

# VARIOUS

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Various

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# Various

## The Continental Monthly, Vol. 6, No 4, August, 1864 / Devoted To Literature And National Policy

### SOME USES OF A CIVIL WAR

War is a great evil. We may confess that, at the start. The Peace Society has the argument its own way. The bloody field, the mangled dying, hoof-trampled into the reeking sod, the groans, and cries, and curses, the wrath, and hate, and madness, the horror and the hell of a great battle, are things no rhetoric can ever make lovely.

The poet may weave his wreath of victory for the conqueror; the historian, with all the pomp of splendid imagery, may describe the heroism of the day of slaughter; but, after all, and none know this better than the men most familiar with it, a great battle is the most hateful and hellish sight that the sun looks on in all his courses.

And the actual battle is only a part. The curse goes far beyond the field of combat. The trampled dead and dying are but a tithe of the actual sufferers. There are desolate homes, far away, where want changes sorrow into madness. Wives wail by hearthstones where the household fires have died into cold ashes forever more. Like Rachel, mothers weep for the proud boys that lie stark beneath the pitiless stars. Under a thousand roofs—cottage roofs and palace roofs—little children ask for 'father.' The pattering feet shall never run to meet, upon the threshold, *his* feet, who lies stiffening in the bloody trench far away!

There are added horrors in *civil war*. These forms, crushed and torn out of all human semblance, are our brothers. These wailing widows, these small fatherless ones speak our mother language, utter their pain in the tongue of our own wives and children. Victory seems barely better than defeat, when it is victory over our own blood. The scars we carve with steel or burn with powder across the shuddering land, are scars on the dear face of the Motherland we love. These blackened roof-trees, they are the homes of our kindred. These cities, where shells are bursting through crumbling wall and flaming spire, they are cities of our own fair land, perhaps the brightest jewels in her crown.

Ay! men do well to pray for *peace!* With suppliant palms outstretched to the pitying God, they do well to cry, as in the ancient litany, 'Give peace in our time, O Lord!' Let the husbandman go forth in the furrow. Let the cattle come lowing to the stalls at evening. Let bleating flocks whiten all the uplands. Let harvest hymns be sung, while groaning wagons drag to bursting barns their mighty weight of sheaves. Let mill wheels turn their dripping rounds by every stream. Let sails whiten along every river. Let the smoke of a million peaceful hearths rise like incense in the morning. Let the shouts of happy children, at their play, ring down ten thousand valleys in the summer day's decline. Over all the blessed land, asleep beneath the shadow of the Almighty hand, let the peace of God rest in benediction! 'Give *peace* in our time, O Lord!'

And yet the final clause to, every human prayer must be 'Thy will be done!' There are things better far than peace. There are things more loathely and more terrible than, the horror of battle and 'garments rolled in blood.' Peace is blessed, but if you have peace with hell, how about the blessedness? A covenant with evil is not the sort of agreement that will bring comfort. A truce with Satan is not the thing that it will do to trust. There are things in this world, without which the prayer for peace is 'a witch's prayer,' read backward to a curse.

That is to say, whether peace is good depends entirely on the further question, With whom are you at peace? Whether war is evil depends on the other question, With whom are you at war? In one most serious and substantial point of view, human life is a battle, which, for the individual, ends only with death, and, for the race, only with the Final Consummation. The tenure of our place and right, as children of God, is that we fight evil to the bitter end. 'The Prince of Peace' Himself came 'not to send peace,' in this war, 'but a sword.'

We may venture, then, to say that there are some wars which are not all evil. They are terrible, but terrible like the hurricane, which sweeps away the pestilence; terrible like the earthquake, on whose night of terror God builds a thousand years of blooming plenty; terrible like the volcano, whose ashes are clothed by the purple vintages and yellow harvests of a hundred generations. The strong powers of nature are as beneficent as strong. The destroying powers are also creating powers. Life sits upon the sepulchre, and sings over buried Death through all nature and all time. War, too, has its compensations.

