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FIGHTING FACTS FOR FOGIES

Young people are often charged with caring little for the past. The charge is just; and the young are right. If they care little for the past, then it is certain that it is in debt to them,—as for them the past cared nothing. It is wonderful, considering how children used to be treated, that the human race ever succeeded in getting established on earth. Humanity should have died out, there was so little that was humane in its bringing up. Because they had contrived to bring a helpless creature into a world that every one wishes he had never known at least twenty-four times a day, a father and mother of the very old school indeed assumed that they had the right to make that creature a slave, and to hold it in everlasting chains. They had much to say about the duty of children, and very little about the love of parents. The sacrificing of children to idols, a not uncommon practice in some renowned countries of antiquity, the highest-born children being the favorite victims,—for Moloch's appetite was delicate,—could never have taken place in any country where the voice of Nature was heeded; and yet those sacrifices were but so many proofs of the existence of a spirit of pride, which caused men to offer up their offspring on the domestic altar. Son and slave were almost the same word with the Romans; and your genuine old Roman made little ado about cutting off the head of one of his boys, perhaps for doing something of a praiseworthy nature. Old Junius Brutus was doubly favored by Fortune, for he was enabled to kill two of his sons in the name of Patriotism, and thereby to gain a reputation for virtue that endures to this day,—though, after all, he was but the first of the brutes. The Romans kept up the paternal rule for many ages, and theoretically it long survived the Republic. It had existed in the Kingdom, and it was not unknown to the Empire. We have an anecdote that shows how strong was the supremacy of *paterfamilias* at the beginning of the eighth century, when Young Rome had already made more than one audacious display of contempt for the Conscript Fathers. When Pompeius was asked what he would do, if Cæsar should resist the requirements of the Senate, he answered,—"What if my son should raise his stick against me?"—meaning to imply, that, in his opinion, resistance from Cæsar was something too absurd to be thought of. Yet Cæsar *did* resist, and triumphed; and, judging from their after-lives, we should say that the Young Pompeys would have had small hesitation in raising their sticks against their august governor, had he proved too disobedient. A few years earlier, according to Sallust, a Roman, one Fulvius, had caused his son to be put to death, because he had sought to join Catiline. The old gentleman heard what his son was about, and when Young Hopeful was arrested and brought before him, he availed himself of his fatherly privilege, and had him strangled, or disposed of after some other of those charming fashions which were so common in the model republic of antiquity. "This imitation of the discipline of the ancient republic," says Merivale, "excited neither applause nor indignation among the languid voluptuaries of the Senate." They probably voted Fulvius a brute, but they no more thought of questioning the legality of his conduct than they did of imitating it. Law was one thing, opinion another. If he liked to play Lucius Junius, well and good; but they had no taste for the part. They felt much as we used to feel in Fugitive-Slave-Law times: we did not question the law, but we would have nothing to do with its execution.

Modern fathers have had no such powers as were held by those of Rome, and if an Englishman of Red-Rose views had killed his son for setting off to join Edward IV. when he had landed at Ravenspur, no one would think of praising the act. What was all right in a Roman of the year 1 of the Republic would be considered shocking in a Christian of the fifteenth century, a time when Christianity had become much diluted from the inter-mixture of blood. In the next century, poor Lady Jane Grey spoke of the torments which she had endured at the hands of her parents, who were of the noblest blood of Europe, in terms that ought to make every young woman thankful that her lot was not cast in the good old times. Roger Ascham was her confidant. He had gone to Brodegate, to take leave of her, and "found her in her chamber alone, reading Phædo Platonis in Greek, and that with as much delight as some gentlemen would read a merry tale of Boccace"; and as all the rest of the Greys were hunting in the park, the schoolmaster inquired why she should lose such pastime. The lady answered, that the pleasure they were having in the park was but the shadow of that pleasure she found in Plato. The conversation proceeding, Ascham inquired how it was that she had come to know such true pleasure, and she answered,—"I will tell you, and tell you a truth which perchance ye may marvel at. One of the greatest benefits God ever gave me is that he sent me so sharp and severe parents and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, eat, drink, be merry, or sad, be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I must do it as it were in such weight, number, and measure, even so perfectly as God made the world, or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways, (which I will not name for the honor I bear them,) so without measure misordered, that I think myself in hell, till time come that I must go to Mr. Elmer, who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing while I am with him. And when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because whatsoever I do else beside learning is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily more pleasure and more, that in respect of it all other pleasures, in very deed, be but trifles and troubles to me." The Duke and Duchess of Suffolk were neither better nor worse than other parents who tormented and tyrannized over their children *temp.* Edward VI., and nothing but the prominence of the most unfortunate of their unfortunate daughters has preserved the memory of their domestic despotism. Throughout all England it was the same, from palace to castle, and from castle to hovel; and father and tyrant were convertible terms. Youth must have been but a dreary time in those old days. Scott's Sir Henry Lee, according to his son, kept strict rule over his children, and he was a type of the antique knight, not of the debauched cavalier, and would be obeyed, with or without reason. The letters and the literature of the seventeenth century show, that, how loose soever became other ties, parents maintained their hold on their children with iron hands. Even the license of the Restoration left fatherly rule largely triumphant and undisputed. When even "husbands, of decent station, were not ashamed to beat their wives," sons and daughters were not spoiled by a sparing of the rod. Harshness was the rule in every grade of life, and harsh indeed was parental rule, until the reader wonders that there was not a general rebellion of women, children, scholars, and apprentices against the savage ascendency of husbands, fathers, pedagogues, and masters.

But the fashions of this world, whether good or evil, pass away. In the eighteenth century we find parents becoming more humane, though still keeping their offspring pretty stiffly bitted. They shared in the general melioration of the age. The father was "honored sir," and was not too familiar with his boys. The great outbreak at the close of the century did much for the emancipation of the young; and by the time that the present century had advanced to a third of its years, youth had so far got the best of the conflict, and treated their elders with so little consideration, that it was thought the latter were rather presumptuous in remaining on earth after fifty. Youth began to organize itself. Young Germany, Young France, and Young England became powers in the world. Young Germany was revolutionary and metaphysical, and nourished itself on bad beer and worse tobacco. Young

France was full-bearded and decidedly dirty, and so far deferred to the past as to look for models in '93; and it had a strong reverence for that antique sentiment which exhibited itself in the assassination of kings. Young England was gentlemanly and cleanly, its leaders being of the patrician order; and it looked to the Middle Ages for patterns of conduct. Its chiefs wore white waistcoats, gave red cloaks and broken meat to old women, and would have lopped off three hundred years from Old England's life, by pushing her back to the early days of Henry VIII., when the religious houses flourished, and when the gallows was a perennial plant, bearing fruit that was *not* for the healing of the nations. Some of the cleverest of the younger members of the aristocracy belonged to the new organization, and a great genius wrote some delightful novels to show their purpose, and to illustrate their manner of how-not-to-do-it in grappling with the grand social questions of the age. In "Coningsby" they sing canticles and carry about the boar's head; in "Sibyl" they sing hymns to the Holy Virgin and the song of labor, and steal title-deeds, after setting houses on fire to distract attention from their immediate object; and in "Tancred" they go on pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, by way of reviving their faith. All this is so well done, that Young England will survive in literature, and be the source of edification, long after there shall be no more left of the dust of its chiefs than there is of the dust of Cheops or Cæsar. For all these youths are already vanished, leaving no more traces than you would find of the flowers that bloomed in the days of their lives. Young Germany went out immediately after the failure of the revolutionists of 1848-9. Young France thought it had triumphed in the fall of the Orléans monarchy, but had only taken the first long step toward making its own fall complete; and now some of its early members are of the firmest supporters of the new phase of imperialism, the only result of the Revolution of February that has given signs of endurance. Young England went out as soberly and steadily as it had lived. The select few who composed it died like gentlemen, and were as polite as Lord Chesterfield in the article of death. Some of them turned Whigs, and have held office under Lord Palmerston; and others are Tories, and expect to hold office under Lord Derby, when he shall form his third ministry. Young America, the worst of these youths, and the latest born, was never above an assassin in courage, or in energy equal to more than the plundering of a hen-roost. The fruits of his exertions are to be seen in some of the incidents of the Secession War, and they were not worth the gathering.

The world had settled down into the belief, that, after all, a man was not much to be blamed for growing old, and liberal-minded people were fast coming to the conclusion, that years, on the whole, were not dishonorable, when the breaking out of a great war led to the return of youth to consideration. The English found themselves at war with Russia, much to their surprise; and, still more to their surprise, their part in that war was made subordinate to that of the French, who acted with them, in the world's estimate of the deeds of the members of the new Grand Alliance. This is not the place to discuss the question whether that estimate was a just one. We have to do only with the facts that England was made to stand in the background and that she seemed at first disposed to accept the general verdict. There was, too, much mismanagement in the conduct of the war, some of which might easily have been avoided; and there was not a little suffering, as the consequence of that mismanagement. John Bull must have his scape-goat, like the rest of us; and, looking over the field, he discovered that all his leaders were old men, and forthwith, though the oldest of old fellows himself, he laid all his mishaps to the account of the years of his upper servants. Sir Charles Napier, who never got into St. Petersburg, was old, and had been a dashing sailor forty years before. Admiral Dundas, who did not destroy Sweaborg, but only burned a lot of corded wood there in summer time, was another old sailor. Lord Raglan, who never saw the inside of Sebastopol, was well stricken in years, having served in Wellington's military family during the Peninsular War. General Simpson, Sir C. Campbell, General Codrington, Sir G. Brown, Sir G. Cathcart, and others of the leaders of the English army in the Crimea, were of the class of gentlemen who might, upon meeting, furnish matter for a paragraph on "united ages." What more natural than to attribute all that was unpleasant in the war to the stagnated blood of men who had heard the music of that musketry before which

Napoleon I.'s empire had gone down? The world went mad on the subject, and it was voted that old generals were nuisances, and that no man had any business in active war who was old enough to have much experience. Age might be venerable, but it was necessarily weak; and the last place in which it should show itself was the field.

It was not strange that the English should have come to the conclusion that the fogies were unfit to lead armies. They were in want of an excuse for their apparent failure in the war, and they took the part that was suggested to them,—therein behaving no worse than ourselves, who have accounted for our many reverses in many foolish and contradictory ways. But it was strange that their view was accepted by others, whose minds were undisturbed, because unmistified,—and accepted, too, in face of the self-evident fact that almost every man who figured in the war was old. Maréchal Pelissier,[1] to whom the chief honor of the contest has been conceded, was but six years the junior of Lord Raglan; and if the Englishman's sixty-six years are to count against age in war, why should not the Frenchman's sixty years count for it? Prince Gortschakoff, who defended Sebastopol so heroically, was but four years younger than Lord Raglan; and Prince Paskevitch was more than six years his senior. Muravieff, Menschikoff, Luders, and other Russian commanders opposed to the Allies, were all old men, all past sixty years when the war began. Prince Menschikoff was sixty-four when he went on his famous mission to Constantinople, and he did not grow younger in the eighteen months that followed, and at the end of which he fought and lost the Battle of the Alma. The Russian war was an old man's war, and the stubbornness with which it was waged had in it much of that ugliness which belongs to age.

> "The young man's wrath is like light straw on fire.
> But like red-hot steel is the old man's ire."

What rendered the attacks that were made on old generals in 1854-6 the more absurd was the fact, that the English called upon an old man to relieve them from bad government, and were backed by other nations. Lord Palmerston, upon whom all thoughts and all eyes were directed, was older than any one of those generals to whose years Englishmen attributed their country's failure. When, with the all but universal approbation of Great Britain and her friends, he became Prime-Minister, he was in his seventy-first year, and his action showed that his natural force was not abated. He was called to play the part of the elder Pitt at a greater age than Pitt reached; and he did not disappoint expectation. It is strange indeed, considering that the Premiership was a more difficult post to fill than that held by any English general, that the English should rely upon the oldest of their active statesmen to retrieve their fortunes, while they were condemning as unfit for service men who were his juniors by several years.

