concord in New Hampshire, from the scene of the war. On his return afterwards, he visited the minister of Chelmsford, and, as is stated in the history of that town, "wished to know whether Chelmsford had suffered much during the war; and being informed that it had not, and that God should be thanked for it, Wannalancet replied, `Me next.'"

Manchester was the residence of John Stark, a hero of two wars, and survivor of a third, and at his death the last but one of the American generals of the Revolution. He was born in the adjoining town of Londonderry, then Nutfield, in 1728. As early as 1752, he was taken prisoner by the Indians while hunting in the wilderness near Baker's River; he performed notable service as a captain of rangers in the French war; commanded a regiment of the New Hampshire militia at the battle of Bunker Hill; and fought and won the battle of Bennington in 1777. He was past service in the last war, and died here in 1822, at the age of 94. His monument stands upon the second bank of the river, about a mile and a half above the falls, and commands a prospect several miles up and down the Merrimack. It suggested how much more impressive in the landscape is the tomb of a hero than the dwellings of the inglorious living. Who is most dead,--a hero by whose monument you stand, or his descendants of whom you have never heard?

The graves of Pasaconaway and Wannalancet are marked by no monument on the bank of their native river.

Every town which we passed, if we may believe the Gazetteer, had been the residence of some great man. But though we knocked at many doors, and even made particular inquiries, we could not find that there were any now living. Under the head of Litchfield we read:--

"The Hon. Wyseman Clagett closed his life in this town."

According to another, "He was a classical scholar, a good

lawyer, a wit, and a poet." We saw his old gray house just below Great Nesenkeag Brook.--Under the head of Merrimack: "Hon. Mathew Thornton, one of the signers of the Declaration of American Independence, resided many years in this town." His house too we saw from the river.--"Dr. Jonathan Gove, a man distinguished for his urbanity, his talents and professional skill, resided in this town [Goffstown]. He was one of the oldest practitioners of medicine in the county. He was many years an active member of the legislature."--"Hon. Robert Means, who died Jan. 24, 1823, at the age of 80, was for a long period a resident in Amherst. He was a native of Ireland. In 1764 he came to this country, where, by his industry and application to business, he acquired a large property, and great respect."--"William Stinson [one of the first settlers of Dunbarton], born in Ireland, came to Londonderry with his father. He was much respected and was a useful man. James Rogers was from Ireland, and father to Major Robert Rogers. He was shot in the woods, being mistaken for a bear."--"Rev. Matthew Clark, second minister of Londonderry, was a native of Ireland, who had in early life been an officer in the army, and distinguished himself in the defence of the city of Londonderry, when besieged by the army of King James II. A. D. 1688-9. He afterwards relinquished a military life for the clerical profession. He possessed a strong mind, marked by a considerable degree of eccentricity. He died Jan. 25, 1735, and was borne to the grave, at his particular request, by his former companions in arms, of whom there were a considerable number among the early settlers of this town; several of them had been made free from taxes throughout the British dominions by King William, for their bravery in that memorable siege."--Col. George Reid and Capt. David M'Clary, also citizens of Londonderry, were "distinguished and brave" officers.--"Major Andrew M'Clary, a native of this town [Epsom], fell at the battle of Breed's Hill ."--Many of these heroes, like the illustrious Roman, were ploughing when the news of the massacre at Lexington arrived, and straightway left their ploughs in the furrow, and repaired to the scene of action. Some miles from where we now were, there once stood a guide-post on which were the words, "3 miles to Squire MacGaw's."

But generally speaking, the land is now, at any rate, very barren of men, and we doubt if there are as many hundreds as we read of. It may be that we stood too near.

Uncannunuc Mountain in Goffstown was visible from Amoskeag, five or six miles westward. It is the north-easternmost in the horizon, which we see from our native town, but seen from there is too ethereally blue to be the same which the like of us have ever climbed. Its name is said to mean "The Two Breasts," there being two eminences some distance apart. The highest, which is about fourteen hundred feet above the sea, probably affords a more extensive view of the Merrimack valley and the adjacent country than any other hill, though it is somewhat obstructed by woods. Only a few short reaches of the river are visible, but you can trace its course far down stream by the sandy tracts on its banks.

A little south of Uncannunuc, about sixty years ago, as the story goes, an old woman who went out to gather pennyroyal, tript her foot in the bail of a small brass kettle in the dead grass and bushes. Some say that flints and charcoal and some traces of a camp were also found. This kettle, holding about four quarts, is still preserved and used to dye thread in. It is supposed to have belonged to some old French or Indian hunter, who was killed in one of his hunting or scouting excursions, and so never returned to look after his kettle.

But we were most interested to hear of the pennyroyal, it is soothing to be reminded that wild nature produces anything ready for the use of man. Men know that something is good. One says that it is yellow-dock, another that it is bitter-sweet, another that it is slippery-elm bark, burdock, catnip, calamint, elicampane, thoroughwort, or pennyroyal. A man may esteem himself happy when that which is his food is also his medicine. There is no kind of herb, but somebody or other says that it is good. I am very glad to hear it. It reminds me of the first chapter of Genesis. But how should they know that it is good? That is the mystery to me. I am always agreeably disappointed; it is incredible that they should have found it out. Since all

things are good, men fail at last to distinguish which is the bane, and which the antidote. There are sure to be two prescriptions diametrically opposite. Stuff a cold and starve a cold are but two ways. They are the two practices both always in full blast. Yet you must take advice of the one school as if there was no other. In respect to religion and the healing art, all nations are still in a state of barbarism. In the most civilized countries the priest is still but a Powwow, and the physician a Great Medicine. Consider the deference which is everywhere paid to a doctor's opinion. Nothing more strikingly betrays the credulity of mankind than medicine. Quackery is a thing universal, and universally successful. In this case it becomes literally true that no imposition is too great for the credulity of men. Priests and physicians should never look one another in the face. They have no common ground, nor is there any to mediate between them. When the one comes, the other goes. They could not come together without laughter, or a significant silence, for the one's profession is a satire on the other's, and either's success would be the other's failure. It is wonderful that the physician should ever die, and that the priest should ever live. Why is it that the priest is never called to consult with the physician? Is it because men believe practically that matter is independent of spirit. But what is quackery? It is commonly an attempt to cure the diseases of a man by addressing his body alone. There is need of a physician who shall minister to both soul and body at once, that is, to man. Now he falls between two souls.

After passing through the locks, we had poled ourselves through the canal here, about half a mile in length, to the boatable part of the river. Above Amoskeag the river spreads out into a lake reaching a mile or two without a bend. There were many canal-boats here bound up to Hooksett, about eight miles, and as they were going up empty with a fair wind, one boatman offered to take us in tow if we would wait. But when we came alongside, we found that they meant to take us on board, since otherwise we should clog their motions too much; but as our boat was too heavy to be lifted aboard, we pursued our way up the stream, as before, while the boatmen were at their dinner, and came to anchor at length under some alders on the opposite shore, where we could

take our lunch. Though far on one side, every sound was wafted over to us from the opposite bank, and from the harbor of the canal, and we could see everything that passed. By and by came several canal-boats, at intervals of a quarter of a mile, standing up to Hooksett with a light breeze, and one by one disappeared round a point above. With their broad sails set, they moved slowly up the stream in the sluggish and fitful breeze, like one-winged antediluvian birds, and as if impelled by some mysterious counter-current. It was a grand motion, so slow and stately, this "standing out," as the phrase is, expressing the gradual and steady progress of a vessel, as if it were by mere rectitude and disposition, without shuffling. Their sails, which stood so still, were like chips cast into the current of the air to show which way it set. At length the boat which we had spoken came along, keeping the middle of the stream, and when within speaking distance the steersman called out ironically to say, that if we would come alongside now he would take us in tow; but not heeding his taunt, we still loitered in the shade till we had finished our lunch, and when the last boat had disappeared round the point with flapping sail, for the breeze had now sunk to a zephyr, with our own sails set, and plying our oars, we shot rapidly up the stream in pursuit, and as we glided close alongside, while they were vainly invoking Aeolus to their aid, we returned their compliment by proposing, if they would throw us a rope, to "take them in tow," to which these Merrimack sailors had no suitable answer ready. Thus we gradually overtook and passed each boat in succession until we had the river to ourselves again.

Our course this afternoon was between Manchester and Goffstown.

While we float here, far from that tributary stream on whose banks our Friends and kindred dwell, our thoughts, like the stars, come out of their horizon still; for there circulates a finer blood than Lavoisier has discovered the laws of,--the blood, not of kindred merely, but of kindness, whose pulse still

beats at any distance and forever.

True kindness is a pure divine affinity,
Not founded upon human consanguinity.
It is a spirit, not a blood relation,
Superior to family and station.

After years of vain familiarity, some distant gesture or unconscious behavior, which we remember, speaks to us with more emphasis than the wisest or kindest words. We are sometimes made aware of a kindness long passed, and realize that there have been times when our Friends' thoughts of us were of so pure and lofty a character that they passed over us like the winds of heaven unnoticed; when they treated us not as what we were, but as what we aspired to be. There has just reached us, it may be, the nobleness of some such silent behavior, not to be forgotten, not to be remembered, and we shudder to think how it fell on us cold, though in some true but tardy hour we endeavor to wipe off these scores.

In my experience, persons, when they are made the subject of conversation, though with a Friend, are commonly the most prosaic and trivial of facts. The universe seems bankrupt as soon as we begin to discuss the character of individuals. Our discourse all runs to slander, and our limits grow narrower as we advance. How is it that we are impelled to treat our old Friends so ill when we obtain new ones? The housekeeper says, I never had any new crockery in my life but I began to break the old. I say, let us speak of mushrooms and forest trees rather. Yet we can sometimes afford to remember them in private.

Lately, alas, I knew a gentle boy,
Whose features all were cast in Virtue's mould,
As one she had designed for Beauty's toy,
But after manned him for her own strong-hold.

On every side he open was as day,
That you might see no lack of strength within,
For walls and ports do only serve always
For a pretence to feebleness and sin.

Say not that Caesar was victorious,
With toil and strife who stormed the House of Fame,
In other sense this youth was glorious,
Himself a kingdom wheresoe'er he came.

No strength went out to get him victory,
When all was income of its own accord;
For where he went none other was to see,
But all were parcel of their noble lord.

He forayed like the subtile haze of summer,
That stilly shows fresh landscapes to our eyes,
And revolutions works without a murmur,
Or rustling of a leaf beneath the skies.

So was I taken unawares by this,
I quite forgot my homage to confess;
Yet now am forced to know, though hard it is,
I might have loved him had I loved him less.

Each moment as we nearer drew to each,
A stern respect withheld us farther yet,
So that we seemed beyond each other's reach,
And less acquainted than when first we met.

We two were one while we did sympathize,
So could we not the simplest bargain drive;
And what avails it now that we are wise,
If absence doth this doubleness contrive?

Eternity may not the chance repeat,
But I must tread my single way alone,
In sad remembrance that we once did meet,
And know that bliss irrevocably gone.

The spheres henceforth my elegy shall sing,
For elegy has other subject none;
Each strain of music in my ears shall ring
Knell of departure from that other one.

Make haste and celebrate my tragedy;
With fitting strain resound ye woods and fields;
Sorrow is dearer in such case to me
Than all the joys other occasion yields.

Is't then too late the damage to repair?
Distance, forsooth, from my weak grasp hath reft
The empty husk, and clutched the useless tare,
But in my hands the wheat and kernel left.

If I but love that virtue which he is,
Though it be scented in the morning air,
Still shall we be truest acquaintances,
Nor mortals know a sympathy more rare.

Friendship is evanescent in every man's experience, and remembered like heat lightning in past summers. Fair and flitting like a summer cloud;--there is always some vapor in the air, no matter how long the drought; there are even April showers. Surely from time to time, for its vestiges never depart, it floats through our atmosphere. It takes place, like vegetation in so many materials, because there is such a law, but always without permanent form, though ancient and familiar as the sun and moon, and as sure to come again. The heart is forever inexperienced. They silently gather as by magic, these never failing, never quite deceiving visions, like the bright and fleecy clouds in the calmest and clearest days. The Friend is some fair floating isle of palms eluding the mariner in Pacific seas. Many are the dangers to be encountered, equinoctial gales and coral reefs, ere he may sail before the constant trades. But who would not sail through mutiny and storm, even over Atlantic waves, to reach the fabulous retreating shores of some continent man? The imagination still clings to the faintest tradition of

THE ATLANTIDES.

The smothered streams of love, which flow
More bright than Phlegethon, more low,
Island us ever, like the sea,
In an Atlantic mystery.
Our fabled shores none ever reach,
No mariner has found our beach,
Scarcely our mirage now is seen,
And neighboring waves with floating green,
Yet still the oldest charts contain
Some dotted outline of our main;
In ancient times midsummer days
Unto the western islands' gaze,
To Teneriffe and the Azores,
Have shown our faint and cloud-like shores.

But sink not yet, ye desolate isles,
Anon your coast with commerce smiles,
And richer freights ye'll furnish far
Than Africa or Malabar.
Be fair, be fertile evermore,
Ye rumored but untrodden shore,
Princes and monarchs will contend
Who first unto your land shall send,
And pawn the jewels of the crown
To call your distant soil their own.

Columbus has sailed westward of these isles by the mariner's compass, but neither he nor his successors have found them. We are no nearer than Plato was. The earnest seeker and hopeful discoverer of this New World always haunts the outskirts of his time, and walks through the densest crowd uninterrupted, and as it were in a straight line.

Sea and land are but his neighbors,
And companions in his labors,
Who on the ocean's verge and firm land's end
Doth long and truly seek his Friend.
Many men dwell far inland,

But he alone sits on the strand.
Whether he ponders men or books,
Always still he seaward looks,
Marine news he ever reads,
And the slightest glances heeds,
Feels the sea breeze on his cheek,
At each word the landsmen speak,
In every companion's eye
A sailing vessel doth descry;
In the ocean's sullen roar
From some distant port he hears,
Of wrecks upon a distant shore,
And the ventures of past years.

Who does not walk on the plain as amid the columns of Tadmora of the desert? There is on the earth no institution which Friendship has established; it is not taught by any religion; no scripture contains its maxims. It has no temple, nor even a solitary column. There goes a rumor that the earth is inhabited, but the shipwrecked mariner has not seen a footprint on the shore. The hunter has found only fragments of pottery and the monuments of inhabitants.

However, our fates at least are social. Our courses do not diverge; but as the web of destiny is woven it is filled, and we are cast more and more into the centre. Men naturally, though feebly, seek this alliance, and their actions faintly foretell it. We are inclined to lay the chief stress on likeness and not on difference, and in foreign bodies we admit that there are many degrees of warmth below blood heat, but none of cold above it.

Mencius says: "If one loses a fowl or a dog, he knows well how to seek them again; if one loses the sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek them again. . . . The duties of practical philosophy consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart which we have lost; that is all."

One or two persons come to my house from time to time, there being proposed to them the faint possibility of intercourse.

They are as full as they are silent, and wait for my plectrum to stir the strings of their lyre. If they could ever come to the length of a sentence, or hear one, on that ground they are dreaming of! They speak faintly, and do not obtrude themselves. They have heard some news, which none, not even they themselves, can impart. It is a wealth they can bear about them which can be expended in various ways. What came they out to seek?

No word is oftener on the lips of men than Friendship, and indeed no thought is more familiar to their aspirations. All men are dreaming of it, and its drama, which is always a tragedy, is enacted daily. It is the secret of the universe. You may thread the town, you may wander the country, and none shall ever speak of it, yet thought is everywhere busy about it, and the idea of what is possible in this respect affects our behavior toward all new men and women, and a great many old ones. Nevertheless, I can remember only two or three essays on this subject in all literature. No wonder that the Mythology, and Arabian Nights, and Shakespeare, and Scott's novels entertain us,--we are poets and fablers and dramatists and novelists ourselves. We are continually acting a part in a more interesting drama than any written. We are dreaming that our Friends are our Friends, and that we are our Friends' Friends. Our actual Friends are but distant relations of those to whom we are pledged. We never exchange more than three words with a Friend in our lives on that level to which our thoughts and feelings almost habitually rise. One goes forth prepared to say, "Sweet Friends!" and the salutation is, "Damn your eyes!" But never mind; faint heart never won true Friend. O my Friend, may it come to pass once, that when you are my Friend I may be yours.

Of what use the friendliest dispositions even, if there are no hours given to Friendship, if it is forever postponed to unimportant duties and relations? Friendship is first, Friendship last. But it is equally impossible to forget our Friends, and to make them answer to our ideal. When they say farewell, then indeed we begin to keep them company. How often we find ourselves turning our backs on our actual Friends, that we may go and meet their ideal cousins. I would that I were worthy to be any man's Friend.

What is commonly honored with the name of Friendship is no very profound or powerful instinct. Men do not, after all, love their Friends greatly. I do not often see the farmers made seers and wise to the verge of insanity by their Friendship for one another. They are not often transfigured and translated by love in each other's presence. I do not observe them purified, refined, and elevated by the love of a man. If one abates a little the price of his wood, or gives a neighbor his vote at town-meeting, or a barrel of apples, or lends him his wagon frequently, it is esteemed a rare instance of Friendship. Nor do the farmers' wives lead lives consecrated to Friendship. I do not see the pair of farmer Friends of either sex prepared to stand against the world. There are only two or three couples in history. To say that a man is your Friend, means commonly no more than this, that he is not your enemy. Most contemplate only what would be the accidental and trifling advantages of Friendship, as that the Friend can assist in time of need, by his substance, or his influence, or his counsel; but he who foresees such advantages in this relation proves himself blind to its real advantage, or indeed wholly inexperienced in the relation itself. Such services are particular and menial, compared with the perpetual and all-embracing service which it is. Even the utmost good-will and harmony and practical kindness are not sufficient for Friendship, for Friends do not live in harmony merely, as some say, but in melody. We do not wish for Friends to feed and clothe our bodies,--neighbors are kind enough for that,--but to do the like office to our spirits. For this few are rich enough, however well disposed they may be. For the most part we stupidly confound one man with another. The dull distinguish only races or nations, or at most classes, but the wise man, individuals. To his Friend a man's peculiar character appears in every feature and in every action, and it is thus drawn out and improved by him.

Think of the importance of Friendship in the education of men.

"He that hath love and judgment too,
Sees more than any other doe."

It will make a man honest; it will make him a hero; it will make him a saint. It is the state of the just dealing with the just, the magnanimous with the magnanimous, the sincere with the sincere, man with man.

And it is well said by another poet,

"Why love among the virtues is not known,
Is that love is them all contract in one."

All the abuses which are the object of reform with the philanthropist, the statesman, and the housekeeper are unconsciously amended in the intercourse of Friends. A Friend is one who incessantly pays us the compliment of expecting from us all the virtues, and who can appreciate them in us. It takes two to speak the truth,—one to speak, and another to hear. How can one treat with magnanimity mere wood and stone? If we dealt only with the false and dishonest, we should at last forget how to speak truth. Only lovers know the value and magnanimity of truth, while traders prize a cheap honesty, and neighbors and acquaintance a cheap civility. In our daily intercourse with men, our nobler faculties are dormant and suffered to rust. None will pay us the compliment to expect nobleness from us. Though we have gold to give, they demand only copper. We ask our neighbor to suffer himself to be dealt with truly, sincerely, nobly; but he answers no by his deafness. He does not even hear this prayer. He says practically, I will be content if you treat me as "no better than I should be," as deceitful, mean, dishonest, and selfish. For the most part, we are contented so to deal and to be dealt with, and we do not think that for the mass of men there is any truer and nobler relation possible. A man may have _good_ neighbors, so called, and acquaintances, and even companions, wife, parents, brothers, sisters, children, who meet himself and one another on this ground only. The State does not demand justice of its members, but thinks that it succeeds very well with the least degree of it, hardly more than rogues practise; and so do the neighborhood and the family. What is commonly called Friendship even is only a little more honor among rogues.

But sometimes we are said to _love_ another, that is, to stand in

a true relation to him, so that we give the best to, and receive the best from, him. Between whom there is hearty truth, there is love; and in proportion to our truthfulness and confidence in one another, our lives are divine and miraculous, and answer to our ideal. There are passages of affection in our intercourse with mortal men and women, such as no prophecy had taught us to expect, which transcend our earthly life, and anticipate Heaven for us. What is this Love that may come right into the middle of a prosaic Goffstown day, equal to any of the gods? that discovers a new world, fair and fresh and eternal, occupying the place of the old one, when to the common eye a dust has settled on the universe? which world cannot else be reached, and does not exist. What other words, we may almost ask, are memorable and worthy to be repeated than those which love has inspired? It is wonderful that they were ever uttered. They are few and rare, indeed, but, like a strain of music, they are incessantly repeated and modulated by the memory. All other words crumble off with the stucco which overlies the heart. We should not dare to repeat these now aloud. We are not competent to hear them at all times.

The books for young people say a great deal about the _selection_ of Friends; it is because they really have nothing to say about _Friends_. They mean associates and confidants merely. "Know that the contrariety of foe and Friend proceeds from God." Friendship takes place between those who have an affinity for one another, and is a perfectly natural and inevitable result. No professions nor advances will avail. Even speech, at first, necessarily has nothing to do with it; but it follows after silence, as the buds in the graft do not put forth into leaves till long after the graft has taken. It is a drama in which the parties have no part to act. We are all Mussulmen and fatalists in this respect. Impatient and uncertain lovers think that they must say or do something kind whenever they meet; they must never be cold. But they who are Friends do not do what they _think_ they must, but what they _must_. Even their Friendship is to some extent but a sublime phenomenon to them.

The true and not despairing Friend will address his Friend in some such terms as these.

"I never asked thy leave to let me love thee,--I have a right. I love thee not as something private and personal, which is _your own_, but as something universal and worthy of love, _which I have found_. O, how I think of you! You are purely good, --you are infinitely good. I can trust you forever. I did not think that humanity was so rich. Give me an opportunity to live."

"You are the fact in a fiction,--you are the truth more strange and admirable than fiction. Consent only to be what you are. I alone will never stand in your way."

"This is what I would like,--to be as intimate with you as our spirits are intimate,--respecting you as I respect my ideal. Never to profane one another by word or action, even by a thought. Between us, if necessary, let there be no acquaintance."

"I have discovered you; how can you be concealed from me?"

The Friend asks no return but that his Friend will religiously accept and wear and not disgrace his apotheosis of him. They cherish each other's hopes. They are kind to each other's dreams.

Though the poet says, "'Tis the pre-eminence of Friendship to impute excellence," yet we can never praise our Friend, nor esteem him praiseworthy, nor let him think that he can please us by any _behavior_, or ever _treat_ us well enough. That kindness which has so good a reputation elsewhere can least of all consist with this relation, and no such affront can be offered to a Friend, as a conscious good-will, a friendliness which is not a necessity of the Friend's nature.

