VARIOUS

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Содержание

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THE WONDERS OF WORDS

Every nation has its legend of a 'golden age' – when all was young and fresh and fair – '*comme les couleurs primitives de la nature*' – even before the existence of this gaunt shadow of Sorrow —*the shadow of ourselves*– that ever stalks in company with us; – an epoch of Saturnian rule, when gods held sweet converse with men, and man primeval bounded with all the elasticity of god-given juvenility:

('Ah! remember,
This – all this – was in the olden
Time long ago.')

And even now, in spite of our atheism and our apathism, amid all the overwhelming world-influences of this great 'living Present' – the ghost of the dead Past will come rushing back upon us with its solemn voices and its infinite wailings of pity: but soft and faint it comes; for the wild jarrings of the Now almost prevent us from hearing its still, small voices. It

'Is but a *dim-remembered* story
Of the old time entombed.'

Besides, what is History but the story of the bygone? The elegy, too, comes to us as the last lamenting, sadly solemn swan-song of that glorious golden time. And, indeed, are not all poesies but various notes of that mighty diapason of Thought and Feeling, that has, through the ages, been singing itself in jubilee and wail?

So it is in the individual – (for is not the individual ever the rudimental, formula-like expression of that awful problem which nations and humanity itself are slowly and painfully working out?): in the 'moonlight of memory' these sorrowful mementos revisit every one of us; and

– 'But I am not *now*
That which I *have been*' —

and *vanitas vanitatum!* are not only the satisfied croakings of *blasé* Childe Harolds, but our universal experience; while from childhood's gushing glee even unto manhood's sad satiety, we feel that all are nought but the phantasmagoria

'of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized.'

Listen now to a snatch of melody:

'The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose,
The moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, wherever I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth!'

So saith the mild Braminical Wordsworth. Now it will be remembered that Wordsworth, in that glorious ode whence we extract the above, develops the Platonic idea (shall we call Platonic that which has been entertained by the wise and the *feeling* of all times?) of a shadowy recollection of past and eternal existence in the profundities of the Divine Heart. 'It sounds forth here a mournful remembrance of a faded world of gods and heroes – as the echoing plaint for the loss of man's original, celestial state, and paradisiacal innocence.' And then we have those transcendent lines that come to us like aromatic breezes blowing from the Spice Islands:

'Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea,
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.'

But,

'descending
From these imaginative heights that yield
Far-stretching views into eternity,' —

what have the golden age and Platonic *dicta* to do with our word-ramble? A good deal. For we will endeavor to show that words, being the very sign-manual of man's convictions, contain the elements of what may throw light on both. To essay this:

Why is it that we generally speak of death as a 'return,' or a 'return home'? And how is it that this same idea has so remarkably interwoven itself with the very warp and woof of our language and poetry? – so that in our fervency, we can sing:

'Jerusalem, my glorious *home*,' etc.

Does not the very idea (not to mention the composition of the word) of a 'return' involve a previously having been in the place? And we can scarcely call that 'home' where we have never been before. So, that 'old Hebrew book' sublimely tells us that 'the spirit of the man *returneth* to God who gave it.'

Is it possible that these can be obscure intimations of that bygone time when WE were rocked in the bosom of the Divine consciousness? Perhaps… And now if the reader will pardon a piece of moralizing, we would say that these expressions teach us in the most emphatic way that – '*This is not our rest*.' So that when we have dived into every mine of knowledge and drunk from every fountain of pleasure; when, with Dante, we arrive at the painful conclusion that

'Tutto l'oro, ch'è sotto la luna,

E che già fu, di queste anime stanche
Non poterebbe farne posar una,'

(since, indeed, the Finite can never gain entire satisfaction in itself) – we may not despair, but still the heart-throbbings, knowing that He who has – for a season – enveloped us in the mantle of this sleep-rounded life, and thrown around himself the drapery of the universe – spangling it with stars – will again take us back to his fatherly bosom.

Somewhat analogous to these, and arguing the eternity of our existence, we have such words as 'decease,' which merely imports a *withdrawal*; 'demise,' implying also a laying down, a *removal*. By the way, it is rather curious to observe the notions in the mind of mankind that have given rise to the words expressing 'death.' Thus we have the Latin word *mors*– allied, perhaps, to the Greek μόιρα and μοίρα,[1] from μείρομαι – to *portion out*, to *assign*. Even this, however, there was a repulsion to using; and both the Greeks and Romans were wont to slip clear of the employment of their θάνατος, *mors*, etc., by such circumlocutions as *vitam suam mutare, transire e seculo*; κοιμήσατο chalkeon hypnon] —*he slept the brazen sleep* (Homer's Iliad, λ, 241); δέ σκότος οσσ εκάλυψεν —*and darkness covered his eyes* (Iliad, Z, 11); or *he completeth the destiny of life*, etc. This reminds us of the French aversion to uttering their *mort*. These expressions, again, are suggestive of our 'fate,' with an application similar to the Latin *fatum*, which, indeed, is none other than 'id quod *fatum est* a deis' – a God's word. So that in this sense we may all be considered 'fatalists,' and all things *fated*. Why not? However, in the following from *Festus*, it is the 'deil' that makes the assertion:

'Festus

Forced on us.

Lucifer

All things are of necessity.

Festus

Then best.
But the good are never fatalists. The bad
Alone act by necessity, they say.

Lucifer

It matters not what men assume to be;

[1] This alliance may be fanciful (though we observe some of the best German lexicographers have it so); a better origin might, perhaps, be found in the Sanscrit *mri*, etc.

Or good, or bad, they are but what they are.'

In which we may agree that his majesty was not so very far wrong.

Moreover, 'Why *should* we mourn departed friends?' – since we know that they are but lying in the μοιμητήριον (cemetery) – the *sleeping place*; or, as the vivid old Hebrew faith would have it, *the house of the living* (Bethaim). Is not this testimony for the soul's immortality worth as much as all the rhapsody written thereon, from Plato to Addison?

Some words are the very essence of poetry; redolent with all beauteous phantasies; odoriferous as flowers in spring, or discoursing an awful organ-melody, like to the re-bellowing of the hoarse-sounding sea. For instance, those two noble old Saxon words 'main' and 'deep,' that we apply to the ocean – what a music is there about them! The 'main' is the *maegen*– the strength, the *strong one*; the great 'deep' is precisely what the name imports. Our employment of 'deep' reminds of the Latin *altum*, which, properly signifying high or lofty, is, by a familiar species of metonymy, put for its opposite.

By the way, how exceedingly timid are our poets and poetasters generally of the open sea —*la pleine mer*. They linger around the shores thereof, in a vain attempt to sit snugly there *à leur aise*, while they 'call spirits from the vasty deep' – that never did and never would come on such conditions, though they grew hoarse over it. We all remember how Sandy Smith labors with making abortive *grabs* at its *amber tails*, *main*, etc. (rather slippery articles on the whole) – but he is not

'A shepherd in the Hebrid Isles,
P*laced far amid the melancholy main!*'

Hail shade of Thomson! But hear how the exile sings it:

'La mer! partout la mer! des flots, des flots encor!
L'oiseau fatigue en vain son inégal essor.
Ici les flots, là-bas les ondes.
Toujours des flots sans fin par des flots repoussés;
L'œil ne voit que des flots dans l'abime entassés
Rouler sous les vaques profondes.'[2]

This we, for our part, would pronounce one of the very best open-sea sketches we have ever met with; and if the reader will take even our unequal rendering, he may think so too.

'The sea! all round, the sea! flood, flood o'er billow surges!
In vain the bird fatigued its faltering wing here urges.
Billows beneath, waves, waves around;
Ever the floods (no end!) by urging floods repulsed;
The eye sees but the waves, in an abyss engulphed,
Roll 'neath their lairs profound.'

'Aurora' comes to us as a remnant of that beautiful Grecian mythology that deified and poetized everything; and even to us she is still the 'rosy-fingered daughter of the morn.' The 'Levant,' 'Orient,' and 'Occident' are all of them poetical, for they are all true translations from nature. The 'Levant' is where the sun is *levant*, raising himself up. 'Orient' will be recognized as the same figure from *orior*; while 'occident' is, of course, the opposite in signification, namely, the declining, the 'setting' place.

[2] 'Les Orientals,' par Victor Hugo. *Le Feu du ciel.*

'Lethe' is another classic myth. It is ὁ τής λήθης ροταμός – the river of forgetfulness, 'the oblivious pool.' Perhaps is it that all of us, as well as the son of Thetis, had a dip therein.

There exists not a more poetic expression than 'Hyperborean,' *i. e.* υπερβόρεος —*beyond Boreas*; or, as a modern poet finely and faithfully expands it:

'Beyond those regions cold
Where dwells the Spirit of the North-Wind,
Boreas old.'

Homer never manifested himself to be more of a poet than in the creation of this word. By the way, the Hyperboreans were regarded by the ancients as an extremely happy and pious people.

How few of those who use that very vague, grandiloquent word 'Ambrosial' know that it has reference to the 'ambrosia' (ἀμβροτος, *immortal*), the food of the gods! It has, however, a secondary signification, namely, that of an unguent, or perfume, hence fragrant; and this is probably the prevailing idea in our 'ambrosial': instance Milton's 'ambrosial flowers.' It was, like the 'nectar' (νέκταρ, an *elixir vitæ*), considered a veritable elixir of immortality, and consequently denied to men.

The Immortals, in their golden halls of 'many-topped Olympus,' seem to have led a merry-enough life of it over their nectar and ambrosia, their laughter and intrigues.

But not half as jolly were they as were Odin and the Iotun – dead drunk in Valhalla over their mead and ale, from

'the ale-cellars of the Iotun,
Which is called Brimir.'

The daisy (Saxon *Daeges ege*) has often been cited as fragrant with poesy. It is the *Day's Eye*: we remember Chaucer's affectionate lines:

'Of all the floures in the mede
Than love I most those floures of white and rede,
Such that men called *daisies* in our toun,
To them I have so great affection.'

Nor is he alone in his love for the

'Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flouer.'

An odoriferous-enough (etymologic) bouquet could we cull from the names of Flora's children. What a beauty is there in the 'primrose,' which is just the *prime*-rose; in the 'Beauty of the Night' and the 'Morning Glory,' except when a pompous scientific terminology, would convert it into a *convolvulus*! So, too, the 'Anemone' (ἀνεμος, the wind-flower), into which it is fabled Venus changed her Adonis. What a story of maiden's love does the 'Sweet William' tell; and how many charming associations cluster around the 'Forget-me-not!' Again, is there not poetry in calling a certain family of minute crustacea, whose two eyes meet and form a single round spot in the centre of the head, 'Cyclops' – (κύκλοψ, circular-eyed)?

And if any one thinketh that there cannot be poetry even in the dry technicalities of science, let him take such an expression as 'coral,' which, in the original Greek, κοράλιον, signifies a *sea damsel*; or the chemical 'cobalt,' 'which,' remarks Webster, 'is said to be the German *Kobold*, a goblin, the demon of the mines; so called by miners, because cobalt was troublesome to miners, and at first its

value was not known.' Ah! but these terms were created before *Science*, in its rigidity, had taught us the *truth* in regard to these matters. Yes! and fortunate is it for us that we still have words, and ideas clustering around these words, that have not yet been chilled and exanimated by the frigid touch of an empirical knowledge. For

> 'Still the heart doth need a language, still
> Doth the old instinct bring back the old names.'