In truth, the position that youth is necessary to success in war is not sustained by military history. It may he no drawback to a soldier's excellence that he is young, but it is equally true that an old man may possess every quality that is necessary in a soldier who would serve his country well and win immortal fame for himself. The best of the Greek commanders were men in advanced life, with a few exceptions. The precise age of Miltiades at Marathon is unproven; but as he had become a noted character almost thirty years before the date of that most memorable of battles, he must have been old when he fought and won it. Even Alcibiades, with whom is associated the idea of youth through his whole career, as if Time had stood still in his behalf, did not have a great command until he was approaching to middle age; and it was not until some years more had expired that he won victories for the Athenians. The date of the birth of Epaminondas—the best public man of all antiquity, and the

[1] There are three accounts as to the time of the birth of "St. Arnaud, formerly Leroy." That which makes him oldest represents him as being fifty-eight at the Battle of the Alma. The second makes him fifty-six, and the third fifty-three. In either case he was not a young man; but, though suffering from mortal illness, he showed no want of vigor on almost every occasion when its display was required.

best soldier of Greece—cannot be fixed; but we find him a middle-aged man when first he appears on that stage on which he performed so pure and brilliant a part through seventeen eventful years. Eight years after he first came forward he won the Battle of Leuctra, which shattered the Spartan supremacy forever, and was the most perfect specimen of scientific fighting that is to be found in classical history, and which some of the greatest of modern commanders have been proud merely to imitate. After that action, but not immediately after it, he invaded the Peloponnesus, and led his forces to the vicinity of Sparta, and then effected a revolution that bridled that power perpetually. Nine years after Leuctra he won the Battle of Mantinea, dying on the field. He must then have been an old man, but the last of his campaigns was a miracle of military skill in all respects; and the effect of his death was the greatest that ever followed the fall of a general on a victorious field, actually turning victory into defeat. The Spartan king, Agesilaus II., who was a not unworthy antagonist of the great Theban, was an old man, and was over seventy when he saved Sparta solely through his skill as a soldier and his energy as a statesman. As a rule, the Greeks, the most intellectual of all races, were averse to the employment of young men in high offices. The Spartan Brasidas, if it be true that he fell in the flower of his age, as the historian asserts, may have been a young man at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, in which he was eminently distinguished; but it was his good fortune to be singularly favored by circumstances on more than one occasion, and his whole career was eminently exceptional to the general current of Hellenic life.

The Romans, though not braver than the Greeks, were more fortunate in their military career than the stayers of the march of Persia. Like the Greeks, they had but few young generals of much reputation. Most of their conquests, and, indeed, the salvation of their country, were the work of old leaders. The grand crisis of Rome was in the years that followed the arrival of Hannibal in Italy; and the two men who did most to baffle the invader were Fabius and Marcellus, who were called, respectively, Rome's shield and sword. They were both old men, though Marcellus may have been looked upon as young in comparison with Fabius, who was upward of seventy, and who, eight years after his memorable pro-dictatorship, retook Tarentum and baffled Hannibal. The old *Lingerer* was, at eighty, too clever, slow as they thought him at Rome, to be "taken in" by Hannibal, who had prepared a nice trap for him, into which he would not walk. Marcellus was about fifty-two when he was pitted against the victor of Cannæ, and he met him on various occasions, and sometimes with striking success. At the age of fifty-six he took Syracuse, after one of the most memorable of sieges, in which he had Archimedes for an opponent. At sixty he was killed in a skirmish, leaving the most brilliant military name of the republican times, so highly are valor and energy rated, though in the higher qualities of generalship he was inferior to men whose names are hardly known. Undoubtedly, Mommsen is right when he says that Rome was saved by the Roman system, and not by the labors of this man or that; but it is something for a country to have men who know how to work under its system, and in accordance with its requirements; and such men were Fabius and Marcellus, the latter old enough to be Hannibal's father, while the former was the contemporary of his grandfather.

The turning point in the Second Punic War was the siege of Capua by the Romans. That siege Hannibal sought by all means in his power to raise, well knowing, that, if the Campanian city should fall, he could never hope to become master of Italy. He marched to Rome in the expectation of compelling the besiegers to hasten to its defence; but without effect. Two old Romans commanded the beleaguering army, and while one of them, Q. Fulvius, hastened home with a small force, the other, Appius Claudius, carried on the siege. Hannibal had to retreat, and Capua fell, the effect of the tenacity with which ancient generals held on to their prey. Had they been less firm, the course of history would have been changed. At a later period of the war, Rome was saved from great danger, if not from destruction, by the victory of the Metaurus, won by M. Livius Salinator and C. Claudius Nero. Nero was an elderly man, having been conspicuous for some years, and the consular age being forty. His colleague was a very old man, having been consul before the war began, and having long lived in retirement, because he had been unjustly treated. The Romans now forced him to take office,

against his wish, though his actions and his language were of the most insulting character. A great union of parties had taken place, for Hasdrubal was marching to Italy, for the purpose of effecting a junction with his brother Hannibal, and it was felt that nothing short of perfect union could save the State. The State was saved, the two old consuls acting together, and defeating and slaying Hasdrubal in the last great battle of the war that was fought in Italy. The old fogies were too much for their foe, a much younger man than either of them, and a soldier of high reputation.

It must be admitted, however, that the Second Punic War is fairly quotable by those who insist upon the superiority of youthful generals over old ones, for the two greatest men who appeared in it were young leaders,—Hannibal, and Publius Cornelius Scipio, the first Africanus. No man has ever exceeded Hannibal in genius for war. He was one of the greatest statesmen that ever lived, and he was so because he was the greatest of soldiers. He might have won pitched battles as a mere general, but it was his statesmanship that enabled him to contend for sixteen years against Rome, in Italy, though Rome was aided by Carthaginian copperheads. But, though a young general, Hannibal was an old soldier when he led his army from the Ebro to the Trebia, as the avenging agent of his country's gods. His military as well as his moral training began in childhood; and when his father, Hamilcar Barcas,[2] was killed, Hannibal, though but eighteen, was of established reputation in the Carthaginian service. Eight years later he took the place which his father and brother-in-law had held, called to it by the voice of the army. During those eight years he had been constantly employed, and he brought to the command an amount and variety of experience such as it has seldom been the lot of even old generals to acquire. Years brought no decay to his faculties, and we have the word of his successful foe, that at Zama, when he was forty-five, he showed as much skill as he had displayed at Cannæ, when he was but thirty-one. Long afterward, when an exile in the East, his powers of mind shine as brightly as they did when he crossed the Pyrenees and the Alps to fulfil his oath. Scipio, too, though in a far less degree than Hannibal, was an old soldier. He had been often employed, and was present at Cannæ, before he obtained that proconsular command in Spain which was the worthy foundation of his fortunes. The four years that he served in that country, and his subsequent services in Africa, qualified him to meet Hannibal, whose junior he was by thirteen years. That he was Hannibal's superior, because he defeated him at Zama, with the aid of Masinissa, no more follows than that Wellington was Napoleon's superior, because, with the aid of Blücher, he defeated him at Waterloo. It would not be more difficult to account for the loss of the African field than it is to account for the loss of the Flemish field, by the superior genius. The elder Africanus is the most exceptional character in all history, and it is impossible to place him. He seems never to have been young, and we cannot associate the idea of age with him, even when he is dying at Liternum at upwards of fifty. He was a man at seventeen, when first he steps boldly out on the historic page, and there is no apparent change in him when we find him leading great armies, and creating a new policy for the redemption of Italy from the evils of war. He was intended to be a king, but he was born two centuries too early to be of any use to his country in accordance with his genius, out of the field. Such a man is not to be judged as a mere soldier, and we were inclined not to range him on the side of youthful generals; but we will be generous, and, in consideration of his years, permit him to be claimed by those who insist that war is the business of youth.

At later periods, Rome's greatest generals were men who were old. The younger Africanus was fifty-one at Numantia, Marius did not obtain the consulship until he was fifty; and he was fifty-five when he won his first great victory over the Northern barbarians, and a year older when he completed their destruction. Sulla was past fifty when he set out to meet the armies of Mithridates, which he conquered; and he was fifty-six when he made himself master of his country, after one of the fiercest

[2] The advocates of youth in generals have never, that we are aware, claimed Hamilcar Barcas as one of the illustrations of their argument; yet he must have been a very young man when he began his extraordinary career, if, as has been stated on good authority, he was not beyond the middle age when he lost his life in battle. He was a great man, perhaps even as great a man as his son Hannibal, who did but carry out his father's designs.

campaigns on record. Pompeius distinguished himself when very young, but it is thought that the title of "the Great" was conferred upon him by Sulla in a spirit of irony. The late Sir William Napier, who ought to have been a good judge, said that he was a very great general, and in a purely military sense perhaps greater than Cæsar. He was fifty-eight in the campaign of Pharsalia, and if he then failed, his failure must be attributed to the circumstances of his position, which was rather that of a party leader than of a general; and a party leader, it has been truly said, must sometimes obey, in order that at other times he may command. Pompeius delivered battle at Pharsalia against his own judgment. The "Onward to Rome!" cry of the fierce aristocrats was too strong to be resisted; and "their general yielded with a sigh to the importunities of his followers, declaring that he could no longer command, and must submit to obey." Not long before he had beaten Cæsar at Dyrrachium, with much loss to the vanquished, completely spoiling his plans; and the great contest might have had a very different result, had not political and personal considerations been permitted to outweigh those of a military character. Politicians are pests in a camp. Cæsar was in his fifty-first year when he crossed the Rubicon and began his wonderful series of campaigns in the Civil War,—campaigns characterized by an almost superhuman energy. The most remarkable of his efforts was that which led to his last appearance in the field, at the Battle of Munda, where he fought for existence; he was then approaching fifty-five, and he could not have been more active and energetic, had he been as young as Alexander at Arbela.

In modern days, the number of old generals who have gained great battles is large, far larger than the number of young generals of the highest class. The French claim to be the first of military peoples, and though no other nation has been so badly beaten in battles, or so completely crushed in campaigns, there is a general disposition to admit their claim; and many of their best commanders were old men. Bertrand du Gueselin performed his best deeds against the English after he was fifty, and he was upward of sixty years when the commandant of Randon laid the keys of his fortress on his body, surrendering, not to the living, but to the dead. Turenne was ever great, but it is admitted that his three last campaigns, begun when he was sixty-two, were his greatest performances. Condé's victory at Rocroi was a most brilliant deed, he being then but twenty-two; but it does not so strikingly illustrate his genius as do those operations by which, at fifty-four, he baffled Montecuculi, and prevented him from profiting from the fall of Turenne. Said Condé to one of his officers, "How much I wish that I could have conversed only two hours with the ghost of Monsieur de Turenne, so as to be able to follow the scope of his ideas!" In these days, generals can have as much ghostly talk as they please, but the privilege would not seem to be much used, or it is not useful, for they do nothing that is of consequence sufficient to be attributed to supernatural power. Luxembourg was sixty-two when he defeated Prince Waldeck at Fleurus; and at sixty-four and sixty-five he defeated William III. at Steinkirk and Landen. Vendôme was fifty-one when he defeated Eugène at Cassano; and at fifty-six he won the eventful Battle of Villaviciosa, to which the Spanish Bourbons owe their throne. Villars, who fought the terrible Battle of Malplaquet against Marlborough and Eugène, was then fifty-six years old; and he had more than once baffled those commanders. At sixty he defeated Eugène, and by his successes enabled France to conclude honorably a most disastrous war. The Comte de Saxe was in his forty-ninth year when he gained the Battle of Fontenoy;[3] and later he won other successes. Rochambeau was in his fifty-seventh year when he acted with Washington at Yorktown, in a campaign that established our existence as a nation.