The sexes are naturally most strongly attracted to one another, by constant constitutional differences, and are most commonly and surely the complements of each other. How natural and easy it is for man to secure the attention of woman to what interests himself. Men and women of equal culture, thrown together, are sure to be of a certain value to one another, more than men to

men. There exists already a natural disinterestedness and liberality in such society, and I think that any man will more confidently carry his favorite books to read to some circle of intelligent women, than to one of his own sex. The visit of man to man is wont to be an interruption, but the sexes naturally expect one another. Yet Friendship is no respecter of sex; and perhaps it is more rare between the sexes than between two of the same sex.

Friendship is, at any rate, a relation of perfect equality. It cannot well spare any outward sign of equal obligation and advantage. The nobleman can never have a Friend among his retainers, nor the king among his subjects. Not that the parties to it are in all respects equal, but they are equal in all that respects or affects their Friendship. The one's love is exactly balanced and represented by the other's. Persons are only the vessels which contain the nectar, and the hydrostatic paradox is the symbol of love's law. It finds its level and rises to its fountain-head in all breasts, and its slenderest column balances the ocean.

"And love as well the shepherd can
As can the mighty nobleman."

The one sex is not, in this respect, more tender than the other.
A hero's love is as delicate as a maiden's.

Confucius said, "Never contract Friendship with a man who is not better than thyself." It is the merit and preservation of Friendship, that it takes place on a level higher than the actual characters of the parties would seem to warrant. The rays of light come to us in such a curve that every man whom we meet appears to be taller than he actually is. Such foundation has civility. My Friend is that one whom I can associate with my choicest thought. I always assign to him a nobler employment in my absence than I ever find him engaged in; and I imagine that the hours which he devotes to me were snatched from a higher society. The sorest insult which I ever received from a Friend was, when he behaved with the license which only long and cheap acquaintance allows to one's faults, in my presence, without

shame, and still addressed me in friendly accents. Beware, lest thy Friend learn at last to tolerate one frailty of thine, and so an obstacle be raised to the progress of thy love. There are times when we have had enough even of our Friends, when we begin inevitably to profane one another, and must withdraw religiously into solitude and silence, the better to prepare ourselves for a loftier intimacy. Silence is the ambrosial night in the intercourse of Friends, in which their sincerity is recruited and takes deeper root.

Friendship is never established as an understood relation. Do you demand that I be less your Friend that you may know it? Yet what right have I to think that another cherishes so rare a sentiment for me? It is a miracle which requires constant proofs. It is an exercise of the purest imagination and the rarest faith. It says by a silent but eloquent behavior,--"I will be so related to thee as thou canst imagine; even so thou mayest believe. I will spend truth,--all my wealth on thee,"--and the Friend responds silently through his nature and life, and treats his Friend with the same divine courtesy. He knows us literally through thick and thin. He never asks for a sign of love, but can distinguish it by the features which it naturally wears. We never need to stand upon ceremony with him with regard to his visits. Wait not till I invite thee, but observe that I am glad to see thee when thou comest. It would be paying too dear for thy visit to ask for it. Where my Friend lives there are all riches and every attraction, and no slight obstacle can keep me from him. Let me never have to tell thee what I have not to tell. Let our intercourse be wholly above ourselves, and draw us up to it.

The language of Friendship is not words, but meanings. It is an intelligence above language. One imagines endless conversations with his Friend, in which the tongue shall be loosed, and thoughts be spoken without hesitancy or end; but the experience is commonly far otherwise. Acquaintances may come and go, and have a word ready for every occasion; but what puny word shall he utter whose very breath is thought and meaning? Suppose you go to bid farewell to your Friend who is setting out on a journey; what other outward sign do you know than to shake his hand? Have

you any palaver ready for him then? any box of salve to commit to his pocket? any particular message to send by him? any statement which you had forgotten to make?--as if you could forget anything.--No, it is much that you take his hand and say Farewell; that you could easily omit; so far custom has prevailed. It is even painful, if he is to go, that he should linger so long. If he must go, let him go quickly. Have you any last words? Alas, it is only the word of words, which you have so long sought and found not; you have not a first word yet. There are few even whom I should venture to call earnestly by their most proper names. A name pronounced is the recognition of the individual to whom it belongs. He who can pronounce my name aright, he can call me, and is entitled to my love and service. Yet reserve is the freedom and abandonment of lovers. It is the reserve of what is hostile or indifferent in their natures, to give place to what is kindred and harmonious.

The violence of love is as much to be dreaded as that of hate. When it is durable it is serene and equable. Even its famous pains begin only with the ebb of love, for few are indeed lovers, though all would fain be. It is one proof of a man's fitness for Friendship that he is able to do without that which is cheap and passionate. A true Friendship is as wise as it is tender. The parties to it yield implicitly to the guidance of their love, and know no other law nor kindness. It is not extravagant and insane, but what it says is something established henceforth, and will bear to be stereotyped. It is a truer truth, it is better and fairer news, and no time will ever shame it, or prove it false. This is a plant which thrives best in a temperate zone, where summer and winter alternate with one another. The Friend is a necessarius, and meets his Friend on homely ground; not on carpets and cushions, but on the ground and on rocks they will sit, obeying the natural and primitive laws. They will meet without any outcry, and part without loud sorrow. Their relation implies such qualities as the warrior prizes; for it takes a valor to open the hearts of men as well as the gates of castles. It is not an idle sympathy and mutual consolation merely, but a heroic sympathy of aspiration and endeavor.

"When manhood shall be matched so

That fear can take no place,
Then weary _works_ make warriors
Each other to embrace."

The Friendship which Wawatam testified for Henry the fur-trader, as described in the latter's "Adventures," so almost bare and leafless, yet not blossomless nor fruitless, is remembered with satisfaction and security. The stern, imperturbable warrior, after fasting, solitude, and mortification of body, comes to the white man's lodge, and affirms that he is the white brother whom he saw in his dream, and adopts him henceforth. He buries the hatchet as it regards his friend, and they hunt and feast and make maple-sugar together. "Metals unite from fluxility; birds and beasts from motives of convenience; fools from fear and stupidity; and just men at sight." If Wawatam would taste the "white man's milk" with his tribe, or take his bowl of human broth made of the trader's fellow-countrymen, he first finds a place of safety for his Friend, whom he has rescued from a similar fate. At length, after a long winter of undisturbed and happy intercourse in the family of the chieftain in the wilderness, hunting and fishing, they return in the spring to Michilimackinac to dispose of their furs; and it becomes necessary for Wawatam to take leave of his Friend at the Isle aux Outardes, when the latter, to avoid his enemies, proceeded to the Sault de Sainte Marie, supposing that they were to be separated for a short time only. "We now exchanged farewells," says Henry, "with an emotion entirely reciprocal. I did not quit the lodge without the most grateful sense of the many acts of goodness which I had experienced in it, nor without the sincerest respect for the virtues which I had witnessed among its members. All the family accompanied me to the beach; and the canoe had no sooner put off than Wawatam commenced an address to the Kichi Manito, beseeching him to take care of me, his brother, till we should next meet. We had proceeded to too great a distance to allow of our hearing his voice, before Wawatam had ceased to offer up his prayers." We never hear of him again.

Friendship is not so kind as is imagined; it has not much human blood in it, but consists with a certain disregard for men and their erections, the Christian duties and humanities, while it

purifies the air like electricity. There may be the sternest tragedy in the relation of two more than usually innocent and true to their highest instincts. We may call it an essentially heathenish intercourse, free and irresponsible in its nature, and practising all the virtues gratuitously. It is not the highest sympathy merely, but a pure and lofty society, a fragmentary and godlike intercourse of ancient date, still kept up at intervals, which, remembering itself, does not hesitate to disregard the humbler rights and duties of humanity. It requires immaculate and godlike qualities full-grown, and exists at all only by condescension and anticipation of the remotest future. We love nothing which is merely good and not fair, if such a thing is possible. Nature puts some kind of blossom before every fruit, not simply a calyx behind it. When the Friend comes out of his heathenism and superstition, and breaks his idols, being converted by the precepts of a newer testament; when he forgets his mythology, and treats his Friend like a Christian, or as he can afford; then Friendship ceases to be Friendship, and becomes charity; that principle which established the almshouse is now beginning with its charity at home, and establishing an almshouse and pauper relations there.

As for the number which this society admits, it is at any rate to be begun with one, the noblest and greatest that we know, and whether the world will ever carry it further, whether, as Chaucer affirms,

"There be no sterres in the skie than a pair,"

remains to be proved;

"And certaine he is well begone
Among a thousand that findeth one."

We shall not surrender ourselves heartily to any while we are conscious that another is more deserving of our love. Yet Friendship does not stand for numbers; the Friend does not count his Friends on his fingers; they are not numerable. The more there are included by this bond, if they are indeed included, the rarer and diviner the quality of the love that binds them. I am

ready to believe that as private and intimate a relation may exist by which three are embraced, as between two. Indeed, we cannot have too many friends; the virtue which we appreciate we to some extent appropriate, so that thus we are made at last more fit for every relation of life. A base Friendship is of a narrowing and exclusive tendency, but a noble one is not exclusive; its very superfluity and dispersed love is the humanity which sweetens society, and sympathizes with foreign nations; for though its foundations are private, it is, in effect, a public affair and a public advantage, and the Friend, more than the father of a family, deserves well of the state.

The only danger in Friendship is that it will end. It is a delicate plant, though a native. The least unworthiness, even if it be unknown to one's self, vitiates it. Let the Friend know that those faults which he observes in his Friend his own faults attract. There is no rule more invariable than that we are paid for our suspicions by finding what we suspected. By our narrowness and prejudices we say, I will have so much and such of you, my Friend, no more. Perhaps there are none charitable, none disinterested, none wise, noble, and heroic enough, for a true and lasting Friendship.

I sometimes hear my Friends complain finely that I do not appreciate their fineness. I shall not tell them whether I do or not. As if they expected a vote of thanks for every fine thing which they uttered or did. Who knows but it was finely appreciated. It may be that your silence was the finest thing of the two. There are some things which a man never speaks of, which are much finer kept silent about. To the highest communications we only lend a silent ear. Our finest relations are not simply kept silent about, but buried under a positive depth of silence never to be revealed. It may be that we are not even yet acquainted. In human intercourse the tragedy begins, not when there is misunderstanding about words, but when silence is not understood. Then there can never be an explanation. What avails it that another loves you, if he does not understand you? Such love is a curse. What sort of companions are they who are presuming always that their silence is more expressive than yours? How foolish, and inconsiderate, and unjust, to conduct as

if you were the only party aggrieved! Has not your Friend always equal ground of complaint? No doubt my Friends sometimes speak to me in vain, but they do not know what things I hear which they are not aware that they have spoken. I know that I have frequently disappointed them by not giving them words when they expected them, or such as they expected. Whenever I see my Friend I speak to him; but the expecter, the man with the ears, is not he. They will complain too that you are hard. O ye that would have the cocoa-nut wrong side outwards, when next I weep I will let you know. They ask for words and deeds, when a true relation is word and deed. If they know not of these things, how can they be informed? We often forbear to confess our feelings, not from pride, but for fear that we could not continue to love the one who required us to give such proof of our affection.

I know a woman who possesses a restless and intelligent mind, interested in her own culture, and earnest to enjoy the highest possible advantages, and I meet her with pleasure as a natural person who not a little provokes me, and I suppose is stimulated in turn by myself. Yet our acquaintance plainly does not attain to that degree of confidence and sentiment which women, which all, in fact, covet. I am glad to help her, as I am helped by her; I like very well to know her with a sort of stranger's privilege, and hesitate to visit her often, like her other Friends. My nature pauses here, I do not well know why. Perhaps she does not make the highest demand on me, a religious demand. Some, with whose prejudices or peculiar bias I have no sympathy, yet inspire me with confidence, and I trust that they confide in me also as a religious heathen at least,--a good Greek. I, too, have principles as well founded as their own. If this person could conceive that, without wilfulness, I associate with her as far as our destinies are coincident, as far as our Good Geniuses permit, and still value such intercourse, it would be a grateful assurance to me. I feel as if I appeared careless, indifferent, and without principle to her, not expecting more, and yet not content with less. If she could know that I make an infinite demand on myself, as well as on all others, she would see that this true though incomplete intercourse, is infinitely better than a more unreserved but falsely grounded one, without the

principle of growth in it. For a companion, I require one who will make an equal demand on me with my own genius. Such a one will always be rightly tolerant. It is suicide, and corrupts good manners to welcome any less than this. I value and trust those who love and praise my aspiration rather than my performance. If you would not stop to look at me, but look whither I am looking, and farther, then my education could not dispense with your company.

My love must be as free
As is the eagle's wing,
Hovering o'er land and sea
And everything.

I must not dim my eye
In thy saloon,
I must not leave my sky
And nightly moon.

Be not the fowler's net
Which stays my flight,
And craftily is set
T'allure the sight.

But be the favoring gale
That bears me on,
And still doth fill my sail
When thou art gone.

I cannot leave my sky
For thy caprice,
True love would soar as high
As heaven is.

The eagle would not brook
Her mate thus won,
Who trained his eye to look
Beneath the sun.

Few things are more difficult than to help a Friend in matters which do not require the aid of Friendship, but only a cheap and trivial service, if your Friendship wants the basis of a thorough practical acquaintance. I stand in the friendliest relation, on social and spiritual grounds, to one who does not perceive what

practical skill I have, but when he seeks my assistance in such matters, is wholly ignorant of that one with whom he deals; does not use my skill, which in such matters is much greater than his, but only my hands. I know another, who, on the contrary, is remarkable for his discrimination in this respect; who knows how to make use of the talents of others when he does not possess the same; knows when not to look after or oversee, and stops short at his man. It is a rare pleasure to serve him, which all laborers know. I am not a little pained by the other kind of treatment. It is as if, after the friendliest and most ennobling intercourse, your Friend should use you as a hammer, and drive a nail with your head, all in good faith; notwithstanding that you are a tolerable carpenter, as well as his good Friend, and would use a hammer cheerfully in his service. This want of perception is a defect which all the virtues of the heart cannot supply:--

The Good how can we trust?
Only the Wise are just.
The Good we use,
The Wise we cannot choose.
These there are none above;
The Good they know and love,
But are not known again
By those of lesser ken.
They do not charm us with their eyes,
But they transfix with their advice;
No partial sympathy they feel,
With private woe or private weal,
But with the universe joy and sigh,
Whose knowledge is their sympathy.

Confucius said: "To contract ties of Friendship with any one, is to contract Friendship with his virtue. There ought not to be any other motive in Friendship." But men wish us to contract Friendship with their vice also. I have a Friend who wishes me to see that to be right which I know to be wrong. But if Friendship is to rob me of my eyes, if it is to darken the day, I will have none of it. It should be expansive and inconceivably liberalizing in its effects. True Friendship can afford true knowledge. It does not depend on darkness and ignorance. A want of discernment cannot be an ingredient in it. If I can see my Friend's virtues more distinctly than another's, his faults too are made more conspicuous by contrast. We have not so good a right to hate any as our Friend. Faults are not the less faults

because they are invariably balanced by corresponding virtues, and for a fault there is no excuse, though it may appear greater than it is in many ways. I have never known one who could bear criticism, who could not be flattered, who would not bribe his judge, or was content that the truth should be loved always better than himself.

If two travellers would go their way harmoniously together, the one must take as true and just a view of things as the other, else their path will not be strewn with roses. Yet you can travel profitably and pleasantly even with a blind man, if he practises common courtesy, and when you converse about the scenery will remember that he is blind but that you can see; and you will not forget that his sense of hearing is probably quickened by his want of sight. Otherwise you will not long keep company. A blind man, and a man in whose eyes there was no defect, were walking together, when they came to the edge of a precipice. "Take care! my friend," said the latter, "here is a steep precipice; go no farther this way."--"I know better," said the other, and stepped off.

It is impossible to say all that we think, even to our truest Friend. We may bid him farewell forever sooner than complain, for our complaint is too well grounded to be uttered. There is not so good an understanding between any two, but the exposure by the one of a serious fault in the other will produce a misunderstanding in proportion to its heinousness. The constitutional differences which always exist, and are obstacles to a perfect Friendship, are forever a forbidden theme to the lips of Friends. They advise by their whole behavior. Nothing can reconcile them but love. They are fatally late when they undertake to explain and treat with one another like foes. Who will take an apology for a Friend? They must apologize like dew and frost, which are off again with the sun, and which all men know in their hearts to be beneficent. The necessity itself for explanation,--what explanation will atone for that?

True love does not quarrel for slight reasons, such mistakes as mutual acquaintances can explain away, but, alas, however slight the apparent cause, only for adequate and fatal and everlasting reasons, which can never be set aside. Its quarrel, if there is any, is ever recurring, notwithstanding the beams of affection which invariably come to gild its tears; as the rainbow, however beautiful and unerring a sign, does not promise fair weather

forever, but only for a season. I have known two or three persons pretty well, and yet I have never known advice to be of use but in trivial and transient matters. One may know what another does not, but the utmost kindness cannot impart what is requisite to make the advice useful. We must accept or refuse one another as we are. I could tame a hyena more easily than my Friend. He is a material which no tool of mine will work. A naked savage will fell an oak with a firebrand, and wear a hatchet out of a rock by friction, but I cannot hew the smallest chip out of the character of my Friend, either to beautify or deform it.

The lover learns at last that there is no person quite transparent and trustworthy, but every one has a devil in him that is capable of any crime in the long run. Yet, as an Oriental philosopher has said, "Although Friendship between good men is interrupted, their principles remain unaltered. The stalk of the lotus may be broken, and the fibres remain connected."

Ignorance and bungling with love are better than wisdom and skill without. There may be courtesy, there may be even temper, and wit, and talent, and sparkling conversation, there may be good-will even,—and yet the humanest and divinest faculties pine for exercise. Our life without love is like coke and ashes. Men may be pure as alabaster and Parian marble, elegant as a Tuscan villa, sublime as Niagara, and yet if there is no milk mingled with the wine at their entertainments, better is the hospitality of Goths and Vandals.

My Friend is not of some other race or family of men, but flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone. He is my real brother. I see his nature groping yonder so like mine. We do not live far apart. Have not the fates associated us in many ways? It says, in the Vishnu Purana: "Seven paces together is sufficient for the friendship of the virtuous, but thou and I have dwelt together." Is it of no significance that we have so long partaken of the same loaf, drank at the same fountain, breathed the same air summer and winter, felt the same heat and cold; that the same fruits have been pleased to refresh us both, and we have never had a thought of different fibre the one from the other!

Nature doth have her dawn each day,
But mine are far between;

Content, I cry, for sooth to say,
Mine brightest are I ween.

For when my sun doth deign to rise,
Though it be her noontide,
Her fairest field in shadow lies,
Nor can my light abide.

Sometimes I bask me in her day,
Conversing with my mate,
But if we interchange one ray,
Forthwith her heats abate.

Through his discourse I climb and see,
As from some eastern hill,
A brighter morrow rise to me
Than lieth in her skill.

As 't were two summer days in one,
Two Sundays come together,
Our rays united make one sun,
With fairest summer weather.

As surely as the sunset in my latest November shall translate me to the ethereal world, and remind me of the ruddy morning of youth; as surely as the last strain of music which falls on my decaying ear shall make age to be forgotten, or, in short, the manifold influences of nature survive during the term of our natural life, so surely my Friend shall forever be my Friend, and reflect a ray of God to me, and time shall foster and adorn and consecrate our Friendship, no less than the ruins of temples. As I love nature, as I love singing birds, and gleaming stubble, and flowing rivers, and morning and evening, and summer and winter, I love thee, my Friend.

But all that can be said of Friendship, is like botany to flowers. How can the understanding take account of its friendliness?

Even the death of Friends will inspire us as much as their lives. They will leave consolation to the mourners, as the rich leave money to defray the expenses of their funerals, and their memories will be incrustated over with sublime and pleasing

thoughts, as monuments of other men are overgrown with moss; for our Friends have no place in the graveyard.

This to our cis-Alpine and cis-Atlantic Friends.

Also this other word of entreaty and advice to the large and respectable nation of Acquaintances, beyond the mountains;--Greeting.

My most serene and irresponsible neighbors, let us see that we have the whole advantage of each other; we will be useful, at least, if not admirable, to one another. I know that the mountains which separate us are high, and covered with perpetual snow, but despair not. Improve the serene winter weather to scale them. If need be, soften the rocks with vinegar. For here lie the verdant plains of Italy ready to receive you. Nor shall I be slow on my side to penetrate to your Provence. Strike then boldly at head or heart or any vital part. Depend upon it, the timber is well seasoned and tough, and will bear rough usage; and if it should crack, there is plenty more where it came from. I am no piece of crockery that cannot be jostled against my neighbor without danger of being broken by the collision, and must needs ring false and jarringly to the end of my days, when once I am cracked; but rather one of the old-fashioned wooden trenchers, which one while stands at the head of the table, and at another is a milking-stool, and at another a seat for children, and finally goes down to its grave not unadorned with honorable scars, and does not die till it is worn out. Nothing can shock a brave man but dulness. Think how many rebuffs every man has experienced in his day; perhaps has fallen into a horse-pond, eaten fresh-water clams, or worn one shirt for a week without washing. Indeed, you cannot receive a shock unless you have an electric affinity for that which shocks you. Use me, then, for I am useful in my way, and stand as one of many petitioners, from toadstool and henbane up to dahlia and violet, supplicating to be put to my use, if by any means ye may find me serviceable; whether for a medicated drink or bath, as balm and lavender; or for fragrance, as verbena and geranium; or for sight, as cactus; or for thoughts, as pansy. These humbler, at least, if not those higher uses.

Ah, my dear Strangers and Enemies, I would not forget you. I can well afford to welcome you. Let me subscribe myself Yours ever

and truly,--your much obliged servant. We have nothing to fear
from our foes; God keeps a standing army for that service; but we
have no ally against our Friends, those ruthless Vandals.

Once more to one and all,

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen, and Lovers."

Let such pure hate still underprop
Our love, that we may be
Each other's conscience.
And have our sympathy
Mainly from thence.

We'll one another treat like gods,
And all the faith we have
In virtue and in truth, bestow
On either, and suspicion leave
To gods below.

Two solitary stars,--
Unmeasured systems far
Between us roll,
But by our conscious light we are
Determined to one pole.

What need confound the sphere,--
Love can afford to wait,
For it no hour's too late
That witnesseth one duty's end,
Or to another doth beginning lend.

It will subserve no use,
More than the tints of flowers,
Only the independent guest
Frequents its bowers,
Inherits its bequest.

No speech though kind has it,
But kinder silence doles
Unto its mates,
By night consoles,
By day congratulates.

What saith the tongue to tongue?
What heareth ear of ear?
By the decrees of fate
From year to year,
Does it communicate.