And may benign heaven deliver us from those buckram individuals who imagine that Nature is as narrow and rigid as their own contracted selves, and who would seek to array her in their own exquisite bottle-green bifurcations and a *gilet à la mode*! These characters always put us in mind of the statues of Louis XIV, in which he is represented as Jupiter or Hercules, nude, with the exception of the lion's hide thrown round him —*and the long, flowing peruke* of the times! O Jupiter *tonans*! let us have either the lion or the ass – only let it be *veracious*!

To proceed: 'Auburn' is probably connected with *brennan*, and means *sun-burned*, analogous, indeed, to 'Ethiopian' (Ἀθίοψ), *one whom the sun has looked upon*.

How seldom do we think, in uttering 'adieu,' that we verily say, I commend you *à Dieu*– to God; that the lightly-spoken *good-by* means *God be wi' you*,[3] or that the (if possible) still more frequent and *unthinking* 'thank you,' in reality assures the person addressed —*I will think often of you*.

'Eld' is a word that has the poetic aroma about it, and is an example (of which we might adduce additional cases from the domain of 'poetic diction') of a word set aside from a prose use and devoted exclusively to poetry. It is, as we know, Saxon, signifying *old* or *old age*, and was formerly in constant use in this sense; as, for instance, in Chaucer's translation of *Boethius de Consolatione Philosophiæ*, we find thus:

> 'At laste no drede ne might overcame tho muses, that thei ne weren fellowes, and foloweden my waie, that is to saie, when I was exiled, thei that weren of my youth whilom welfull and grene, comforten now sorrowfull weirdes of me olde man: for *elde* is comen unwarely upon me, hasted by the harmes that I have, and sorowe hath commaunded his age to be in me.'

So in the *Knightes Tale*:

> 'As sooth in said *elde* hath gret avantage;
> In *elde* is both wisdom and usage:
> Men may the old out-renne but not out-rede.'

Oh! what an overflowing fulness of truth and beauty is there wrapped up in the core of these articulations that we so heedlessly utter, would we but make use of the wizard's wand wherewith to evoke them! What an exhaustless wealth does there lie in even the humblest fruitage and flowerage of language, and what a fecundity have even dry 'roots'!

'Thinkest thou there were no poets till Dan Chaucer?' asks our great Thomas; 'no heart burning with a thought, which it could not hold, and had no word for; and needed to shape and coin a word for – what thou callest a metaphor, trope, or the like? For every word we have, there was such a man and poet. The coldest word was once a glowing new metaphor, and bold questionable originality. 'Thy very ATTENTION, does it not mean an *attentio*, a STRETCHING-TO?' Fancy that act of the mind which all were conscious of, which none had yet named – when this new 'poet' first felt bound

[3] The 'by' may, however, have the force of going or passing, equivalent to 'fare' in 'farewell,' or 'welfare,' *i. e.*, may you have a good passage or journey.

and driven to name it! His questionable originality and new glowing metaphor was found adoptible, intelligible; and remains our name for it to this day.'[4]

This seems to be a pet etymology of Carlyle, as he makes Professor Teufelsdröckh give it to us also.

Nor less of a poet was that Grecian man who first named this beauteous world – with its boundless unity in variety – the κόσμος,[5] the *order*, the *adornment*. But

'Alas, for the rarity
Of Christian charity,'

and

'Ah! the inanity
Of frail humanity,'

that first induced some luckless mortal to give to certain mysterious compounds the appellation of *cosmetics*! But here is an atonement; for even in our unmythical, unbelieving days, the god 'Terminus' is made to stand guard over every railway station! Again, how finely did the Roman call his heroism his 'virtus' – his *vir*tue – his *manliness*. With the Italians, however, it became quite a different thing; for his 'virtu' is none other than his love of the fine arts (these being to him the only subject of *manly* occupation), a mere *objet de vertu*; and his *virtuoso* has no more virtuousness or manliness about him than what appertains to being skilled in these same fine arts. With us, our 'virtue' is … well, as soon as we can find out, we will tell you.

By the way, in what a *bathos* of mystery are most of our terms expressing the moral relations plunged! Some philosophers have declared that truth lies at the bottom of a well; – the well in which the truth in regard to these matters lies would seem to stretch far enough down – reaching, in fact, almost to the kingdom of the Inane. The beautiful simplicity of Bible truths has often become so perverted – so overloaded by the vain works (and *words*) of man's device – as barely to escape total extinction. Witness 'repentance'; in what a farrago of endless absurdities and palpable contradictions has this word (and, more unfortunately still, the thing itself along with it) been enveloped! According to the 'divines,' what does it not signify? Its composition, we very well know, gives us *pœnitentia*, from *pœnitere*, to *be sorry*, to *regret*– and such is its true and *only* meaning. 'This design' (that of the analysis of language in its elementary forms), says Wilkins, 'will likewise contribute much to the clearing of some of our modern differences in religion; by unmasking many wild errors, that shelter themselves under the disguise of affected phrases; which being philosophically unfolded, and rendered according to the genuine and natural importance of words, will appear to be inconsistencies and absurdities.' Nor would he have gone very far astray had he put *philosophy* and *politics* under the same category. Strip the gaudy dress and trappings from an expression, and it will have a most marked result. Analysis is a terrible humiliation to your mysticism and your grandiloquence – and an awful bore to those who depend for effect on either. We have something to say hereafter on those astonishingly profound oracles whose only depth is in the terminology they employ. In the mean time, expect not too much of words. Never, in all our philologic researches, must we lose sight of the fact that *words are but the daughters of earth, while things are the sons of heaven*. This expecting too much of words has been the fruitful source of innumerable errors. To resume:

Take a dozen words (to prove our generosity, we will let it be a baker's dozen) illustrative of this same principle of metaphor that governs the mechanism of language, and sheds a glory and a

[4] 'Past and Present,' pp. 128, 129.

[5] Compare with this the Latin *mundus*, which is exactly analogous in signification.

beauty around even our every-day fireside words; so that even those that seem hackneyed, worn out, and apparently tottering with the imbecility of old age – would we but get into the core of them – will shine forth with all the expressive meaning of their spring time – with the blush and bloom of poesy —

'All redolent with youth and flowers,'

and prove their very abusers – poets.

The 'halcyon' days! What a balmy serenity hovers around them – basking in the sunlight of undisturbed tranquillity. This we feel; but how we realize it after reading the little *family secret* that it wraps up! The Ἀλκυών (halcyon) —*alcedo hispida*– was the name applied by the Greeks to the *kingfisher* (a name commonly derived from Ἅλς, κυλ, i. e., *sea-conceiving*, from the fact of this bird's being said to lay her eggs in rocks near the sea); and the ἁλκκυονίδες ἡμέραι —*halcyon days*– were those fourteen 'during the calm weather about the winter solstice,' during which the bird was said to build her nest and lay her eggs; hence, by an easy transition, perfect quietude in general.

Those who have felt the bitter, biting effect of 'sarcasm,' will hardly be disposed to consider it a metaphor even, should we trace it back to the Greek σαρκάζω —*to tear off the flesh* (σαρξ), *literally*, to 'flay.' 'Satire,' again, has an arbitrary-enough origin; it is *satira*, from *satur*, *mixed*; and the application is as follows: each species of poetry had, among the Romans, its own special kind of versification; thus the hexameter was used in the epic, the iambic in the drama, etc. Ennius, however, the earliest Latin 'satirist,' first disregarded these conventionalities, and introduced a *medley* (satira) of all kinds of metres. It afterward, however, lost this idea of a *melange*, and acquired the notion of a poem 'directed against the vices and failings of men with a view to their correction.'

Perhaps we owe to reviewing the metaphorical applications of such terms as 'caustic,' 'mordant,' 'piquant,' etc., in their *burning*, *biting*, and *pricking* senses.

But 'review,' itself, we are to regard as pure metaphor. Our friend 'Snooks,' at least, found *that* out; for, instead of *re*-viewing —*i. e.*, viewing again and again his book, they pronounced it to be decidedly bad without any examination whatever. A 'critic' we all recognize in his character of *judge* or *umpire*; but is it that he always possesses discrimination – has he always *insight* (for these are the primary ideas attaching themselves to κρίνω, whence κριτικός comes) – does he divide between the merely arbitrary and incidental, and see into the absolute and eternal Art-Soul that vivifies a poem or a picture? If so, then is he a critic indeed.

How perfectly do 'invidiousness' and 'envy'[6] express the *looking over against* (*in-video*) – the *askance gaze*– the natural development of that painful mental state which poor humanity is so subject to! So with 'obstinacy' (*ob-sto*), which, by the way, the phrenologists represent, literally enough, by an ass in a position which assuredly Webster had in his mind when he wrote his definition of this word; thus: … '*in a fixedness in opinion or resolution that cannot be shaken at all, or without great difficulty*.'

Speaking of this reminds us of those very capital 'Illustrations of Phrenology,' by Cruikshank, with which we all are familiar, and where, for example, '*veneration* is exemplified by a stout old gentleman, with an ample paunch, gazing with admiring eyes and uplifted hands on the fat side of an ox fed by Mr. Heavyside, and exhibited at the stall of a butcher. In this way a Jew old-clothes man, holding his hand on his breast with the utmost earnestness, while in the other he offers a coin for a pair of slippers, two pairs of boots, three hats, and a large bundle of clothes, to an old woman, who, evidently astonished all over, exclaims, 'A shilling!' is an illustration of *conscientiousness*. A dialogue of two fishwomen at Billingsgate illustrates *language*, and a riot at Donnybrook Fair explains the phrenological doctrine of *combativeness*.'

But peace to the 'bumps,' and pass we on. Could anything be more completely metaphorical than such expressions as 'egregious' and 'fanatic?' 'Egregious' is chosen, *e-grex—out of the flock*, i. e.,

[6] En-voir.

the best sheep, etc., selected from the rest, and set aside for sacred purposes; hence, *distingué*. This word, though occupying at present comparatively neutral ground, seems fast merging toward its worst application. Can it be that an 'egregious' *rogue* is an article of so much more frequent occurrence than an 'egregiously' *honest* man, that incongruity seems to subsist between the latter? 'Fanatic,' again, is just the Roman '*fanaticus*,' one addicted to the *fana*,[7] the temples in which the 'fanatici' or fanatics were wont to spend an extraordinary portion of their time. But besides this, their religious fervor used to impel them to many extravagances, such as cutting themselves with knives, etc., and hence an 'ultraist' (one who goes *beyond* (ultra) the notions of other people) in any sense. Whereupon it might be remarked that though

'Cœlum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt,'

may, in certain applications, be true, it is surely not so in the case of a good many words. Thus this very instance, 'fanatic,' which, among the Romans, implied one who had an *extra share of devotion*, is, among us – the better informed on this head – by a very curious and very unfathomable figure (disfigure?) of speech or logic, applied to one who has a peculiar *penchant* for human liberty!

'In the most high and *palmy* state of Rome,
A little ere the mighty Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.'

We do not quote this for the sake of the making-the-hair-to-stand-on-end tendencies of the last two lines, but through the voluptuous quiescence of the first,

'In the most high and palmy state of Rome,'

to introduce the beautifully metaphorical expression, 'palmy.' It will, of course, be immediately recognized as being from the 'palm' tree; that is to say, *palm-abounding*. And what visions of orient splendor does it bear with it, wafting on its wings the very aroma of the isles of the blest – μάκαρων νήσοι – or

'Where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold!'

It bears us away with it, and we stand on that sun-kissed land

'Whose rivers wander over sands of gold,'

with a houri lurking in every 'bosky bourne,' and the beauteous palm, waving its umbrageous head, at once food, shade, and shelter.