For years, amid the world's rages, *we* had peace. The only war we had, at all events, was one of our own seeking, and a mere playing at war. Many of us thought it would be so always. We believed we had discovered a method of settling all the world's difficulties without blows. The peace people had their jubilee. They talked about the advance of intelligence, and the softening power of civilization. They placed war among the forgotten horrors of a dead barbarism. They proved that commerce had rendered war impossible, because it had made it against self-interest. They talked about reason and persuasion, and moral influences. They asked, 'Why not settle all troubles in a grand world's congress, some huge palaver and paradise of speechmakers, where it will be all talk and voting and no blows?' Why not, indeed? How easy to 'resolve' this poor, blind, struggling world of ours into a bit of heaven, you see, and so end our troubles! How easy to vote these poor, stupid, blundering brothers of ours into angels, in some great parliament of eloquent philosophers, and govern them thereafter on that basis!

Now, resolutions and speeches and grand palavers are nice things, in their way, *to play with*, but, on the whole, it is best to get down to the hard fact if one really wants to work and prosper. And the hard fact is, that Adam's sons are not yet cherubs, nor their homestead, among the stars, just yet an outlying field of paradise. It is a planet whose private affairs are badly muddled. Its tenants for life are a quarrelsome, ill-tempered, unruly set of creatures altogether. As things go, they will break each others' heads sometimes. It is very unreasonable. I can see that. But men are not always reasonable. It is not for their own interest. I can see that too. But how often does interest, the best and highest, raise an impregnable barrier against passion or even caprice?

We must take men as they are, and the world as we find it, to get a secure ground for attempting the reformation of either. And as men are, and as I find the world, at present, I meet Wrong, and find it armed to resist Right. The Wrong will not yield to persuasion, it will not surrender to reason. It comes straight on, coarse, brutal, devilish, caring not a straw for peace rhetoric or Quaker gravity, for persuasion or interest. It strikes straight down at right or justice. It tries to hammer them to atoms, and trample them with swinish hoofs into the mire. Now what am I to do? To stand peaceably by and see this thing done, while I study new tropes and invent new metaphors to *persuade*? Is that my business, to waste the godlike gift of human speech on this mad brute or devil?

With wise pains and thoughtful labor, I clear my little spot of this stubborn soil. I hedge and plant my small vineyard. It begins, after much care, to yield me some fruit. I get a little corn and a little wine, to comfort me and mine. I have good hope that, as the years go by, I shall gather more. I trust, at last, my purple vintages may gladden many hearts of men, my rich olives make many faces shine. But some day, from the yet untamed forest, bursts the wild boar, and rushes on my hedge, and will break through to trample down my vineyard before mine eyes. And I am only to *argue* with him! I am to cast the pearls of human reason and persuasion at his feet to stop him! Nay, rather, am I not to seize the first sufficient weapon that comes to hand, unloose the dogs upon him, and drive him to his lair again, or, better, bring his head in triumph home?

It is true, there are wars where this parable will not apply. There are capricious wars, wars undertaken for no fit cause, wars with scarce a principle on either side. Such have often been *king's wars*, begun in folly, conducted in vanity, ended in shame, wars for the ambition of some crowned scoundrel, who rides a patient people till he drives them mad. And even such wars have their uses. They are not wholly evil. Alexander's, the maddest wars of all, and those of his successors, the most stupid and brutal ever fought, even they had their uses. Our war with poor Mexico, even Louis Bonaparte's, was not wholly evil.

But there are wars, again, that are not capricious, that are simply necessary, unavoidable, as life, death, or judgment, wars where the choice is to see right trampled out of sight or to fight for it, where truth and justice are crushed unless the sword be grasped and used, where law and civilization and Christianity are assailed by savagery, brutality, and devilishness, and only the true bullet and the cold steel are received in the discussion. These are the Peoples' wars. In them nations arm. Generations swarm to their battle fields. They are landmarks in the world's advancement. For victories in them men sing *Te Deums* throughout the ages. The heroes, who fell in them, loom through the haze of time like demigods.

On the plains of Tours, when the Moslem tide, that swept on to overwhelm in ruin Christian Europe, was met, and stemmed, and turned by Charles Martel, and, breaking into foam against the iron breasts of his stalwart Franks, was whirled away into the darkness like spray before the tempest, the *Hammer-man* did a work that day that, till the end of time, a world will thank Heaven for, as *he* thanked it in the hour of victory.

And when his greater grandson, creator, guide, and guardian of modern civilization, paced with restless, ever-present steps, around the borders of that small world of light which he had built up, half blindly, in the overwhelming dark, and with two-handed blows beat back, with the iron mace of Germany, the savage assaults of Saracen and Slave, of black Dane and brutal Wendt, and smote on till he died smiting, for order, and law, and faith, and so saved Europe, and, let us humbly hope, his own rude but true soul *alive!* are not the thanks of all the world well due, that Karl der Grosse was no non-resistant, but a great, broad-shouldered, royal soldier, who wore the imperial purple by right of a moat imperial sword?

