VARIOUS

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Содержание

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CHRISTOPHER UNDER CANVASS

Encampment at Cladich. Time – *Eleven*, A.M.

SCENE – *The Portal of the Pavilion.*

North – Buller – Seward.

BULLER.

I know there is nothing you dislike so much as personal observations —

NORTH.

On myself to myself – not at all on others.

BULLER.

Yet I cannot help telling you to your face, sir, that you are one of the finest-looking old men —

NORTH.

Elderly gentlemen, if you please, sir.

BULLER.

In Britain, in Europe, in the World. I am perfectly serious, sir. You are.

NORTH.

You needed not to say you were perfectly serious: for I suffer no man to be ironical on Me, Mr Buller. I am.

BULLER.

Such a change since we came to Cladich! Seward was equally shocked, with myself, at your looks on board the Steamer. So lean – so bent – so sallow – so haggard – in a word – so aged!

NORTH.

Were you shocked, Seward?

SEWARD.

Buller has such a blunt way with him that he often makes me blush. I was not shocked, my dear sir, but I was affected.

BULLER.

Turning to me, he said in a whisper, "What a wreck!"

NORTH.

I saw little alteration on you, Mr Seward; but as to Buller, it was with the utmost difficulty I could be brought, by his reiterated asseverations, into a sort of quasi-belief in his personal identity; and even now, it is far from amounting to anything like a settled conviction. Why, his face is twice the breadth it used to be – and so red! It used to be narrow and pale. Then what a bushy head – now, cocker it as he will, bald. In figure was he not slim? Now, stout's the word. Stout – stout – yes, Buller, you have grown stout, and will grow stouter – your doom is to be fat – I prophesy paunch —

BULLER.

Spare me – spare me, sir. Seward should not have interrupted me – 'twas but the first impression – and soon wore off – those Edinboro' people have much to answer for – unmercifully wearing you out at their ceaseless *soirées*– but since you came to Cladich, sir, Christopher's Himself again – pardon my familiarity – nor can I now, after the minutest inspection, and severest scrutiny, detect one single additional wrinkle on face or forehead – nay, not a wrinkle at all – not one – so fresh of colour, too,

sir, that the irradiation is at times ruddy – and without losing an atom of expression, the countenance absolutely – plump. Yes, sir, plump's the word – plump, plump, plump.

NORTH.

Now you speak sensibly, and like yourself, my dear Buller. I wear well.

BULLER.

Your enemies circulated a report —

NORTH.

I did not think I had an enemy in the world.

BULLER.

Your friends, sir, had heard a rumour – that you had mounted a wig.

NORTH.

And was there, among them all, one so weak-minded as to believe it? But to be sure, there are no bounds to the credulity of mankind.

BULLER.

That you had lost your hair – and that, like Sampson —

NORTH.

And by what Delilah had my locks been shorn?

SEWARD.

It all originated, I verily believe, sir, in the moved imagination of the Pensive Public:

"Res est soliciti plena timoris Amor."

NORTH.

Buller, I see little, if any – no change whatever – on you, since the days of Deeside – nor on you, Seward. Yes, I do. Not now, when by yourselves; but when your boys are in Tent, ah! then I do indeed – a pleasant, a happy, a blessed change! Bright boys they are – delightful lads – noble youths – and so are my Two – emphasis on *my*—

SEWARD AND BULLER.

Yes, all emphasis, and may the Four be friends for life.

NORTH.

In presence of us old folks, composed and respectful – in manly modesty attentive to every word we say – at times no doubt wearisome enough! Yet each ready, at a look or pause, to join in when we are at our gravest – and the solemn may be getting dull – enlivening the sleepy flow of our conversation as with rivulets issuing from pure sources in the hills of the morning —

SEWARD.

Ay – ay; heaven bless them all!

NORTH.

Why, there is more than sense – more than talent – there is *genius* among them – in their eyes and on their tongues – though they have no suspicion of it – and that is the charm. Then how they rally one another! Witty fellows all Four. And the right sort of raillery. Gentlemen by birth and breeding, to whom in their wildest sallies vulgarity is impossible – to whom, on the giddy brink – the perilous edge – still adheres a native Decorum superior to that of all the Schools.

SEWARD.

They have their faults, sir —

NORTH.

So have we. And 'tis well for us. Without faults we should be unloveable.

SEWARD.

In affection I spake.

NORTH.

I know you did. There is no such hateful sight on earth as a perfect character. He is one mass of corruption – for he is a hypocrite – *intus et in cute*– by the necessity of nature. The moment a perfect character enters a room – I leave it.

SEWARD.

What if you happened to live in the neighbourhood of the nuisance?

NORTH.

Emigrate. Or remain here – encamped for life – with imperfect characters – till the order should issue – Strike Tent.

BULLER.

My Boy has a temper of his own.

NORTH.

Original – or acquired?

BULLER.

Naturally sweet-blooded – assuredly by the mother's side – but in her goodness she did all she could to spoil him. Some excuse – We have but Marmy.

NORTH.

And his father, naturally not quite so sweet-blooded, does all he can to preserve him? Between the two, a pretty Pickle he is. Has thine a temper of his own, too, Seward?

SEWARD.

Hot.

NORTH.

Hereditary.

SEWARD.

No – North. A milder, meeker, Christian Lady than his mother is not in England.

NORTH.

I confess I was at the moment not thinking of his mother. But somewhat too much of this. I hereby authorise the Boys of this Empire to have what tempers they choose – with one sole exception – The Sulky.

BULLER.

The Edict is promulged.

NORTH.

Once, and once only, during one of the longest and best-spent lives on record, was I in the mood proscribed – and it endured most part of a whole day. The Anniversary of that day I observe, in severest solitude, with a salutary horror. And it is my Birthday. Ask me not, my friends, to reveal the Cause. Aloof from confession before man – we must keep to ourselves – as John Foster says – a corner of our own souls. A black corner it is – and enter it with or without a light – you see, here and there, something dismal – hideous – shapeless – nameless – each lying in its own place on the floor. There lies the Cause. It was the morning of my Ninth Year. As I kept sitting high upstairs by myself – one familiar face after another kept ever and anon looking in upon me – all with one expression! And one familiar voice after another – all with one tone – kept muttering at me – "*He's still in the Sulks!*" How I hated them with an intenser hatred – and chief them I before had loved best – at each opening and each shutting of that door! How I hated myself, as my blubbered face felt hotter and hotter – and I knew how ugly I must be, with my fixed fiery eyes. It was painful to sit on such a chair for hours in one posture, and to have so chained a child would have been great cruelty – but I was resolved to die, rather than change it; and had I been told by any one under an angel to get up and go to play, I would have spat in his face. It was a lonesome attic, and I had the fear of ghosts. But not then – my superstitious fancy was quelled by my troubled heart. Had I not deserved to be allowed to go? Did they not all know that all my happiness in this life depended on my being allowed to go? Could any one of them give a reason for not allowing me to go? What right had they to say that if I did go, I

should never be able to find my way, by myself, back? What right had they to say that Roundy was a blackguard, and that he would lead me to the gallows? Never before, in all the world, had a good boy been used so on his birthday. They pretend to be sorry when I am sick – and when I say my prayers, they say theirs too; but I am sicker now – and they are not sorry, but angry – there's no use in prayers – and I won't read one verse in the Bible this night, should my aunt go down on her knees. And in the midst of such unworded soliloquies did the young blasphemer fall asleep.

BULLER.

Young Christopher North! Incredible.

NORTH.

I know not how long I slept; but on awaking, I saw an angel with a most beautiful face and most beautiful hair – a little young angel – about the same size as myself – sitting on a stool by my feet. "Are you quite well now, Christopher? Let us go to the meadows and gather flowers." Shame, sorrow, remorse, contrition, came to me with those innocent words – we wept together, and I was comforted. "I have been sinful" – "but you are forgiven." Down all the stairs hand in hand we glided; and there was no longer anger in any eyes – the whole house was happy. All voices were kinder – if that were possible – than they had been when I rose in the morning – a Boy in his Ninth Year. Parental hands smoothed my hair – parental lips kissed it – and parental greetings, only a little more cheerful than prayers, restored me to the Love I had never lost, and which I felt now had animated that brief and just displeasure. I had never heard then of Elysian fields; but I had often heard, and often had dreamt happy, happy dreams of fields of light in heaven. And such looked the fields to be, where fairest Mary Gordon and I gathered flowers, and spoke to the birds, and to one another, all day long – and again, when the day was gone, and the evening going, on till moon-time, below and among the soft-burning stars.

BULLER.

And never has *Christopher been in the Sulks* since that day.

NORTH.

Under heaven I owe it all to that child's eyes. Still I sternly keep the Anniversary – for, beyond doubt, I was that day possessed with a Devil – and an angel it was, though human, that drove him out.

SEWARD.

Your first Love?

NORTH.

In a week she was in heaven. My friends – in childhood – our whole future life would sometimes seem to be at the mercy of such small events as these. Small call them not – for they are great for good or for evil – because of the unfathomable mysteries that lie shrouded in the growth, on earth, of an immortal soul.

SEWARD.

May I dare to ask you, sir – it is indeed a delicate – a more than delicate question – if the Anniversary – has been brought round with the revolving year since we encamped?

NORTH.

It has.

SEWARD.

Ah! Buller! we know now the reason of his absence that day from the Pavilion and Deeside – of his utter seclusion – he was doing penance in the Swiss Giantess – a severe sojourn.

NORTH.

A Good Temper, friends – not a good Conscience – is the Blessing of Life.

BULLER.

Shocked to hear you say so, sir. Unsay it, my dear sir – unsay it – pernicious doctrine. It may get abroad.

NORTH.

The Sulks! – the Celestials. The Sulks are hell, sirs – the Celestials, by the very name, heaven. I take temper in its all-embracing sense of Physical, Mental, and Moral Atmosphere. Pure and serene – then we respire God's gifts, and are happier than we desire! Is not that divine? Foul and disturbed – then we are stifled by God's gifts – and are wickeder than we fear! Is not that devilish? A good Conscience and a bad Temper! Talk not to me, Young Men, of pernicious doctrine – it is a soul-saving doctrine – "millions of spiritual creatures walk unseen" teaching it – men's Thoughts, communing with heaven, have been teaching it – surely not all in vain – since Cain slew Abel.

SEWARD.

The Sage!

BULLER.

Socrates.

NORTH.

Morose! Think for five minutes on what that word means – and on what that word contains – and you see the Man must be an Atheist. Sitting in the House of God *morosely*! Bright, bold, beautiful boys of ours, ye are not morose – heaven's air has free access through your open souls – a clear conscience carries the Friends in their pastimes up the Mountains.

SEWARD.

And their fathers before them.

NORTH.

And their great-grandfather – I mean their spiritual great-grandfather – myself – Christopher North. They are gathering up – even as we gathered up – images that will never die. Evanescent! Clouds – lights – shadows – glooms – the falling sound – the running murmur – and the swinging roar – as cataract, stream, and forest all alike seem wheeling by – these are not evanescent – for they will all keep coming and going – before their Imagination – all life-long at the bidding of the Will – or obedient to a Wish! Or by benign Law, whose might is a mystery, coming back from the far profound – remembered apparitions!

SEWARD.

Dear sir.

NORTH.

Even my Image will sometimes reappear – and the Tents of Cladich – the Camp on Lochawe-side.

BULLER.

My dear sir – it will not be evanescent —

NORTH.

And withal such Devils! But I have given them *carte blanche*.

SEWARD.

Nor will they abuse it.

NORTH.

I wonder when they sleep. Each has his own dormitory – the cluster forming the left wing of the Camp – but Deeside is not seldom broad awake till midnight; and though I am always up and out by six at the latest, never once have I caught a man of them napping, but either there they are each more blooming than the other, getting ready their gear for a start; – or, on sweeping the Loch with my glass, I see their heads, like wild-ducks – swimming – round Rabbit Island – as some wretch has baptised Inishail – or away to Inistrynish – or, for anything I know, to Port-Sonachan – swimming for a Medal given by the Club! Or there goes *Gutta-Percha* by the Pass of Brandir, or shooting away into the woods near Kilchurn. Twice have they been on the top of Cruachan – once for a clear hour, and once for a dark day – the very next morning, Marmaduke said, they would have "some more mountain," and the Four Cloud-compellers swept the whole range of Ben-Bhuridh and Bein-Lurachan as far as the head of Glensrea. Though they said nothing about it, I heard of their having been over the hills

behind us, t'other night, at Cairndow, at a wedding. Why, only think, sirs, yesterday they were off by daylight to try their luck in Loch Dochart, and again I heard their merriment soon after we had retired. They must have footed it above forty miles. That Cornwall Clipper will be their death. And off again this morning – all on foot – to the Black Mount.

BULLER.

For what?

NORTH.

By permission of the Marquis, to shoot an Eagle. She is said to be again on egg – and to cliff-climbers her eyrie is within rifle-range. But let us forget the Boys – as they have forgot us.

SEWARD.

