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WHY THE PUTKAMMER CASTLE WAS DESTROYED

There is a test of truth in popular creeds and in human opinions generally which is prominently put forward by Herbert Spencer, and has been more or less distinctly stated by other writers, long before our time,—a very searching and trustworthy test.

It is, in substance, this:—Whatever doctrine or opinion has received, throughout a long succession of centuries, the common assent of mankind, may be properly set down as being, if not absolutely true in its usually received form, yet founded on truth, and having, at least, a great, undeniable verity that underlies it.

If, however, there be conflicting details as to any doctrine, varying in form according to the sect or the nation that entertains it, then the test is to be received as affirming the grand underlying truth, but not as proving any of the conflicting varieties of investment in which particular sects or nations may have chosen to clothe it.

Thus of the world's belief in the reality of another life, and in the doctrine of future reward and punishment.

In some form or other, such a faith has existed in every age and among almost every people. Charon and his boat might be the means of conveyance. Or the believer, dying in battle for the creed of the Faithful, might expect to wake up in a celestial harem peopled with Houris. Or the belief might embody the matchless horrors painted by Dante; his dolorous city with the terrible inscription over its entrance-gate: "*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate*."

Again, the conception might be of a long unconscious interval after death, succeeded at last by a resuscitation; or it might be of another world, the supplement and immediate continuation of this, into which Death, herald, not destroyer, ushers us even while human friends are yet closing our eyes and composing our limbs. It might be of the Paradise in which, on the very day of the crucifixion, the penitent thief was to meet the Saviour of mankind; or it might be of that Heaven, yet increate or unpeopled, seen by some in long, distant perspective, shadowed forth in such lines as these:—

"That man, when laid in lonesome grave,
    Shall sleep in Death's dark gloom,
Until the eternal morning wake
    The slumbers of the tomb."

Yet again, the idea may be of a Future of which the denizens shall be, on some Great Day, tried as before an earthly court, doomed as by an earthly tribunal, and sentence pronounced against them by a presiding God, who, of his own omnipotent will, decides to inflict upon sinners condign punishment, in measure far beyond all earthly severity,—torment in quenchless flames, with no drop of water to cool the parched tongue, for ever and ever.

In other words, we may conceive, as to human destiny in another world, either of punishments optional and arbitrary, growing out of the indignation of an offended Judge who hates and requites sin, or of punishments natural and inherent, growing out of the very nature of sin itself, as *delirium tremens*

requites a long career of intemperance. We may conceive of punishments which are the awards of judicial vengeance; or we may believe in those only which are the inevitable results of eternal and immutable law, a necessary sequence in the next life to the bad passions and evil deeds of this.

Those who incline to this latter aspect of the Great Future, as the scene of reward or punishment supervening in the natural order of things, may chance to find interest, beyond mere curiosity, in the following strange narrative.

There is not, perhaps, a country more rife in legends of haunted houses than Germany. No province but has its store of them. Many, drawn by tradition from the obscurity of the past, have lost, if they ever possessed, any claim to be regarded except as apocryphal. But others, of a recent date and better attested, cannot be disposed of in so summary a manner.

In furnishing a specimen of this latter class, I depart from a rule which I think it well to observe in regard to original narratives of character so marvellous: to record such, namely, only when they can be procured direct from the lips of the witnesses themselves. This comes to me at second hand. I had no opportunity of cross-questioning the actors in the scenes narrated. Yet I had the story from a gentleman of high respectability: the principal Secretary of the – Legation at Naples: and his sources of information were direct and authentic.

In the southeastern portion of Pomerania, at no great distance from the frontier of the province of West Prussia, and in the vicinity of the small town of Bütow, there stood, not many years since, an ancient château. It was the ancestral residence of an old Pomeranian family of baronial rank; and the narrative of its destruction, with the causes which led thereto, is curious and remarkable.

Its former owner, the Baron von Putkammer, after leading a wild and dissolute life, had expired within its walls. For years previously, many a mysterious story, fraught with dark hints of seduction and infanticide, had been whispered over the surrounding country; and when at last death arrested the Baron's profligate career, some reported that he had been strangled in requital of outrage committed,—others, that the Devil had taken home his own, as they had long expected.

His estate went to a relative of the same name, who granted the enjoyment of it to his eldest son, heir to the title. This young man, after a time, arrived to take possession. He found in the château the administrator of the deceased Baron's estate.

It was late, the first night, before he went to bed. Yet he was scarcely undressed, when he heard, through the stillness of the night, the approach of a carriage, at first rolling over the sharp gravel of the avenue, then entering the paved court-yard. This was succeeded by the noise of the front door opening, and the distinct sound of steps on the principal staircase.

Young Putkammer, surprised at this unseasonable visit, yet supposing it some friend who had been benighted, hastily donned his dressing-gown, and, with light in hand, stepped to the landing. Nothing to be seen there! But he heard behind him the opening of a door leading into the principal gallery of the château,—a long hall which for some time had been out of use. It had been employed by the former owner of the castle as a banqueting-room, was hung with old family portraits, and, as the young man had noticed during the day, was so completely incumbered with furniture, which had been temporarily stored there, that no one could pass through it.

He returned in great surprise, which was much increased when he found the door of the gallery in question closed and locked. He listened, and heard quite distinctly, within the room, the noise of plates and dishes and the clatter of knives and forks. To this, after a time, succeeded the sound of shuffling cards and the rattle of money, as if thrown on the table in the course of the game.

More and more astonished, he awoke his servant, and bade him listen at the door and tell him what he heard. The terrified valet reported the same sounds that had reached his master's ears, Thereupon the latter told him to arouse the administrator and request his presence.

When this gentleman appeared, the young nobleman eagerly asked if he could furnish any explanation of this strange disturbance.

"I was unwilling," said he, in reply, "to anticipate what you now witness, lest you might imagine I had some interested motive to prevent your coming hither. We are all familiar with these sounds. They occur every night at about the same hour. And we have sought in vain any natural explanation of their constant recurrence."

"Have you the key of the gallery?"

"Here it is."

The door was unlocked and thrown open. Silence and darkness! And when the lights were introduced, not an object to be seen through the gloom, but the old furniture confusedly piled up over the floor.

They closed and locked the door. Again the same sounds commenced: the clatter of dishes, the noise of revelling, the clink of the gamblers' gold. A second time they opened the door, this time quickly and suddenly; and a second time the sounds instantly ceased, and the hall, untenanted except by the silent portraits on its walls, appeared before them, the same still and gloomy lumber-room as before.

Baffled for the time, young Putkammer dismissed his attendants and retired to his chamber. Erelong he heard the door of the gallery open, the heavy footsteps sound on the stairway, the front door creak on its hinges,—and then the roll of the carriage, first over the stone pavement, then along the gravelled avenue, till the sounds gradually died away in the distance.

The next night he was ready dressed and prepared with lights. When, about the same hour, the noise of the approaching carriage was heard, he had the lights immediately carried to the top of the stairway, and he himself half descended the stairs. Up the stairs and past his very side came the footsteps; but neither living being nor spectral form could his eyes perceive.

The same noises in the old banqueting-hall. The same fruitless attempts to witness the revel, or to get at the secret, if any, of the imposition.

The young man was brave and devoid of superstition. Yet, in spite of himself, these mysterious sounds, renewed night after night, irritated his nerves, and preyed upon his quiet. He thought to break through the spell by inviting a party of living guests. They came, to the number of thirty or forty; but not for their presence did the invisible revellers intermit their nocturnal visit. All heard the approach of the carriage, the steps ascending the staircase, the sounds of revelry in the hall. And all, when the opened door disclosed, as wont, but darkness and silence, turned away with a shudder,—and to the subsequent invitation of their host to favor him again with their company replied by some shallow apology, which he perfectly understood.

Thus deserted by his friends, and subjected, night after night, to the same ghastly annoyance, the young man found his health beginning to suffer, and decided to endure it no longer.

Returning to his father, he informed him that he would receive with gratitude the rents of the property, but only on condition that he was not required to reside in its haunted château.

The father, ridiculing what he termed his son's superstitious weakness, declared that he would himself take up his residence there for a time, assured that he could not fail to discover the true cause of the sounds that had driven off its former occupants.

But the result belied his expectations. Like his son, he never could *see* anything. But the selfsame sounds nightly assailed his ears. He caused the hall to be cleared out and occupied daily. So long as it was lighted, and there was any one within it, no sounds were heard; and by thus occupying it all night, the disturbance could be averted. But as often as it was closed or left in darkness, the invisible revel recommenced at the wonted hour, preceded by the same preliminaries, terminating in the same manner.

Nothing was left untried to penetrate the mystery, and to detect the trick, if to trickery the disturbances were due. But every effort to obtain an explanation of the phenomena utterly failed. And the father, like the son, after a few weeks' struggle against the nightly annoyance, found his nervous

system unable to cope with this constant strain upon it, and left the château, determined never again to enter its walls.

The next expedient was to rent it to those whom the fame of its ghostly reputation had not reached. But this was unavailing, except for a brief season. No tenant would remain beyond a week or ten days. This plan, therefore, was abandoned in despair; the principal rooms were closed; and the building remained for years untenanted, except by one or two unwilling dependants.

Finally the proprietor, deeming all change hopeless, and finding that the keeping up of the château was a mere useless expense, resolved to destroy it. The dead had fairly driven out the living. He had it pulled down; and a few low, ruined walls alone remained to mark the place where it stood.

Still, even within these deserted ruins, the same sounds of nightly revelry were declared to have been heard by those who were bold enough to approach them at the midnight hour. When this was reported to the proprietor, he determined, if possible, to outroot this last remnant of disturbance. Accordingly, he caused to be erected, out of the remaining materials of the château and on the spot where it had stood, a small chapel, now to be found there, a mute witness of the story I have here told.

The chapel was completed and consecrated in the year 1844. Even while the rites attending its consecration were in progress, strange and unwonted noises disturbed the congregation; but from that time on they ceased; and the chapel has since been entirely free from any such.

A relative of the proprietor, a young officer in the Prussian army, was present at the consecration, himself witnessed the noises in question, and had previously heard, from the parties themselves, all the former occurrences. He it was who related the circumstances to my informant, the Baron von P–, a gentleman of a grave and earnest character, whose manner, in repeating them to me, evinced sincerity and conviction. But it is not merely upon his authority that the details of the narrative rest. They are, it would seem, of public notoriety in Pomerania; and hundreds of persons in the neighborhood, as my informant declared, can yet be found to testify, from personal observation, to the general accuracy of the above narration.[1]

The most salient point in this story is the practical and business part of it,—the actual pulling down of the château, as a last resort, to get rid of the disturbance. Mere fancy is not wont to lead to such a result as that. The owner of a piece of valuable property is not likely to destroy it for imaginary cause. Interest is a marvellous quickener of the wits, and may be supposed to have left no stone unturned, before assenting to such a sacrifice.

I inquired of the gentleman to whom I am indebted for the above narrative if there were no skeptical surmises in regard to the origin of the disturbance. He replied, that he had heard but one,—namely, that the administrator of the deceased Baron's estate might, from motives of interest and to have the field to himself, have resorted to a trick to scare the owners from the premises.

It is beyond a doubt that such devices have been successfully employed ere now for similar purpose. An example may be found in the story of the monks of St. Bruno, and the shrewd device they employed to obtain from King Louis the Saint the grant of one of his ancestral palaces. It was in this wise.