There are wars like these, that, as the world goes, are inevitable. Some wrong undertakes to rule. Some lie challenges sovereignty. Some mere brutality or heathenism faces order, civilization, and law. There is no choice in the matter *then*. The wrong, the lie, the brutality, the barbarism *must go down*. If they listen to reason, well. If they can be only preached or lectured into dying peaceably, and getting quietly buried, it is an excellent consummation. If they do not, if they try conclusions, as they are far more apt to do, if they come on with brute force, there is no alternative. They must be met by force. They must get the only persuasion that can influence them—hard knocks, and plenty of them, well delivered, straight at the heart.

Wars so undertaken, under a divine necessity, and with a divine sadness, too, by a patient people, whose business is not brutal fighting, but peaceful working, wars of this sort, in the world's long history, are scarce evils at all, and, even in the day of their wrath, bring compensative blessings. They may be fierce and terrible, they may bring wretchedness and ruin, they may 'demoralize' armies and people, they may be dreadful evils, and leave long trails of desolation, but they are none the less wars for victories in which men will return thanks while the world shall stand. The men who fall in such wars, receive the benedictions of their kind. The people that, with patient pain, stands and fights in them, bleeding drop by drop, and conquering or dying, inch by inch, but never yielding, because it feels the deathless value of *the cause*, the brave, calm people, who so fight is crowned forever on the earth.

From our paradise of a lamb-like world this nation was awakened, three years ago, by a cannon shot across Charleston harbor. The fools who fired it knew not what they did, perhaps. They thought to open fire on a poor old fort and its handful of a garrison. They *did* open fire on civilization, on

order, on law, on the world's progress, on the hopes of man. There, at last, we were brought face to face with hard facts. Talk, in Congress, or out, was at an end. Voting and balloting, and speech-making were ruled out of order. We had administered the country, so far, by that machinery. It was puffed away at one discharge of glazed powder. The cannon alone could get a hearing. The bullet and the bayonet were the only arguments. No matter how it might end, we were forced to accept the challenge. No matter how utterly we might hate war, we were forced to try the last old persuasive—the naked sword.

I cannot see how any honest and sensible man can now look back and see any other course possible. Could we stand by and see our house beaten into blackened ruin over our heads? Were we to talk 'peace,' and use 'moral suasion' in the mouth of shotted cannon? Were we prepared to see the Constitution and the law, bought by long years of toil and blood, torn to tatters by the caprice of ambitious madmen? Fighting became a simple duty in an hour! There was no escape. What a pity that so many beautiful peace speeches (Charles Sumner's very eloquent ones among the rest!) should have been proved mere froth and wasted paper rags by one short telegram!

So the great evil came to *us*, as it has come to all nations, as we believe it *must* come, from what we now see, to every nation that will be great and strong. The land, for a time, staggered under the blow. Men's souls for an hour were struck dumb, so sudden was it, so unlocked for. As duty became clearer, we awaked at last to the fact that was at our doors. We turned to deal with it, as the best nations always do, cheerfully and hopefully. We have made mistakes and great ones. We have blundered fearfully. That was to have been expected. But we have gone on, nevertheless, steadfastly, patiently. That was also to have been expected. For three years and over, this has been our business. We have indeed carried on some commerce, and some manufactures, and some agriculture, but our main work has been fighting. The rest have been subsidiary to that. And the land groans and pants with this bloody toil. It clothes itself in mourning and darkens its streets, and desolates its homes, and bleeds its life drops slowly in its patient agony. But it never falters. It has accepted the appointed work. It sees no outlook yet, no chance for the bells to ring out peace over the roar of cannon, and it stands at its post bleeding, but wrestling still.

Has there been nothing gained, however? For the terrible outlay is there yet no return? Has the war been evil and only evil so far, even granting that we do not finally succeed, according to our wish? The present writer does not think so. He believes there have been gains already, and great gains, not merely the gains that may be summed in the advance of forces, in territory recovered, in cities taken, in enemies defeated, but gains which, though not visible like these, are no less real and vastly more valuable, gains which add to the nation's moral power, and educate it for the future. He leaves to others the consideration of the material gain, and desires to hint, at least, at this other, which is much more likely to be slighted or perhaps forgotten.

