

HARRY GRAHAM

MISREPRESENTATIVE
MEN

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Misrepresentative Men:*

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Foreword

ALL great biographers possess,
Besides a thirst for information,
That talent which commands success,
I mean of course Imagination;
Combining with excessive Tact
A total disregard for Fact.

Boswell and Froude, and all the rest,
With just sufficient grounds to go on,
Could only tell the world, at best,
What Great Men did, and thought – and so on.
But I, of course, can speak to you
About the things they didn't do.

I don't rely on breadth of mind,
On wit or pow'rs of observation;
Carnegie's libraries I find
A fruitful source of inspiration;
The new Encyclopædia Brit.
Has helped me, too, a little bit.

In any case I cannot fail,
With such a range of mental vision,
So deep a passion for detail,
And such meticulous precision.
I pity men like Sidney Lee;
How jealous they must be of me!

'Tis easy work to be exact,
(I have no fear of contradiction),
Since it has been allowed that Fact
Is stranger far than any Fiction;
But what demands the truest wit
Is knowing what one should omit.

Carlyle, for instance, finds no place
Among my list of lucubrations;
Because I have no wish to face
The righteous wrath of his relations.
Whatever feud they have with Froude,
No one can say that *I* was rude.

This work is written to supply
A long-felt want among Beginners;
A handbook where the student's eye
May read the lives of saints and sinners,
And learn, without undue expense,
The fruits of their experience.

A book to buy and give away,
To fill the youthful with ambition,
For even they may hope, some day,
To share the Author's erudition;
So not in vain, nor void of gain,
The work of his colossal brain.

Theodore Roosevelt

ALERT as bird or early worm,
Yet gifted with those courtly ways
Which connoisseurs correctly term
The *tout-c'qu'-il-y-a de Louis seize*;
He reigns, by popular assent,
The People's peerless President!

Behold him! Squarely built and small;
With hands that would resemble Liszt's,
Did they not forcibly recall
The contour of Fitzsimmons' fists;
Beneath whose velvet gloves you feel
The politician's grip of steel.

Accomplished as a King should be,
And autocratic as a Czar,
To him all classes bow the knee,
In spotless Washington afar;
And while his jealous rivals scoff,
He wears the smile-that-won't-come-off.

In him combined we critics find
The diplomatic skill of Choate,
Elijah Dowie's breadth of mind,

And Chauncey's fund of anecdote;
He joins the morals of Susannah
To Dr. Munyon's bedside manner.

The rugged virtues of his race
He softens with a Dewey's tact,
Combining Shafter's easy grace
With all Bourke Cockran's love of fact;
To Dooley's pow'rs of observation
He adds the charms of Carrie Nation.

In him we see a devotee
Of what is called the "simpler life"
(To tell the naked Truth, and be
Contented with a single wife).
Luxurious living he abhors,
And takes his pleasures out of doors.

And, since his sole delight and pride
Are exercise and open air,
His spirit chafes at being tied
All day to an official chair;
The bell-boys (in the room beneath)
Can hear him gnash his serried teeth.

In summertime he can't resist
A country gallop on his cob,
So, like a thorough altruist,
He lets another do his job;

In winter he will work all day,
But when the sun shines he makes Hay.

And thus, in spite of office ties,
He manages to take a lot
Of healthy outdoor exercise,
Where other Presidents have not;
As I can prove by drawing your
Attention to his *carte du jour*.

At 6 a.m. he shoots a bear,
At 8 he schools a restive horse,
From 10 to 4 he takes the air, —
(He doesn't take it all, of course);
And then at 5 o'clock, maybe,
Some colored man drops in to tea.

At intervals throughout the day
He sprints around the house, or if
His residence is Oyster Bay,
He races up and down the cliff;
While seagulls scream about his legs,
Or hasten home to hide their eggs.

A man of deeds, not words, is he,
Who never stooped to roll a log;
Agile as fond gazelle or flea,
Sagacious as an indoor dog;
In him we find a spacious mind,

"Uncribb'd, uncabin'd, unconfin'd."

In martial exploits he delights,
And has no fear of War's alarms;
The hero of a hundred fights,
Since first he was a child (in arms);
Like battle-horse, when bugles bray,
He champs his bit and tries to neigh.

And if the Army of the State
Is always in such perfect trim,
Well-organized and up to date,
This grand result is due to him;
For while his country reaped the fruit,
'Twas he alone could reach the Root.

And spite of jeers that foes have hurled,
No problems can his soul perplex;
He lectures women of the world
Upon the duties of their sex,
And with unfailing courage thrusts
His spoke within the wheels of trusts.

No private ends has he to serve,
No dirty linen needs to wash;
A man of quite colossal nerve,
Who lives *sans peur et sans reproche*;
In modo suaviter maybe,
But then how *fortiter in re*!

A lion is his crest, you know,
Columbia stooping to caress it,
With *vi et armis* writ below,
Nemo impune me lacessit;
His motto, as you've read already,
Semper paratus— always Teddy!

Bacon

IN far Elizabethan days
(Ho! By my Halidome! Gadzooks!)
Lord Bacon wrote his own essays,
And lots of other people's books;
Annexing as a pseudonym
Each author's name that suited him.

All notoriety he'd shirk,
Nor sought for literary credit,
Although the best of Shakespeare's work
Was his. (For Mrs. Gallup said it,
And she, poor lady, I suppose,
Has read the whole of it, and knows.)

Such was his kind, unselfish plan,
That he allowed a rude, unshaven,
Ill-educated actor man
To style himself the Bard of Avon;
Altho' 'twas *he* and not this fellow
Who wrote "The Tempest" and "Othello."

For right throughout his works there is
A cipher hid, which makes it certain
That all Pope's "Iliad" is his,

And the "Anatomy" of Burton;
There's not a volume you can name
To which he has not laid a claim.

He is responsible, I wot,
For Euclid's lucid demonstrations,
The early works of Walter Scott,
And the Aurelian "Meditations";
Also "The House with Seven Gables"
And most of Æsop's (so-called) Fables.

And once, when he annoyed the Queen,
And wished to gain the royal pardon,
He wrote his masterpiece; I mean
That work about her German Garden;
And published, just before his death,
The "Visits of Elizabeth."

Yet peradventure we are wrong,
For just as probable the chance is
That all these volumes may belong
To someone else, and not to Francis.
I think, – tho' I may be mistaken, —
That Shakespeare wrote the works of Bacon.

MORAL

If you approach the Mosque of Fame,
And seek to climb its tallest steeple,
Just lodge a literary claim
Against the works of other people.
And though the Press may not receive it,
A few old ladies will believe it.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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