The Spanish army of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, down to the date of the Battle of Rocroi, stood very high. Several of its best generals were old men. Gonsalvo de Córdova, "the

[3] At Fontenoy the Duke of Cumberland was but half the age of the Comte de Saxe. In that battle an English soldier was taken prisoner, after fighting with heroic bravery. A French officer complimented him, saying, that, if there had been fifty thousand men like him on the other side, the victory would have been theirs. "No," said the Englishman, "it was not the fifty thousand brave men who were wanting, but a Marshal Saxe." Cumberland was ever unlucky, save at Culloden. Saxe was old beyond his years, being one of the fastest of the fast men of his time, as became the son of Augustus the Strong and Aurora von Königsmark.

Great Captain," who may be considered the father of the famous Spanish infantry, was fifty when he completed his Italian conquests; and nine years later he was again called to the head of the Spaniards in Italy, but the King of Aragon's jealousy prevented him from going to that country. Alva was about sixty when he went to the Netherlands, on his awful mission; and it must be allowed that he was as great in the field as he was detestably cruel. At seventy-four he conquered Portugal. Readers of Mr. Prescott's work on Peru will remember his lively account of Francisco de Carbajal, who at fourscore was more active than are most men at thirty. Francisco Pizarro was an old man, about sixty, when he effected the conquest of Peru; and his principal associate, Almagro, was his senior. Spinola, who died at sixty-one, in the full possession of his reputation, was, perhaps, the greatest military genius of his time, next to Gustavus Adolphus and Wallenstein.

The Austrian military service has become a sort of butt with those who shoot their arrows at what is called slowness, and who delight to transfix old generals. Since Bonaparte, in less than a year, tumbled over Beaulieu, Wurmser, and Alvinczy, (whose united ages exceeded two hundred years,) it has been taken for granted that the Austrians never have generals under threescore-and-ten years, and that they are always beaten. There have been many old generals in the Austrian service, it is true, and most of them have been very good leaders. Montecuculi was fifty-six when he defeated the Turks at St. Gothard, which is counted one of the "decisive battles" of the seventeenth century. Daun was fifty-three when he won the victory of Kolin, June 18, 1757, inflicting defeat on the Prussian Frederick, next to Marlborough the greatest commander of modern times who had then appeared. Melas was seventy when he met Bonaparte at Marengo, and beat him, the victory being with the Austrian while he remained on the field; but infirmities having compelled him to leave before he could glean it, the arrival of Desaix and the dash of the younger Kellermann turned the tide of battle in favor of the French. General Zach, Melas's chief of the staff, was in command in the latter part of the battle, and it is supposed, that, if he had not been captured, the Austrians would have kept what they had won. He was fifty-six years old, but was not destined to be the "Old Zach" of his country, as *the* "Old Zach" was always victorious. Marshal Radelzky was eighty-two when, in 1848, he found himself compelled to uphold the Austrian cause in Italy, without the hope of aid from home; and not only did he uphold it, but a year later he restored it completely, and was the virtual ruler of the Peninsula until he had reached the age of ninety. Of all the military men who took part in the wars of 1848-9, he, it is admitted, displayed the most talent and energy. So well was his work done, that it required the united forces of France and Sardinia to undo it, shortly after his death; and he died in the conviction that it could not be undone. Haynau, who certainly displayed eminent ability in 1848-9, was in his sixty-second year when the war began, and stands next to Radetzky as the preserver of the Austrian monarchy; and we should not allow detestation of his cruelties to detract from his military merits. The Devil is entitled to justice, and by consequence so are his imps. Austria has often seen her armies beaten when led by old men, but other old men have won victories for her. Even those of her generals who were so rapidly beaten by young Bonaparte had been good soldiers elsewhere; and when the Archduke Charles, who was two years the junior of Bonaparte, was sent to meet the Frenchman, he had no better luck than had been found by Beaulieu and Wurmser, though his reverses were not on the same extraordinary scale that had marked the fall of his predecessors. Twelve years later, in 1809, Napoleon again met the Archduke Charles, and defeated him repeatedly; and though the Archduke was victorious at Essling, he, the younger commander, had not sufficient boldness so to improve his success as should have given to Austria the credit of the deliverance of Germany, which was to come from Russia. Those who dwell so pertinaciously on the failures of old Austrian generals should in justice to age remember that it was a young Austrian general, and a good soldier too, who showed a most extraordinary want of energy in 1809, immediately after the French under Napoleon had met with the greatest reverse which their arms had then experienced since Bonaparte had been spoiled into a despot. Prince Schwartzenberg, who had nominal command of the Allied Armies in 1813-14, was of the same age as the Archduke Charles, but it would be absurd to call

him a great soldier. He was a brave man, and he had seen considerable service; but as a general he did not rank even as second-rate. His appointment to command in 1813 was a political proceeding, meant to conciliate Austria; but though it was a useful appointment in some respects, it was injurious to the Allies in the field; and had the Prince's plan at Leipsic been adhered to, Napoleon would have won decided successes there. The Czar wished for the command, and his zeal might have enabled him to do something; but the entire absence of military talent from the list of his accomplishments would have greatly endangered the Allies' cause. Schwartzenberg's merit consisted in this, that he had sufficient influence and tact to "keep things straight" in the councils of a jarring confederacy, until others had gained such victories as placed the final defeat of Napoleon beyond all doubt. His first battle was Dresden, and there Napoleon gave him a drubbing of the severest character; and the loss of that battle would have carried with it the loss of the cause for which it was fought by the Allies, had it not been that at the very same time were fought and won a series of battles, at the Katzbach and elsewhere, which were due to the boldness of Blücher, who was old enough to be Schwartzenberg's father, with more than a dozen years to spare. Blücher was also the real hero at Leipsie, where he gained brilliant successes; while on that part of the field where Schwartzenberg commanded, the Allies did but little beyond holding their original ground. Had Blücher failed, Leipsie would have been a French victory.

England's best generals mostly have been old men, or men well advance in life, the chief exceptions being found among her kings and princes.[4] The Englishmen who have exhibited the greatest genius for war, in what may be called their country's modern history, are Oliver Cromwell, Marlborough, and Wellington. Cromwell was in his forty-fourth year when he received the baptism of fire at Edgehill, as a captain; and he was in his fifty-third year when he fought, as lord-general, his last battle, at Worcester, which closed a campaign, as well as an active military career, that had been conducted with great energy. It was as a military man that he subsequently ruled the British islands, and to the day of his death there was no abatement in ability. Marlborough had a good military education, served under Turenne when he was but twenty-two, and attracted his commander's admiration; but he never had an independent command until he was forty, when he led an expedition to Ireland, and captured Cork and Kinsale. He was fifty-two when he assumed command of the armies of the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV., and in his fifty-fifth year when he won the Battle of Blenheim. At fifty-six he gained the victory of Ramillies, and at fifty-eight that of Oudenarde. His last great battle, Malplaquet, was fought when he was in his sixtieth year; and after that the French never durst meet him in the field. He never knew what defeat meant, from experience, and was the most successful even of those commanders who have never failed. He left his command at sixty-two, with no one to dispute his title of the first of living soldiers; and with him victory left the Alliance. Subsequently he was employed by George I., and to his measures the defeat of the rebels of 1715 was due, he having predicted that they would be overthrown precisely where they were overthrown. The story that he survived his mental powers is without foundation, and he continued to perform his official duties to the last, the King having refused to accept his proffered resignation. Wellington had a thorough military training, received his first commission at eighteen, and was a lieutenant-colonel in his twenty-fifth year. After showing that he was a good soldier in 1794-5, against the French, he went to India, where he distinguished himself in subordinate campaigns, and was made a major-general in 1802. Assaye, the first battle in which he commanded, was won when he was in his thirty-fifth

[4] Henry V. was present, as Prince of Wales, at the Battle of Shrewsbury, before he was sixteen; and there is some reason for supposing that he commanded the royal forces in the Battle of Grosmont, fought and won in his eighteenth year. He was but twenty-eight at Agincourt. Splendid as was his military career, it was all over before he had reached to thirty-six years. The Black Prince was but sixteen at Crécy, and in his twenty-seventh year at Poitiers. Edward IV. was not nineteen when he won the great Battle of Towton, and that was not his first battle and victory. He was always successful. Richard III., as Duke of Gloucester, was not nineteen when he showed himself to be an able soldier, at Barnet; and he proved his generalship on other fields. William I., Henry I., Stephen, Henry II., Richard I., Edward I., Edward III., Henry IV., and William III. were all distinguished soldiers. The last English sovereign who took part in a battle was George II., at Dettingen.

year. He had just entered on his fortieth year when he took command of that force with which he first defeated the French in Portugal. He was in his forty-seventh year when he fought at Waterloo. If he cannot be classed with old generals, neither can he be placed in the list of youthful soldiers; and so little confidence had he in his military talents, that at twenty-six he petitioned to be transferred to the civil service. His powers were developed by events and time. Some of his Peninsular lieutenants were older than himself. Craufurd was five years his senior, and was a capital soldier. Picton, who had some of the highest military qualities, was almost eleven years older than his chief, and was little short of fifty-seven when he fell at Waterloo. Lord Hopetoun was six years older than Wellington. Lord Lynedoch (General Sir Thomas Graham) was in his sixty-first year when he defeated Maréchal Victor at Barrosa, and in his sixty-third when he led the left wing of the Allies at Vittoria, which was the turning battle of the long contest between England and France. A few months later he took St. Sebastian, after one of the most terrible sieges known to modern warfare. He continued to serve under Wellington until France was invaded. Returning to England, he was sent to Holland, with an independent command; and though his forces were few, so little had his fire been dulled by time, that he carried the great fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom by storm, but only to lose it again, with more than two thousand men, because of the sense and gallantry of the French General Bezanet, who, like our Rosecrans at Murfreesboro', would not accept defeat under any circumstances. When Wellington afterward saw the place, he remarked that it was very strong, and must have been extremely difficult to enter; "but when once in," he added, "I wonder how the Devil they suffered themselves to be beaten out again!" Though the old Scotchman failed on this particular occasion, his boldness and daring are to be cited in support of the position that energy in war is not the exclusive property of youth.

Some of the best of the English second-class generals were old men. Lord Clyde began his memorable Indian campaigns at sixty-six, and certainly showed no want of talent and activity in their course. He restored, to all appearance, British supremacy in the East. Sir C.J. Napier was in his sixty-second year when he conquered Sinde, winning the great Battles of Meanee and Doobah; and six years later he was sent out to India, as Commander-in-chief, at the suggestion of Wellington, who said, that, if Napier would not go, he should go himself. He reached India too late to fight the Sikhs, but showed great vigor in governing the Indian army. He died in 1853; had he lived until the next spring, he would unquestionably have been placed at the head of that force which England sent first to Turkey and then to Southern Russia. Lord Raglan was almost sixty-six when he was appointed to his first command, and though his conduct has been severely criticized, and much misrepresented by many writers, the opinion is now becoming common that he discharged well the duties of a very difficult position. Mr. Kinglake's brilliant work is obtaining justice for the services and memory of his illustrious friend. Lord Hardinge and Lord Gough were old men when they carried on some of the fiercest hostilities ever known to the English in India. Sir Ralph Abercromby was sixty-three when he defeated the French in Egypt, in 1801. Lord Cornwallis was fifty-two when he broke the power of Tippoo Saib, and prepared the way for his ultimate overthrow. Lord Peterborough was forty-seven, and had never before held a command or seen much service, when he set out on that series of extraordinary campaigns which came so near replacing the Austrian house in possession of Spain and the Indies. Peterborough has been called the last of the knights-errant; but, in fact, no book on knight-errantry contains anything half so wonderful as his deeds in the country of Don Quixote. Sir Eyre Coote, who had so boldly supported that bold policy which led to the victory of Plassey, nearly a quarter of a century later supported Hastings in the field with almost as much vigor as he had supported Clive in council, and saved British India, when it was assailed by the ablest of all its foes. His last victories were gained in advanced life, and are ranked with the highest of those actions to which England owes her wonderful Oriental dominion. Lord Keane was verging upon sixty when he led the British forces into Afghanistan, and took Ghuznee. Against all her old and middle-aged generals, her kings and princes apart, England could place but very few young commanders of great worth. Clive's case was clearly exceptional; and Wolfe owed his victory on the Heights of Abraham

as much to Montcalm's folly as to his own audacity. The Frenchman should have refused battle, when time and climate would soon have wrought his deliverance and his enemy's ruin.