The Loch is calmer to-day, sir, than we have yet seen it; but the calm is of a different character from yesterday's – that was serene, this is solemn – I had almost said austere. Yesterday there were few clouds; and such was the prevailing power of all those lovely woods on the islands, and along the mainland shores – that the whole reflexion seemed sylvan. When gazing on such a sight, does not our feeling of the unrealities – the shadows – attach to the realities – the substances? So that the living trees – earth-rooted, and growing upwards – become almost as visionary as their inverted semblances in that commingling clime? Or is it that the life of the trees gives life to the images, and imagination believes that the whole, in its beauty, must belong, by the same law, to the same world?

NORTH.

Let us understand, without seeking to destroy, our delusions – for has not this life of ours been wisely called the dream of a shadow!

SEWARD.

To-day there are many clouds, and aloft they are beautiful; nor is the light of the sun not most gracious; but the repose of all that downward world affects me – I know not why – with sadness – it is beginning to look almost gloomy – and I seem to see the hush not of sleep, but of death. There is not the unboundaried expanse of yesterday – the loch looks narrower – and Cruachan closer to us, with all his heights.

BULLER.

I felt a drop of rain on the back of my hand.

SEWARD.

It must have been, then, from your nose. There will be no rain this week. But a breath of air there is somewhere – for the mirror is dimmed, and the vision gone.

NORTH.

The drop was not from his nose, Seward, for here are three – and clear, pure drops too – on my Milton. I should not be at all surprised if we were to have a little rain.

SEWARD.

Odd enough. I cannot conjecture where it comes from. It must be dew.

BULLER.

Who ever heard of dew dropping in large fat globules at meridian on a summer's day? It is getting very close and sultry. The interior must be, as Wordsworth says, "Like a Lion's den." Did you whisper, sir?

NORTH.

No. But something did. Look at the quicksilver, Buller.

BULLER.

Thermometer 85. Barometer I can say nothing about – but that it is very low indeed. A long way below Stormy.

NORTH.

What colour would you call that Glare about the Crown of Cruachan? Yellow?

SEWARD.

You may just as well call it yellow as not. I never saw such a colour before – and don't care though I never see such again – for it is horrid. That *is* a – Glare.

NORTH.

Cowper says grandly,

> "A terrible sagacity informs
> The Poet's heart: he looks to distant storms;
> He hears the thunder ere the tempest lowers."

He is speaking of tempests in the moral world. You know the passage – it is a fine one – so indeed is the whole Epistle – Table-Talk. I am a bit of a Poet myself in smelling thunder. Early this morning I set it down for mid-day – and it is mid-day now.

BULLER.

Liker Evening.

NORTH.

Dimmish and darkish, certainly – but unlike Evening. I pray you look at the Sun.

BULLER.

What about him?

NORTH.

Though unclouded – he seems shrouded in his own solemn light – expecting thunder.

BULLER.

There is not much motion among the clouds.

NORTH.

Not yet. Merely what in Scotland we call a carry – yet that great central mass is double the size it was ten minutes ago – the City Churches are crowding round the Cathedral – and the whole assemblage lies under the shadow of the Citadel – with battlements and colonnades at once Fort and Temple.

BULLER.

Still some blue sky. Not very much. But some.

NORTH.

Cruachan! you are changing colour.

BULLER.

Grim – very.

NORTH.

The Loch's like ink. I could dip my pen in it.

SEWARD.

We are about to have thunder.

NORTH.

Weather-wise wizard – we are. That mutter was thunder. In five seconds you will hear some more. One – two – three – four – there; that was a growl. I call that good growling – sulky, sullen, savage growling, that makes the heart of Silence quake.

SEWARD.

And mine.

NORTH.

What? Dying away! Some incomprehensible cause is turning the thunderous masses round towards Appin.

SEWARD.

And I wish them a safe journey.

NORTH.

All right. They are coming this way – all at once – the whole Thunderstorm. Flash – roar.

"Be thou as lightning in the eyes of France;
For ere thou canst report I will be there,
The thunder of my cannon shall be heard."

Who but Willy could have said *that*?

SEWARD.

Who said what?

NORTH.

How ghastly all the trees!

SEWARD.

I see no trees – nor anything else.

NORTH.

How can you, with that Flying Dutchman over your eyes?

BULLER.

I gave him my handkerchief – for at this moment I know his head is like to rend. I wish I had kept it to myself; but no use – the lightning is seen through lids and hands, and would be through stone walls.

NORTH.

Each flash has, of course, a thunder-clap of its own – if we knew where to look for it; but, to our senses, all connexion between cause and effect is lost – such incessant flashings – and such multitudinous outbreaks – and such a continuous roll of outrageous echoes!

BULLER.

Coruscation – explosion – are but feeble words.

NORTH.

The Cathedral's on Fire.

BULLER.

I don't mind so much those wide flarings among the piled clouds, as these gleams – oh!

NORTH.

Where art thou, Cruachan! Ay – methinks I see thee – methinks I do not – thy Three Peaks may not pierce the masses that now oppress thee – but behind the broken midway clouds, those black purple breadths of solid earth are thine – thine those unmistakeable Cliffs – thine the assured beauty of that fearless Forest – and may the lightning scathe not one single tree!

BULLER.

Nor man.

NORTH.

This is your true total Eclipse of the Sun. Day, not night, is the time for thunder and lightning. Night can be dark of itself – nay, cannot help it; but when Day grows black, then is the blackness of darkness in the Bright One terrible; – and terror – Burke said well – is at the heart of the sublime. The Light, such as it is, sets off the power of the lightning – it pales to that flashing – and is forgotten in Fire. It smells of hell.

SEWARD.

It is constitutional in the Sewards. North, I am sick.

NORTH.

Give way to gasping – and lie down – nothing can be done for you. The danger is not —

SEWARD.

I am not afraid – I am faint.

NORTH.

You must speak louder, if you expect to be heard by ears of clay. Peals is not the word. "Peals on peals redoubled" is worse. There never was – and never will be a word in any language – for *all that*.

BULLER.

Unreasonable to expect it. Try twenty – in twenty languages.

NORTH.

Buller, you may count ten individual deluges – besides the descent of three at hand – conspicuous in the general Rain, which without them would be Rain sufficient for a Flood. Now the Camp has it – and let us enter the Pavilion. I don't think there is much wind here – yet far down the black Loch is silently whitening with waves like breakers; for here the Rain alone rules, and its rushing deadens the retiring thunder. The ebbing thunder! Still louder than any sea on any shore – but a diminishing loudness, though really vast, seems quelled; and, losing its power over the present, imagination follows it not into the distant region where it may be raging as bad as ever. Buller?

BULLER.

What?

NORTH.

How's Seward?

SEWARD.

Much better. It was very, very kind of you, my dear sir, to carry me in your arms, and place me in your own Swing-chair. The change of atmosphere has revived me – but the Boys!

NORTH.

The Boys – why, they went to the Black Mount to shoot an eagle, and see a thunder-storm, and long before this they have had their heart's desire. There are caves, Seward, in Buachail-Mor; and one recess I know – not a cave – but grander far than any cave – near the Fall of Eas-a-Bhrogich – far down below the bottom of the Fall, which in its long descent whitens the sable cliffs. Thither leads a winding access no storm can shake. In that recess you sit rock-surrounded – but with elbow-room for five hundred men – and all the light you have – and you would not wish for more – comes down upon you from a cupola far nearer heaven than that hung by Michael Angelo.

SEWARD.

The Boys are safe.

NORTH.

Or the lone House of Dalness has received them – hospitable now as of yore – or the Huntsman's hut – or the Shepherd's shieling – that word I love, and shall use it now – though shieling it is not, but a comfortable cottage – and the dwellers there fear not the thunder and the lightning – for they know they are in His hands – and talk cheerfully in the storm.

SEWARD.

Over and gone. How breathable the atmosphere!

NORTH.

In the Forests of the Marquis and of Monzie, the horns of the Red-deer are again in motion. In my mind's eye – Harry – I see one – an enormous fellow – bigger than the big stag of Benmore himself – and not to be so easily brought to perform, by particular desire, the part of Moriens – giving himself a shake of his whole huge bulk, and a *caive* of his whole wide antlery – and then leading down from the Corrie, with Platonic affection, a herd of Hinds to the greensward islanded among brackens and heather – a spot equally adapted for feed, play, rumination, and sleep. And the Roes are glinting through the glades – and the Fleece are nibbling on the mountains' glittering breast – and the Cattle are grazing, and galloping, and lowing on the hills – and the furred folk, who are always dry, come out from crevices for a mouthful of the fresh air; and the whole four-footed creation are jocund – are happy!

BULLER.

What a picture!

NORTH.

And the Fowls of the Air – think ye not the Eagle, storm-driven not unalarmed along that league-long face of cliff, is now glad at heart, pruning the wing that shall carry him again, like a meteor, into the subsided skies?

BULLER.

What it is to have an imagination! Worth all my Estate.

NORTH.

Let us exchange.

BULLER.

Not possible. Strictly entailed.

NORTH.

Dock.

BULLER.

Mno.

NORTH.

And the little wren flits out from the back door of her nest – too happy she to sing – and in a minute is back again, with a worm in her mouth, to her half-score gaping babies – the sole family in all the dell. And the seamews, sore against their will driven seawards, are returning by ones and twos, and thirties, and thousands, up Loch-Etive, and, dallying with what wind is still alive above the green transparency, drop down in successive parties of pleasure on the silver sands of Ardmatty, or lured onwards into the still leas of Glenliver, or the profounder quietude of the low mounds of Dalness.

SEWARD.

My fancy is contented to feed on what is before my eyes.

BULLER.

Doff, then, the Flying Dutchman.

NORTH.

And thousands of Rills, on the first day of their apparent existence, are all happy too, and make me happy to look on them leaping and dancing down the rocks – and the River Etive rejoicing in his strength, from far Kingshouse all along to the end of his journey, is happiest of them all; for the storm that has swollen has not discoloured him, and with a pomp of clouds on his breast, he is flowing in his expanded beauty into his own desired Loch.

SEWARD.

Gaze with me, my dear sir, on what lies before our eyes.

NORTH.

The Rainbow!

BULLER.

Four miles wide, and half a mile broad.

NORTH.

Thy own Rainbow, Cruachan – from end to end.

SEWARD.

Is it fading – or is it brightening? – no, it is not fading – and to brighten is impossible. It is the beautiful at perfection – it is dissolving – it is gone.

BULLER.

I asked you, sir, have the Poets well handled Thunder?

NORTH.

I was waiting for the Rainbow. Many eyes besides ours are now regarding it – many hearts gladdened – but have you not often felt, Seward, as if such Apparitions came at a silent call in our souls – that we might behold them – and that the hour – or the moment – was given to us alone! So have I felt when walking alone among the great solitudes of Nature.

SEWARD.

Lochawe is the name now for a dozen little lovely lakes! For, lo! as the vapours are rising, they disclose, here a bay that does not seem to be a bay, but complete in its own encircled stillness, – there a bare grass island – yes, it is Inishail – with a shore of mists, – and there, with its Pines and Castle, Freoch, as if it were Loch Freoch, and not itself an Isle. Beautiful bewilderment! but of our own creating! – for thus Fancy is fain to dally with what we love – and would seek to estrange the familiar – as if Lochawe in its own simple grandeur were not all-sufficient for our gaze.

BULLER.

Let me try my hand. No – no – no – I can see and feel, have an eye and a heart for Scenery, as it is called, but am no hand at a description. My dear, sweet, soft-breasted, fair-fronted, bright-headed, delightful Cruachan – thy very name, how liquid with open vowels – not a consonant among them all – no Man-Mountain Thou – Thou art the Lady of the Lake. I am in love with Thee – Thou must not think of retiring from the earth – Thou must not take the veil – off with it – off with it from those glorious shoulders – and come, in all Thy loveliness, to my long – my longing arms!

SEWARD.

Is that the singing of larks?

NORTH.

No larks live here. The laverock is a Lowland bird, and loves our brairded fields and our pastoral braes; but the Highland mountains are not for him – he knows by instinct that they are haunted – though he never saw the shadow nor heard the sugh of the eagle's wing.

SEWARD.

The singing from the woods seems to reach the sky. They have utterly forgotten their fear; or think you, sir, that birds know that what frightened them is gone, and that they sing with intenser joy because of the fear that kept them mute?

NORTH.

The lambs are frisking – and the sheep staring placidly at the Tents. I hear the hum of bees – returned – and returning from their straw-built Citadels. In the primal hour of his winged life, that wavering butterfly goes by in search of the sunshine that meets him; and happy for this generation of ephemerals that they first took wing on the afternoon of the day of the Great Storm.

BULLER.

How have the Poets, sir, handled thunder and lightning?

NORTH.

Sæpe ego, cum flavis messorem induceret arvis
Agricola, et fragili jam stringeret hordea culmo,
Omnia ventorum concurrere prælia vidi,
Quæ gravidam latè segetem ab radicibus imis
Sublimè expulsam eruerent: ita turbine nigro
Ferret hyems culmumque levem, stipulasque volantes.
Sæpe etiam immensum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,
Et fœdam glomerant tempestatem imbribus atris
Collectæ ex alto nubes: ruit arduus æther,
Et pluviâ ingenti sata læta, boumque labores
Diluit: implentur fossæ, et cava flumina crescunt
Cum sonitu, fervetque fretis spirantibus æquor.
Ipse Pater, mediâ nimborum in nocte, corusca
Fulmina molitur dextrâ: quo maxima motu
Terra tremit: fugêre feræ, et mortalia corda
Per gentes humilis stravit pavor: ille flagranti

Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit: ingeminant Austri, et densissimus imber:
Nunc nemora ingenti vento, nunc littora plangunt.