The palm being to the Oriental of such passing price, we can easily imagine how he would so enhance its value as to make it the type of everything that is prosperous and glorious and 'palmy,' the *beau-ideal* of everything that is flourishing. Hear what Sir Walter Raleigh says on this subject: 'Nothing better proveth the excellency of this soil than the abundant growing of the *palm trees* without labor of man. *This tree alone giveth unto man whatsoever his life beggeth at nature's hand.*'

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[7] Perhaps nothing could better prove how profoundly *religious* were the Latins than a word compounded of the above; namely 'profane.' A 'fanatic' was one who devoted himself to the *fanum* or temple – 'profane' is an object devoted to *anything else 'pro'—instead of*– the '*fanum*,' or fane.

'Paradise,' too, is oriental in all its associations. It is παράδεισος,[8] that is, a *park* or *pleasure ground*, in which sense it is constantly employed by Xenophon, as every weary youth who has *parasanged* it with him knows. By the LXX it was used in a metaphorical sense for the garden of Eden:

> 'The glories we have known,
> And that imperial palace whence we came;'

but a still loftier meaning did it acquire when the Christ employed it as descriptive of the splendors of the 'better land' – of the glories and beauties of the land Beulah.

But, look out, fellow strollers, for we are off in a tangent!

What a curiously humble origin has 'literature,' contrasted with the magnitude of its present import. It is just 'litteral' —*letters* in their most primitive sense; and γραμματα is nought other. Nor can even all the pomposity of the 'belles-lettres' carry us any farther than the very fine 'letters' or *litteral*; while even Solomon So-so may take courage when he reflects (provided Solomon be ever guilty of reflecting) that the 'literati' have 'literally' nothing more profound about them than the knowledge of their 'letters.' The Latins were prolific in words of this kind; thus they had the *literatus* and the *literator*– making some such discrimination between them as we do between 'philosopher' and 'philosophe.'

'Unlettered,' to be sure, is one who is unacquainted even with his 'letters;' but what is 'erudite?' It is merely E, *out of*, a RUDIS, *rude*, *chaotic*, *ignorant* state of things; and thus in itself asserts nothing very tremendous, and makes no very prodigious pretensions. Surely these words had their origin at an epoch when 'letters' stood higher in the scale of estimation than they do now; when he who knew them possessed a spell that rendered him a potent character among the 'unlettered.'

A 'spell' did we say? Perhaps that is not altogether fanciful; for 'spell' itself in the Saxon primarily imports a *word*; and we know that the runes or Runic letters were long employed in this way. For instance, Mr. Turner thus informs us ('History of the Anglo-Saxons,' vol. i, p. 169): 'It was the invariable policy of the Roman ecclesiastics to discourage the use of the Runic characters, because they were of pagan origin, and had been much connected with idolatrous superstitions.' And if any one be incredulous, let him read this from Sir Thomas Brown: 'Some have delivered the polity of spirits, that they stand in awe of charms, *spells*, and conjurations; *letters*, characters, notes, and dashes.' And have not the A and Ω something mystic and cabalistic about them even to us?

While on this, let us note that 'spell' gives us the beautiful and cheering expression 'gospel,' which is precisely *God's-spell*– the 'evangile,' the good God's-news!

To resume:

'Graphical' (γράφω) is just what is well delineated —*literally*, 'well written,' or, as our common expression corroboratively has it, *like a book*!

'Style' and 'stiletto' would, from their significations, appear to be radically very different words; and yet they are something more akin than even cousins-german. 'Style' is known to be from the στύλος, or *stylus*, which the Greeks and Romans employed in writing on their waxen tablets; and, as they were both sharp and strong, they became in the hands of scholars quite formidable instruments when used against their schoolmasters. Afterward they came to be employed in all the bloody relations and uses to which a 'bare bodkin' can be put, and hence our acceptation of 'stiletto.' Cæsar himself, it is supposed, got his 'quietus' by means of a 'stylus;' nor is he the first or last character whose 'style' has been his (*literary*, if not *literal*) damnation.

'Volume,' too, how perfectly metaphorical is it in its present reception! It is originally just a *volumen*, that is, a 'roll' of parchment, papyrus, or whatever else the 'book' (i. e., the *bark*– the 'liber') might be composed of. Nor can we regard as aught other such terms as 'leaf' or 'folio,' which is

[8] The word is more properly oriental than Greek, *e. g.*, Hebrew, *pardes*, and Sanscrit, *paradêsa*.

also 'leaf.' 'Stave,' too, is suggestive of the *staff* on which the runes were wont to be cut. Indeed, old almanacs are sometimes to be met with consisting of these long sticks or 'staves,' on which the days and months are represented by the Runic letters.

'Charm,' 'enchant,' and 'incantation' all owe their origin to the time when spells were in vogue. 'Charm' is just *carmen*, from the fact that 'a kind of Runic rhyme' was employed in *diablerie* of this sort; so 'enchant' and 'incantation' are but a *singing to*– a true 'siren's song;' while 'fascination' took its rise when the mystic terrors of the *evil eye* threw its withering blight over many a heart.

We are all familiar with the old fable of *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*. We will vouch that the following read us as luminous a comment thereon as may be desired: 'Polite,' 'urbane,' 'civil,' 'rustic,' 'villain,' 'savage,' 'pagan,' 'heathen.' Let us seek the moral:

'Polite,' 'urbane,' and 'civil' we of course recognize as being respectively from πόλις, *urbs*, and *civis*, each denoting the city or town —*la grande ville*. 'Polite' is *city-like*; while 'urbanity' and 'civility' carry nothing deeper with them than the graces and the attentions that belong to the punctilious town. 'Rustic' we note as implying nothing more uncultivated than a 'peasant,' which is just *pays*-an, or, as we also say, a 'countryman.' 'Savage,' too, or, as we ought to write it, *salvage*,[9] is nothing more grim or terrible than one who dwells *in sylvis*, in the woods – a meaning we can appreciate from our still comparatively pure application of the adjective *sylvan*. A 'backwoodsman' is therefore the very best original type of a *savage*! 'Savage' seems to be hesitating between its civil and its ethical applications; 'villain,' 'pagan,' and 'heathen,' however, have become quite absorbed in their moral sense – and this by a contortion that would seem strange enough were we not constantly accustomed to such transgressions. For we need not to be informed that 'villain' primarily and properly implies simply one who inhabits a ville or *village*. In Chaucer, for example, we see it without at least any moral signification attached thereto:

> 'But firste I praie you of your curtesie
> That ye ne arette it not my *vilanie*.'
>
> *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.*

So a 'pagan,' or *paganus*, is but a dweller in a *pagus*, or village; precisely equivalent to the Greek κωμήτης, with no other idea whatever attached thereto; while 'heathen' imported those who lived on the *heaths* or in the country, consequently far away from *civilization* or *town-like-ness*.

From all of which expressions we may learn the mere conventionality and the utter arbitrariness of even our most important ethical terms. How prodigiously *cheap* is the application of any such epithets, considering the terrible abuse they have undergone! And how poor is that philosophy that can concentrate 'politeness' and 'civility' in the frippery and heartlessness of mere external city-forms; and convert the man who dwells in the woods or in the village into a *savage* or a *villain*! How fearful a lack do these numerous words and their so prolific analogues manifest of acknowledgment of that glorious principle which Burns has with fire-words given utterance to – and to which, would we preserve the dignity of manhood, we must hold on —

> 'A man's a man for a' that!'

Ah! it is veritably enough to make us atrabiliar! Here we see words in their weaknesses and their meannesses, as elsewhere in their glory and beauty. And not so much *their* meanness and weakness, as that of those who have distorted these innocent servants of truth to become tools of falsehood and the abject instruments of the extinction of all honesty and nobleness.

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[9] See the Italian *setvaggio* and the Spanish *salvage*, in which a more approximate orthography has been retained.

The word 'health' wraps up in it – for, indeed, it is hardly metaphorical – a whole world of thought and suggestion. It is that which *healeth* or maketh one to be *whole*, or, as the Scotch say, *hale*; which *whole* or *hale* (for they are one word) may imply entireness or unity; that is to say, perfect 'health' is that state of the system in which there is no disorganization – no division of interest – but when it is recognized as a perfect *one* or whole; or, in other words, not recognized at all. And this meaning is confirmed by our analogue *sanity*, which, from *sanus*, and allied to σάος, has underneath it a similar basis.

Every student of Carlyle will remember the very telling use to which he puts the idea contained in this word – speaking of the manifold relations of physical, psychal, and social health. Reference is made to his employment of it in the 'Characteristics' – itself one of the most authentic and veracious pieces of philosophy that it has been our lot to meet with for a long time; yet wherein he proves the impossibility of any, and the uselessness of all philosophies. Listen while he discourses thereon: 'So long as the several elements of life, all fitly adjusted, can pour forth their movement like harmonious tuned strings, it is melody and unison: life, from its mysterious fountains, flows out as in celestial music and diapason – which, also, like that other music of the spheres, even because it is perennial and complete, without interruption and without imperfection, might be fabled to escape the ear. Thus, too, in some languages, is the state of health well denoted by a term expressing unity; when we feel ourselves as we wish to be, we say that we are *whole*.'

But our psychal and social wholeness or health, as well as our physical, is yet, it would appear, in the future, in the good time *coming*—

> 'When man to man
> Shall brothers be and a' that!'

Even that, however, is encouraging – that it is *in prospectu*. For we know that *right before us* lies this great promised land – this *Future*, teeming with all the donations of infinite time, and bursting with blessings. And for us, too, there are in waiting μακάρων νήσοι, or Islands of the Blest, where all heroic doers and all heroic sufferers shall enjoy rest forever!

In conclusion, take the benediction of serene old Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, in his preface to 'Don Quixote' (could we possibly have a better?): 'And so God give you *health*, not forgetting me. Farewell!'

THE CHECH

"Chcés li tajnou véc aneb pravdu vyzvédéti, blazen, dité, opily člověk o tom umeji povedeti."

"Wouldst thou know a truth or mystery,
A drunkard, fool, or child may tell it thee."

Bohemian Proverb.

And now I'll wrap my blanket o'er me,
And on the tavern floor I'll lie;
A double spirit-flask before me,
And watch the pipe clouds melting die.

They melt and die – but ever darken,
As night comes on and hides the day;
Till all is black; – then, brothers, hearken!
And if ye can, write down my lay!

In yon black loaf my knife is gleaming,
Like one long sail above the boat; —
– As once at Pesth I saw it beaming,
Half through a curst Croatian throat.

Now faster, faster whirls the ceiling,
And wilder, wilder turns my brain;
And still I'll drink – till, past all feeling,
The soul leaps forth to light again.

Whence come these white girls wreathing round me?
Baruska! – long I thought thee dead!
Kacenka! – when these arms last bound thee,
Thou laidst by Rajhrad cold as lead!

Now faster, faster whirls the ceiling,
And wilder, wilder turns my brain;
And from afar a star comes stealing,
Straight at me o'er the death-black plain.

Alas! – I sink – my spirits miss me,
I swim, I shoot from sky to shore!
Klarà! thou golden sister – kiss me!
I rise – I'm safe – I'm strong once more.

And faster, faster whirls the ceiling,
And wilder, wilder turns my brain;

The star! – it strikes my soul, revealing
All life and light to me again.

* * *

Against the waves fresh waves are dashing,
Above the breeze fresh breezes blow;
Through seas of light new light is flashing,
And with them all I float and flow.

But round me rings of fire are gleaming:
Pale rings of fire – wild eyes of death!
Why haunt me thus awake or dreaming?
Methought I left ye with my breath.

Aye glare and stare with life increasing,
And leech-like eyebrows arching in;
Be, if ye must, my fate unceasing,
But never hope a fear to win.

