VARIOUS

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, VOLUME 16, NO. 96, OCTOBER 1865

Various

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 16, No. 96, October 1865

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=35502051
The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 16, No. 96, October 1865 / A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, and Politics:

Содержание

Various
The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 16, No. 96, October 1865 / A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, and Politics

SAINTS WHO HAVE HAD BODIES

All doubtless remember the story which is told of the witty Charles II. and the Royal Society: How one day the King brought to the attention of its members a most curious and inexplicable phenomenon, which he stated thus: "When you put a trout into a pail full of water, why does not the water overflow?" The savans, naturally enough, were surprised, and suggested many wise, but fruitless explanations; until at last one of their number, having no proper reverence for royalty in his heart, demanded that the experiment should actually be tried. Then, of course, it was proved that there was no phenomenon to be explained. The water overflowed fast enough. Indeed, it is chronicled that the evolutions of this lively member of the piscatory tribe were so brisk, that the difficulty was the exact opposite of what was

anticipated, namely, how to keep the water in.

This story may be a pure fable, but the lesson it teaches is true and important. It illustrates forcibly the facility with which even wise men accept doubtful propositions, and then apply the whole power of their minds to explain them, and perhaps to defend them. Latterly one hears constantly of the physical decay which threatens the American people, because of their unwise and disproportioned stimulation of the brain. It is assumed, almost as an axiom, that there is "a deficiency of physical health in America." Especially is it assumed that great mental progress, either of races or of individuals, has been generally purchased at the expense of the physical frame. Indeed, it is one of the questions of the day, how the saints, that is, those devoted to literary and professional pursuits, shall obtain good and serviceable bodies; or, to widen the query, how the finest intellectual culture can exist side by side with the noblest physical development; or, to bring this question into a form that shall touch us most sharply, how our boys and girls can obtain all needful knowledge and mental discipline, and yet keep full of graceful and buoyant vitality.

What do we say to the theories and convictions which are underneath this language? What answer shall we make to these questions? What answer ought we to make? Our first reply would be, We doubt the proposition. We ask for the broad and firm basis of undoubted facts upon which it rests. And we enter an opposite plea. We affirm that the saints have as good bodies

as other people, and that they always did have. We deny that they need to be patched up or watched over any more than their neighbors. They live as long and enjoy as much as the rest of mankind. They can endure as many hard buffets, and come out as tough and strong, as the veriest dolt whose intellectual bark foundered in the unsounded depths of his primer. The world's history through, the races which are best taught have the best endowment of health. Nay, in our own New England, with just such influences, physical, mental, and moral, as actually exist, there is no deterioration in real vitality to weep over.

We hold, then, on this subject very different opinions from those which prevail in many quarters. We believe in the essential healthfulness of literary culture, and in the invigorating power of sound knowledge. Emphatically do we believe that our common schools have been in the aggregate a positive physical benefit. We are confident, that, just to the degree that the unseen force within a man receives its rightful development, does vigorous life flow in every current that beats from heart to extremities. With entire respect for the opinions of others, even while we cannot concur with them, with a readiness to admit that the assertion of those opinions may have been indirectly beneficial, we wish to state the truth as it looks to us, to exhibit the facts which bear upon this subject in the shape and hue they have to our own minds, and to give the grounds of our conviction that a cultivated mind is the best friend and ally of the body.

Would it not be singular, if anything different were true?

You say, and you say rightly, that the best part of a man is his mind and soul, those spiritual elements which divide him from all the rest of the creation, animate or inanimate, and make him lord and sovereign over them all. You say, and you say wisely, that the body, however strong and beautiful, is nothing,—that the senses, however keen and vigorous, are nothing,—that the outward glories, however much they may minister to sensual gratification, are nothing,—unless they all become the instruments for the upbuilding of the immortal part in man. But what a tremendous impeachment of the wisdom or power of the Creator you are bringing, if you assert that the development of this highest part, whether by its direct influence on the body, or indirectly by the habits of life which it creates, is destructive of all the rest, nay, self-destructive! You may show that every opening bud in spring, and every joint, nerve, and muscle in every animate creature, are full of proofs of wise designs accomplishing their purposes, and it shall all count for less than nothing, if you can demonstrate that the mind, in its highest, broadest development, brings anarchy into the system,—or, mark it well, produces, or tends to produce, habits of living ruinous to health, and so ruinous to true usefulness. At the outset, therefore, the very fact that the mind is the highest creation of Divine wisdom would force us to believe that that development of it, that increase of knowledge, that sharpening of the faculties, that feeding of intellectual hunger, which does not promote joy and health in every part, must be false and illegitimate indeed.

And it is hardly too much to say, that, in a rational being, thought is almost synonymous with vitality of all sorts. The brain throws out its network of nerves to every part of the body; and those nerves are the pathways along which it sends, not alone physical volitions, but its mental force and high intelligence, to mingle by a subtile chemistry with every fibre, and give it a finer life and a more bounding elasticity. So one might foretell, before the study of a single fact of experience, that, other things being equal, he who had few or no thoughts would have not only a dormant mind, but also a sluggish and inert body, less active than another, less enduring, and especially less defiant of physical ills. And one might prophesy, too, that he who had high thoughts and wealth of knowledge would have stored up in his brain a magazine of reserved power wherewith to support the faltering body: a prophecy not wide apart, perhaps, from any broad and candid observation of human life.

And who can fail to remember what superior resources a cultivated mind has over one sunk in sloth and ignorance,—how much wider an outlook, how much larger and more varied interests, and how these things support when outward props fail, how they strengthen in misfortune and pain, and keep the heart from anxieties which might wear out the body? Scott, dictating "Ivanhoe" in the midst of a torturing sickness, and so rising, by force of a cultivated imagination, above all physical anguish, to revel in visions of chivalric splendor, is but the type of men everywhere, who, but for resources supplied by the mind, would

have sunk beneath the blows of adverse fortune, or else sought forgetfulness in brutalizing and destructive pleasures. Sometimes a book is better far than medicine, and more truly soothing than the best anodyne. Sometimes a rich-freighted memory is more genial than many companions. Sometimes a firm mind, that has all it needs within itself, is a watchtower to which we may flee, and from which look down calmly upon our own losses and misfortunes. He who does not understand this has either had a most fortunate experience, or else has no culture, which is really a part of himself, woven into the very texture of the soul. So, if there were no facts, considering the mind, and who made it, and how it is related to the body, and how, when it is a good mind and a well-stored mind, it seems to stand for all else, to be food and shelter and comfort and friend and hope, who could believe anything else than that a well-instructed soul could do nought but good to its servant the body?

After all, we cannot evade, and we ought not to seek to evade, the testimony of facts. No cause can properly stand on any theory, however pleasant and cheering, or however plausible. What, then, of the facts, of the painful facts of experience, which are said to tell so different a tale? This,—that the physical value of education is in no way so clearly demonstrated as by these very facts. We know what is the traditional picture of the scholar,—pale, stooping, hectic, hurrying with unsteady feet to a predestined early grave; or else morbid, dyspeptic, cadaverous, putting into his works the dark tints of his own inward nature.

At best, he is painted as a mere bookworm, bleached and almost mildewed in some learned retirement beneath the shadow of great folios, until he is out of joint with the world, and all fresh and hearty life has gone out of him. Who cannot recall just such pictures, wherein one knows not which predominates, the ludicrous or the pitiful? We protest against them all. In the name of truth and common-sense alike, we indignantly reject them. We have a vision of a sturdier manhood: of the genial, open countenance of an Irving; of the homely, honest strength that shone in every feature of a Walter Scott; of the massive vigor of a Goethe or a Humboldt. How much, too, is said of the physical degeneracy of our own people,—how the jaw is retreating, how the frame is growing slender and gaunt, how the chest flattens, and how tenderly we ought to cherish every octogenarian among us, for that we are seeing the last of them! If this is intended to be a piece of pleasant badinage, far be it from us to arrest a single smile it may awaken. But if it is given as a serious description, from which serious deductions can be drawn, then we say, that, as a delineation, it is, to a considerable extent, purely fanciful,—as an argument, utterly so. The facts, so far as they are ascertained, point unwaveringly to this conclusion,—that every advance of a people in knowledge and refinement is accompanied by as striking an advance in health and strength.

Try this question, if you please, on the largest possible scale. Compare the uneducated savage with his civilized brother. His form has never been bent by confinement in the school-room.

Overburdening thoughts have never wasted his frame. And if unremitting exercise amid the free airs of heaven will alone make one strong, then he will be strong. Is the savage stronger? Does he live more years? Can he compete side by side with civilized races in the struggle for existence? Just the opposite is true. Our puny boys, as we sometimes call them, in our colleges, will weigh more, lift more, endure more than any barbarian race of them all. This day the gentle Sandwich-Islanders are wasting like snow-wreaths, in contact with educated races. This day our red men are being swept before advancing civilization like leaves before the breath of the hurricane. And it requires no prophet's eye to see, that, if we do not give the black man education as well as freedom, an unshackled mind as well as unshackled limbs, he, too, will share the same fate.

To all this it may naturally be objected, that the reason so many savage races do not display the greatest physical stamina is not so much intellectual barrenness as their vices, native or acquired,—or because they bring no wisdom to the conduct of life, but dwell in smoky huts, eat unhealthy food, go from starvation to plethora and from plethora to starvation again, exchange the indolent lethargy which is the law of savage life for the frantic struggles of war or the chase which diversify and break up its monotony. Allow the objection; and then what have we accomplished, but carrying the argument one step back? For what are self-control and self-care, but the just fruits of intelligence? But in truth it is a combination of all these influences, and not any of them alone,

that enables the civilized man to outlive and outrival his barbarian brother. He succeeds, not simply because of the superior address and sagacity which education gives him, though that, no doubt, has much to do with it; not altogether because his habits of life are better, though we would not underrate their value; but equally because the culture of the brain gives a finer life to every red drop in his arteries, and greater hardihood to every fibre which is woven into his flesh. If it is not so, how do you explain the fact that our colored soldier, fighting in his native climate, with the same exposure in health and the same care in sickness, succumbs to wounds and diseases over which his white comrade triumphs? Or how will you explain analogous facts in the history of disease among other uneducated races? Our explanation is simple. As the slightest interfusion of carbon may change the dull iron into trenchant steel, so intelligence working through invisible channels may add a new temper to the physical nature. And thus it may be strictly true that it is not only the mind and soul which slavery and ignorance wrong, but the body just as much.

It may be said, and perhaps justly, that a comparison between races so unlike is not a fair comparison. Take, then, if you prefer, the intelligent and unintelligent periods in the history of the same race. The old knights! Those men with mail-clad bodies and iron natures, who stand out in imagination as symbols of masculine strength! The old knights! They were not scholars. Their constitutions were not ruined by study, or by superfluous

sainthood of any kind. They were more at home with the sword than the pen. They loved better "to hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak." So their minds were sufficiently dormant. How was it with their bodies? Were they sturdier men? Did they stand heavier on their feet than their descendants? It is a familiar fact that the armor which inclosed them will not hold those whom we call their degenerate children. A friend tells me that in the armory of London Tower there are preserved scores, if not hundreds, of the swords of those terrible Northmen, those Vikings, who, ten centuries ago, swept the seas and were the dread of all Europe, and that scarcely one of them has a hilt large enough to be grasped by a man of this generation. Of races who have left behind them no methodical records, and whose story is preserved only in the rude rhymes of their poets and ruder chronicles, it is not safe to make positive affirmations; but all the indications are that the student of to-day is a larger and stronger man than the warrior of the Middle Ages.