It is generally held that the wars which grew out of the French Revolution, and which involved the world in their flames, were chiefly the work of young men, and that their history illustrates the superiority of youth over age in the ancient art of human destruction. But this belief is not well founded, and, indeed, bears a close resemblance to that other error in connection with the French Revolution, namely, that it proceeded from the advent of new opinions, which obtained ascendency, —whereas those opinions were older than France, and had more than once been aired in France, and there had struggled for supremacy. The opinions before the triumph of which the old monarchy went down were much older than that monarchy; but as they had never before been able definitely to influence the nation's action, it was not strange that they should be considered new, when there was nothing new about them save their application. Young opinions, as they are supposed to have been, are best championed by young men; and hence it is assumed that the French leaders in the field were youthful heroes, as were the civil leaders in many instances,—and a very nice mess the latter made of the business they engaged in, doing little that was well in it beyond getting their own heads cut off. There are some facts that greatly help to sustain the position that France was saved from partition by the exertions of young generals, the new men of the new time. Hoche, Moreau, Bonaparte, Desaix, Soult, Lannes, Ney, and others, who early rose to fame in the Revolutionary wars, were all young men, and their exploits were so great as to throw the deeds of others into the shade; but the salvation of France was effected before any one of their number became conspicuous as a leader. Napoleon once said that it was not the new levies that saved France, but the old soldiers of the Bourbons; and he was right; and he might have added, that they were led by old or elderly generals. Dumouriez was in his fifty-fourth year when, in 1792, he won the Battles of Valmy and Jemmapes; and at Valmy he was aided by the elder Kellermann, who was fifty-seven. Those two battles decided the fate of Europe, and laid the foundation of that French supremacy which endured for twenty years, until Napoleon himself overthrew it by his mad Moscow expedition. Custine, who also was successful in 1792, on the side of Germany, was fifty-two. Jourdan and Pichegru, though not old men, were old soldiers, when, in 1794 and 1795, they did so much to establish the power of the French Republic, the former winning the Battle of Fleurus. It was in the three years that followed the beginning of the war in 1792, that the French performed those deeds which subsequently enabled Napoleon and his Marshals to chain victory to their chariots, and to become so drunk from success that they fell through their own folly rather than because of the exertions of their enemies. Had the old French generals been beaten at Valmy, the Prussians would have entered Paris in a few days, the monarchy would have been restored, and the name of Bonaparte never would have been heard; and equally unknown would have been the names of a hundred other French leaders, who distinguished themselves in the three-and-twenty years that followed the first successes of Dumouriez and Kellermann. Let honor be given where it is due, and let the fogies have their just share of it. There can be nothing meaner than to insist upon stripping gray heads of green laurels.

After the old generals and old soldiers of France had secured standing-places for the new generation, the representatives of the latter certainly did make their way brilliantly and rapidly. The school was a good one, and the scholars were apt to learn, and did credit to their masters. They carried the tricolor over Europe and into Egypt, and saw it flying over the capital of almost every member of those coalitions which had purposed its degradation at Paris. It was the flag to which men bowed at Madrid and Seville, at Milan and Rome, at Paris and at the Hague, at Warsaw and Wilna, at Dantzie and in Dalmatia, at the same time that it was fast approaching Moscow; and it was thought of with as much fear as hatred at Vienna and Berlin. No wonder that the world forgot or overlooked the earlier and fewer triumphs of the first Republican commanders, when dazzled by the glories that shone from Arcola, the Pyramids, Zürich, Marengo, Hohenlinden, Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Eckmühl, Wagram, Borodino, Lützen, Bautzen, and Dresden. But those young generals of the Republic and the Empire

were sometimes found unequal to the work of contending against the old generals of the Coalitionists. Suvaroff was in his seventieth year when he defeated Macdonald at the Battle of the Trebbia, the Frenchman being but thirty-four; and a few months later he defeated Joubert, who was thirty, at Novi. Joubert was one of Bonaparte's generals in his first Italian wars, and was so conspicuous and popular that he had been selected to command the Army of Italy by the moderate reactionists, in the hope that he might there win such glory as should enable him to play the part which Bonaparte played but a few months later,—Bonaparte being then in the East, with the English fleets between him and France, so that he was considered a lost man. "The striking similarity of situation between Joubert and Bonaparte," says Madame d'Abrantes, "is most remarkable. They were of equal age, and both, in their early career, suffered a sort of disgrace; they were finally appointed to command, first, the seventeenth military division, and afterward the Army of Italy. There is in all this a curious parity of events; but death soon ended the career of one of the young heroes. That which ought to have constituted the happiness of his life was the cause of Joubert's death,—his marriage. But how could he refrain from loving the woman he espoused? Who can have forgotten Zaphirine de Montholon, her enchanting grace, her playful wit, her good humor, and her beauty?" Like another famous soldier, Joubert loved too well to love wisely. Bonaparte, who never was young, had received the command of the Army of Italy as the portion of the ex-mistress of Barras, who was seven years his senior, and, being a matter-of-fact man, he reduced his *lune de miel* to three days, and posted off to his work. He knew the value of time in those days, and not Cleopatra herself could have kept him from his men. Joubert, more of a man, but an inferior soldier, took his honeymoon in full measure, passing a month with his bride; and the loss of that month, if so sweet a thirty days could be called a loss, ruined him, and perhaps prevented him from becoming Emperor of the French. The enemy received reinforcements while he was so lovingly employed, and when he at length arrived on the scene of action he found that the Allies had obtained mastery of the situation. It was no longer in the power of the French to say whether they would fight or not. They had to give battle at Novi, where the tough old Russian of seventy years asserted his superiority over the *héros de roman* who had posted from Paris to retrieve the fortune of France, and to make his own. When he left Paris, he said to his wife, "You will see me again, dead or victorious,"—and dead he was, in less than a month. He fell early in the action, on the fifteenth of August, 1799, the very day on which Bonaparte completed his thirtieth year. Moreau took the command, but failed to turn the tide of disaster. The French are unanimous in ascribing their defeat to Joubert's delay at Paris, and it is certain that the enemy did take Alexandria and Mantua during that month's delay, and thus were enabled to add the besieging forces to their main army, so that Joubert was about to retreat to the Apennines, and to assume a defensive position, when Suvaroff forced him to accept battle. But something should be allowed for the genius of the Russian general, who was one of the great master-spirits of war, and who seldom fought without being completely victorious. He had mostly been employed against the Turks, whose military reputation was then at the lowest, or the Poles, who were too divided and depressed to do themselves and their cause justice, and therefore his character as a soldier did not stand so high as that of more than one man who was his inferior; but when, in his seventieth year, he took command in Italy, there to encounter soldiers who had beaten the armies of almost all other European nations, and who were animated by a fanatical spirit as strong as that which fired his own bosom, he showed himself to be more than equal to his position. He was not at all at fault, though brought face to face with an entirely new state of things, but acted with his accustomed vigor, marching from victory to victory, and reconquering Italy more rapidly than it had been conquered three years before by Bonaparte. When Bonaparte was destroying the Austrian armies in Italy, Suvaroff watched his operations with deep interest, and said that he must go to the West to meet the new genius, or that Bonaparte would march to the East against Russia,—a prediction, it has been said, that was fulfilled to the Frenchman's ruin. "Whether, had he encountered Bonaparte, he would have beaten him, is a question for the ingenious to argue, but which never can be settled. But one thing is certain, and that is, that Bonaparte never encountered an

opponent of that determined and energetic character which belonged to Suvaroff until his latter days, and then his fall was rapid and his ruin utter. That Suvaroff failed in Switzerland, to which country he had been transferred from Italy, does not at all impeach his character for generalship. His failure was due partly to the faults of others, and partly to circumstances. Switzerland was to him what Russia became to Napoleon in 1812. Massena's victory at Zürich, in which half of Korsakoff's army was destroyed, rendered Russian failure in the campaign inevitable. All the genius in the world, on that field of action, could not have done anything that should have compensated for so terrible a calamity. Zürich saved France far more than did Marengo, and it is to be noted that it was fought and won by the oldest of all the able men who figure in history as Napoleon's Marshals. There were some of the Marshals who were older than Massena, but they were not men of superior talents. Massena was forty-one when he defeated Korsakoff, and he was a veteran soldier when the Revolutionary wars began.

The three commanders who did most to break down Napoleon's power, and to bring about his overthrow, namely,—Benningsen, and Kutusoff, and Blücher,—were all old men; and the two last-named were very old men. It would be absurd to call either of them a great commander, but it is indisputable that they all had great parts in great wars. Benningsen can scarcely be called a good general of the second class, and he is mostly spoken of as a foolish braggart and boaster; but it is a fact that he did some things at an important time which indicated his possession of qualities that were highly desirable in a general who was bound to act against Napoleon. Having, in 1807, obtained command of the Russian army in Poland, he had what the French considered the consummate impudence to take the offensive against the Emperor, and compelled him to mass his forces, and to fight in the dead of winter, and a Polish winter to boot, in which all that is not ice and snow is mud. True, Napoleon would have made him pay dear for his boldness, had there not occurred one or two of those accidents which often spoil the best-laid plans of war; but as it was, the butcherly Battle of Eylau was fought, both parties, and each with some show of reason, claiming the victory. Had the Russians acted on the night after Eylau as the English acted on the night after Flodden, and remained on the field, the world would have pronounced them victorious, and the French Empire might have been shorn of its proportions, and perhaps have fallen, seven years in advance of its time; but they retreated, and thus the French made a fair claim to the honors of the engagement, though virtually beaten in the fight. Benningsen boasted tremendously, and as there were men enough to believe what he said to be true, because they wished it to be true, and as he had behaved well on some previous occasions, his reputation was vastly raised, and his name was in all mouths and on all pens. If the reader will take the trouble to look over a file of some Federal journal of 1807, he will find Benningsen as frequently and as warmly praised as Lee or Stonewall Jackson is (or was) praised by English journals in 1863,—for the Federalists hated Napoleon as bitterly as the English hate us, and read of Eylau with as much unction as the English of to-day read of the American reverses at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, while Austerlitz and Friedland pleased our Federalists about as well as Donelson and Pulaski please the English of these times. A few months after Eylau, Benningsen repulsed an attack which Napoleon imprudently made on his intrenched camp at Heilsberg, which placed another feather in his cap; nor did the smashing defeat he met with four days later, at Friedland, lessen his reputation. The world is slow to think poorly of a man who has done some clever things. We have seen how it was with the late Stonewall Jackson, concerning whom most men spoke as if he had never known defeat, though it is, or it should be, notorious, that he was as often beaten as successful, that more than once he had to fly with wind-like swiftness to escape personal destruction, and that on one occasion he was saved from ruin only because of an exhibition on our side of more than a usual amount of stupidity. But he had repeatedly showed some of the best qualities of a dashing general, and all else was overlooked in admiration of the skill and the audacity with which he then had done his evil work. So it was with Benningsen, and with more justice. The man who had bearded Napoleon but a few months after Jena, and not much more than a year after Austerlitz, and who had fought an even battle with him, in which fifty thousand men fell, must have had some high moral qualities

that entitled him to respect; and he continued to be much talked of until greater and more fruitful campaigns had obscured his deeds. The pluck which he had exhibited tended to keep alive the spirit of European resistance to Napoleon, as it showed that the conqueror had only to be firmly met to be made to fight hardly for victory; and that was much, in view of the rapidity with which Napoleon had beaten both Austria and Russia in 1805, and Prussia in 1806. Benningsen completed his sixty-second year two days after the Battle of Eylau. He was employed in 1812, '13, '14, but not in the first line, and his name is not of much mention in the histories of those eventful years.