Having heard his confessor speak in high terms of the goodness and learning of the monks of St. Bruno, the King expressed a desire to found a community of them near Paris. Bernard de la Tour, the superior, sent six of the brethren; and Louis assigned to them, as residence, a handsome dwelling in the village of Chantilly. It so happened, that from their windows they had a fine view of the old palace of Vauvert, originally erected for a royal residence by King Robert, but which had been deserted for years. The worthy monks, oblivious of the Tenth Commandment, may have thought the place would suit them; but ashamed, probably, to make a formal demand of it from the King, they seem to have set their wits to work to procure it by stratagem.

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[1] I find in my journal the following:—"*August 17, 1857.* Read over to the Baron von P– the Putkammer narrative; and he assented to its accuracy in every particular."

At all events, the palace of Vauvert, which had never labored under any imputation against its character until they became its neighbors, began almost immediately afterwards to acquire a bad name. Frightful shrieks were heard to proceed thence at night. Blue, red, and green lights were seen to glimmer from its casements, and then suddenly disappear. The clanking of chains succeeded, together with the howlings of persons as in great pain. Then a ghastly spectre, in pea-green, with long, white beard and serpent's tail, appeared at the principal windows, shaking his fist at the passers-by. This went on for months.

The King, to whom all these wonders were duly reported, deplored the scandal, and sent commissioners to look into the affair. To these the six monks of Chantilly, indignant that the Devil should play such pranks before their very faces, suggested, that, if they could but have the palace as a residence, they would undertake speedily to cure it of all ghostly intrusion. A deed, with the royal sign-manual, conveyed Vauvert to the monks of St Bruno. It bears the date of 1259. From that time all disturbances ceased,—the green ghost, according to the creed of the pious, being laid to rest forever under the waters of the Red Sea.[2]

Some will surmise that the story of the castle of Putkammer is but a modified version of that of the palace of Vauvert. It may be so. One who was not on the spot, to witness the phenomena and personally to verify all the details, cannot rationally deny the possibility of such an hypothesis. Yet I find little parallel between the cases, and difficulties, apparently insuperable, in the way of accepting such a solution of the mystery.

The French palace was deserted, and nothing was easier than to play off there, unchallenged, such commonplace tricks as the showing of colored lights, the clanking of chains, shrieks, groans, and a howling spectre with beard and tail,—all in accordance with the prejudices of that age; nor do we read that any one was bold enough to penetrate, during the night, into the scene of the disturbance; nor had the King's commissioners any personal motive to urge a thorough research; nor had a pious sovereign, the owner of a dozen palaces, any strong inducement to refuse the cession of one of these, already untenanted and useless, to certain holy men, the objects of his veneration.

Very different, in every respect, is the affair of the Pomeranian castle. It is a narrative of the skeptical nineteenth century, that sets down all ghost-stories as nursery-tales. The owner, and his son, the future possessor, each at separate times and for weeks, reside in the castle, and occupy themselves in repeated attempts to discover whether they have been imposed on. The selfsame trick, if trick it was, is repeated night after night, without variation. The roll of the approaching carriage-wheels, first along the gravelled avenue, then over the paved court-yard, while no carriage was visible,—how were such sounds to be imitated? The fall of footsteps, unaccompanied by aught in bodily form, up the lighted stairway, and past the very side of the bold youth who stepped down to meet them,—what human device could successfully simulate these? The sound of the opening gallery-door and the noises of the midnight orgies, with full opportunity to examine every nook and corner of the scene whence, to every ear, the same identical indications came,—how, in producing and reproducing these, could trickery, time after time, escape detection? Both father and son, it is evident, had their suspicions aroused; and both, as evidently, were men of courage, not to be blinded by superstitious panic. Is it a probable thing that they would destroy an old and valued family mansion, without having exhausted every conceivable expedient to detect imposture?

Nor was this imposture, if as such we are to regard it, conducted in approved form, after the orthodox fashion. It assumed a shape contrary to all usually received ideas. No spectre clanking its chains; no lights burning blue; no groans of the tormented; no ordinary getting-up of a ghostly disturbance. But a mere succession of sounds, indicating, if we are to receive and interpret them literally, the periodical return from the world of spirits of some of its tenants, restless and unblest. Was this the machinery a mystifier was likely to select?

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[2] This story is given in Garinet's *Histoire de la Magie en France*, p. 75.

Such are the difficulties which attend the hypothesis of a concerted plan of deception. They will be overlooked by those who have made up their minds that communications between this world and the next are impossible, and who will content themselves with pronouncing, that, though they cannot detect the mode of the imposture, yet imposture of some kind or other it plainly must have been.

And such skeptics will very properly remind us of other difficulties in the way of accepting as a reality the alleged phenomena. What have the spirits of the departed to do with conveyances resembling those of earthly structure? Are there incorporeal carriages and horses? Can grave men admit such fancies as these?[3] Or is all this, even if genuine, only symbolical,—sounds without objective counterpart? Then what becomes of the positive character of this narrative, as a lesson, as a warning to us? The whole degenerates into an acted parable. It fades into the idle pageantry of a dream. Thus we lose ourselves in shadowy conjecture.

But, none the less, the facts, if facts they be, remain to be dealt with. And if at last we concede the ultramundane origin of these manifestations, whether as objective reality or only as truth-teaching allegory, what a field is opened to our speculations regarding the realms of spirit and the possible punishments there in store for those who, by degrading their natures in this world, may have rendered themselves unfit for happiness in the next,—and who, perhaps, still attracted to earth by the debasing excesses they once mistook for pleasure, may be doomed, in the phantom repetition of their sins, to detect their naked reality, to have stamped on their consciousness the vileness of these without the brutal gratifications that veiled it, the essence of vice shorn of its sensual halo, the grossness without the glitter: if so, a terrible expiation!

I beg it may not be imagined, that, because I see grave difficulties in the way of regarding this case as one of imposture, I therefore set it up as proof of a novel theory regarding future punishments. A structure so great cannot be erected on foundation so slender. I but furnish it as a chance contribution towards the probabilities of ultramundane intercourse,—as material for thought, —as one of those hints which future facts may render valueless, but which, on the other hand, other observed phenomena may possibly serve to work out and corroborate and explain.

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[3] Yet in a recent case, occurring in England, and authenticated in the strongest manner, the "sound of carriages driving in the park when none were there" is one of the incidents given on the authority of the lady who had witnessed the disturbances, and who furnishes a detailed account of them. See "Facts and Fantasies," a sequel to "Lights and Sounds, the Mystery of the Day," by Henry Spicer, London, 1853, pp. 76-101.

THE RHYME OF THE MASTER'S MATE

FORT HENRY

None who saw it can forget
How they went into the fight,
Four abreast,—
Thereby was the foe perplexed,—
With the Essex on the right,
That is nearest to the Fort,
And the Cincinnati next,
The St. Louis on her left,
All so gallant and so deft,
And the brave Carondelet.

Boom, boom, from every bow!
(They'll have to answer that!)
From the Rebel bastions, now,
There's a flash.
Cool, keep cool, boys, don't be rash!
Mind your eyes, as the old Boss said;
Keep together and go ahead,—
Not too high and not too low,
Fire slow!

Paff!
Now we have it from the Fort,
And the Rebels all a-crowing;
While the devils'-echoes laugh,
With a loonish thunder-lowing,
After every gun's report:
'Tisn't bird-shot they are throwing,—
'Tisn't chaff!
Ping! Ping!
If you've ever seen the thing
That can fly without a wing
Swifter than the Thunder's bird,
Lightning-clenching, lightning-spurred,—
If you've ever heard it sing,
You will understand the word,
And look out;
For, beyond a mortal doubt,
It can sting!

Thump!
'D y' ever hear anything like it?

Sounded very much like a ten-strike,—it
Appears they're after a spare!
Bet it made the old Boss jump,
Or at any rate awfully screw up his brows,—
Hit the pilot-house,
And he's up there,—
Must 'a' been a hundred-pounder,—
Had the twang of a conical ball,—
Would 'a' gone plumb through a ten-foot wall.
Isn't the old *Cinc.* a trump?

They meant that for a damper!
Square it off with an eighty shell
And a fifteen-second fuse,
(With all the latest news!)—
Pretty well done, boys, pretty well!
Guess that'll be apt to tell
'Em all about where it came from,
And where it's a-going to,
What it took its name from,
And all it's a-knowing to!
See 'em scamper!

The Conestoga, the Tyler,
And the Lexington, you know,
Are in line a half a mile, or
A little less, below,—
Just this side of the Panther
(Little woody island),
They've their orders–Oh,
But, after all, how *can* their
Wooden-heads keep silent?
Wonder 'f it don't make 'em feel bad,
Even if they ain't all *steel*-clad,
At being slighted so!

'Tisn't so bad a day,
Although it's a little cloudy,—
Or rather, as one might say,
Smoky, perhaps,—
A little hazy, a little dubious,
A little too sulphury to be salubrious.
D' ye mind those thunder-claps?
Do you feel now and then the least little bit
Of an incipient earthquake fit,
Accompanied with awful raps?
But give 'em gowdy, give 'em gowdy,
And it'll soon clear away!

Old Boss ain't to be balked.—
All this, you know,
Was only the way (or nearly so)
The boys talked,
And felt and thought,
(And acted, too,)
The harder they fought
And the hotter it grew.—

But there was a Hand at the reel
That nobody saw,—
Old Hickory there at every keel,
In every timber, from stem to stern,—
A *something* in every crank and wheel,
That made 'em answer their turn;
And everywhere,
On earth and water, in fire and air,
As it were to see it all well done,
The Wraith of the murdered Law,—
Old John Brown at every gun!

But the Fort was all in a roar:
No use to talk, they had the range,—
Which wasn't strange,
Guess they'd tried it before,—
And the pounding was not soft,
But might well appall
The boldest heart.
Cool and calm,
Trumpet in hand,
Up in the cock-loft,
Where 'twas the hottest of all,
Our brave old Commodore
Took his stand,
And played his part,
Humming over some old psalm!

Tut! did ye hear the hiss and scream
Of that hot steam?
It's the Essex that's struck,—
She never had any luck:
Ah, 'twas a wicked shot,
And, whether they know it or not,
It doesn't give us joy!

Thorough an open port it flew,
As with some special permit to destroy;
And first, for sport,
Struck the soul from that beautiful boy;

Then through the bulkhead lunged,
And into the boiler plunged,
Scalding the whole crew!

We know that the brave must fall,—
But that was a sight to see:
Twenty-three,
All in an instant scalded and scathed,
All at once in the white shroud swathed!
A low moan came from the deck
Of the drifting wreck,—
And that was all.

How the traitors'll boast,
As soon as they come to see her
All adrift and aghast!—
Hark! d' ye hear? d' ye hear?
D' ye hear 'em shout?
They see it already, no doubt.
We shall have to count her out,—
That white breath was her last,—
She has given up the ghost!

What does the old Boss think?
Will he shrink?
Will he waver or falter now?—
A little shadow flits over his brow,
For the sharp pang in his heart,—
Flits over—and is gone,—
And a light looms up in his old gray eye,
Whether you see it or not,
That is like a sudden dawn
In a stormy sky!

What does he *think*?
What will he *do*?—
Well! he don't say!
But I'll tell you what,
You can bet your life,
As you would your knife,
And your wife, too,
He'll do
(And put 'em up at once!)—
He'll run these boats right up to their guns,
And take that Fort, or sink!

But, oh—oh, it was hot!
So thick and fast the solid shot
Upon our iron armor played,

It kept, like thunder, a kind of time—
Devil's tattoo or gallopade—
That, like an awful, awful rhyme,
            Rang in the ear;
And they sent us cheer after cheer.