If we come down to periods of historical certainty, no one will doubt that the England of the present hour is more educated than the England of fifty years ago, or that the England of fifty years since had a broader diffusion of intelligence than the England of a century previous. Yet that very intelligence has prolonged life. An Englishman lives longer to-day than he did in 1800, and longer yet than in 1700. Here is a curious proof. Annuities calculated on a certain rate of life in 1694 would yield a fortune to those who issued them. Calculated at the same rate in 1794, they

would ruin them; for the more general diffusion of knowledge and refinement had added, I am not able to say how many years to the average British life. Observe how this statement is confirmed by some wonderful statistics preserved at Geneva. From 1600 to 1700 the average length of life in that city was 13 years 3 months. From 1700 to 1750 it was 27 years 9 months. From 1750 to 1800, 31 years 3 months. From 1800 to 1833, 43 years 6 months.

One more pertinent fact. Take in England any number of families you please, whose parents can read and write, and an equal number of families whose parents cannot read and write, and the number of children in the latter class of families who will die before the age of five years will greatly exceed that in the former class,—some thirty or forty per cent. So surely does a thoughtful ordering of life come in the train of intelligence. If faith is to be placed in statistics of any sort, then it holds true in foreign countries that human life is long in proportion to the degree that knowledge, refinement, and virtue are diffused. That is, sainthood, so far from destroying the body, preserves it.

I anticipate the objection which may be made to our last argument. Abroad, we are told, there is such an element of healthy, out-door life, that any ill effects which might naturally follow in the train of general education are neutralized. Abroad, too, education with the masses is elementary, and advanced also with more moderation than with us. Abroad, moreover, the whole social being is not pervaded with the intense intellectual activity and fervor which are so characteristic especially of New

England life.

Come home, then, to our own Massachusetts, which some will have is school-mad. What do you find? Here, in a climate proverbially changeable and rigorous,—here, where mental and moral excitements rise to fever-heat,—here, where churches adorn every landscape, and school-houses greet us at every corner, and lyceums are established in every village,—here, where newspapers circulate by the hundred thousand, and magazines for our old folks, and "Our Young Folks," too, reach fifty thousand,—here, in Massachusetts, health is at its climax: greater and more enduring than in bonnie England, or vine-clad France, or sunny Italy. I read some statistics the other day, and I have ever since had a greater respect for the land of "east-winds, and salt-fish and school-houses," as scandalous people have termed Massachusetts. What do these statistics say? That, while in England the deaths reach annually 2.21 per cent of the whole population, and in France 2.36 per cent, and in Italy 2.94 per cent, and in Austria 3.34 per cent, in Massachusetts, the deaths are only 1.82 per cent annually. Even in Boston, with its large proportion of foreign elements, the percentage of deaths is only 2.35. It may be said, in criticism of these statements, that in our country statistics are not kept with sufficient accuracy to furnish correct data. However this may be in our rural districts, it certainly is not true of the metropolis. The figures are not at hand, but they exist, and they prove conclusively that those wards in Boston which have a population most purely native reach

a salubrity unexcelled. So that, with all the real drawbacks of climate, and the pretended drawbacks of unnatural or excessive mental stimulus, the health here is absolutely unequalled by that of any country in Europe. Certainly, if the mental and moral sainthood which we have does not build up the body, it cannot be said that it does any injury to it.

Have we noted what a splendid testimony the war which has just closed has given to the physical results of our New England villages and put into the ranks of our army—young men who learned the alphabet at four, who all through boyhood had the advantages of our common-school system, who had felt to the full the excitement of the intellectual life about them—have stood taller, weighed heavier, fought more bravely and intelligently, won victory out of more adverse circumstances, and, what is more to the point, endured more hardship with less sickness, than a like number of any other race on earth. We care not where you look for comparison, whether to Britain, or to France, or to Russia, where the spelling-book has almost been tabooed, or to Spain, where in times past the capacity to read the Bible was scarcely less than rank heresy, at least for the common people. This war has been brought to a successful issue by the best educated army that ever fought on battle-field, or, as the new book has it, by "the thinking bayonet," by men whose physical manhood has received no detriment from their intellectual culture.

These assertions are founded upon statistics which have been

preserved regiments whose members were almost exclusively native-born. And the results are certainly in accordance with all candid observation. It may, indeed, be said that the better health of our army has been after all the result of the better care which the soldier has taken of himself. We answer, the better care was the product of his education. It may be said again that this health was owing in a great measure to the superior watchfulness exercised over the soldier by others, by the Government, by the Sanitary Commission, and by State agencies. Then we reply, that this tenderness of the soldier, if tenderness it be, and this sagacity, if sagacity prompted the care, were both the offspring of that high intelligence which is the proper result of popular education.

There is but one possible mode of escape from such testimony. This whole train of argument is inconclusive, it may be asserted, because what is maintained is not that intellectual culture is unhealthful, where it is woven into the web of active life, but only where the pursuit of knowledge is one's business. It may be readily allowed, that, where the whole nature is kept alive by the breath of outward enterprise, when the great waves of this world's excitements are permitted to roll with purifying tides into the inmost recesses of the soul, the results of mental culture may be modified. But what of the saints? What of the literary men *par excellence*?

Ah! if you restrain us to that line of inquiry, the argument will be trebly strong, and the facts grow overwhelmingly pertinent

and conclusive. Will you examine the careful registry of deaths in Massachusetts which has been kept the last twenty years? It will inform you that the classes whose average of life is high up, almost the highest up, are with us the classes that work with the brain,—the judges, the lawyers, the physicians, the clergymen, the professors in your colleges. The very exception to this statement rather confirms than contradicts our general position, that intellectual culture is absolutely invigorating. The cultivators of the soil live longest. But note that it is the educated, intelligent farmers, the farmers of Massachusetts, the farmers of a State of common schools, the farmers who link thought to labor, who live long. And doubtless, if they carried more thought into their labor, if they were more intelligent, if they were better educated, they would live yet longer. At any rate, in England the cultivators of her soil, her down-trodden peasantry, sluggish and uneducated, do not live out half their days. Very likely the farmer's lot, *plus* education and *plus* habits of mental activity, is the healthiest as it is the primal condition of man. Nevertheless, considering what is the general opinion, it is surprising how slight is the advantage which he has even then over the purely literary classes.

Will you go to Harvard University and ascertain what becomes of her children? Take up, then, Dr. Palmer's Necrology of the Alumni of Harvard from 1851 to 1863. You will learn, that, while the average age of all persons who in Massachusetts die after they have attained the period of twenty years is but

fifty years, the average age of Harvard graduates, who die in like manner, is fifty-eight years. Thus you have, in favor of the highest form of public education known in the State, a clear average of eight years. You may examine backward the Triennial Catalogue as far as you please, and you will not find the testimony essentially different. The statement will stand impregnable, that, from the time John Harvard founded our little College in the wilderness, to this hour, when it is fast becoming a great University, with its schools in every department, and its lectures covering the whole field of human knowledge, the graduates have always attained a longevity surpassing that of their generation.

And you are to observe that this comparison is a strictly just comparison. We contrast not the whole community, old and young, with those who must necessarily have attained manhood before they are a class at all; but adults with adults, graduates with those of other avocations who have arrived at the period of twenty years. Neither do we compare the bright and peculiar luminaries of Harvard with the mass of men,—though, in fact, it is well known that the best scholars live the most years,—but we compare the whole body of the graduates, bright and dull, studious and unstudious, with the whole body of the community.

To the array of evidence which may be brought from all the registries of all the states and universities under heaven, some may triumphantly exclaim, "Statistics are unworthy of trust." "To lie like statistics," "false as a fact," these are the stalest

of witticisms. But the objection to which they give point is practically frivolous. Grant that statistics are to a certain degree doubtful, are they not the most trustworthy evidence we have? And in the question at issue, are they not the only evidence which has real force? And allowing their general defectiveness, how shall we explain, that, though gathered from all sides and by all kinds of people, they so uniformly favor education? Why, if they must err, do they err so pertinaciously in one direction? How does it happen, that, summon as many witnesses as you please, and cross-question them as severely as you can, they never falter in this testimony, that, where intelligence abounds, there physical vigor does much more abound? that, where education is broad and generous, there the years are many and happy?

If, therefore, facts can prove anything, it is that just such a condition of life as that which is growing more and more general among us, and which our common-school system directly fosters, where every man is becoming an educated man,—where the farmer upon his acres, the merchant at his desk, and the mechanic in his shop, no less than the scholar poring over his books shall be in the truest sense educated,—that such a condition is the one of all others which promotes habits of thought and action, an elasticity of temper and a breadth of vision and interest most conducive to health and vigor. It is the fashion to talk of the appearance of superior robustness so characteristic of our English brethren. But we suspect that in this case, too, appearances are deceitful. That climate may produce in us a

restless energy inconsistent with rounded forms and rosy cheeks we freely allow. But in strength and real endurance the New England constitution will yield to none. And the stern logic of facts shows beyond a peradventure, that here there are no influences, climatic or intellectual, which war with longevity. What may be hidden in the future, what results may come from a still wider diffusion of education, we cannot tell, but hitherto nothing but good has come of ever-increasing knowledge.

We hasten now to inquire concerning the health and years of special classes of literary men: not, indeed, to prove that there is no real war between the mind and the body,—for we consider that point to be already demonstrated,—but rather to show that we need shrink from no field of inquiry, and that from every fresh field will come new evidence of the substantial truth of our position.

We have taken the trouble to ascertain the average age of all the English poets of whom Johnson wrote lives, some fifty or sixty in all. Here are great men and small men, men with immortal names and men whose names were long since forgotten, men of good habits and men whose habits would undermine any constitution, flourishing, too, in a period when human life was certainly far shorter in England than now. And how long did they live? What do you think? Thirty, forty years? No; they endured their sainthood, or their want of it, for the comfortable period of fifty-six years. Nor is the case a particle different, if you take only the great and memorable names of

English poetry. Chaucer, living at the dawn almost of English civilization; Shakspeare, whose varied and marvellous dramas might well have exhausted any vitality; Milton, struggling with domestic infelicity, with political hatred, and with blindness; Dryden, Pope, Swift: none of these burning and shining lights of English literature went out at mid-day. The result is not altered, if you come nearer our own time. That galaxy of talent and genius which shone with such brilliancy in the Scottish capital at the beginning of the century,—Sydney Smith, Lord Jeffrey, Christopher North, Macaulay, Mackintosh, De Quincey, Brougham,—all these, with scarcely an exception, have lived far beyond the average of human life. So was it with the great poets and romancers of that period. Wordsworth, living the life of a recluse near the beautiful lakes of Westmoreland, lasted to fourscore. Southey, after a life of unparalleled literary industry, broke down at sixty-six. Coleridge, with habits which ought to have destroyed him early, lingered till sixty-two. Scott, struggling to throw off a mountain-load of debt, endured superhuman labor till more than sixty. Even Byron and Burns, who did not live as men who desired length of days, died scarcely sooner than their generation.