Pathless the gulf of feeling yawns,--
No trivial bridge of words,
Or arch of boldest span,
Can leap the moat that girds
The sincere man.

No show of bolts and bars
Can keep the foeman out,
Or 'scape his secret mine
Who entered with the doubt
That drew the line.

No warder at the gate
Can let the friendly in,
But, like the sun, o'er all
He will the castle win,
And shine along the wall.

There's nothing in the world I know
That can escape from love,
For every depth it goes below,
And every height above.

It waits as waits the sky,
Until the clouds go by,
Yet shines serenely on
With an eternal day,
Alike when they are gone,
And when they stay.

Implacable is Love,--
Foes may be bought or teased
From their hostile intent,
But he goes unappeased
Who is on kindness bent.

Having rowed five or six miles above Amoskeag before sunset, and

reached a pleasant part of the river, one of us landed to look for a farm-house, where we might replenish our stores, while the other remained cruising about the stream, and exploring the opposite shores to find a suitable harbor for the night. In the mean while the canal-boats began to come round a point in our rear, poling their way along close to the shore, the breeze having quite died away. This time there was no offer of assistance, but one of the boatmen only called out to say, as the truest revenge for having been the losers in the race, that he had seen a wood-duck, which we had scared up, sitting on a tall white-pine, half a mile down stream; and he repeated the assertion several times, and seemed really chagrined at the apparent suspicion with which this information was received. But there sat the summer duck still, undisturbed by us.

By and by the other voyageur returned from his inland expedition, bringing one of the natives with him, a little flaxen-headed boy, with some tradition, or small edition, of Robinson Crusoe in his head, who had been charmed by the account of our adventures, and asked his father's leave to join us. He examined, at first from the top of the bank, our boat and furniture, with sparkling eyes, and wished himself already his own man. He was a lively and interesting boy, and we should have been glad to ship him; but Nathan was still his father's boy, and had not come to years of discretion.

We had got a loaf of home-made bread, and musk and water melons for dessert. For this farmer, a clever and well-disposed man, cultivated a large patch of melons for the Hooksett and Concord markets. He hospitably entertained us the next day, exhibiting his hop-fields and kiln and melon-patch, warning us to step over the tight rope which surrounded the latter at a foot from the ground, while he pointed to a little bower at one corner, where it connected with the lock of a gun ranging with the line, and where, as he informed us, he sometimes sat in pleasant nights to defend his premises against thieves. We stepped high over the line, and sympathized with our host's on the whole quite human, if not humane, interest in the success of his experiment. That night especially thieves were to be expected, from rumors in the atmosphere, and the priming was not wet. He was a Methodist man, who had his dwelling between the river and Uncannunuc Mountain; who there belonged, and stayed at home there, and by the encouragement of distant political organizations, and by his own tenacity, held a property in his melons, and continued to plant.

We suggested melon-seeds of new varieties and fruit of foreign flavor to be added to his stock. We had come away up here among the hills to learn the impartial and unbribable beneficence of Nature. Strawberries and melons grow as well in one man's garden as another's, and the sun lodges as kindly under his hillside,--when we had imagined that she inclined rather to some few earnest and faithful souls whom we know.

We found a convenient harbor for our boat on the opposite or east shore, still in Hooksett, at the mouth of a small brook which emptied into the Merrimack, where it would be out of the way of any passing boat in the night,--for they commonly hug the shore if bound up stream, either to avoid the current, or touch the bottom with their poles,--and where it would be accessible without stepping on the clayey shore. We set one of our largest melons to cool in the still water among the alders at the mouth of this creek, but when our tent was pitched and ready, and we went to get it, it had floated out into the stream, and was nowhere to be seen. So taking the boat in the twilight, we went in pursuit of this property, and at length, after long straining of the eyes, its green disk was discovered far down the river, gently floating seaward with many twigs and leaves from the mountains that evening, and so perfectly balanced that it had not keeled at all, and no water had run in at the tap which had been taken out to hasten its cooling.

As we sat on the bank eating our supper, the clear light of the western sky fell on the eastern trees, and was reflected in the water, and we enjoyed so serene an evening as left nothing to describe. For the most part we think that there are few degrees of sublimity, and that the highest is but little higher than that which we now behold; but we are always deceived. Sublimers visions appear, and the former pale and fade away. We are grateful when we are reminded by interior evidence of the permanence of universal laws; for our faith is but faintly remembered, indeed, is not a remembered assurance, but a use and enjoyment of knowledge. It is when we do not have to believe, but come into actual contact with Truth, and are related to her in the most direct and intimate way. Waves of serener life pass over us from time to time, like flakes of sunlight over the fields in cloudy weather. In some happier moment, when more sap flows in the withered stalk of our life, Syria and India stretch away from our present as they do in history. All the events which make the annals of the nations are but the shadows of our

private experiences. Suddenly and silently the eras which we call history awake and glimmer in us, and there is room for Alexander and Hannibal to march and conquer. In short, the history which we read is only a fainter memory of events which have happened in our own experience. Tradition is a more interrupted and feebler memory.

This world is but canvas to our imaginations. I see men with infinite pains endeavoring to realize to their bodies, what I, with at least equal pains, would realize to my imagination,--its capacities; for certainly there is a life of the mind above the wants of the body, and independent of it. Often the body is warmed, but the imagination is torpid; the body is fat, but the imagination is lean and shrunk. But what avails all other wealth if this is wanting? "Imagination is the air of mind," in which it lives and breathes. All things are as I am. Where is the House of Change? The past is only so heroic as we see it. It is the canvas on which our idea of heroism is painted, and so, in one sense, the dim prospectus of our future field. Our circumstances answer to our expectations and the demand of our natures. I have noticed that if a man thinks that he needs a thousand dollars, and cannot be convinced that he does not, he will commonly be found to have them; if he lives and thinks a thousand dollars will be forthcoming, though it be to buy shoe-strings with. A thousand mills will be just as slow to come to one who finds it equally hard to convince himself that he needs them.

Men are by birth equal in this, that given Themselves and their condition, they are even.

I am astonished at the singular pertinacity and endurance of our lives. The miracle is, that what is is, when it is so difficult, if not impossible, for anything else to be; that we walk on in our particular paths so far, before we fall on death and fate, merely because we must walk in some path; that every man can get a living, and so few can do anything more. So much only can I accomplish ere health and strength are gone, and yet this suffices. The bird now sits just out of gunshot. I am never rich in money, and I am never meanly poor. If debts are incurred, why, debts are in the course of events cancelled, as it were by the same law by which they were incurred. I heard that an engagement was entered into between a certain youth and a maiden, and then I heard that it was broken off, but I did not

know the reason in either case. We are hedged about, we think, by accident and circumstance, now we creep as in a dream, and now again we run, as if there were a fate in it, and all things thwarted or assisted. I cannot change my clothes but when I do, and yet I do change them, and soil the new ones. It is wonderful that this gets done, when some admirable deeds which I could mention do not get done. Our particular lives seem of such fortune and confident strength and durability as piers of solid rock thrown forward into the tide of circumstance. When every other path would fail, with singular and unerring confidence we advance on our particular course. What risks we run! famine and fire and pestilence, and the thousand forms of a cruel fate,--and yet every man lives till he--dies. How did he manage that? Is there no immediate danger? We wonder superfluously when we hear of a somnambulist walking a plank securely,--we have walked a plank all our lives up to this particular string-piece where we are. My life will wait for nobody, but is being matured still without delay, while I go about the streets, and chaffer with this man and that to secure it a living. It is as indifferent and easy meanwhile as a poor man's dog, and making acquaintance with its kind. It will cut its own channel like a mountain stream, and by the longest ridge is not kept from the sea at last. I have found all things thus far, persons and inanimate matter, elements and seasons, strangely adapted to my resources. No matter what imprudent haste in my career; I am permitted to be rash. Gulfs are bridged in a twinkling, as if some unseen baggage-train carried pontoons for my convenience, and while from the heights I scan the tempting but unexplored Pacific Ocean of Futurity, the ship is being carried over the mountains piecemeal on the backs of mules and lamas, whose keel shall plough its waves, and bear me to the Indies. Day would not dawn if it were not for

THE INWARD MORNING

Packed in my mind lie all the clothes
Which outward nature wears,
And in its fashion's hourly change
It all things else repairs.

In vain I look for change abroad,
And can no difference find,
Till some new ray of peace uncalled
Illumes my inmost mind.

What is it gilds the trees and clouds,
And paints the heavens so gay,
But yonder fast-abiding light
With its unchanging ray?

Lo, when the sun streams through the wood,
Upon a winter's morn,
Where'er his silent beams intrude,
The murky night is gone.

How could the patient pine have known
The morning breeze would come,
Or humble flowers anticipate
The insect's noonday hum,--

Till the new light with morning cheer
From far streamed through the aisles,
And nimbly told the forest trees
For many stretching miles?

I've heard within my inmost soul
Such cheerful morning news,
In the horizon of my mind
Have seen such orient hues,

As in the twilight of the dawn,
When the first birds awake,
Are heard within some silent wood,
Where they the small twigs break,

Or in the eastern skies are seen,
Before the sun appears,
The harbingers of summer heats
Which from afar he bears.

Whole weeks and months of my summer life slide away in thin
volumes like mist and smoke, till at length, some warm morning,
perchance, I see a sheet of mist blown down the brook to the
swamp, and I float as high above the fields with it. I can recall
to mind the stillest summer hours, in which the grasshopper sings
over the mulleins, and there is a valor in that time the bare
memory of which is armor that can laugh at any blow of fortune.
For our lifetime the strains of a harp are heard to swell and die

alternately, and death is but "the pause when the blast is recollecting itself."

We lay awake a long while, listening to the murmurs of the brook, in the angle formed by whose bank with the river our tent was pitched, and there was a sort of human interest in its story, which ceases not in freshet or in drought the livelong summer, and the profounder lapse of the river was quite drowned by its din. But the rill, whose

"Silver sands and pebbles sing
Eternal ditties with the spring,"

is silenced by the first frosts of winter, while mightier streams, on whose bottom the sun never shines, clogged with sunken rocks and the ruins of forests, from whose surface comes up no murmur, are strangers to the icy fetters which bind fast a thousand contributory rills.

I dreamed this night of an event which had occurred long before. It was a difference with a Friend, which had not ceased to give me pain, though I had no cause to blame myself. But in my dream ideal justice was at length done me for his suspicions, and I received that compensation which I had never obtained in my waking hours. I was unspeakably soothed and rejoiced, even after I awoke, because in dreams we never deceive ourselves, nor are deceived, and this seemed to have the authority of a final judgment.

We bless and curse ourselves. Some dreams are divine, as well as some waking thoughts. Donne sings of one

"Who dreamt devoutlier than most use to pray."

Dreams are the touchstones of our characters. We are scarcely less afflicted when we remember some unworthiness in our conduct in a dream, than if it had been actual, and the intensity of our grief, which is our atonement, measures the degree by which this is separated from an actual unworthiness. For in dreams we but act a part which must have been learned and rehearsed in our waking hours, and no doubt could discover some waking consent thereto. If this meanness had not its foundation in us, why are we grieved at it? In dreams we see ourselves naked and acting

out our real characters, even more clearly than we see others awake. But an unwavering and commanding virtue would compel even its most fantastic and faintest dreams to respect its ever-wakeful authority; as we are accustomed to say carelessly, we should never have _dreamed_ of such a thing. Our truest life is when we are in dreams awake.

"And, more to lulle him in his slumber soft,
A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe,
And ever-drizzling raine upon the loft,
Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swowne.
No other noyse, nor people's troublous cryes,
As still are wont t' annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lyes
Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enemyes."

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THURSDAY.

"He trode the unplanted forest floor, whereon
The all-seeing sun for ages hath not shone,
Where feeds the moose, and walks the surly bear,
And up the tall mast runs the woodpecker.

. . . .

Where darkness found him he lay glad at night;
There the red morning touched him with its light.

. . . .

Go where he will, the wise man is at home,
His hearth the earth,--his hall the azure dome;
Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his road,
By God's own light illumined and foreshowed."

^Emerson^.

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THURSDAY.

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When we awoke this morning, we heard the faint, deliberate, and ominous sound of rain-drops on our cotton roof. The rain had pattered all night, and now the whole country wept, the drops falling in the river, and on the alders, and in the pastures, and instead of any bow in the heavens, there was the trill of the hair-bird all the morning. The cheery faith of this little bird atoned for the silence of the whole woodland choir beside. When we first stepped abroad, a flock of sheep, led by their rams, came rushing down a ravine in our rear, with heedless haste and unreserved frisking, as if unobserved by man, from some higher pasture where they had spent the night, to taste the herbage by the river-side; but when their leaders caught sight of our white tent through the mist, struck with sudden astonishment, with their fore-feet braced, they sustained the rushing torrent in their rear, and the whole flock stood stock-still, endeavoring to solve the mystery in their sheepish brains. At length, concluding that it boded no mischief to them, they spread themselves out quietly over the field. We learned afterward that we had pitched our tent on the very spot which a few summers before had been occupied by a party of Penobscots. We could see rising before us through the mist a dark conical eminence called Hooksett Pinnacle, a landmark to boatmen, and also Uncannunuc Mountain, broad off on the west side of the river.

This was the limit of our voyage, for a few hours more in the rain would have taken us to the last of the locks, and our boat was too heavy to be dragged around the long and numerous rapids which would occur. On foot, however, we continued up along the bank, feeling our way with a stick through the showery and foggy day, and climbing over the slippery logs in our path with as much pleasure and buoyancy as in brightest sunshine; scenting the fragrance of the pines and the wet clay under our feet, and cheered by the tones of invisible waterfalls; with visions of toadstools, and wandering frogs, and festoons of moss hanging from the spruce-trees, and thrushes flitting silent under the leaves; our road still holding together through that wettest of weather, like faith, while we confidently followed its lead. We managed to keep our thoughts dry, however, and only our clothes

were wet. It was altogether a cloudy and drizzling day, with occasional brightenings in the mist, when the trill of the tree-sparrow seemed to be ushering in sunny hours.

"Nothing that naturally happens to man can _hurt_ him, earthquakes and thunder-storms not excepted," said a man of genius, who at this time lived a few miles farther on our road. When compelled by a shower to take shelter under a tree, we may improve that opportunity for a more minute inspection of some of Nature's works. I have stood under a tree in the woods half a day at a time, during a heavy rain in the summer, and yet employed myself happily and profitably there prying with microscopic eye into the crevices of the bark or the leaves or the fungi at my feet. "Riches are the attendants of the miser; and the heavens rain plenteously upon the mountains." I can fancy that it would be a luxury to stand up to one's chin in some retired swamp a whole summer day, scenting the wild honeysuckle and bilberry blows, and lulled by the minstrelsy of gnats and mosquitoes! A day passed in the society of those Greek sages, such as described in the Banquet of Xenophon, would not be comparable with the dry wit of decayed cranberry vines, and the fresh Attic salt of the moss-beds. Say twelve hours of genial and familiar converse with the leopard frog; the sun to rise behind alder and dogwood, and climb buoyantly to his meridian of two hands' breadth, and finally sink to rest behind some bold western hummock. To hear the evening chant of the mosquito from a thousand green chapels, and the bittern begin to boom from some concealed fort like a sunset gun!--Surely one may as profitably be soaked in the juices of a swamp for one day as pick his way dry-shod over sand. Cold and damp,--are they not as rich experience as warmth and dryness?

At present, the drops come trickling down the stubble while we lie drenched on a bed of withered wild oats, by the side of a bushy hill, and the gathering in of the clouds, with the last rush and dying breath of the wind, and then the regular dripping of twigs and leaves the country over, enhance the sense of inward comfort and sociableness. The birds draw closer and are more familiar under the thick foliage, seemingly composing new strains upon their roosts against the sunshine. What were the amusements of the drawing-room and the library in comparison, if we had them here? We should still sing as of old,--

My books I'd fain cast off, I cannot read,

'Twi't every page my thoughts go stray at large
Down in the meadow, where is richer feed,
And will not mind to hit their proper targe.

Plutarch was good, and so was Homer too,
Our Shakespeare's life were rich to live again,
What Plutarch read, that was not good nor true,
Nor Shakespeare's books, unless his books were men

Here while I lie beneath this walnut bough,
What care I for the Greeks or for Troy town,
If juster battles are enacted now
Between the ants upon this hummock's crown?

Bid Homer wait till I the issue learn,
If red or black the gods will favor most,
Or yonder Ajax will the phalanx turn,
Struggling to heave some rock against the host.

Tell Shakespeare to attend some leisure hour,
For now I've business with this drop of dew,
And see you not, the clouds prepare a shower,--
I'll meet him shortly when the sky is blue.

This bed of herd's-grass and wild oats was spread
Last year with nicer skill than monarchs use,
A clover tuft is pillow for my head,
And violets quite overtop my shoes.

And now the cordial clouds have shut all in
And gently swells the wind to say all's well
The scattered drops are falling fast and thin,
Some in the pool, some in the flower-bell.

I am well drenched upon my bed of oats;
But see that globe come rolling down its stem
Now like a lonely planet there it floats,
And now it sinks into my garment's hem.

Drip drip the trees for all the country round,
And richness rare distils from every bough,
The wind alone it is makes every sound,
Shaking down crystals on the leaves below.

For shame the sun will never show himself,
Who could not with his beams e'er melt me so,
My dripping locks,--they would become an elf,
Who in a beaded coat does gayly go.

The Pinnacle is a small wooded hill which rises very abruptly to the height of about two hundred feet, near the shore at Hooksett Falls. As Uncannunuc Mountain is perhaps the best point from which to view the valley of the Merrimack, so this hill affords the best view of the river itself. I have sat upon its summit, a precipitous rock only a few rods long, in fairer weather, when the sun was setting and filling the river valley with a flood of light. You can see up and down the Merrimack several miles each way. The broad and straight river, full of light and life, with its sparkling and foaming falls, the islet which divides the stream, the village of Hooksett on the shore almost directly under your feet, so near that you can converse with its inhabitants or throw a stone into its yards, the woodland lake at its western base, and the mountains in the north and northeast, make a scene of rare beauty and completeness, which the traveller should take pains to behold.

We were hospitably entertained in Concord, New Hampshire, which we persisted in calling New Concord, as we had been wont, to distinguish it from our native town, from which we had been told that it was named and in part originally settled. This would have been the proper place to conclude our voyage, uniting Concord with Concord by these meandering rivers, but our boat was moored some miles below its port.

The richness of the intervals at Penacook, now Concord, New Hampshire, had been observed by explorers, and, according to the historian of Haverhill, in the

"year 1726, considerable progress was made in the settlement, and a road was cut through the wilderness from Haverhill to Penacook. In the fall of 1727, the first family, that of Captain Ebenezer Eastman, moved into the place. His team was driven by Jacob Shute, who was by birth a Frenchman, and he is said to have been the first person who drove a team through the wilderness. Soon after, says tradition, one Ayer, a lad of 18, drove a team consisting of ten yoke of oxen to Penacook, swam the river, and ploughed a portion of the interval. He is supposed to have been the first person who ploughed land in

that place. After he had completed his work, he started on his return at sunrise, drowned a yoke of oxen while recrossing the river, and arrived at Haverhill about midnight. The crank of the first saw-mill was manufactured in Haverhill, and carried to Penacook on a horse."

But we found that the frontiers were not this way any longer. This generation has come into the world fatally late for some enterprises. Go where we will on the _surface_ of things, men have been there before us. We cannot now have the pleasure of erecting the _last_ house; that was long ago set up in the suburbs of Astoria City, and our boundaries have literally been run to the South Sea, according to the old patents. But the lives of men, though more extended laterally in their range, are still as shallow as ever. Undoubtedly, as a Western orator said, "Men generally live over about the same surface; some live long and narrow, and others live broad and short"; but it is all superficial living. A worm is as good a traveller as a grasshopper or a cricket, and a much wiser settler. With all their activity these do not hop away from drought nor forward to summer. We do not avoid evil by fleeing before it, but by rising above or diving below its plane; as the worm escapes drought and frost by boring a few inches deeper. The frontiers are not east or west, north or south, but wherever a man _fronts_ a fact, though that fact be his neighbor, there is an unsettled wilderness between him and Canada, between him and the setting sun, or, farther still, between him and _it_. Let him build himself a log-house with the bark on where he is, _fronting_ ^{^it^}, and wage there an Old French war for seven or seventy years, with Indians and Rangers, or whatever else may come between him and the reality, and save his scalp if he can.

We now no longer sailed or floated on the river, but trod the unyielding land like pilgrims. Sadi tells who may travel; among others, "A common mechanic, who can earn a subsistence by the industry of his hand, and shall not have to stake his reputation for every morsel of bread, as philosophers have said." He may travel who can subsist on the wild fruits and game of the most cultivated country. A man may travel fast enough and earn his living on the road. I have at times been applied to to do work when on a journey; to do tinkering and repair clocks, when I had a knapsack on my back. A man once applied to me to go into a factory, stating conditions and wages, observing that I succeeded

in shutting the window of a railroad car in which we were travelling, when the other passengers had failed. "Hast thou not heard of a Sufi, who was hammering some nails into the sole of his sandal; an officer of cavalry took him by the sleeve, saying, Come along and shoe my horse." Farmers have asked me to assist them in haying, when I was passing their fields. A man once applied to me to mend his umbrella, taking me for an umbrella-mender, because, being on a journey, I carried an umbrella in my hand while the sun shone. Another wished to buy a tin cup of me, observing that I had one strapped to my belt, and a sauce-pan on my back. The cheapest way to travel, and the way to travel the farthest in the shortest distance, is to go afoot, carrying a dipper, a spoon, and a fish-line, some Indian meal, some salt, and some sugar. When you come to a brook or pond, you can catch fish and cook them; or you can boil a hasty-pudding; or you can buy a loaf of bread at a farmer's house for fourpence, moisten it in the next brook that crosses the road, and dip into it your sugar,--this alone will last you a whole day;--or, if you are accustomed to heartier living, you can buy a quart of milk for two cents, crumb your bread or cold pudding into it, and eat it with your own spoon out of your own dish. Any one of these things I mean, not all together. I have travelled thus some hundreds of miles without taking any meal in a house, sleeping on the ground when convenient, and found it cheaper, and in many respects more profitable, than staying at home. So that some have inquired why it would not be best to travel always. But I never thought of travelling simply as a means of getting a livelihood. A simple woman down in Tyngsborough, at whose house I once stopped to get a draught of water, when I said, recognizing the bucket, that I had stopped there nine years before for the same purpose, asked if I was not a traveller, supposing that I had been travelling ever since, and had now come round again; that travelling was one of the professions, more or less productive, which her husband did not follow. But continued travelling is far from productive. It begins with wearing away the soles of the shoes, and making the feet sore, and ere long it will wear a man clean up, after making his heart sore into the bargain. I have observed that the after-life of those who have travelled much is very pathetic. True and sincere travelling is no pastime, but it is as serious as the grave, or any part of the human journey, and it requires a long probation to be broken into it. I do not speak of those that travel sitting, the sedentary travellers whose legs hang dangling the while, mere idle symbols of the fact, any more than when we speak of sitting hens we mean

those that sit standing, but I mean those to whom travelling is life for the legs, and death too, at last. The traveller must be born again on the road, and earn a passport from the elements, the principal powers that be for him. He shall experience at last that old threat of his mother fulfilled, that he shall be skinned alive. His sores shall gradually deepen themselves that they may heal inwardly, while he gives no rest to the sole of his foot, and at night weariness must be his pillow, that so he may acquire experience against his rainy days.--So was it with us.