But the boys had been to *school*,
And *their* guns were not cool;
For they knew what Cause they served,
And not a man of 'em swerved!
But on, right on, they swept,
And from every grim bow-port
Their nutmegs and shell-barks leaped
Into the jaws of the Fort!
And (to give her, perhaps, a chance to breathe)
Knocked out some of her big, black teeth!
And (to raise a better crop, no doubt,
Than was ever raised there before)
Ploughed her up into awful creases,
            Inside and out!—
For now they were up and doing the chore
At only four hundred yards,
And the death-dealing shreds and shards
Of our shell were tearing 'em all to pieces!

Hurrah for the brave old Flag!
To triumph see her ride!—
Ha, ha! they dodge and duck,—
The Snake's expiring!
Their gunners run and hide,—
By heaven, they've struck!
Down comes the rattlesnake rag
By the run,—
Stop the firing!
The work is done!—

Anyhow, she'll do for batter!—
You see now, Butternuts, you were plucky;
But that ain't "what's the matter,"—
Not by a long shot!
No, no,—no! I'll tell you what—
And you mustn't take it at all amiss—
I'll tell you what the *matter* is:
'Tain't because you were born unlucky,
(Bear in mind,)
Nor that you've good eyes and we are blind,—
Nothing of the kind,—
But it's something else, if it isn't more:
The reason—pardon!—you had to cotton

Was simply this: Your *Cause* was rotten,—
Rotten to the very core:
That's what's the matter!

But you ought to 'a' heard our water-dogs yelp!—
Just an hour and fifteen minutes!—
(Twitter away, you English linnets!)
Horizontal and perpendicular,
Fair and square, without any help,—
That is, any in particular,—
The old ferry wash-tubs of the West,
With some new-fashioned *hoops*, for a little test,
And a few old *pounders* from—Kingdom Come,
And nothing for suds but the "Nawth'n scum,"
Made these "gen'l'men" turn as white
As a head o' hair in a single night!
Cleaned their army completely out,
(We're going to give *that* another wipe!)
On the double-quick, by the shortest route,—
Wrung their stronghold from their gripe,—
Brought their garrison right to taw,
And made 'em get down to the "higher law"!

So that when Grant and his boys came up,
(There's places enough for a man to die!)
Swearing that we had "spoiled" their "sport,"
With a quiet twinkle in his eye,
Old Boss asked 'em to come in and sup,
And set 'em to *house-keeping* in the Fort!—
But all the old fellow could say or do,
They'd still keep a-going it: "Bully for *you*!"

"Bully" for Grant and for Foote!—
E'en if the voice must tremble,—
And "bully" for all who helped 'em to do 't!
Bully for Porter and Stemble!
For Paulding and for Walke,—
For Phelps, for Gwin, and for Shirk!—
But what's the use to talk?
They were all of 'em up to the work!
Bully for each brave tub
That bore the Union Blue!
And for every mother's son
Of every gallant crew,
Whatever his color or name,
Who, when it came to the rub,
Shall be found to have been *game*!

* * * * *

Such was the Rhyme of the Master's Mate,
Just as they found it in the locker,
With this at the foot:—
"It's getting late,
And I hear a pretty loud Knock at the knocker!
Captain, if I should chance to fall,
Try to send me home. Good bye!" That's all,—
Excepting the date, the name, and rank:—
"Feb. 12th, '62, – –,
Master's Mate."

All next day a great black Cloud
Hung over the land from coast to coast;
And the next, the Knocking was "pretty loud,"—
With a sudden Eclipse, as it were, of the sun,—
And the earth, all day, quaked—"Donelson!"
But the next was the deadliest day of all,
And the Master's Mate was not at Call!
Yet nobody seemed to wonder why,—
There was something, perhaps, the Master knew
Far better than we, for his Mate to do,—
And the Day went down with a bloody sky!

But when the long, long Night was past,
And our Eagle, sweeping the traitor's crag,
Circled to victory up the dome,
The great Reveille was heard at last!—
They wrapped the Mate in his country's flag,
And sent him in glory home!

THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE IN LIBRARIES

A visible library is a goodly sight. We do not underrate the external value of books, when we say it is the invisible which forms their chief charm. Sometimes rather too much is said about "tall copies," and "large-paper copies," and "first editions," the binding, paper, type, and all the rest of the outside attraction, or the fancy price, which go to make up the collector's trade. The books themselves feel a little degraded, when this sort of conversation is carried on in their presence: some of them know well enough that occasionally they fall into hands which think more "of the coat than of the man who is under it." We must, however, be honest enough to confess that we are ourself a bibliomaniac, and few possessions are more valued than an old manuscript, written on vellum some five hundred years ago, of which we cannot read one word. Nor do we prize less the modern extreme of external attraction,—volumes exquisitely printed and adorned, bound by Rivière, in full tree-marbled calf, with delicate tooling on the back, which looks as if the frost-work from the window-pane on a cold January morning had been transmuted into gold, and laid on the leather. Ah, these are sights fit for the gods!

Nevertheless, we come back to our starting-point, that what is unseen forms the real value of the library. The type, the paper, the binding, the age, are all visible; but the soul that conceived it, the mind that arranged it, the hand that wrote it, the associations which cling to it, are the invisible links in a long chain of thought, effort, and history, which make the book what it is.

In wandering through the great libraries of Europe, how often has this truth been impressed upon the mind!—such a library as that in the old city of Nuremberg, housed in what was once a monastery, and looking so ancient, quaint, and black-lettered, visibly and invisibly, that, if the old monk in the legend who slipped over a thousand years while the little bird sang to him in the wood, and was thereby taught, what he could not understand in the written Word, that a thousand years in God's sight are but as a day,—if that old monk had walked out of the Nuremberg monastery and now walked back again, he might almost take up the selfsame manuscript he had laid down a thousand years ago.

What invisible heads have ached, and hands become weary, over those vellum volumes, with their bright initial letters! What hearts have throbbed over the early printed book! How triumphantly was the first copy, now worm-eaten and forgotten, contemplated by the author! How was that invisible world which surrounded him to be stirred by that new book!

We remember looking into one of the cell-like alcoves arranged for students in a college library at Oxford, and watching a fellow of the college (a type of scholars, grown old among books, rarely found in our busy land) crooning over a strange black-letter folio, and laughing to himself with a sort of invisible chuckle. The unseen in that volume was revealed to us through that laugh of the old bookworm, and quite unseen we partook of his amusement. Another alcove was vacant; a crabbed manuscript, just laid down by the writer, was on the desk. He was invisible; but the watchful guardian at the head of the room saw us peering in, and warned us with a loud voice not to enter. Safely might we have been permitted to do so, for we could hardly have deciphered at a glance all the wisdom that lurked in the open page; yet that hidden meaning, invisible to us, was of real value to the unseen writer.

There are many incidents connected with the visible and invisible of libraries existing in the great houses of England, which could point a moral in sketches of this subject. One, concerning a pamphlet found at Woburn Abbey, has a peculiar interest.

Lord William Russell, eldest son of Francis, fourth Earl of Bedford, after completing his education at Oxford, and travelling abroad for two years, returned home in the winter of 1634. Young, handsome, accomplished, and the eldest son of the House of Russell, the fashionable world of London marked him as a prize in the matrimonial speculations of the times, and was quite in a flutter to know which of the reigning beauties, would captivate the young Lord Russell. Lady Elizabeth Cecil, Lady

Dorothy Sidney, Lady Anne Carr were the rival belles upon whom the eyes of the world were fixed. It was with no small consternation that the Earl of Bedford soon found that the affections of his son had been attracted by Lady Anne Carr, the daughter of the Earl and Countess of Somerset, more widely known as Robert Carr and Lady Essex. The Earl of Bedford had taken a prominent part in the Countess's trial, and participated in the general abhorrence of her character. In vain his son pleaded the innocence of the daughter, who, early separated from her parents, knew nothing of their history or their crimes. The Earl of Bedford shrunk with a feeling of all but insurmountable aversion to such an alliance; and not until the king interceded for the youthful lovers, did the father yield a reluctant consent, and their marriage was celebrated. The undisturbed happiness and harmony in which the parties lived reconciled the Earl to the connection; he became much attached to his beautiful daughter-in-law; and in the sweetness and domestic purity of her character he could sometimes forget her parents. Lady Anne's life passed quietly in the discharge of the duties of a wife and mother, and of those which devolved upon her when her husband became fifth Earl of Bedford in 1641. In 1683, their eldest son, Lord William Russell, died on the scaffold.

"There is a life in the principles of freedom," says the historian of the House of Russell, "which the axe of the executioner does not, for it cannot, touch." This great thought must have strengthened the souls of the parents under so terrible a trial. The mother's health, however, sunk under the blow, which, in the sympathy of her celebrated daughter-in-law, the heroic Lady Rachel Russell, she endeavored to sustain. One day, seeking, perhaps, some book to cheer her thoughts, Lady Bedford entered the library, and in an anteroom seldom visited chanced to take a pamphlet from the shelves. She opened its pages, and read there, for the first time, the record of her mother's guilt. The visible in that page rent aside the invisible veil which those who loved Lady Bedford had silently woven over her whole life, as a shield from a terrible truth. She was found by her attendants senseless, with the fatal book open in her hand. The revelations of the past, the sorrows of the present, were too much for her to bear, and she died. Lady Rachel Russell, writing from Woburn Abbey at the time, states her conviction that Lady Bedford's reason would not have sustained the shock received from the contents of the pamphlet, even had her physical powers rallied.

Turning aside one moment from our subject, we stand in awe before the striking contrast presented by the characters of two women, each so closely linked with Lady Bedford's life,—the one who heard her first breath, and the other who received her last sigh. If Lady Somerset causes us to shrink with horror from the depth of depravity of which woman's nature is capable, let us thank God that in Lady Rachel Russell we have a witness of the purity, self-sacrifice, and holiness a true woman's soul can attain.

In the library at Wilton House, the seat of the Sidneys, we were shown a lock of Queen Elizabeth's hair, hidden for more than a hundred years in one of the books. A day came when some member of the family took down an old volume to see what treasures of wisdom lurked therein. "She builded better than she knew," for between the leaves lay folded a paper which contained a faded lock of the once proud Queen Bess. How it came there, and by whose hand it was placed in the book, is one of the invisible things of the library, but the writing within the paper authenticated the relic beyond doubt; and it is now shown as one of the visible treasures of the library of Wilton House.

Magdalen College, Cambridge, contains the Pepysian Library,—placed there by the will of Pepys, under stringent conditions, in default of whose fulfilment the bequest falls to Trinity. One of the fellows of Magdalen is always obliged to mount guard over visitors to the library. Such an escort being provided, we ascended the stairs, and found ourselves in the presence of the bookcases which once adorned Pepys's house in London, containing the "three thousand bookes" of which he was so proud. The bookcases are handsome, with small mirrors let into them, in which, doubtless, Mrs. Pepys often surveyed the effect of those "newegownes" which pleased her husband's vanity so well, although he rather reluctantly paid the cost. There, too, is the original manuscript of that entertaining Diary, wherein Pepys daguerrotyped the age in which he lived, and himself with all his

sense and nonsense. That Diary would have remained one of the invisible treasures of libraries, for it was written in a cipher of his own invention, but, by a very curious chance, the key to that cipher was unintentionally betrayed through comparison with another paper, and the journal was brought to light, and many things made visible which the writer dreamed not of confiding to future ages. Pepys was an indefatigable, and, we cannot but half suspect, an unscrupulous collector. Volumes of autographs, great scrap-books filled with prints, tickets, invitations, ballads, let us into the visible and invisible of the reign of Charles II. A manuscript music-book, elegantly bound, and labelled, "Songs altered to suit my Voice," carried us back to the days when, after going to the play in the afternoon, Pepys and some of his companions "came back to my house and had musique."