You are not willing, perhaps, to test this question by the longevity of purely literary men. You ask what can be said about the great preachers. You have always heard, that, while the ministers were, no doubt, men of excellent intentions and much sound learning, what with their morbid notions of life, and what

with the weight of a rather heavy sort of erudition, they were saints with the very poorest kind of bodies. Just the contrary. No class lives longer. We once made out a list of the thirty most remarkable preachers of the last four centuries that we could call to mind. Of the age to which most of these attained we had at the outset no idea whatever. In that list were included the men who must figure in every candid account of preaching. The great men of the Reformation, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Beza, Knox, were there. That resplendent group which adorned the seventeenth century, and whose names are synonymes for pulpit eloquence, Barrow, South, Jeremy Taylor, and Tillotson, were prominent in it. The milder lights of the last century, Paley, Blair, Robertson, Priestley, were not forgotten. The Catholics were represented by Massillon, Bossuet, Bourdalouë, and Fénelon. The Protestants as truly by Robert Hall and Chalmers, by Wesley and Channing. In short, it was a thoroughly fair list. We then proceeded to ascertain the average life of those included in it. It was just sixty-nine years. And we invite all persons who are wedded to the notion that the saints are always knights of the broken body, to take pen and paper and jot down the name of every remarkable preacher since the year 1500 that they can recall, and add, if they wish, every man in their own vicinity who has risen in learning and talent above the mass of his profession. We will insure the result without any premium. They will produce a list that would delight the heart of a provident director of a life-insurance company. And their average will

come as near the old Scripture pattern of threescore years and ten as that of any body of men who have lived since the days of Isaac and Jacob.

If now any one has a lurking doubt of the physical value of an active and well-stored mind, let him pass from the preachers to the statesmen, from the men who teach the wisdom of the world to come to the men who administer the things of this world. Let him begin with the grand names of the Long Parliament, —Hampden, Pym, Vane, Cromwell,—and then gather up all the great administrators of the next two centuries, down to the octogenarians who are now foremost in the conduct of British affairs; and if he wishes to widen his observation, let him pass over the Channel to the Continent, and in France recall such names as Sully and Richelieu, Mazarin and Colbert, Talleyrand and Guizot; in Austria, Kaunitz and Metternich. And when he has made his list as broad, as inclusive of all really great statesmanship everywhere as he can, find his average; and if he can bring it much beneath seventy, he will be more fortunate than we were when we tried the experiment.

Do not by any means omit the men of science. There are the astronomers. If any employment would seem to draw a man up to heaven, it would be this. Yet, of all men, astronomers apparently have had the most wedded attachment to earth. Galileo, Newton, La Place, Herschel,—these are the royal names, the fixed stars, set, as it were, in that very firmament which for so many years they searched with telescopic eye. And yet neither of them lived

less than seventy-eight years. As for the men of natural science, it looks as though they were spared by some Providential provision, in order that they might observe and report for long epochs the changes of this old earth of ours. Cuvier dying at seventy-five, Sir Joseph Banks at seventy-seven, Buffon at eighty-one, Blumenbach at eighty-eight, and Humboldt at fourscore and ten, are some of the cases which make such a supposition altogether reasonable.

Cross the ocean, and you will find the same testimony, that mental culture is absolutely favorable to physical endurance. The greatest men in our nation's history, whether in walks of statesmanship, science, or literature, almost without exception, have lived long. Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, Madison, the elder Adams, and Patrick Henry, in earlier periods,—the younger Adams, Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Choate, and Everett, Irving, Prescott, Cooper, and Hawthorne, in later times,—are cases in point. These men did not die prematurely. They grew strong by the toil of the brain. And to-day the quartette of our truest poets—Bryant, Whittier, Longfellow, and Holmes—are with us in the hale years of a green age, never singing sweeter songs, never harping more inspiring strains. Long may our ears hear their melodies!

If now we could enter the walks of private life, and study widely the experience of individual men, we should have an interesting record indeed, and a manifold and wellnigh irresistible testimony. Consider a few remarkable, yet widely

differing cases.

Who can read attentively the life of John Wesley, and not exclaim, if varied and exhausting labor, if perpetual excitement and constant drafts upon the brain, would ever wear a man out, he would have worn out? It was his creative energy that called into existence a denomination, his ardent piety that inspired it, his clear mind that legislated for it, his heroic industry that did no mean part of the incessant daily toil needful for its establishment. Yet this man of many labors, who through a long life never knew practically the meaning of the word *leisure*, says, at seventy-two, "How is it that I find the same strength that I did thirty years ago, that my nerves are firmer, that I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several that I had in youth." And ten years later, he devoutly records, "Is anything too hard for God? It is now eleven years since I have felt such a thing as weariness." And he continued till eighty-eight in full possession of his faculties, laboring with body and mind alike to within a week of his death.

Joseph Priestley was certainly a very different man, but scarcely less remarkable. No mean student in all branches of literature, a metaphysician, a theologian, a man of science, he began life with a feeble frame, and ended a hearty old age at seventy-one. He himself declares at fifty-four, that, "so far from suffering from application to study, I have found my health steadily improve from the age of eighteen to the present time."

You would scarcely find a life more widely divided from these than that of Washington Irving. Nevertheless, it is like

them in one respect, that it bears emphatic testimony to the real healthiness of mental exertion. He was the feeblest of striplings at eighteen. At nineteen, Judge Kent said, "He is not long for this world." His friends sent him abroad at twenty-one, to see if a sea voyage would not husband his strength. So pale, so broken, was he, that, when he stepped on board the ship, the captain whispered, "There is a chap who will be overboard before we are across!" Irving had, too, his share of misfortunes,—failure in business, loss of investments, in earlier life some anxiety as to the ways and means of support. Even his habits of study were hardly what the highest wisdom would direct. While he was always genial and social, and at times easy almost to indolence, when the mood seized him, he would write incessantly for weeks and even for months, sometimes fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen hours in a day. But he grew robust for half a century, and writes, at seventy-five, that he has now "a streak of old age."

The example of some of those who are said to have been worn out by intense mental application furnishes perhaps the most convincing proof of all that no reasonable activity of the mind ever warred with the best health of the body. Walter Scott, we are told, wore out. And very likely, to a certain extent, the statement is true. But what had he not accomplished before he wore out? He had astonished the world with that wonderful series of romances which place him scarcely second to any name in English literature. He had sung those border legends which delighted the ears of his generation. He had produced

histories which show, that, had he chosen, he might have been as much a master in the region of historic fact as in the realm of imagination. He had edited other men's works; he had written essays; he had lent himself with a royal generosity to every one who asked his time or influence; and when, almost an old man, commercial bankruptcy overtook him, and he sought to lift the mountain of his debt by pure intellectual toil, he wore out. But declining years, disappointed hopes, desperate exertions, may wear anybody out. He wore out, but it was at more than threescore years, when nine tenths of his generation had long slept in quiet graves,—when the crowd of the thoughtless and indolent, who began life with him, had rusted out in inglorious repose. Yes, Walter Scott wore out, if you call that wearing out.

John Calvin, all his biographers say, wore out. Perhaps so;—but not without a prolonged resistance. Commencing life with the frailest constitution, he was, as early as twenty-five, a model of erudition, and had already written his immortal work. For thirty years he was in the heat and ferment of a great religious revolution. For thirty years he was one of the controlling minds of his age. For thirty years he was the sternest soldier in the Church Militant, bearing down stubborn resistance by a yet more stubborn will. For thirty years neither his brain nor his pen knew rest. And so at fifty-six this man of broken body and many labors laid down the weapons of his warfare; but it was at Geneva, where the public registers tell us that the average of human life in that century was only nine years.

One writes words like these:—"John Kitto died, and his death was the judgment for overwork, and overwork of a single organ,—the brain." And who was John Kitto? A poor boy, the son a drunken father, subject from infancy to agonizing headache. An unfortunate lad, who at thirteen fell from a scaffolding and was taken up for dead, and escaped only with total deafness and a supposed permanent injury to the brain. A hapless apprentice, who suffered at the hands of a cruel taskmaster all that brutality and drunken fury could suggest. A youth, thirsting for knowledge, but able to obtain it only by the hardest ways, peering into booksellers' windows, reading at book-stalls, purchasing cheap books with pennies stained all over with the sweat of his toil. An heroic student, who labored for more than twenty years with almost unparalleled industry, and with an equally unparalleled neglect of the laws of health; of whom it is scarcely too much to say literally, that he knew no change, but from his desk to his bed, and from his bed to his desk again. A voluminous writer, who, if he produced no work of positive genius, has done more than any other man to illustrate the Scriptures, and to make familiar and vivid the scenery, the life, the geography, and the natural history of the Holy Land. And he died in the harness,—but not so very early,—at fifty. And we say that he would have lived much longer, had he given his constitution a fair chance. But when we remember his passionate fondness for books, how they compensated him for the want of wealth, comforts, and the pleasant voices of wife and children

that he could not hear, we grow doubtful. And we hear him exclaim almost in rhapsody,—"If I were blind as well as deaf, in what a wretched situation should I be! If I could not read, how deplorable would be my condition! What earthly pleasure equal to the reading of a good book? O dearest tomes! O princely and august folios! to obtain you, I would work night and day, and forbid myself every sensual joy!" When we behold the forlorn man, shut out by his misfortune from so many resources, and finding more than recompense for this privation within the four walls of his library, we are tempted to say, No, he would not have lived as long; had he studied less, he would have remembered his griefs more.

Of course it is easy to take exception to all evidence drawn from the life and experience of individual men,—natural to say that one must needs be somewhat old before he can acquire a great name at all, and that our estimate considers those alone to whom mere prolongation of day has given reputation, and forgets "the village Hampdens, the mute, inglorious Miltons," the unrecorded Newtons, the voiceless orators, sages, or saints who have died and made no sign. To this the simple reply is, that individual cases, however numerous and striking, are not relied upon to prove any position, but only to illustrate and confirm one which general data have already demonstrated. Grant the full force of every criticism, and then it remains true that the widest record of literary life exhibits no tendency of mental culture to shorten human life or to create habits which would shorten

it. Indeed, we do not know where to look for any broad range of facts which would indicate that education here or anywhere else has decreased or is likely to decrease health. And were it not for the respect which we cherish towards those who hold it, we should say that such a position was as nearly pure theory or prejudice or opinion founded on fragmentary data as any view well could be.

But do you mean to assert that there is no such thing as intellectual excess? that intellectual activity never injures? that unremitting attention to mental pursuits, with an entire abstinence from proper exercise and recreation, is positively invigorating? that robbing the body of sleep, and bending it sixteen or eighteen hours over the desk, is the best way to build it up in grace and strength? Of course no one would say any such absurd things. There is a right and wrong use of everything. Any part of the system will wear out with excessive use. Overwork kills, but certainly not any quicker when it is overwork of the mind than when it is overwork of the body. Overwork in the study is just as healthful as overwork on the farm or at the ledger or in the smoky shop, toiling and moiling, with no rest and no quickening thoughts. Especially is it true that education does not peculiarly tempt a man to excess.

But are you ready to maintain that there is no element of excess infused into our common-school system? Certainly. Most emphatically there is not. What, then, is there to put over against these terrible statements of excessive labor of six or seven hours

a day, under which young brains are reeling and young spines are bending until there are no rosy-checked urchins and blooming maids left among us? The inexorable logic of facts. The public schools of Massachusetts were taught in the years 1863-4 on an average just thirty-two weeks, just five days in a week, and, making proper allowance for recesses and opening exercises, just five and a quarter hours in a day. Granting now that all the boys and girls studied during these hours faithfully, you have an average for the three hundred and thirteen working days of the year of two hours and forty-one minutes a day,—an amount of study that never injured any healthy child. But, going back a little to youthful recollections, and considering the amazing proclivity of the young mind to idleness, whispering, and fun and frolic in general, it seems doubtful whether our children ever yet attained to so high an average of actual study as two hours a day. As a modification of this statement, it may be granted that in the cities and larger towns the school term reaches forty weeks in a year. If you add one hour as the average amount of study at home, given by pupils of over twelve years, (and the allowance is certainly ample,) you have four hours as the utmost period ever given by any considerable class of children. That there is excess we freely admit. That there are easy committee-men who permit too high a pressure, and infatuated teachers who insist upon it, that there are ambitious children whom nobody can stop, and silly parents who fondly wish to see their children monstrosities of brightness, lisping Latin and Greek in their cradles, respiring mathematics

as they would the atmosphere, and bristling all over with facts of natural science like porcupines, till every bit of childhood is worked out of them,—that such things are, we are not inclined to deny. But they are rare exceptions,—no more a part of the system than white crows are proper representatives of the dusky and cawing brotherhood.