He has said enough to show that he does not like this slaughtering business in any shape. He is sure that the sooner it is ended the better. He has had its bloody consequences brought, in their most fearful form, to his own heart and home, but he has a fixed faith, nevertheless, that any duty, conscientiously undertaken, any duty from which there is no honorable or honest escape, must, if faithfully performed, obtain its meet reward. And believing that this business of war has been undertaken by the mass of the people of these United States in all simplicity of heart and honesty of purpose, as an unavoidable and hard necessity, he also believes they will get their honest wages for the doing it. He believes, too, that the day of recompense is not entirely delayed; that benefits, large and excellent, have already resulted to the nation. He sees already visible uses, which, to some extent at least, should comfort and sustain a people, even under the awful curse and agony of a civil war. He writes to show these uses to others, that they too may take heart and hope, when the days are darkest.

In the first place, this war is, at last, our *national independence*. To be sure, we read of a war carried on by our fathers to secure that boon. They paid a large price for it, and they got it, and got all nations to acknowledge they deserved it, including the great nation they fought with. It was

their *political* independence only. It secured nothing beyond that. *Morally* we were not independent. *Socially*, we were not independent. There was a time, we can all remember it, when we literally trembled before every cockney that strangled innocent aspirates at their birth. We had not secured our moral independence of Europe, and particularly not of our own kindred and people. We literally crouched at the feet of England, and begged for recognition like a poor, disowned relation. We scarcely knew what was right till England told us. We dare not accept a thing as wise, proper, or becoming till we had heard her verdict. What will England say? How will they think of this across the water? In all emergencies these were the questions thought, at least, if not spoken. We lived in perpetual terror of transatlantic opinion. Some cockney came to visit us. He might be a fool, a puppy, an intolerably bore, an infinite ass. It made no difference. He rode our consciousness like a nightmare. He and his note book dominated free America. 'What does he think of us? What will he say of us?' We actually grovelled before the creature, more than once begging for his good word, his kindly forbearance, his pity for our faults and failures. 'We know we are wicked, for we are republicans, O serene John! We are sinful, for we have no parish beadle. We are no better than the publicans, for we have no workhouse. We are altogether sinners, for we have no lord. It is also a sad truth that there are people among us who have been seen to eat with a knife, and but very few that could say, 'Hold *Hingland*,' with the true London aspiration. But be merciful notwithstanding. We beg pardon for all our faults. We recognize thy great kindness in coming among such barbarians. We will treat thee kindly as we can, and copy thy manners as closely as we can, and so try to improve ourselves. Do not, therefore, for the present, annihilate us with the indignation of thy outraged virtue. Have a touch of pity for us unfortunate and degenerate Americans!'

That supplication is hardly an exaggeration. It was utterly shameful, the position we took in this matter of deference to English opinion. No people ever more grossly imposed upon themselves. We had an ideal England, which we almost worshipped, whose good opinion we coveted like the praise of a good conscience. We bowed before her word, as the child bows to the rebuke of a mother he reverences. She was Shakspeare's England, Raleigh's England, Sidney's England, the England of heroes and bards and sages, our grand old Mother, who had sat crowned among the nations for a thousand years. We were proud to claim even remote relationship with the Island Queen. We were proud to speak her tongue, to reënact her laws, to read her sages, to sing her songs, to claim her ancient glory as partly our own. England, the stormy cradle of our nation, the sullen mistress of the angry western seas, our hearts went out to her, across the ocean, across the years, across war, across injustice, and went out still in love and reverence. We never dreamed that our ideal England was dead and buried, that the actual England was not the marble goddess of our idolatry, but a poor Brummagem image, coarse lacquer-ware and tawdry paint! We never dreamed that the queenly mother of heroes was nursing 'shopkeepers' now, with only shopkeepers' ethics, 'pawnbrokers' morality!'

At last our eyes are opened. To-day we stand a self-centred nation. We have seen so much of English consistency, of English nobleness, we have so learned to prize English honor and English generosity, that there is not a living American, North or South, who values English opinion, on any point of national right, duty, or manliness, above the idle whistling of the wind. Who considers it of the slightest consequence now what England may think on any matter American? Who has the curiosity to ask after an English opinion?