He who knows all may haunt the haunting,
He who fears nought hath conquered fate;
Who bears in silence quells the daunting,
And sees his spoiler desolate.

Oh wondrous eyes of star-like lustre,
How ye have changed to guardian love!
Alas! – where stars in myriads cluster
Ye vanish in the heaven above.

* * *

I hear two bells so softly singing:
How sweet their silver voices roll!
The one on yonder hill is ringing,
The other peals within my soul.

I hear two maidens gently talking,
Bohemian maidens fair to see;
The one on yonder hill is walking,
The other maiden – where is she?

Where is she? – when the moonlight glistens
O'er silent lake or murm'ring stream,
I hear her call my soul which listens:

'Oh! wake no more – come, love, and dream!'

She came to earth-earth's loveliest creature;
She died – and then was born once more;
Changed was her race, and changed each feature,
But oh! I loved her as before.

We live – but still, when night has bound us
In golden dreams too sweet to last,
A wondrous light-blue world around us,
She comes, the loved one of the Past.

I know not which I love the dearest,
For both my loves are still the same;
The living to my heart is nearest,
The dead love feeds the living flame.

And when the moon, its rose-wine quaffing
Which flows across the Eastern deep,
Awakes us, Klarà chides me laughing,
And says, 'We love too well in sleep!'

And though no more a Vojvod's daughter,
As when she lived on Earth before,
The love is still the same which sought her,
And she is true – what would you more?

* * *

Bright moonbeams on the sea are playing,
And starlight shines o'er vale and hill;
I should be gone – yet still delaying,
By thy loved side I linger still!

My gold is gone – my hopes have perished,
And nought remains save love for thee!
E'en that must fade, though once so cherished:
Farewell! – and think no more of me!

'Though gold be gone and hope departed,
And nought remain save love for me,
Thou ne'er shalt leave me broken-hearted,
For I will share my life with thee!

'Thou deem'st me but a wanton maiden,
The plaything of thy idle hours;
But laughing streams with gold are laden,

And sweets are hidden 'neath the flowers.

'E'en outcasts may have heart and feeling,
E'en such as I be fond and true;
And love, like light, in dungeons stealing,
Though bars be there, will still burst through.'

PICTURES FROM THE NORTH

It is worth while to live in the city, that we may learn to love the country; and it is not bad for many, that artificial life binds them with bonds of silk or lace or rags or cobwebs, since, when they are rent away, the Real gleams out in a beauty and with a zest which had not been save for contrast.

Contrast is the salt of the beautiful. I wonder that the ancients, who came so near it in so many ways, never made a goddess of Contrast. They had something like it in ever-varying Future – something like it in double-faced Janus, who was their real 'Angel of the Odd.' Perhaps it is my ignorance which is at fault – if so, I pray you correct me. The subtle Neo-Platonists *must* have apotheosized such a savor to all æsthetic bliss. Mostly do I feel its charm when there come before me pictures true to life of far lands and lives, of valley and river, sea and shore. Then I forget the narrow office and the shop-lined street, the rattling cars and hurried hotel-lodgment, and think what it would be if nature, in all her freshness and never-ending contrasts, could be my ever-present.

I thought this yesterday, in glancing over an old manuscript in my drawer, containing translations, by some hand to me unknown, of sketches of Sweden by the fairy-story teller Hans Christian Andersen. Reader, will they strike you as pleasantly as they did me? I know not. Let us glance them over. They have at least the full flavor of the North, of the healthy land of frost and pines, of fragrant birch and of sweeter meadow-grass, and simpler, holier flowers than the rich South ever showed, even in her simplest moods.

The first of these sketches sweeps us at once far away over the Northland:

'WE JOURNEY

'It is spring, fragrant spring, the birds are singing. You do not understand their song? Then hear it in free translation:

"Seat thyself upon my back!' said the stork, the holy bird of our green island. 'I will carry thee over the waves of the Sound. Sweden also has its fresh, fragrant beechwoods, green meadows, and fields of waving corn; in Schoonen, under the blooming apple trees behind the peasant's house, thou wilt imagine thyself still in Denmark!'

"Fly with me,' said the swallow. 'I fly over Hal-land's mountain ridges, where the beeches cease. I soar farther toward the north than the stork. I will show you where the arable land retires before rocky valleys. You shall see friendly towns, old churches, solitary court yards, within which it is cosy and pleasant to dwell, where the family stands in circle around the table with the smoking platters, and asks a blessing through the mouth of the youngest child, and morning and evening sings a holy song. I have heard it, I have seen it, when I was yet small, from my nest under the roof.'

"Come! come!' cried the unsteady seagull, impatiently waiting, and ever flying round in a circle. 'Follow me into the Scheeren, where thousands of rocky islands, covered with pines and firs, lie along the coasts like flower beds; where the fisherman draws full nets!'

"Let yourself down between our outspread wings!' sing the wild swans. 'We will bear you to the great seas, to the ever-roaring, arrow-quick mountain streams, where the oak does not thrive and the birches are stunted; let yourself down between our outspread wings, – we soar high over Sulitelma, the eye of the island, as the mountain is called; we fly from the spring-green valley, over the snow waves, up to

the summit of the mountain, whence you may catch a glimpse of the North Sea, beyond Norway. We fly toward Jamtland, with its high blue mountains, where the waterfalls roar, where the signal fires flame up as signs from coast to coast that they are waiting for the ferry boat – up to the deep, cold, hurrying floods, which do not see the sun set in midsummer, where twilight is dawn!'

'So sing the birds! Shall we hearken to their song – follow them, at least a short way? We do not seat ourselves upon the wings of the swan, nor upon the back of the stork; we stride forward with steam and horses, sometimes upon our own feet, and glance, at the same time, now and then, from the actual, over the hedge into the kingdom of fancy, that is always our near neighborland, and pluck flowers or leaves, which shall be placed together in the memorandum book – they bud indeed on the flight of the journey. We fly, and we sing: Sweden, thou glorious land! Sweden, whither holy gods came in remote antiquity from the mountains of Asia; thou land that art yet illumined by their glitter! It streams out of the flowers, with the name of Linnæus; it beams before thy knightly people from the banner of Charles the Twelfth, it sounds out of the memorial stone erected upon the field at Lutzen. Sweden! thou land of deep feeling, of inward songs, home of the clear streams, where wild swans sing in the northern light's glimmer! thou land, upon whose deep, still seas the fairies of the North build their colonnades and lead their struggling spirit-hosts over the ice mirror. Glorious Sweden, with the perfume-breathing Linea, with Jenny's soulful songs! To thee will we fly with the stork and the swallow, with the unsteady seagull and the wild swan. Thy birchwood throws out its perfume so refreshing and animating, under its hanging, earnest boughs – on its white trunk shall the harp hang. Let the summer wind of the North glide murmuring over its strings.'

There is true fatherland's love there. I doubt if there was ever yet *real* patriotism in a hot climate – the North is the only home of unselfish and great union. Italy owes it to the cool breezes of her Apennines that she cherishes unity; had it not been for her northern mountains in a southern clime, she would have long ago forgotten to think of *one* country. But while the Alps are her backbone, she will always be at least a vertebrate among nations, and one of the higher order. Without the Alps she would soon be eaten up by the cancer of states' rights. It is the North, too, which will supply the great uniting power of America, and keep alive a love for the great national name.

Very different is the rest – and yet it has too the domestic home-tone of the North. In Sweden, in Germany, in America, in England, the family tie is somewhat other than in the East or in any warm country. With us, old age is not so ever-neglected and little honored as in softer climes. Thank the fireside for that. The hearth, and the stove, and the long, cold months which keep the grandsire and granddame in the easy chair by the warm corner, make a home centre, where the children linger as long as they may for stories, and where love lingers, kept alive by many a cheerful, not to be easily told tie. And it lives – this love – lives in the heart of the man after he has gone forth to business or to battle: he will not tell you of it, but he remembers grandmother and grandfather, as he saw them a boy – the centre of the group, which will never form again save in heaven.

Let us turn to

'THE GRANDMOTHER

'Grandmother is very old, has many wrinkles, and perfectly white hair; but her eyes gleam like two stars, yes, much more beautiful; they are so mild, it does one good to look into them! And then she knows how to relate the most beautiful stories. And she has a dress embroidered with great, great flowers; it is such a heavy

silk stuff that it rattles. Grandmother knows a great deal, because she has lived much longer than father and mother; that is certain! Grandmother has a hymn book with strong silver clasps, and she reads very often in the book. In the midst of it lies a rose, pressed and dry; it is not so beautiful as the rose which stands in the glass, but yet she smiles upon it in the most friendly way; indeed, it brings the tears to her eyes! Why does grandmother look so at the faded flower in the old book? Do you know? Every time that grandmother's tears fall upon the flower, the colors become fresh again, the rose swells up and fills the whole room with its fragrance, the walls disappear, as if they were only mist, and round about her is the green, glorious wood, where the sun beams through the leaves of the trees; and grandmother is young again; a charming maiden, with full red cheeks, beautiful and innocent – no rose is fresher; but the eyes, the mild, blessing eyes, still belong to grandmother. At her side sits a young man, large and powerful: he reaches her the rose, and she smiles – grandmother does not smile so now! oh yes, look now! – But he has vanished: many thoughts, many forms sweep past – the beautiful young man is gone, the rose lies in the hymn book, and grandmother sits there again as an old woman, and looks upon the faded rose which lies in the book.

'Now grandmother is dead. She sat in the armchair and related a long, beautiful story; she said, 'Now the story is finished, and I am tired;' and she leaned her head back, in order to sleep a little. We could hear her breathing – she slept; but it became stiller and stiller, her face was full of happiness and peace, it was as if a sunbeam illumined her features; she smiled again, and then the people said, 'She is dead.' She was placed in a black box; there she lay covered with white linen; she was very beautiful, and yet her eyes were closed, but every wrinkle had vanished; she lay there with a smile about her mouth; her hair was silver white, venerable, but it did not frighten one to look upon the corpse, for it was indeed the dear, kind-hearted grandmother. The hymn book was placed under her head – this she had herself desired; the rose lay in the old book; and then they buried grandmother.

Upon the grave, close by the church wall, a rose tree was planted; it was full of roses, and the nightingale flew singing over the flowers and the grave. Within the church, there resounded from the organ the most beautiful hymns, which were in the old book under the head of the dead one. The moon shone down upon the grave, but the dead was not there; each child could go there quietly by night and pluck a rose from the peaceful courtyard wall. The dead know more than all of us living ones; they are better than we. The earth is heaped up over the coffin, even within the coffin there is earth; the leaves of the hymn book are dust, and the rose, with all its memories. But above bloom fresh roses; above, the nightingale sings, and the organ tones forth; above, the memory of the old grandmother lives, with her mild, ever young eyes. Eyes can never die. Ours will one day see the grandmother again, young and blooming as when she for the first time kissed the fresh red rose, which is now dust in the grave.'