Or yet again, do we mean to assert that no attention need be given to the formation of right physical habits? or that bodily exercise ought not to be joined to mental toils? or that the walk in the woods, the row upon the quiet river, the stroll with rod in hand by the babbling brook, or with gun on shoulder over the green prairies, or the skating in the crisp December air on the glistening lake, ought to be discouraged? Do we speak disrespectfully of dumb-bells and clubs and parallel bars, and all the paraphernalia of the gymnasium? Are we aggrieved at the mention of boxing-gloves or single-stick or foils? Would it shock our nervous sensibilities, if our next-door neighbor the philosopher, or some near-by grave and reverend doctor of divinity, or even the learned judge himself, should give unmistakable evidence that he had in his body the two hundred and odd bones and the five hundred and more muscles, with all their fit accompaniments of joints and sinews, of which the anatomists tell us? Not at all. Far from it. We exercise, no doubt, too little. We know of God's fair world too much by description, too little by the sight of our own eyes. Welcome anything which leads us out into this goodly and glorious universe! Welcome all that tends to give the human

frame higher grace and symmetry! Welcome the gymnastics, too, heavy or light either, if they will guide us to a more harmonious physical development.

We ourselves own a set of heavy Indian-clubs, of middling Indian-clubs, and of light Indian-clubs. We have iron dumb-bells and wooden dumb-bells. We recollect with considerable satisfaction a veritable bean-bag which did good service in the household until it unfortunately sprung a-leak. In an amateur way we have tried both systems, and felt the better for them. We have a dim remembrance of rowing sundry leagues, and even of dabbling with the rod and line. We always look with friendly eye upon the Harvard Gymnasium, whenever it looms up in actual or mental vision. Never yet could we get by an honest game of cricket or base-ball without losing some ten minutes in admiring contemplation. We bow with deep respect to Dr. Windship and his heavy weights. We bow, if anything, with a trifle more of cordiality to Dr. Lewis and his light weights. They both have our good word. We think that they would have our example, were it not for the fatal proclivity of solitary gymnastics to dulness. If we have not risen to the high degrees in this noble order of muscular Christians, we claim at least to be a humble craftsman and faithful brother.

Speaking with all seriousness, we have no faith in mental activity purchased at the expense of physical sloth. It is well to introduce into the school, into the family, and into the neighborhood any movement system which will exercise all the

muscles of the body. But the educated man is not any more likely to need this general physical development than anybody else. Establish your gymnasium in any village, and the farmer fresh from the plough, the mechanic from swinging the hammer or driving the plane, will be just as sure to find new muscles that he never dreamed of as the palest scholar of them all. And the diffusion of knowledge and refinement, so far from promoting inactivity and banishing recreations from life, directly feeds that craving for variety out of which healthful changes come, and awakens that noble curiosity which at fit seasons sends a man out to see how the wild-flower grows in the woods, how the green buds open in the spring, how the foliage takes on its painted autumn glory, which leads him to struggle through tangled thickets or through pathless woods that he may behold the brook laughing in cascade from rock to rock, or to breast the steep mountain that he may behold from a higher outlook the wonders of the visible creation. Other things being equal, the educated man in any vocation is quite as likely as another to be active, quick in every motion and free in every limb.

But admit all that is claimed. Admit that increasing intelligence has changed the average of man's life from the twenty-five years of the seventeenth century to the thirty-five of the eighteenth or the forty-five years of the nineteenth century. Admit, too, that the best educated men of this generation will live five or ten years more than the least educated men. Ought we to be satisfied with things as they are? Should we not look for

more than the forty or fifty years of human life? Assuredly. But it is not our superfluous sainthood which is destroying life. It is not that we have too much saintliness, but too little, too limited wisdom, too narrow intelligence, too small an endowment of virtue and conscience. It is our fierce absorption in outward plans which plants anxieties like thorns in the heart. It is out sloth and gluttony which eat out vitality. It is our unbridled appetites and passions which burn like a consuming fire in our breasts. It is our unwise exposure which saps the strength and gives energy and force to latent disease. These, tenfold more than any intense application of the brain to its legitimate work, limit and destroy human life. The truly cultivated mind tends to give just aims, moderate desires, and good habits.

Ay, and when the true sainthood shall possess and rule humanity,—when the fields of knowledge with their wholesome fruits shall tempt every foot away from the forbidden paths of vice and sensual indulgence,—when a wise intelligence shall cool the hot passions which dry up the refreshing fountains of peace and joy in the heart,—when a heavenly wisdom shall lift us above any bondage to this world's fortunes, and when a good conscience and a lofty trust shall forbid us to be slaves to any occupation lower than the highest,—when we stand erect and free, clothed with a real saintliness,—then the years of our life may increase, and man may go down to his grave "in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

Meanwhile we must stand firmly on this assertion, that, the

more of mental and moral sainthood our people achieve, the more that sainthood will write fair inscriptions on their bodies, will shine out in intelligence in their faces, will exhibit itself in graceful form and motion, and thus add to the deeper and more lasting virtues physical power, a body which shall be at once a good servant and the proper representative of a refined and elevated soul.

NO TIME LIKE THE OLD TIME

There is no time like the old time, when you and I were young,
When the buds of April blossomed, and the birds of spring-time sung!
The garden's brightest glories by summer suns are nursed,
But, oh, the sweet, sweet violets, the flowers that opened first!

There is no place like the old place where you and I were born,
Where we lifted first our eyelids on the splendors of the morn
From the milk-white breast that warmed us, from the clinging arms that bore,
Where the dear eyes glistened o'er us that will look on us no more!

There is no friend like the old friend who has shared our morning days,
No greeting like his welcome, no homage like his praise:
Fame is the scentless sunflower, with gaudy crown of gold;
But friendship is the breathing rose, with sweets in every fold.

There is no love like the old love that we courted in our pride;
Though our leaves are falling, falling, and we're fading side by side,
There are blossoms all around us with the colors of our dawn,

And we live in borrowed sunshine when the light of day is gone.

There are no times like the old times,—they shall never be forgot!
There is no place like the old place,—keep green the dear old spot!
There are no friends like our old friends,—may Heaven prolong their lives!
There are no loves like our old loves,—God bless our loving wives!

COUPON BONDS

PART II

Mr. Ducklow had scarcely turned the corner of the street, when, looking anxiously in the direction of his homestead, he saw a column of smoke. It was directly over the spot where he knew his house to be situated. He guessed at a glance what had happened. The frightful catastrophe he foreboded had befallen. Taddy had set the house afire.

"Them bonds! them bonds!" he exclaimed, distractedly. He did not think so much of the house: house and furniture were insured; if they were burned, the inconvenience would be great indeed, and at any other time the thought of such an event would have been a sufficient cause for trepidation,—but now his chief, his only anxiety was the bonds. They were not insured. They would be a dead loss. And what added sharpness to his pangs, they would be a loss which he must keep a secret, as he had kept their existence a secret,—a loss which he could not confess, and of which he could not complain. Had he not just given his neighbors to understand that he held no such property? And his wife,—was she not at that very moment, if not serving up a lie on the subject, at least paring the truth very thin indeed?

"A man would think," observed Ferring, "that Ducklow had

some o' them bonds on his hands, and got scaret, he took such a sudden start. He has, hasn't he, Mrs. Ducklow?"

"Has what?" said Mrs. Ducklow, pretending ignorance.

"Some o' them cowpon bonds. I ruther guess he's got some."

"You mean Gov'ment bonds? Ducklow got some? 'Ta'n't at all likely he'd spec'late in them, without saying something to *me* about it! No, he couldn't have any without my knowing it, I'm sure!"

How demure, how innocent she looked, plying her knitting-needles, and stopping to take up a stitch! How little at that moment she knew of Ducklow's trouble, and its terrible cause!

Ducklow's first impulse was to drive on and endeavor at all hazards to snatch the bonds from the flames. His next was, to return and alarm his neighbors, and obtain their assistance. But a minute's delay might be fatal; so he drove on, screaming "Fire! fire!" at the top of his voice.

But the old mare was a slow-footed animal; and Ducklow had no whip. He reached forward and struck her with the reins.

"Git up! git up!—Fire! fire!" screamed Ducklow. "Oh, them bonds! them bonds! Why didn't I give the money to Reuben? Fire! fire! fire!"

By dint of screaming and slapping, he urged her from a trot into a gallop, which was scarcely an improvement as to speed, and certainly not as to grace. It was like the gallop of an old cow. "Why don't ye go 'long!" he cried despairingly.

Slap, slap! He knocked his own hat off with the loose ends

of the reins. It fell under the wheels. He cast one look behind, to satisfy himself that it had been very thoroughly run over and crushed into the dirt, and left it to its fate.

Slap, slap! "Fire, fire!" Canter, canter, canter! Neighbors looked out of their windows, and, recognizing Ducklow's wagon and old mare in such an astonishing plight, and Ducklow himself, without his hat, rising from his seat, and reaching forward in wild attitudes, brandishing the reins, at the same time rending the azure with yells, thought he must be insane.

He drove to the top of the hill, and looking beyond, in expectation of seeing his house wrapped in flames, discovered that the smoke proceeded from a brush-heap which his neighbor Atkins was burning in a field near by.

The revulsion of feeling that ensued was almost too much for the excitable Ducklow. His strength went out of him. For a little while there seemed to be nothing left of him but tremor and cold sweat. Difficult as it had been to get the old mare in motion, it was now even more difficult to stop her.

"Why! what has got into Ducklow's old mare? She's running away with him! Who ever heard of such a thing!" And Atkins, watching the ludicrous spectacle from his field, became almost as weak from laughter as Ducklow was from the effects of fear.

At length Ducklow succeeded in checking the old mare's speed, and in turning her about. It was necessary to drive back for his hat. By this time he could hear a chorus of shouts, "Fire! fire! fire!" over the hill. He had aroused the neighbors as he passed,

and now they were flocking to extinguish the flames.

"A false alarm! a false alarm!" said Ducklow, looking marvellously sheepish, as he met them. "Nothing but Atkins's brush-heap!"

"Seems to me you ought to have found that out 'fore you raised all creation with your yells!" said one hyperbolical fellow. "You looked like the Flying Dutchman! This your hat? I thought 'twas a dead cat in the road. No fire, no fire!"—turning back to his comrades,—"only one of Ducklow's jokes."

Nevertheless, two or three boys there were who would not be convinced, but continued to leap up, swing their caps, and scream "Fire!" against all remonstrance. Ducklow did not wait to enter into explanations, but, turning the old mare about again, drove home amid the laughter of the bystanders and the screams of the misguided youngsters. As he approached the house, he met Taddy rushing wildly up the street.

"Thaddeus! Thaddeus! where ye goin', Thaddeus?"

"Goin' to the fire!" cried Taddy.

"There isn't any fire, boy!"

"Yes, there is! Didn't ye hear 'em? They've been yellin' like fury."

"It's nothin' but Atkins's brush."

"That all?" And Taddy appeared very much disappointed. "I thought there was goin' to be some fun. I wonder who was such a fool as to yell fire jest for a darned old brush-heap!"

Ducklow did not inform him.