This much the war has done for us. We are at last a *nation*. We have found a conscience of our own. We have been forced to stand on our own national sense of right and wrong. We are independent morally as well as politically, in opinion as well as in government. We shall never turn our eyes again across the sea to ask what any there may say or think of us. We have found that perhaps we do not understand them. We have certainly found that they do not understand us. We have taken the stand which every great people is obliged to take soon or late. We are sufficient for ourselves. Our own national conscience, our own sense of right and duty, our own public sentiment is our guide henceforth. By that we stand or fall. By that, and that only, will we consent that men should judge us.

We are a grown-up nation from this time forth. We answer for ourselves to humanity and the future. We decide all causes at our own judgment seat.

And there is another good, perhaps larger than this, which we have won, a good which contains and justifies this moral, national independence: We have been baptized at last into the family of great nations, by that red baptism which, from the first, has been the required initiation into that august brotherhood.

It seems to be the invariable law, of earthly life at least, that humanity can advance only by the road of suffering. It is so with individuals. There is no spiritual growth without pain. Prosperity alone never makes a grand character. Purple and fine linen never clothe the hero. There are powers and gifts in the soul of man that only come to life and action in some day of bitterness. There are wells in the heart, whose crystal waters lie in darkness till some earthquake shakes the man's nature to its centre, bursts the fountain open, and lets the cooling waters out to refresh a parched land. There are seeds of noblest fruits that lie latent in the soul, till some storm of sorrow shakes down tears to moisten, and some burning sun of scorching pain sends heat to warm them into a harvest of blessings.

By trouble met and patiently mastered, by suffering endured and conquered, by trials tested and overcome, so only does a man's soul grow to manliness.

Now a nation is made up of single men. The law holds for the mass as for the individuals. It took a thousand years of toil, and war, and suffering, to make the Europe that we have. It took a thousand years of wrestle for the very life itself, to build Rome before. To be sure, we inherited all that this past of agony had bought the world. For us Rome had lived, fought, toiled, and fallen. For us Celt, Saxon, Norman had wrought and striven. We started with the accumulated capital of a hundred generations. It was perhaps natural to suppose we might escape the hard necessity of our fathers. We might surely profit by their dear-bought experience. The wrecks, strewn along the shores, would be effectual warnings to our gallant vessel on the dangerous seas where they had sailed. In peace, plenty, and prosperity, we might be carried to the highest reach of national greatness.

Nay! never, unless we give the lie to all the world's experience! There never was a great nation yet nursed on pap, and swathed in silk. Storms broke around its rude cradle instead. The tempests rocked the stalwart child. The dragons came to strangle the baby Hercules in his swaddling clothes. The magnificent commerce, the increasing manufactures, the teeming soil, the wealth fast accumulating, they would never have made us, after all, a great people. They would have eaten the manhood out of us at last. We were becoming selfish, self-indulgent, sybaritic rapidly. The nation's muscle was softening, its heart was hardening. If we were to become a great nation, we needed more than commerce, more than plenty, more than rapid riches, more than a comfortable, indulgent life. If we were to be one of the world's great peoples, a people to dig deep and build strong, a people whose name and fame the world was to accept as a part of itself, we must look to pay the price inflexibly demanded at every people's hand, and count it out in sweat drops, tear drops, blood drops, to the last unit.

We have been patiently counting out this costly currency for three slow years. I pity the moral outlook of the man who does not see that we have received largely of our purchase.

From a nation whom the world believed, and whom itself believed, to be sunk in hopeless mammon worship, we have risen to be a nation that pours out its wealth like water for a noble purpose. Never again will 'the almighty dollar' be called America's divinity. We were sinking fast to low aims and selfish purposes, and wise men groaned at national degeneracy. The summons came, and millions leaped to offer all they had, to fling fortune, limb, and life on the altar of an unselfish cause. The dead manhood of the nation sprang to life at the call. We proved the redness of the old faithful, manly blood, to be as bright as ever.

I know we hear men talk of the demoralization produced by war. There is a great deal they can say eloquently on that side. Drunkenness, licentiousness, lawlessness, they say are produced by it, already to an extent fearful to consider. And scoundrels are using the land's necessities for their

own selfish purposes, and fattening on its blood. These things are all true, and a great deal more of the same sort beside. And it may be well at times, with good purpose, to consider them. But it is not well to consider them alone, and speak of them as the only moral results of the war. No! by the ten thousands who have died for the grand idea of National Unity, by the unselfish heroes who have thrown themselves, a living wall, before the parricidal hands of traitors, who have perished that the land they loved beyond life might not perish, by the example and the memory they have left in ten thousand homes, which their death has consecrated for the nation's reverence by *their* lives and deaths, we protest against the one-sided view that looks only on the moral *evil* of the struggle!