Pepys certainly never meant to be one of the invisible things in his own library, for every book contains an engraving from his own portrait. Should he ever come back to look after the possessions he so much valued, he can surely be at no loss to find the likeness of the form he once wore. If a spirit can retain any human vanity and self-importance, his must certainly be unpleasantly surprised that the great collection looks small in these days, and attracts but little attention. To antiquaries and lovers of the odd and curious it must ever be valuable; but the obligation of having a fellow of Magdalen at one's elbow much interferes with that quiet, cozy "mousing" so dear to the soul of a bibliomaniac. We heartily wished that we could have made an appointment with the shade of old Pepys, and, returning to the library in the stillness of midnight, have found him ready to show off his collections. That would have been, indeed, the visible and the invisible of the Pepysian Library. The Cambridge men of to-day are too busy about their own affairs to look much into Pepys's collections, which remain quietly ensconced under the guardianship of Old Magdalen, one of the visible links between the seen and unseen in libraries.

Nestled quietly in an old Elizabethan house, among the great trees at Wotton, is the library of John Evelyn. Belonging to the same age as that of Pepys, but collected by a man of widely different tastes and character, there is much outwardly to charm as well as to elevate the mind in the influences shed around it. Here are tall copies and folios of grave works, classic and historical, the solid literary food of a man who kept his soul pure amid a corrupt age, books as harmonious with the reflective mind of Evelyn as were the grand old woods of Wotton with the refined tastes of the author of "Sylva." Here is preserved the original manuscript of Evelyn's Journal, the paper yellow with the mellow tints of two hundred autumns, yet the thought as fresh as if written yesterday. Near the manuscript is seen the prayer-book which Charles I. held in his hand when he mounted the scaffold at Whitehall. There is much of the visible and invisible in that quaint old library at Wotton.

The internal treasures of Christian faith opened a wide field for the outward decoration of religious books. "The Hours" (meaning devotional hours) of kings and queens are magnificent specimens of chirography, showing also the skill of artists in the earliest centuries. The art of preparing these volumes was divided into two branches: that of the *Miniatori*, or illuminators, who furnished the paintings, the borders, and arabesques, and also laid on the gold; and that of the *Miniatori calligrafi*, who wrote the whole of the book, and drew the initial letters of blue and red with their fanciful ornaments. Many of the great libraries of Europe contain these splendid manuscripts, and although but one page is open to the passing visitor, which he sees "through a glass darkly," yet that page is written over and illuminated with associations and memories. Could a glance reveal thoughts which have looked out of eyes bending over these pages, when they were held in the hand of their first owner, what messages from the invisible would be received! Some of these rare and regal possessions have gone a little astray, and wandered about in the wilderness of the world, as is confirmed by an anecdote we recently received from good authority. A magnificent volume, illustrated by views of French châteaux of the Middle Ages, presented to a princess of the House of Bourbon, was known to have existed. This manuscript had disappeared, and for more than a hundred years it could not be traced. The Duc d'Aumale, son of Louis Philippe, while in Genoa, was informed (by a person who called upon him for that purpose) that there was for sale in that city a valuable illuminated manuscript,

and, as the Duke was known to be a collector of rare books, it would be shown to him. He accordingly followed his informant to an obscure part of the city, and into an old house, where the manuscript was produced. What was his astonishment, when he beheld before him the lost Bourbon manuscript, so long sought for in vain! He immediately became its purchaser; and whatever secret history belongs to the volume, connected with the time when it was invisible, it is now one of the most treasured realities in the magnificent library at Orleans House.

In the illuminated pages of many of these old manuscripts there lurks much more, doubtless, than meets the eye. Thus, that famous poem of the Middle Ages, the "Romance of the Rose," has passed for a mere fanciful allegory, or love-story. Splendidly illuminated copies of this Romance are well known. The British Museum possesses one, which Dibdin calls "the cream of the Harleian Collection": it is in folio, and replete with embellishments. He also mentions another copy, at that time belonging to Mr. North, the frontispiece of which represents Francis I. surrounded by his courtiers, receiving a copy from the author. Only the visible of the illuminated volume was probably opened to the eyes of Francis, or even of Dibdin. A later student pronounces the Romance to be a complete specimen of Hermetic Philosophy, concealing great truths under its allegory,—the Rose being the symbol of philosophic gold.

Such is the view taken of this Romance by our distinguished fellow-countryman, Major-General Hitchcock, who found time, in the interval between two wars, to collect and study three hundred volumes of Hermetic Philosophy, coming forth therefrom as a champion in defence of a much misunderstood class. This ingenious work, entitled "Alchemy and the Alchemists," published in 1857, was written to prove that the alchemists were not foolish seekers for sordid gold, nor vain believers in the elixir of life, but philosophers of deep thought and high aims, who, in days when a man dared not say his soul was his own, veiled in mystic language, perfectly understood by each other, theological and philosophical truths, theories, and discoveries, which would have brought them to the stake or the rack, had they been produced openly. "Man was the subject of alchemy, and the object of the art was the perfection, or at least the improvement, of man." These were the *real* Hermetic Philosophers. After them came men who, not knowing the meaning of the symbolic language which concealed the spiritual truths, took the written word in a literal sense, and went to work with crucibles and retorts, seeking the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life, not knowing, indeed, the Scripture, that "the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive."

Such a theory as that advanced in "Alchemy and the Alchemists" opens a new chapter in the visible and invisible of a library of Hermetic Philosophy.

The most ancient specimens of calligraphy extant are probably the Terence of the fourth century and the Virgil of the fifth century, in the Vatican Library. Alas for those who have no open sesame to that collection! We shall never forget our disappointment upon entering the Vatican. We could not gaze even on the mouldy vellum or faded leather of old bindings, and saw nothing but stupid modern painted cases, bodies quite unworthy of the souls they hid. Gladly would we have laid aside our theory concerning unseen treasures, and looked that great collection face to face.

"The taste for the external decoration of manuscripts," says Labarte, (whose interesting "Hand-Book on the Arts of the Middle Ages" has been admirably translated by Mrs. Palliser,) "already existed among the ancients. Marcus Varro called forth the praises of Cicero for having traced in his book the portraits of more than seven hundred celebrated persons; Seneca, in his treatise 'De Tranquillitate Animi,' speaks of books ornamented with figures; and Martial addresses his thanks to Stertinius, who had placed his portrait in his library."

These ancient works of Art have vanished, none have survived the stormy passage of ages, yet this casual mention of them carries us into the otherwise invisible past. We see the seven hundred portraits in Marcus Varro's book, and walk into the library of Stertinius to give our opinion of the portrait of Martial.

"The miniatures of manuscripts were long considered," says Labarte, "only as ornaments. Montfaucon was the first to recognize their usefulness as historical documents. To possess manuscripts of the Middle Ages with miniatures is in fact to possess a gallery of contemporaneous pictures."

The most beautiful specimen of ancient illuminated manuscript we have seen in this country belongs to the Honorable Charles Sumner. It is a missal of the fifteenth century, of finest quality. Several of the miniatures might well be claimed as the work of Van Eyck. The frontispiece consists of the portrait of the lady for whose devotions the book was prepared. She kneels before the Madonna, while her patron saint stands beside her. Beneath this celestial vision is the heraldic shield of the lady's family, thus throwing in a glimpse of visible worldly grandeur. The borders and arabesques of this manuscript are equal in execution to the miniatures, and the missal is one of rare beauty.

Can we forbear alluding to that other treasure of Senator Sumner's collection,—the Album which belonged to Camillus Cordoyn, who, more than two centuries ago, entertained guests at his house as they journeyed into Italy? One of these, Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Lord Strafford, then a young man gayly travelling about the world, wrote his name in the volume, little thinking of the block and the axe which were to illustrate the closing chapter of his book of life. The immortal Milton, on his return from Italy, was the guest of the same nobleman. What would we not give for a look into that house at Geneva, and see this little volume laid before the visitor! The glorious eyes of John Milton looked over its pages, and perhaps he listened to the story of some of the distinguished personages, now all forgotten, whose names and heraldic shields are there. Then he turned to a blank leaf, and wrote two lines from his own "Comus,"—

"If Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her."

He signed his name on that 20th of June, 1639, and the host took back the book. And now, more than two hundred years after, that page is held as priceless in this great republic beyond the sea.

We should speak gratefully of the externals of books, because for two long years our oculist did not allow us to open them. We dared not go farther than their titles, yet even these were talismans which revealed wide regions, and carried us from Indus to the Pole. We went with Arthur Penrhyn Stanley to the Holy Land, discovered Nineveh with Layard, explored Art treasures with Mrs. Jameson, plunged among icebergs with Parry. A volume of Belzoni bore us not only to pyramids and mummies in Egypt, but away to a strange old hall "in Padua, beyond the sea." Cabalistic paintings cover the walls, misty with age; lurking in one corner of the vast apartment is a gigantic wooden horse, that figured at some public festival four hundred years ago, and now pauses, ready to prance out of the mouldy past into the affrighted present; opposite stand two Egyptian statues, cat-headed human figures, resting their hands on their stone knees. These were gifts from Belzoni to his native city of Padua; and his handsome head in the Eastern turban, turned into white marble, stands above the entrance-door.

Coming back from the Paduan hall, so weird and ghostly, we glance along the shelves at a long row of volumes which bear De Quincey's name, and we need not open a page to feel the mysterious spell of the opium-eater. Like one of those strange dreams of his seems a remembrance which comes back to us with his name. A quaint, tall house in the old part of Edinburgh has admitted us into a quiet apartment, where, as the twilight is creeping in through the windows, a small gray man receives us, with graceful and tender courtesy. He converses with a felicity of language like that of his printed pages, but in a voice so sweet, so low, so exquisitely modulated, that the magical tone vibrates on the ear like music. It was De Quincey, who held us entranced until darkness gathered around us, then bade us farewell, his kind words lingering on the air, as, with a flickering candle in his hand, he flitted up the winding stair, and vanished away.

Another volume bears the name of William Wordsworth, and beneath his autograph he writes that it was purchased at Bath from a circulating-library. It is that strange journal of the Margravine of Bareith, sister of Frederic the Great, a sad story of those who dwell in kings' houses; but we think only of Wordsworth, and of the viewless history of the book carried by the poet from circulating in Bath to quiet rural Rydal Mount, and now having wandered over to New England.

A dainty volume near by bears the autograph of Rogers, and though the association is not so purely imaginative, perhaps, as a poet should call up, yet it always brings to our mind the breakfasts at his house, of which many of our friends have partaken, and related divers stories concerning those morning refections. They are invisible feasts to us, for we never even picked up the crumbs from them, except at second hand; yet this elegant little book knew all about them, and heard what was said before, and also behind—the table-cloth.

Singular experiences connected with books are sometimes known to their owners, quite invisible to others. In yonder corner are two volumes. Book-collectors know that they are rare, and the uninitiated think they contain queer old wood-cuts. To us that corner is haunted; an invisible lady hovers about those volumes. Once upon a time an order was given for those books, but the answer came back from over the sea, that they were not to be had, or to be had only at rare intervals on the breaking up of a library. To our no small surprise, very soon after this quietus had been given to bibliomaniacal hopes, the books in question appeared before us in excellent condition. We could hardly suppose that any one had been benevolent enough to break up a library on purpose to oblige us, and we waited to hear a very odd story.