"I've got to drive over to town and git Reuben's trunk. You stand by the mare while I step in and brush my hat."

Instead of applying himself at once to the restoration of his beaver, he hastened to the sitting-room, to see that the bonds were safe.

"Heavens and 'arth!" said Ducklow.

The chair, which had been carefully planted in the spot where they were concealed, had been removed. Three or four tacks had been taken out, and the carpet pushed from the wall. There was straw scattered about. Evidently Taddy had been interrupted, in the midst of his ransacking, by the alarm of fire. Indeed, he was even now creeping into the house to see what notice Ducklow would take of these evidences of his mischief.

In great trepidation the farmer thrust in his hand here and there, and groped, until he found the envelope precisely where it had been placed the night before, with the tape tied around it, which his wife had put on to prevent its contents from slipping out and losing themselves. Great was the joy of Ducklow. Great also was the wrath of him, when he turned and discovered Taddy.

"Didn't I tell you to stand by the old mare?"

"She won't stir," said Taddy, shrinking away again.

"Come here!" And Ducklow grasped him by the collar. "What have you been doin'? Look at that!"

"'Twa'n't me!"—beginning to whimper, and ram his fists into his eyes.

"Don't tell me 'twa'n't you!" Ducklow shook him till his teeth

chattered. "What was you pullin' up the carpet for?"

"Lost a marble!" snivelled Taddy.

"Lost a marble! Ye didn't lose it under the carpet, did ye? Look at all that straw pulled out!"—shaking him again.

"Didn't know but it might 'a' got under the carpet, marbles roll so," explained Taddy, as soon as he could get his breath.

"Wal, Sir!" Ducklow administered a resounding box on his ear. "Don't you do such a thing again, if you lose a million marbles!"

"Ha'n't got a million!" Taddy wept, rubbing his cheek. "Ha'n't got but four! Won't ye buy me some to-day?"

"Go to that mare, and don't you leave her again till I come, or I'll *marble* ye in a way you won't like!"

Understanding, by this somewhat equivocal form of expression, that flagellation was threatened, Taddy obeyed, still feeling his smarting and burning ear.

Ducklow was in trouble. What should he do with the bonds? The floor was no place for them, after what had happened; and he remembered too well the experience of yesterday to think for a moment of carrying them about his person. With unreasonable impatience, his mind reverted to Mrs. Ducklow.

"Why a'n't she to home? These women are forever a-gaddin'! I wish Reuben's trunk was in Jericho!"

Thinking of the trunk reminded him of one in the garret, filled with old papers of all sorts,—newspapers, letters, bills of sale, children's writing-books,—accumulations of the past quarter of

a century. Neither fire nor burglar nor ransacking youngster had ever molested those ancient records during all those five-and-twenty years. A bright thought struck him.

"I'll slip the bonds down into that wuthless heap o' rubbish, where no one 'u'd ever think o' lookin' for 'em, and resk 'em."

Having assured himself that Taddy was standing by the wagon, he paid a hasty visit to the trunk in the garret, and concealed the envelope, still bound in its band of tape, among the papers. He then drove away, giving Taddy a final charge to beware of setting anything afire.

He had driven about half a mile when he met a peddler. There was nothing unusual or alarming in such a circumstance, surely; but as Ducklow kept on, it troubled him.

"He'll stop to the house now, most likely, and want to trade. Findin' nobody but Taddy, there's no knowin' what he'll be tempted to do. But I a'n't a-goin' to worry. I'll defy anybody to find them bonds. Besides, she may be home by this time. I guess she'll hear of the fire-alarm, and hurry home: it'll be jest like her. She'll be there, and—trade with the peddler?" thought Ducklow, uneasily. Then a frightful fancy possessed him. "She has threatened two or three times to sell that old trunkful of papers. He'll offer a big price for 'em, and ten to one she'll let him have 'em. Why *didn't* I think on 't? What a stupid blunderbuss I be!"

As Ducklow thought of it, he felt almost certain that Mrs. Ducklow had returned home, and that she was bargaining with

the peddler at that moment. He fancied her smilingly receiving bright tin-ware for the old papers; and he could see the tape-tied envelope going into the bag with the rest! The result was, that he turned about and whipped the old mare home again in terrific haste, to catch the departing peddler.

Arriving, he found the house as he had left it, and Taddy occupied in making a kite-frame.

"Did that peddler stop here?"

"I ha'n't seen no peddler."

"And ha'n't yer Ma Ducklow been home, neither?"

"No."

And with a guilty look, Taddy put the kite-frame behind him.

Ducklow considered. The peddler had turned up a cross-street: he would probably turn down again and stop at the house, after all: Mrs. Ducklow might by that time be at home: then the sale of old papers would be very likely to take place. Ducklow thought of leaving word that he did not wish any old papers in the house to be sold, but feared lest the request might excite Taddy's suspicions.

"I don't see no way but for me to take the bonds with me," thought he, with an inward groan.

He accordingly went to the garret, took the envelope out of the trunk, and placed it in the breast-pocket of his overcoat, to which he pinned it, to prevent it by any chance from getting out. He used six large, strong pins for the purpose, and was afterwards sorry he did not use seven.

"There's suthin' losin' out of yer pocket!" bawled Taddy, as he was once more mounting the wagon.

Quick as lightning, Ducklow clapped his hand to his breast. In doing so, he loosed his hold of the wagon-box and fell, raking his shin badly on the wheel.

"Yer side-pocket! it's one o' yer mittens!" said Taddy.

"You rascal! how you scared me!"

Seating himself in the wagon, Ducklow gently pulled up his trousers-leg to look at the bruised part.

"Got anything in yer boot-leg to-day, Pa Ducklow?" asked Taddy, innocently.

"Yes, a barked shin!—all on your account, too! Go and put that straw back, and fix the carpet; and don't ye let me hear ye speak of my boot-leg again, or I'll *boot-leg* ye!"

So saying, Ducklow departed.

Instead of repairing the mischief he had done in the sitting-room, Taddy devoted his time and talents to the more interesting occupation of constructing his kite-frame. He worked at that, until Mr. Grantley, the minister, driving by, stopped to inquire how the folks were.

"A'n't to home: may I ride?" cried Taddy, all in a breath.

Mr. Grantley was an indulgent old gentleman, fond of children; so he said, "Jump in"; and in a minute Taddy had scrambled to a seat by his side.

And now occurred a circumstance which Ducklow had foreseen. The alarm of fire had reached Reuben's; and although

the report of its falseness followed immediately, Mrs. Ducklow's inflammable fancy was so kindled by it that she could find no comfort in prolonging her visit.

"Mr. Ducklow'll be going for the trunk, and I *must* go home and see to things, Taddy's *such* a fellow for mischief! I can foot it; I sha'n't mind it."

And off she started, walking herself out of breath in her anxiety.

She reached the brow of the hill just in time to see a chaise drive away from her own door.

"Who *can* that be? I wonder if Taddy's there to guard the house! If anything should happen to them bonds!"

Out of breath as she was, she quickened her pace, and trudged on, flushed, perspiring, panting, until she reached the house.

"Thaddeus!" she called.

No Taddy answered. She went in. The house was deserted. And lo! the carpet torn up, and the bonds abstracted!

Mr. Ducklow never would have made such work, removing the bonds. Then somebody else must have taken them, she reasoned.

"The man in the chaise!" she exclaimed, or rather made an effort to exclaim, succeeding only in bringing forth a hoarse, gasping sound. Fear dried up articulation. *Vox faucibus hæsit.*

And Taddy? He had disappeared; been murdered, perhaps,—or gagged and carried away by the man in the chaise.

Mrs. Ducklow flew hither and thither, (to use a favorite phrase

of her own,) "like a hen with her head cut off"; then rushed out of the house, and up the street, screaming after the chaise,—

"Murder! murder! Stop thief! stop thief!"

She waved her hands aloft in the air frantically. If she had trudged before, now she trotted, now she cantered; but if the cantering of the old mare was fitly likened to that of a cow, to what thing, to what manner of motion under the sun, shall we liken the cantering of Mrs. Ducklow? It was original; it was unique; it was prodigious. Now, with her frantically waving hands, and all her undulating and flapping skirts, she seemed a species of huge, unwieldy bird attempting to fly. Then she sank down into a heavy, dragging walk,—breath and strength all gone, —no voice left even to scream murder. Then the awful realization of the loss of the bonds once more rushing over her, she started up again. "Half running, half flying, what progress she made!" Then Atkins's dog saw her, and, naturally mistaking her for a prodigy, came out at her, bristling up and bounding and barking terrifically.

"Come here!" cried Atkins, following the dog. "What's the matter? What's to pay, Mrs. Ducklow?"

Attempting to speak, the good woman could only pant and wheeze.

"Robbed!" she at last managed to whisper, amid the yelpings of the cur that refused to be silenced.

"Robbed? How? Who?"

"The chaise. Ketch it."

Her gestures expressed more than her words; and Atkins's horse and wagon, with which he had been drawing out brush, being in the yard near by, he ran to them, leaped to the seat, drove into the road, took Mrs. Ducklow aboard, and set out in vigorous pursuit of the slow two-wheeled vehicle.

"Stop, you, Sir! Stop, you, Sir!" shrieked Mrs. Ducklow, having recovered her breath by the time they came up with the chaise.

It stopped, and Mr. Grantley the minister put out his good-natured, surprised face.

"You've robbed my house! You've took"–

Mrs. Ducklow was going on in wild, accusatory accents, when she recognized the benign countenance.

"What do you say? I have robbed you?" he exclaimed, very much astonished.

"No, no! not you! You wouldn't do such a thing!" she stammered forth, while Atkins, who had laughed himself weak at Mr. Ducklow's plight earlier in the morning, now laughed himself into a side-ache at Mrs. Ducklow's ludicrous mistake. "But did you—did you stop at my house? Have you seen our Thaddeus?"

"Here I be, Ma Ducklow!" piped a small voice; and Taddy, who had till then remained hidden, fearing punishment, peeped out of the chaise from behind the broad back of the minister.

"Taddy! Taddy! how came the carpet"–

"I pulled it up, huntin' for a marble," said Taddy, as she

paused, overmastered by her emotions.

"And the—the thing tied up in a brown wrapper?"

"Pa Ducklow took it."

"Ye sure?"

"Yes, I seen him!"

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Ducklow, "I never was so beat! Mr. Grantley, I hope—excuse me—I didn't know what I was about! Taddy, you notty boy, what did you leave the house for? Be ye quite sure yer Pa Ducklow"–

Taddy repeated that he was quite sure, as he climbed from the chaise into Atkins's wagon. The minister smilingly remarked that he hoped she would find no robbery had been committed, and went his way. Atkins, driving back, and setting her and Taddy down at the Ducklow gate, answered her embarrassed "Much obleeged to ye," with a sincere "Not at all," considering the fun he had had a sufficient compensation for his trouble. And thus ended the morning's adventures, with the exception of an unimportant episode, in which Taddy, Mrs. Ducklow, and Mrs. Ducklow's rattan were the principal actors.

At noon Mr. Ducklow returned.

"Did ye take the bonds?" was his wife's first question.

"Of course I did! Ye don't suppose I'd go away and leave 'em in the house, not knowin' when you'd be comin' home?"

"Wal, I didn't know. And I didn't know whuther to believe Taddy or not. Oh, I've had such a fright!"

And she related the story of her pursuit of the minister.

"How could ye make such a fool of yerself? It'll git all over town, and I shall be mortified to death. Jest like a woman, to git frightened!"

"If *you* hadn't got frightened, and made a fool of *yourself*, yelling fire, 'twouldn't have happened!" retorted Mrs. Ducklow.