'THE CELL PRISON

'By separation from other men, by loneliness, in continual silence shall the criminal be punished and benefited; on this account cell prisons are built. In Sweden there are many such, and new ones are building. I visited for the first time one in Marienstadt. The building lies in a beautiful landscape, close by the town, on a small

stream of water, like a great villa, white and smiling, with window upon window. But one soon discovers that the stillness of the grave rests over the place; it seems as if no one dwelt here, or as if it were a dwelling forsaken during the plague. The gates of these walls are locked; but one opened and the jailor received us, with his bundle of keys in his hand. The court is empty and clean; even the grass between the paving stones is weeded out. We entered the 'reception room,' to which the prisoner is first taken; then the bath room, whither he is carried next. We ascend a flight of stairs, and find ourselves in a large hall, built the whole length and height of the building. Several galleries, one over another in the different stories, extend round the whole hall, and in the midst of the hall is the chancel, from which, on Sundays, the preacher delivers his sermon before an invisible audience. All the doors of the cells, which lead upon the galleries, are half opened, the prisoners hear the preacher, but they cannot see him, nor he them. The whole is a well-built machine for a pressure of the spirit. In the door of each cell there is a glass of the size of an eye; a valve covers it on the outside, and through this may the warden, unnoticed by the prisoners, observe all which is going on within; but he must move with soft step, noiselessly, for the hearing of the prisoner is wonderfully sharpened by solitude. I removed the valve from the glass very softly, and looked into the closed room – for a moment the glance of the prisoner met my eye. It is airy, pure, and clean within, but the window is so high that it is impossible to look out. The whole furniture consists of a high bench, made fast to a kind of table, a berth, which can be fastened with hooks to the ceiling, and around which there is a curtain. Several cells were opened to us. In one there was a young, very pretty maiden; she had lain down in her berth, but sprang out when the door was opened, and her first movement disturbed the berth, which it unclasped and rolled together. Upon the little table stood the water cask, and near it lay the remains of hard black bread, farther off the Bible, and a few spiritual songs. In another cell sat an infanticide; I saw her only through the small glass of the door, she had heard our steps, and our talking, but she sat still, cowered together in the corner by the door, as if she wished to conceal herself as much as she could; her back was bent, her head sunk almost into her lap, and over it her hands were folded. The unhappy one is very young, said they. In two different cells sat two brothers; they were paying the penalty of horse-stealing; one was yet a boy. In one cell sat a poor servant girl; they said she had no relations, and was poor, and they placed her here. I thought that I had misunderstood, repeated my question, Why is the maiden here? and received the same answer. Yet still I prefer to believe that I have misunderstood the remark. Without, in the clear, free sunlight, is the busy rush of day; here within the stillness of midnight always reigns. The spider, which spins along the wall, the swallow, which rarely flies near the vaulted window there above, even the tread of the stranger in the gallery, close by the door, is an occurrence in this mute, solitary life, where the mind of the prisoner revolves ever upon himself. One should read of the martyr cells of the holy inquisition, of the unfortunates of the Bagnio chained to each other, of the hot leaden chambers, and the dark wet abyss of the pit of Venice, and shudder over those pictures, in order to wander through the galleries of the cell prison with a calmer heart; here is light, here is air, here it is more human. Here, where the sunbeam throws in upon the prisoner its mild light, here will an illuminating beam from God Himself sink into the heart.'

Last we have

'SALA

'Sweden's great king, Germany's deliverer, Gustavus Adolphus, caused Sala to be built. The small enclosed wood in the vicinity of the little town relates to us yet traditions of the youthful love of the hero king, of his rendezvous with Ebba Brahe. The silver shafts at Sala are the largest, the deepest and oldest in Sweden; they reach down a hundred and seventy fathoms, almost as deep as the Baltic. This is sufficient to awaken an interest in the little town; how does it look now? 'Sala,' says the guide book, 'lies in a valley, in a flat, and not very agreeable region.' And so it is truly; in that direction was nothing beautiful, and the highway led directly into the town, which has no character. It consists of a single long street with a knot and a pair of ends: the knot is the market; at the ends are two lanes which are attached to it. The long street – it may be called long in such a short town – was entirely empty. No one came out of the doors, no one looked out of the windows. It was with no small joy that I saw a man, at last, in a shop, in whose window hung a paper of pins, a red handkerchief, and two tea cans, a solitary, sedate apprentice, who leaned over the counter and looked out through the open house door. He certainly wrote that evening in his journal, if he kept one; 'To-day a traveller went through the town; the dear God may know him, I do not!' The apprentice's face appeared to me to say all that, and he had an honest face.

'In the tavern in which I entered, the same deathlike stillness reigned as upon the street. The door was indeed closed, but in the interior of the house all the doors stood wide open; the house cock stood in the midst of the sitting room, and crowed in order to give information that there was some one in the house. As to the rest, the house was entirely picturesque; it had an open balcony looking out upon the court – upon the street would have been too lively. The old sign hung over the door and creaked in the wind; it sounded as if it were alive. I saw it from my window; I saw also how the grass had overgrown the pavement of the street. The sun shone clear, but as it shines in the sitting room of the solitary old bachelor and upon the balsam in the pot of the old maid, it was still as on a Scottish Sunday, and it was Tuesday! I felt myself drawn to study Young's 'Night Thoughts.'

'I looked down from the balcony into the neighbor's court; no living being was to be seen, but children had played there; they had built a little garden out of perfectly dry twigs; these had been stuck into the soft earth and watered; the potsherd, which served as watering pot, lay there still; the twigs represented roses and geranium. It had been a splendid garden – ah yes! We great, grown-up men play just so, build us a garden with love's roses and friendship's geranium, we water it with our tears and our heart's blood – and yet they are and remain dry twigs without roots. That was a gloomy thought – I felt it, and in order to transform the dry twigs into a blossoming Aaron's-staff, I went out. I went out into the ends and into the long thread, that is to say, into the little lanes and into the great street, and here was more life, as I might have expected; a herd of cows met me, who were coming home, or going away, I know not – they had no leader. The apprentice was still standing behind the counter; he bowed over it and greeted; the stranger took off his hat in return; these were the events of this day in Sala. Pardon me, thou still town, which Gustavus Adolphus built, where his young heart glowed in its first love, and where the silver rests in the deep shafts without the town, in a flat and not very pleasant country. I knew

> no one in this town, no one conducted me about, and so I went with the cows, and reached the graveyard; the cows went on, I climbed over the fence, and found myself between the graves, where the green grass grew, and nearly all the tombstones lay with inscriptions blotted out; only here and there, 'Anno' was still legible – what further? And who rests here? Everything on the stone was effaced, as the earth life of the one who was now earth within the earth. What drama have ye dead ones played here in the still Sala? The setting sun threw its beams over the graves, no leaf stirred on the tree; all was still, deathly still, in the town of the silver mines, which for the remembrance of the traveller is only a frame about the apprentice, who bowed greeting over the counter.'

Silence, stillness, quiet, solitude, loneliness, far-away-ness; hushed, calm, remote, out of the world, un-newspapered, operaless, un-gossipped – was there ever a sketch which carried one so far from the world as this of 'Sala'? That *one* shopboy – those going or coming cows – the tombs, with wornout dates, every point of time vanishing – a living grave!

Contrast again, dear reader. Verily she is a goddess – and I adore her. Lo! she brings me back again in Sala to the busy streets of this city, and the office, and the 'exchanges,' and the rustling, bustling world, and the hotel dinner – to be in time for which I am even now writing against time – and I am thankful for it all. Sala has cured me. That picture drives away longings. Verily, he who lives in America, and in its great roaring current of events, needs but a glance at Sala to feel that *here* he is on a darting stream ever hurrying more gloriously into the world and away from the dull inanity – which the merest sibilant of aggravation will change to insanity.

Reader, our Andersen is an artist – as most children know. But I am glad that he seldom gives us anything which is so *very* much of a monochrome as Sala.

I wonder if Sala was the native and surnaming town of that *other* Sala whose initials are G. A. S., and whose nature is 'ditto'? Did its dulness drive him to liveliness, even as an 'orthodox' training is said to drive youth to dissipation? It may be so. The one hath a deep mine of silver – the other contains inexhaustible mines of brass – and the name of the one as of the other, when read in Hebrew-wise gives us 'alas!'

But I am wandering from the Northern pictures and fresh nature, and must close.

THE NEW RASSELAS

… And Joseph, opening the drawing room, told me the postchaise was ready. My mother and my sister threw themselves into my arms.

'It is still time,' said they, 'to abandon this scheme. Stay with us.'

'Mother, I am of noble birth, I am now twenty, I must have a name, I must be talked about in the country, I must be getting a position in the army or at court.'

'Oh! but, Bernard, when you have gone, what will become of me?'

'You will be happy and proud when you hear of your son's success.'

'But if you are killed in some battle?'

'What of that! What's life? Who thinks about being killed? When one is twenty, and of noble lineage, he thinks of nothing but glory. And, mother, in a few years you shall see me return to your side a colonel, or a general, or with some rich office at Versailles.'

'Well, and what then?'

'Why, then I shall be respected and considered about here.'

'And then?'

'Why, everybody will take off their hat to me.'

'And then?'

'I'll marry Cousin Henrietta, and I'll marry off my young sisters, and we'll all live together with you, tranquil and happy, on my estate in Brittany.'

'Now, why can't you commence this tranquil and happy life to-day? Has not your father left us the largest fortune of all the province? Is there anywhere near us a richer estate or a finer chateau than that of La Roche Bernard? Are you not considered by all your vassals? Doesn't everybody take off their hat when they meet you? No, don't quit us, my dear child; remain with your friends, with your sisters, with your old mother, whom, at your return, perhaps you may not find alive; do not expend in vain glory, nor abridge by cares and annoyances of every kind, days which at the best pass away too rapidly: life is a pleasant thing, my son, and Brittany's sun is genial!'

As she said this, she showed me from the drawing-room windows the beautiful avenues of my park, the old horse-chestnuts in bloom, the lilacs, the honeysuckles, whose fragrance filled the air, and whose verdure glistened in the sun. In the antechamber was the gardener and all his family, who, sad and silent, seemed also to say to me, 'Don't go, young master, don't go.' Hortense, my eldest sister, pressed me in her arms, and Amélie, my little sister, who was in a corner of the drawing room looking at the pictures in a volume of La Fontaine, came up to me, holding out the book:

'Read, read, brother,' said she, weeping…

She pointed to the fable of the Two Pigeons!.. I suddenly got up, and repelled them all. 'I am now twenty, I am of noble blood, I want glory and honor… Let me go.' And I ran toward the courtyard. I was about getting into the postchaise, when a woman appeared on the staircase. It was Henrietta! She did not weep … she did not say a word … but, pale and trembling, it was with the utmost difficulty that she kept from falling. She waved the white handkerchief she held in her hand, as a last good-by, and she fell senseless on the floor. I ran and took her up, I pressed her in my arms, I pledged my love to her for life; and as she recovered consciousness, leaving her in the hands of my mother and sister, I ran to my postchaise without stopping, and without turning my head.

If I had looked at Henrietta, I should not have gone.