BULLER.

You recite well, sir, and Latin better than English – not so sing-songy – and as sonorous: then Virgil, to be sure, is fitter for recitation than any Laker of you all —

NORTH.

I am not a Laker – I am a Locher.

BULLER.

Tweedledum – Tweedledee.

NORTH.

That means the Tweed and the Dee? Content. One might have thought, Buller, that our Scottish Critics would have been puzzled to find a fault in that strain —

BULLER.

It is faultless; but not a Scotch critic worth a curse but yourself —

NORTH.

I cannot accept a compliment at the expense of all the rest of my countrymen. I cannot indeed.

BULLER.

Yes, you can.

NORTH.

There was Lord Kames – a man of great talents – a most ingenious man – and with an insight —

BULLER.

I never heard of him – was he a Scotch Peer?

NORTH.

One of the Fifteen. A strained elevation – says his Lordship – I am sure of the words, though I have not seen his Elements of Criticism for fifty years —

BULLER.

You are a creature of a wonderful memory.

NORTH.

"A strained elevation is attended with another inconvenience, that the author is apt to fall suddenly, as well as the reader; because it is not a little difficult to descend sweetly and easily from such elevation to the ordinary tone of the subject. The following is a good illustration of that observation" – and then his Lordship quotes the passage I recited – stopping with the words, "*densissimus imber*," which are thus made to conclude the description!

BULLER.

Oh! oh! oh! That's murder.

NORTH.

In the description of a storm – continues his Lordship – "to figure Jupiter throwing down huge mountains with his thunderbolts, is hyperbolically sublime, if I may use the expression: the tone of mind produced by that image is so distinct from the tone produced by a thick shower of rain, that the sudden transition *must be very unpleasant*."

BULLER.

Suggestive of a great-coat. That's the way to deal with a great Poet. Clap your hand on the Poet's mouth in its fervour – shut up the words in mid-volley – and then tell him that he does not know how to descend sweetly and easily from strained elevation!

NORTH.

Nor do I agree with his Lordship that "to figure Jupiter throwing down huge mountains with his thunderbolts is hyperbolically sublime." As a part for a whole is a figure of speech, so is a whole for a

part. Virgil says, "dejicit;" but he did not mean to say that Jupiter "tumbled down" Athos or Rhodope or the Acroceraunian range. He knew – for he saw them – that there they were in all their altitude after the storm – little if at all the worse. But Jupiter had struck – smitten – splintered – rent – trees and rocks – midway or on the summits – and the sight was terrific – and "dejicit" brings it before our imagination which not for a moment pictures the whole mountain tumbling down. But great Poets know the power of words, and on great occasions how to use them – in this case – one – and small critics will not suffer their own senses to instruct them in Poetry – and hence the Elements of Criticism are not the Elements of Nature, and assist us not in comprehending the grandeur of reported storms.

BULLER.

Lay it into them, sir.

NORTH.

Good Dr Hugh Blair again, who in his day had a high character for taste and judgment, agreed with Henry Home that "the transition is made too hastily – I am afraid – from the preceding sublime images, to a thick shower and the blowing of the south wind, and shows how difficult it frequently is to descend with grace, without seeming to fall." Nay, even Mr Alison himself – one of the finest spirits that ever breathed on earth, says – "I acknowledge, indeed, that the 'pluviâ ingenti sata læta, boumque labores diluit' is defensible from the connexion of the imagery with the subject of the poem; but the 'implentur fossæ' is both an unnecessary and a degrading circumstance when compared with the magnificent effects that are described in the rest of the passage." In his quotation, too, the final grand line is inadvertently omitted —

"Nunc nemora ingenti vento, nunc litora plangunt."

BULLER.

I never read Hugh Blair – but I have read – often, and always with increased delight – Mr Alison's exquisite Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste, and Lord Jeffrey's admirable exposition of the Theory – in statement so clear, and in illustration so rich – worth all the Æsthetics of the Germans – Schiller excepted – in one Volume of Mist.

NORTH.

Mr Alison had an original as well as a fine mind; and here he seems to have been momentarily beguiled into mistake by unconscious deference to the judgment of men – in his province far inferior to himself – whom in his modesty he admired. Mark. Virgil's main purpose is to describe the dangers – the losses to which the agriculturist is at all seasons exposed from wind and weather. And he sets them before us in plain and perspicuous language, not rising above the proper level of the didactic. Yet being a Poet he puts poetry into his description from the first and throughout. To say that the line "Et pluviâ" &c. is "*defensible* from the connexion of the imagery with the subject of the Poem" is not enough. It is *necessitated*. Strike it out and you abolish the subject. And just so with "implentur fossæ." The "fossæ" we know in that country were numerous and wide, and, when swollen, dangerous – and the "cava flumina" well follow instantly – for the "fossæ" were their feeders – and we hear as well as see the rivers rushing to the sea – and we hear too, as well as see, the sea itself. *There the description ends.* Virgil has done his work. But his imagination is moved, and there arises a new strain altogether. He is done with the agriculturists. And now he deals with man at large – with the whole human race. He is now a Boanerges – a son of thunder – and he begins with Jove. The sublimity comes in a moment. "Ipse Pater, mediâ nimborum in nocte" – and is sustained to the close – the last line being great as the first – and all between accordant, and all true to nature. Without rain and wind, what would be a thunder-storm? The "densissimus imber" obeys the laws – and so do the ingeminanting Austri – and the shaken woods and the stricken shores.

BULLER.

Well done, Virgil – well done, North.

NORTH.

I cannot rest, Buller – I can have no peace of mind but in a successful defence of these Ditches. Why is a Ditch to be despised? Because it is dug? So is a grave. Is the Ditch – wet or dry – that must be passed by the Volunteers of the Fighting Division before the Fort can be stormed, too low a word for a Poet to use? Alas! on such an occasion well might he say, as he looked after the assault and saw the floating tartans – *implentur fossæ*– the Ditch is filled!

BULLER.

Ay, Mr North, in that case the word Ditch – and the thing – would be dignified by danger, daring, and death. But here —

NORTH.

The case is the same – with a difference, for there is all the Danger – all the Daring – all the Death – that the incident or event admits of – and they are not small. Think for a moment. The Rain falls over the whole broad heart of the tilled earth – from the face of the fields it runs into the Ditches – the first unavoidable receptacles – these pour into the rivers – the rivers into the river mouths – and then you are in the Sea.

BULLER.

Go on, sir, go on.

NORTH.

I am amazed – I am indignant, Buller. *Ruit arduus æther.* The steep or high ether rushes down! as we saw it rush down a few minutes ago. What happens?

> "Et pluvià ingenti sata læta, boumque labores
> Diluit!"

Alas! for the hopeful – hopeless husbandman now. What a multiplied and magnified expression have we here for the arable lands. All the glad seed-time vain – vain all industry of man and oxen – there you have the true agricultural pathos – washed away – set in a swim – deluged! Well has the Poet – in one great line – spoke the greatness of a great matter. Sudden affliction – visible desolation – imagined dearth.

BULLER.

Don't stop, sir, you speak to the President of our Agricultural Society – go on, sir, go on.

NORTH.

Now drop in – in its veriest place, and in two words, the *necessitated Implentur fossæ*. No pretence – no display – no phraseology – the nakedest, but quite effectual statement of the fact – which the farmer – I love that word farmer – has witnessed as often as he has ever seen the Coming – the Ditches that were dry ran full to the brim. The homely rustic fact, strong and impressive to the husbandman, cannot be dealt with by poetry otherwise than by setting it down in its bald simplicity. Seek to raise – to dress – to disguise – and you make it ridiculous. The Mantuan knew better – he says what must be said – and goes on —

BULLER.

He goes on – so do you, sir – you both get on.

NORTH.

And now again begins Magnification,

> "Et cava flumina crescunt
> Cum sonitu."

The "hollow-bedded rivers" grow, swell, visibly wax mighty and turbulent. You imagine that you stand on the bank and see the river that had shrunk into a thread getting broad enough to fill

the capacity of its whole hollow bed. The rushing of arduous ether would not of itself have proved sufficient. Therefore glory to the Italian Ditches and glory to the Dumfriesshire Drains, which I have seen, in an hour, change the white murmuring Esk into a red rolling river, with as sweeping sway as ever attended the Arno on its way to inundate Florence.

BULLER.

Glory to the Ditches of the Vale of Arno – glory to the Drains of Dumfriesshire. Draw breath, sir. Now go on, sir.

NORTH.

"Cum sonitu." Not as Father Thames rises – *silently*– till the flow lapse over lateral meadow-grounds for a mile on either side. But "cum sonitu," with a voice – with a roar – a mischievous roar – a roar of – ten thousand Ditches.

BULLER.

And then the "flumina" – "cava" no more – will be as clear as mud.

NORTH.

You have hit it. They will be – for the Arno in flood is like liquid mud – by no means enamouring, perhaps not even sublime – but showing you that it comes off the fields and along the Ditches – that you see swillings of the "sata læta boumque labores."

BULLER.

Agricultural Produce!

NORTH.

For a moment – a single moment – leave out the Ditches, and say merely, "The rain falls over the fields – the rivers swell roaring." No picture at all. You must have the fall over the surface – the gathering in the narrower artificial – the delivery into the wider natural channels – the fight of spate and surge at river mouth —

"Fervetque fretis spirantibus æquor."

The Ditches are indispensable in nature and in Virgil.

BULLER.

Put this glass of water to your lips, sir – not that I would recommend water to a man in a fit of eloquence – but I know you are abstinent – infatuated in your abjuration of wine. Go on – half-minute time.

NORTH.

I swear to defend – at the pen's point – against all Comers – this position – that the line is, where it stands – and looking before and after – a perfect line; and that to strike out "implentur fossæ" would be an outrage on it – just equal, Buller, to my knocking out, without hesitation, your brains – for your brains do not contribute more to the flow of our conversation – than do the Ditches to that other Spate.

"Diluit: implentur fossæ, cava flumina crescunt
Cum sonitu – "

BULLER.

That will do – you may stop.

NORTH.

I ask no man's permission – I obey no man's mandate – to stop. Now Virgil takes wing – now he blazes and soars. Now comes the power and spirit of the Storm gathered in the Person of the Sire – of him who wields the thunderbolt into which the Cyclops have forged storms of all sorts – wind

and rain together – "*Tres Imbri torti radios!*" &c. You remember the magnificent mixture. And there we have Virgilius *versus* Homerum.

BULLER.

You may sit down, sir.

NORTH.

I did not know I had stood up. Beg pardon.

BULLER.

I am putting Swing to rights for you, Sir.

NORTH.

Methinks Jupiter is *twice* apparent – the first time, as the President of the Storm, which is agreeable to the dictates of reason and necessity; – the second – to my fancy – as delighting himself in the conscious exertion of power. What is he splintering Athos, or Rhodope, or the Acroceraunians for? The divine use of the Fulmen is to quell Titans, and to kill that mad fellow who was running up the ladder at Thebes, Capaneus. Let the Great Gods find *out their enemies now*– find out and finish them – and enemies they must have not a few among those prostrate crowds – "per gentes humilis stravit pavor." But shattering and shivering the mountain tops – which, as I take it, is here the prominent affair – and, as I said, the true meaning of "dejicit" – is mere pastime – as if Jupiter Tonans were disporting himself on a holiday.

BULLER.

Oh! sir, you have exhausted the subject – if not yourself – and us; – I beseech you sit down; – see, Swing solicits you – and oh! sir, you – we – all of us will find in a few minutes' silence a great relief after all that thunder.

NORTH.

You remember Lucretius?

BULLER.

No, I don't. To you I am not ashamed to confess that I read him with some difficulty. With ease, sir, do you?

NORTH.

I never knew a man who did but Bobus Smith; and so thoroughly was he imbued with the spirit of the great Epicurean, that Landor – himself the best Latinist living – equals him with Lucretius. The famous Thunder passage is very fine, but I cannot recollect every word; and the man who, in recitation, haggles and boggles at a great strain of a great poet deserves death without benefit of clergy. I do remember, however, that he does not descend from his elevation with such ease and grace as would have satisfied Henry Home and Hugh Blair – for he has so little notion of true dignity as to mention rain, as Virgil afterwards did, in immediate connexion with thunder.

"Quo de concussu sequitur *gravis imber* et uber,
Omnis utei videatur in imbrem vortier æther,
Atque ita præcipitans ad diluviem revocare."

BULLER.

What think you of the thunder in Thomson's Seasons?

NORTH.

What all the world thinks – that it is our very best British Thunder. He gives the Gathering, the General engagement, and the Retreat. In the Gathering there are touches and strokes that make all mankind shudder – the foreboding – the ominous! And the terror, when it comes, aggrandises the premonitory symptoms. "Follows the loosened aggravated roar" is a line of power to bring the voice of thunder upon your soul on the most peaceable day. He, too – prevailing poet – feels the grandeur of the Rain. For instant on the words "convulsing heaven and earth," ensue,

"Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain."