Soon after the letter had been sent, announcing the ill success of our commission, the writer of it was in a bookshop in London, when a lady entered and desired an interview with the master. After some private conversation, the lady returned to her carriage and drove away. The bookseller remarked to his friend, that the lady had brought with her some books, which she desired to part with. Our informant asked to see them, and, lo! the very volumes for which in our behalf he had searched in vain: he immediately secured the prize, which was forwarded by the next steamer.

Can any one ask why the figure of the lady who brought those books to us three thousand miles over the sea "haunts us like a shadow"? We see her ascend her invisible carriage, we go with her to her invisible home, we meet her viewless husband;—here we shudder, but we recover ourselves; we are convinced that he could not have been a book-collector, or she had not dared such a deed. Then we puzzle ourselves about her unseen motives for selling the books. Had she gambled? Had she bet on the losing horse at the Derby? Had she bought an expensive bonnet? Or was it the impulse of some strong benevolent purpose? Why *did* she sell those books? Since she did thus part with them, we thank her, and are content that by very strange combinations of circumstances, blending the visible and invisible together, those books, viewless in her library, are now apparent in our own.

Here is another volume which has also something mystical about it in its visible and invisible effect. It is a copy of Dibdin's "Bibliomania," which belonged to Dawson Turner. A note in his handwriting states that the tools required for the binding were used exclusively for Lord Spencer, and that a view of Strawberry Hill will be found on its edges. Gilt edges, however, are all that meet the eye; but turned by a skilful hand to the right light, the gilding vanishes, and a picture of Strawberry Hill appears, painted with velvety softness. Such a nice bibliomaniacal fancy must have delighted Dibdin; and as he was at one time librarian at Althorpe, he doubtless was the medium of bestowing this charm upon the binding of his own work for his friend.

The invisible in libraries has ever seemed to us linked with those who have written or read the books. If souls are allowed to return to their earthly haunts, a library would surely be the place to meet them. For this reason we have cherished a firm belief in the apparition which the distinguished librarian of the Astor Library beheld, and never desire to hear any commonplace explanations concerning it; and on visiting the Astor collection, we were more desirous to see the spot where the reading phantom appeared than all the rest of the building. Who shall say that authors and students

do not come back to the books which contain their invisible souls, or spirits like themselves? Without venturing to invoke the sceptred sovereigns of literature, or to call up the shades of the prophets and sibyls of elder time, yet at midnight what a circle might come forth and visit the library! Scott and Burns and Byron, Burke and Fox and Sheridan, all in one evening; clever, pretty Mrs. Thrale comes bringing Fanny Burney to meet Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth; Horace Walpole, patronizing Gray, Rogers, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Charles Lamb,—what a social club that would be! Ah, the librarian of the Astor is more fortunate than we; these spirits are all invisible, and we catch not even at midnight the rustle of the leaf they turn or the passing murmur of their voices. Yet within the library, ever ready to meet us, their souls still linger; and when we open the visible book which enshrines it, we find the hidden spirit.

A number of gentlemen once went together to a friend's house. While they awaited his entrance, one of the party, being a lover of books, naturally turned to the shelves of the library. Without any particular attraction to the title, he chanced to take down one of the volumes. As he opened it, a sealed letter fell from between the leaves on the floor. He took it up, and, to his no small astonishment, perceived that it was addressed to himself.

He called the attention of his companions to this strange circumstance. As it could be no breach of decorum to break the seal of a letter addressed to one's self, he did so. The surprise was increased by finding a bank-note within. The letter came from a well-known gentleman, and bore the date of a year past. When the owner of the house entered, he found his guests in quite a tumult of surprise and puzzle. At first he was quite as much at a loss as themselves to account for this discovery. It was, however, remembered by the gentleman to whom the letter was addressed, that about a year before he had applied to the writer for aid in some charity, but, having many demands of the same kind to supply, he declined. Afterwards, as it appeared, he regretted having done so, and had accordingly inclosed the money. Probably, soon after, he met the gentleman in whose book it was found, (with whom he was on intimate terms,) and asked him to give the letter as addressed. The receiver brought it home, laid it on his table, and forgot it. The book lying open, it may be that the letter slipped between the leaves and the volume was returned to the shelf. And there it had waited for more than a year, holding the invisible letter quite safe, until the person to whom it was addressed took down, for the first time in his life, a volume from those shelves, and received into his own hand the communication intended for him. No one can wonder that the invisible in libraries has a strong hold on the faith of our friend.

Although few may be so fortunate as to find bank-notes in letters addressed to themselves between the leaves of books in libraries, yet we all have felt the sensation of discoverers of hidden treasures. After carelessly looking at a volume which has stood on the shelves for years, we open it and find within thoughts which appeal to our deepest experiences, high incentives to our nobler energies, deep sympathy in our sorrows, sustaining words to help us on with our life-work. How differently do we ever after regard the visible of that book! The invisible has been revealed to us, and we almost wonder whether, if we had looked into it two or three years before, we should have found there what now we prize so much. Perhaps not; for after different experiences in life come different revelations from books. The pages which a few years ago we might have glanced over with indifference now speak to us as if uttering the emotions of our own souls.

Sometimes it is a work of fiction which, we open for the first time, the title of which has been familiar to our eyes. Out of it invisible spirits walk. We are introduced to charming people who never existed, and yet who become our daily companions. We go with them through many trials, we rejoice with them, we know all their secrets, and share with them many of our own. Is it possible, that, shut up between those covers, long unknown, all these existed which have since made life brighter and better to us?

In Sterling's "Onyx Ring," Walsingham, the poet, takes down a volume from Sir Charles Harcourt's library, and reads a charming romance, apparently from its pages. A lady of the company

afterwards turned to the same book, which proved to be a work of Jeremy Bentham's, and searched in vain for the graceful narrative. Walsingham smiled at her perplexity, and said, "Those only find who know where to look."

The invisible world of thought, and the invisible representation of it in books, have known many changes since Cicero looked at the volume which Marcus Varro had illustrated; and from an earlier civilization than Cicero's comes the exclamation of the soul-wearied Job, "Oh that mine adversary had written a book!" Solomon also exclaims, "Of making many books there is no end." He dreamed not of the extent to which the manufacture would be carried in these days. On the other hand, how little we know of the literary world existing in the days of Job or Solomon! and may we not be led by these exclamations to suspect not only a large supply of books, but even the existence of an Arabian Review or a Dead-Sea Magazine?

The increase of wealth, and the restless activity of intellect in the new world which surrounds us, lead naturally to the accumulation of libraries, both public and private. In our daily walks we often pass dwellings which we know hold literary treasures. Sometimes the beauties of Nature can be combined with those of Art, even in a city, around the library. We recall one from the windows of which we look forth, not on crowded streets, but on the wide river as it bends to the sea. Behind the distant hills the heavens are resplendent with the autumnal hues of sunset, the water is aglow with reflected glories, while swooping and sailing over the waves come the white sea-gulls. It is a leaf from the illuminated prayer-missal for all eyes and hearts. The literary treasures of that friend's library have been elsewhere described, some of them gifts from wise men, earnest women, world-worshipped poets, bearing on their leaves the signatures of their authors' friendship. Other treasures are there, visible and invisible, among which we would fain linger, but we must pass on. We enter another library, once filled with rare and costly works, which taught of the wonderful structure of plants, from the hyssop on the wall to the cedar of Lebanon. Gone now are these volumes, and vanished, too, is their collector, whose wide and generous culture was veiled by the curtain of modesty and quietness. His collections he bestowed upon a public institution, where the wonders of God's universe will be a subject of study for all coming time. These he gave, and then went peacefully away from our sight to learn yet wider and grander lessons at the feet of that Teacher who, when he was on earth, bade his followers "consider the lilies of the field." Is not that library as real to us as when the books filled its shelves, and we were welcomed by the gentle voice of its master?

The crowds which form the living stream that surges through Washington Street and eddies around the Old South Church seldom, perhaps, pause to think of that edifice as one of the links uniting the memorable past of our country's history with the momentous present. Still less do they who raise their eyes to the tower to learn the hour of the day imagine that there is an invisible library connected with the familiar form of the belfry. Yet a romance of literary and historic interest encircles it. At the time of the Revolution, Dr. Prince was pastor of the Old South Church, and in the tower he kept his historical treasures along with the New England Library. Among these volumes were Governor Bradford's letter-book and the manuscript of his "History of the Plantation of Plymouth." During the siege of Boston, the British turned the Old South into a riding-school, and the troopers had free scope to do what mischief they pleased. After the evacuation of the town the library was found in a disordered condition, and the valued manuscripts of Bradford were missing. Some time after, a person observed that the article he had bought from a grocer in Halifax was wrapped in paper written over in a peculiar hand. He deciphered enough to make him earnest to obtain what remained of the manuscript in the grocer's possession. It proved to be fragments of the missing letter-book of Governor Bradford. Years passed on until 1856, when the attention of an historical writer was attracted by a quotation, in a note to an English work, from "a manuscript history of the Plantation of Plymouth, in the Fulham Library." As the extract contained passages not found in any part of that history known in America, it immediately occurred to those interested that this might be the missing volume from the Prince Library. A correspondence was thereupon opened with the Bishop

of London. The handwriting of Bradford being authenticated, as well as that of Dr. Prince, which was found in a memorandum, dated "June 28th, showing how he obtained it from Major John Bradford," there could no longer remain a doubt that this was indeed the lost historical treasure. Part of the manuscripts of Bradford had been carried by the British soldiers to Halifax, and sold at last as waste-paper to a grocer; and the rest, after some history unknown, reached England and found protection under the care of the Bishop of London. A copy of this manuscript is now in the possession of the Boston Historical Society.

In the rooms of that society is preserved the Dowse Library. A rare collection of books, formed by a man daily engaged in the mechanic craft of a leather-dresser, is a singular illustration of the visible and invisible of libraries. We recall past days in Cambridge, when, beneath the sign of a white wooden sheep, we entered the unpretending house which contained not only the leather-dresser's shop, but a small gallery of pictures and this valuable library. We remember, also, with grateful interest, the modest, but manly, welcome of the master of both the mechanic craft and the treasures of art and literature, and how quietly he would give us a few words about his books. The Dowse Library we visit is always *there*, and although much is visible in the beautiful room where the bequest of the owner has been fittingly enshrined, yet its distinctive charm is invisible.

The City Library of Boston has one feature entirely new in the visible of a great public collection. A large portion of the books, under certain regulations, are circulated among the inhabitants of the city, and thousands avail themselves of this privilege. Here, then, is opened a great fountain of knowledge in the midst of a wide population: all may come, without money and without price. The visible pages of learning, wisdom, science, truth, imagination, ingenious theory, or deep conviction lie open not only to the eyes, but to the hearts and homes of a great people. It is like the overflowing Nile, carrying sweet waters to irrigate many waste places, and clothing the dry dust of common life with the flowers, the fruit, and the sustaining grain, springing from invisible seeds cast by unseen hands into the wide field of the world.

"If," says Lord Bacon, "the invention of ships was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, how much more are letters to be magnified, which, as ships, pass through the vast seas of time, and make ages so distant to participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, the one of the other!"

> Note.—Since these pages were written, one who knew how to prize the visible and invisible of books has passed away. The silent library of George Livermore speaks eloquently of him. That collection, gathered with a love which increased as years advanced, includes ancient copies of the Bible of rarest values. His life was a book, written over with good deeds and pure thoughts, illuminated by holy aspirations. That volume is closed, but the spirit which rendered it precious is not withdrawn; living in many hearts, it will continue to be a cherished presence in the world, the home, and the library.