Sometimes we lodged at an inn in the woods, where trout-fishers from distant cities had arrived before us, and where, to our astonishment, the settlers dropped in at nightfall to have a chat and hear the news, though there was but one road, and no other house was visible,--as if they had come out of the earth. There we sometimes read old newspapers, who never before read new ones, and in the rustle of their leaves heard the dashing of the surf along the Atlantic shore, instead of the sough of the wind among the pines. But then walking had given us an appetite even for the least palatable and nutritious food.

Some hard and dry book in a dead language, which you have found it impossible to read at home, but for which you have still a lingering regard, is the best to carry with you on a journey. At a country inn, in the barren society of ostlers and travellers, I could undertake the writers of the silver or the brazen age with confidence. Almost the last regular service which I performed in the cause of literature was to read the works of

AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS.

If you have imagined what a divine work is spread out for the poet, and approach this author too, in the hope of finding the field at length fairly entered on, you will hardly dissent from the words of the prologue,

"Ipse semipaganus
Ad sacra Vatum carmen affero nostrum."

I half pagan
Bring my verses to the shrine of the poets.

Here is none of the interior dignity of Virgil, nor the elegance and vivacity of Horace, nor will any sibyl be needed to remind

you, that from those older Greek poets there is a sad descent to Persius. You can scarcely distinguish one harmonious sound amid this unmusical bickering with the follies of men.

One sees that music has its place in thought, but hardly as yet in language. When the Muse arrives, we wait for her to remould language, and impart to it her own rhythm. Hitherto the verse groans and labors with its load, and goes not forward blithely, singing by the way. The best ode may be parodied, indeed is itself a parody, and has a poor and trivial sound, like a man stepping on the rounds of a ladder. Homer and Shakespeare and Milton and Marvell and Wordsworth are but the rustling of leaves and crackling of twigs in the forest, and there is not yet the sound of any bird. The Muse has never lifted up her voice to sing. Most of all, satire will not be sung. A Juvenal or Persius do not marry music to their verse, but are measured fault-finders at best; stand but just outside the faults they condemn, and so are concerned rather about the monster which they have escaped, than the fair prospect before them. Let them live on an age, and they will have travelled out of his shadow and reach, and found other objects to ponder.

As long as there is satire, the poet is, as it were, *particeps criminis*. One sees not but he had best let bad take care of itself, and have to do only with what is beyond suspicion. If you light on the least vestige of truth, and it is the weight of the whole body still which stamps the faintest trace, an eternity will not suffice to extol it, while no evil is so huge, but you grudge to bestow on it a moment of hate. Truth never turns to rebuke falsehood; her own straightforwardness is the severest correction. Horace would not have written satire so well if he had not been inspired by it, as by a passion, and fondly cherished his vein. In his odes, the love always exceeds the hate, so that the severest satire still sings itself, and the poet is satisfied, though the folly be not corrected.

A sort of necessary order in the development of Genius is, first, Complaint; second, Plaint; third, Love. Complaint, which is the condition of Persius, lies not in the province of poetry. Ere long the enjoyment of a superior good would have changed his disgust into regret. We can never have much sympathy with the complainer; for after searching nature through, we conclude that he must be both plaintiff and defendant too, and so had best come to a settlement without a hearing. He who receives an injury is to

some extent an accomplice of the wrong-doer.

Perhaps it would be truer to say, that the highest strain of the muse is essentially plaintive. The saint's are still tears of joy. Who has ever heard the Innocent sing?

But the divinest poem, or the life of a great man, is the severest satire; as impersonal as Nature herself, and like the sighs of her winds in the woods, which convey ever a slight reproof to the hearer. The greater the genius, the keener the edge of the satire.

Hence we have to do only with the rare and fragmentary traits, which least belong to Persius, or shall we say, are the properest utterances of his muse; since that which he says best at any time is what he can best say at all times. The Spectators and Ramblers have not failed to cull some quotable sentences from this garden too, so pleasant is it to meet even the most familiar truth in a new dress, when, if our neighbor had said it, we should have passed it by as hackneyed. Out of these six satires, you may perhaps select some twenty lines, which fit so well as many thoughts, that they will recur to the scholar almost as readily as a natural image; though when translated into familiar language, they lose that insular emphasis, which fitted them for quotation. Such lines as the following, translation cannot render commonplace. Contrasting the man of true religion with those who, with jealous privacy, would fain carry on a secret commerce with the gods, he says:--

"Haud cuivis promptum est, murmurque humilesque susurros
Tollere de templis; et aperto vivere voto."

It is not easy for every one to take murmurs and low
Whispers out of the temples, and live with open vow.

To the virtuous man, the universe is the only sanctum sanctorum, and the penetralia of the temple are the broad noon of his existence. Why should he betake himself to a subterranean crypt, as if it were the only holy ground in all the world which he had left unprofaned? The obedient soul would only the more discover and familiarize things, and escape more and more into light and air, as having henceforth done with secrecy, so that the universe shall not seem open enough for it. At length, it is neglectful

even of that silence which is consistent with true modesty, but by its independence of all confidence in its disclosures, makes that which it imparts so private to the hearer, that it becomes the care of the whole world that modesty be not infringed.

To the man who cherishes a secret in his breast, there is a still greater secret unexplored. Our most indifferent acts may be matter for secrecy, but whatever we do with the utmost truthfulness and integrity, by virtue of its pureness, must be transparent as light.

In the third satire, he asks:--

"Est aliquid quo tendis, et in quod dirigis arcum?

An passim sequeris corvos, testave, lutove,

Securus quo pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivis?"

Is there anything to which thou tendest, and against which thou directest thy bow?

Or dost thou pursue crows, at random, with pottery or clay,

Careless whither thy feet bear thee, and live *_ex tempore_*?

The bad sense is always a secondary one. Language does not appear to have justice done it, but is obviously cramped and narrowed in its significance, when any meanness is described.

The truest construction is not put upon it. What may readily be fashioned into a rule of wisdom, is here thrown in the teeth of the sluggard, and constitutes the front of his offence.

Universally, the innocent man will come forth from the sharpest inquisition and lecturing, the combined din of reproof and commendation, with a faint sound of eulogy in his ears. Our vices always lie in the direction of our virtues, and in their best estate are but plausible imitations of the latter.

Falsehood never attains to the dignity of entire falseness, but is only an inferior sort of truth; if it were more thoroughly false, it would incur danger of becoming true.

"Securus quo pes ferat, atque ex tempore *_vivit_*,"

is then the motto of a wise man. For first, as the subtle discernment of the language would have taught us, with all his negligence he is still secure; but the sluggard, notwithstanding his heedlessness, is insecure.

The life of a wise man is most of all extemporaneous, for he lives out of an eternity which includes all time. The cunning mind travels further back than Zoroaster each instant, and comes quite down to the present with its revelation. The utmost thrift and industry of thinking give no man any stock in life; his credit with the inner world is no better, his capital no larger. He must try his fortune again to-day as yesterday. All questions rely on the present for their solution. Time measures nothing but itself. The word that is written may be postponed, but not that on the lip. If this is what the occasion says, let the occasion say it. All the world is forward to prompt him who gets up to live without his creed in his pocket.

In the fifth satire, which is the best, I find,--

"Stat contra ratio, et secretam garrit in aurem,
Ne liceat facere id, quod quis vitiabit agendo."

Reason opposes, and whispers in the secret ear,
That it is not lawful to do that which one will spoil by doing.

Only they who do not see how anything might be better done are forward to try their hand on it. Even the master workman must be encouraged by the reflection, that his awkwardness will be incompetent to do that thing harm, to which his skill may fail to do justice. Here is no apology for neglecting to do many things from a sense of our incapacity,--for what deed does not fall maimed and imperfect from our hands?--but only a warning to bungle less.

The satires of Persius are the furthest possible from inspired; evidently a chosen, not imposed subject. Perhaps I have given him credit for more earnestness than is apparent; but it is certain, that that which alone we can call Persius, which is forever independent and consistent, was in earnest, and so sanctions the sober consideration of all. The artist and his work are not to be separated. The most wilfully foolish man cannot stand aloof from his folly, but the deed and the doer together make ever one sober fact. There is but one stage for the peasant and the actor. The buffoon cannot bribe you to laugh always at his grimaces; they shall sculpture themselves in Egyptian granite, to stand heavy as the pyramids on the ground of his character.

Suns rose and set and found us still on the dank forest path which meanders up the Pemigewasset, now more like an otter's or a marten's trail, or where a beaver had dragged his trap, than where the wheels of travel raise a dust; where towns begin to serve as gores, only to hold the earth together. The wild pigeon sat secure above our heads, high on the dead limbs of naval pines, reduced to a robin's size. The very yards of our hostelries inclined upon the skirts of mountains, and, as we passed, we looked up at a steep angle at the stems of maples waving in the clouds.

Far up in the country,--for we would be faithful to our experience,--in Thornton, perhaps, we met a soldier lad in the woods, going to muster in full regimentals, and holding the middle of the road; deep in the forest, with shouldered musket and military step, and thoughts of war and glory all to himself. It was a sore trial to the youth, tougher than many a battle, to get by us creditably and with soldierlike bearing. Poor man! He actually shivered like a reed in his thin military pants, and by the time we had got up with him, all the sternness that becomes the soldier had forsaken his face, and he skulked past as if he were driving his father's sheep under a sword-proof helmet. It was too much for him to carry any extra armor then, who could not easily dispose of his natural arms. And for his legs, they were like heavy artillery in boggy places; better to cut the traces and forsake them. His greaves chafed and wrestled one with another for want of other foes. But he did get by and get off with all his munitions, and lived to fight another day; and I do not record this as casting any suspicion on his honor and real bravery in the field.

Wandering on through notches which the streams had made, by the side and over the brows of hoar hills and mountains, across the stumpy, rocky, forested, and bepastured country, we at length crossed on prostrate trees over the Amonoosuck, and breathed the free air of Unappropriated Land. Thus, in fair days as well as foul, we had traced up the river to which our native stream is a tributary, until from Merrimack it became the Pemigewasset that leaped by our side, and when we had passed its fountain-head, the Wild Amonoosuck, whose puny channel was crossed at a stride, guiding us toward its distant source among the mountains, and at

length, without its guidance, we were enabled to reach the summit of ^Agiocochook^.

"Sweet days, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die."
^Herbert^.

When we returned to Hooksett, a week afterward, the melon man, in whose corn-barn we had hung our tent and buffaloes and other things to dry, was already picking his hops, with many women and children to help him. We bought one watermelon, the largest in his patch, to carry with us for ballast. It was Nathan's, which he might sell if he wished, having been conveyed to him in the green state, and owned daily by his eyes. After due consultation with "Father," the bargain was concluded,--we to buy it at a venture on the vine, green or ripe, our risk, and pay "what the gentlemen pleased." It proved to be ripe; for we had had honest experience in selecting this fruit.

Finding our boat safe in its harbor, under Uncannunuc Mountain, with a fair wind and the current in our favor, we commenced our return voyage at noon, sitting at our ease and conversing, or in silence watching for the last trace of each reach in the river as a bend concealed it from our view. As the season was further advanced, the wind now blew steadily from the north, and with our sail set we could occasionally lie on our oars without loss of time. The lumbermen throwing down wood from the top of the high bank, thirty or forty feet above the water, that it might be sent down stream, paused in their work to watch our retreating sail. By this time, indeed, we were well known to the boatmen, and were hailed as the Revenue Cutter of the stream. As we sailed rapidly down the river, shut in between two mounds of earth, the sounds of this timber rolled down the bank enhanced the silence and vastness of the noon, and we fancied that only the primeval echoes were awakened. The vision of a distant scow just heaving in sight round a headland also increased by contrast the solitude.

Through the din and desultoriness of noon, even in the most Oriental city, is seen the fresh and primitive and savage nature,

in which Scythians and Ethiopians and Indians dwell. What is echo, what are light and shade, day and night, ocean and stars, earthquake and eclipse, there? The works of man are everywhere swallowed up in the immensity of Nature. The Aegean Sea is but Lake Huron still to the Indian. Also there is all the refinement of civilized life in the woods under a sylvan garb. The wildest scenes have an air of domesticity and homeliness even to the citizen, and when the flicker's cackle is heard in the clearing, he is reminded that civilization has wrought but little change there. Science is welcome to the deepest recesses of the forest, for there too nature obeys the same old civil laws. The little red bug on the stump of a pine,--for it the wind shifts and the sun breaks through the clouds. In the wildest nature, there is not only the material of the most cultivated life, and a sort of anticipation of the last result, but a greater refinement already than is ever attained by man. There is papyrus by the river-side, and rushes for light, and the goose only flies overhead, ages before the studios are born or letters invented, and that literature which the former suggest, and even from the first have rudely served, it may be man does not yet use them to express. Nature is prepared to welcome into her scenery the finest work of human art, for she is herself an art so cunning that the artist never appears in his work.

Art is not tame, and Nature is not wild, in the ordinary sense. A perfect work of man's art would also be wild or natural in a good sense. Man tames Nature only that he may at last make her more free even than he found her, though he may never yet have succeeded.

With this propitious breeze, and the help of our oars, we soon reached the Falls of Amoskeag, and the mouth of the Piscataquoag, and recognized, as we swept rapidly by, many a fair bank and islet on which our eyes had rested in the upward passage. Our boat was like that which Chaucer describes in his Dream, in which the knight took his departure from the island,

"To journey for his marriage,
And return with such an host,
That wedded might be least and most. . . .
Which barge was as a man's thought,
After his pleasure to him brought,
The queene herself accustomed aye

In the same barge to play,
It needed neither mast ne rother,
I have not heard of such another,
No master for the governance,
Hie sayled by thought and pleasaunce,
Without labor east and west,
All was one, calme or tempest."

So we sailed this afternoon, thinking of the saying of Pythagoras, though we had no peculiar right to remember it, "It is beautiful when prosperity is present with intellect, and when sailing as it were with a prosperous wind, actions are performed looking to virtue; just as a pilot looks to the motions of the stars." All the world reposes in beauty to him who preserves equipoise in his life, and moves serenely on his path without secret violence; as he who sails down a stream, he has only to steer, keeping his bark in the middle, and carry it round the falls. The ripples curled away in our wake, like ringlets from the head of a child, while we steadily held on our course, and under the bows we watched

"The swaying soft,
Made by the delicate wave parted in front,
As through the gentle element we move
Like shadows gliding through untroubled dreams."

The forms of beauty fall naturally around the path of him who is in the performance of his proper work; as the curled shavings drop from the plane, and borings cluster round the auger. Undulation is the gentlest and most ideal of motions, produced by one fluid falling on another. Rippling is a more graceful flight. From a hill-top you may detect in it the wings of birds endlessly repeated. The two waving lines which represent the flight of birds appear to have been copied from the ripple.

The trees made an admirable fence to the landscape, skirting the horizon on every side. The single trees and the groves left standing on the interval appeared naturally disposed, though the farmer had consulted only his convenience, for he too falls into the scheme of Nature. Art can never match the luxury and superfluity of Nature. In the former all is seen; it cannot afford concealed wealth, and is niggardly in comparison; but Nature, even when she is scant and thin outwardly, satisfies us still by the assurance of a certain generosity at the roots. In

swamps, where there is only here and there an ever-green tree amid the quaking moss and cranberry beds, the bareness does not suggest poverty. The single-spruce, which I had hardly noticed in gardens, attracts me in such places, and now first I understand why men try to make them grow about their houses. But though there may be very perfect specimens in front-yard plots, their beauty is for the most part ineffectual there, for there is no such assurance of kindred wealth beneath and around them, to make them show to advantage. As we have said, Nature is a greater and more perfect art, the art of God; though, referred to herself, she is genius; and there is a similarity between her operations and man's art even in the details and trifles. When the overhanging pine drops into the water, by the sun and water, and the wind rubbing it against the shore, its boughs are worn into fantastic shapes, and white and smooth, as if turned in a lathe. Man's art has wisely imitated those forms into which all matter is most inclined to run, as foliage and fruit. A hammock swung in a grove assumes the exact form of a canoe, broader or narrower, and higher or lower at the ends, as more or fewer persons are in it, and it rolls in the air with the motion of the body, like a canoe in the water. Our art leaves its shavings and its dust about; her art exhibits itself even in the shavings and the dust which we make. She has perfected herself by an eternity of practice. The world is well kept; no rubbish accumulates; the morning air is clear even at this day, and no dust has settled on the grass. Behold how the evening now steals over the fields, the shadows of the trees creeping farther and farther into the meadow, and ere long the stars will come to bathe in these retired waters. Her undertakings are secure and never fail. If I were awakened from a deep sleep, I should know which side of the meridian the sun might be by the aspect of nature, and by the chirp of the crickets, and yet no painter can paint this difference. The landscape contains a thousand dials which indicate the natural divisions of time, the shadows of a thousand styles point to the hour.

"Not only o'er the dial's face,
This silent phantom day by day,
With slow, unseen, unceasing pace
Steals moments, months, and years away;
From hoary rock and aged tree,
From proud Palmyra's mouldering walls,
From Teneriffe, towering o'er the sea,
From every blade of grass it falls."

It is almost the only game which the trees play at, this tit-for-tat, now this side in the sun, now that, the drama of the day. In deep ravines under the eastern sides of cliffs, Night forwardly plants her foot even at noonday, and as Day retreats she steps into his trenches, skulking from tree to tree, from fence to fence, until at last she sits in his citadel and draws out her forces into the plain. It may be that the forenoon is brighter than the afternoon, not only because of the greater transparency of its atmosphere, but because we naturally look most into the west, as forward into the day, and so in the forenoon see the sunny side of things, but in the afternoon the shadow of every tree.

The afternoon is now far advanced, and a fresh and leisurely wind is blowing over the river, making long reaches of bright ripples. The river has done its stint, and appears not to flow, but lie at its length reflecting the light, and the haze over the woods is like the inaudible panting, or rather the gentle perspiration of resting nature, rising from a myriad of pores into the attenuated atmosphere.

On the thirty-first day of March, one hundred and forty-two years before this, probably about this time in the afternoon, there were hurriedly paddling down this part of the river, between the pine woods which then fringed these banks, two white women and a boy, who had left an island at the mouth of the Contocook before daybreak. They were slightly clad for the season, in the English fashion, and handled their paddles unskilfully, but with nervous energy and determination, and at the bottom of their canoe lay the still bleeding scalps of ten of the aborigines. They were Hannah Dustan, and her nurse, Mary Neff, both of Haverhill, eighteen miles from the mouth of this river, and an English boy, named Samuel Lennardson, escaping from captivity among the Indians. On the 15th of March previous, Hannah Dustan had been compelled to rise from child-bed, and half dressed, with one foot bare, accompanied by her nurse, commence an uncertain march, in still inclement weather, through the snow and the wilderness. She had seen her seven elder children flee with their father, but knew not of their fate. She had seen her infant's brains dashed out against an apple-tree, and had left her own and her neighbors' dwellings in ashes. When she reached the wigwam of her captor, situated on an island in the Merrimack, more than

twenty miles above where we now are, she had been told that she and her nurse were soon to be taken to a distant Indian settlement, and there made to run the gauntlet naked. The family of this Indian consisted of two men, three women, and seven children, beside an English boy, whom she found a prisoner among them. Having determined to attempt her escape, she instructed the boy to inquire of one of the men, how he should despatch an enemy in the quickest manner, and take his scalp. "Strike 'em there," said he, placing his finger on his temple, and he also showed him how to take off the scalp. On the morning of the 31st she arose before daybreak, and awoke her nurse and the boy, and taking the Indians' tomahawks, they killed them all in their sleep, excepting one favorite boy, and one squaw who fled wounded with him to the woods. The English boy struck the Indian who had given him the information, on the temple, as he had been directed. They then collected all the provision they could find, and took their master's tomahawk and gun, and scuttling all the canoes but one, commenced their flight to Haverhill, distant about sixty miles by the river. But after having proceeded a short distance, fearing that her story would not be believed if she should escape to tell it, they returned to the silent wigwam, and taking off the scalps of the dead, put them into a bag as proofs of what they had done, and then retracing their steps to the shore in the twilight, recommenced their voyage.

Early this morning this deed was performed, and now, perchance, these tired women and this boy, their clothes stained with blood, and their minds racked with alternate resolution and fear, are making a hasty meal of parched corn and moose-meat, while their canoe glides under these pine roots whose stumps are still standing on the bank. They are thinking of the dead whom they have left behind on that solitary isle far up the stream, and of the relentless living warriors who are in pursuit. Every withered leaf which the winter has left seems to know their story, and in its rustling to repeat it and betray them. An Indian lurks behind every rock and pine, and their nerves cannot bear the tapping of a woodpecker. Or they forget their own dangers and their deeds in conjecturing the fate of their kindred, and whether, if they escape the Indians, they shall find the former still alive. They do not stop to cook their meals upon the bank, nor land, except to carry their canoe about the falls. The stolen birch forgets its master and does them good service, and the swollen current bears them swiftly along with little need of the paddle, except to steer and keep them warm by

exercise. For ice is floating in the river; the spring is opening; the muskrat and the beaver are driven out of their holes by the flood; deer gaze at them from the bank; a few faint-singing forest birds, perchance, fly across the river to the northernmost shore; the fish-hawk sails and screams overhead, and geese fly over with a startling clangor; but they do not observe these things, or they speedily forget them. They do not smile or chat all day. Sometimes they pass an Indian grave surrounded by its paling on the bank, or the frame of a wigwam, with a few coals left behind, or the withered stalks still rustling in the Indian's solitary cornfield on the interval. The birch stripped of its bark, or the charred stump where a tree has been burned down to be made into a canoe, these are the only traces of man,--a fabulous wild man to us. On either side, the primeval forest stretches away uninterrupted to Canada, or to the "South Sea"; to the white man a drear and howling wilderness, but to the Indian a home, adapted to his nature, and cheerful as the smile of the Great Spirit.

While we loiter here this autumn evening, looking for a spot retired enough, where we shall quietly rest to-night, they thus, in that chilly March evening, one hundred and forty-two years before us, with wind and current favoring, have already glided out of sight, not to camp, as we shall, at night, but while two sleep one will manage the canoe, and the swift stream bear them onward to the settlements, it may be, even to old John Lovewell's house on Salmon Brook to-night.