Prince Kutusoff, though a good soldier in the Turkish and Polish wars, did not have a command against the French until he had completed his sixtieth year, in 1805, when he led a Russian army to the aid of Austria. He checked the advance of the French after Ulm, and was in nominal command of the Allies at Austerlitz; but that battle was really fought in accordance with the plans of General Weyrother, for which Kutusoff had a profound contempt. If thorough beating could make good soldiers of men, the vanquished at Austerlitz ought to have become the superiors of the victors. In 1812, when the Russians had become weary of that sound policy which was drawing Napoleon to destruction, Kutusoff assumed command of their army, and fought the Battle of Borodino, which was a defeat in name, but a victory in its consequences, to the invaded party. His conduct while the French were at Moscow had the effect of keeping them in that trap until their fate was sealed; and his action while following them on their memorable retreat was a happy mixture of audacity and prudence, and completed the Russian triumph. Sir Robert Wilson, who was with the Russian general, who must have found him a bore of the first magnitude, is very severe on Kutusoff's proceedings; but all that he says makes it clear that the stout old Russian knew what he was about, and that he was determined not to be made a mere tool of England. If success is a test of merit, Kutusoff's action deserves the very highest admiration, for the French army was annihilated. He died just after he had brought the greatest of modern campaigns to a triumphant close, at the age of sixty-eight, and before he could hear the world's applause. The Germans, who were to owe so much to his labors, rejoiced at his removal, because he was supposed to belong to the peace party, who were opposed to further action, and who thought that their country was under no obligation to fight for the deliverance of other nations. They feared, too, that, if the war should go on, his "Muscovite hoof" would be too strong for the Fatherland to bear it; and they saw in his death a Providential incident, which encouraged them to move against the French. It is altogether probable, that, if he had lived but three months longer, events would have taken quite a different turn. Baron von Müffling tells us that Kutusoff "would not hear a word of crossing the Elbe; and all Scharnhorst's endeavors to make him more favorably disposed toward Prussia were fruitless. The whole peace party in the Russian army joined with the Field-Marshal, and the Emperor was placed in a difficult position. On my arrival at Altenberg, I found Scharnhorst deeply dejected, for he could not shut his eyes to the consequences of this resistance. Unexpectedly, the death of the obstinate old Marshal occurred on the twenty-eighth of April, and the Emperor was thus left free to pursue his own policy." The first general who had successfully encountered Napoleon, it would have been the strangest of history's strange facts, if the Emperor had owed the continuance of his reign to Kutusoff's influence, and that was the end to which the Russian's policy was directed; for, though he wished to confine French power within proper limits, he had no wish to strengthen either England or any of the German nations, deeming them likely to become the enemies of Russia, while he might well suppose that the French had had enough of Russian warfare to satisfy them for the rest of the century. Had his astute policy been adopted and acted on, there never would have been a Crimean War, and Sebastopol would not now be a ruin; and Russia would have been greater than she is likely to be in our time, or in the time of our children.

Blücher, who completed the work which Kutusoff began, and in a manner which the Russian would hardly have approved, was an older man than the hero of Borodino. When called to the command of the Prussian army, in March, 1813, he was in his seventy-first year; and he was in his seventy-third year when his energy enabled him, in the face of difficulties that no other commander

could have overcome, to bring up more than fifty thousand men to the assistance of Wellington at Waterloo, losing more than an eighth of their number. He had no military talent, as the term is generally used. He could not tell whether a plan was good or bad. He could not understand the maps. He was not a disciplinarian, and he was ignorant of all the details of preparing an army, of clothing and feeding and arming it. In all those things which it is supposed a commander should know, and which such commanders as Napoleon and Wellington did know well, he was so entirely ignorant, that he might have been raised to the head of an army of United States Volunteers amid universal applause. He was vicious to an extent that surprised even the fastest men of that vicious time,—a gambler, a drunkard, and a loose liver every way, indulging in vices that are held by mild moralists to be excusable in youth who are employed in sowing wild oats, but which are universally admitted to be disgusting in those upon whom age has laid its withering hand. Yet this vicious and ignorant old man had more to do with bringing about the fall of Napoleon than all the generals and statesmen of the Allies combined. He had energy, which is the most valuable of all qualities in a military leader; and he hated Napoleon as heartily as he hated Satan, and a great deal more heartily than he hated sin. Mr. Dickens tells us that the vigorous tenacity of love is always much stronger than hate, and perhaps he is right, so far as concerns private life; but in public life hate is by far the stronger passion. But for Blücher's hatred of Napoleon the campaign of 1813 would have terminated in favor of the Emperor, that of 1814 never would have been undertaken, and that of 1815, if ever attempted, would have had a far different issue. The old German disregarded all orders and suggestions, and set all military and political principles at defiance, in his ardor to accomplish the one purpose which he had in view; and as that purpose was accomplished, he has taken his place in history as one of the greatest of soldiers. Napoleon himself is not more secure of immortality. He was greatly favored by circumstances, but he is a wise man who knows how to profit from circumstances. Take Blücher out of the wars of 1813-15, and there is little left in them on the side of the Allies that is calculated to command admiration. Next to Blücher stands his celebrated chief of the staff, General Count Gneisenau, who was the brains of the Army of Silesia, Blücher being its head. When Blücher was made an LL.D. at Oxford, he facetiously remarked, "If I am a doctor, here is my pill-maker," placing his hand on Gneisenau's head, —which was a frank acknowledgment that few men would have been able to make. Gneisenau was fifty-three when he became associated with Blücher, and he was fifty-five when he acted with him in 1815. In 1831 he was appointed to an important command, being then seventy-one. The celebrated Scharnhorst, Gneisenau's predecessor, and to whom the Prussians owed so much, was in his fifty-seventh year when he died of the wounds he had received at the Battle of Lützen.

There are some European generals whom it is difficult to class, as they showed great capacity and won great victories as well in age as in youth. Prince Eugène was one of these, and Frederick of Prussia was another. Eugène showed high talent when very young, and won the first of his grand victories over the Turks at thirty-four; but it was not so splendid an affair as that of Belgrade, which he won at fifty-four. He was forty-three when he defeated the French at Turin, under circumstances and with incidents that took attention even from Marlborough, whom he subsequently aided to gain the victories of Oudenarde and Malplaquet, as he had previously aided him at Blenheim. At seventy-one Eugène led an Austrian army against the French; and though no battle was fought, his conduct showed that he had not lost his capacity for command. Frederick began his military life when in his thirtieth year, and was actively engaged until thirty-three, showing striking ability on several occasions, though he began badly, according to his own admission. But it was in the Seven Years' War that his fame as a soldier was won, and that contest began when he was in his forty-fifth year. He was close upon forty-six when he gained the Battles of Rossbach and Leuthen. Whatever opinion others may entertain as to his age, it is certain that he counted himself an old man in those days. Writing to the Marquis d'Argens, a few days before he was forty-eight, he said, "In my old age I have come down almost to be a theatrical king"; and not two years later he wrote to the same friend, "I have sacrificed my youth to my father, and my manhood to my fatherland. I think, therefore, I have acquired the right to my

old age." He reckoned by trials and events, and he had gone through enough to have aged any man. Those were the days when he carried poison on his person, in order that, should he be completely beaten, or captured, he might not adorn Maria Theresa's triumph, but end his life "after the high Roman fashion." When the question of the Bavarian succession threatened to lead to another war with Austria, Frederick's action, though he was in his sixty-seventh year, showed, to use the homely language of the English soldier at St. Helena when Napoleon arrived at that famous watering place, that he had many campaigns in his belly yet. The youthful Emperor, Joseph II., would have been no match for the old soldier of Liegnitz and Zorndorf.

Some of Frederick's best generals were old men. Schwerin, who was killed in the terrible Battle of Prague, was then seventy-three, and a soldier of great reputation. Sixteen years before he had won the Battle of Mollwitz, one of the most decisive actions of that time, from which Frederick himself is said to have run away in sheer fright. General Ziethen, perhaps the best of all modern cavalry commanders, was in his fifty-eighth year when the Seven Years' War began, and he served through it with eminent distinction, and most usefully to his sovereign. He could not have exhibited more dash, if he had been but eight-and-twenty, instead of eight-and-fifty, or sixty-five, as he was when peace was made. Field-Marshal Keith, an officer of great ability, was sixty when he fell at Hochkirchen, after a brilliant career.

American military history is favorable to old generals. Washington was in his forty-fourth year when he assumed command of the Revolutionary armies, and in his fiftieth when he took Yorktown. Wayne and Greene were the only two of our young generals of the Revolution who showed decided fitness for great commands. Had Hamilton served altogether in the field, his would have been the highest military name of the war. The absurd jealousies that deprived Schuyler of command, in 1777, alone prevented him from standing next to Washington. He was close upon forty-four when, he gave way to Gates, who was forty-nine. The military reputation of both Schuyler and Hamilton has been most nobly maintained by their living descendants. Washington was called to the command of the American forces at sixty-six, when it was supposed that the French would attempt to invade the United States, which shows that the Government of that day had no prejudice against old generals. General Jackson's great Louisiana campaign was conducted when he was nearly forty-eight, and he was, from almost unintermitted illness, older in constitution than in years. Had General Scott had means at his disposal, we should have been able to point to a young American general equal to any who is mentioned in history; but our poverty forbade him an opportunity in war worthy of his genius. It "froze the genial current of his soul." As a veteran leader, he was most brilliantly distinguished. He was in his sixty-first year when he set out on his memorable Mexican campaign, which was an unbroken series of grand operations and splendid victories, such as are seldom to be found in the history of war. The weight of years had no effect on that magnificent mind. Of him, as it was of Carnôt, it can be said that he organized victory, and made it permanent. His deeds were all the greater because of the feeble support he received from his Government. Like Wellington, in some of his campaigns, he had to find within himself the resources which were denied him by bad ministers. General Taylor was in his sixty-second year when the Mexican War began, and in less than a year he won the Battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, and Buena Vista. He, too, was badly supported. The Secession War has been conducted by elderly or middle-aged men. General Lee, whom the world holds to have displayed the most ability in it, is about fifty-six. General Rosecrans is forty-four, and General Grant forty-two. Stonewall Jackson died at thirty-seven. General Banks is forty-eight, General Hooker forty-five, General Beauregard forty-six, General Bragg forty-nine, General Burnside forty, General Gillmore thirty-nine, General Franklin forty-one, General Magruder fifty-three, General Meade forty-eight, General Schuyler Hamilton forty-two, General Charles S. Hamilton forty, and General Foster forty. General Lander, a man of great promise, died in his fortieth year. General Kearney was killed at forty-seven, and General Stevens at forty-five. General Sickles was in his forty-first year when he was wounded at Gettysburg, and General Reno was thirty-seven when he died so bravely at South

Mountain. General Pemberton lost Vicksburg at forty-five. General T.W. Sherman is forty-six, and General W. T. Sherman forty-four. General McClellan was in his thirty-fifth year when he assumed command at Washington in 1861. General Lyon had not completed the first month of his forty-third year when he fell at Wilson's Creek. General McDowell was in his forty-third year when he failed at Bull Run, in consequence of the coming up of General Joe Johnston, who was fifty-one. General Keyes is fifty-three, General Kelley fifty-seven, General King forty, and General Pope forty-one. General A.S. Johnston was fifty-nine when he was killed at Shiloh. General Halleck is forty-eight. General Longstreet is forty. The best of the Southern cavalry-leaders was General Ashby, who was killed at thirty-eight. General Stuart is twenty-nine. On our side, General Stanley is thirty, General Pleasonton forty, and General Averell about thirty. General Phelps is fifty-one, General Polk fifty-eight, General S. Cooper sixty-eight, General J. Cooper fifty-four, and General Blunt thirty-eight. The list might be much extended, but very few young men would be found in it,—or very few old men, either. The best of our leaders are men who have either passed beyond middle life, or who may be said to be in the enjoyment of that stage of existence. It is so, too, with the Rebels. If the war does not afford many facts in support of the position that old generals are very useful, neither does it afford many to be quoted by those who hold that the history of heroism is the history of youth.