Thomson had been in the heart of thunder-storms many a time before he left Scotland; and what always impresses me is the want of method – the confusion, I might almost say – in his description. Nothing contradictory in the proceedings of the storm; they all go on obediently to what we know of Nature's laws. But the effects of their agency on man and nature are given – not according to any scheme – but as they happen to come before the Poet's imagination, as they happened in reality. The pine is struck first – then the cattle and the sheep below – and then the castled cliff – and then the

"Gloomy woods
Start at the flash, and from their deep recess
Wide-flaming out, their trembling inmates shake."

No regular ascending – or descending scale here; but wherever the lightning chooses to go, there it goes – the blind agent of indiscriminating destruction.

BULLER.

Capricious Zig-zag.

NORTH.

Jemmy was overmuch given to mouthing in the *Seasons*; and in this description – matchless though it be – he sometimes out-mouths the big-mouthed thunder at his own bombast. Perhaps that is inevitable – you must, in confabulating with that Meteor, either imitate him, to keep him and yourself in countenance, or be, if not mute as a mouse, as thin-piped as a fly. In youth I used to go sounding to myself among the mountains the concluding lines of the Retreat.

"Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar; with mighty crush,
Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
Of Penmanmaur heap'd hideous to the sky,
Tumble the smitten cliffs, and Snowdon's peak,
Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load:
Far seen, the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
And Thule bellows through her utmost isles."

Are they good – or are they bad? I fear – not good. But I am dubious. The previous picture has been of one locality – a wide one – but within the visible horizon – enlarged somewhat by the imagination, which, as the schoolmen said, inflows into every act of the senses – and powerfully, no doubt, into the senses engaged in witnessing a thunder-storm. Many of the effects so faithfully, and some of them so tenderly painted, interest us by their picturesque particularity.

"Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
They wore alive, and ruminating still
In fancy's eye; and there the frowning bull,
And ox half-raised."

We are here in a confined world – close to us and near; and our sympathies with its inhabitants – human or brute – comprehend the very attitudes or postures in which the lightning found and left them; but the final verses waft us away from all that terror and pity – the geographical takes place

of the pathetic – a visionary panorama of material objects supersedes the heart-throbbing region of the spiritual – for a mournful song instinct with the humanities, an ambitious bravura displaying the power and pride of the musician, now thinking not at all of us, and following the thunder only as affording him an opportunity for the display of his own art.

BULLER.

Are they good – or are they bad? I am dubious.

NORTH.

Thunder-storms travel fast and far – but here they seem simultaneous; Thule is more vociferous than the whole of Wales together – yet perhaps the sound itself of the verses is the loudest of all – and we cease to hear the thunder in the din that describes it.

BULLER.

Severe – but just.

NORTH.

Ha! Thou comest in such a questionable shape —

ENTRANT.

That I will speak to thee. How do you do, my dear sir? God bless you, how do you do?

NORTH.

Art thou a spirit of health or goblin damned?

ENTRANT.

A spirit of health.

NORTH.

It is – it is the voice of Talboys. Don't move an inch. Stand still for ten seconds – on the very same site, that I may have one steady look at you, to make assurance doubly sure – and then let us meet each other half-way in a Cornish hug.

TALBOYS.

Are we going to wrestle already, Mr North?

NORTH.

Stand still ten seconds more. He *is* He – You *are* You – gentlemen – H. G. Talboys – Seward, my crutch – Buller, your arm —

TALBOYS.

Wonderful feat of agility! Feet up to the ceiling —

NORTH.

Don't say ceiling —

TALBOYS.

Why not? ceiling – cœlum. Feet up to heaven.

NORTH.

An involuntary feat – the fault of Swing – sole fault – but I always forget it when agitated —

BULLER.

Some time or other, sir, you will fly backwards and fracture your skull.

NORTH.

There, we have recovered our equilibrium – now we are in grips, don't fear a fall – I hope you are not displeased with your reception.

TALBOYS.

I wrote last night, sir, to say I was coming – but there being no speedier conveyance – I put the letter in my pocket, and there it is —

NORTH.

(*On reading* "*Dies Boreales.*– No. 1.")

A friend returned! spring bursting forth again!

The song of other years! which, when we roam,
Brings up all sweet and common things of home,
And sinks into the thirsty heart like rain!
Such the strong influence of the thrilling strain
By human love made sad and musical,
Yet full of high philosophy withal,
Poured from thy wizard harp o'er land and main!
A thousand hearts will waken at its call,
And breathe the prayer they breathed in earlier youth, —
May o'er thy brow no envious shadow fall!
Blaze in thine eye the eloquence of truth!
Thy righteous wrath the soul of guilt appal,
As lion's streaming hair or dragon's fiery tooth!

TALBOYS.

I blush to think I have given you the wrong paper.

NORTH.

It is the right one. But may I ask what you have on your head?

TALBOYS.

A hat. At least it was so an hour ago.

NORTH.

It never will be a hat again.

TALBOYS.

A patent hat – a waterproof hat – it was swimming, when I purchased it yesterday, in a pail – warranted against Lammas floods —

NORTH.

And in an hour it has come to this! Why, it has no more shape than a coal-heaver's.

TALBOYS.

Oh! then it can be little the worse. For that is its natural artificial shape. It is constructed on that principle – and the patentee prides himself on its affording equal protection to head, shoulders, and back – helmet at once and shield.

NORTH.

But you must immediately put on dry clothes —

TALBOYS.

The clothes I have on are as dry as if they had been taking horse-exercise all morning before a laundry-fire. I am waterproof all over – and I had need to be so – for between Inverary and Cladich there was much moisture in the atmosphere.

NORTH.

Do – do – go and put on dry clothes. Why the spot you stand on is absolutely swimming —

TALBOYS.

My Sporting-jacket, sir, is a new invention – an invention of my own – to the sight silk – to the feel feathers – and of feathers is the texture – but that is a secret, don't blab it – and to rain I am impervious as a plover.

NORTH.

Do – do – go and put on dry clothes.

TALBOYS.

Intended to have been here last night – left Glasgow yesterday morning – and had a most delightful forenoon of it in the Steamer to Tarbert. Loch Lomond fairly outshone herself – never before had I felt the full force of the words – "Fortunate Isles." The Bens were magnificent. At Tarbert

– just as I was disembarking – who should be embarking but our friends Outram, M'Culloch, Macnee —

NORTH.

And why are they not here?

TALBOYS.

And I was induced – I could not resist them – to take a trip on to Inverarnan. We returned to Tarbert and had a glorious afternoon till two this morning – thought I might lie down for an hour or two – but, after undressing, it occurred to me that it was advisable to redress – and be off instanter – so, wheeling round the head of Loch Long – never beheld the bay so lovely – I glided up the gentle slope of Glencroe and sat down on "Rest and be thankful" – to hold a minute's colloquy with a hawk – or some sort of eagle or another, who seemed to think nobody at that hour had a right to be there but himself – covered him to a nicety with my rod – and had it been a gun, he was a dead bird. Down the other – that is, this side of the glen, which, so far from being precipitous, is known to be a descent but by the pretty little cataracts playing at leap-frog – from your description I knew that must be Loch Fine – and that St Catherine's. Shall I drop down and signalise the Inverary Steamer? I have not time – so through the woods of Ardkinglass – surely the most beautiful in this world – to Cairndow. Looked at my watch – had forgot to wind her up – set her by the sun – and on nearing the inn door an unaccountable impulse landed me in the parlour to the right. Breakfast on the table for somebody up stairs – whom nobody – so the girl said – could awaken – ate it – and the ten miles were but one to that celebrated Circuit Town. Saluted Dun-nu-quech for your sake – and the Castle for the Duke's – and could have lingered all June among those gorgeous groves.

NORTH.

Do – do – go and put on dry clothes.

TALBOYS.

Hitherto it had been cool – shady – breezy – the very day for such a saunter – when all at once it was an oven. I had occasion to note that fine line of the Poet's – "Where not a lime-leaf moves," as I passed under a tree of that species, with an umbrage some hundred feet in circumference, and a presentiment of what was coming whispered "Stop here" – but the Fates tempted me on – and if I am rather wet, sir, there is some excuse for it – for there was thunder and lightning, and a great tempest.

NORTH.

Not to-day? Here all has been hush.

TALBOYS.

It came at once from all points of the compass – and they all met – all the storms – every mother's son of them – at a central point – where I happened to be. Of course, no house. Look for a house on an emergency, and if once in a million times you see one – the door is locked, and the people gone to Australia.

NORTH.

I insist on you putting on dry clothes. Don't try my temper.

TALBOYS.

By-and-by I began to have my suspicions that I had been distracted from the road – and was in the Channel of the Airey. But on looking down I saw the Airey in his own channel – almost as drumly as the mire-burn – vulgarly called road – I was plashing up. Altogether the scene was most animating – and in a moment of intense exhilaration – not to weather-fend, but in defiance – I unfurled my Umbrella.

NORTH.

What, a Plover with a Parapluie?

TALBOYS.

I use it, sir, but as a Parasol. Never but on this one occasion had it affronted rain.

NORTH.

The same we sat under, that dog-day, at Dunoon?

TALBOYS.

The same. Whew! Up into the sky like the incarnation of a whirlwind! No turning outside in – too strong-ribbed for inversion – before the wind he flew – like a creature of the element – and gracefully accomplished the descent on an eminence about a mile off.

NORTH.

Near Orain-imali-chauan-mala-chuilish?

TALBOYS.

I eyed him where he lay – not without anger. It had manifestly been a wilful act – he had torn himself from my grasp – and now he kept looking at me – at safe distance as he thought – like a wild animal suddenly undomesticated – and escaped into his native liberty. If he had sailed before the wind – why might not I? No need to *stalk* him – so I went at him right in front – but such another flounder! Then, sir, I first knew fatigue.

NORTH.

> "So eagerly The Fiend
> O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
> With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,
> And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies."

TALBOYS.

Finally I reached him – closed on him – when Eolus, or Eurus, or Notus, or Favonius – for all the heathen wind-gods were abroad – inflated him, and away he flew – rustling like a dragon-fly – and zig-zagging all fiery-green in the gloom – sat down – as composedly as you would yourself, sir – on a knoll, in another region – engirdled with young birch-groves – as beautiful a resting-place, I must acknowledge as, after a lyrical flight, could have been selected for repose by Mr Wordsworth.

NORTH.

I know it – Arash-alaba-chalin-ora-begota-la-chona-hurie. Archy will go for it in the evening – all safe. But do go and put on dry clothes. What now, Billy?

BILLY BALMER.

Here are Mr Talboys' trunk, sir.

NORTH.

Who brought it?

BILLY.

Nea, Maister – I dan't kna' – I s'pose Carrier. I ken't reet weell – ance at Windermere-watter.

NORTH.

Swiss Giantess – Billy.

BILLY.

Ay – ay – sir.

NORTH.

You will find the Swiss Giantess as complete a dormitory as man can desire, Talboys. I reserve it for myself, in event of rheumatism. Though lined with velvet, it is always cool – ventilated on a new principle – of which I took merely a hint from the Punka. My cot hangs in what used to be the Exhibition-room – and her Retreat is now a commodious Dressing-room. Billy, show Mr Talboys to the Swiss Giantess.

BILLY.

Ay – ay, sir. This way, Mr Talboy – this way, sir.

TALBOYS.

What is your dinner-hour, Mr North?

NORTH.

Sharp seven – seven sharp.

TALBOYS.

And now 'tis but half-past two. Four hours for work. The Cladich – or whatever you call him – is rumbling disorderly in the wood; and I noted, as I crossed the bridge, that he was proud as a piper of being in Spate – but he looks more rational down in yonder meadows – and – heaven have mercy on me! there's Loch Awe!!

NORTH.

I thought it queer that you never looked at it.

TALBOYS.

Looked at it? How could I look at it? I don't believe it was there. If it was – from the hill-top I had eyes but for the Camp – the Tents and the Trees – and "Thee the spirit of them all!" Let me have another eye-full – another soul-full of the Loch. But 'twill never do to be losing time in this way. Where's my creel – where's my creel?

NORTH.

On your shoulders —

TALBOYS.

And my Book? Lost – lost – lost! Not in any one of all my pockets. I shall go mad.

NORTH.

Not far to go. Why your Book's in your hand.

TALBOYS.

At eight?

NORTH.

Seven. Archy, follow him – In that state of excitement he will be walking with his spectacles on over some precipice. Keep your eye on him, Archy —

ARCHY.

I can pretend to be carrying the landing-net, sir.

NORTH.

There's a specimen of a Scottish Lawyer, gentlemen. What do you think of him?

BULLER.

That he is without exception the most agreeable fellow, at first sight, I ever met in my life.

NORTH.

And so you would continue to think him, were you to see him twice a-week for twenty years. But he is far more than that – though, as the world goes, that is much: his mind is steel to the back-bone – his heart is sound as his lungs – his talents great – in literature, had he liked it, he might have excelled; but he has wisely chosen a better Profession – and his character now stands high as a Lawyer and a Judge. Yonder he goes! As fresh as a kitten after a score and three quarter miles at the least.

BULLER.

Seward – let's after him. Billy – the minnows.

BILLY.

Here's the Can, sirs.

Scene closes.

Scene II.