The truth is, there are war vices and war virtues. There are peace vices and there are peace virtues. Decorous quiet, orderly habits, sober conduct, attention to business, these are the good things demanded by society in peace. And they may consist with meanness, selfishness, cowardice, and utter unmanliness. The round-stomached, prosperous man, with his ships, shops, and factories, is very anxious for the cultivation of these virtues. He does not like to be disturbed o' nights. He wants his street to be quiet and orderly. He wants to be left undisturbed to prosecute his prosperous business. He measures virtue by the aid it offers for that end. Peace vices, the cankers that gnaw a nation's heart, greed, self-seeking luxury, epicurean self-indulgence, hardness to growing ignorance, want, and suffering, indifference to all high purposes, spiritual *coma* and deadness, these do not disturb him. They are rotting the nation to its marrow, but they do not stand in the way of his money-getting. He never thinks of them as evils at all. To be sure, sometimes, across his torpid brain and heart may echo some harsh expressions, from those stern old Hebrew prophets, about these things. But he has a very comfortable pew, in a very soporific church, and he is only half awake, and the echo dies away and leaves no sign. *He* is just the man to tell us all about the demoralization of war.

Now quietness and good order, sober, discreet, self-seeking, decorous epicureanism and the rest, are not precisely the virtues that will save a people. There are certain old foundation virtues of another kind, which are the only safe substratum for national or personal salvation. These are courage—hard, muscular, manly courage—fortitude, patience, obedience to discipline, self-denial, self-sacrifice, veracity of purpose, and such like. These rough old virtues must lie at the base of all right character. You may add, as ornaments to your edifice, as frieze, cornices, and capitals to the pillars, refinements, and courtesies, and gentleness, and so on. But the foundation must rest on the rude granite blocks we have mentioned, or your gingerbread erection will go down in the first storm.

And the simple fact is that peace has a tendency to eat out just these foundation virtues. They are *war* virtues; just the things called out by a life-and-death battle for some good cause. In these virtues we claim the land has grown. The national character has deepened and intensified in these. We have strengthened anew these rocky foundations of a nation's greatness. Men lapped in luxury have patiently bowed to toil and weariness. Men living in self-indulgence have shaken off their sloth, and roused the old slumbering fearlessness of their race. Men, living for selfish ends, have been penetrated by the light of a great purpose, and have risen to the loftiness of human duty. Men, who shrank from pain as the sorest evil, have voluntarily accepted pain, and borne it with a fortitude we once believed lost from among mankind; and, over all, the flaming light of a worthy cause that men might worthily live for and worthily die for, has led the thousands of the land out of their narrow lives, and low endeavors, to the clear mountain heights of sacrifice! We stand now, a courageous, patient, steadfast, unselfish people before all the world. We stand, a people that has taken its life in its hand for a purely unselfish cause. We have won our place in the foremost rank of nations, not on our wealth, our numbers, or our prosperity, but on the truer test of our manhood, truth, and steadfastness. We stand justified at the bar of our own conscience, for national pride and self-reliance, as we shall infallibly be justified at the bar of the world.

Is this lifting up of a great people nothing? Is this placing of twenty millions on the clear ground of unselfish duty, as life's motive, nothing? Is there one of us, to-day, who is not prouder of his nation and its character, in the midst of its desperate tug for life, than he ever was in the day of its envied

prosperity? And when he considers how the nation has answered to its hard necessity, how it has borne itself in its sore trial, is he not clear of all doubt about its vitality and continuance? And is that, also, nothing?

But besides this education in the stern, rude, heroic virtues that prop a people's life, there has been an education in some others, which, though apparently opposed, are really kindred. Unselfish courage is noble, but always with the highest courage there lives a great pity and tenderness. The brave man is always soft hearted. The most courageous people are the tenderest people. The highest manhood dwells with the highest womanhood.

So the heart of the nation has been touched and softened, while its muscles have been steeled. While it has grasped the sword, it has grasped it weeping in infinite pity. It has recognized the truth of human brotherhood as it never did before. All ranks have been drawn together in mutual sympathy. All barriers, that hedge brethren apart, have been broken down in the common suffering.