LETTER TO A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER

You know, dear M., it is said that in times of bankruptcy men go home to get acquainted with their wives; perhaps it should be added that wives then go to get introduced to their kitchens. But your sensible letter is an omen, little friend, that to you and H. this does not apply. You will not wait for poverty to teach you economy, but will learn economy to ward off poverty. So herewith I send a few of the culinary notes of the last two years; but neither of us is to be taken for a bankrupt's wife, for all that. It is simply recognizing that you are alone in new duties, and that cookery is an art which may not be gained even from that fountain of knowledge, named by the Apostle Paul as one's husband. The successes of the art no one knows better than he; but of the processes he will be found sublimely ignorant. There are but two points in which you can defer to him,—punch and lobster-salad. These, like swearing and smoking, are strictly masculine accomplishments.

If you had the thrifty maiden aunt kept in reserve by most families for an emergency, you would kindly offer her a home at your house for a while. But since you have not, I will be as disagreeable to you as she. So turn your glowing Spanish eyes toward me, instead of looking demurely about, as people do when they are having old letters read to them.

Byron said he hated to see a woman eat; and there is a class of housekeepers who certainly return the compliment upon men. These ethereal beings are forever sighing for life with appetite left out. Like Lord Dundreary's lady-love, they are "*so* delicate," unless caught in the pantry hastily devouring onions and beefsteak. To be hungry is so vulgar! One should live by nothing grosser than inhalation, and should never have an appetite greater than that of a healthy bumble-bee. But, thanks to the robust, latter-day theory, that the best saints have the best bodies, this puerile class is diminishing. For who can doubt that the senses are entitled to their full blossom? Gustation was meant to be delightful; and cooking is certainly half as good as tasting. At times one may have longed for the old Roman custom of two meals a day, and going to bed at chicken-time, bringing the hour of roast near the hour of roost; but this was probably in families where there were three repasts, with lunch all the way between, and an incessant buying of cookies from the baker, lest the children should go hungry. After this surfeit one pardons a recoil. Or, in an enervating day of July, one may have longed to dine upon humming-bird, with rose-leaves for dessert. But these are exceptional times; the abiding hope is, that we shall continue to eat, drink, and be merry. For the practical is in the imperative. It is cumulative, and reinforces itself,—a real John Brown power that is always marching on, and we must march beside it with patient, cheery hearts. Is it strange that even the moss-covered Carlisle town, of which the Last Minstrel sang, and where the Scottish Mary tarried in her flight from the cousin queen, is now chiefly remarkable for its cotton-factory and biscuit-bakery?

Indeed, the enthusiasm over biscuits has its place, as well as that over books; and it is not always that there is as much genuine joy in a novel as one may get out of bread-making. This is quite too scientific and interesting to be left to a domestic. It is really among the most exciting experiments. Try it every week for two years, and it seems just as new an enterprise as at the beginning,—but a thousand times more successful, we observe. Working up the light drifts of flour, leaving them at night a heavy pat and nothing more,—waking to find a dish flowing-full of snowy foam. The first thing on rising one's self is, to see if the dough be risen, too; and that is always sure to be early, for every batch of bread sets an alarm in one's brain. After breakfast one will be as expectant as if going to a ball in lieu of a baking. Then to see the difference a little more or less flour will make, and out of what quantity comes perfection! To feminine vision, more precious than "apples of gold in pictures of silver" are loaves of bread in dishes of tin. If one were ever penurious, might it not be of these handsome loaves of hers? The little housewife will be very gentle to the persecuted man of Scripture who was so reluctant to get up at midnight and give away his bread. She will even be charitable to the

stingy merchant scorned by Saadi, of whom it was written, that, "if, instead of his loaf of bread, the orb of the sun had been in his wallet, nobody had seen daylight in the world till the Day of Judgment."

Dr. Kane says, he knows how bread can be raised in three hours without salt, saleratus, or shortening,—knows, but sha'n't tell. This must be another mystery of the Arctic regions. Certainly that bread could not have been raised in the sun. But how one quantity was managed the Doctor is free to say. He kneaded a whole barrel of flour in a pickled-cabbage cask, and baked it at once by firing several volumes of the "Penny Cyclopædia of Useful Knowledge."

After compliments, however, to come in with the cash down of the practical, here is a veritable bread-making recipe, well-tested and voted superior. Take a quart of milk; heat one third and scald with it a half-pint of flour; if skimmed milk, use a small piece of butter. When the batter is cool, add the remainder of the milk, a teacup of hop-yeast, a half-tablespoon of salt, with flour to make it quite stiff. Knead it on the board till it is very fine and smooth; raise over night. It will make two small loaves and a half-dozen biscuits.

This recipe ought to give good bread week in and week out, so saving you from the frequent calamity of soda-biscuits. These may be used for dumplings, or as a sudden extempore, but do not let them be habitual. True, you will occasionally meet people who say that they can eat these, when raised ones are fatal. But some persons find cheese good for dyspepsia, many advocate ice-cream, others can eat only beans, while some are cured by popped corn. Yet these articles are not likely to become staples of diet. They would hardly answer a normal appetite; and any stomach that can steadily withstand the searchingness of soda and tartaric acid seems ready to go out to pasture and eat the fences. Chemists will say, if bread must be improvised, use soda and muriatic acid. These combined in precise proportions are supposed to evaporate in the baking, and leave common salt. But this acid is such furious stuff! It will come to you from the druggists in a bottle marked "Poison," and it is not pleasant to put into one's mouth a substance that will burn a hole in her apron. It is too much of the Roland for an Oliver,—You eat me and I will eat you. For it is quite difficult to perfectly combine the acid and alkali, and then the bread is streaked with muriatic fire; then one might easily take into the system a thousand streaks a year, and then one would become a fire-eater.

But probably the greatest of all bread wonders are the unleavened Graham cakes. These are worth a special mail and large postage to tell of. I was about to beg that you surprise H. with them at your next breakfast. But no, he won't like them; besides, according to the theory of "Woman and her Era," they're a deal too good for men, they are fit only for women and angels. So just salt and scald some Graham meal into a dough as soft as can be and be handled. Roll it an inch thick, cutting in diamonds, which place on a tin sheet and thrust into the hottest of ovens. (Note this last direction, or the diamonds will be flat leather.) Strange to say, they will rise, and keep rising, till in ten minutes you take them out quite puffed. One would never guess them innocent of yeast. An inch thick is the rule; but there is nothing like an adventurous courage. It is at once suggested, if they are so good at an inch, will they not be twice as good at two inches. And certainly they are. The meal will not be outwitted. It is the liveliest and most buoyant material. Its lightness keeps up with the utmost experiment. Finally, it may be turned into a massive loaf, and with a brisk heat it will refuse to be depressed.

The morning when were produced these charming little miracles remains a red-letter day in our household. Who ever tasted anything, save a nut, half so sweet, or who ever anything so pure? We ate, lingered, and revelled in them, thus becoming epicures at once. It seemed as if all our lives we had been seeking something really *recherché*, and had just found it. They were as great a revelation to the palate as Bettine or Thoreau might be to the mind. Now all was *couleur de rose*. Here was found, if not the philosopher's stone, the philosopher's bread, that should turn everything into health. Henceforth the strong heroes celebrated by Emerson, who "at rich men's tables eat but bread and pulse," might sit at ours, arising refreshed and glorified. And was not this also coming very near Nature? but two removes from the field, wheat cracked, then ground. (I have since come a degree nearer on cracked wheat at a water-cure!) It sounded altogether wholesome and primitive. I hastened with a sample to

my best friend. She, too, tasted, exulted, and passed on the tidings to others. Now, indeed, was the golden age in dawn. Already we saw a community purified and rejuvenated. Before our philosopher-cakes sin and bad blood would disappear, and already the crowns of grateful generations were pressing on our brows. But something went wrong with all the cooks. Either they didn't scald the meal or they didn't heat the oven,—what in one hand was light beaten gold in another became lead. For a while it seemed that I could not go to my friend's without meeting some one who cast scorn on our reformation cakes. All tried them and failed; so sin remains in the world.

But now hope plumes itself anew. You at least will attempt the little wheatens. You have a deft hand, and will succeed. The buoyancy of the meal revives in my blood. Now the world rights itself again, and once more we are all bounding sunward.

But to be honest. For a few weeks I and the radical cakes were as satisfied as young lovers, but soon came temptations to progress from the primitive,—first to add a little sugar. But I vetoed as resolutely as Andrew Jackson himself, thus putting up the bars between the wheat-field and cane-field, or probably by this time I should have been pouring in spice, eggs, and milk, and at last should have committed the crime of doing just as other people do.

If you would confess it, you have probably found in your new captain-general a susceptibility not only to your charms, but to those of good cooking. Always count these among the young wife's fascinations. Remember how Miss Bremer's Fannie, of "The Neighbors," in a matrimonial quarrel with her Bear, conquered him with fresh-baked patties aimed at his mouth. But be not too conciliatory,—especially towards coffee. If you could be hard-hearted enough to win H. from this bilious beverage, would it not be worth the perils? Entertain him for a few mornings so brilliantly that he won't know what he is drinking, then–But I'll tell you how we will cheat him admirably; and it isn't very cruel either, for merely to gratify the taste make-believes are as good as realities. First, every one knows Taraxacum or dandelion; invalids know crust-coffee, and many with indignation know burnt peas. Also Miss Beecher, whose estimable cook-book you certainly must get, mentions that ochra seeds or gumbo cannot be told from Java; an army correspondent has since reported coffee made at the South from oker seeds, doubtless the same; another found in use the sweet potato, roasted, and flavored with coffee; while a friend has just described the most enticing beverage made from chickory,—the root being stripped and dried under the stove. This is said to be so rich that sometimes it has to be diluted with a trifle of coffee. And still further, there is simple rye, which is cheaper found than either. Jeff. Davis drank it for four years and wrote all *her* grand proclamations out of it. But probably the wholesomer article is wheat coffee. I have lately prepared some by boiling a cup of well-scorched wheat-bran in a pint of water; and although I don't quite know how good coffee tastes, no doubt this was very like the true Java. It poured clear and rich as wine. Now try this in full strength with your spouse, being very witty when he drinks. And as the mornings pass, oh, weaken it more and more. That is, cheat him pleasantly at first, then worse and worse, till he is glad to take milk or pure water with you. Conspiracies are usually contemptible; but this is one of the very "best water," you see.

Perhaps we who never drink coffee can hardly understand the affection its votaries have for it. To their minds, water seems to be given only for steeping that delicious mud. Said one extravagant Madame Follet, "When I see a coffee-pot, 'tis exactly the same as if I saw an angel from heaven." And the Biloxi people, whom General Butler surprised of a morning, were found to be in a very tragic state. One boy exclaimed, "Oh, give me just a handful of coffee, master, an' I'll give you 'lasses, sugar, anything!" while a strong man ejaculated, "My God, we're short of everything! I haven't tasted tea or coffee for four months!"—as grievous as if he hadn't seen a human face for a year. According to the "Herald" correspondent, the chief reason that the South rejoices in peace is that "Now we'll be able to get some real coffee!"—perhaps, he adds, in the next breath inquiring, "What are you going to do with our niggers?"

No, we could not, with Ward Beecher, "bless the man who discovered the immortal berry." Nor could we, with De Quincey, apostrophize to a certain other excitant, "O just, subtle, and mighty opium! thou boldest the keys of Paradise!" Yet one must concede the possible uses of a stimulant. Coffee has been priceless to our army, on its cold, wet marches; and benedictions should be ordered in the churches, if need be, to the man who made it into that wondrous pemmican, so that the coffee of a regiment may be carried in a few tin cans. Then, too, it seems good for men who go driving up and down the world on stage-coaches and locomotives; but for stay-at-home, counting-house mortals, is it not a mere delicious superfluity? Quite as much of one as a cigar, I think.