THE WRECK OF RIVERMOUTH. [5]

[1657.]

Rivermouth Rocks are fair to see,
  By dawn or sunset shone across,
When the ebb of the sea has left them free
  To dry their fringes of gold-green moss:
For there the river comes winding down
From salt sea-meadows and uplands brown,
And waves on the outer rocks afoam
Shout to its waters, "Welcome home!"

And fair are the sunny isles in view
  East of the grisly Head of the Boar,
And Agamenticus lifts its blue
  Disk of a cloud the woodlands o'er;
And southerly, when the tide is down,
'Twixt white sea-waves and sand-hills brown,
The beach-birds dance and the gray gulls wheel
Over a floor of burnished steel.

Once, in the old Colonial days,
  Two hundred years ago and more,
A boat sailed down through the winding ways
  Of Hampton river to that low shore,
Full of a goodly company
Sailing out on the summer sea,
Veering to catch the land-breeze light,
With the Boar to left and the Rocks to right.

In Hampton meadows, where mowers laid
  Their scythes to the swaths of salted grass,
"Ah, well-a-day! our hay must be made!"
  A young man sighed, who saw them pass.
Loud laughed his fellows to see him stand
Whetting his scythe with a listless hand,
Hearing a voice in a far-off song,
Watching a white hand beckoning long.

"Fie on the witch!" cried a merry girl,
  As they rounded the point where Goody Cole

[5] See *Norfolk County Records*, 1657; *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, No. II. p. 192. The moral lapse of the first minister of Hampton at the age of fourscore is referred to in the third number of the same periodical. Goody Cole, the Hampton witch, was twice imprisoned for the alleged practice of her arts.

Sat by her door with her wheel atwirl,
    A bent and blear-eyed poor old soul.
"Oho!" she muttered, "ye're brave to-day!
But I hear the little waves laugh and say,
'The broth will be cold that waits at home;
For it's one to go, but another to come!'"

"She's curst," said the skipper; "speak her fair:
    I'm scary always to see her shake
Her wicked head, with its wild gray hair,
    And nose like a hawk, and eyes like a snake."
But merrily still, with laugh and shout,
From Hampton river the boat sailed out,
Till the huts and the flakes on Star seemed nigh,
And they lost the scent of the pines of Rye.

They dropped their lines in the lazy tide,
    Drawing up haddock and mottled cod;
They saw not the Shadow that walked beside,
    They heard not the feet with silence shod.
But thicker and thicker a hot mist grew,
Shot by the lightnings through and through;
And muffled growls, like the growl of a beast,
Ran along the sky from west to east.

Then the skipper looked from the darkening sea
    Up to the dimmed and wading sun,
But he spake like a brave man cheerily,
    "Yet there is time for our homeward run."
Veering and tacking, they backward wore;
And just as a breath from the woods ashore
Blew out to whisper of danger past,
The wrath of the storm came down at last!

The skipper hauled at the heavy sail:
    "God be our help!" he only cried,
As the roaring gale, like the stroke of a flail,
    Smote the boat on its starboard side.
The Shoalsmen looked, but saw alone
Dark films of rain-cloud slantwise blown,
Wild rocks lit up by the lightning's glare,
The strife and torment of sea and air.

Goody Cole looked out from her door:
    The Isles of Shoals were drowned and gone,
Scarcely she saw the Head of the Boar
    Toss the foam from tusks of stone.
She clasped her hands with a grip of pain,
The tear on her cheek was not of rain:

"They are lost," she muttered, "boat and crew!
Lord, forgive me! my words were true!"

Suddenly seaward swept the squall;
The low sun smote through cloudy rack;
The Shoals stood clear in the light, and all
The trend of the coast lay hard and black.
But far and wide as eye could reach,
No life was seen upon wave or beach;
The boat that went out at morning never
Sailed back again into Hampton river.

O mower, lean on thy bended snath,
Look from the meadows green and low:
The wind of the sea is a waft of death,
The waves are singing a song of woe!
By silent river, by moaning sea,
Long and vain shall thy watching be:
Never again shall the sweet voice call,
Never the white hand rise and fall!

O Rivermouth Rocks, how sad a sight
Ye saw in the light of breaking day!
Dead faces looking up cold and white
From sand and sea-weed where they lay!
The mad old witch-wife wailed and wept,
And cursed the tide as it backward crept:
"Crawl back, crawl back, blue water-snake!
Leave your dead for the hearts that break!"

Solemn it was in that old day
In Hampton town and its log-built church,
Where side by side the coffins lay
And the mourners stood in aisle and porch.
In the singing-seats young eyes were dim,
The voices faltered that raised the hymn,
And Father Dalton, grave and stern,
Sobbed through his prayer and wept in turn.

But his ancient colleague did not pray,
Because of his sin at fourscore years:
He stood apart, with the iron-gray
Of his strong brows knitted to hide his tears.
And a wretched woman, holding her breath
In the awful presence of sin and death,
Cowered and shrank, while her neighbors thronged
To look on the dead her shame had wronged.

Apart with them, like them forbid,

Old Goody Cole looked drearily round,
As, two by two, with their faces hid,
The mourners walked to the burying-ground.
She let the staff from her clasped hands fall:
"Lord, forgive us! we're sinners all!"
And the voice of the old man answered her:
"Amen!" said Father Bachiler.

So, as I sat upon Appledore
In the calm of a closing summer day,
And the broken lines of Hampton shore
In purple mist of cloudland lay,
The Rivermouth Rocks their story told;
And waves aglow with sunset gold,
Rising and breaking in steady chime,
Beat the rhythm and kept the time.

And the sunset paled, and warmed once more
With a softer, tenderer after-glow;
In the east was moon-rise, with boats off-shore
And sails in the distance drifting slow.
The beacon glimmered from Portsmouth bar,
The White Isle kindled its great red star;
And life and death in my old-time lay
Mingled in peace like the night and day!

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S STORY

I was in the shop of my friend on the day of the great snow-storm, when the plan was proposed which he mentions in the beginning of his story, called "Pink and Blue," printed in this magazine in the month of May, 1861. Fears were entertained that some of the women might object. And they did. My sister Fanny, Mrs. Maylie, said it was like being set in a frame. Farmer Hill's wife hoped we shouldn't tell *exactly* how much we used to think of them, for "praise to the face was open disgrace." But my wife, Mrs. Browne, thought the stories should be made as good as possible, for praise could not hurt them so long as they knew themselves, just what they were. It was suggested by some one, that, if the married men told how they won their wives, there were a couple of old bachelors belonging to our set who ought to tell how they came to be without, which seemed very fair.

When the lot fell upon me, my wife laughed, and declared that our affairs ran so crooked, she didn't believe I could tell a straight story. But Fanny said *that* would make it seem more like a book; the puzzle to her was what I should call myself, seeing that I was neither one thing nor another. It was finally agreed, however, that, as I had taught school one winter, and that an important one, I should call mine "The Schoolmaster's Story." The truth is, my own calling would not look well at the head of an article, for I am by profession a loafer. For this vocation, which was my own deliberate choice, I was well prepared, having graduated, with a moderate degree of honor, from Cambridge College. I know of no profession requiring for its complete enjoyment a more thorough and varied preparation.

My sister Fanny and I were two poor orphans, brought up, fed, clothed, and loved by our Aunt Huldah. If it had not been for her, I don't know what we should have done. Our Aunt Huldah was a widow and a *manager*. Nearly every person has among his acquaintances one individual, usually a female, who is called *a good manager*. She knows what is to be done, and who should do it,—picks out wives for the young men, husbands for the maidens, and attends herself to the matter of bringing them together. Sometimes these individuals become tyrannical, standing with vials of wrath all ready to be poured forth upon the heads of the unsubmissive, and it must be owned that our aunt was in this not wholly unlike the rest; but then she was so good-natured, so reasonable, that, although the aforesaid vials were often known to be well filled, yet her kindness and good sense always kept the corks in.

I think she took us partly from love, and partly to show how children ought to be managed. We got on admirably together. I was by no means a fiery youth. I was amiable, fond of books, had soft, light hair, fair complexion, a quiet, persevering way, and never *ran* after the girls. Taking all these things into consideration, my aunt determined that I should go to college, and become an honor to the family.

Fanny, though not a bit like me, got along equally as well with the reigning power. She was a smart, black-eyed maiden, full of life, and had herself some of the managing blood in her veins. In fact, so bright and so sly was my dear little sister, that she often succeeded in managing the Grand Panjandra herself. I speak thus particularly of Fanny, because, if it had not been for her, I might now have no story to tell. I never, from childhood to manhood, worked myself into any tight place, that her little scheming brain did not invent some way of getting me out.

When my collegiate labors were nearly finished, our aunt was taken *poor*. She was subject to these attacks, under which she always resorted to the heroic treatment, retrenching and economizing with the greatest zeal. This attack of hers was the primary cause of my taking a winter school in the little village of Norway, about twenty miles from home. I was perfectly willing to keep school; it seemed the easiest thing in the world.

The night before leaving home, my aunt summoned me to her chamber. She sat erect in her straight-backed chair, a tall, dark woman, in a bombazine gown, with white muslin frill and turban. Her eyes were black and deep. Her nose was rather above than below the usual height, and eminently

fitted to bear its spectacles. She was evidently a person who thought before she acted, but who was sure to act after she had thought.

Good advice was what she wanted to give me. The world was a snare. The Devil was always on the lookout, and everywhere in a minute. She read considerable portions from the "Boston Recorder," after which she dropped some hints about the marriage-state,—said she had noticed, with pleasure, my prudence in not hurrying these matters, adding, that it was much safer to choose a wife from among our own neighbors and friends than to run the risk of marrying a stranger. No names were mentioned, but I knew she was thinking of Alice, the postmaster's daughter, a fair young maiden, soft in speech, quiet in manners, and constant at meeting,—a maiden, in fact, of whom I had long stood in dread.

My school commenced the week after Thanksgiving. I had fancied myself appearing among my scholars like a king surrounded by his subjects. But these lofty notions soon melted down beneath the searching glances of forty pairs of eyes. A sense of my incompetency came over me, and I felt like saying,—"Young people, little children, what can I do for you, and how shall I show you any good?"

The first thing I did was to take the names. Ah! in what school-record of modern times could be found such a catalogue of the Christian virtues? Think of mending pens for Faith and Prudence!—of teaching arithmetic to Love, Hope, and Charity!—of imparting general knowledge to Experience! There were three of this last name, and it was only after a long *experience* of my own that I learned that the first was called "Pelly," the second, "Exy," and the third, "Sperrence." Penelope was rendered "Pep."