"Wal! wal! say no more about it! The bonds are safe."

"I was in hopes you'd change 'em for them registered bonds Reuben spoke of."

"I did try to, but they told me to the bank it couldn't be did. Then I asked 'em if they would keep 'em for me, and they said they wouldn't object to lockin' on 'em up in their safe; but they wouldn't give me no receipt, nor hold themselves responsible for 'em. I didn't know what else to do, so I handed 'em the bonds to keep."

"I want to know if you did now!" exclaimed Mrs. Ducklow, disapprovingly.

"Why not? What else could I do? I didn't want to lug 'em around with me forever. And as for keepin' 'em hid in the house, we've tried that!" and Ducklow unfolded his weekly newspaper.

Mrs. Ducklow was placing the dinner on the table, with a look which seemed to say, "*I* wouldn't have left the bonds in the bank; *my* judgment would have been better than all that. If they are lost, *I* sha'n't be to blame!" when suddenly Ducklow started and uttered a cry of consternation over his newspaper.

"Why, what have ye found?"

"Bank robbery!"

"Not *your* bank? Not the bank where *your bonds*"–

"Of course not; but in the very next town! The safe blown open with gunpowder! Five thousand dollars in Gov'ment bonds stole!"

"How strange!" said Mrs. Ducklow. "Now what did I tell ye?"

"I believe you're right," cried Ducklow, starting to his feet. "They'll be safer in my own house, or even in my own pocket!"

"If you was going to put 'em in any safe, why not put 'em in Josiah's? He's got a safe, ye know."

"So he has! We might drive over there and make a visit Monday, and ask him to lock up–yes, we might tell him and Laury all about it, and leave 'em in their charge."

"So we might!" said Mrs. Ducklow.

Laura was their daughter, and Josiah her husband, in whose honor and sagacity they placed unlimited confidence. The plan was resolved upon at once.

"To-morrow's Sunday," said Ducklow, pacing the floor. "If we leave the bonds in the bank over night, they must stay there till Monday."

"And Sunday is jest the day for burglars to operate!" added Mrs. Ducklow.

"I've a good notion—let me see!" said Ducklow, looking at the clock. "Twenty minutes after twelve! Bank closes at two! An hour and a half,—I believe I could git there in an hour and a half. I will. I'll take a bite and drive right back."

Which he accordingly did, and brought the tape-tied envelope

home with him again. That night he slept with it under his pillow. The next day was Sunday; and although Mr. Ducklow did not like to have the bonds on his mind during sermon-time, and Mrs. Ducklow "dreaded dreadfully," as she said, "to look the minister in the face," they concluded that it was best, on the whole, to go to meeting, and carry the bonds. With the envelope once more in his breast-pocket, (stitched in this time by Mrs. Ducklow's own hand,) the farmer sat under the droppings of the sanctuary, and stared up at the good minister, but without hearing a word of the discourse, his mind was so engrossed by worldly cares, until the preacher exclaimed vehemently, looking straight at Ducklow's pew,—

"What said Paul? 'I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, *except these bonds*.' *'Except these bonds'!*" he repeated, striking the Bible. "Can you, my hearers,—can you say, with Paul, 'Would that all were as I am, *except these bonds*'?"

A point which seemed for a moment so personal to himself, that Ducklow was filled with confusion, and would certainly have stammered out some foolish answer, had not the preacher passed on to other themes. As it was, Ducklow contented himself with glancing around to see if the congregation was looking at him, and carelessly passing his hand across his breast-pocket to make sure the bonds were still there.

Early the next morning, the old mare was harnessed, and Taddy's adopted parents set out to visit their daughter,—Mrs.

Ducklow having postponed her washing for the purpose. It was afternoon when they arrived at their journey's end. Laura received them joyfully, but Josiah was not expected home until evening. Mr. Ducklow put the old mare in the barn, and fed her, and then went in to dinner, feeling very comfortable indeed.

"Josiah's got a nice place here. That's about as slick a little barn as ever I see. Always does me good to come over here and see you gittin' along so nicely, Laury."

"I wish you'd come oftener, then," said Laura.

"Wal, it's hard leavin' home, ye know. Have to git one of the Atkins boys to come and sleep with Taddy the night we're away."

"We shouldn't have come to-day, if 't hadn't been for me," remarked Mrs. Ducklow. "Says I to your father, says I, 'I feel as if I wanted to go over and see Laury; it seems an age since I've seen her,' says I. 'Wal,' says he, 's'pos'n' we go!' says he. That was only last Saturday; and this morning we started."

"And it's no fool of a job to make the journey with the old mare!" said Ducklow.

"Why don't you drive a better horse?" said Laura, whose pride was always touched when her parents came to visit her with the old mare and the one-horse wagon.

"Oh, she answers my purpose. Hossflesh is high, Laury. Have to economize, these times."

"I'm sure there's no need of your economizing!" exclaimed Laura, leading the way to the dining-room. "Why don't you use your money, and have the good of it?"

"So I tell him," said Mrs. Ducklow, faintly.—"Why, Laury! I didn't want you to be to so much trouble to git dinner jest for us! A bite would have answered. Do see, father!"

At evening Josiah came home; and it was not until then that Ducklow mentioned the subject which was foremost in his thoughts.

"What do ye think o' Gov'ment bonds, Josiah?" he incidentally inquired, after supper.

"First-rate!" said Josiah.

"About as safe as anything, a'n't they?" said Ducklow, encouraged.

"Safe?" cried Josiah. "Just look at the resources of this country! Nobody has begun yet to appreciate the power and undeveloped wealth of these United States. It's a big rebellion, I know; but we're going to put it down. It'll leave us a big debt, very sure; but we handle it now easy as that child lifts that stool. It makes him grunt and stagger a little, not because he isn't strong enough for it, but because he don't understand his own strength, or how to use it: he'll have twice the strength, and know just how to apply it, in a little while. Just so with this country. It makes me laugh to bear folks talk about repudiation and bankruptcy."

"But s'pos'n' we do put down the Rebellion, and the States come back: then what's to hender the South, and Secesh sympathizers in the North, from j'inin' together and votin' that the debt sha'n't be paid?"

"Don't you worry about that! Do ye suppose we're going to

be such fools as to give the Rebels, after we've whipped 'em, the same political power they had before the war? Not by a long chalk! Sooner than that, we'll put the ballot into the hands of the freedmen. They're our friends. They've fought on the right side, and they'll vote on the right side. I tell ye, spite of all the prejudice there is against black skins, we a'n't such a nation of ninnies as to give up all we're fighting for, and leave our best friends and allies, not to speak of our own interests, in the hands of our enemies."

"You consider Gov'ments a good investment, then, do ye?" said Ducklow, growing radiant.

"I do, decidedly,—the very best. Besides, you help the Government; and that's no small consideration."

"So I thought. But how is it about the cowpon bonds? A'n't they rather ticklish property to have in the house?"

"Well, I don't know. Think how many years you'll keep old bills and documents and never dream of such a thing as losing them! There's not a bit more danger with the bonds. I shouldn't want to carry 'em around with me, to any great amount,—though I did once carry three thousand-dollar bonds in my pocket for a week. I didn't mind it."

"Curi's!" said Ducklow: "I've got three thousan'-dollar bonds in my pocket this minute!"

"Well, it's so much good property," said Josiah, appearing not at all surprised at the circumstance.

"Seems to me, though, if I had a safe, as you have, I should lock 'em up in it."

"I was travelling that week. I locked 'em up pretty soon after I got home, though."

"Suppose," said Ducklow, as if the thought had but just occurred to him,—"suppose you put my bonds into your safe: I shall feel easier."

"Of course," replied Josiah. "I'll keep 'em for you, if you like."

"It will be an accommodation. They'll be safe, will they?"

"Safe as mine are; safe as anybody's: I'll insure 'em for twenty-five cents."

Ducklow was happy. Mrs. Ducklow was happy. She took her husband's coat, and with a pair of scissors cut the threads that stitched the envelope to the pocket.

"Have you torn off the May coupons?" asked Josiah.

"No."

"Well, you'd better. They'll be payable now soon; and if you take them, you won't have to touch the bonds again till the interest on the November coupons is due."

"A good idea!" said Ducklow.

He took the envelope, untied the tape, and removed its contents. Suddenly the glow of comfort, the gleam of satisfaction, faded from his countenance.

"Hello! What ye got there?" cried Josiah.

"Why, father! massy sakes!" exclaimed Mrs. Ducklow.

As for Ducklow himself, he could not utter a word; but, dumb with consternation, he looked again in the envelope, and opened and turned inside out, and shook, with trembling hands,

its astonishing contents. The bonds were not there: they had been stolen, and three copies of the "Sunday Visitor" had been inserted in their place.

Very early on the following morning a dismal-faced middle-aged couple might have been seen riding away from Josiah's house. It was the Ducklows returning home, after their fruitless, their worse than fruitless, journey. No entreaties could prevail upon them to prolong their visit. It was with difficulty even that they had been prevented from setting off immediately on the discovery of their loss, and travelling all night, in their impatience to get upon the track of the missing bonds.

"There'll be not the least use in going to-night," Josiah had said. "If they were stolen at the bank, you can't do anything about it till to-morrow. And even if they were taken from your own house, I don't see what's to be gained now by hurrying back. It isn't probable you'll ever see 'em again, and you may just as well take it easy,—go to bed and sleep on it, and get a fresh start in the morning."

So, much against their inclination, the unfortunate owners of the abstracted bonds retired to the luxurious chamber Laura gave them, and lay awake all night, groaning and sighing, wondering and surmising, and (I regret to add) blaming each other. So true it is, that "modern conveniences," hot and cold water all over the house, a pier-glass, and the most magnificently canopied couch, avail nothing to give tranquillity to the harassed mind. Hitherto the Ducklows had felt great satisfaction in the style their

daughter, by her marriage, was enabled to support. To brag of her nice house and furniture and two servants was almost as good as possessing them. Remembering her rich dining-room and silver service and porcelain, they were proud. Such things were enough for the honor of the family; and, asking nothing for themselves, they slept well in their humblest of bed-chambers, and sipped their tea contentedly out of clumsy earthen. But that night the boasted style in which their "darter" lived was less appreciated than formerly: fashion and splendor were no longer a consolation.

"If we had only given the three thousan' dollars to Reuben!" said Ducklow, driving homewards with a countenance as long as his whip-lash. "'Twould have jest set him up, and been some compensation for his sufferin's and losses goin' to the war."

"Wal, I had no objections," replied Mrs. Ducklow. "I always thought he ought to have the money eventooally. And, as Miss Beswick said, no doubt it would 'a' been ten times the comfort to him now it would be a number o' years from now. But you didn't seem willing."

"I don't know! 'twas you that wasn't willin'!"

And they expatiated on Reuben's merits, and their benevolent intentions towards him, and, in imagination, endowed him with the price of the bonds over and over again: so easy is it to be generous with lost money!

"But it's no use talkin'!" said Ducklow. "I've not the least idee we shall ever see the color o' them bonds again. If they was stole to the bank, I can't prove anything."

"It does seem strange to me," Mrs. Ducklow replied, "that you should have had no more gumption than to trust the bonds with strangers, when they told you in so many words they wouldn't be responsible."

"If you have flung that in my teeth once, you have fifty times!" And Ducklow lashed the old mare, as if she, and not Mrs. Ducklow, had exasperated him.

"Wal," said the lady, "I don't see how we're going to work to find 'em, now they're lost, without making inquiries; and we can't make inquiries without letting it be known we had bought."

"I been thinkin' about that," said her husband. "Oh, dear!" with a groan; "I wish the pesky cowpon bonds had never been invented!"