Interior of Deeside.– Time – *Seven* p. m.

North – Talboys – Buller – Seward.

NORTH.

Seward, face Buller. Talboys, face North. Fall too, gentlemen; to-day we dispense with regular service. Each man has his own distinct dinner before him, or in the immediate vicinity – soup, fish,

flesh, fowl – and with all necessary accompaniments and sequences. How do you like the arrangement of the table, Talboys?

TALBOYS.

The principle shows a profound knowledge of human nature, sir. In theory, self-love and social are the same – but in practice, self-love looks to your own plate – social to your neighbours. By this felicitous multiplication of dinners – this One in Four – this Four in One – the harmony of the moral system is preserved – and all works together for the general good. Looked at artistically, we have here what the Germans and others say is essential to the beautiful and the sublime – Unity.

NORTH.

I believe the Four Dinners – if weighed separately – would be found not to differ by a pound. This man's fish might prove in the scale a few ounces heavier than that man's – but in such case, his fowl would be found just so many ounces lighter. And so on. The Puddings are cast in the same mould – and things equal to the same thing, are equal to one another.

TALBOYS.

The weight of each repast?

NORTH.

Calculated at twenty-five pounds.

TALBOYS.

Grand total, one hundred. The golden mean.

NORTH.

From these general views, to descend to particulars. Soup (turtle) two pounds – Hotch, ditto – Fish (Trout) two pounds – Flesh, (Jigot – black face five-year-old,) six pounds – Fowl (Howtowdie boiled) five pounds – Duck, (wild) three pounds – Tart (gooseberry) one pound – Pud (Variorum Edition) two pounds.

BULLER.

That is but twenty-three, sir! I have taken down the gentleman's words.

NORTH.

Polite – and grateful. But you have omitted sauces and creams, breads and cheeses. Did you ever know me incorrect in my figures, in any affirmation or denial, private or public?

BULLER.

Never. Beg pardon.

NORTH.

Now that the soups and fishes seem disposed of, I boldly ask you, one and all, gentlemen, if you ever beheld Four more tempting Jigots?

TALBOYS.

I am still at my Fish. No fish so sweet as of one's own catching – so I have the advantage of you all. This one here – the one I am eating at this blessed moment – I killed in what the man with the Landing-net called the Birk Pool. I know him by his peculiar physiognomy – an odd cast in his eye – which has not left him on the gridiron. That Trout of my killing on your plate, Mr Seward, made the fatal plunge at the tail of the stream so overhung with Alders that you can take it successfully only by the tail – and I know him by his colour, almost as silvery as a whitling. Yours, Mr Buller, was the third I killed – just where the river – for a river he is to-day, whatever he may be to-morrow – goes whirling into the Loch – and I can swear to him from his leopard spots. Illustrious sir, of him whom you have now disposed of – the finest of the Four – I remember saying inwardly, as with difficulty I encreeled him – for his shoulders were like a hog's – this for the King.

NORTH.

Your perfect Pounder, Talboys, is the beau-ideal of a Scottish Trout. How he cuts up! If much heavier – you are frustrated in your attempts to eat him thoroughly – have to search – probably in

vain – for what in a perfect Pounder lies patent to the day – he is to back-bone comeatable – from gill to fork, Seward, you are an artist. Good creel?

SEWARD.

I gave Mr Talboys the first of the water, and followed him – a mere caprice – with the Archimedean Minnow. I had a run – but just as the monster opened his jaws to absorb – he suddenly eschewed the scentless phenomenon, and with a sullen plunge, sunk into the deep.

BULLER.

I tried the natural minnow after Seward – but I wished Archimedes at Syracuse – for the Screw had spread a panic – and in a panic the scaly people lose all power of discrimination, and fear to touch a minnow, lest it turn up a bit of tin or some other precious metal.

NORTH.

I have often been lost in conjecturing how you always manage to fill your creel, Talboys; for the truth is – and it must be spoken – you are no angler.

TALBOYS.

I can afford to smile! I was no angler, sir, ten years ago – now I am. But how did I become one? By attending you, sir – for seven seasons – along the Tweed and the Yarrow, the Clyde and the Daer, the Tay and the Tummel, the Don and the Dee – and treasuring up lessons from the Great Master of the Art.

NORTH.

You surprise me! Why, you never put a single question to me about the art – always declined taking rod in hand – seemed reading some book or other, held close to your eyes – or lying on banks a-dose or poetising – or facetious with the Old Man – or with the Old Man serious – and sometimes more than serious, as, sauntering along our winding way, we conversed of man, of nature, and of human life.

TALBOYS.

I never lost a single word you said, sir, during those days, breathing in every sense "vernal delight and joy," yet all the while I was taking lessons in the art. The flexure of your shoulder – the sweep of your arm – the twist of your wrist – your Delivery, and your Recover – that union of grace and power – the utmost delicacy, with the most perfect precision – All these qualities of a heaven-born Angler, by which you might be known from all other men on the banks of the Whittadder on a Fast-day —

NORTH.

I never angled on a Fast-day.

TALBOYS.

A *lapsus linguæ*– From a hundred anglers on the Daer, on the Queen's Birthday —

NORTH.

My dear Friend, you ex —

TALBOYS.

All those qualities of a heaven-born Angler I learned first to admire – then to understand – and then to imitate. For three years I practised on the carpet – for three I essayed on a pond – for three I strove by the running waters – and still the Image of Christopher North was before me – till emboldened by conscious acquisition and constant success, I came forth and took my place among the Anglers of my country.

BULLER.

To-day I saw you fast in a tree.

TALBOYS.

You mean my Fly.

BULLER.

First your Fly, and then, I think, yourself.

TALBOYS.

I have seen *Il Maestro* himself in Timber, and in brushwood too. From him I learned to disentangle knots, intricate and perplexed far beyond the Gordian – "with frizzled hair implicit" – round twig, branch, or bole. Not more than half-a-dozen times of the forty that I may have been fast aloft – I speak mainly of my noviciate – have I had to effect liberation by sacrifice.

SEWARD.

Pardon me, Mr Talboys, for hinting that you smacked off your tail-fly to-day – I knew it by the sound.

TALBOYS.

The sound! No trusting to an uncertain sound, Mr Seward. Oh! I did so once – but intentionally – the hook had lost the barb – not a fish would it hold – so I whipped it off, and on with a Professor.

BULLER.

You lost one good fish in rather an awkward manner, Mr Talboys.

TALBOYS.

I did – that metal minnow of yours came with a splash within an inch of his nose – and no wonder he broke me – nay, I believe it was the minnow that broke me – and yet you can speak of *my* losing a good fish in rather an awkward manner!

NORTH.

It is melancholy to think that I have taught young Scotland to excel myself in all the Arts that adorn and dignify life. Till I rose, Scotland was a barbarous country —

TALBOYS.

Do say, my dear sir, semi-civilised.

NORTH.

Now it heads the Nations – and I may set.

TALBOYS.

And why should that be a melancholy thought, sir?

NORTH.

Oh, Talboys – National Ingratitude! They are fast forgetting the man who made them what they are – in a few fleeting centuries the name of Christopher North will be in oblivion! Would you believe it possible, gentlemen, that even now, there are Scotsmen who never heard of the Fly that bears the name of me, its Inventor – Killing Kit!

BULLER.

In Cornwall it is a household word.

SEWARD.

And in all the Devons.

BULLER.

Men in Scotland who never heard the name of North!

NORTH.

Christopher North – who is he? Who do you mean by the Man of the Crutch? – The Knight of the Knout? Better never to have been born than thus to be virtually dead.

SEWARD.

Sir, be comforted – you are under a delusion – Britain is ringing with your name.

NORTH.

Not that I care for noisy fame – but I do dearly love the still.

TALBOYS.

And you have it, sir – enjoy it and be thankful.

NORTH.

But it may be too still.

TALBOYS.

My dear sir, what would you have?

NORTH.

I taught you, Talboys, to play Chess – and now you trumpet Staunton.

TALBOYS.

Chess – where's the board? Let us have a game.

NORTH.

Drafts – and you quote Anderson and the Shepherd Laddie.

TALBOYS.

Mr North, why so querulous?

NORTH.

Where was the Art of Criticism? Where Prose? Young Scotland owes all her Composition to me – buries me in the earth – and then claims inspiration from heaven. "How sharper than a Serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless Child!" Peter – Peterkin – Pym – Stretch – where are your lazinesses – clear decks.

"Away with Melancholy —
Nor doleful changes ring
On Life and human Folly,
But merrily, merrily sing – fal la!"

BULLER.

What a sweet pipe! A single snatch of an old song from you, sir —

NORTH.

Why are you glowering at me, Talboys?

TALBOYS.

It has come into my head, I know not how, to ask you a question.

NORTH.

Let it be an easy one – for I am languid.

TALBOYS.

Pray, sir, what is the precise signification of the word "Classical?"

NORTH.

My dear Talboys, you seem to think that I have the power of answering, off-hand, any and every question a first-rate fellow chooses to ask me. Classical – classical! Why, I should say, in the first place – One and one other Mighty People – Those, the Kings of Thought – These, the Kings of the Earth.

TALBOYS.

The Greeks – and Romans.

NORTH.

In the second place —

TALBOYS.

Attend – do attend, gentlemen. And I hope I am not too much presuming on our not ancient friendship – for I feel that a few hours on Lochawe-side give the privilege of years – in suggesting that you will have the goodness to use the metal nut-crackers; they are more euphonious than ivory with walnuts.

NORTH.

In the second place – let me consider – Mr Talboys – I should say – in the second place – yes, I have it – a Character of Art expressing itself by words: a mode – a mode of Poetry and Eloquence – Fitness and Beauty.

TALBOYS.

Thank you, sir. Fitness and Beauty. Anything more?

NORTH.

Much more. We think of the Greeks and Romans, sir, as those in whom the Human Mind reached Superhuman Power.

TALBOYS.

Superhuman?

NORTH.

We think so – comparing ourselves with them, we cannot help it. In the Hellenic Wit, we suppose Genius and Taste met at their height – the Inspiration Omnipotent – the Instinct unerring! The creations of Greek Poetry! – Ποιησις – a Making! There the soul seems to be free from its chains – happily self-lawed. "The Earth we pace" is there peopled with divine Forms. Sculpture was the human Form glorified – deified. And as in Marble, so in Song. Something common – terrestrial – adheres to *our* being, and weighs *us* down. They – the Hellenes – appear to us to have *really* walked – as we walk in our visions of exaltation – as if the Graces and the Muses held sway over daily and hourly existence, and not alone over work of Art and solemn occasion. No moral stain or imperfection can hinder them from appearing to us as the Light of human kind. Singular, that in Greece we reconcile ourselves to Heathenism.

TALBOYS.

It may be that we are all Heathens at heart.

NORTH.

The enthusiast adores Greece – not knowing that Greece monarchies over him, only because it is a miraculous mirror that resplendently and more beautifully reflects – himself —

"Divisque videbit
Permixtos Heroas, et Ipse, videbitur illis."

SEWARD.

Very fine.

NORTH.

O life of old, and long, long ago! In the meek, solemn, soul-stilling hush of Academic Bowers!

SEWARD.

The Isis!

NORTH.

My youth returns. Come, spirits of the world that has been! Throw open the valvules of these your shrines, in which you stand around me, niched side by side, in visible presence, in this cathedral-like Library! I read Historian, Poet, Orator, Voyager – a life that slid silently away in shades, or that bounded like a bark over the billows. I lift up the curtain of all ages – I stand under all skies – on the Capitol – on the Acropolis. Like that magician whose spirit, with a magical word, could leave his own bosom to inhabit another, I take upon myself every mode of existence. I read Thucydides, and I would be a Historian – Demosthenes, and I would be an Orator – Homer, and I dread to believe myself called to be, in some shape or other, a servant of the Muse. Heroes and Hermits of Thought – Seers of the Invisible – Prophets of the Ineffable – Hierophants of profitable mysteries – Oracles of the Nations – Luminaries of that spiritual Heaven! I bid ye, hail!

BULLER.

The fit is on him – he has not the slightest idea that he is in Deeside.

NORTH.

Ay – from the beginning a part of the race have separated themselves from the dusty, and the dust-devoured, turmoil of Action to Contemplation. Have thought – known – worshipped! And such knowledge Books keep. Books now crumbling like Towers and Pyramids – now outlasting them! Books that, from age to age, and all the sections of mankind helping, build up the pile of Knowledge

– a trophied Citadel. He who can read Books as they should be read, peruses the operation of the Creator in his conscious, and in his unconscious Works, which yet we call upon to join, as if conscious, in our worship. Yet why – oh! why all this pains to attain that, through the labour of ages, which in the dewy, sunny prime of morn, one thrill of transport gives to me and to the Lark alike, summoning, lifting both heavenwards? Ah! perchance because the dewy, sunny prime does not last through the day! Because light poured into the eyes, and sweet breath inhaled, are not the whole of man's life here below – and because there is an Hereafter!

SEWARD.

I know where he is, Buller. He called it well a Cathedral-like Library.

NORTH.