But henceforth, when Rio is high, drink rye. If one must have either, better the simulant than the stimulant.

Among other things, you have doubtless discovered that one admirable breakfast dish is eggs. If you serve them in the shell, it is quite worth while to follow the English way, keeping them close covered for ten minutes in very hot water without boiling. The yolks are thus left running, and the whites are beautifully jellied. These are convenient to get when relations arrive at night, and there is no meat in the house. Relations always expect meat for breakfast.

In fact, it is just at this point that one's genius is to come in,—when a nice meal must be gotten at short notice, and the larder is empty. None but the woman of resources can do it; and she knows her realm is as full of strategies as was ever the Department of the Potomac. Under her hand, when there was supposed to be nothing for breakfast, I have seen bits of meat snatched from cold soup, and wrought up into the most savory morsels,—one would never guess that the goodness was all boiled out of them; while a cup of yesterday's griddle-cake batter went suddenly into the oven, and came out a breakfast-cake finer than waffles.

One who had the knack of the heroine Fleda, in "Queechy," would be friendly to omelets, and tell of them too. But you must be self-reliant, and put them on the list of experiments. It will probably be some time before you come to that refinement of egg-eating which Mrs. Stowe found at the mansion of the Duke of Sutherland, where she was honored with lunch. Her sylvan spirit was somewhat startled, when a servant brought five little speckled plover eggs, all lying in the nest just as taken from the tree. How they were cooked is unknown; but one would certainly need a recipe to eat them by.

But an American woman can outdo the Duchess of Sutherland. She will find an egg daintier than the plover's, and not stir from her own door; for awhile since, some one, fumbling among the secrets of Nature, discovered, not that stones were sermons, but that snow was eggs, and straight made a cook-book to tell it, as we will do on discovering that rain is milk. Of course all things have their limitations; and these new eggs are not just the article for custards, will not do to poach for breakfast, or would hardly keep in brine; but they may be used in any compound that requires lightness without richness. Even our grandmothers made snow pancakes; but, in the present age, to be distinguished is to be venturesome, and in this experiment one need not stop short of veritable loaf-cake. The volatile element in snow makes two table-spoons of it equal to one egg; therefore to a small loaf I should allow ten table-spoons. Cooks always put in as many eggs as they can afford, you know.

Thus, when snow falls every day for four months, as it does in New England, eggs get exceedingly cheap in the prudent household. Then one can smile to think how she circumvents the grocer, and pray the clouds to lay a good nestful every week.

A friend the other day improvised a list of edibles headed, "Poisonous *P*s,"—pastry, pickles, pork, and preserves. She was pleased to leave out puddings, and hereto we shall say, Amen. Not that one is to indorse such odiously rich ones as cocoa-nut, suet, and English plum; but, bating these, there are enough both nice and wholesome to change the dessert every day for a fortnight, at least. At another time I may give you some recipes, with various items by this writing omitted.

Pastry the physiologists have been shaking their heads about for some time,—especially as many persons use soda with the lard, not being aware that they are making soft soap. This sort of

paste one often sees in the country. But it is easy to omit the soap. On the next bread-making day, simply reserve a piece of the well-raised dough, and roll in butter. This gives a palatable and harmless crust. I have also experimented with a shortening of hot, fine-mashed potato and milk, which, if it may not be recommended to an epicure, is really better than it sounds, And does it not sound better than Dr. Trall's proposal of sweet oil? Will not some of these ways satisfy our ardent reformers and physiologists? But about chicken-pie, remember the tradition, that, unless the top crust is punctured, it will make one very ill. (Who knows but this was the secret of the National Hotel sickness?) At least, it is truer than some other traditions, such as that eating burnt crusts will make the cheeks red, or that fried turnip will make the hair curl.

Pickles do not seem so good that they must be eaten, nor so bad that they must not be. But with them comes evermore the vision that Trollope has prepared of all our smart little five-year-old men and women perched at hotel-tables, pale-faced and sedate, with waiters behind their chairs, and ordering chowders and chops with an inevitable "Please don't forget the pickles."

Preserves, aside from the recent luxury of canned fruit, have the happiest substitutes, if we will take what the seasons bring to our hands. Not a month in the year is left wholly barren of these relishes for the tea-table. There are berries all the summer, apples and cranberries in the winter, when, just as the last russet disappears, and with it every one's appetite, up springs the pungent and luxuriant rhubarb. Somewhat curious is it concerning this last article. Forty years ago it was such a pure experiment in England, that a Mr. Myatt, who took seven bundles of it to London, succeeded in selling but three. Still he persisted in keeping it before the people, although he seemed only to lose rhubarb and to gain ridicule, being designated as the man who sold "physic pies."

And besides our own zone, with its fruits fresh or dried, there are the abounding tropics always at the door: Pine-apples, which, if unwholesome, are yet charmingly convenient to help a luckless housekeeper, and which, by the way, made a better *entrée* in London than pie-plant, being so popular that their salesmen floated flags from the top of their stalls; bananas, those foreign muskmelons of spring; oranges, gilding every street-corner; dates, which do not go meanly with bread and butter, though one is a little fearful of finding a whole straw bed therein; and prunes, which, if soaked several hours and stewed slowly, are luscious enough for a prince.

But pork it appears to be the common impression that man cannot do without. Certainly he must have partaken somewhat of its nature to make him so greedy; and there would seem to be animals enough on land and sea, without devouring the swine. If pork be important anywhere, it is so in the old Puritan dish of baked beans; yet those who have tasted baked beans prepared with fine rich beef instead have voted them quite sumptuous, and possibly rich enough for people who live at restaurants. But so long as fish, bird, and fowl remain, and men even eat turtles and frogs,—so long as sheep do not die of wolves, nor cattle of the county commissioners,—may not the pig be left to his wallowing in the mire?

Thus much for the poisonous *p*s. We do not place among them that popular plant, the potato, though it has the blood of the nightshade in its veins. But these may be made moderately poisonous by putting them into soup. Once taste clear potato-water, and you will not aspire to drink a strong broth from it. And even potatoes one may eat at a dozen tables, and not find nicely served at any. With domestics generally they figure as the article that in cooking takes care of itself,—the convenient vegetable, that may be thrown into the kettle, and taken up when nothing else needs to be. In the end they are either half done and hard, or when done, being left soaking, are watery and soggy; whereas they should be pared, kept boiling in salted water till they break, then drained and shaken over the coals till powdery dry. They need tossing up with as light a hand as an omelet, you see. If they are not of the nicest variety, they should be mashed with milk, butter, and salt, and placed in the oven to brown. This is a kind of medication which usually makes the poorest article quite palatable, and is resorted to in the early summer, when potatoes are become decidedly an "aged *p*." I was once amused to hear a man complaining of a certain potato, because it was "too dry." It is doubtful what

he would do in Maine, the land of the famous Jackson whites, which boil to a creamy powder. One must be grateful that our Massachusetts Dovers cannot be dampened by this original potato-taster. He probably would like juicy potatoes and mealy oranges.

But of course none can have studied diet and its varied effects on various persons, without seeing it to be impossible to make up two lists of dishes, one of which shall be voted hurtful and the other harmless. Nor does the healthfulness of food seem to consist wholly in its simplicity, according to old Grahamite theories. There is probably some truth in the saying of Hippocrates, "Whatever pleases the palate nourishes"; but one cannot fail to recognize the wisdom of M. Soyer, that prince of the *cuisine*, who maintains that the digestibility of food depends, not on the number of articles used in its manufacture, but in their proper combination. Says M. Soyer, "I would wager that I could give a first-class indigestion to the greatest *gourmet*, even while using the most *recherché* provisions, without his being able to detect any fault in the preparation of the dishes of which he had partaken,—and this simply by improperly classifying the condiments used in the preparation." This gives a hint of the nicety of the culinary art, the genius required to practise it, and the fine physical effects that hinge upon it. It is no wonder that Vatel committed suicide before the great banquet which he had prepared for his master, the Prince of Condé, because he feared it was to fail. It is certainly enough to alarm ordinary amateurs,—and such are the most of us; for, while Americans place all due stress upon the table, they neglect to emphasize the *cuisine*. Instead of this *nonchalance*, we have yet to discover that cookery belongs to the fine arts; that it is exhaustive alike of chemistry and physiology, and touches upon laws as sure as those which mingle the atmospheric elements, hourly adjusting them to man's nicest needs. And we should count it among the best of the progressive plans of our country, if to the new Industrial College under subscription at Worcester were to be added an elaborate culinary department, with the most accomplished professor that could be obtained. Perhaps, as M. Soyer was philanthropic enough to go to the Crimea, and teach the English to make hospital soup, he would even come here and give our nation a glimpse of those marvellous morsels that have made Paris the envy of epicures the world over.

And if there is a proper harmony to be attained in the combining of various ingredients, making every perfect dish a poem, there is no less harmony in combining the various dishes for a repast, making a poem in every perfect meal. For every leading dish has its kindred and antagonistic ones: as, at dinner, one would not serve cauliflower with fricasseed chicken, nor turnips with boiled salmon, nor, at tea, currants with cream-toast, nor currants with custard. But this is something that cannot be fully taught or learned. It is almost wholly at the mercy of one's instinct, and may be ruled by a tact as delicate as that which conducts a drawing-room.

But we are quite curious to learn, M., if your excellent companion has yet been away from home so long that you have had to go to market. And can you wisely discern roasts, steaks, and fowl? Says one, "The way to select fowl is first to select your butcher"; and away he swings out of intelligence and responsibility with a magnificent air. A lady friend has this charming fashion of frankness: "Now, Mr. –, I don't know one piece of meat from another, and shall expect you to give me the best"; thus throwing herself directly on her faith and fascinations. But these might grow jejune, nor is it safe to trust the tender mercies of a butcher. Better know what you want, and know if you get it. Therefore you will study the anatomy of animals, as laid down in all modern cook-books. But really it is a little perplexing. I confess I am near concluding that every beef creature is a special creation; for one never finds the same joint twice, and apparently the only things common to all are tongue and liver.

Not long since, having a discussion at the market with an elderly gentleman, he said something pleasant which must be written for the husband of a young housekeeper. We agreed that a rump steak was of more uniform richness than a sirloin, the best of the latter being only that luscious strip underlying the bone. "But," added the kindly man, "I always buy the sirloin, because I give that juicy scrap to my wife." It is worth while, M., to be wedded to the thoughtful heart, who, after forty years, yet wills to give one the single choice bit from the table.

Aside from the ordinary beef-routine, there is another dish which is usually popular. Select a cheap, lean piece of beef, weighing two or three pounds, put it on the stove in cold water soon after breakfast, boiling gently. Half an hour before dinner add a small onion, a sliced parsnip and carrot, a few bits of turnip, and a half-dozen dumplings. When these are done, remove them; season and thicken, serving a dumpling with meat and vegetables to each plate of stew. This may be rather plebeian, but is certainly palatable,—unless there be choice company to dine. We might call it Rainy-Day Stew.