It gave me peculiar sensations to find among my scholars so many large girls. I have said that I had never been in the habit of running after the girls, and I never had. I was one of those quiet young men who read poetry, buy pictures and statues, and play the flute on still, moonlight evenings. Not that I was indifferent to female charms, or let beauty pass by unnoticed. In fact, I was keenly alive to the beautiful in all its forms. I had seen, in the course of my life, a great many handsome faces, which, in my quiet way, I had studied, when nobody was minding, comparing beauties, or imagining alterations for the better, just as if I had been studying a picture or a statue, and with no more fear of being myself affected. Passing strange it was, that, exposed as I had been, I should have remained so long unscathed. My time had not yet come. But now dangers thickened around me, and I felt that Aunt Huldah knew the world, when she said it was a *snare*. For, in glancing about the room carelessly, while taking the names, I could not but perceive that I was beset by perils on every side,—perils from which there seemed no possible escape: for no sooner did I turn resolutely away from a dove-like face in one corner than my eye was caught by a bright eye or a sweet smile in another; and the admiring glance which with reluctance I withdrew from a graceful figure was arrested by a well-shaped head or a rosy cheek. One was almost a beauty, with her light curls and delicate pink cheeks; another was quite such: her smile was bewitching, and her eyes were roguish. But I soon found that there were other things to be attended to besides picking out the prettiest flowers in my winter bouquet.

I have intimated that my ideas regarding school-keeping were exceedingly vague. Nevertheless, I had in the course of my studies picked out and put together a system for the instruction and management of youth. This system I now proceeded to apply.

It is curious, as we trace back the current of our lives, to discover the multitude of whims, plans, and mighty resolves which lie wrecked upon the shore. I cannot help smiling, as, in looking back upon my own life-stream, I discern the remains of my precious system lying high and dry among the rocks of that winter's experience. Yet I tried all ways to make it go. I was like a boy with a new boat, who increases or lessens his ballast, now tries her with mainsail, foresail, topsail, jib, flying jib, and jibber jib, and now with bare poles,—*anything* to make her float. Each night I took my poor system home for repairs, and each morning, full of hope, tried to launch it anew in my school-room. I have always felt that I wronged those scholars, that I learned more than I taught. I have no doubt of it.

I, of course, as was then the custom, boarded round; and this method of obtaining nourishment, though savoring somewhat of the Arab or the common beggar, I, on the whole, enjoyed. It gave me a much stronger interest in the children, seeing them thus in their own homes, where was so much love, so much solicitude for even the dullest of them. Besides this, I came in contact with all sorts of curious people, found new faces to study.

Another custom of the place I also fell in with, which was, to keep an evening-school. All the schoolmasters had kept one from time immemorial. This evening-school I really enjoyed. Plenty of charming girls, too big or too busy to waste their daylight upon books, came from great distances, bringing their brothers and their beaux, all intent upon having a good time and getting on in their ciphering. Teaching them was a pleasure, for they felt the need of knowledge. I feel bound to say, however, that imparting knowledge was not my only pleasure. In intervals of leisure, before or after school, or at recess, I found much that was worthy attention. Seated at my desk, wrapped in my dignity, I watched, with many a sidelong glance, the progress of rustic love-making. I only mean by this, that from their general movements I constructed such love-stories as seemed to me probable. I learned who went with whom, who wished they could go with whom, who could and who couldn't, who did and who didn't.

Did I not go into the business on my own account? That is by no means an improper question. In fact, I might have expected it. Some have, no doubt, considered it a settled thing that I fell in love with the bright-eyed beauty, before mentioned, or with the pink-cheeked; but I beg that such fancies may be brushed away, that all may be in readiness to receive the true queen, who in due time will come to take possession of her kingdom. For I will be honest with you, and not, like most story-tellers, try to pull wool over your eyes all the way through. I will say openly, that I did first see the girl who was afterwards my wife in that cold little village of Norway. Cold it seems not to me now, in the light of so many warm, sunshiny memories!

When my evening-school had been in operation a few weeks, I noticed, one evening, at the end of the back-form on the girls' side a new face. The owner of this new face was very quietly studying her book, a thin, blue-covered book, Temple's Arithmetic. She was dressed in black,—not fine, glossy black, but black that was gray, rusty, and well worn. A very small silk handkerchief of the same color was drawn over her shoulders and pinned where its two corners met her gown in front, making a sort of triangle of whiteness,—some would say, "revealing a neck and throat pure and white as a lily-leaf"; and they would say no more than the truth, only I never like to put things in that way. Just so white was her face. Her hair was black, soft, but not what the other girls would have called smooth, or "slick." It was pulled away behind her ears, and fixed up rather queerly in a great bunch behind, as if the only aim were to get it out of the way. The upper part of her face was the most striking, —the black eyebrows upon such a white, straight forehead. I am rather particular in describing this new face, because—well, perhaps because I remember it so distinctly. While I was studying her as, I might perhaps say, a work of Art, she suddenly raised her eyes, as people always do when they are watched. I looked away in a hurry, though her eyes were just what I wanted to see more of, for they were splendid eyes. "Splendid" is not the right word, though. Deep, thoughtful, sorrowful, are the words which are floating about in my mind. I wondered how she would look when animated, and watched, at recess, for some of the others to talk to her.

But she seemed one by herself. While other girls chatted with their beaux, or whispered wonderful secrets, she remained sitting alone, now looking at her book, and now glancing around in a pitiful sort of way, that made me feel like going to speak to her. In fact, as her teacher, I was bound to do this, and, true to the promptings of duty, I walked slowly down the alley. As I paused by her side, she glanced up in my face. I never forgot that look. I might say that I never recovered from the effects of it. I asked about her studies, and very willingly explained a sum over which she had stumbled.

After this, she came every evening, and it usually happened that it was most convenient for me to attend to her at recess. Helping her in her sums was a pleasant thing to do, but in nothing was I

more interested than in the writing-exercise. I felt that I was indeed fortunate to be in duty bound to follow the movement of her charming little hand across the page, to teach her pretty fingers how to hold the pen; but then, if pleasure and duty *would* unite, how could I help it? Then I had a way, all my own, of throwing looks sidelong at her face, while thus engaged; but sometimes my eyes would get so entangled in her long lashes, that I could hardly turn them away before she looked up.

Yet I never thought then of being in love with the girl. Marriage was a subject upon which I had never seriously reflected. Much as I liked to watch, to criticize pretty faces, I never had thought of taking one for my own. I was like a good boy in a flower-garden, who looks about him with delight, admiring each beautiful blossom, but plucking none. Not that I meant to live a bachelor; for, whenever I looked forward,—an indefinite number of years,—I invariably saw myself sitting by my own fireside, with a gentle-faced woman making pinafores near me, a cradle close by, and one or two chaps reading stories, or playing checkers with beans and buttons. But this gentle maker of pinafores had never yet assumed a tangible shape. She had only floated before me, in my lonely moments, enveloped in mist, and far too indistinct for revealing the color of the eyes and hair. So I could not be in love with Rachel,—her name was Rachel Lowe,—only a sort of magnetism, as it would be called in these days, drew my eyes constantly that way. I soon found, however, that it was impossible to watch her face with that indifference with which, as I have before stated, it had been my custom to regard female beauty. Its peculiar expression puzzled me, and I kept trying to study it out. Interesting, but dangerous study! The difficulties of school-keeping are by no means fully appreciated.

One evening, after school, the young folks stopped to slide down-hill. Rachel and a few little girls stood awhile, watching the sleds go by; but it was cold standing still, and they soon moved homewards. I walked along by the side of Rachel: this was the first time I ever went home with her. I found she was living in the family of Squire Brewster, a family in which I had not yet boarded. After this I frequently walked home with her. Sometimes I would determine not to do so again, for I was afraid I was getting—I didn't know where, but where I had never been before; but when evening came, and I saw how handsome she looked, and how all alone, I couldn't help it. It was not often I could get her to talk much. She was bashful, different from any girl I had ever met. The only friend she seemed to have was the young wife of the Doctor, Mrs. James. The Doctor, she said, had attended her through a fever, and asked no pay. His wife was kind, and lent her books to read.

I was boarding at that time with a poor widow-woman, and one night I asked her about Rachel. She warmed up immediately, said Rachel Lowe was a good girl and ought to be "sot by," and not slighted on her parents' account.

"And who were her parents?" I asked.

"Why, when her father was a poor boy, the Squire thought he would take him and bring him up to learnin'; but when he came to be a man grown almost, he ran away to sea; and long afterwards we heard of his marryin' some outlandish girl, half English, half French,—but Rachel's no worse for that. After his wife died,—and, as far as I can find out, the way he carried on was what killed her,—he started to bring Rachel here; but he died on the passage, and she came with only a letter. I suppose he thought the ones that had been kind to him would be kind to her; but, you see, the Squire is a-livin' with his second wife, and she isn't the woman the first Miss Brewster was. In time folks will come round, but now they sort of look down upon her; for, you see, everybody knows who her father was, and how he didn't do any credit to his bringin' up, and nobody knows who her mother was, only that she was a furrener, which was so much agin her. But you are goin' right from here to the Squire's; and mebby, if you make of her, and let folks see that you set store by her, they'll begin to open their eyes."

I thought I felt just like kissing the poor widow; anyway, I knew I felt like kissing somebody. To be sure, the talk was all about Rachel, and it might—But no matter; what difference does it make now who it was I wanted to kiss forty or fifty years ago?

The next day I went to board at the Squire's. It was dark when I reached the house; the candles were just being lighted. The Squire, a kindly old man, met me in the porch and took my bundle. I

followed him into the kitchen. There something more than common seemed to be going on, for chairs were being arranged in rows, and Mrs. Brewster was putting out of sight every article suggestive of work. There was to be an evening meeting. I watched the people as they came in, still and solemn. Not many of the women wore bonnets. All who lived within a moderate distance just stepped in with a little homespun blanket over the head, or a patchwork cradle-quilt. I noticed Rachel when she entered and took her seat upon the settle. It will only take a minute to tell what a settle is, or, rather, was. If you should take a low wooden bench and add to it a high back and ends, you would make a settle. It usually stood near the fireplace, and was a most luxurious seat,—its high back protecting you from cold draughts and keeping in the heat of the fire. It was now shoved back against the wall. This neighborhood-gathering was called a conference-meeting, being carried on by the brethren. I liked to hear them speak, because they were so much in earnest. The exercises closed with singing "Old Hundred." I joined at first, but soon there fell upon my ear such sweet strains from the other side of the room that I was glad to stop and listen. They came from the settle. It was Rachel, singing counter. Only those who have heard it know what counter is, and how particularly beautiful it is in "Old Hundred." I think it has already been intimated that I was somewhat poetical. It will not, therefore, be considered strange, that, when I heard those clear tones, rising high above the harsher ones around, above the grating bass of the brethren and the cracked voices of elderly females, I thought of summer days in the woods, when I had listened to the notes of the robin amid a chorus of locusts and grasshoppers.

Squire Brewster treated Rachel kindly; but women make the home, and Mrs. Brewster was a hard woman. The neighbors said she was close, and would have more of a cat than her skin. Miss Sarah had been out of town to school, and was proud. Sam, the grown-up son, was coarse, but just as proud as his sister. I disliked the way he looked at Rachel. Her position in the family I soon understood. She was there to take the drudgery from Mrs. Brewster, to be ordered about by Miss Sarah, tormented by the younger children, and teased, if not insulted, by Sam. What puzzled me was her manner towards them. She spoke but seldom, and, it seemed to me, had a way of looking *down* upon these people, who were so bent upon making her look *up* to them. The cross looks and words seemed not to hit her. Her deep, dark eyes appeared as if they were looking away beyond the scenes around her. I was very glad to see, however, that she could notice Sam enough to avoid him; for to that young man I had taken a dislike, and not, as it turned, without reason.

One evening, during my second week at the Brewsters', I sat long at my chamber-window, watching the fading twilight, the growing moonlight, and the steady snow-light. Presently I saw Rachel come out to take in the clothes. It seemed just right that she should appear then, for in her face were all three,—the shadowy twilight, the soft moonlight, and the white snow-light.