The breath of departed years floats here for my respiration. The pure air of heaven flows round about, but enters not. The sunbeams glide in, bedimmed as if in some haunt half-separated from Life, yet on our side of Death. Recess, hardly accessible – profound – of which I, the sole inmate, held under an uncomprehended restraint, breathe, move, and follow my own way and wise, apart from human mortals! Ye! tall, thick Volumes, that are each a treasure-house of austere or blazing thoughts, which of you shall I touch with sensitive fingers, of which violate the calmly austere repose? I dread what I desire. You may disturb – you may destroy me! Knowledge *pulsates* in me, as I receive it, communing with myself on my unquiet or tearful pillow – or as it visits me, brought on the streaming moonlight, or from the fields afire with noon-splendour, or looking at me from human eyes, and stirring round and around me in the tumult of men – Your knowledge comes in a holy stillness and chillness, as if spelt off tombstones.

SEWARD.

Magdalen College Library, I do believe. Mr North – Mr North – awake – awake – here we are all in Deeside.

NORTH.

Ay – ay – you say well, Seward. "Look at the studies of the Great Scholar, and see from how many quarters of the mind impulses may mingle to compose the motives that bear him on with indefatigable strength in his laborious career."

SEWARD.

These were not my very words, sir —

NORTH.

Ay, Seward, you say well. From how many indeed! First among the prime, that peculiar aptitude and faculty, which may be called – a Taste and Genius for – Words.

BULLER.

I rather failed there in the Schools.

NORTH.

Yet you were in the First Class. There is implied in it, Seward, a readiness of logical discrimination in the Understanding, which apprehends the propriety of Words.

BULLER.

I got up my Logic passably and a little more.

NORTH.

For, Seward, the Thoughts, the Notions themselves – must be distinctly dissevered in the mind, which shall exactly apply to each Thought – Notion – its appropriate sign, its own Word.

BULLER.

You might as well have said "Buller" – for I beat Seward in my Logic.

NORTH.

But even to this task, Seward, of rightly distinguishing the meaning of Words, more than a mere precision of thinking – more than a clearness and strictness of the intellectual action is requisite.

BULLER.

And in Classics we were equal.

NORTH.

You will be convinced of this, Buller, if you recollect what Words express. The mind itself. For all its affections and sensibilities, Talboys, furnish a whole host of meanings, which must have names in Language. For mankind do not rest from enriching and refining their languages, until they have made them capable of giving the representation of their whole Spirit.

TALBOYS.

The pupil of language, therefore, sir – pardon my presumption – before he can recognise the appropriation of the Sign, must recognise the Thing signified?

NORTH.

And if the Thing signified, Talboys, by the Word, be some profound, solemn, and moral affection – or if it be some wild, fanciful impression – or if it be some delicate shade or tinge of a tender sensibility – can anything be more evident than that the Scholar must have experienced in himself the solemn, or the wild, or the tenderly delicate feeling before he is in the condition of affixing the right and true sense to the Word that expresses it?

TALBOYS.

I should think so, sir.

SEWARD.

The Words of Man paint the spirit of Man. The Words of a People depicture the Spirit of a People.

NORTH.

Well said, Seward. And, therefore, the Understanding that is to possess the Words of a language, in the Spirit in which they were or are spoken and written, must, by self-experience and sympathy, be able to converse, and have conversed, with the Spirit of the People, now and of old.

BULLER.

And yet what coarse fellows hold up their dunderheads as Scholars, forsooth, in these our days!

NORTH.

Hence it is an impossibility that a low and hard moral nature should furnish a high and fine Scholar. The intellectual endowments must be supported and made available by the concurrence of the sensitive nature – of the moral and the imaginative sensibilities.

BULLER.

What moral and imaginative sensibilities have they – the blear-eyed – the purblind – the pompous and the pedantic! But we have some true scholars – for example —

NORTH.

No names, Buller. Yes, Seward, the knowledge of Words is the Gate of Scholarship. Therefore I lay down upon the threshold of the Scholar's Studies this first condition of his high and worthy success, that he will not pluck the loftiest palm by means of acute, quick, clear, penetrating, sagacious, intellectual faculties alone – let him not hope it: that he requires to the highest renown also a capacious, profound, and tender soul.

SEWARD.

Ay, sir, and I say so in all humility, this at the gateway, and upon the threshold. How much more when he *reads*.

NORTH.

Ay, Seward, you laid the emphasis well there – *reads*.

SEWARD.

When the written Volumes of Mind from different and distant ages of the world, from its different and distant climates, are successively unrolled before his insatiable sight and his insatiable soul!

BULLER.

Take all things in moderation.

NORTH.

No – not the sacred hunger and thirst of the soul.

BULLER.

Greed – give – give.

NORTH.

From what unknown recesses, from what unlocked fountains in the depth of his own being, shall he bring into the light of day the thoughts by means of which he shall understand Homer, Pindar, Æschylus, Demosthenes, Plato, Aristotle – DISCOURSING! Shall understand them, as the younger did the elder – the contemporaries did the contemporaries – as each sublime spirit understood – himself?

BULLER.

Did each sublime spirit always understand himself?

TALBOYS.

Urge that, Mr Buller.

NORTH.

So – and so only – to read, is to be a Scholar.

BULLER.

Then I am none.

NORTH.

I did not say you were.

BULLER.

Thank you. What do you think of that, Mr Talboys? Address Seward, sir.

NORTH.

I address you all three. Is the student smitten with the sacred love of Song? Is he sensible to the profound allurement of philosophic truth? Does he yearn to acquaint himself with the fates and fortunes of his kind? All these several desires are so many several inducements of learned study.

BULLER.

I understand that.

TALBOYS.

Ditto.

NORTH.

And another inducement to such study is – an ear sensible to the Beauty of the Music of Words – and the metaphysical faculty of unravelling the causal process which the human mind followed in imparting to a Word, originally the sign of one Thought only, the power to signify a cognate second Thought, which shall displace the first possessor and exponent, usurp the throne, and rule for ever over an extended empire in the minds, or the hearts, or the souls of men.

BULLER.

Let him have his swing, Mr Talboys.

TALBOYS.

He has it in that chair.

NORTH.

A Taste and a Genius for Words! An ear for the beautiful music of Words! A happy justness in the perception of their strict proprieties! A fine skill in apprehending the secret relations of Thought with Thought – relations along which the mind moves with creative power, to find out for its own use, and for the use of all minds to come, some hitherto uncreated expression of an idea – an image – a sentiment – a passion! These dispositions, and these faculties of the Scholar in another Mind falling in with other faculties of genius, produce a student of a different name – The Poet.

BULLER.

Oh! my dear dear sir, of Poetry we surely had enough – I don't say more than enough – a few days ago, sir.

NORTH.

Who is the Poet?

BULLER.

I beseech you let the Poet alone for this evening.

NORTH.

Well – I will. I remember the time, Seward, when there was a great clamour for a Standard of Taste. A definite measure of the indefinite!

TALBOYS.

Which is impossible.

NORTH.

And there is a great clamour for a Standard of Morals. A definite measure of the indefinite!

TALBOYS.

Which is impossible.

NORTH.

Why, gentlemen, the Faculty of Beauty *lives*; and in finite beings, which we are, Life changes incessantly. The Faculty of Moral Perception *lives*– and thereby it too changes for better and for worse. This is the Divine Law – at once encouraging and fearful – that Obedience brightens the moral eyesight – Sin darkens. Let all men know this, and keep it in mind always – that a single narrowest, simplest Duty, steadily practised day after day, does more to support, and may do more to enlighten the soul of the Doer, than a course of Moral Philosophy taught by a tongue which a soul compounded of Bacon, Spenser, Shakspeare, Homer, Demosthenes, and Burke – to say nothing of Socrates, and Plato, and Aristotle, should inspire.

BULLER.

You put it strongly, sir.

TALBOYS.

Undeniable doctrine.

NORTH.

Gentlemen, you will often find this question – "Is there a Standard of Taste?" inextricably confused with the question "Is there a true and a false Taste?" He who denies the one seems to deny the other. In like manner, "Is there a Right and Wrong?" And "is there accessible to us an infallible measure of Right and Wrong" are two questions entirely distinct, but often confused – for Logic fled the earth with Astræa.

TALBOYS.

She did.

NORTH.

Talboys, you understand well enough the sense and culture of the Beautiful?

TALBOYS.

Something of it perhaps I do.

NORTH.

To feel – to love – to be swallowed up in the spirit and works of the Beautiful – in verse and in the visible Universe! That is a life – an enthusiasm – a worship. You find those who would if they could, and who pretend they can, attain the same end at less cost. They have taken lessons, and they will have their formalities go valid against the intuitions of the dedicated soul.

TALBOYS.

But the lessons perish – the dedicated soul is a Power in all emergencies and extremities.

NORTH.

There are Pharisees of Beauty – and Pharisees of Morality.

SEWARD.

At this day spiritual Christians lament that nine-tenths of Christians Judaise.

NORTH.

Nor without good reason. The Gospel is the Standard of Christian Morality. That is unquestionable. It is an authority without appeal, and under which undoubtedly all matters, uncertain before, will fall. But pray mark this – it is not a *positive standard*, in the ordinary meaning of that word – it is not one of which our common human understanding has only to require and to obtain the indications – which it has only to apply and observe.

SEWARD.

I see your meaning, sir. The Gospel refers all moral intelligence to the Light of Love within our hearts. Therefore, the very reading of the canons, of every prescriptive line in it, must be by this light.

NORTH.

That is my meaning – but not my whole meaning, dear Seward. For take it, as it unequivocally declares itself to be, a Revelation – not simply of instruction, committed now and for ever to men in written human words, and so left – but accompanied with a perpetual agency to enable Will and Understanding to receive it; and then it will follow, I believe, that it is at every moment intelligible and applicable in its full sense, only by a direct and present inspiration – is it too much to say – anew revealing itself? "They shall be taught of God."

SEWARD.

So far, then, from the Christian Morality being one of which the Standard is applicable by every Understanding, with like result in given cases, it is one that is different to every Christian in proportion to his obedience?

NORTH.

Even so. I suppose that none have ever reached the full understanding of it. It is an evergrowing illumination – a light more and more unto the perfect day – which day I suppose cannot be of the same life, in which we see as through a glass darkly.

TALBOYS.

May I offer an illustration? The land shall descend to the eldest son – you shall love your neighbour as yourself. In the two codes these are foundation-stones. But see how they differ! There is the land – here is the eldest son – the right is clear and fast – and the case done with. But – do to thy neighbour! Do what? and to whom?

NORTH.

All human actions, all human affections, all human thoughts are then contained in the one Law – as the *subject* of which it defines the disposal. All mankind, but distributed into communities, and individuals all differently related to me are contained in it, as the parties in respect of whom it defines the disposal!

SEWARD.

And what is the Form? Do as thou wouldst it be done to thee!

NORTH.

Ay – my dear friend – The form resolves into a feeling. Love thy neighbour. That is all. Is a measure given? As thyself.

SEWARD.

And is there no limitation?

NORTH.

By the whole apposition, thy love to thyself and thy neighbour are both to be put together in subordination to, and limitation and regulation by – thy Love to God. Love Him utterly – infinitely – with all thy mind, all thy heart, all thy strength. This is the entire book or canon – the Standard. How wholly indefinite and formless, to the Understanding! How full of light and form to the believing and loving Heart!

SEWARD.

The Moon is up – how calm the night after all that tempest – and how steady the Stars! Images of enduring peace in the heart of nature – and of man. They, too, are a Revelation.

NORTH.

They, too, are the legible Book of God. Try to conceive how different the World must be to its rational inhabitant – with or without a Maker! Think of it as a soulless – will-less World. In one sense, it abounds as much with good to enjoy. But there is no good-giver. The banquet spread, but the Lord of the Mansion away. The feast – and neither grace nor welcome. The heaped enjoyment, without the gratitude.

SEWARD.

Yet there have been Philosophers who so misbelieved!

NORTH.

Alas! there have been – and alas! there are. And what low souls must be theirs! The tone and temper of our feelings are determined by the objects with which we habitually converse. If we see beautiful scenes, they impart serenity – if sublime scenes, they elevate us. Will no serenity, no elevation come from contemplating Him, of whose Thought the Beautiful and the Sublime are but shadows!

SEWARD.

No sincere or elevating influence be lost out of a World out of which He is lost?

NORTH.

Now we look upon Planets and Suns, and see Intelligence ruling them – on Seasons that succeed each other, we apprehend Design – on plant and animal fitted to its place in the world, and furnished with its due means of existence, and repeated for ever in its kind – and we admire Wisdom. Oh! Atheist or Sceptic – what a difference to Us if the marvellous Laws are here without a Lawgiver – If Design be here without a Designer – all the Order that wisdom could mean and effect, and not the Wisdom – if Chance, or Necessity, or Fate reigns here, and not Mind – if this Universe is matter of Astonishment merely, and not of adoration!

SEWARD.

We are made better, nobler, sir, by the society of the good and the noble. Perhaps of ourselves unable to think high thoughts, and without the bold warmth that dares generously, we catch by degrees something of the mounting spirit, and of the ardour proper to the stronger souls with whom we live familiarly, and become sharers and imitators of virtues to which we could not have given birth. The devoted courage of a leader turns his followers into heroes – the patient death of one martyr inflames in a thousand slumbering bosoms a zeal answerable to his own. And shall Perfect Goodness contemplated move no goodness in us? Shall His Holiness and Purity raise in us no desire to be holy and pure? – His infinite Love towards His creatures kindle no spark of love in us towards our fellow-creatures!