They drove first to the bank, where they were of course told that the envelope had not been untied there. "Besides, it was sealed, wasn't it?" said the cashier. "Indeed!" He expressed great surprise, when informed that it was not. "It should have been: I supposed any child would know enough to look out for that!"

And this was all the consolation Ducklow could obtain.

"Just as I expected," said Mrs. Ducklow, as they resumed their journey. "I just as much believe that man stole your bonds as that you trusted 'em in his hands in an unsealed wrapper! Beats all, how you could be so careless!"

"Wal, wal! I s'pose I never shall hear the last on 't!"

And again the poor old mare had to suffer for Mrs. Ducklow's offences.

They had but one hope now,—that perhaps Taddy had tampered with the envelope, and that the bonds might be found somewhere about the house. But this hope was quickly extinguished on their arrival. Taddy, being accused, protested his innocence with a vehemence which convinced even Mr. Ducklow that the cashier was probably the guilty party.

"Unless," said he, brandishing the rattan, "somebody got into the house that morning when the little scamp run off to ride with the minister!"

"Oh, don't lick me for that! I've been licked for that once; ha'n't I, Ma Ducklow?" shrieked Taddy.

The house was searched in vain. No clew to the purloined securities could be obtained,—the copies of the "Sunday Visitor," which had been substituted for them, affording not the least; for that valuable little paper was found in almost every household, except Ducklow's.

"I don't see any way left but to advertise, as Josiah said," remarked the farmer, with a deep sigh of despondency.

"And that'll bring it all out!" exclaimed Mrs. Ducklow. "If you only hadn't been so imprudent!"

"Wal, wal!" said Ducklow, cutting her short.

Before resorting to public measures for the recovery of the stolen property, it was deemed expedient to acquaint their friends with their loss in a private way. The next day, accordingly, they went to pay Reuben a visit. It was a very different meeting from that which took place a few mornings before. The returned

soldier had gained in health, but not in spirits. The rapture of reaching home once more, the flush of hope and happiness, had passed away with the visitors who had flocked to offer their congratulations. He had had time to reflect: he had reached home, indeed; but now every moment reminded him how soon that home was to be taken from him. He looked at his wife and children, and clenched his teeth hard to stifle the emotions that arose at the thought of their future. The sweet serenity, the faith and patience and cheerfulness, which never ceased to illumine Sophronia's face as she moved about the house, pursuing her daily tasks, and tenderly waiting upon him, deepened at once his love and his solicitude. He was watching her thus when the Ducklows entered with countenances mournful as the grave.

"How are you gittin' along, Reuben?" said Ducklow, while his wife murmured a solemn "good morning" to Sophronia.

"I am doing well enough. Don't be at all concerned about me! It a'n't pleasant to lie here, and feel it may be months, months, before I'm able to be about my business; but I wouldn't mind it, —I could stand it first-rate,—I could stand anything, anything, but to see her working her life out for me and the children! To no purpose, either; that's the worst of it. We shall have to lose this place, spite of fate!"

"Oh, Reuben!" said Sophronia, hastening to him, and laying her soothing hands upon his hot forehead; "why won't you stop thinking about that? Do try to have more faith! We shall be taken care of, I'm sure!"

"If I had three thousand dollars,—yes, or even two,—then I'd have faith!" said Reuben. "Miss Beswick has proposed to send a subscription-paper around town for us; but I'd rather die than have it done. Besides, nothing near that amount could be raised, I'm confident. You needn't groan so, Pa Ducklow, for I a'n't hinting at you. I don't expect you to help me out of my trouble. If you had felt called upon to do it, you'd have done it before now; and I don't ask, I don't beg of any man!" added the soldier, proudly.

"That's right; I like your sperit!" said the miserable Ducklow. "But I was sighing to think of something,—something you haven't known anything about, Reuben."

"Yes, Reuben, we should have helped you," said Mrs. Ducklow, "and did, did take steps towards it"–

"In fact," resumed Ducklow, "you've met with a great misfortin', Reuben. Unbeknown to yourself, you've met with a great misfortin'! Yer Ma Ducklow knows."

"Yes, Reuben, the very day you came home, your Pa Ducklow made an investment for your benefit. We didn't mention it,—you know I wouldn't own up to it, though I didn't exactly say the contrary, the morning we was over here"–

"Because," said Ducklow, as she faltered, "we wanted to surprise you; we was keepin' it a secret till the right time, then we was goin' to make it a pleasant surprise to ye."

"What in the name of common-sense are you talking about?" cried Reuben, looking from one to the other of the wretched,

prevaricating pair.

"Cowpon bonds!" groaned Ducklow. "Three thousan'-dollar cowpon bonds! The money had been lent, but I wanted to make a good investment for you, and I thought there was nothin' so good as Gov'ments"–

"That's all right," said Reuben. "Only, if you had money to invest for my benefit, I should have preferred to pay off the mortgage the first thing."

"Sartin! sartin!" said Ducklow; "and you could have turned the bonds right in, if you had so chosen, like so much cash. Or you could have drawed your interest on the bonds in gold, and paid the interest on your mortgage in currency, and made so much, as I rather thought you would."

"But the bonds?" eagerly demanded Reuben, with trembling hopes, just as Miss Beswick, with her shawl over her head, entered the room.

"We was jest telling about our loss, Reuben's loss," said Mrs. Ducklow in a manner which betrayed no little anxiety to conciliate that terrible woman.

"Very well! don't let me interrupt." And Miss Beswick, slipping the shawl from her head, sat down.

Her presence, stiff and prim and sarcastic, did not tend in the least to relieve Mr. Ducklow from the natural embarrassment he felt in giving his version of Reuben's loss. However, assisted occasionally by a judicious remark thrown in by Mrs. Ducklow, he succeeded in telling a sufficiently plausible and candid-

seeming story.

"I see! I see!" said Reuben, who had listened with astonishment and pain to the narrative. "You had kinder intentions towards me than I gave you credit for. Forgive me, if I wronged you!" He pressed the hand of his adopted father, and thanked him from a heart filled with gratitude and trouble. "But don't feel so bad about it. You did what you thought best I can only say, the fates are against me."

"Hem!" coughing, Miss Beswick stretched up her long neck and cleared her throat "So them bonds you had bought for Reuben was in the house the very night I called!"

"Yes, Miss Beswick," replied Mrs. Ducklow; "and that's what made it so uncomfortable to us to have you talk the way you did."

"Hem!" The neck was stretched up still farther than before, and the redoubtable throat cleared again. "'Twas too bad! Ye ought to have told me. You'd actooally bought the bonds,—bought 'em for Reuben, had ye?"

"Sartin! sartin!" said Ducklow.

"To be sure!" said Mrs. Ducklow.

"We designed 'em for his benefit, a surprise, when the right time come," said both together.

"Hem! well!" (It was evident that the Beswick was clearing her decks for action.) "When the right time come! yes! That right time wasn't somethin' indefinite, in the fur futur', of course! Yer losin' the bonds didn't hurry up yer benevolence the least grain, I s'pose! Hem! let in them boys, Sophrony!"

Sophronia opened the door, and in walked Master Dick Atkins, (son of the brush-burner,) followed, not without reluctance and concern, by Master Taddy.

"Thaddeus! what you here for?" demanded the adopted parents.

"Because I said so," remarked Miss Beswick, arbitrarily. "Step along, boys, step along. Hold up yer head, Taddy, for ye a'n't goin' to be hurt while I'm around. Take yer fists out o' yer eyes, and stop blubberin'. Mr. Ducklow, that boy knows somethin' about Reuben's cowpon bonds."

"Thaddeus!" ejaculated both Ducklows at once, "did you touch them bonds?"

"Didn't know what they was!" whimpered Taddy.

"Did you take them?" And the female Ducklow grasped his shoulder.

"Hands off, if you please!" remarked Miss Beswick, with frightfully gleaming courtesy. "I told him, if he'd be a good boy, and come along with Richard, and tell the truth, he shouldn't be hurt. *If* you please," she repeated, with a majestic nod; and Mrs. Ducklow took her hands off.

"Where are they now? where are they?" cried Ducklow, rushing headlong to the main question.

"Don't know," said Taddy.

"Don't know? you villain!" And Ducklow was rising in wrath. But Miss Beswick put up her hand deprecatingly.

"If *you* please!" she said, with grim civility; and Ducklow sank

down again.

"What did you do with 'em? what did you want of 'em?" said Mrs. Ducklow, with difficulty restraining an impulse to wring his neck.

"To cover my kite," confessed the miserable Taddy.

"Cover your kite! your kite!" A chorus of groans from the Ducklows. "Didn't you know no better?"

"Didn't think you'd care," said Taddy. "I had some newspapers Dick give me to cover it; but I thought them things 'u'd be pootier. So I took 'em, and put the newspapers in the wrapper."

"Did ye cover yer kite?"

"No. When I found out you cared so much about 'em, I dars'n't; I was afraid you'd see 'em."

"Then what *did* you do with 'em?"

"When you was away, Dick come over to sleep with me, and I—I sold 'em to him."

"Sold 'em to Dick!"

"Yes," spoke up Dick, stoutly, "for six marbles, and one was a bull's-eye, and one agate, and two alleys. Then, when you come home and made such a fuss, he wanted 'em ag'in. But he wouldn't give me back but four, and I wa'n't going to agree to no such nonsense as that."

"I'd lost the bull's-eye and one common," whined Taddy.

"But the bonds! did you destroy 'em?"

"Likely I'd destroy 'em, after I'd paid six marbles for 'em!" said Dick. "I wanted 'em to cover *my* kite with."

"Cover *your*—oh! then *you*'ve made a kite of 'em?" said Ducklow.

"Well, I was going to, when Aunt Beswick ketched me at it. She made me tell where I got 'em, and took me over to your house jest now; and Taddy said you was over here, and so she put ahead, and made us follow her."

Again, in an agony of impatience, Ducklow demanded to know where the bonds were at that moment.

"If Taddy'll give me back the marbles," began Master Dick.

"That'll do!" said Miss Beswick, silencing him with a gesture. "Reuben will give you twenty marbles; for I believe you said they was Reuben's bonds, Mr. Ducklow?"

"Yes, that is"–stammered the adopted father.

"Eventooally," struck in the adopted mother.

"Now look here! What am I to understand? Be they Reuben's bonds, or be they not? That's the question!" And there was that in Miss Beswick's look which said, "If they are not Reuben's, then your eyes shall never behold them more!"

"Of course they're Reuben's!" "We intended all the while"–"His benefit"–"To do jest what he pleases with 'em," chorused Pa and Ma Ducklow.

"Wal! now it's understood! Here, Reuben, are your cowpon bonds!"

And Miss Beswick, drawing them from her bosom, placed the precious documents, with formal politeness, in the glad soldier's agitated hands.

"Glory!" cried Reuben, assuring himself that they were genuine and real. "Sophrony, you've got a home! Ruby, Carrie, you've got a home! Miss Beswick! you angel from the skies! order a bushel and a half of marbles for Dick, and have the bill sent to me! Oh, Pa Ducklow! you never did a nobler or more generous thing in your life. These will lift the mortgage, and leave me a nest-egg besides. Then when I get my back pay, and my pension, and my health again, we shall be independent."

And the soldier, overcome by his feelings, sank back in the arms of his wife.

"We always told you we'd do well by ye, you remember?" said the Ducklows, triumphantly.

The news went abroad. Again congratulations poured in upon the returned volunteer. Everybody rejoiced in his good fortune, —especially certain rich ones who had been dreading to see Miss Beswick come round with her proposed subscription-paper.