According to the historian, they escaped as by a miracle all roving bands of Indians, and reached their homes in safety, with their trophies, for which the General Court paid them fifty pounds. The family of Hannah Dustan all assembled alive once more, except the infant whose brains were dashed out against the apple-tree, and there have been many who in later times have lived to say that they had eaten of the fruit of that apple-tree.

This seems a long while ago, and yet it happened since Milton wrote his *Paradise Lost*. But its antiquity is not the less great for that, for we do not regulate our historical time by the English standard, nor did the English by the Roman, nor the Roman by the Greek. "We must look a long way back," says Raleigh, "to find the Romans giving laws to nations, and their consuls bringing kings and princes bound in chains to Rome in triumph; to see men

go to Greece for wisdom, or Ophir for gold; when now nothing remains but a poor paper remembrance of their former condition." And yet, in one sense, not so far back as to find the Penacooks and Pawtuckets using bows and arrows and hatchets of stone, on the banks of the Merrimack. From this September afternoon, and from between these now cultivated shores, those times seemed more remote than the dark ages. On beholding an old picture of Concord, as it appeared but seventy-five years ago, with a fair open prospect and a light on trees and river, as if it were broad noon, I find that I had not thought the sun shone in those days, or that men lived in broad daylight then. Still less do we imagine the sun shining on hill and valley during Philip's war, on the war-path of Church or Philip, or later of Lovewell or Paugus, with serene summer weather, but they must have lived and fought in a dim twilight or night.

The age of the world is great enough for our imaginations, even according to the Mosaic account, without borrowing any years from the geologist. From Adam and Eve at one leap sheer down to the deluge, and then through the ancient monarchies, through Babylon and Thebes, Brahma and Abraham, to Greece and the Argonauts; whence we might start again with Orpheus and the Trojan war, the Pyramids and the Olympic games, and Homer and Athens, for our stages; and after a breathing space at the building of Rome, continue our journey down through Odin and Christ to--America. It is a wearisome while. And yet the lives of but sixty old women, such as live under the hill, say of a century each, strung together, are sufficient to reach over the whole ground. Taking hold of hands they would span the interval from Eve to my own mother. A respectable tea-party merely,--whose gossip would be Universal History. The fourth old woman from myself suckled Columbus,--the ninth was nurse to the Norman Conqueror,--the nineteenth was the Virgin Mary,--the twenty-fourth the Cumaean Sibyl,--the thirtieth was at the Trojan war and Helen her name,--the thirty-eighth was Queen Semiramis,--the sixtieth was Eve the mother of mankind. So much for the

"Old woman that lives under the hill,
And if she's not gone she lives there still."

It will not take a very great-granddaughter of hers to be in at the death of Time.

We can never safely exceed the actual facts in our narratives.

Of pure invention, such as some suppose, there is no instance. To write a true work of fiction even, is only to take leisure and liberty to describe some things more exactly as they are. A true account of the actual is the rarest poetry, for common sense always takes a hasty and superficial view. Though I am not much acquainted with the works of Goethe, I should say that it was one of his chief excellences as a writer, that he was satisfied with giving an exact description of things as they appeared to him, and their effect upon him. Most travellers have not self-respect enough to do this simply, and make objects and events stand around them as the centre, but still imagine more favorable positions and relations than the actual ones, and so we get no valuable report from them at all. In his Italian Travels Goethe jogs along at a snail's pace, but always mindful that the earth is beneath and the heavens are above him. His Italy is not merely the fatherland of lazzaroni and virtuosi, and scene of splendid ruins, but a solid turf-clad soil, daily shined on by the sun, and nightly by the moon. Even the few showers are faithfully recorded. He speaks as an unconcerned spectator, whose object is faithfully to describe what he sees, and that, for the most part, in the order in which he sees it. Even his reflections do not interfere with his descriptions. In one place he speaks of himself as giving so glowing and truthful a description of an old tower to the peasants who had gathered around him, that they who had been born and brought up in the neighborhood must needs look over their shoulders, "that," to use his own words, "they might behold with their eyes, what I had praised to their ears,"--"and I added nothing, not even the ivy which for centuries had decorated the walls." It would thus be possible for inferior minds to produce invaluable books, if this very moderation were not the evidence of superiority; for the wise are not so much wiser than others as respecters of their own wisdom. Some, poor in spirit, record plaintively only what has happened to them; but others how they have happened to the universe, and the judgment which they have awarded to circumstances. Above all, he possessed a hearty good-will to all men, and never wrote a cross or even careless word. On one occasion the post-boy snivelling, "Signor perdonate, questa e` la mia patria," he confesses that "to me poor northerner came something tear-like into the eyes."

Goethe's whole education and life were those of the artist. He lacks the unconsciousness of the poet. In his autobiography he describes accurately the life of the author of Wilhelm Meister.

For as there is in that book, mingled with a rare and serene wisdom, a certain pettiness or exaggeration of trifles, wisdom applied to produce a constrained and partial and merely well-bred man,—a magnifying of the theatre till life itself is turned into a stage, for which it is our duty to study our parts well, and conduct with propriety and precision,—so in the autobiography, the fault of his education is, so to speak, its merely artistic completeness. Nature is hindered, though she prevails at last in making an unusually catholic impression on the boy. It is the life of a city boy, whose toys are pictures and works of art, whose wonders are the theatre and kingly processions and crownings. As the youth studied minutely the order and the degrees in the imperial procession, and suffered none of its effect to be lost on him, so the man aimed to secure a rank in society which would satisfy his notion of fitness and respectability. He was defrauded of much which the savage boy enjoys. Indeed, he himself has occasion to say in this very autobiography, when at last he escapes into the woods without the gates: "Thus much is certain, that only the undefinable, wide-expanding feelings of youth and of uncultivated nations are adapted to the sublime, which, whenever it may be excited in us through external objects, since it is either formless, or else moulded into forms which are incomprehensible, must surround us with a grandeur which we find above our reach." He further says of himself: "I had lived among painters from my childhood, and had accustomed myself to look at objects, as they did, with reference to art." And this was his practice to the last. He was even too well-bred to be thoroughly bred. He says that he had had no intercourse with the lowest class of his towns-boys. The child should have the advantage of ignorance as well as of knowledge, and is fortunate if he gets his share of neglect and exposure.

"The laws of Nature break the rules of Art."

The Man of Genius may at the same time be, indeed is commonly, an Artist, but the two are not to be confounded. The Man of Genius, referred to mankind, is an originator, an inspired or demonic man, who produces a perfect work in obedience to laws yet unexplored. The Artist is he who detects and applies the law from observation of the works of Genius, whether of man or nature. The Artisan is he who merely applies the rules which others have detected. There has been no man of pure Genius; as there has been none wholly destitute of Genius.

Poetry is the mysticism of mankind.

The expressions of the poet cannot be analyzed; his sentence is one word, whose syllables are words. There are indeed no words quite worthy to be set to his music. But what matter if we do not hear the words always, if we hear the music?

Much verse fails of being poetry because it was not written exactly at the right crisis, though it may have been inconceivably near to it. It is only by a miracle that poetry is written at all. It is not recoverable thought, but a hue caught from a vaster receding thought.

A poem is one undivided unimpeded expression fallen ripe into literature, and it is undividedly and unimpededly received by those for whom it was matured.

If you can speak what you will never hear, if you can write what you will never read, you have done rare things.

The work we choose should be our own,
God lets alone.

The unconsciousness of man is the consciousness of God.

Deep are the foundations of sincerity. Even stone walls have their foundation below the frost.

What is produced by a free stroke charms us, like the forms of lichens and leaves. There is a certain perfection in accident which we never consciously attain. Draw a blunt quill filled with ink over a sheet of paper, and fold the paper before the ink is dry, transversely to this line, and a delicately shaded and regular figure will be produced, in some respects more pleasing than an elaborate drawing.

The talent of composition is very dangerous,--the striking out the heart of life at a blow, as the Indian takes off a scalp. I feel as if my life had grown more outward when I can express it.

On his journey from Brenner to Verona, Goethe writes:

"The Tees flows now more gently, and makes in many places broad sands. On the land, near to the water, upon the hillsides, everything is so closely planted one to another, that you think they must choke one another,--vineyards, maize, mulberry-trees, apples, pears, quinces, and nuts. The dwarf elder throws itself vigorously over the walls. Ivy grows with strong stems up the rocks, and spreads itself wide over them, the lizard glides through the intervals, and everything that wanders to and fro reminds one of the loveliest pictures of art. The women's tufts of hair bound up, the men's bare breasts and light jackets, the excellent oxen which they drive home from market, the little asses with their loads,--everything forms a living, animated Heinrich Roos. And now that it is evening, in the mild air a few clouds rest upon the mountains, in the heavens more stand still than move, and immediately after sunset the chirping of crickets begins to grow more loud; then one feels for once at home in the world, and not as concealed or in exile. I am contented as though I had been born and brought up here, and were now returning from a Greenland or whaling voyage. Even the dust of my Fatherland, which is often whirled about the wagon, and which for so long a time I had not seen, is greeted. The clock-and-bell jingling of the crickets is altogether lovely, penetrating, and agreeable. It sounds bravely when roguish boys whistle in emulation of a field of such songstresses. One fancies that they really enhance one another. Also the evening is perfectly mild as the day."

"If one who dwelt in the south, and came hither from the south, should hear of my rapture hereupon, he would deem me very childish. Alas! what I here express I have long known while I suffered under an unpropitious heaven, and now may I joyful feel this joy as an exception, which we should enjoy everforth as an eternal necessity of our nature."

Thus we "sayled by thought and pleasaunce," as Chaucer says, and all things seemed with us to flow; the shore itself, and the distant cliffs, were dissolved by the undiluted air. The hardest material seemed to obey the same law with the most fluid, and so indeed in the long run it does. Trees were but rivers of sap and woody fibre, flowing from the atmosphere, and emptying into the earth by their trunks, as their roots flowed upward to the surface. And in the heavens there were rivers of stars, and milky-ways, already beginning to gleam and ripple over our heads.

There were rivers of rock on the surface of the earth, and rivers of ore in its bowels, and our thoughts flowed and circulated, and this portion of time was but the current hour. Let us wander where we will, the universe is built round about us, and we are central still. If we look into the heavens they are concave, and if we were to look into a gulf as bottomless, it would be concave also. The sky is curved downward to the earth in the horizon, because we stand on the plain. I draw down its skirts. The stars so low there seem loath to depart, but by a circuitous path to be remembering me, and returning on their steps.

We had already passed by broad daylight the scene of our encampment at Coos Falls, and at length we pitched our camp on the west bank, in the northern part of Merrimack, nearly opposite to the large island on which we had spent the noon in our way up the river.

There we went to bed that summer evening, on a sloping shelf in the bank, a couple of rods from our boat, which was drawn up on the sand, and just behind a thin fringe of oaks which bordered the river; without having disturbed any inhabitants but the spiders in the grass, which came out by the light of our lamp, and crawled over our buffaloes. When we looked out from under the tent, the trees were seen dimly through the mist, and a cool dew hung upon the grass, which seemed to rejoice in the night, and with the damp air we inhaled a solid fragrance. Having eaten our supper of hot cocoa and bread and watermelon, we soon grew weary of conversing, and writing in our journals, and, putting out the lantern which hung from the tent-pole, fell asleep.

Unfortunately, many things have been omitted which should have been recorded in our journal; for though we made it a rule to set down all our experiences therein, yet such a resolution is very hard to keep, for the important experience rarely allows us to remember such obligations, and so indifferent things get recorded, while that is frequently neglected. It is not easy to write in a journal what interests us at any time, because to write it is not what interests us.

Whenever we awoke in the night, still eking out our dreams with half-awakened thoughts, it was not till after an interval, when the wind breathed harder than usual, flapping the curtains of the tent, and causing its cords to vibrate, that we remembered that we lay on the bank of the Merrimack, and not in our chamber at

home. With our heads so low in the grass, we heard the river whirling and sucking, and lapsing downward, kissing the shore as it went, sometimes rippling louder than usual, and again its mighty current making only a slight limpid, trickling sound, as if our water-pail had sprung a leak, and the water were flowing into the grass by our side. The wind, rustling the oaks and hazels, impressed us like a wakeful and inconsiderate person up at midnight, moving about, and putting things to rights, occasionally stirring up whole drawers full of leaves at a puff. There seemed to be a great haste and preparation throughout Nature, as for a distinguished visitor; all her aisles had to be swept in the night, by a thousand hand-maidens, and a thousand pots to be boiled for the next day's feasting;--such a whispering bustle, as if ten thousand fairies made their fingers fly, silently sewing at the new carpet with which the earth was to be clothed, and the new drapery which was to adorn the trees. And then the wind would lull and die away, and we like it fell asleep again.

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FRIDAY.

"The Boteman strayt
Held on his course with stayed stedfastnesse,
Ne ever shroncke, ne ever sought to bayt
His tryed armes for toylesome wearinesse;
But with his oares did sweepe the watry wildernesse."

^Spenser.^

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"Summer's robe grows
Dusky, and like an oft-dyed garment shows."

^Donne.^

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FRIDAY.

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As we lay awake long before daybreak, listening to the rippling of the river, and the rustling of the leaves, in suspense whether the wind blew up or down the stream, was favorable or unfavorable to our voyage, we already suspected that there was a change in the weather, from a freshness as of autumn in these sounds. The wind in the woods sounded like an incessant waterfall dashing and roaring amid rocks, and we even felt encouraged by the unusual activity of the elements. He who hears the rippling of rivers in these degenerate days will not utterly despair. That night was the turning-point in the season. We had gone to bed in summer, and we awoke in autumn; for summer passes into autumn in some unimaginable point of time, like the turning of a leaf.

We found our boat in the dawn just as we had left it, and as if waiting for us, there on the shore, in autumn, all cool and dripping with dew, and our tracks still fresh in the wet sand around it, the fairies all gone or concealed. Before five o'clock we pushed it into the fog, and, leaping in, at one shove were out of sight of the shores, and began to sweep downward with the rushing river, keeping a sharp lookout for rocks. We could see only the yellow gurgling water, and a solid bank of fog on every side, forming a small yard around us. We soon passed the mouth of the Souhegan, and the village of Merrimack, and as the mist gradually rolled away, and we were relieved from the trouble of watching for rocks, we saw by the flitting clouds, by the first russet tinge on the hills, by the rushing river, the cottages on shore, and the shore itself, so coolly fresh and shining with dew, and later in the day, by the hue of the grape-vine, the goldfinch on the willow, the flickers flying in flocks, and when we passed near enough to the shore, as we fancied, by the faces of men, that the Fall had commenced. The cottages looked more snug and comfortable, and their inhabitants were seen only for a moment, and then went quietly in and shut the door, retreating inward to the haunts of summer.

"And now the cold autumnal dews are seen
To cobweb ev'ry green;
And by the low-shorn rowens doth appear
The fast-declining year."

We heard the sigh of the first autumnal wind, and even the water had acquired a grayer hue. The sumach, grape, and maple were already changed, and the milkweed had turned to a deep rich yellow. In all woods the leaves were fast ripening for their fall; for their full veins and lively gloss mark the ripe leaf, and not the sered one of the poets; and we knew that the maples, stripped of their leaves among the earliest, would soon stand like a wreath of smoke along the edge of the meadow. Already the cattle were heard to low wildly in the pastures and along the highways, restlessly running to and fro, as if in apprehension of the withering of the grass and of the approach of winter. Our thoughts, too, began to rustle.

As I pass along the streets of our village of Concord on the day of our annual Cattle-Show, when it usually happens that the leaves of the elms and buttonwoods begin first to strew the ground under the breath of the October wind, the lively spirits in their sap seem to mount as high as any plough-boy's let loose that day; and they lead my thoughts away to the rustling woods, where the trees are preparing for their winter campaign. This autumnal festival, when men are gathered in crowds in the streets as regularly and by as natural a law as the leaves cluster and rustle by the wayside, is naturally associated in my mind with the fall of the year. The low of cattle in the streets sounds like a hoarse symphony or running bass to the rustling of the leaves. The wind goes hurrying down the country, gleaning every loose straw that is left in the fields, while every farmer lad too appears to scud before it,--having donned his best pea-jacket and pepper-and-salt waistcoat, his unbent trousers, outstanding rigging of duck or kerseymere or corduroy, and his furry hat withal,--to country fairs and cattle-shows, to that Rome among the villages where the treasures of the year are gathered. All the land over they go leaping the fences with their tough, idle palms, which have never learned to hang by their sides, amid the low of calves and the bleating of sheep,--Amos, Abner, Elnathan, Elbridge,--

"From steep pine-bearing mountains to the plain."

I love these sons of earth every mother's son of them, with their great hearty hearts rushing tumultuously in herds from spectacle to spectacle, as if fearful lest there should not be time between sun and sun to see them all, and the sun does not wait more than in haying-time.

"Wise Nature's darlings, they live in the world
Perplexing not themselves how it is hurled."

Running hither and thither with appetite for the coarse pastimes of the day, now with boisterous speed at the heels of the inspired negro from whose larynx the melodies of all Congo and Guinea Coast have broke loose into our streets; now to see the procession of a hundred yoke of oxen, all as august and grave as Osiris, or the droves of neat cattle and milch cows as unspotted as Isis or Io. Such as had no love for Nature

"at all,
Came lovers home from this great festival."

They may bring their fattest cattle and richest fruits to the fair, but they are all eclipsed by the show of men. These are stirring autumn days, when men sweep by in crowds, amid the rustle of leaves, like migrating finches; this is the true harvest of the year, when the air is but the breath of men, and the rustling of leaves is as the trampling of the crowd. We read now-a-days of the ancient festivals, games, and processions of the Greeks and Etruscans, with a little incredulity, or at least with little sympathy; but how natural and irrepressible in every people is some hearty and palpable greeting of Nature. The Corybantes, the Bacchantes, the rude primitive tragedians with their procession and goat-song, and the whole paraphernalia of the Panathenaea, which appear so antiquated and peculiar, have their parallel now. The husbandman is always a better Greek than the scholar is prepared to appreciate, and the old custom still survives, while antiquarians and scholars grow gray in commemorating it. The farmers crowd to the fair to-day in obedience to the same ancient law, which Solon or Lycurgus did not enact, as naturally as bees swarm and follow their queen.

It is worth the while to see the country's people, how they pour into the town, the sober farmer folk, now all agog, their very shirt and coat-collars pointing forward,--collars so broad as if they had put their shirts on wrong end upward, for the fashions

always tend to superfluity,--and with an unusual springiness in their gait, jabbering earnestly to one another. The more supple vagabond, too, is sure to appear on the least rumor of such a gathering, and the next day to disappear, and go into his hole like the seventeen-year locust, in an ever-shabby coat, though finer than the farmer's best, yet never dressed; come to see the sport, and have a hand in what is going,--to know "what's the row," if there is any; to be where some men are drunk, some horses race, some cockerels fight; anxious to be shaking props under a table, and above all to see the "striped pig." He especially is the creature of the occasion. He empties both his pockets and his character into the stream, and swims in such a day. He dearly loves the social slush. There is no reserve of soberness in him.

I love to see the herd of men feeding heartily on coarse and succulent pleasures, as cattle on the husks and stalks of vegetables. Though there are many crooked and crabbled specimens of humanity among them, run all to thorn and rind, and crowded out of shape by adverse circumstances, like the third chestnut in the burr, so that you wonder to see some heads wear a whole hat, yet fear not that the race will fail or waver in them; like the crabs which grow in hedges, they furnish the stocks of sweet and thrifty fruits still. Thus is nature recruited from age to age, while the fair and palatable varieties die out, and have their period. This is that mankind. How cheap must be the material of which so many men are made.

The wind blew steadily down the stream, so that we kept our sails set, and lost not a moment of the forenoon by delays, but from early morning until noon were continually dropping downward. With our hands on the steering-paddle, which was thrust deep into the river, or bending to the oar, which indeed we rarely relinquished, we felt each palpitation in the veins of our steed, and each impulse of the wings which drew us above. The current of our thoughts made as sudden bends as the river, which was continually opening new prospects to the east or south, but we are aware that rivers flow most rapidly and shallowest at these points. The steadfast shores never once turned aside for us, but still trended as they were made; why then should we always turn aside for them?

A man cannot wheedle nor overawe his Genius. It requires to be

conciliated by nobler conduct than the world demands or can appreciate. These winged thoughts are like birds, and will not be handled; even hens will not let you touch them like quadrupeds. Nothing was ever so unfamiliar and startling to a man as his own thoughts.

To the rarest genius it is the most expensive to succumb and conform to the ways of the world. Genius is the worst of lumber, if the poet would float upon the breeze of popularity. The bird of paradise is obliged constantly to fly against the wind, lest its gay trappings, pressing close to its body, impede its free movements.

He is the best sailor who can steer within the fewest points of the wind, and extract a motive power out of the greatest obstacles. Most begin to veer and tack as soon as the wind changes from aft, and as within the tropics it does not blow from all points of the compass, there are some harbors which they can never reach.

The poet is no tender slip of fairy stock, who requires peculiar institutions and edicts for his defence, but the toughest son of earth and of Heaven, and by his greater strength and endurance his fainting companions will recognize the God in him. It is the worshippers of beauty, after all, who have done the real pioneer work of the world.

The poet will prevail to be popular in spite of his faults, and in spite of his beauties too. He will hit the nail on the head, and we shall not know the shape of his hammer. He makes us free of his hearth and heart, which is greater than to offer one the freedom of a city.

Great men, unknown to their generation, have their fame among the great who have preceded them, and all true worldly fame subsides from their high estimate beyond the stars.

Orpheus does not hear the strains which issue from his lyre, but only those which are breathed into it; for the original strain precedes the sound, by as much as the echo follows after. The rest is the perquisite of the rocks and trees and beasts.

When I stand in a library where is all the recorded wit of the world, but none of the recording, a mere accumulated, and not

truly cumulative treasure, where immortal works stand side by side with anthologies which did not survive their month, and cobweb and mildew have already spread from these to the binding of those; and happily I am reminded of what poetry is,--I perceive that Shakespeare and Milton did not foresee into what company they were to fall. Alas! that so soon the work of a true poet should be swept into such a dust-hole!

The poet will write for his peers alone. He will remember only that he saw truth and beauty from his position, and expect the time when a vision as broad shall overlook the same field as freely.

We are often prompted to speak our thoughts to our neighbors, or the single travellers whom we meet on the road, but poetry is a communication from our home and solitude addressed to all Intelligence. It never whispers in a private ear. Knowing this, we may understand those sonnets said to be addressed to particular persons, or "To a Mistress's Eyebrow." Let none feel flattered by them. For poetry write love, and it will be equally true.