NORTH.

God bless you, my dear Seward – but you speak well. Our fellow-creatures! The name, the binding title, dissolves in air, if He be not our common Creator. Take away that bond of relationship among men, and according to circumstances they confront one another as friends or foes – but Brothers no longer – if not children of one celestial Father.

TALBOYS.

And if they no longer have immortal souls!

NORTH.

Oh! my friends – if this winged and swift life be all our life, what a mournful taste have we had of possible happiness? We have, as it were, from some dark and cold edge of a bright world, just looked in and been plucked away again! Have we come to experience pleasure by fits and glimpses; but intertwined with pain, burdensome labour, with weariness, and with indifference? Have we come

to try the solace and joy of a warm, fearless, and confiding affection, to be then chilled or blighted by bitterness, by separation, by change of heart, or by the dread sunderer of loves – Death? Have we found the gladness and the strength of knowledge, when some rays of truth have flashed in upon our souls, in the midst of error and uncertainty, or amidst continuous, necessitated, uninstructive avocations of the Understanding – and is that all? Have we felt in fortunate hour the charm of the Beautiful, that invests, as with a mantle, this visible Creation, or have we found ourselves lifted above the earth by sudden apprehension of sublimity? Have we had the consciousness of such feelings, which have seemed to us as if they might themselves make up a life – almost an angel's life – and were they "instant come and instant gone?" Have we known the consolation of Doing Right, in the midst of much that we have done wrong? and was that also a corruscation of a transient sunshine? Have we lifted up our thoughts to see Him who is Love, and Light, and Truth, and Bliss, to be in the next instant plunged into the darkness of annihilation? Have all these things been but flowers that we have pulled by the side of a hard and tedious way, and that, after gladdening us for a brief season with hue and odour, wither in our hands, and are like ourselves – nothing?

BULLER.

I love you, sir, better and better every day.

NORTH.

We step the earth – we look abroad over it, and it seems immense – so does the sea. What ages had men lived – and knew but a small portion. They circumnavigate it now with a speed under which its vast bulk shrinks. But let the astronomer lift up his glass and he learns to believe in a total mass of matter, compared with which this great globe itself becomes an imponderable grain of dust. And so to each of us walking along the road of life, a year, a day, or an hour shall seem long. As we grow older, the time shortens; but when we lift up our eyes to look beyond this earth, our seventy years, and the few thousands of years which have rolled over the human race, vanish into a point; for then we are measuring Time against Eternity.

TALBOYS.

And if we can find ground for believing that this quickly-measured span of Life is but the beginning – the dim daybreak of a Life immeasurable, never attaining to its night – what *weight* shall we any longer allow to the cares, fears, toils, troubles, afflictions – which here have sometimes bowed down our strength to the ground – a burden more than we could bear?

NORTH.

They then all acquire a new character. That they are then felt as transitory must do something towards lightening their load. But more is disclosed in them; for they then appear as having an unsuspected worth and use. If this life be but the beginning of another, then it may be believed that the accidents and passages thereof have some bearing upon the conditions of that other, and we learn to look on this as a state of Probation. Let us out, and look at the sky.

THE ISLAND OF SARDINIA. [1]

The opinion of Nelson with regard to the importance of Sardinia, – that it is "worth a hundred Maltas," is well known; and that he strongly recommended its purchase to our government, thinking it might be obtained for £500,000. We can scarcely believe that Nelson failed to make an impression on the government, and conjecture rather that it was with the King of Sardinia the precious inheritance of a Naboth's vineyard. We do not remember to have met with a Sardinian tourist. Travellers as we are, with our ready "Hand-Books" for the remote corners of the earth, we seem, by a general consent, to have cut Sardinia from the map of observable countries. "Nos numerus sumus" – we plead guilty to this ignorance and neglect, and should have remained unconcerned about Sardinia still, had we not, in the work of Mr Tyndale, dipped into a few extracts from Lord Nelson's letters. Extending our reading, we find in these three volumes so much research, learning, historical speculation, and interesting matter, interspersed with amusing narrative, that we think a notice in Maga of this valuable and agreeable work may be not unacceptable.

The very circumstance that Sardinia is little known, renders it an agreeable speculation. The *ignotum* makes the charm. Our pleasure is in the fabulous, the dubious, the unexplained. In the ecstacy of ignorance the reader stands by the side of Mr Layard, watching the exhumation of the unknown gods or demons of Nineveh. "Ignorance is bliss," – for the subject-matter of ignorance is fact – fact isolated – or the broken links in time's long chain. The mind longs to fabricate, and connect. Were it possible that other sibylline books should be offered for sale, it would be preferable that Mr Murray should act the part of Tarquin than publish them as "Hand-Books." In truth, curiosity, that happy ingredient in the clay of the human mind, if so material an expression be allowed, is fed by ignorance, but dies under a surfeit of knowledge. Now, to apply this to our subject – Sardinia. The island is full of monuments, as mysterious to us as the Pyramids. There is sufficient obscurity to make a "sublime." It is happy for the reader, who has not lost his natural propensity to wonder, that there is so little known respecting them, and yet such grounds for conjecture; for he may be sure that, if any documents existed anywhere, Mr Tyndale would have discovered them, for he is the most indefatigable of authors in exploring in all the mines of literature. But he has to treat of things that were before literature was. The traveller who should first discover a Stonehenge – one who, walking on a hitherto untrodden plain, should come suddenly upon two such great sedate sitting images in stone as look over Egyptian sands – is he not greatly to be envied? We, who peer about our cities and villages, raking out decayed stone and mortar for broken pieces of antique art or memorial, as we facetiously term the remnants of a few hundred years, and of whose "whereabouts," from the beginning, we can receive some tolerable assurance, have but a slight glimpse of the delight experienced by the first finder of a monument of the Pelasgi, or even Cyclopean walls. But to make conjecture upon monuments beyond centuries – to count by thousands of years, and make out of them a dream that shall, like an Arabian magician, take the dreamer back to the Flood – is a happiness enjoyed by few. We never envied traveller more than we once did that lady who came suddenly upon the Etrurian monument, in which there was just aperture enough to see for a moment only a sitting figure, with its look and drapery of more than thousands of years; who just saw it for a few seconds, preserved only in the stillness of antiquity, and falling to dust at her very breathing. Not so ancient the monument, but of like character the discovery of him who, digging within the walls of his own house at Portici, came upon marble steps that led him down and down, till he found before him, in the obscure, a white marble equestrian statue the size of life. If one could be *made* a poet, these two incidents were enough. The interior of Sardinia has been hitherto a kind of "terra incognita." Mr Tyndale must therefore have ascended and descended its craggy or wooded mountains, and threaded its ravines, and crossed its fertile or desolate plains,

[1] *The Island of Sardinia.* By John Warre Tyndale. 3 vols., post 8vo.

with no common feeling of expectation; and though the frequent "Noraghe" and "Sepolture de is Gigantes," and their accompanying strange conical stones, were not of a character to fill him with that amazement produced by the above-mentioned incidents, they were sufficiently mysterious, and the attempt to reach them in some instances sufficiently adventurous – to keep alive the mind, and stir the imagination to the working out visions, and conjuring up the seeming-probable existences of the past, or wilder dreams, in such variety as reason deduced or fancy willed. On one occasion he descended an aperture, in a domed chamber of a Noraghe, groped his way through a subterranean passage, and came upon some finely-pulverised matter, "about fifteen inches deep, which at first appeared to be earth, but on scraping into it were several human bones, some broken and others mouldering away on being touched." But here the reader unacquainted with Sardinia, as it may be presumed very many are, may ask something about these Noraghe, with their domed chambers, and the Sepolture. There may be a preliminary inquiry into the origin of the inhabitants. Various are the statements of different authors: without following chronological order, we may readily concur in their conclusions, that the island was peopled by Phœnician, Libyan, Tyrrhenian, Greek, Trojan, and other colonies – unless the disquisitions of some historians of our day would compel us to reject the Trojans, in the doubt as to the existence of Troy itself. But many of these may have been only partial, temporary immigrations, which found a people in prior possession. The argument is strongly in favour of the supposition that the Sarde nation are of Phœnician origin, and that its antiquities are Phœnician, or of a still earlier epoch. In descending to more historic times, we find the Carthaginians exercising influence there as early as 700 B.C., and that the island suffered severely from the alternate sway of the rival powers of Rome and Carthage. And here we are disposed to rest, utterly disinclined to follow the labyrinth of cruelties which the history of every people, nation, and language under the sun presents.

If, at least for the present moment, a disgust of history is a disqualification for the notice of such a work as this before us, the reader must be referred to the book itself at once; but there are in it so many subjects of interest, both as to customs, manners, and some characters that shine out from the dark pages of history here and there, that we venture on, not careful of the thread, but with a purpose of taking it up, wherever there may be a promise of amusement. There is little pleasure in recording how many hundreds of thousands were put to the sword by Carthaginians, Romans, and, subsequently, Vandals and Goths; nor the various tyrannies arising out of contests for the possession of the island, which have been continually inflicted upon the people by the European powers of Christian times. Mankind never did, and it may be supposed never will, let each other alone. We are willing to believe that peace and security, for any continuance, is not for man on earth, and that his nature requires this universal stirring activity of aggression and defence, for the development of his powers – and that out of this evil comes good. Where would be virtue without suffering? Yet we are not always in the humour to sit out the tragedy of human life. There are moments when the present and real troubles of our own times press too heavily on the spirits, and we shrink from the scrutiny of past results, through a dread of a similar future, and gladly seek relief from bitter truths in lighter speculations. In such a humour we confess a dislike to biography, in which kind of reading the future does cast its dark shadow before, and we are constantly haunted by the ghost of the last pages, amid the earnest pursuits and perhaps gaieties of the first. But what that last page of biography is, we find nearly every page of history to be, only far sadder, and far more cruel. The man's tale may tell us that at least he died in his bed; but history draws up the curtain at every act, presenting to the unquiet sight, scenes of wholesale tortures, poisonings, slaughters, and fields of unburied and mutilated carcases.

It is time to say something of these monuments of great antiquity, the Noraghe, and what they are, before speculating upon who built them. We extract the following account, unable to make it more concise: —

> "All are built on natural or artificial mounds, whether in valleys, plains, or on mountains, and some are partially enclosed at a slight distance, by a low wall of a similar construction to the building. Their essential architectural feature is a

truncated cone or tower, averaging from thirty to sixty feet in height, and from one hundred to three hundred in circumference at the base. The majority have no basement, but the rest are raised on one extending either in corresponding or in irregular shape, and of which the perimeter varies from three hundred to six hundred and fifty-three feet, the largest yet measured. The inward inclination of the exterior wall of the principal tower, which almost always is the centre of the building, is so well executed as to present, in its elevation, a perfect and continuously symmetrical line; but sometimes a small portion of the external face of the outer-works of the basements, which are not regular, is straight and perpendicular: such instances are, however, very rare. There is every reason to believe, though without positive proof – for none of the Noraghe are quite perfect – that the cone was originally truncated, and formed thereby a platform on its summit. The material of which they are built being always the natural stone of the locality, we accordingly find them of granite, limestone, basalt, trachyte porphyry, lava, and tufa; the blocks varying in shape and size from three to nine cubic feet, while those forming the architraves of the passages are sometimes twelve feet long, five feet wide, and the same in depth. The surfaces present that slight irregularity which proves the blocks to have been rudely worked by the hammer, but with sufficient exactness to form regular horizontal layers. With few exceptions, the stones are not polygonal, but, when so, are without that regularity of form which would indicate the use of the rule; nor is their construction of the Cyclopean and Pelasgic styles; neither have they any sculpture, ornamental work, or cement. The external entrance, invariably between the E.S.E. and S. by W., but generally to the east of south, seldom exceeds five feet high and two feet wide, and is often so small as to necessitate crawling on all fours. The architrave, as previously mentioned, is very large; but having once passed it, a passage varying from three to six feet high, and two to four wide, leads to the principal domed chamber, the entrance to which is sometimes by another low aperture as small as the first. The interior of the cone consists of one, two, or three domed chambers, placed one above the other, and diminishing in size in proportion to the external inclination; the lowest averaging from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter, and from twenty to twenty-five in height. The base of each is always circular, but, when otherwise, elliptical; the edges of the stones, where the tiers overlay each other, are worked off, so that the exterior assumes a semi-ovoidal form, or that of which the section would be a parabola, the apex being crowned with a large flat stone, resting on the last circular layer, which is reduced to a small diameter." "In the interior of the lowest chamber, and on a level with the floor, are frequently from two to four cells or niches, formed in the thickness of the masonry without external communication, varying from three to six feet long, two to four wide, and two to five high, and only accessible by very small entrances. The access to the second and third chambers, as well as to the platform on the top of those Noraghe which have only one chamber, is by a spiral corridor made in the building, either as a simple ramp, with a gradual ascent, or with rough irregular steps made in the stones. The corridor varies from three to six feet in height, and from two to four in width, and the outer side either inclines according to the external wall of the cone, and the inner side according to the domed chamber, or resembles in the section a segment of a circle. The entrance to this spiral corridor is generally in the horizontal passage which leads from the external entrance to the first-floor chamber of the cone; though sometimes it is by a small aperture in the chamber, about six or eight feet from the base, and very difficult of entry. The upper chambers are entered by a small passage at right angles to this corridor; and opposite to this

> passage, is often a small aperture in the outer wall, having apparently no regular position, though frequently over the external entrance to the ground floor; while, in some instances, there are several apertures so made that only the sky, or most distant objects in the horizon, are visible."