Among the rest, the Ducklows rejoiced not the least; for selfishness was with them, as it is with many, rather a thing of habit than a fault of the heart. The catastrophe of the bonds broke up that life-long habit, and revealed good hearts underneath. The consciousness of having done an act of justice, although by accident, proved very sweet to them: it was really a fresh sensation; and Reuben and his dear little family, saved from ruin and distress, happy, thankful, glad, was a sight to their old eyes such as they had never witnessed before. Not gold itself, in any quantity, at the highest premium, could have given them so

much satisfaction; and as for coupon bonds, they are not to be mentioned in the comparison.

"Won't you do well by me some time, too?" teased little Taddy, who overheard his adopted parents congratulating themselves on having acted so generously by Reuben. "I don't care for no cowpen bonds, but I do want a new drum!"

"Yes, yes, my son!" said Ducklow, patting the boy's shoulder.

And the drum was bought.

Taddy was delighted. But he did not know what made the Ducklows so much happier, so much gentler and kinder, than formerly. Do you?

THE AUTHOR OF "SAUL." [1]

We are not one of those who believe that the manifestation of any native, vigorous faculty of the mind is dependent upon circumstances. It is true that education, in its largest sense, modifies development; but it cannot, to any serious extent, add to, or take from, the power to be developed. In the lack of encouragement and contemporary appreciation, certain of the finer faculties may not give forth their full and perfect fragrance; but the rose is always seen to be a rose, though never a bud come to flower. The "mute, inglorious Milton" is a pleasant poetic fiction. Against the "hands that the rod of empire *might* have swayed" we have nothing to object, knowing to what sort of hands the said rod has so often been intrusted.

John Howard Payne once read to us—and it was something of an infliction—a long manuscript on "The Neglected Geniuses of America,"—a work which only death, we suspect, prevented him from giving to the world. There was not one name in the list which had ever before reached our ears. Nicholas Blauvelt and William Phillips and a number of other utterly forgotten rhymesters were described and eulogized at length, the quoted

---

[1] *Saul.* A Drama, in Three Parts. Montreal: John Lovell. 1850.*Count Fillippo; or The Unequal Marriage.* By the Author of "Saul." Montreal: Printed for the Author. 1860.*Jephthah's Daughter.* By Charles Heavysege, Author of "Saul." Montreal: Dawson Brothers. 1865.

specimens of their poetry proving all the while their admirable right to the oblivion which Mr. Payne deprecated. They were men of culture, some of them wealthy, and we could detect no lack of opportunity in the story of their lives. Had they been mechanics, they would have planed boards and laid bricks from youth to age. The Ayrshire ploughman and the Bedford tinker were made of other stuff. Our inference then was, and still is, that unacknowledged (or at least unmanifested) genius is no genius at all, and that the lack of sympathy which many young authors so bitterly lament is a necessary test of their fitness for their assumed vocation.

Gerald Massey is one of the most recent instances of the certainty with which a poetic faculty by no means of the highest order will enforce its own development, under seemingly fatal discouragements. The author of "Saul" is a better illustration of the same fact; for, although, in our ignorance of the circumstances of his early life, we are unable to affirm what particular difficulties he had to encounter, we know how long he was obliged to wait for the first word of recognition, and to what heights he aspired in the course of many long and solitary years.

The existence of "Saul" was first made known to the world by an article in the "North British Review," in the year 1858, when the author had already attained his forty-second year. The fact that the work was published in Montreal called some attention to it on this side of the Atlantic, and a few critical notices appeared in our literary periodicals. It is still, however, comparatively

unknown; and those into whose hands it may have fallen are, doubtless, ignorant of the author's name and history. An outline of the latter, so far as we have been able to ascertain its features, will help the reader to a more intelligent judgment, when we come to discuss the author's claim to a place in literature.

Charles Heavysege was born in Liverpool, England, in the year 1816. We know nothing in regard to his parents, except that they were poor, yet able to send their son to an ordinary school. His passion for reading, especially such the poetry as fell into his hands, showed itself while he was yet a child. Milton seems to have been the first author who made a profound impression upon his mind; but it is also reported that the schoolmaster once indignantly snatched Gray's "Elegy" from his hand, because he so frequently selected that poem for his reading-lesson. Somewhat later, he saw "Macbeth" performed, and was immediately seized with the ambition to become an actor,—a profession for which few persons could be less qualified. The impression produced by this tragedy, combined with the strict religious training which he appears to have received, undoubtedly fixed the character and manner of his subsequent literary efforts.

There are but few other facts of his life which we can state with certainty. His chances of education were evidently very scanty, for he must have left school while yet a boy, in order to learn his trade,—that of a machinist. He had thenceforth little time and less opportunity for literary culture. His reading was desultory, and the poetic faculty, expending itself on whatever

subjects came to hand, produced great quantities of manuscripts, which were destroyed almost as soon as written. The idea of publishing them does not seem to have presented itself to his mind. Either his life must have been devoid of every form of intellectual sympathy, or there was some external impediment formidable enough to keep down that ambition which always co-exists with the creative power.

In the year 1843 he married, and in 1853 emigrated to Canada, and settled in Montreal. Even here his literary labor was at first performed in secrecy; he was nearly forty years old before a line from his pen appeared in type. He found employment in a machine-shop, and it was only very gradually—probably after much doubt and hesitation—that he came to the determination to subject his private creations to the ordeal of print. His first venture was a poem in blank verse, the title of which we have been unable to ascertain. A few copies were printed anonymously and distributed among personal friends. It was a premature birth, which never knew a moment's life, and the father of it would now be the last person to attempt a resuscitation.

Soon afterwards appeared—also anonymously—a little pamphlet, containing fifty "so-called" sonnets. They are, in reality, fragmentary poems of fourteen lines each, bound to no metre or order of rhyme. In spite of occasional crudities of expression, the ideas are always poetic and elevated, and there are many vigorous couplets and quatrains. They do not, however, furnish any evidence of sustained power, and the reader, who

should peruse them as the only productions of the author, would be far from inferring the latter's possession of that lofty epical utterance which he exhibits in "Saul" and "Jephthah's Daughter."

We cannot learn that this second attempt to obtain a hearing was successful, so far as any public notice of the pamphlet is concerned; but it seems, at least, to have procured for Mr. Heavysege the first private recognition of his poetic abilities which he had ever received, and thereby given him courage for a more ambitious venture. "Saul," as an epical subject, must have haunted his mind for years. The greater portion of it, indeed, had been written before he had become familiar with the idea of publication; and even after the completion of the work, we can imagine the sacrifices which must have delayed its appearance in print. For a hard-working mechanic, in straitened circumstances, courage of another kind was required. It is no slight expense to produce an octavo volume of three hundred and thirty pages; there must have been much anxious self-consultation, a great call for patience, fortitude, and hope, with who may know what doubts and despondencies, before, in 1857 "Saul" was given to the world.

Nothing could have been more depressing than its reception, if, indeed, the term "reception" can be applied to complete indifference. A country like Canada, possessing no nationality, and looking across the Atlantic, not only for its political rule, but also (until very recently, at least) for its opinions, tastes, and habits, is especially unfavorable to the growth of an independent

literature. Although there are many men of learning and culture among the residents of Montreal, they do not form a class to whom a native author could look for encouragement or appreciation sufficient to stamp him as successful. The reading public there accept the decrees of England and the United States, and they did not detect the merits of "Saul," until the discovery had first been made in those countries.

Several months had elapsed since the publication of the volume; it seemed to be already forgotten, when the notice to which we have referred appeared in the "North British Review." The author had sent a copy to Mr. Hawthorne, then residing in Liverpool, and that gentleman, being on friendly terms with some of the writers for the "North British," procured the insertion of an appreciative review of the poem. Up to that time, we believe, no favorable notice of the work had appeared in Canada. The little circulation it obtained was chiefly among the American residents. A few copies found their way across the border, and some of our authors (among whom we may mention Mr. Emerson and Mr. Longfellow) were the first to recognize the genius of the poet. With this double indorsement, his fellow-townsmen hastened to make amends for their neglect. They could not be expected to give any very enthusiastic welcome, nor was their patronage extensive enough to confer more than moderate success; but the remaining copies of the first small edition were sold, and a second edition—which has not yet been exhausted—issued in 1859.

In February, 1860, we happened to visit Montreal. At that time we had never read the poem, and the bare fact of its existence had almost faded from memory, when it was recalled by an American resident who was acquainted with Mr. Heavysege, and whose account of his patience, his quiet energy, and serene faith in his poetic calling strongly interested us. It was but a few hours before our departure; there was a furious snow-storm; yet the gentleman ordered a sleigh, and we drove at once to a large machine-shop, in the outskirts of the city. Here, amid the noise of hammers, saws, and rasps, in a great grimy hall smelling of oil and iron-dust, we found the poet at his work-bench. A small, slender man, with a thin, sensitive face, bright blonde hair, and eyes of that peculiar blue which burns warm, instead of cold, under excitement,—in the few minutes of our interview the picture was fixed, and remains so. His manner was quiet, natural, and unassuming: he received us with the simple good-breeding which a gentleman always possesses, whether we find him on a throne or beside an anvil. Not a man to assert his claim loudly, or to notice injustice or neglect by a single spoken word; but one to take quietly success or failure, in the serenity of a mood habitually untouched by either extreme.

In that one brief first and last interview, we discovered, at least, the simple, earnest sincerity of the man's nature,—a quality too rare, even among authors. When we took our seat in the train for Rouse's Point, we opened the volume of "Saul." The first part was finished as we approached St. Albans; the second

at Vergennes; and twilight was falling as we closed the book between Bennington and Troy. Whatever crudities of expression, inaccuracies of rhythm, faults of arrangement, and violations of dramatic law met us from time to time, the earnest purpose of the writer carried us over them all. The book has a fine flavor of the Elizabethan age,—a sustained epic rather than dramatic character, an affluence of quaint, original images; yet the construction was frequently that of a school-boy. In opulence and maturity of ideas, and poverty of artistic skill, the work stands almost alone in literature. What little we have learned of the history of the author suggests an explanation of this peculiarity. Never was so much genuine power so long silent.

"Saul" is yet so little known, that a descriptive outline of the poem will be a twice-told tale to very few readers of the "Atlantic." The author strictly follows the history of the renowned Hebrew king, as it is related in I Samuel, commencing with the tenth chapter, but divides the subject into three dramas, after the manner of Schiller's "Wallenstein." The first part embraces the history of Saul, from his anointing by Samuel at Ramah to David's exorcism of the evil spirit, (xvi. 23,) and contains five acts. The second part opens with David as a guest in the palace at Gibeah. The defeat of the Philistines at Elah, Saul's jealousy of David, and the latter's marriage with Michal form the staple of the *four* acts of this part. The third part consists of *six* acts of unusual length, (some of them have thirteen scenes,) and is devoted to the pursuits and escapes of David,

the Witch of Endor, and the final battle, wherein the king and his three sons are slain. No liberties have been taken with the order of the Scripture narrative, although a few subordinate characters have here and there been introduced to complete the action. The author seems either to lack the inventive faculty, or to have feared modifying the sacred record for the purposes of Art. In fact, no considerable modification was necessary. The simple narrative fulfils almost all the requirements of dramatic writing, in its succession of striking situations, and its cumulative interest. From beginning to end, however, Mr. Heavysege makes no attempt to produce a dramatic effect. It is true that he has availed himself of the phrase "an evil spirit from the Lord," to introduce a demoniac element, but, singularly enough, the demons seem to appear and to act unwillingly, and manifest great relief when they are allowed to retire from the stage.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.