No doubt it is an important difference between men of genius or poets, and men not of genius, that the latter are unable to grasp and confront the thought which visits them. But it is because it is too faint for expression, or even conscious impression. What merely quickens or retards the blood in their veins and fills their afternoons with pleasure they know not whence, conveys a distinct assurance to the finer organization of the poet.

We talk of genius as if it were a mere knack, and the poet could only express what other men conceived. But in comparison with his task, the poet is the least talented of any; the writer of prose has more skill. See what talent the smith has. His material is pliant in his hands. When the poet is most inspired, is stimulated by an *aura* which never even colors the afternoons of common men, then his talent is all gone, and he is no longer a poet. The gods do not grant him any skill more than another. They never put their gifts into his hands, but they encompass and sustain him with their breath.

To say that God has given a man many and great talents, frequently means that he has brought his heavens down within reach of his hands.

When the poetic frenzy seizes us, we run and scratch with our pen, intent only on worms, calling our mates around us, like the cock, and delighting in the dust we make, but do not detect where the jewel lies, which, perhaps, we have in the mean time cast to a distance, or quite covered up again.

The poet's body even is not fed like other men's, but he sometimes tastes the genuine nectar and ambrosia of the gods, and lives a divine life. By the healthful and invigorating thrills of inspiration his life is preserved to a serene old age.

Some poems are for holidays only. They are polished and sweet, but it is the sweetness of sugar, and not such as toil gives to sour bread. The breath with which the poet utters his verse must be that by which he lives.

Great prose, of equal elevation, commands our respect more than great verse, since it implies a more permanent and level height, a life more pervaded with the grandeur of the thought. The poet often only makes an irruption, like a Parthian, and is off again, shooting while he retreats; but the prose writer has conquered like a Roman, and settled colonies.

The true poem is not that which the public read. There is always a poem not printed on paper, coincident with the production of this, stereotyped in the poet's life. It is _what he has become through his work_. Not how is the idea expressed in stone, or on canvas or paper, is the question, but how far it has obtained form and expression in the life of the artist. His true work will not stand in any prince's gallery.

My life has been the poem I would have writ,
But I could not both live and utter it.

THE POET'S DELAY.

In vain I see the morning rise,
In vain observe the western blaze,
Who idly look to other skies,
Expecting life by other ways.

Amidst such boundless wealth without,

I only still am poor within,
The birds have sung their summer out,
But still my spring does not begin.

Shall I then wait the autumn wind,
Compelled to seek a milder day,
And leave no curious nest behind,
No woods still echoing to my lay?

This raw and gusty day, and the creaking of the oaks and pines on shore, reminded us of more northern climes than Greece, and more wintry seas than the Aegean.

The genuine remains of Ossian, or those ancient poems which bear his name, though of less fame and extent, are, in many respects, of the same stamp with the Iliad itself. He asserts the dignity of the bard no less than Homer, and in his era we hear of no other priest than he. It will not avail to call him a heathen, because he personifies the sun and addresses it; and what if his heroes did "worship the ghosts of their fathers," their thin, airy, and unsubstantial forms? we worship but the ghosts of our fathers in more substantial forms. We cannot but respect the vigorous faith of those heathen, who sternly believed somewhat, and are inclined to say to the critics, who are offended by their superstitious rites,--Don't interrupt these men's prayers. As if we knew more about human life and a God, than the heathen and ancients. Does English theology contain the recent discoveries!

Ossian reminds us of the most refined and rudest eras, of Homer, Pindar, Isaiah, and the American Indian. In his poetry, as in Homer's, only the simplest and most enduring features of humanity are seen, such essential parts of a man as Stonehenge exhibits of a temple; we see the circles of stone, and the upright shaft alone. The phenomena of life acquire almost an unreal and gigantic size seen through his mists. Like all older and grander poetry, it is distinguished by the few elements in the lives of its heroes. They stand on the heath, between the stars and the earth, shrunk to the bones and sinews. The earth is a boundless plain for their deeds. They lead such a simple, dry, and everlasting life, as hardly needs depart with the flesh, but is transmitted entire from age to age. There are but few objects to distract their sight, and their life is as unencumbered as the course of the stars they gaze at.

"The wrathful kings, on cairns apart,
Look forward from behind their shields,
And mark the wandering stars,
That brilliant westward move."

It does not cost much for these heroes to live; they do not want much furniture. They are such forms of men only as can be seen afar through the mist, and have no costume nor dialect, but for language there is the tongue itself, and for costume there are always the skins of beasts and the bark of trees to be had. They live out their years by the vigor of their constitutions. They survive storms and the spears of their foes, and perform a few heroic deeds, and then

"Mounds will answer questions of them,
For many future years."

Blind and infirm, they spend the remnant of their days listening to the lays of the bards, and feeling the weapons which laid their enemies low, and when at length they die, by a convulsion of nature, the bard allows us a short and misty glance into futurity, yet as clear, perchance, as their lives had been. When Mac-Roine was slain,

"His soul departed to his warlike sires,
To follow misty forms of boars,
In tempestuous islands bleak."

The hero's cairn is erected, and the bard sings a brief significant strain, which will suffice for epitaph and biography.

"The weak will find his bow in the dwelling,
The feeble will attempt to bend it."

Compared with this simple, fibrous life, our civilized history appears the chronicle of debility, of fashion, and the arts of luxury. But the civilized man misses no real refinement in the poetry of the rudest era. It reminds him that civilization does but dress men. It makes shoes, but it does not toughen the soles of the feet. It makes cloth of finer texture, but it does not touch the skin. Inside the civilized man stand the savage still in the place of honor. We are those blue-eyed, yellow-haired Saxons, those slender, dark-haired Normans.

The profession of the bard attracted more respect in those days from the importance attached to fame. It was his province to record the deeds of heroes. When Ossian hears the traditions of inferior bards, he exclaims,--

"I straightway seize the unfruitful tales,
And send them down in faithful verse."

His philosophy of life is expressed in the opening of the third Duan of Ca-Lodin.

"Whence have sprung the things that are?
And whither roll the passing years?
Where does Time conceal its two heads,
In dense impenetrable gloom,
Its surface marked with heroes' deeds alone?
I view the generations gone;
The past appears but dim;
As objects by the moon's faint beams,
Reflected from a distant lake.
I see, indeed, the thunderbolts of war,
But there the unmighty joyless dwell,
All those who send not down their deeds
To far, succeeding times."

The ignoble warriors die and are forgotten;

"Strangers come to build a tower,
And throw their ashes overhand;
Some rusted swords appear in dust;
One, bending forward, says,
'The arms belonged to heroes gone;
We never heard their praise in song.'"

The grandeur of the similes is another feature which characterizes great poetry. Ossian seems to speak a gigantic and universal language. The images and pictures occupy even much space in the landscape, as if they could be seen only from the sides of mountains, and plains with a wide horizon, or across arms of the sea. The machinery is so massive that it cannot be less than natural. Oivana says to the spirit of her father, "Gray-haired Torkil of Torne," seen in the skies,

"Thou glidest away like receding ships."

So when the hosts of Fingal and Starne approach to battle,

"With murmurs loud, like rivers far,
The race of Torne hither moved."

And when compelled to retire,

"dragging his spear behind,
Cudulin sank in the distant wood,
Like a fire upblazing ere it dies."

Nor did Fingal want a proper audience when he spoke;

"A thousand orators inclined
To hear the lay of Fingal."

The threats too would have deterred a man. Vengeance and terror were real. Trenmore threatens the young warrior whom he meets on a foreign strand,

"Thy mother shall find thee pale on the shore,
While lessening on the waves she spies
The sails of him who slew her son."

If Ossian's heroes weep, it is from excess of strength, and not from weakness, a sacrifice or libation of fertile natures, like the perspiration of stone in summer's heat. We hardly know that tears have been shed, and it seems as if weeping were proper only for babes and heroes. Their joy and their sorrow are made of one stuff, like rain and snow, the rainbow and the mist. When Fillan was worsted in fight, and ashamed in the presence of Fingal,

"He strode away forthwith,
And bent in grief above a stream,
His cheeks bedewed with tears.
From time to time the thistles gray
He lopped with his inverted lance."

Crodar, blind and old, receives Ossian, son of Fingal, who comes to aid him in war;--

"My eyes have failed," says he, "Crodar is blind,
Is thy strength like that of thy fathers?"

Stretch, Ossian, thine arm to the hoary-haired.'

I gave my arm to the king.

The aged hero seized my hand;

He heaved a heavy sigh;

Tears flowed incessant down his cheek.

'Strong art thou, son of the mighty,

Though not so dreadful as Morven's prince.

Let my feast be spread in the hall,

Let every sweet-voiced minstrel sing;

Great is he who is within my walls,

Sons of wave-echoing Croma."

Even Ossian himself, the hero-bard, pays tribute to the superior strength of his father Fingal.

"How beautiful, mighty man, was thy mind,

Why succeeded Ossian without its strength?"

While we sailed fleetly before the wind, with the river gurgling under our stern, the thoughts of autumn coursed as steadily through our minds, and we observed less what was passing on the shore, than the dateless associations and impressions which the season awakened, anticipating in some measure the progress of the year.

I hearing get, who had but ears,

And sight, who had but eyes before,

I moments live, who lived but years,

And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

Sitting with our faces now up stream, we studied the landscape by degrees, as one unrolls a map, rock, tree, house, hill, and meadow, assuming new and varying positions as wind and water shifted the scene, and there was variety enough for our entertainment in the metamorphoses of the simplest objects. Viewed from this side the scenery appeared new to us.

The most familiar sheet of water viewed from a new hill-top,

yields a novel and unexpected pleasure. When we have travelled a few miles, we do not recognize the profiles even of the hills which overlook our native village, and perhaps no man is quite familiar with the horizon as seen from the hill nearest to his house, and can recall its outline distinctly when in the valley. We do not commonly know, beyond a short distance, which way the hills range which take in our houses and farms in their sweep. As if our birth had at first sundered things, and we had been thrust up through into nature like a wedge, and not till the wound heals and the scar disappears, do we begin to discover where we are, and that nature is one and continuous everywhere. It is an important epoch when a man who has always lived on the east side of a mountain, and seen it in the west, travels round and sees it in the east. Yet the universe is a sphere whose centre is wherever there is intelligence. The sun is not so central as a man. Upon an isolated hill-top, in an open country, we seem to ourselves to be standing on the boss of an immense shield, the immediate landscape being apparently depressed below the more remote, and rising gradually to the horizon, which is the rim of the shield, villas, steeples, forests, mountains, one above another, till they are swallowed up in the heavens. The most distant mountains in the horizon appear to rise directly from the shore of that lake in the woods by which we chance to be standing, while from the mountain-top, not only this, but a thousand nearer and larger lakes, are equally unobserved.

Seen through this clear atmosphere, the works of the farmer, his ploughing and reaping, had a beauty to our eyes which he never saw. How fortunate were we who did not own an acre of these shores, who had not renounced our title to the whole. One who knew how to appropriate the true value of this world would be the poorest man in it. The poor rich man! all he has is what he has bought. What I see is mine. I am a large owner in the Merrimack intervals.

Men dig and dive but cannot my wealth spend,
Who yet no partial store appropriate,
Who no armed ship into the Indies send,
To rob me of my orient estate.

He is the rich man, and enjoys the fruits of riches, who summer and winter forever can find delight in his own thoughts. Buy a farm! What have I to pay for a farm which a farmer will take?

When I visit again some haunt of my youth, I am glad to find that nature wears so well. The landscape is indeed something real, and solid, and sincere, and I have not put my foot through it yet. There is a pleasant tract on the bank of the Concord, called Conantum, which I have in my mind;--the old deserted farm-house, the desolate pasture with its bleak cliff, the open wood, the river-reach, the green meadow in the midst, and the moss-grown wild-apple orchard,--places where one may have many thoughts and not decide anything. It is a scene which I can not only remember, as I might a vision, but when I will can bodily revisit, and find it even so, unaccountable, yet unpretending in its pleasant dreariness. When my thoughts are sensible of change, I love to see and sit on rocks which I _have_ known, and pry into their moss, and see unchangeableness so established. I not yet gray on rocks forever gray, I no longer green under the evergreens. There is something even in the lapse of time by which time recovers itself.

As we have said, it proved a cool as well as breezy day, and by the time we reached Penichook Brook we were obliged to sit muffled in our cloaks, while the wind and current carried us along. We bounded swiftly over the rippling surface, far by many cultivated lands and the ends of fences which divided innumerable farms, with hardly a thought for the various lives which they separated; now by long rows of alders or groves of pines or oaks, and now by some homestead where the women and children stood outside to gaze at us, till we had swept out of their sight, and beyond the limit of their longest Saturday ramble. We glided past the mouth of the Nashua, and not long after, of Salmon Brook, without more pause than the wind.

Salmon Brook,
Penichook,
Ye sweet waters of my brain,
When shall I look,
Or cast the hook,
In your waves again?

Silver eels,
Wooden creels,
These the baits that still allure,
And dragon-fly
That floated by,
May they still endure?

The shadows chased one another swiftly over wood and meadow, and their alternation harmonized with our mood. We could distinguish the clouds which cast each one, though never so high in the heavens. When a shadow flits across the landscape of the soul, where is the substance? Probably, if we were wise enough, we should see to what virtue we are indebted for any happier moment we enjoy. No doubt we have earned it at some time; for the gifts of Heaven are never quite gratuitous. The constant abrasion and decay of our lives makes the soil of our future growth. The wood which we now mature, when it becomes virgin mould, determines the character of our second growth, whether that be oaks or pines. Every man casts a shadow; not his body only, but his imperfectly mingled spirit. This is his grief. Let him turn which way he will, it falls opposite to the sun; short at noon, long at eve. Did you never see it?--But, referred to the sun, it is widest at its base, which is no greater than his own opacity. The divine light is diffused almost entirely around us, and by means of the refraction of light, or else by a certain self-luminousness, or, as some will have it, transparency, if we preserve ourselves untarnished, we are able to enlighten our shaded side. At any rate, our darkest grief has that bronze color of the moon eclipsed. There is no ill which may not be dissipated, like the dark, if you let in a stronger light upon it. Shadows, referred to the source of light, are pyramids whose bases are never greater than those of the substances which cast them, but light is a spherical congeries of pyramids, whose very apexes are the sun itself, and hence the system shines with uninterrupted light. But if the light we use is but a paltry and narrow taper, most objects will cast a shadow wider than themselves.

The places where we had stopped or spent the night in our way up the river, had already acquired a slight historical interest for us; for many upward day's voyaging were unravelled in this rapid downward passage. When one landed to stretch his limbs by walking, he soon found himself falling behind his companion, and was obliged to take advantage of the curves, and ford the brooks and ravines in haste, to recover his ground. Already the banks and the distant meadows wore a sober and deepened tinge, for the September air had shorn them of their summer's pride.

"And what's a life? The flourishing array
Of the proud summer meadow, which to-day
Wears her green plush, and is to-morrow hay."

The air was really the "fine element" which the poets describe.
It had a finer and sharper grain, seen against the russet
pastures and meadows, than before, as if cleansed of the summer's
impurities.

Having passed the New Hampshire line and reached the Horseshoe
Interval in Tyngsborough, where there is a high and regular
second bank, we climbed up this in haste to get a nearer sight of
the autumnal flowers, asters, golden-rod, and yarrow, and
blue-curly (_Trichostema dichotoma_), humble roadside blossoms,
and, lingering still, the harebell and the _Rhexia Virginica_.
The last, growing in patches of lively pink flowers on the edge
of the meadows, had almost too gay an appearance for the rest of
the landscape, like a pink ribbon on the bonnet of a Puritan
woman. Asters and golden-rods were the livery which nature wore
at present. The latter alone expressed all the ripeness of the
season, and shed their mellow lustre over the fields, as if the
now declining summer's sun had bequeathed its hues to them. It
is the floral solstice a little after midsummer, when the
particles of golden light, the sun-dust, have, as it were, fallen
like seeds on the earth, and produced these blossoms. On every
hillside, and in every valley, stood countless asters, coreopses,
tansies, golden-rods, and the whole race of yellow flowers, like
Brahminical devotees, turning steadily with their luminary from
morning till night.

"I see the golden-rod shine bright,
As sun-showers at the birth of day,
A golden plume of yellow light,
That robs the Day-god's splendid ray.

"The aster's violet rays divide
The bank with many stars for me,
And yarrow in blanch tints is dyed,
As moonlight floats across the sea.

"I see the emerald woods prepare
To shed their vestiture once more,
And distant elm-trees spot the air
With yellow pictures softly o'er.

.

"No more the water-lily's pride
In milk-white circles swims content,

No more the blue-weed's clusters ride
And mock the heavens' element.

.
"Autumn, thy wreath and mine are blent
With the same colors, for to me
A richer sky than all is lent,
While fades my dream-like company.

"Our skies glow purple, but the wind
Sobs chill through green trees and bright graas,
To-day shines fair, and lurk behind
The times that into winter pass.

"So fair we seem, so cold we are,
So fast we hasten to decay,
Yet through our night glows many a star,
That still shall claim its sunny day."

So sang a Concord poet once.

There is a peculiar interest belonging to the still later flowers, which abide with us the approach of winter. There is something witch-like in the appearance of the witch-hazel, which blossoms late in October and in November, with its irregular and angular spray and petals like furies' hair, or small ribbon streamers. Its blossoming, too, at this irregular period, when other shrubs have lost their leaves, as well as blossoms, looks like witches' craft. Certainly it blooms in no garden of man's. There is a whole fairy-land on the hillside where it grows.

Some have thought that the gales do not at present waft to the voyager the natural and original fragrance of the land, such as the early navigators described, and that the loss of many odoriferous native plants, sweet-scented grasses and medicinal herbs, which formerly sweetened the atmosphere, and rendered it salubrious,—by the grazing of cattle and the rooting of swine, is the source of many diseases which now prevail; the earth, say they, having been long subjected to extremely artificial and luxurious modes of cultivation, to gratify the appetite, converted into a sty and hot-bed, where men for profit increase the ordinary decay of nature.

According to the record of an old inhabitant of Tyngsborough, now

dead, whose farm we were now gliding past, one of the greatest freshets on this river took place in October, 1785, and its height was marked by a nail driven into an apple-tree behind his house. One of his descendants has shown this to me, and I judged it to be at least seventeen or eighteen feet above the level of the river at the time. According to Barber, the river rose twenty-one feet above the common high-water mark, at Bradford in the year 1818. Before the Lowell and Nashua railroad was built, the engineer made inquiries of the inhabitants along the banks as to how high they had known the river to rise. When he came to this house he was conducted to the apple-tree, and as the nail was not then visible, the lady of the house placed her hand on the trunk where she said that she remembered the nail to have been from her childhood. In the mean while the old man put his arm inside the tree, which was hollow, and felt the point of the nail sticking through, and it was exactly opposite to her hand. The spot is now plainly marked by a notch in the bark. But as no one else remembered the river to have risen so high as this, the engineer disregarded this statement, and I learn that there has since been a freshet which rose within nine inches of the rails at Biscuit Brook, and such a freshet as that of 1785 would have covered the railroad two feet deep.

The revolutions of nature tell as fine tales, and make as interesting revelations, on this river's banks, as on the Euphrates or the Nile. This apple-tree, which stands within a few rods of the river, is called "Elisha's apple-tree," from a friendly Indian, who was anciently in the service of Jonathan Tyng, and, with one other man, was killed here by his own race in one of the Indian wars,—the particulars of which affair were told us on the spot. He was buried close by, no one knew exactly where, but in the flood of 1785, so great a weight of water standing over the grave, caused the earth to settle where it had once been disturbed, and when the flood went down, a sunken spot, exactly of the form and size of the grave, revealed its locality; but this was now lost again, and no future flood can detect it; yet, no doubt, Nature will know how to point it out in due time, if it be necessary, by methods yet more searching and unexpected. Thus there is not only the crisis when the spirit ceases to inspire and expand the body, marked by a fresh mound in the churchyard, but there is also a crisis when the body ceases to take up room as such in nature, marked by a fainter depression in the earth.

We sat awhile to rest us here upon the brink of the western bank, surrounded by the glossy leaves of the red variety of the mountain laurel, just above the head of Wicasuck Island, where we could observe some scows which were loading with clay from the opposite shore, and also overlook the grounds of the farmer, of whom I have spoken, who once hospitably entertained us for a night. He had on his pleasant farm, besides an abundance of the beach-plum, or *Prunus littoralis*, which grew wild, the Canada plum under cultivation, fine Porter apples, some peaches, and large patches of musk and water melons, which he cultivated for the Lowell market. Elisha's apple-tree, too, bore a native fruit, which was prized by the family. He raised the blood peach, which, as he showed us with satisfaction, was more like the oak in the color of its bark and in the setting of its branches, and was less liable to break down under the weight of the fruit, or the snow, than other varieties. It was of slower growth, and its branches strong and tough. There, also, was his nursery of native apple-trees, thickly set upon the bank, which cost but little care, and which he sold to the neighboring farmers when they were five or six years old. To see a single peach upon its stem makes an impression of paradisaical fertility and luxury. This reminded us even of an old Roman farm, as described by Varro:--Caesar Vopiscus Aedilicius, when he pleaded before the Censors, said that the grounds of Rosea were the garden (*_sumen_* the tid-bit) of Italy, in which a pole being left would not be visible the day after, on account of the growth of the herbage. This soil may not have been remarkably fertile, yet at this distance we thought that this anecdote might be told of the Tyngsborough farm.

When we passed Wicasuck Island, there was a pleasure-boat containing a youth and a maiden on the island brook, which we were pleased to see, since it proved that there were some hereabouts to whom our excursion would not be wholly strange. Before this, a canal-boatman, of whom we made some inquiries respecting Wicasuck Island, and who told us that it was disputed property, suspected that we had a claim upon it, and though we assured him that all this was news to us, and explained, as well as we could, why we had come to see it, he believed not a word of it, and seriously offered us one hundred dollars for our title. The only other small boats which we met with were used to pick up driftwood. Some of the poorer class along the stream collect, in this way, all the fuel which they require. While one of us landed not far from this island to forage for provisions among

the farm-houses whose roofs we saw, for our supply was now exhausted, the other, sitting in the boat, which was moored to the shore, was left alone to his reflections.

If there is nothing new on the earth, still the traveller always has a resource in the skies. They are constantly turning a new page to view. The wind sets the types on this blue ground, and the inquiring may always read a new truth there. There are things there written with such fine and subtle tinctures, paler than the juice of limes, that to the diurnal eye they leave no trace, and only the chemistry of night reveals them. Every man's daylight firmament answers in his mind to the brightness of the vision in his starriest hour.

These continents and hemispheres are soon run over, but an always unexplored and infinite region makes off on every side from the mind, further than to sunset, and we can make no highway or beaten track into it, but the grass immediately springs up in the path, for we travel there chiefly with our wings.