But the toothsome time for beef-eaters was undoubtedly in the days of pleuro-pneumonia. Then the frightened public fled from beef as from the plague, and all the best cuts were left for the bold. One was tempted to pray that such pleuro might last for the season, save that the Commissioners were so costly, and the dear cattle were having an unusually sanguinary Bull Run. I know what our vegetarian friend, Mr. Alcott, will say; but he must indulge me in a very small mania, even if it seem to him a kind of cannibalism; therefore, whatever rhapsodies are left from bread and potato, let them all be given to good beef. While the quarrel of round, rump, and sirloin goes on, this let us buy and eat and reinforce ourselves. In it are poems, powers, and possessions ineffable. Twenty-five cents a pound, and the strength of the gods in one's veins! Broil it carefully and rare, then go and toss quoits with Hercules. In this, ye disconsolate, behold lands, lovers, and virtues in plenty. It fills and steadies the pulse, and plants the planet plump under one's feet. "My friend, is he who makes me do what I can," says the sage. Only beefsteak can come to the rescue. If one were going to a martyr's fire, of this should he eat, lest he die, not sublimely, with a fainting body. He would try this steak, and then that stake.

But there is one event that comes alike to all, and that is a holiday dinner. Even the poor have their plum-pudding days, and all seem to think that on a Christmas or Thanksgiving Nature suspends her laws and lets one eat as much as he can. It is quite in the spirit of the Scottish Lord Cockburn, who, ending a long walk, used to say, "We will eat a profligate supper,—a supper without regard to discretion or digestion." Or after the theory of one who ate whatever he pleased, whenever he pleased, and as much as he pleased, saying, "Oh, if it makes me sick, I can take medicine. What are the doctors for, if 'tisn't to cure people?" He did not know how small hope can be gotten from the doctors, and how those who know best get more and more courage to travel into places where they are not. There must have been a poor chance for the Egyptians, who, Herodotus says, had a physician for each part of the body; so that the human frame would seem to have been a sort of university, and each of the organs a vacant professorship. In case of malady, every officer worked away on his own member without regard to what his medical neighbors were doing. Michelet mentions a fish that has the power of multiplying stomachs to the number of one hundred and twenty. Fortunately that power is not man's. Think of dyspepsia with a hundred and twenty stomachs, and a different doctor for each!

Do not imagine this a plea for the transcendental diet that drove Sydney Smith to that pathetic sigh, "Ah, I wish they would allow me even the wing of a roasted butterfly!" But perhaps it would not be amiss to conjure up a terror-demon from these bodies of ours, so that we should fear to violate laws with such merciless penalties,—should have none but well-cooked food, at sensible and systematic hours. Is it strange that little Miss Bremer, who thought herself of soundest digestion, after three months of American night-dinners with oysters and preserve, is at last seen to grasp Dr. Osgood with both hands, exclaiming, in tears, "Oh, help me!" I want to save you from resembling the great people of the world after the manner of Dr. Beattie, whose title to genius was, "Have I not headaches like Pope, vertigo like Swift, gray hairs like Homer? Do I not wear large shoes for fear of corns like Virgil, and sometimes complain of sore eyes like Horace?"

Therefore I hope that your H. will make the counting-room conform to regular mid-day dinner and early tea-time. And let us trust that it will not have the same fatal result as with King Louis XII., who is said to have died earlier from changing his dinner-hour in compliment to his foreign bride.

One can hardly think of late suppers without turning quite away to those ideal tea-takings of the Wordsworths at Grasmere. "Plain living and high thinking," was the motto of the philosopher-poet, and that table was never crowded with viands. One can well believe, that, as De Quincey said, in the quiet walks after tea the face of the poet "grew solemn and spiritual as any saint's." But he probably was thinking very high when he drew a knife from the buttered toast and cut the leaves of a new book just lent to him!

Quite sombre are the memories of Rydal Mount; but since we are really alive, let us be lively. Behold me, then, dear M., well turbaned and aproned, and know that this is our churning-day. You give one of your gleeful little shrieks, perhaps; but yes, it is true; we live in the city, take a pint of milk per day, and make butter.

And where is the churn? you suggest. Oh, I extemporize that. It is out of the question to buy every convenient thing, or purse will run dry and house overflow. Dr. Kane hints how few dishes it is possible to use; and the plan is admirable; so one need not buy a churn, but make one out of a bowl and spoon. Into the bowl goes the cream, into the cream the spoon, and then I beat, beat, beat, not as one who beateth the air. This often lasts for two hours or more; it might be said that the cream remains in chrysalis, and refuses to butterfly! Indeed, there is no reason why a small bowl of cream shouldn't be as refractory as a wooden churnful. But when it "won't come," my distress is not at all proportioned to the size of the bowl.

Still I beat, beat, beat, perspiringly, but resolutely, while it whisks about, spattering over face, bib, and turban. At length there appear within it greasy-looking flecks. These increase till the mass thickens, beats solidly, separates from the milk, and declares itself butter. A limited quantity, certainly, but I will none the less press it dry, salt, and make it into cakes as large as a full-blown tea-rose. Each of these I will stamp, lay on a dapper glass cup-plate, and at tea-time several dear ones in various households will find these astonishing little pats beside them. Think you not they are genuine love-pats?

This would be a pretty way to serve butter always, did it not remind one of cheap hotels kept on the European plan, where those small, slushy, yellow cakes come in with the rolls. A choicer way is to form it into acorns or strawberries,—though I don't in the least know how it is done,—placing them all together on a plate and serving one to each at the table. This dainty way, however, would hardly make a bad article good, and no one would crave a berry of ancient firkin butter. For, as trivial a matter as it seems, this single condiment of food, one has only to encounter it in a strong, cheesy state to feel it among the most important things in the *cuisine*. Then one suddenly discovers that butter is in everything. Eating becomes intolerable, living dwindles into dyspepsia, and finally one is tempted to exclaim with a certain epicure, "I wish I were under the sod! There's no lump butter in the market!"

It is related of Apicius, who lived at Rome, that he ate very large shrimps; but hearing that those of Greece were larger, he straightway sailed for that coast without losing a day. He met a great storm and much danger; but on arriving, the fishermen brought him of their best. Apicius shook his head.

"Have you never any larger shrimps?"

"No, Seignior, never!"

At which, rubbing his hands with delight, he ordered the captain to sail back at once, saying,—

"I have left some at home larger than these, and they will be spoiled, if the wind is not in our favor."

We will not carry our dilletantism so far as this, nor let it carry us so far; still we are glad not to be driven to the expedient of the Syrians, whose only butter is the fat procured from the tails of their sheep,—which is literally being reduced to extremities.

By the way, something quite remarkable occurred in my first churning. I began with one cup of cream and ended with a cup of butter and a full cup of buttermilk! This law of expansion is paralleled only by that of contraction, as shown to the farmer who took a brimming pail of dinner to the sty;

and after the little pig had eaten it all, the farmer put him into the pail, and had room for another half of a pig beside.

But, dear M., it is hardly two moons since the bridal trunks were taken from our hall, and you went away with the friend. You have scarcely been domesticated long enough to see that bright tins bake badly, and that one must crucify her pride by allowing them to blacken; yet so soon do I overwhelm you with culinary suggestions. I am distressed to remember them. But you must forgive and smile me into peacefulness again. And be not discouraged, little housewife! It may take years of attention to excel in bread-making, some skill even for boiling potatoes, and common-sense for everything; but stand steadily beside your servants, and watch their processes patiently. Take notes, experiment, amend, and if there be failure, discover the reason; then it need not happen again.

And despite the difficulties of the practical, you and H. will not slight the ideal. Love the work you are doing and must do; but when it is done, oh, train the rose-vines over your door!

THE PEACE AUTUMN

Thank God for rest, where none molest,
        And none can make afraid,—
For Peace that sits as Plenty's guest,
        Beneath the homestead shade!

Bring pike and gun, the sword's red scourge,
        The negro's broken chains,
And beat them at the blacksmith's forge
        To ploughshares for our plains.

Alike henceforth our hills of snow,
        And vales where cotton flowers;
All streams that flow, all winds that blow,
        Are Freedom's motive-powers.

Henceforth to Labor's chivalry
        Be knightly honors paid;
For nobler than the sword's shall be
        The sickle's accolade.

Build up an altar to the Lord,
        O grateful hearts of ours!
And shape it of the greenest sward
        That ever drank the showers.

Lay all the bloom of gardens there,
        And there the orchard fruits;
Bring golden grain from sun and air,
        From earth her goodly roots.

There let our banners droop and flow,
        The stars uprise and fall;
Our roll of martyrs, sad and slow,
        Let sighing breezes call.

Their names let hands of horn and tan
        And rough-shod feet applaud,
Who died to make the slave a man,
        And link with toil reward.

There let the common heart keep time
        To such an anthem sung,
As never swelled on poet's rhyme,
        Or thrilled on singer's tongue.

Song of our burden and relief
Of peace and long annoy;
The passion of our mighty grief
And our exceeding joy!

A song of praise to Him who filled
The harvests sown in tears,
And gave each field a double yield
To feed our battle-years!

A song of faith that trusts the end
To match the good begun,
Nor doubts the power of Love to blend
The hearts of men as one!

DOCTOR JOHNS

XXXVII

Meantime Reuben was gaining, month by month, in a knowledge of the world,—at least of such portion of it as came within the range of his vision in New York. He imagined it, indeed, a very large portion, and took airs upon himself in consequence. He thought with due commiseration of the humble people of Ashfield. He wonders how he could have tolerated so long their simple ways. The Eagle Tavern, with its creaking sign-board, does not loom so largely as it once did upon the horizon of his thought. That he should ever have trembled as a lad at walking up to the little corner bar, in company with Phil! And as for Nat Boody, whose stories he once listened to admiringly, what a scrubby personage he has become in his eye! Fighting-dogs, indeed! "Scamp" would be nothing to what he has seen a score of times in the city!

He has put Phil through some of the "sights": for that great lout of a country lad (as Reuben could not help counting him, though he liked his big, honest heart for all that) had found him out, when he came to New York to take ship for the West Indies.

"I say, Phil," Reuben had said, as he marched his old schoolmate up Broadway, "it's rather a touch beyond Ashfield, this, isn't it? How do you think Old Boody's tavern and sign-board would look along here?"

And Phil laughed, quietly.

"I should like to see old Deacon Tourtelot," continued Reuben, "with Huldy on his arm, sloping down Broadway. Wouldn't the old people stare?"

"I guess they would," Phil said, demurely.

"I wonder if they'd knock off at sundown Saturday night," continued Reuben, mockingly.

And his tone somehow hurt Phil, who had the memories of the old home—a very dear one to him—fresh upon him.

"And I suppose Miss Almiry keeps at her singing?"

"Yes," said Phil, straining a point in favor of his townswoman; "and I think she sings pretty well."

"Pretty well! By Jove, Phil, you should have been at the Old Park night before last; you would have heard what *I* call singing. It would have stirred up the old folks of Ashfield."

And Phil met it all very seriously. It seemed to him, in his honesty, that Reuben was wantonly cutting asunder all the ties that once bound him to the old home. It pained him, moreover, to think—as he did, with a good deal of restiveness—that his blessed mother, and Rose perhaps, and the old Squire, his father, were among the Ashfield people at whom Reuben sneered so glibly. And when he parted with him upon the dock,—for Reuben had gone down to see him off,—it was with a secret conviction that their old friendship had come to an end, and that thenceforth they two could have no sympathies in common.

But in this Phil was by no means wholly right. The talk of Reuben was, after all, but the ebullition of a city conceit,—a conceit which is apt to belong to all young men at some period of their novitiate in city life. He was mainly anxious to impress upon Phil the great gain which he had made in knowledge of the world in the last few years, and to astound him with the great difference between his present standpoint and the old one, when they were boys together on the benches of the Ashfield meeting-house. We never make such gains, or apparent gains, at any period of life, it is to be feared, without wishing to demonstrate their magnitude to the slow coaches we have left behind.

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