She wore a little shawl, crossed in front, and tied behind at the waist, and over her head a bright-colored blanket, just pinned under the chin. This exposed her face, and while I watched it, as it showed front-view or profile, not knowing which I liked best, admiring, meanwhile, the grace with which she reached up, where the line was high, sometimes springing from the ground, I saw Sam approaching, very slowly and softly, from behind. When quite near, watching his opportunity, he seized her by the waist. He was going to kiss her. I started up, as if to do something, but there was nothing to be done. With a quick motion she slid from his grasp, stepped back, and looked him in the face. Not a word fell from her lips, only her silence spoke. "I despise you! There is nothing in you that words can reach!" was the speech which I felt in my heart she was making, though her lips never moved. Other things, too, I felt in my heart,—rather perplexing, agitating, but still pleasing sensations, which I did not exactly feel like analyzing. One of the children came out to take hold one side of the basket, and Sam walked away.

I went down soon after and look my favorite seat upon the settle, which was then in its own place by the fire. The children were in bed, the older ones had gone to singing-school, and Mrs. Brewster was at an evening-meeting. The Squire was at home with his rheumatism.

I liked a nice chat with the Squire. He was a great reader, and delighted to draw me into long talks, political or theological. My remarks on this particular evening would have been more brilliant, had not Rachel been sprinkling and folding clothes at the back of the room. The Squire, in his roundabout, came exactly between us, so that, in looking up to answer his questions, I could not help seeing a white arm with the sleeve rolled above the elbow, could not help watching the drops of water, as she shook them from her fingers. I wondered how it was, that, while working so hard, her hands should be so white. My sister Fanny told me, long afterwards, that some girls always have white hands, no matter how hard they work.

This question interested me more than the political ones raised by the Squire, and I became aware that my answers were getting wild, by his eying me over his spectacles. Rachel finished the clothes, and seated herself, with her knitting-work, at the opposite corner of the fireplace. I changed to the other end of the settle: sitting long in one position is tiresome. She was knitting a gray woollen stocking. I think she must have been "setting the heel," for she kept counting the stitches. I had often noticed Fanny doing the same thing, at this turning-point in the progress of a stocking; but then it never took her half as long. After knitting so many feet of leg, though, any change must have been pleasant.

A mug of cider stood near one andiron; leaning against the other was a flat stone,—the Squire's "Simon." It would soon be needed, for he was already nodding,—nodding and brightening up,—nodding and brightening up. While he slept, the room was still, unless the fire snapped, or a brand fell down. I said within myself, "This is a pleasant time! It is good to be here!" That cozy settle, that glowing fire, that good old man, that pure-hearted girl,—how distinctly do they now rise before me! It seems such a little, little while ago! For I feel young. I like to be with young folks; I like what they like. Yet deep lines are set in my forehead, the veins stand out upon my hands, and my shadow is the shadow of a stooping old man; and when, from frequent weariness, I rest my head on my hand, the fingers clasp only smoothness, or, at best, but a few scattered locks,—*wisps*, I might as well say. If ever I took pride in anything, it was in my fine head of hair. Well, what matters it? Since *heart* of youth is left me, I'll never mind the *head*.

Many writers speak well of age, and it certainly is not without its advantages, meeting everywhere, as it does, with respect and indulgence. Neither is it, so the books say, without its own peculiar beauty. An old man leaning upon his staff, with white locks streaming in the wind, they call a picturesque object. All this may be; still, I have tried both, and must say that my own leaning is towards youth.

Remembering the desire of the poor widow, that Rachel should be "made of," I continued to walk home with her from evening-school, and to pay her many little attentions, even after I had left the Squire's. The widow was right in saying, that, when folks saw that I "set store" by her, they would open their eyes. They did,—in wonder that "the schoolmaster should be so attentive to Rachel Lowe!" We were "town-talk." I often, in the school-house entry, overheard the scholars joking about us; and once I saw them slyly writing our names together on the bricks of the fireplace. Everybody was on the look-out for what might happen.

One evening, in school-time, I stood a long while leaning over her desk, working out for her a difficult sum. On observing me change my position, to rest myself, she, very naturally, and almost unconsciously, moved for me to sit down, and I took a seat beside her, going on, all the while, with my ciphering. Happening to look up suddenly, I saw that half the school were watching us. I kept my seat with calmness, though I knew I turned red. I glanced at Rachel, and really pitied her, she looked so distressed, so conscious. That night she hurried home before I had put away my books, and for several evenings did not appear.

But if she could do without me, I could not do without her. I missed her face there at the end of the back-seat. I missed the walk home with her: I had grown to depend upon it. She was just getting willing to talk, and in what she said and the way she said it, in the tone of her voice and in

her whole manner, there was something to me extremely bewitching. She had been strangely brought up, was familiar with books, but, having received no regular education, fancied herself ignorant, and different from everybody.

Finding that she still kept away from the school, I resolved one night to call at the Squire's. It was some time after dark when I reached there; and as I stood in the porch, brushing the snow from my boots, I became aware of loud talking in the kitchen. Poor Rachel! both Mrs. Brewster and Sarah were upon her, laughing and sneering about her "setting her cap" for the schoolmaster, and accusing her of trying to get him to come home with her, of moving for him to sit down by her side! Once I heard Rachel's voice,—"Oh, please don't talk so! I don't do as you say. It is dreadful for you to talk so!" I judged it better to defer my call, and walked slowly along the road. It was not very cold, and I sat down upon the stone wall. I sat down to think. Presently Rachel herself hurried by, carrying a pitcher. She was bound on some errand up the road. I called out,—

"Rachel, stop!"

She turned, in affright, and, upon seeing me, hurried the more. But I overtook her, and placed her arm within mine in a moment, saying,—

"Rachel, you are not afraid of me, I hope!"

"Oh, no, Sir! no, indeed!" she exclaimed.

"And yet you run away from me."

She made no answer.

"Rachel," I said, at last, "I wish you would talk to me freely. I wish you would tell what troubles you."

She hesitated a moment; and when, at last, she spoke, her answer rather surprised me.

"I ought not to be so weak, I know," she replied; "but it is so hard to stand all alone, to live my life just right, that sometimes I get discouraged."

I had expected complaints of ill treatment, but found her blaming no one but herself.

"And who said you must stand alone?" I asked.

"That was one of the things my mother used to say."

"And what other things did she say?"

"Oh, Mr. Browne," she replied, "I wish I could tell you about my mother! But I can't talk; I am too ignorant; I don't know how to say it. When she was alive," she continued, speaking very slowly, "I never knew how good she was; but now her words keep coming back to me. Sometimes I think she whispers them,—for she is an angel, and you know the hymn says,

'There are angels hovering round.'

When we sing,

'Ye holy throng of angels bright,'

I always sing to her, for I know she is listening."

Here she stopped suddenly, as if frightened that she had said so much. The house to which she was going was now close by. I waited for her to come out, and walked back with her towards home. After proceeding a little way in silence, I said, abruptly,—

"Rachel, do they treat you well at the house yonder?"

She seemed reluctant to answer, but said, at last,—

"Not very well."

"Then, why stay? Why not find some other home?"

"I don't think it is time yet," she replied.

"I don't understand you. I wish—Rachel, can't you make a friend of me, since you have no other?"

"I will tell you as well as I can," she replied, "what my mother used to say. She said we must act rightly."

"That is true," I replied; "and what else did she say?"

"She said, that *that* would only be the outside life, but the inside life must be right too, must be pure and strong, and that the way to make it pure and strong was to learn to *bear*."

"Still," I urged, "I wish you would find a better home. You cannot learn to bear any more patiently than you do."

She shook her head.

"That shows that you don't know," she answered. "It seems to me right to remain. Why, you know they can't hurt me any. Suppose they scold me when I am not to blame, and my temper rises,—for I am very quick-tempered"—

"Oh, no, Rachel!"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Browne! Suppose my temper rises, and I put it down, and keep myself pleasant, do I not do myself good? And thinking about it in this way, is not their unkindness a benefit to me,—to the real me,—to the soul of Rachel Lowe?"

I hardly knew what to say. Somehow, she seemed away up above me, while I found that I had, in common with the Brewsters, only in a different way, taken for granted my own superiority.

"All this may be true," I remarked, after a pause, "but it is not the common way of viewing things."

"Perhaps not," she answered. "My mother was not like other people. My father was a strong man, but he looked *up* to her, and he loved her; but he killed her at last,—with his conduct, he killed her. But when she was dead, he grew crazy with grief, he loved her so. He talked about her always,—talked in an absent, dreamy way about her goodness, her beauty, her white hands, her long hair. Sometimes he would seem to be whispering with her, and would say, softly,—'Oh, yes! I'll take care of Rachel! pretty Rachel! your Rachel!'"

I longed to have her go on; but we had now reached the bars, and she was not willing to walk farther.

"I have been talking a great deal about myself," she said; "but you know you kept asking me questions."

"Yes, Rachel, I know I kept asking you questions. Do you care? I may wish to ask you others."

"Oh, no," she replied; "but I could not answer many questions. I have only a few thoughts, and know very little."

I watched her into the house, and then walked slowly homewards, thinking, all the way, of this strange young girl, striving thus to stand alone, working out her own salvation. I passed a pleasant night, half sleeping, half waking, having always before my eyes that white face, earnest and beautiful, as it looked up to me in the winter starlight, and in my ears her words, "Is not their unkindness a benefit to me,—to the real me,—to the soul of Rachel Lowe?"

But spring came; my school drew to a close; and I began to think of home, Aunt Huldah, and Fanny. I wished that my sister could see Rachel. I knew she would appreciate her, for there was depth in Fanny, with all her liveliness. Sometimes I imagined, just imagined, myself married to Rachel. But then there was Aunt Huldah,—what would she say to a foreigner? And I was dependent upon Aunt Huldah. Besides, how did I know that Rachel would have me? Was I equal to her? How worthless seemed my little stock of book-learning by the side of that heart-wisdom which she had coined, as it were, from her own sorrow!

My last day came, and I had not spoken. In fact, we latterly had both grown silent. I was to leave in the afternoon stage. I gave the driver my trunk, telling him to call for me at the Squire's,—for I must bid Rachel good-bye, and in some way let her know how I felt towards her. As I drew near

the house, I saw that she was drawing water. I stepped quickly towards the well, but Sam appeared just then, and I could not say one word. She walked into the house. I went behind with the water-pail, and Sam followed us into the porch. Rachel was going up-stairs, but I took her hand to bid her good-bye. Mrs. Brewster and Sarah were in the kitchen, watching. "Quite a love-scene!" I heard them whisper. "I do believe he'll marry her!"

Now, although I was by nature quiet, yet I *could* be roused. Bidding good-bye to Rachel had stirred the very depths of my nature. I longed to take her in my arms, and bear her away to my own quiet home. And when, instead of this, I thought of the life to which I must leave her, it needed but those sneering whispers to make me speak out,—and I did speak out. Taking her by the hand, I stepped quickly forward, and stood before them.

"And so I *will* marry her!" I exclaimed. "If she will accept me, I shall be *proud* to marry her!"

"Rachel," said I, turning towards her, "this is strange wooing; but before these people I ask, Will you be my wife?"

The astonished spectators of our love-scene looked on in dismay.

"Mr. Browne!" exclaimed Mrs. Brewster, "do you know what you are doing? I have no ill-will to the girl; but I feel it my duty to tell you who and what she is."

"I know what Rachel Lowe is, Madam!" I cried, almost fiercely; "you don't,—you can't!"

Then, turning to the trembling girl, I said again,—

"Rachel, say, *will* you be my wife?"

At this moment Sam came forward. His face was pale, and he trembled.

"No, Rachel," said he, "don't be his wife! Be mine! I haven't treated you right, I know I haven't; but I love you, you don't know how much! The very way you have tried to keep me off has made me love you!"

"Sam! stop!" cried his mother, in a rage. "What do you mean? You *know* you won't marry that girl!"

"Mother," exclaimed Sam, "you don't know anything about her! She is worth every other girl in the place, and handsomer than all of them put together!"

"Sam!" began Miss Sarah.

"Now, Sarah, you stop!" cried he. "I've begun, and now I'll *tell*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.