In a few moments afterward the postchaise was rattling along the highway. For a long time my mind was completely absorbed by thoughts of my sisters, of Henrietta, of my mother, and of all the happiness I left behind me; but these ideas gradually quitted me as I lost sight of the turrets of La Roche Bernard, and dreams of ambition and of glory took the entire possession of my mind. What schemes! What castles in the air! What noble actions I performed in my postchaise!! I denied

myself nothing: wealth, honors, dignities, success of every kind, I merited and I awarded myself all; at the last, raising myself from grade to grade as I advanced on my journey, by the time I reached my inn at night, I was duke and peer, governor of a province, and marshal of France. The voice of my servant, who called me modestly Monsieur le Chevalier, alone forced me to remember who I was, and to abdicate all my dignities. The next day, and the following days, I indulged in the same dreams, and enjoyed the same intoxication, for my journey was long. I was going to a chateau near Sedan the chateau of the Duke de C – , an old friend of my father, and protector of my family. It was understood that he was to carry me to Paris with him, where he was expected about the end of the month; he promised to present me at Versailles, and to give me a company of dragoons through the credit of his sister, the Marchioness de F – , a charming young lady, designated by public opinion as Madame de Pompadour's successor, whose title she claimed with the greater justice as she had long filled its honorable functions. I reached Sedan at night, and at too late an hour to go to the chateau of my protector. I therefore postponed my visit until the nest day, and lay at the 'France's Arms,' the best hotel of the town, and the ordinary rendezvous of all the officers; for Sedan is a garrison town, and is well fortified; the streets have a warlike air, and even the shopkeepers have a martial look, which seems to say to strangers, 'We are fellow countrymen of the great Turenne!' I supped at the general table, and I asked what road I should take in the morning to go to the chateau of the Duke de C – , which is situated some three leagues out of the town. 'Anybody will show you,' I was told, 'for it is well known hereabouts: Marshal Fabert, a great warrior and a celebrated man, died there.' Thereupon the conversation turned about Marshal Fabert. Between young soldiers, this was very natural; his battles, his exploits, his modesty, which made him refuse the letters patent of nobility and the collar of his orders offered him by Louis XIV, were all talked about; they dwelt especially on the inconceivable fortune which had raised him from the rank of a simple soldier to the rank of a marshal of France – him, who was nothing at all, the son of a mere printer: it was the only example of such a piece of fortune which could then be instanced, and which, even during Fabert's life, had appeared so extraordinary, the vulgar never feared to ascribe his elevation to supernatural causes. It was said that from his youth he had busied himself with magic and sorcery, and that he had made a league with the devil. Mine host, who, to the stupidity inherent in all the natives of the province of Champagne, added the credulity of our Brittany peasants, assured us with a great deal of sangfroid, that when Fabert died in the chateau of the Duke de C – , a black man, whom nobody knew, was seen to enter into the dead man's room, and disappear, taking with him the marshal's soul, which he had bought, and which belonged to him; and that even now, every May, about the period of the death of Fabert, the people of the chateau saw the black man about the house, bearing a small light. This story made our dessert merry, and we drank a bottle of champagne to the demon of Fabert, craving it to be good enough to take us also under its protection, and enable us to win some battles like those of Collioure and La Marfee.

I rose early the next morning, and went to the chateau of the Duke de C – , an immense gothic manor-house, which perhaps at any other moment I would not have noticed, but which I regarded, I acknowledge, with curiosity mixed with emotion, as I recollected the story told us on the preceding evening by the host of the 'France's Arms.' The servant to whom I spoke, told me he did not know whether his master could receive company, and whether he could receive me. I gave him my name, and he went out, leaving me alone in a sort of armory, decorated with the attributes of the chase and family portraits.

I waited some time, and no one came. 'The career of glory and of honor I have dreamed commences by the antechamber,' said I to myself, and impatience soon possessed the discontented solicitor. I had counted over the family portraits and all the rafters of the ceiling some two or three times, when I heard a slight noise in the wooden wainscoting. It was caused by an ill-closed door the wind had forced open. I looked in, and I perceived a very handsome boudoir, lighted by two large windows and a glazed door opening on a magnificent park. I walked into this room, and after I had

gone a short distance, I was stopped by a scene which I had not at first perceived. A man was lying on a sofa, with his back turned to the door by which I came in. He got up, and without perceiving me, ran abruptly to the window. Tears streamed down his cheeks, and a profound despair was marked on his every feature. He remained motionless for some time, keeping his face buried in his hands; then he began striding rapidly about the room. I was then near him; he perceived me, and trembled; I, too, was annoyed and confounded at my indiscretion; I sought to retire, muttering some words of excuse.

'Who are you? What do you want?' he said to me in a loud voice, taking hold of me by my arms.

'I am the Chevalier Bernard de la Roche Bernard, and I come from Brittany.'…

'I know, I know,' said he; and he threw himself into my arms, made me take a seat by his side, spoke to me warmly about my father and all my family, whom he knew so well that I was persuaded I was talking with the master of the chateau.

'You are Monsieur de C – ?' I asked him.

He got up, looked at me wildly, and replied, 'I was he, I am he no longer, I am nothing;' and seeing my astonishment, he exclaimed, 'Not a word more, young man, don't question me!'

'I must, Monsieur; I have been the involuntary witness of your chagrin and your grief, and if my attachment and my friendship may to some degree alleviate' —

'You are right, you are right,' said he; 'you cannot change my fate, but at the least you may receive my last wishes and my last injunctions … it is the only favor I ask of you.'

He shut the door, and again took his seat by my side; I was touched, and tremblingly expected what he was going to say: he spoke with a grave and solemn manner. His physiognomy had an expression I had never seen before on any face. His forehead, which I attentively examined, seemed marked by fatality; his face was pale; his black eyes sparkled, and occasionally his features, although changed by pain, would contract in an ironical and infernal smile. 'What I am going to tell you,' said he, 'will surprise you.' You will doubt me … you will not believe me … even. I doubt it sometimes … at the least, I would like to doubt it; but I have got the proofs of it; and there is in everything around us, in our very organization, a great many other mysteries which we are obliged to undergo, without being able to understand.' He remained silent for a moment, as if to collect his ideas, brushed his forehead with his hand, and then proceeded:

'I was born in this chateau. I had two elder brothers, to whom the honors and the estates of our house were to descend. I could hope nothing above the cassock of an abbé, and yet dreams of ambition and of glory fermented in my head, and quickened the beatings of my heart. Discontented with my obscurity, eager for fame, I thought of nothing but the means of acquiring it, and this idea made me insensible to all the pleasures and all the joys of life. The present was nothing to me; I existed only in the future; and that future lay before me robed in the most sombre colors. I was nearly thirty years old, and had done nothing. Then literary reputations arose from every side in Paris, and their brilliancy was reflected even to our distant province. 'Ah!' I often said to myself, 'if I could at the least command a name in the world of letters! that at least would be fame, and fame is happiness.' The confidant of my sorrow was an old servant, an aged negro, who had lived in the chateau for years before I was born; he was the oldest person about the house, for no one remembered when he came to live there; and some of the country people said that he knew the Marshal Fabert, and had been present at his death' —

My host saw me express the greatest surprise; he interrupted his narrative to ask me what was the matter.

'Nothing,' said I; but I could not help thinking of the black man the innkeeper had mentioned the evening before.

Monsieur de C – went on with his story: 'One day, before Juba (such was the negro's name), I loudly expressed my despair at my obscurity and the uselessness of my life, and I exclaimed: '*I would give ten years of my life* to be placed in the first rank of our authors.' 'Ten years,' he coldly replied to me, 'are a great deal; it's paying dearly for a trifle; but that's nothing, I accept your ten years. I

take them now; remember your promises: I shall keep mine!' I cannot depict to you my surprise at hearing him speak in this way. I thought years had weakened his reason; I smiled, and he shrugged his shoulders, and in a few days afterward I quitted the chateau to pay a visit to Paris. There I was thrown a great deal in literary society. Their example encouraged me, and I published several works, whose success I shall not weary you by describing. All Paris applauded me; the newspapers proclaimed my praises; the new name I had assumed became celebrated, and no later than yesterday, you, yourself, my young friend, admired me.'

A new gesture of surprise again interrupted his narrative: 'What! you are not the Duke de C – ?' I exclaimed.

'No,' said he very coldly.

'And,' I said to myself, 'a celebrated literary man! Is it Marmontel? or D'Alembert? or Voltaire?'

He sighed; a smile of regret and of contempt flitted over his lips, and he resumed his story: 'This literary reputation I had desired soon became insufficient for a soul as ardent as my own. I longed for nobler success, and I said to Juba, who had followed me to Paris, and who now remained with me: 'There is no real glory, no true fame, but that acquired in the profession of arms. What is a literary man? A poet? Nothing. But a great captain, a leader of an army! Ah! that's the destiny I desire; and for a great military reputation, I would give another ten years of my life.' 'I accept them,' Juba replied; 'I take them now; don't forget it.''

At this part of his story he stopped again, and, observing the trouble and hesitation visible in my every feature, he said:

'I warned you beforehand, young man, that you could not believe me; this seems a dream, a chimera to you!.. and to me, too!.. and yet the grades and the honors I obtained were no illusions; those soldiers I led to the cannon's mouth, those redoubts stormed, those flags won, those victories with which all France has rung … all that was my work … all that glory was mine.'…

While he strode up and down the room, and spoke with this warmth and enthusiasm, surprise chilled my blood, and I said to myself, 'Who can this gentleman be?.. Is he Coligny?.. Richelieu?.. the Marshal Saxe?'…

From this state of excitement he had fallen into great depression, and coming close to me, he said to me, with a sombre air:

'Juba spoke truly; and after a short time had passed away, disgusted with this vain bubble of military glory, I longed for the only thing real and satisfactory and permanent in this world; and when, at the cost of five or six years of life, I desired gold and wealth, Juba gave them too… Yes, my young friend, yes, I have seen fortune surpass all my desires; I became the lord of estates, of forests, of chateaux. Up to this morning they were all mine; if you don't believe me, if you don't believe Juba … wait … wait … he is coming … and you will see for yourself, with your own eyes, that what confounds your reason and mine, is unhappily but too real.'

He then walked toward the mantlepiece, looked at the clock, exhibited great alarm, and said to me in a whisper:

'This morning at daybreak I felt so depressed and weak I could scarcely get up. I rang for my servant. Juba came. 'What is the matter with me this morning?' I asked him. 'Master, nothing more than natural. The hour approaches, the moment draws near!' 'What hour? What moment?' 'Don't you remember? Heaven allotted sixty years as the term of your existence. You were thirty when I began to obey you!' 'Juba,' said I, seriously alarmed, 'are you in earnest?' 'Yes, master; in five years you have dissipated in glory twenty-five years of life. You gave them to me, they belong to me; and those years you bartered away shall now be added to the days I have to live.' 'What, was that the price of your services?' 'Others have paid more dearly for them. You have heard of Fabert: I protected him.' 'Silence! silence!' I said to him; 'you lie! you lie!' 'As you please; but get ready, you have only half an hour to live.' 'You are mocking me; you deceive me.' 'Not at all; make the calculation yourself. You have really lived thirty-five years; you have lost twenty-five years: total, sixty years.' He started

to go out… I felt my strength diminishing; I felt my life waning away. 'Juba! Juba!' said I, 'give me a few hours, only a few hours,' I screamed; 'oh! give me a few hours longer!' 'No, no,' said he, 'that would be to diminish my own life, and I know better than you the value of life. There is no treasure in this world worth two hours' existence!' I could scarcely speak; my eyes became obscured by a thick veil, the icy hand of death began to freeze my veins. 'Oh!' said I, making an effort to speak, 'take back those estates for which I have sacrificed everything. Give me four hours longer, and I make you master of all my gold, of all my wealth, of all that opulence of fortune I have so earnestly desired.' 'Agreed: you have been a good master, and I am willing to do something for you; I consent to your prayer.' I felt my strength return; and I exclaimed: 'Four hours are so little … oh! Juba! … Juba … oh! Juba! give me yet four hours, and I renounce all my literary glory, all my works, everything that has placed me so high in the opinion of the world.' 'Four hours of life for that!' exclaimed the negro with contempt… 'That's a great deal; but never mind; you shan't say I refused your last dying request.' 'Oh! no! no! Juba, don't say my last dying request… Juba! Juba! I beg of you, give me until this evening, give me twelve hours, the whole day, and may my exploits, my victories, my military fame, my whole career be forever effaced from the memory of men!.. may nothing whatever remain of them!.. if you will give me this day, only to-day, Juba; and I shall be too well satisfied.' 'You abuse my generosity,' said he, 'and I am making a fool's bargain. But never mind, I give you until sundown. After that, ask me for nothing more. Don't forget, after sundown I shall come for you!'