News comes, to-day, that a great battle has been fought, and wounded thousands of our brothers need aid and care. You tell the news in any city or hamlet in the land, and hands are opened, purses emptied, stores ransacked for comforts for the suffering, and gentle women, in hundreds, are ready to tend them as they would their own. Is this no gain? Is it nothing that the selfishness of us all has been broken up as by an earthquake, and that kindness, charity, and pity to the sick and needy have become the law of our lives? Count the millions that have streamed forth from a people whose heart has been touched by a common suffering, in kindness to wounded and sick soldiers and to their needy families! Benevolence has become the atmosphere of the land.

Four years ago we could not have believed it. That the voluntary charity of Americans would count by millions yearly, would flow out in a steady, deep, increasing tide, that giving would be the rule, free, glad giving, and refusing the marked exception, the world would not have believed it, *we* would not have believed it ourselves. Is this nothing?

We will think more of each other also for all this. We will love and honor each other better. Under the awful pressure of the Hand that lies upon us so heavily, we are brought into closer knowledge and closer sympathy. The blows of battle are welding us into one. Fragments of all people, and all races, cast here by the waves, and strangers to each other, with a hundred repulsions and separations, even to language, religions, and morals, the furnace heat of our trial is fusing all parts into one strong, united whole. We are driven and drawn together by the sore need that is upon us, and as Americans are forgetting all else. The civil war is making us *a people*—the American People. We are no longer 'the loose sweepings of all lands,' as they called us. We are one, now, brethren all in the sacrament of a great sorrow.

And is this nothing?

And these goods and gains are permanent. They do not belong to this generation only, or to this time exclusively. After all, the nation is mainly an educator. These things remain, as parts of its moral influence in moulding and training. And here is their infinite value. Independence, courage, patience, fortitude, nobleness, self-sacrifice, and tenderness become the national ethics. These things are pressed home on all growing minds. Coming generations are to be educated in these, by the example of the present. We are stamping these things, as the essentials of the national character, on the ages to come.

A thousand years of prosperity will have no power of this kind. What is there in Chinese history to elevate a Chinaman? What high, heroic experience to educate him, in her long centuries of ignoble peace? The training power of a nation is acquired always in the crises of its history. In the day when it rises to fight for its life, the typical men, who give it the lasting models of its excellence, spring forth too for recognition. The examples of these days of our own crisis will remain forever to influence the children of our people. We may be thankful, in our deepest sorrow, that we are leaving them no example of cowardice or meanness, that we give them a record to read of the courage, endurance, and manliness of the men that begat them, that the stamp of national character we leave to teach

them is one of which a brave, free people need never be ashamed, that, in the troubles they may be called to face, we leave them, as the national and tried cure for *all* troubles, the bold, true heart, the willing hand, the strong arm, and faith in the Lord of Hosts. Shiloh, Stone River, Gettysburg, and the Wilderness, and a hundred others, are the heroic names that will educate our grandchildren, as Bunker Hill, Yorktown, and Saratoga have educated ourselves. Who will say that a heritage of heroism and truth and loyalty like this, to leave to the land we love, is nothing? Who can count the price that will sum its value?

Here, at least, are some of the gains of our civil war. We seek not to penetrate the councils of the Omniscient, or guess His purposes, though we may humbly hope there are vaster things than these in store for humanity and the world as the results of the struggle. Believing that He governs still, that He reigns on the James, as He reigned on the Jordan, that *He* decides the end, and not President Lincoln or Jefferson Davis, and not General Grant or General Lee, we have firm faith that this awful struggle is no brute fight of beasts or ruffians, but a grand world's war of heroes. We believe He will justify His government in the end, and make this struggle praise Him, in the blessed days that are to come. But we leave all those dim results unguessed at, as we leave the purposes of the war itself unmentioned, and the ends which justify us in fighting on. Men, by this time, have made up their minds, once for all, on these last points. The nation has chosen, and in its own conscience, let others think as they may, accepts the responsibility cheerfully.

It is enough to indicate, as we have done, some *real*, though immaterial, results already attained, results which, to the philosopher or thoughtful statesman, are worth a very large outlay. They do not, indeed, remove the horror of war, they do not ask us not to seek peace, they do not dry the tears, or hide the blood of the contest, but they do show us that war is no unmixed evil, that even honest, faithful war-work is acceptable work, and will be paid for.