Sometimes we see objects as through a thin haze, in their eternal relations, and they stand like Palenque and the Pyramids, and we wonder who set them up, and for what purpose. If we see the reality in things, of what moment is the superficial and apparent longer? What are the earth and all its interests beside the deep surmise which pierces and scatters them? While I sit here listening to the waves which ripple and break on this shore, I am absolved from all obligation to the past, and the council of nations may reconsider its votes. The grating of a pebble annuls them. Still occasionally in my dreams I remember that rippling water.

Oft, as I turn me on my pillow o'er,
I hear the lapse of waves upon the shore,
Distinct as if it were at broad noonday,
And I were drifting down from Nashua.

With a bending sail we glided rapidly by Tyngsborough and Chelmsford, each holding in one hand half of a tart country apple-pie which we had purchased to celebrate our return, and in the other a fragment of the newspaper in which it was wrapped, devouring these with divided relish, and learning the news which had transpired since we sailed. The river here opened into a broad and straight reach of great length, which we bounded

merrily over before a smacking breeze, with a devil-may-care look in our faces, and our boat a white bone in its mouth, and a speed which greatly astonished some scow boatmen whom we met. The wind in the horizon rolled like a flood over valley and plain, and every tree bent to the blast, and the mountains like school-boys turned their cheeks to it. They were great and current motions, the flowing sail, the running stream, the waving tree, the roving wind. The north-wind stepped readily into the harness which we had provided, and pulled us along with good will. Sometimes we sailed as gently and steadily as the clouds overhead, watching the receding shores and the motions of our sail; the play of its pulse so like our own lives, so thin and yet so full of life, so noiseless when it labored hardest, so noisy and impatient when least effective; now bending to some generous impulse of the breeze, and then fluttering and flapping with a kind of human suspense. It was the scale on which the varying temperature of distant atmospheres was graduated, and it was some attraction for us that the breeze it played with had been out of doors so long. Thus we sailed, not being able to fly, but as next best, making a long furrow in the fields of the Merrimack toward our home, with our wings spread, but never lifting our heel from the watery trench; gracefully ploughing homeward with our brisk and willing team, wind and stream, pulling together, the former yet a wild steer, yoked to his more sedate fellow. It was very near flying, as when the duck rushes through the water with an impulse of her wings, throwing the spray about her, before she can rise. How we had stuck fast if drawn up but a few feet on the shore!

When we reached the great bend just above Middlesex, where the river runs east thirty-five miles to the sea, we at length lost the aid of this propitious wind, though we contrived to make one long and judicious tack carry us nearly to the locks of the canal. We were here locked through at noon by our old friend, the lover of the higher mathematics, who seemed glad to see us safe back again through so many locks; but we did not stop to consider any of his problems, though we could cheerfully have spent a whole autumn in this way another time, and never have asked what his religion was. It is so rare to meet with a man out-doors who cherishes a worthy thought in his mind, which is independent of the labor of his hands. Behind every man's busy-ness there should be a level of undisturbed serenity and industry, as within the reef encircling a coral isle there is always an expanse of still water, where the depositions are going on which will finally raise it above the surface.

The eye which can appreciate the naked and absolute beauty of a scientific truth is far more rare than that which is attracted by a moral one. Few detect the morality in the former, or the science in the latter. Aristotle defined art to be <Lo'gos tou~ e'rgou a'neu hy'l'es>, _The principle of the work without the wood_; but most men prefer to have some of the wood along with the principle; they demand that the truth be clothed in flesh and blood and the warm colors of life. They prefer the partial statement because it fits and measures them and their commodities best. But science still exists everywhere as the sealer of weights and measures at least.

We have heard much about the poetry of mathematics, but very little of it has yet been sung. The ancients had a juster notion of their poetic value than we. The most distinct and beautiful statement of any truth must take at last the mathematical form. We might so simplify the rules of moral philosophy, as well as of arithmetic, that one formula would express them both. All the moral laws are readily translated into natural philosophy, for often we have only to restore the primitive meaning of the words by which they are expressed, or to attend to their literal instead of their metaphorical sense. They are already _supernatural_ philosophy. The whole body of what is now called moral or ethical truth existed in the golden age as abstract science. Or, if we prefer, we may say that the laws of Nature are the purest morality. The Tree of Knowledge is a Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. He is not a true man of science who does not bring some sympathy to his studies, and expect to learn something by behavior as well as by application. It is childish to rest in the discovery of mere coincidences, or of partial and extraneous laws. The study of geometry is a petty and idle exercise of the mind, if it is applied to no larger system than the starry one. Mathematics should be mixed not only with physics but with ethics, _that_ is _mixed_ mathematics. The fact which interests us most is the life of the naturalist. The purest science is still biographical. Nothing will dignify and elevate science while it is sundered so wholly from the moral life of its devotee, and he professes another religion than it teaches, and worships at a foreign shrine. Anciently the faith of a philosopher was identical with his system, or, in other words, his view of the universe.

My friends mistake when they communicate facts to me with so much pains. Their presence, even their exaggerations and loose statements, are equally good facts for me. I have no respect for facts even except when I would use them, and for the most part I am independent of those which I hear, and can afford to be inaccurate, or, in other words, to substitute more present and pressing facts in their place.

The poet uses the results of science and philosophy, and generalizes their widest deductions.

The process of discovery is very simple. An unwearied and systematic application of known laws to nature, causes the unknown to reveal themselves. Almost any _mode_ of observation will be successful at last, for what is most wanted is method. Only let something be determined and fixed around which observation may rally. How many new relations a foot-rule alone will reveal, and to how many things still this has not been applied! What wonderful discoveries have been, and may still be, made, with a plumb-line, a level, a surveyor's compass, a thermometer, or a barometer! Where there is an observatory and a telescope, we expect that any eyes will see new worlds at once. I should say that the most prominent scientific men of our country, and perhaps of this age, are either serving the arts and not pure science, or are performing faithful but quite subordinate labors in particular departments. They make no steady and systematic approaches to the central fact. A discovery is made, and at once the attention of all observers is distracted to that, and it draws many analogous discoveries in its train; as if their work were not already laid out for them, but they had been lying on their oars. There is wanting constant and accurate observation with enough of theory to direct and discipline it.

But, above all, there is wanting genius. Our books of science, as they improve in accuracy, are in danger of losing the freshness and vigor and readiness to appreciate the real laws of Nature, which is a marked merit in the oftentimes false theories of the ancients. I am attracted by the slight pride and satisfaction, the emphatic and even exaggerated style in which some of the older naturalists speak of the operations of Nature, though they are better qualified to appreciate than to discriminate the facts. Their assertions are not without value when disproved. If they are not facts, they are suggestions for Nature herself to

act upon. "The Greeks," says Gesner, "had a common proverb (<Lagos katheudon>) a sleeping hare, for a dissembler or counterfeit; because the hare sees when she sleeps; for this is an admirable and rare work of Nature, that all the residue of her bodily parts take their rest, but the eye standeth continually sentinel."

Observation is so wide awake, and facts are being so rapidly added to the sum of human experience, that it appears as if the theorizer would always be in arrears, and were doomed forever to arrive at imperfect conclusions; but the power to perceive a law is equally rare in all ages of the world, and depends but little on the number of facts observed. The senses of the savage will furnish him with facts enough to set him up as a philosopher. The ancients can still speak to us with authority, even on the themes of geology and chemistry, though these studies are thought to have had their birth in modern times. Much is said about the progress of science in these centuries. I should say that the useful results of science had accumulated, but that there had been no accumulation of knowledge, strictly speaking, for posterity; for knowledge is to be acquired only by a corresponding experience. How can we know what we are told merely? Each man can interpret another's experience only by his own. We read that Newton discovered the law of gravitation, but how many who have heard of his famous discovery have recognized the same truth that he did? It may be not one. The revelation which was then made to him has not been superseded by the revelation made to any successor.

We see the planet fall,
And that is all.

In a review of Sir James Clark Ross's Antarctic Voyage of Discovery, there is a passage which shows how far a body of men are commonly impressed by an object of sublimity, and which is also a good instance of the step from the sublime to the ridiculous. After describing the discovery of the Antarctic Continent, at first seen a hundred miles distant over fields of ice,—stupendous ranges of mountains from seven and eight to twelve and fourteen thousand feet high, covered with eternal snow and ice, in solitary and inaccessible grandeur, at one time the weather being beautifully clear, and the sun shining on the icy landscape; a continent whose islands only are accessible, and these exhibited "not the smallest trace of vegetation," only in a

few places the rocks protruding through their icy covering, to convince the beholder that land formed the nucleus, and that it was not an iceberg;--the practical British reviewer proceeds thus, sticking to his last, "On the 22d of January, afternoon, the Expedition made the latitude of 74 degrees 20' and by 7h P.M., having ground (ground! where did they get ground?) to believe that they were then in a higher southern latitude than had been attained by that enterprising seaman, the late Captain James Weddel, and therefore higher than all their predecessors, an extra allowance of grog was issued to the crews as a reward for their perseverance."

Let not us sailors of late centuries take upon ourselves any airs on account of our Newtons and our Cuviers; we deserve an extra allowance of grog only.

We endeavored in vain to persuade the wind to blow through the long corridor of the canal, which is here cut straight through the woods, and were obliged to resort to our old expedient of drawing by a cord. When we reached the Concord, we were forced to row once more in good earnest, with neither wind nor current in our favor, but by this time the rawness of the day had disappeared, and we experienced the warmth of a summer afternoon. This change in the weather was favorable to our contemplative mood, and disposed us to dream yet deeper at our oars, while we floated in imagination farther down the stream of time, as we had floated down the stream of the Merrimack, to poets of a milder period than had engaged us in the morning. Chelmsford and Billerica appeared like old English towns, compared with Merrimack and Nashua, and many generations of civil poets might have lived and sung here.

What a contrast between the stern and desolate poetry of Ossian, and that of Chaucer, and even of Shakespeare and Milton, much more of Dryden, and Pope, and Gray. Our summer of English poetry like the Greek and Latin before it, seems well advanced toward its fall, and laden with the fruit and foliage of the season, with bright autumnal tints, but soon the winter will scatter its myriad clustering and shading leaves, and leave only a few desolate and fibrous boughs to sustain the snow and rime, and creak in the blasts of ages. We cannot escape the impression that the Muse has stooped a little in her flight, when we come to the literature of civilized eras. Now first we hear of various

ages and styles of poetry; it is pastoral, and lyric, and narrative, and didactic; but the poetry of runic monuments is of one style, and for every age. The bard has in a great measure lost the dignity and sacredness of his office. Formerly he was called a *_seer_*, but now it is thought that one man sees as much as another. He has no longer the bardic rage, and only conceives the deed, which he formerly stood ready to perform. Hosts of warriors earnest for battle could not mistake nor dispense with the ancient bard. His lays were heard in the pauses of the fight. There was no danger of his being overlooked by his contemporaries. But now the hero and the bard are of different professions. When we come to the pleasant English verse, the storms have all cleared away and it will never thunder and lighten more. The poet has come within doors, and exchanged the forest and crag for the fireside, the hut of the Gael, and Stonehenge with its circles of stones, for the house of the Englishman. No hero stands at the door prepared to break forth into song or heroic action, but a homely Englishman, who cultivates the art of poetry. We see the comfortable fireside, and hear the crackling fagots in all the verse.

Notwithstanding the broad humanity of Chaucer, and the many social and domestic comforts which we meet with in his verse, we have to narrow our vision somewhat to consider him, as if he occupied less space in the landscape, and did not stretch over hill and valley as Ossian does. Yet, seen from the side of posterity, as the father of English poetry, preceded by a long silence or confusion in history, unenlivened by any strain of pure melody, we easily come to reverence him. Passing over the earlier continental poets, since we are bound to the pleasant archipelago of English poetry, Chaucer's is the first name after that misty weather in which Ossian lived, which can detain us long. Indeed, though he represents so different a culture and society, he may be regarded as in many respects the Homer of the English poets. Perhaps he is the youthfullest of them all. We return to him as to the purest well, the fountain farthest removed from the highway of desultory life. He is so natural and cheerful, compared with later poets, that we might almost regard him as a personification of spring. To the faithful reader his muse has even given an aspect to his times, and when he is fresh from perusing him, they seem related to the golden age. It is still the poetry of youth and life, rather than of thought; and though the moral vein is obvious and constant, it has not yet banished the sun and daylight from his verse. The loftiest

strains of the muse are, for the most part, sublimely plaintive, and not a carol as free as nature's. The content which the sun shines to celebrate from morning to evening, is unsung. The muse solaces herself, and is not ravished but consoled. There is a catastrophe implied, and a tragic element in all our verse, and less of the lark and morning dews, than of the nightingale and evening shades. But in Homer and Chaucer there is more of the innocence and serenity of youth than in the more modern and moral poets. The Iliad is not Sabbath but morning reading, and men cling to this old song, because they still have moments of unbaptized and uncommitted life, which give them an appetite for more. To the innocent there are neither cherubim nor angels. At rare intervals we rise above the necessity of virtue into an unchangeable morning light, in which we have only to live right on and breathe the ambrosial air. The Iliad represents no creed nor opinion, and we read it with a rare sense of freedom and irresponsibility, as if we trod on native ground, and were autochthones of the soil.

Chaucer had eminently the habits of a literary man and a scholar. There were never any times so stirring that there were not to be found some sedentary still. He was surrounded by the din of arms. The battles of Hallidon Hill and Neville's Cross, and the still more memorable battles of Cressy and Poitiers, were fought in his youth; but these did not concern our poet much, Wickliffe and his reform much more. He regarded himself always as one privileged to sit and converse with books. He helped to establish the literary class. His character as one of the fathers of the English language would alone make his works important, even those which have little poetical merit. He was as simple as Wordsworth in preferring his homely but vigorous Saxon tongue, when it was neglected by the court, and had not yet attained to the dignity of a literature, and rendered a similar service to his country to that which Dante rendered to Italy. If Greek sufficeth for Greek, and Arabic for Arabian, and Hebrew for Jew, and Latin for Latin, then English shall suffice for him, for any of these will serve to teach truth "right as divers pathes leaden divers folke the right waye to Rome." In the Testament of Love he writes, "Let then clerkes enditen in Latin, for they have the propertie of science, and the knowinge in that facultie, and lette Frenchmen in their Frenche also enditen their queinte termes, for it is kyndely to their mouthes, and let us shewe our fantasies in soche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge."

He will know how to appreciate Chaucer best, who has come down to him the natural way, through the meagre pastures of Saxon and ante-Chaucerian poetry; and yet, so human and wise he appears after such diet, that we are liable to misjudge him still. In the Saxon poetry extant, in the earliest English, and the contemporary Scottish poetry, there is less to remind the reader of the rudeness and vigor of youth, than of the feebleness of a declining age. It is for the most part translation of imitation merely, with only an occasional and slight tinge of poetry, oftentimes the falsehood and exaggeration of fable, without its imagination to redeem it, and we look in vain to find antiquity restored, humanized, and made blithe again by some natural sympathy between it and the present. But Chaucer is fresh and modern still, and no dust settles on his true passages. It lightens along the line, and we are reminded that flowers have bloomed, and birds sung, and hearts beaten in England. Before the earnest gaze of the reader, the rust and moss of time gradually drop off, and the original green life is revealed. He was a homely and domestic man, and did breathe quite as modern men do.

There is no wisdom that can take place of humanity, and we find that in Chaucer. We can expand at last in his breadth, and we think that we could have been that man's acquaintance. He was worthy to be a citizen of England, while Petrarch and Boccaccio lived in Italy, and Tell and Tamerlane in Switzerland and in Asia, and Bruce in Scotland, and Wickliffe, and Gower, and Edward the Third, and John of Gaunt, and the Black Prince, were his own countrymen as well as contemporaries; all stout and stirring names. The fame of Roger Bacon came down from the preceding century, and the name of Dante still possessed the influence of a living presence. On the whole, Chaucer impresses us as greater than his reputation, and not a little like Homer and Shakespeare, for he would have held up his head in their company. Among early English poets he is the landlord and host, and has the authority of such. The affectionate mention which succeeding early poets make of him, coupling him with Homer and Virgil, is to be taken into the account in estimating his character and influence. King James and Dunbar of Scotland speak of him with more love and reverence than any modern author of his predecessors of the last century. The same childlike relation is without a parallel now. For the most part we read him without criticism, for he does not plead his own cause, but speaks for his readers, and has that greatness of trust and reliance which compels popularity. He

confides in the reader, and speaks privily with him, keeping nothing back. And in return the reader has great confidence in him, that he tells no lies, and reads his story with indulgence, as if it were the circumlocution of a child, but often discovers afterwards that he has spoken with more directness and economy of words than a sage. He is never heartless,

"For first the thing is thought within the hart,
Er any word out from the mouth astart."

And so new was all his theme in those days, that he did not have to invent, but only to tell.

We admire Chaucer for his sturdy English wit. The easy height he speaks from in his Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, as if he were equal to any of the company there assembled, is as good as any particular excellence in it. But though it is full of good sense and humanity, it is not transcendent poetry. For picturesque description of persons it is, perhaps, without a parallel in English poetry; yet it is essentially humorous, as the loftiest genius never is. Humor, however broad and genial, takes a narrower view than enthusiasm. To his own finer vein he added all the common wit and wisdom of his time, and everywhere in his works his remarkable knowledge of the world, and nice perception of character, his rare common sense and proverbial wisdom, are apparent. His genius does not soar like Milton's, but is genial and familiar. It shows great tenderness and delicacy, but not the heroic sentiment. It is only a greater portion of humanity with all its weakness. He is not heroic, as Raleigh, nor pious, as Herbert, nor philosophical, as Shakespeare, but he is the child of the English muse, that child which is the father of the man. The charm of his poetry consists often only in an exceeding naturalness, perfect sincerity, with the behavior of a child rather than of a man.

Gentleness and delicacy of character are everywhere apparent in his verse. The simplest and humblest words come readily to his lips. No one can read the Prioress's tale, understanding the spirit in which it was written, and in which the child sings *_O alma redemptoris mater_*, or the account of the departure of Constance with her child upon the sea, in the Man of Lawe's tale, without feeling the native innocence and refinement of the author. Nor can we be mistaken respecting the essential purity of his character, disregarding the apology of the manners of the

age. A simple pathos and feminine gentleness, which Wordsworth only occasionally approaches, but does not equal, are peculiar to him. We are tempted to say that his genius was feminine, not masculine. It was such a feminineness, however, as is rarest to find in woman, though not the appreciation of it; perhaps it is not to be found at all in woman, but is only the feminine in man.

Such pure and genuine and childlike love of Nature is hardly to be found in any poet.

Chaucer's remarkably trustful and affectionate character appears in his familiar, yet innocent and reverent, manner of speaking of his God. He comes into his thought without any false reverence, and with no more parade than the zephyr to his ear. If Nature is our mother, then God is our father. There is less love and simple, practical trust in Shakespeare and Milton. How rarely in our English tongue do we find expressed any affection for God. Certainly, there is no sentiment so rare as the love of God. Herbert almost alone expresses it, "Ah, my dear God!" Our poet uses similar words with propriety; and whenever he sees a beautiful person, or other object, prides himself on the "maistry" of his God. He even recommends Dido to be his bride,--

"if that God that heaven and yearth made,
Would have a love for beauty and goodnesse,
And womanhede, trowth, and semeliness."

But in justification of our praise, we must refer to his works themselves; to the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, the account of Gentilesse, the Flower and the Leaf, the stories of Griselda, Virginia, Ariadne, and Blanche the Dutchesse, and much more of less distinguished merit. There are many poets of more taste, and better manners, who knew how to leave out their dulness; but such negative genius cannot detain us long; we shall return to Chaucer still with love. Some natures, which are really rude and ill-developed, have yet a higher standard of perfection than others which are refined and well balanced. Even the clown has taste, whose dictates, though he disregards them, are higher and purer than those which the artist obeys. If we have to wander through many dull and prosaic passages in Chaucer, we have at least the satisfaction of knowing that it is not an artificial dulness, but too easily matched by many passages in life. We confess that we feel a disposition commonly to concentrate sweets, and accumulate pleasures; but the poet may be presumed

always to speak as a traveller, who leads us through a varied scenery, from one eminence to another, and it is, perhaps, more pleasing, after all, to meet with a fine thought in its natural setting. Surely fate has enshrined it in these circumstances for some end. Nature strews her nuts and flowers broadcast, and never collects them into heaps. This was the soil it grew in, and this the hour it bloomed in; if sun, wind, and rain came here to cherish and expand the flower, shall not we come here to pluck it?

A true poem is distinguished not so much by a felicitous expression, or any thought it suggests, as by the atmosphere which surrounds it. Most have beauty of outline merely, and are striking as the form and bearing of a stranger; but true verses come toward us indistinctly, as the very breath of all friendliness, and envelop us in their spirit and fragrance. Much of our poetry has the very best manners, but no character. It is only an unusual precision and elasticity of speech, as if its author had taken, not an intoxicating draught, but an electuary. It has the distinct outline of sculpture, and chronicles an early hour. Under the influence of passion all men speak thus distinctly, but wrath is not always divine.

There are two classes of men called poets. The one cultivates life, the other art,—one seeks food for nutriment, the other for flavor; one satisfies hunger, the other gratifies the palate. There are two kinds of writing, both great and rare; one that of genius, or the inspired, the other of intellect and taste, in the intervals of inspiration. The former is above criticism, always correct, giving the law to criticism. It vibrates and pulsates with life forever. It is sacred, and to be read with reverence, as the works of nature are studied. There are few instances of a sustained style of this kind; perhaps every man has spoken words, but the speaker is then careless of the record. Such a style removes us out of personal relations with its author; we do not take his words on our lips, but his sense into our hearts. It is the stream of inspiration, which bubbles out, now here, now there, now in this man, now in that. It matters not through what ice-crystals it is seen, now a fountain, now the ocean stream running under ground. It is in Shakespeare, Alpheus, in Burns, Arethuse; but ever the same. The other is self-possessed and wise. It is reverent of genius, and greedy of inspiration. It is conscious in the highest and the least degree. It consists

with the most perfect command of the faculties. It dwells in a repose as of the desert, and objects are as distinct in it as oases or palms in the horizon of sand. The train of thought moves with subdued and measured step, like a caravan. But the pen is only an instrument in its hand, and not instinct with life, like a longer arm. It leaves a thin varnish or glaze over all its work. The works of Goethe furnish remarkable instances of the latter.

There is no just and serene criticism as yet. Nothing is considered simply as it lies in the lap of eternal beauty, but our thoughts, as well as our bodies, must be dressed after the latest fashions. Our taste is too delicate and particular. It says nay to the poet's work, but never yea to his hope. It invites him to adorn his deformities, and not to cast them off by expansion, as the tree its bark. We are a people who live in a bright light, in houses of pearl and porcelain, and drink only light wines, whose teeth are easily set on edge by the least natural sour. If we had been consulted, the backbone of the earth would have been made, not of granite, but of Bristol spar. A modern author would have died in infancy in a ruder age. But the poet is something more than a scald, "a smoother and polisher of language"; he is a Cincinnatus in literature, and occupies no west end of the world. Like the sun, he will indifferently select his rhymes, and with a liberal taste weave into his verse the planet and the stubble.