'He went away,' added my companion, with a tone of despair I can never forget, 'and this is the last day of my life.' He then walked to the glazed door looking out on the park (it was open), and he exclaimed:

'Oh God! I shall see no more this beautiful sky, these green lawns, these sparkling waters; I shall never again breathe the balmy air of the spring! Madman that I was! I might have enjoyed for twenty-five years to come these blessings God has showered on all, blessings whose worth I knew not, and of which I am beginning to know the value. I have worn out my days, I have sacrificed my life for a vain chimera, for a sterile glory, which has not made me happy, and which died before me… See! see there!' said he, pointing to some peasants plodding their weary way homeward; 'what would I not give to share their labors and their poverty!.. But I have nothing to give, nothing to hope here below … nothing … not even misfortune!'… At this moment a sunbeam, a May sunbeam, lighted up his pale, haggard features; he took me by the arm with a sort of delirium, and said to me:

'See! oh see! how splendid is the sun!.. Oh! and I must leave all this!.. Oh! at the least let me enjoy it now… Let me taste to the full this pure and beautiful day … whose morrow I shall never see!'

He leaped into the park, and, before I could well comprehend what he was doing, he had disappeared down an alley. But, to speak truly, I could not have restrained him, even if I would… I had not now the strength; I fell back on the sofa, confounded, stunned, bewildered by all I had seen and heard. At length I arose and walked about the room to convince myself that I was awake, that I was not dreaming, that…

At this moment the door of the boudoir opened, and a servant announced:

'My master, Monsieur le Duc de C – .'

A gentleman some sixty years old and of a very aristocratic appearance came forward, and, taking me by the hand, begged my pardon for having kept me so long waiting.

'I was not at the chateau,' said he. 'I have just come from the town, where I have been to consult with the physicians about the health of the Count de C – , my younger brother.'

'Is he dangerously ill?'

'No, monsieur, thank Heaven, he is not; but in his youth visions of glory and of ambition had excited his imagination, and a grave fever, from which he has just recovered, and which came near proving fatal, has left his head in a state of delirium and insanity, which persuades him that he has only one day longer to live. That's his madness.'

Everything was explained to me now!

'Come, my young friend, now let us talk over your business; tell me what I can do for your advancement. We will go together to Versailles about the end of this month. I will present you at court.'

'I know how kind you are to me, duke, and I have come here to thank you for it.'

'What! have you renounced going to court, and to the advantages you may reckon on having there?'

'Yes.'

'But recollect, that aided by me, you will make a rapid progress, and that with a little assiduity and patience … say in ten years.'

'They would be ten years lost!'

'What!' exclaimed the duke with astonishment, 'is that purchasing too dearly glory, fortune, and fame?.. Silence, my young friend, we will go together to Versailles.'

'No, duke, I return to Brittany, and I beg you to accept my thanks and those of my family for your kindness.'

'You are mad!' said the duke.

But thinking over what I had heard and seen, I said to myself: 'You are the same!'

The next morning I turned my face homeward. With what pleasure I saw again my fine chateau de la Roche Bernard, the old trees of my park, and the beautiful sun of Brittany! I found again my vassals, my sisters, my mother, and happiness, which has never quitted me since, for eight days afterward I married Henrietta.

THE CHAINED RIVER

Home I love, I now must leave thee! Home I love, I now must go
Far away, although it grieve me, through the valley, through the snow.

By the night and through the valley, though the hail against us flies,
Till we reach the frozen river – on its bank the foeman lies.

Frozen river, mighty river! – wilt thou e'er again be free
From the fountain through the mountain, from the mountain to the sea.

Yes; though Freedom's glorious river for a time be frozen fast,
Still it cannot hold forever – Winter's reign will soon be past.

Still it runs, although 'tis frozen – on beneath the icy plain,
From the mountain to the ocean – free as thought, though held in chain.

From the mountain to the ocean, from the ocean to the sky,
Then in rainy drops returning – lo the ice-chains burst and fly!

And the ice makes great the river. Breast the spring-flood if you dare!
Rivers run though ice be o'er them – God and Freedom everywhere!

HOW THE WAR AFFECTS AMERICANS

At the outbreak of the present terrible civil war, the condition of the American people was apparently enviable beyond that of any other nation. We say apparently, because the seeds of the rebellion had long been germinating; and, to a philosophic eye, the great change destined to follow the rebellion was inevitable, though it was then impossible for human foresight to predict the steps by which that change would come. Unconscious of impending calamity, we were proud of our position and character as American citizens. We were free from oppressive taxation, and enjoyed unbounded liberty of speech and action. Revelling in the fertility of a virgin continent, unexampled in modern times for the facilities of cultivation and the richness of its return to human labor, it was a national characteristic to felicitate ourselves upon the general prosperity, and boastingly to compare our growing resources and our unlimited and almost spontaneous abundance, with the hard-earned and dearly purchased productions of other and more exhausted countries. Our population, swollen by streams of immigration from the crowded continents of the old world, has spread over the boundless plains of this, with amazing rapidity; and the physical improvements which have followed our wonderful expansion have been truly magical in their results, as shown by the decennial exhibits of the census, or presented in still more palpable form to the eye of the thoughtful and observant traveller. Since the fall of the Roman empire, no single government has possessed so magnificent a domain in the temperate regions of the globe; and certainly, no other people so numerous, intelligent, and powerful, has ever in any age of the world enjoyed the same unrestricted freedom in the pursuit of happiness: accordingly, none has ever exhibited the same extraordinary activity in enterprise, or equal success in the creation and accumulation of wealth. It was unfortunately true that our mighty energies were mostly employed in the production of physical results; and although our youthful, vigorous, and unrestricted efforts made these results truly marvellous, yet the moral and intellectual basis on which we built was not sufficiently broad and stable to sustain the vast superstructure of our prosperity. The foundations having been seriously disturbed, it becomes indispensable to look to their permanent security, whatever may be the temporary inconvenience arising from the necessary destruction of portions of the old fabric.

When the war began, the South was supplying the world with cotton – a staple which in modern times has become intimately connected with the physical well-being of the whole civilized world. At the same time, the Northwest was furnishing to all nations immense quantities of grain and animal food, her teeming fields presenting a sure resource against the uncertainty of seasons in those regions of the earth in which capital must supply the fertility which is still inexhaustible here. While such were the occupations of the South and the West, the North and East were advancing in the path of mechanical and commercial improvement, with a rapidity beyond all former example. Agricultural and manufacturing inventions were springing up, full grown, out of the teeming brain of the Yankees, and were fast altering the face of the world. New combinations of natural forces were appearing as the agents of the human will, and were multiplying the physical capacity of man in a ratio that seemed to know no bounds. Commercial enterprise kept pace with these magnificent creations, and never failed, with liberal and enlightened spirit, to avail itself of all the resources which industry produced or genius invented. Our tonnage surpassed that of the greatest nations; the skill of our shipbuilders was unsurpassed; and the courage, industry, and perseverance of our seamen were renowned all over the world. On every ocean and in every important harbor of the earth were daily visible the emblems of our national power and the evidences of our individual prosperity. But in one fatal moment, from a cause which was inherent in our moral and political condition, all this prodigious activity of thought and work was brought to a complete stand. Such a shock was never before experienced, because such a social and material momentum had never before been acquired by any nation, and then been

arrested by so gigantic a calamity. It was as if the earth had been suddenly stopped on its axis, and all things on its surface had felt the destructive impulse of the centrifugal force.

War itself is, unhappily, no uncommon condition of mankind. Wars on a gigantic scale have often heretofore raged among the great nations, or even between sundered parts of the same people. It is not the magnitude of the present contest which constitutes its greatest peculiarity. It is rather the magnitude and importance of the interests it involves and the relations it sunders, which give it the tremendous significance it bears in the eyes of the world. Never has any war found the contending parties engaged in works of such world-wide and absorbing interest, as those which occupied both sections of our people at the commencement of this rebellion. No two people, connected by so many ties, enjoying such unlimited freedom of intercourse, so mutually dependent each upon the other, and occupying a country so utterly incapable of natural divisions, have ever been known to struggle with each other in so sanguinary a conflict. All the circumstances of the case have been unexampled in history. Accordingly the influence of the contest upon affairs on this continent, and indeed upon human affairs generally, has been great and disastrous in proportion to the magnitude of the peaceful works which have been suspended by it, and to the closeness of those brotherly relations which have heretofore existed between the contending parties, now violently broken, and perhaps forever destroyed.

Almost the entire industry and commerce of the United States have been diverted into new and unaccustomed channels. The most active and enterprising people in the world, in the midst of their varied occupations, suddenly find all the accustomed channels of business blocked up and the stream of their productions flowing back upon them in a disastrous flood, and stagnating in their workshops and storehouses. They are compelled to find new issues for their enterprise and to make a complete change in their habits and works. It is not merely in the cessation of all intercourse between the two vast sections, North and South, that this mighty transformation has taken place; but an equal alteration has been suddenly effected in the character of the business and the nature of the occupations which the people have heretofore pursued in the loyal States of the Union. Great branches of business, employing millions of capital, have been utterly annihilated or indefinitely suspended. Vast amounts of capital have been sunk and utterly lost in the deep gulf of separation which temporarily divides the States; or if they are ever to be recovered, it will be only after the storm shall have completely subsided, when some portions of the wrecks, which have been scattered in the fearful commotion, may be thrown safely on to the shores of reunion. It was anticipated, especially by the rebels themselves, that these incalculable losses, these tremendous shocks and sudden changes, would utterly overwhelm the North with ruin and tear her to pieces with faction and disorder. But this anticipation of accumulated disasters, in which the wish was father to the thought, has not been realized to any appreciable extent. The pecuniary losses have been in a great measure compensated by the immense demands of the war; and when faction has attempted to raise its head, it has been compelled to retire before the patriotic rebuke of the people. And although the vast expenditures of the war give present relief; by drawing largely on the resources of the future, yet the strength we acquire is none the less real or less effectual in overthrowing the rebellion.