Such is the description of these singular structures – when and by whom built? Their number must have been very great indeed; for although there have ever been decay and abstraction of the materials for common purposes going on, there are now upwards of three thousand in existence; yet, not one has been built during the last 2500 years. Not only is the inquiry, by whom, and when were they erected, but for what purpose? On all these points, various opinions have been given. Mr Tyndale, who has well weighed all that has been written on the subject, is of opinion that they were built by the very early Canaanites, when, expelled from their country, they migrated to Sardinia. There are visible indications of other migrations of the Canaanites, but nowhere are exactly, or even nearly similar buildings found. We know, upon the authority of Procopius, that in Mauritania were two columns, on which were inscribed in Phœnician characters, "We are those who fled from the face of Joshua, the robber, the son of Nane." There is certainly a kind of similarity between these buildings and the round towers of Ireland – a subject examined by our author; but there is also a striking dissimilarity in dimensions, they not being more than from eight to fifteen feet in diameter. But there is a tumulus on the banks of the Boyne, between Drogheda and Slane, which in its passages, domed chambers, and general dimensions, may find some affinity with the Sarde Noraghe. It certainly is curious that an opinion has been formed, not without show of reason for the conjecture, that these people, whether as Canaanites, Phœnicians, or Carthaginians, reached Ireland; and it is well known that the single specimen of the Carthaginian language, in a passage in Plautus, is very intelligible Irish. It has been observed that when Cato, in the Roman senate, uttered those celebrated and significant words, "Delenda est Carthago," he was unconsciously fulfilling a decree against that denounced people. We should be unwilling to trace the denunciation further. There are, however, few things more astonishing in history, than that so powerful a people as the Carthaginians were – the great rivals of the masters of the world, should have been apparently so utterly swept from the face of the world, and nothing left, even of their language, but those few unintelligible (unless they be Irish) words in Plautus.

The "Sepolture de is Gigantes" should also be here noticed.

> "They may be described as a series of large stones placed together without any cement, enclosing a foss or vacuum, from fifteen to thirty-six feet long, from three to six wide, the same in depth, with immense flat stones resting on them as a covering; but though the latter are not always found, it is evident, by a comparison with the more perfect sepulture, that they once existed, and have been destroyed or removed. The foss runs invariably from north-west to south-east; and at the latter point is a large upright headstone, averaging from ten to fifteen feet high, varying in its form from the square, elliptical, and conical, to that of three quarters of an egg, and having in many instances an aperture about eighteen inches square at its base. On either side of this still commences a series of separate stones, irregular in size and shape, but forming an arc, the chord of which varies from twenty to forty feet, so that the whole figure somewhat resembles the bow and shank of a spear."

Their number must have been very great. They are called sepulchres of giants by the Sardes, who believe that giants were buried within them. There is no doubt that these Sepolture and Noraghe were works of one and the same people. Mr Tyndale thinks, if the one kind of structure were tombs, so were the other: we should draw a different conclusion from their general contiguity to each other. It should be mentioned, that in the Noraghe have been found several earthenware figures, which are described in La Marmora's work as Phœnician idols. There is another very remarkable object of

antiquity – "a row of six conical stones near the Sepoltura, standing in a straight line, a few paces apart from each other, with the exception of one, which has been upset, and lies on the ground, but in the sketch is represented as standing. They are about four feet eight inches high, of two kinds, and have been designated male and female, from three of them having two globular projections from the surface of the stone, resembling the breasts of a woman." He meets elsewhere with five others, there evidently having been a sixth, but without the above remarkable significance. We know, from Herodotus, that columns were set up with female emblems, denoting the conquest over an effeminate people, but can scarcely attribute to these such a meaning, for they are together of both kinds. For a curious and learned dissertation upon the subject of these antiquities, we confidently refer the reader to Mr Tyndale's book.

After the mention of these singular monuments, perhaps of three thousand years ago, it may be scarcely worth while to notice the antiquities of, comparatively speaking, a modern date, Roman or other. Nor do we intend to speak of the history of the people under the Romans or Carthaginians, and but shortly notice that kind of government under "Giudici," as princes presiding over the several provinces some centuries before the Pisan, Genoese, and Aragon possession of the island. The origin of this government is involved in much obscurity; there are, however, documents of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which speak of preceding Giudici, and their acts. It would be idle to inquire why they were called Giudici: it may suffice, that the "judges" were the actual rulers.

"It is supposed," says our author, "that the whole island was originally comprehended in one Giudicato, of which Cagliari was the capital; but, in the course of time, the local interests of each grew sufficiently self-important to cause a subdivision and establishment of separate Giudicati." The minor ones were in time swallowed up by the others, and only four remained, of which there is a precise history, Cagliari, Arborea, Gallura, and Logudoro.

To us, the government of Giudicati is interesting from its similarity to the condition of England under the Heptarchy. This similarity is traced through its detail by Mr Tyndale. The Giudici are mentioned as early as 598, though there is no account of any direct succession till about 900. "In both countries the ecclesiastics took a leading part in the administration of public affairs; and the hierarchy of Sardinia was as sacred and honoured as that of England, where, by the laws of some of the provinces of the Heptarchy, the price of the archbishop's head was even higher than that of the king's. It is unnecessary, though it would be easy, to give further proofs of similarity in the institutions of the two countries; but those above are sufficient to show their analogy, without the appearance of there having been the slightest connexion or communication with each other, or derived from the same origin." Perhaps something may be attributed to the long possession of both countries by the Romans. We have not certainly lost all trace of them in our own.

The government of the Giudici was not characterised by feudalism, before the Pisan, Genoese, and Aragon influence. It did, however, become established in all its usual forms. Feudalism has, however, been abolished by the present reigning family; and we trust, notwithstanding our author's evident doubts and suspicious, that the change will ultimately, if not immediately, be for the happiness of the Sardes. It requires a very intimate knowledge of a people, of their habits, their modes of thinking, their character as a race, as well as their character from custom, to say that this or that form of government is best suited to them.

The constitution-mongering fancy is a very mischievous one, and is generally that of a very self-conceited mind. There are some among us, in high places, who have dabbled very unsuccessfully that way; and there is now enough going on in the state of Europe to read them a good lesson. Carlo Alberto is no great favourite with Mr Tyndale; yet we are not sure that he has not done more wisely for Sardinia than if the barons had set aside their "pride and ignorance," and made such "spontaneous concessions" as we find elsewhere have not had very happy terminations. We conclude the following was written prior to events which throw rather a new light on the nature of constitutional reforms, as they are called: "In Hungary and Sicily the nobles, with generous patriotism, voluntarily conceded, not only

privileges, but pecuniary advantages, and the people have reaped the benefit. In Sardinia, the empty pride and ignorance of the greater part of the feudal barons always prevented such a spontaneous concession." We beg Mr Tyndale to reflect upon the peculiar *benefits* those two happy people are now reaping. A man cannot tell his own growth of mind and character, how he comes to be what he is; but he must have little reflection indeed not to know, that, under other circumstances than those in which he has been placed, he must have been a very different man, and have required a very different kind of self, or other government, to regulate his own happiness. So institutions grow – and so governments. Paper changes are very pretty pieces for declamation; but for sudden application, and that to all, whatever their condition in morals and knowledge, they are but "σηματα λυγρα," and indicate bloodshed.

To return, however. We will not dismiss the subject of the Giudici without the mention of two persons whose romantic histories are intimately connected with Sardinian affairs. The celebrated Enzio, illegitimate son of the Emperor Frederick II. and the Giudicessa Eleonora. More than a century elapsed between these two extraordinary characters; the benefits conferred on Sardinia by the latter may be said to still live in some of the excellent laws which she established.

Enzio, not a Sarde by birth, by his marriage with Adelasia, a widow, Giudicessa of Torres, and Gallura, and a part of Cagliari, came into possession of those provinces, and soon, by treaty and force of arms, became powerful over the whole island. The favourite son of Frederick II., as a matter of course, he obtained the enmity of Gregory IX., who had, by this marriage, been foiled in his schemes upon Sardinia, through a marriage he contemplated between Adelasia and one of his own relatives. Enzio bore an illustrious part in the warfare of those times, between the Pope and the Emperor; and such was his success, that, after his celebrated engagement of the fleets near Leghorn, and the capture of the prelates who had been summoned from the Empire to the Pope – to prevent whose arrival this armament was undertaken – Pope Gregory died in his hundredth year, his disease having been greatly aggravated by this disastrous event. The quarrel was, however, continued by his successor, Innocent IV., and the fortune of events turned against the Emperor. Enzio was taken prisoner in an unsuccessful battle near Modena, by the Bolognese, and was, though handsomely treated, detained captive twenty years, during which all the members of his family quitted this life. He consoled the hours of his captivity by music and poetry, in which he excelled, so as to have obtained eminence as a poet amongst the poets of Italy. But he enjoyed a still sweeter solace. When he had been led in triumph as prisoner into Bologna, in his twenty-fifth year, so early had he distinguished himself as a warrior, the beauty of his person, and the elegance of his deportment, awakened in all the tenderest sympathies. An accomplished maiden of Bologna, Lucia Viadagoli, besides the pity and admiration which all felt, entertained for him the most ardent passion; an intimacy ensued, and the passion was as mutual as it was ardent. From this connexion, as it is said, arose the founder of the family of Bentivoglio, who were, in after years, the avengers of his sufferings, and lords over the proud republic. He had likewise obtained the devoted attachment of a youth, Pietro Asinelli; through this faithful friend, a plan was laid down for his escape, which was very nearly successful. He was carried out in a tun, in which some excellent wine for the King Enzio's use had been brought. His friends Asinelli and Rainerio de' Gonfalioneri were waiting near, with horses for his escape, when a lock of beautiful hair, protruding from the barrel, was discovered, either by a soldier, or, as some say, a maid, or an old mad woman, for accounts vary. Alarm was given, and the prisoner rescued in his place of confinement. Gonfalioneri was arrested and executed; his friend Asinelli escaped, but was banished for life. Enzio died in this captivity in the 47th year of his age, 15th March 1272, on the anniversary of his father the Emperor's death, ad the saints' day of his beloved Lucia. He was buried magnificently at the expense of the republic. It might have been recorded of him, that he possessed every virtue, had not his conduct to his wife left a stain on his name. His early and ill-assorted marriage may offer some excuse for one who showed himself so amiable on all other occasions. He had won and governed Sardinia, and "conquered a great part of Italy, at an age when the vast majority of youths, even under

the most favourable circumstances, are but beginning to aspire to glory and active life; while, equally fitted for the duties of a peaceful statesman, he was, at the same early age, intrusted with a highly important charge, and opposed to the most subtle politicians."

Should any future Hesiod meditate another poem on illustrious women, Eleonora of Sardinia will have a conspicuous place among the "Ηοιαι." This Giudicessa was born about the middle of the fourteenth century. Her father was Mariano IV., Giudice of Arborea. She was married to Brancaleone Doria, a man altogether inferior to his wife. On the death of her brother Ugone IV., a man worthy of note, she assumed the government, styling herself Giudicessa of Arborea, in the name of her infant son; in this she displayed a talent and vigour superior even to her father.

> "The first occasion on which her courage and political sagacity were tried, was on the murder of her brother Ugone, and his daughter Benedetta, when the insurgents sought to destroy the whole reigning family, and to form themselves into a republic. Perceiving the danger which threatened the lives and rights of her sons, and undismayed by the pusillanimous conduct of her husband, who fled for succour to the court of Aragon, she promptly took the command in the state, and placing herself in arms, at the head of such troops as remained faithful, speedily and entirely discomfited the rebels. She lost no time in taking possession of the territories and castles belonging to the Giudici of Arborea, causing all people to do homage, and swear fealty to the young prince, her son; and wrote to obtain assistance from the King of Aragon, in restoring order in her Giudicato. Brancaleone, encouraged by his wife's intrepidity and success, asked permission from the King of Aragon to return to Sardinia with the promised auxiliaries; but the king, alarmed at the high spirit of the Giudicessa, prevented his departure, and kept him in stricter confinement, under pretence of conferring greater honours on him. He was, however, at last allowed to depart, under certain heavy conditions, one of them being the surrender of Frederic, his son, as a hostage for the performance of a treaty then commenced. On his arrival at Cagliari in 1384, with the Aragonese army, he repeatedly besought his wife to submit to the king, in pursuance of the treaties. It was in vain. Despising alike the pusillanimous recommendation of her husband, and the threats of the Aragonese general, she for two years kept up a courageous and successful warfare against the latter, till having, by her exertions, acquired an advantageous position, she commenced a treaty with her enemy respecting the sovereignty in dispute, and for the deliverance of her husband, who, during the whole of the time, was kept in close confinement at Cagliari."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.