In these old books the stucco has long since crumbled away, and we read what was sculptured in the granite. They are rude and massive in their proportions, rather than smooth and delicate in their finish. The workers in stone polish only their chimney ornaments, but their pyramids are roughly done. There is a soberness in a rough aspect, as of unhewn granite, which addresses a depth in us, but a polished surface hits only the ball of the eye. The true finish is the work of time, and the use to which a thing is put. The elements are still polishing the pyramids. Art may varnish and gild, but it can do no more. A work of genius is rough-hewn from the first, because it anticipates the lapse of time, and has an ingrained polish, which still appears when fragments are broken off, an essential quality of its substance. Its beauty is at the same time its strength, and it breaks with a lustre.

The great poem must have the stamp of greatness as well as its

essence. The reader easily goes within the shallowest contemporary poetry, and informs it with all the life and promise of the day, as the pilgrim goes within the temple, and hears the faintest strains of the worshippers; but it will have to speak to posterity, traversing these deserts, through the ruins of its outmost walls, by the grandeur and beauty of its proportions.

But here on the stream of the Concord, where we have all the while been bodily, Nature, who is superior to all styles and ages, is now, with pensive face, composing her poem Autumn, with which no work of man will bear to be compared.

In summer we live out of doors, and have only impulses and feelings, which are all for action, and must wait commonly for the stillness and longer nights of autumn and winter before any thought will subside; we are sensible that behind the rustling leaves, and the stacks of grain, and the bare clusters of the grape, there is the field of a wholly new life, which no man has lived; that even this earth was made for more mysterious and nobler inhabitants than men and women. In the hues of October sunsets, we see the portals to other mansions than those which we occupy, not far off geographically,--

"There is a place beyond that flaming hill,
From whence the stars their thin appearance shed,
A place beyond all place, where never ill,
Nor impure thought was ever harbored."

Sometimes a mortal feels in himself Nature, not his Father but his Mother stirs within him, and he becomes immortal with her immortality. From time to time she claims kindredship with us, and some globule from her veins steals up into our own.

I am the autumnal sun,
With autumn gales my race is run;
When will the hazel put forth its flowers,
Or the grape ripen under my bowers?
When will the harvest or the hunter's moon,
Turn my midnight into mid-noon?
I am all sere and yellow,
And to my core mellow.

The mast is dropping within my woods,
The winter is lurking within my moods,
And the rustling of the withered leaf
Is the constant music of my grief.

To an unskilful rhymer the Muse thus spoke in prose:

The moon no longer reflects the day, but rises to her absolute rule, and the husbandman and hunter acknowledge her for their mistress. Asters and golden-rods reign along the way, and the life-everlasting withers not. The fields are reaped and shorn of their pride, but an inward verdure still crowns them. The thistle scatters its down on the pool, and yellow leaves clothe the vine, and naught disturbs the serious life of men. But behind the sheaves, and under the sod, there lurks a ripe fruit, which the reapers have not gathered, the true harvest of the year, which it bears forever, annually watering and maturing it, and man never severs the stalk which bears this palatable fruit.

Men nowhere, east or west, live yet a natural life, round which the vine clings, and which the elm willingly shadows. Man would desecrate it by his touch, and so the beauty of the world remains veiled to him. He needs not only to be spiritualized, but naturalized, on the soil of earth. Who shall conceive what kind of roof the heavens might extend over him, what seasons minister to him, and what employment dignify his life! Only the convalescent raise the veil of nature. An immortality in his life would confer immortality on his abode. The winds should be his breath, the seasons his moods, and he should impart of his serenity to Nature herself. But such as we know him he is ephemeral like the scenery which surrounds him, and does not aspire to an enduring existence. When we come down into the distant village, visible from the mountain-top, the nobler inhabitants with whom we peopled it have departed, and left only vermin in its desolate streets. It is the imagination of poets which puts those brave speeches into the mouths of their heroes. They may feign that Cato's last words were

"The earth, the air, and seas I know, and all
The joys and horrors of their peace and wars;
And now will view the Gods' state and the stars,"

but such are not the thoughts nor the destiny of common men.

What is this heaven which they expect, if it is no better than they expect? Are they prepared for a better than they can now imagine? Where is the heaven of him who dies on a stage, in a theatre? Here or nowhere is our heaven.

"Although we see celestial bodies move
Above the earth, the earth we till and love."

We can conceive of nothing more fair than something which we have experienced. "The remembrance of youth is a sigh." We linger in manhood to tell the dreams of our childhood, and they are half forgotten ere we have learned the language. We have need to be earth-born as well as heaven-born, <g_egeinei~s>, as was said of the Titans of old, or in a better sense than they. There have been heroes for whom this world seemed expressly prepared, as if creation had at last succeeded; whose daily life was the stuff of which our dreams are made, and whose presence enhanced the beauty and amplex of Nature herself. Where they walked,

"Largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit
Purpureo: Solemque suum, sua sidera norunt."

"Here a more copious air invests the fields, and clothes with purple light; and they know their own sun and their own stars." We love to hear some men speak, though we hear not what they say; the very air they breathe is rich and perfumed, and the sound of their voices falls on the ear like the rustling of leaves or the crackling of the fire. They stand many deep. They have the heavens for their abettors, as those who have never stood from under them, and they look at the stars with an answering ray. Their eyes are like glow-worms, and their motions graceful and flowing, as if a place were already found for them, like rivers flowing through valleys. The distinctions of morality, of right and wrong, sense and nonsense, are petty, and have lost their significance, beside these pure primeval natures. When I consider the clouds stretched in stupendous masses across the sky, frowning with darkness or glowing with downy light, or gilded with the rays of the setting sun, like the battlements of a city in the heavens, their grandeur appears thrown away on the meanness of my employment; the drapery is altogether too rich for such poor acting. I am hardly worthy to be a suburban dweller outside those walls

"Unless above himself he can

Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!"

With our music we would fain challenge transiently another and finer sort of intercourse than our daily toil permits. The strains come back to us amended in the echo, as when a friend reads our verse. Why have they so painted the fruits, and freighted them with such fragrance as to satisfy a more than animal appetite?

"I asked the schoolman, his advice was free,
But scored me out too intricate a way."

These things imply, perchance, that we live on the verge of another and purer realm, from which these odors and sounds are wafted over to us. The borders of our plot are set with flowers, whose seeds were blown from more Elysian fields adjacent. They are the pot-herbs of the gods. Some fairer fruits and sweeter fragrances wafted over to us, betray another realm's vicinity. There, too, does Echo dwell, and there is the abutment of the rainbow's arch.

A finer race and finer fed
Feast and revel o'er our head,
And we titmen are only able
To catch the fragments from their table.
Theirs is the fragrance of the fruits,
While we consume the pulp and roots.
What are the moments that we stand
Astonished on the Olympian land!

We need pray for no higher heaven than the pure senses can furnish, a purely sensuous life. Our present senses are but the rudiments of what they are destined to become. We are comparatively deaf and dumb and blind, and without smell or taste or feeling. Every generation makes the discovery, that its divine vigor has been dissipated, and each sense and faculty misapplied and debauched. The ears were made, not for such trivial uses as men are wont to suppose, but to hear celestial sounds. The eyes were not made for such grovelling uses as they are now put to and worn out by, but to behold beauty now invisible. May we not see God? Are we to be put off and amused in this life, as it were with a mere allegory? Is not Nature, rightly read, that of which she is commonly taken to be the symbol merely? When the common man looks into the sky, which

he has not so much profaned, he thinks it less gross than the earth, and with reverence speaks of "the Heavens," but the seer will in the same sense speak of "the Earths," and his Father who is in them. "Did not he that made that which is _within_, make that which is _without_ also?" What is it, then, to educate but to develop these divine germs called the senses? for individuals and states to deal magnanimously with the rising generation, leading it not into temptation,--not teach the eye to squint, nor attune the ear to profanity. But where is the instructed teacher? Where are the _normal_ schools?

A Hindoo sage said, "As a dancer, having exhibited herself to the spectator, desists from the dance, so does Nature desist, having manifested herself to soul--. Nothing, in my opinion, is more gentle than Nature; once aware of having been seen, she does not again expose herself to the gaze of soul."

It is easier to discover another such a new world as Columbus did, than to go within one fold of this which we appear to know so well; the land is lost sight of, the compass varies, and mankind mutiny; and still history accumulates like rubbish before the portals of nature. But there is only necessary a moment's sanity and sound senses, to teach us that there is a nature behind the ordinary, in which we have only some vague pre-emption right and western reserve as yet. We live on the outskirts of that region. Carved wood, and floating boughs, and sunset skies, are all that we know of it. We are not to be imposed on by the longest spell of weather. Let us not, my friends, be wheedled and cheated into good behavior to earn the salt of our eternal porridge, whoever they are that attempt it. Let us wait a little, and not purchase any clearing here, trusting that richer bottoms will soon be put up. It is but thin soil where we stand; I have felt my roots in a richer ere this. I have seen a bunch of violets in a glass vase, tied loosely with a straw, which reminded me of myself.

I am a parcel of vain strivings tied
By a chance bond together,
Dangling this way and that, their links
Were made so loose and wide,
Methinks,
For milder weather.

A bunch of violets without their roots,
And sorrel intermixed,
Encircled by a wisp of straw
Once coiled about their shoots,
The law
By which I'm fixed.

A nosegay which Time clutched from out
Those fair Elysian fields,
With weeds and broken stems, in haste,
Doth make the rabble rout
That waste
The day he yields.

And here I bloom for a short hour unseen,
Drinking my juices up,
With no root in the land
To keep my branches green,
But stand
In a bare cup.

Some tender buds were left upon my stem
In mimicry of life,
But ah! the children will not know,
Till time has withered them,
The woe
With which they're rife.

But now I see I was not plucked for naught,
And after in life's vase
Of glass set while I might survive,
But by a kind hand brought
Alive
To a strange place.

That stock thus thinned will soon redeem its hours,
And by another year,
Such as God knows, with freer air,
More fruits and fairer flowers
Will bear,
While I droop here.

This world has many rings, like Saturn, and we live now on the
outmost of them all. None can say deliberately that he inhabits

the same sphere, or is contemporary with, the flower which his hands have plucked, and though his feet may seem to crush it, inconceivable spaces and ages separate them, and perchance there is no danger that he will hurt it. What do the botanists know?

Our lives should go between the lichen and the bark. The eye may see for the hand, but not for the mind. We are still being born, and have as yet but a dim vision of sea and land, sun, moon and stars, and shall not see clearly till after nine days at least.

That is a pathetic inquiry among travellers and geographers after the site of ancient Troy. It is not near where they think it is.

When a thing is decayed and gone, how indistinct must be the place it occupied!

The anecdotes of modern astronomy affect me in the same way as do those faint revelations of the Real which are vouchsafed to men from time to time, or rather from eternity to eternity. When I remember the history of that faint light in our firmament, which we call Venus, which ancient men regarded, and which most modern men still regard, as a bright spark attached to a hollow sphere revolving about our earth, but which we have discovered to be _another world_, in itself,--how Copernicus, reasoning long and patiently about the matter, predicted confidently concerning it, before yet the telescope had been invented, that if ever men came to see it more clearly than they did then, they would discover that it had phases like our moon, and that within a century after his death the telescope was invented, and that prediction verified, by Galileo,--I am not without hope that we may, even here and now obtain some accurate information concerning that OTHER WORLD which the instinct of mankind has so long predicted. Indeed, all that we call science, as well as all that we call poetry, is a particle of such information, accurate as far as it goes, though it be but to the confines of the truth. If we can reason so accurately, and with such wonderful confirmation of our reasoning, respecting so-called material objects and events infinitely removed beyond the range of our natural vision, so that the mind hesitates to trust its calculations even when they are confirmed by observation, why may not our speculations penetrate as far into the immaterial starry system, of which the former is but the outward and visible type? Surely, we are provided with senses as well fitted to penetrate the spaces of the real, the substantial, the eternal, as these outward are to penetrate the material universe. Veias, Menu, Zoroaster, Socrates, Christ, Shakespeare, Swedenborg,--these are some of our astronomers.

There are perturbations in our orbits produced by the influence of outlying spheres, and no astronomer has ever yet calculated the elements of that undiscovered world which produces them. I perceive in the common train of my thoughts a natural and uninterrupted sequence, each implying the next, or, if interruption occurs, it is occasioned by a new object being presented to my _senses_. But a steep, and sudden, and by these means unaccountable transition, is that from a comparatively narrow and partial, what is called common sense view of things, to an infinitely expanded and liberating one, from seeing things as men describe them, to seeing them as men cannot describe them. This implies a sense which is not common, but rare in the wisest man's experience; which is sensible or sentient of more than common.

In what enclosures does the astronomer loiter! His skies are shoal, and imagination, like a thirsty traveller, pants to be through their desert. The roving mind impatiently bursts the fetters of astronomical orbits, like cobwebs in a corner of its universe, and launches itself to where distance fails to follow, and law, such as science has discovered, grows weak and weary. The mind knows a distance and a space of which all those sums combined do not make a unit of measure,--the interval between that which _appears_, and that which _is_. I know that there are many stars, I know that they are far enough off, bright enough, steady enough in their orbits,--but what are they all worth? They are more waste land in the West,--star territory,--to be made slave States, perchance, if we colonize them. I have interest but for six feet of star, and that interest is transient. Then farewell to all ye bodies, such as I have known ye.

Every man, if he is wise, will stand on such bottom as will sustain him, and if one gravitates downward more strongly than another, he will not venture on those meads where the latter walks securely, but rather leave the cranberries which grow there unraked by himself. Perchance, some spring a higher freshet will float them within his reach, though they may be watery and frost-bitten by that time. Such shrivelled berries I have seen in many a poor man's garret, ay, in many a church-bin and state-coffer, and with a little water and heat they swell again to their original size and fairness, and added sugar enough, stead mankind for sauce to this world's dish.

What is called common sense is excellent in its department, and as invaluable as the virtue of conformity in the army and navy,--for there must be subordination,--but uncommon sense, that sense which is common only to the wisest, is as much more excellent as it is more rare. Some aspire to excellence in the subordinate department, and may God speed them. What Fuller says of masters of colleges is universally applicable, that "a little alloy of dulness in a master of a college makes him fitter to manage secular affairs."

"He that wants faith, and apprehends a grief
Because he wants it, hath a true belief;
And he that grieves because his grief's so small,
Has a true grief, and the best Faith of all."

Or be encouraged by this other poet's strain,--

"By them went Fido marshal of the field:
Weak was his mother when she gave him day;
And he at first a sick and weakly child,
As e'er with tears welcomed the sunny ray;
Yet when more years afford more growth and might,
A champion stout he was, and puissant knight,
As ever came in field, or shone in armor bright.

"Mountains he flings in seas with mighty hand;
Stops and turns back the sun's impetuous course;
Nature breaks Nature's laws at his command;
No force of Hell or Heaven withstands his force;
Events to come yet many ages hence,
He present makes, by wondrous prescience;
Proving the senses blind by being blind to sense."

"Yesterday, at dawn," says Hafiz, "God delivered me from all worldly affliction; and amidst the gloom of night presented me with the water of immortality."

In the life of Sadi by Dowlat Shah occurs this sentence: "The eagle of the immaterial soul of Shaikh Sadi shook from his plumage the dust of his body."

Thus thoughtfully we were rowing homeward to find some autumnal work to do, and help on the revolution of the seasons. Perhaps Nature would condescend to make use of us even without our knowledge, as when we help to scatter her seeds in our walks, and carry burrs and cockles on our clothes from field to field.

All things are current found
On earthly ground,
Spirits and elements
Have their descents.

Night and day, year on year,
High and low, far and near,
These are our own aspects,
These are our own regrets.

Ye gods of the shore,
Who abide evermore,
I see your far headland,
Stretching on either hand;

I hear the sweet evening sounds
From your undecaying grounds;
Cheat me no more with time,
Take me to your clime.

As it grew later in the afternoon, and we rowed leisurely up the gentle stream, shut in between fragrant and blooming banks, where we had first pitched our tent, and drew nearer to the fields where our lives had passed, we seemed to detect the hues of our native sky in the southwest horizon. The sun was just setting behind the edge of a wooded hill, so rich a sunset as would never have ended but for some reason unknown to men, and to be marked with brighter colors than ordinary in the scroll of time. Though the shadows of the hills were beginning to steal over the stream, the whole river valley undulated with mild light, purer and more memorable than the noon. For so day bids farewell even to solitary vales uninhabited by man. Two herons, *Ardea herodias*, with their long and slender limbs relieved against the sky, were seen travelling high over our heads,--their lofty and silent flight, as they were wending their way at evening, surely not to alight in any marsh on the earth's surface, but, perchance, on

the other side of our atmosphere, a symbol for the ages to study, whether impressed upon the sky, or sculptured amid the hieroglyphics of Egypt. Bound to some northern meadow, they held on their stately, stationary flight, like the storks in the picture, and disappeared at length behind the clouds. Dense flocks of blackbirds were winging their way along the river's course, as if on a short evening pilgrimage to some shrine of theirs, or to celebrate so fair a sunset.

"Therefore, as doth the pilgrim, whom the night
Hastes darkly to imprison on his way,
Think on thy home, my soul, and think aright
Of what's yet left thee of life's wasting day:
Thy sun posts westward, passed is thy morn,
And twice it is not given thee to be born."

The sun-setting presumed all men at leisure, and in a contemplative mood; but the farmer's boy only whistled the more thoughtfully as he drove his cows home from pasture, and the teamster refrained from cracking his whip, and guided his team with a subdued voice. The last vestiges of daylight at length disappeared, and as we rowed silently along with our backs toward home through the darkness, only a few stars being visible, we had little to say, but sat absorbed in thought, or in silence listened to the monotonous sound of our oars, a sort of rudimental music, suitable for the ear of Night and the acoustics of her dimly lighted halls;

"Pulsae referunt ad sidera valles,"

and the valleys echoed the sound to the stars.

As we looked up in silence to those distant lights, we were reminded that it was a rare imagination which first taught that the stars are worlds, and had conferred a great benefit on mankind. It is recorded in the Chronicle of Bernaldez, that in Columbus's first voyage the natives "pointed towards the heavens, making signs that they believed that there was all power and holiness." We have reason to be grateful for celestial phenomena, for they chiefly answer to the ideal in man. The stars are distant and unobtrusive, but bright and enduring as our fairest and most memorable experiences. "Let the immortal depth of your soul lead you, but earnestly extend your eyes upwards."

As the truest society approaches always nearer to solitude, so the most excellent speech finally falls into Silence. Silence is audible to all men, at all times, and in all places. She is when we hear inwardly, sound when we hear outwardly. Creation has not displaced her, but is her visible framework and foil. All sounds are her servants, and purveyors, proclaiming not only that their mistress is, but is a rare mistress, and earnestly to be sought after. They are so far akin to Silence, that they are but bubbles on her surface, which straightway burst, an evidence of the strength and prolificness of the under-current; a faint utterance of Silence, and then only agreeable to our auditory nerves when they contrast themselves with and relieve the former. In proportion as they do this, and are heighteners and intensifiers of the Silence, they are harmony and purest melody.

Silence is the universal refuge, the sequel to all dull discourses and all foolish acts, a balm to our every chagrin, as welcome after satiety as after disappointment; that background which the painter may not daub, be he master or bungler, and which, however awkward a figure we may have made in the foreground, remains ever our inviolable asylum, where no indignity can assail, no personality disturb us.

The orator puts off his individuality, and is then most eloquent when most silent. He listens while he speaks, and is a hearer along with his audience. Who has not hearkened to Her infinite din? She is Truth's speaking-trumpet, the sole oracle, the true Delphi and Dodona, which kings and courtiers would do well to consult, nor will they be balked by an ambiguous answer. For through Her all revelations have been made, and just in proportion as men have consulted her oracle within, they have obtained a clear insight, and their age has been marked as an enlightened one. But as often as they have gone gadding abroad to a strange Delphi and her mad priestess, their age has been dark and leaden. Such were garrulous and noisy eras, which no longer yield any sound, but the Grecian or silent and melodious era is ever sounding and resounding in the ears of men.

A good book is the plectrum with which our else silent lyres are struck. We not unfrequently refer the interest which belongs to our own unwritten sequel, to the written and comparatively lifeless body of the work. Of all books this sequel is the most indispensable part. It should be the author's aim to say once

and emphatically, "He said," <e'ph_e, e'>. This is the most the book-maker can attain to. If he make his volume a mole whereon the waves of Silence may break, it is well.

It were vain for me to endeavor to interrupt the Silence. She cannot be done into English. For six thousand years men have translated her with what fidelity belonged to each, and still she is little better than a sealed book. A man may run on confidently for a time, thinking he has her under his thumb, and shall one day exhaust her, but he too must at last be silent, and men remark only how brave a beginning he made; for when he at length dives into her, so vast is the disproportion of the told to the untold, that the former will seem but the bubble on the surface where he disappeared. Nevertheless, we will go on, like those Chinese cliff swallows, feathering our nests with the froth, which may one day be bread of life to such as dwell by the sea-shore.

We had made about fifty miles this day with sail and oar, and now, far in the evening, our boat was grating against the bulrushes of its native port, and its keel recognized the Concord mud, where some semblance of its outline was still preserved in the flattened flags which had scarce yet erected themselves since our departure; and we leaped gladly on shore, drawing it up, and fastening it to the wild apple-tree, whose stem still bore the mark which its chain had worn in the chafing of the spring freshets.

THE END.

In the original text, there were accented letters in a few lines, as follows:

Sabér, according to the French traveller and naturalist, Botta, is celebrated for producing the Kát-tree, of which "the soft tops would be our Kát-trees.

"Now turn again, turn again, said the pindèr,

began, in Alwákidis' Arabian Chronicle: "I was informed by _Ahmed Almatin Aljorhami_, who had it from _Rephâa Ebn Kais Alámiri_, who had it from _Saiph Ebn Fabalah Alchâtquarmi_, who had it from _Thabet Ebn Alkamah_, who said he was present at the action."

collections as they have at the Catacombs, Père la Chaise, Mount

ignotis insultavêre carinae;_ "and keels which had long stood on high mountains careered insultingly (_insultavêre_) over unknown

si bona nôrint_, there are no more quiet Tempes, nor more poetic

"Stat contrà ratio, et secretam garrit in aurem,

An passim sequeris corvos, testâve, lutove,
Securus quò pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivis?"

occasion the post-boy snivelling, "Signor perdonate, quèsta è la

Purpureo: Solemque suum, sua sidera nôrunt.

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