But this sudden and grand emergency, with all its appalling concomitants of lives sacrificed, property destroyed, commercial disaster, and social derangement, has given a rare opportunity for the testing of our national character, and of our ability to meet and overcome the most tremendous difficulties and dangers. Perhaps the versatility of American genius and its ready adaptation to the new circumstances, are even more wonderful than any other exhibition made by our people in this great national crisis. There has never been any good reason to doubt the capacity of any portion of American citizens for warlike occupations, nor their possession of the moral qualities necessary to make them good soldiers. The long period of peace which has blessed our country, with the industrial, educational, and moral improvement produced by it, has rendered war justly distasteful to the Free States of the Union. They were slow to recognize the necessity for it; and nothing but the most solemn

convictions of duty would have aroused them to the stern and unanimous determination with which they have entered on the present struggle. Swift would have been our degeneration, if the spirit of our fathers had already died out among us. But our history of less than a century since the Revolutionary war has fully maintained the self-reliant character of Americans and demonstrated their military abilities; and if the commercial and manufacturing populations of particular sections were supposed to have become somewhat enervated by long exemption from the labors and perils of war, it was certain that our large agricultural regions and especially our frontier settlements were peopled with men inured to toil and familiar with danger, constituting the best material for armies to be found in any country. Nor was it in fact true that any considerable portion of our people, even those drawn from the stores and workshops of the cities, had become so far deteriorated in vigor of body, or demoralized in spirit, as to be unfit for military service. The Southern leaders looked with scorn upon our volunteer army only until they encountered it in battle. They were then compelled to alter their preconceived opinions of the Yankee character, and to change their contempt, real or pretended, into respect, if not admiration. Even when superior numbers or better strategy enabled them to beat us, they have seldom failed to bear honorable testimony to the unflinching courage and endurance of our troops. Nor do we need the admissions of the enemy to establish this character for us; our own triumphs, on many glorious fields, are the best evidences of our ability in war, and of themselves sufficiently attest the valor and energy of our noble volunteers. In this aspect of the matter, we must not forget the peculiar character and constitution of our vast army. It is indeed worthy to be called the wonder of the world. It is virtually a voluntary association of the people for the purpose of putting down a gigantic rebellion and saving their own government from destruction. This is a social phenomenon never before known in history on a scale approaching the magnitude of our combinations – a phenomenon which could only take place in a popular government, where the unrestricted freedom of individual action promotes the virtues of personal independence, self-respect, and manly courage. Even the Southern people, fighting on their own soil, in a war which, though actually commenced by them, they now affect to consider wholly defensive – even they, with all their boasted unanimity, and with the fierce passions engendered by slavery, have been compelled to maintain their armies by a conscription of the most unexampled severity; while the loyal States, fighting solely for union and nationality – interests of the most general nature, and offering little of mere personal inducement – have so far escaped that necessity, and are now just preparing to resort to it. After all, it must be acknowledged by every just and generous mind, whether that of friend or foe, that there is a substratum of noble sentiment and manly impulses at the foundation of the Yankee character. The vast movements of the Northern people plainly show it. Their contributions for the support of soldiers' families and for the relief of the wounded and disabled, are upon a gigantic scale. They raise immense sums for the payment of bounties to volunteers, and thus, in every way, the burdens of the war are voluntarily assumed by the people, and to some extent distributed among them, so that every one may participate in the patriotic work. Nor is this large-hearted liberality confined solely to our own country. The sufferers in other lands, who have felt the disastrous effects of our great civil war, have not been forgotten. In the midst of a life-and-death struggle among ourselves, we have found time and means to assist in relieving their wants – an exhibition of liberality peculiar, and truly American in character.

Nor are these the only interesting features in the bearing of the American people at the present crisis. Perhaps a still more remarkable one is the entire devotion of the national energies – of intellect not less than of heart, of skill, not less than of capital – to the great purposes of the war. This was the necessary result of our free institutions; of our untrammelled pursuits; the mobility of our means and agencies of production; and the plastic character of all our creations. The amount of thought expended on this subject has been prodigious and incalculable. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to enumerate the ten thousand inventions and devices of all kinds which have been presented for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of weapons and of all the appliances of war, as well as for adding to the comfort and securing the health of the soldier. Every imaginable instrument of usefulness in

any of the operations of the camp, or the march, or the field of battle, has been the subject of tentative ingenuity, such as none but Yankees could display. The musket, the carbine, the pistol, have been constructed upon numberless plans, apparently with every possible modification. The cartridge has been covered with copper, impervious to water, instead of paper, and has its own fulminate attached in various modes. Cannon shot and shells have been made in many new forms; and cannons themselves have been increased in calibre to an extraordinary size with proportionate efficiency, and have been constructed in various modes and forms never before conceived. The tent, the cot, the chest, the chair, the knife and fork, the stove and bakeoven, each and every one of them, have been touched by the transforming hand of homely genius, and have assumed a thousand unimaginable forms of usefulness and convenience. India rubber and every other available material have been made to perform new and appropriate parts in the general work. The result of all this unexampled activity and ingenuity has not yet been fully eliminated. It would require years of experience in war in order to bring American genius, as at present developed, to bear with all its extraordinary force on the mechanical details of the military art. Beyond doubt, numberless devices, among those presented, will prove to be utterly worthless; but many of them will certainly stand the test of experience, will be ultimately approved and adopted, and will remain as monuments of the enterprise and ingenuity aroused by the necessities of the country in this hour of its sad calamity.

It would be a curious and interesting employment to estimate the number and character of these inventions, due wholly to the existing civil strife. Only then should we be able to form some adequate conception of the immense stimulus which has been applied to the national intellect, and which has caused it to embrace within the boundless range of its investigations, the highest moral and political problems, alike with the minutest questions of mechanical and economical convenience. But we should be greatly disappointed in not finding this phenomenon even partially comprehended by the powers that be. It is truly a melancholy thing to meet in the highest quarters so little sympathy with the noblest efforts of the popular mind, and to witness the cold neglect and even disdainful suspicion with which the most useful and valuable devices are often received, or rather, we should say, haughtily disregarded and rejected. Seldom or never do we find these inventions appreciated according to their merits. The Government is proverbially slow to adopt improvements of any kind; and the army and navy, like all similar professional bodies, are averse to every important change, and wedded to the instruments and processes in the use of which they have been educated and trained. This peculiar indisposition to progressive movements, in all the established institutions and organizations of society, has frequently been the subject of remark and of regret. It is, however, only an exaggeration of the conservative principle, which, when confined within proper limits, is wise and beneficial. Indeed, the actual progress of society in any period, is neither more nor less than the result of the conflict between the opposite tendencies, of retrogradation and advancement – a disposition to adhere to the old, which has been tried and approved, and a tendency toward the new, which, however promising and alluring, may yet disappoint and mislead. In the long run, however, the latter prevails, and the progressive movement, more or less rapid, goes on continually. Improvements gradually force themselves upon the attention of the most prejudiced minds, and eventually conquer opposition in spite of professional immobility and aversion to change. Observation has shown that the most important steps of progress usually originate outside of the professions, and are only adopted when they can no longer be resisted with safety to the conservative body. To the volunteer officer and soldier, or to those educated soldiers who have long been in civil life, will probably be due the greater part of that accessibility to new ideas which will result in important advances in the art of war. This assertion may seem to be paradoxical; but all experience proves that ignorance of old processes is most favorable to the introduction of new ones. And though in a thousand instances such ignorance may be disastrous, occasionally it finds the unprejudiced intellect illuminated by flashes of original genius, and open to the entrance of valuable ideas which would have been utterly excluded by all the old and established rules.

But the actual work of the unexampled mental activity of the present day, will not be fully known and estimated until after the close of the war. Until then there will be neither time nor opportunity to weigh and test the creations of the national ingenuity. In the midst of campaigns and battles, with the absorbing interest of the great struggle, the instruments of warfare cannot be easily changed, however important may be the improvement presented. The emergency which arouses genius and brings forth valuable inventions, is by no means favorable to their adoption and general use. On the contrary, by a sort of fatality which seems to be a law of their existence, they are doomed to struggle with adversity and fierce opposition, and they are left by the occasion which gave them birth as its repudiated offspring – a legacy to the future emergency which will cherish and perfect them, make them available, and enjoy the full benefit to be derived from them.

The navy has always justly been the pride of our country; and it was to be expected that it would first feel the impulse of inventive genius. Confident in our strength and resources, we had long remained comparatively sluggish, and regardless of those interesting experiments which other great maritime powers had been carefully making with a view to render ships invulnerable. We looked on quietly, observed the results, and waited for the occasion when we should be required to put forth our strength in this direction. When the war commenced, we had not a single iron-clad vessel of any description. It became necessary that the immense Southern coast of our country should be subjected to the strictest blockade. This was a work of vast magnitude, and a very large and sudden increase of the navy was demanded by the extraordinary emergency. Cities were to be taken, and strong fortresses to be attacked. The rebels had managed to save some of the vessels intended to be destroyed at Norfolk, and had converted the Merrimack into a formidable monster, which in due time displayed her destructive powers upon our unfortunate fleet in Hampton Roads, in that ever-memorable contest in which the Monitor first made her timely appearance. The chief result of the vast effort demanded by the perilous situation of our country, was the class of vessels of which the partially successful but ill-fated Monitor was the type. These structures are certainly very far from being perfect as ships of war; nevertheless, they constitute an interesting and valuable experiment, and mark an advance in naval warfare of the very first importance. They establish the form in which defensive armor may perhaps be most effectively disposed for the protection of men on board ships; but at the same time, it must be conceded that they utterly fail in all the other requisites for men-of-war and sea-going vessels. They are deficient in buoyancy and speed. In truth they are nothing more than floating batteries, useful in the defence of harbors or the attack of forts. The melancholy end of the Monitor shows too plainly that vessels of her character cannot be safely trusted to the fury of the open sea. They may do well in favorable weather, or may escape on a single expedition; but a repetition of long voyages will be almost certain to result in their loss.

We want lighter and swifter vessels to be equally formidable in ordnance, and alike invulnerable to the attacks of any adversary. To combine all these requisites is not beyond the ingenuity of American constructors. Most assuredly such vessels will soon make their appearance on the ocean. Some new arrangement of the propelling apparatus, and lighter and more powerful machinery, will accomplish this important end. And then, too, with greatly increased speed, and with a construction suitable to the new function, the principle of the ram will be perfected; so that the projectile thrown by the most powerful ordnance now existing or even conceived will be insignificant compared with the momentum of a large steamer, going at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour, and herself becoming the direct instrument of destruction to her adversary. Ordnance may possibly be devised which will throw shot or shell weighing each a thousand pounds; but by the new principle, which is evidently growing in practicability and favor, the weight of thousands of tons will be precipitated against vessels of war, and naval combats will become a conflict of gigantic forces, in comparison with which the discharge of guns and the momentum of cannon balls will be little more than the bursting of bubbles.

The exploits of the rebel steamer Alabama, so destructive to our commerce and so humiliating to our pride as a great naval power, sufficiently attest the vital importance of the element of speed in

ships of war. Her capacity under steam is beyond that of our best vessels, and she therefore becomes, at her pleasure, utterly inaccessible to anything we may send to pursue her. We have built our steamers strong and heavy; but proportionately slow and clumsy. The Alabama could not safely encounter any one of them entitled to the name of a regular cruiser; but she does not intend to risk such a contest, and, most unfortunately for us, she cannot be compelled to meet it. Of what real use are all the costly structures of our navy with the tremendous ordnance which they carry, if this comparatively insignificant craft can go and come when and where she will, and sail through and around our fleets without the possibility of being interrupted? They are perfectly well suited to remain stationary and aid us in blockading the Southern ports; but the frequent escape of fast steamers running the blockade, serves still further to demonstrate the great and palpable deficiency in the speed of our ships of war. We may start a hundred of our best steamers on the track of the Alabama, and, without an accident, they can never overtake her. The only alternative is to accept the lesson which her example teaches, and to surpass her in those qualities which constitute her efficiency and make her formidable as a foe. This we must do, or we must quietly surrender our commerce to her infamous depredations, and acknowledge ourselves beaten on the seas by the rebel confederacy without an open port, and without anything worthy to be called a navy. The ability of our naval heroes, and their skill and valor, so nobly illustrated on several occasions during the present war, will be utterly unavailing against superior celerity of motion. Their just pride must be humbled, and their patriotic hearts must chafe with vexation, so long as the terrible rebel rover continues to command the seas, as she will not fail to do so long as we are unable to cope with her in activity and speed. Nor is it certain we have yet known the worst. Ominous appearances abroad, and thick-coming rumors brought by every arrival, indicate the construction in England of numerous other ships like the Alabama, destined to run the blockade and afterward to join that renowned cruiser in her work of destruction. Stores of cotton held in Southern ports offer a temptation to the cupidity of foreign adventurers which will command capital to any amount, and the best skill of English engineers and builders will be enlisted to make the enterprise successful – a skill not embarrassed by bureaucratic inertia and stolidity.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.