They declare that, after all, war is a means of moral training, that 'Carnage' may be, as the gentlest of poets wrote, 'God's daughter,' that battles may be blessings to be thankful for in the long march of time. They bring to our consciousness, once more, the fact that a Great Battle, amid all its horror, wrath, and blood, is something sacred still, an earthly shadow of that Unseen Battle which has stormed through time, between the hosts of Light and Darkness. They declare again, to the nation, that old truth, without which the nation perishes and man rots, that to die in some good cause is the noblest thing a man can do on earth. They bid us bend in hope beneath the awful hand of the God of Battles, and do our appointed work patiently, bravely, loyally, till *He* brings the end. They tell us that not work only, but heroic fighting, also, is a worship accepted at His seat. They bid us be thankful, as for the most sacred of all gifts, that thousands, in this loyal land of ours, have had the high grace, given from above,

'To search through all they felt and saw,  
The springs of life, the depths of awe,  
And reach *the law within the law*:

'To pass, when Life her light withdraws,  
Not void of righteous self-applause,  
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

'In some good cause, not in their own,  
To perish, *wept for, honored, known*,  
And like a warrior overthrown.'

## PROVERBS

Violets and lilies-of-the-valley are seen in a vale.

Family jars should be filled with honey.

All are not lambs that gambol on the green.

Ask the 'whys,' and be wise.

# **THE UNDIVINE COMEDY—A POLISH DRAMA**

**Dedicated to Mary**

## PART II

*'Du Gemisch von Koth und Feuer!'*

*'Thou compound of clay and fire!'*

Why, O child! art thou not, like other children, riding gayly about on sticks for horses, playing with toys, torturing flies, or impaling butterflies on pins, that the brilliant circles of their dying pangs may amuse thy young soul? Why dost thou never romp and sport upon the grassy turf, pilfer sugarplums and sweetmeats, and wet the letters of thy picture book from A to Z with sudden tears?

Infant king of flies, moths, and grasshoppers; of cowslips, daisies, and of kingcups; of tops, hoops, and kites; little friend of Punch and puppets; robber of birds' nests, and outlaw of petty mischiefs—son of the poet, tell me, why art thou so unlike a child—so like an angel?

What strange meaning lies in the blue depths of thy dreamy eyes? Why do they seek the ground as if weighed down by the shadows of their drooping lashes; and why is their latent fire so gloomed by mournful memories, although they have only watched the early violets of a few springs? Why sinks thy broad head heavily down upon thy tiny hands, while thy pallid temples bend under the weight of thine infant thoughts, like snowdrops burdened with the dew of night?

And when thy pale cheek floods with sudden crimson, and, tossing back thy golden curls, thou gazest sadly into the depths of the sky—tell me, infant, what seest thou there, and with whom holdest thou communion? For then the light and subtle wrinkles weave their living mesh across thy spotless brow, like silken threads untwining by an unseen power from viewless coils, and thine eyes sparkle, freighted with mystic meanings, which none are able to interpret! Then thy grandam calls in vain, 'George, George!' and weeps, for thou heedest her not, and she fears thou dost not love her! Friends and relations then appeal to thee in vain, for thou seemest not to hear or know them! Thy father is silent and looks sad; tears fill his anxious eyes, falling coldly back into his troubled heart.

The physician comes, puts his finger on thy pulse, counts its changeful beats, and says thy nerves are out of order.

Thy old godfather brings thee sugarplums, strokes thy pale cheeks, and tells thee thou must be a statesman in thy native land.

The professor passes his hand over thy broad brow, and declares thou will have talent for the abstract sciences.

The beggar, whom thou never passest without casting a coin in his tattered hat, promises thee a beautiful wife, and a heavenly crown.

The soldier, raising thee high in the air, declares thou wilt yet be a great general.

The wandering gypsy looks into thy tender face, traces the lines upon thy little hand, but will not tell their hidden meaning; she gazes sadly on thee, and then sighing turns away; she says nothing, and refuses to take the proffered coin.

The magnetizer makes his passes over thee, presses his fingers on thine eyes, and circles thy face, but mutters suddenly an oath, for he is himself growing sleepy; he feels like kneeling down before thee, as before a holy image. Then thou growest angry, and stampest with thy tiny feet; and when thy father comes, thou seemest to him a little Lucifer; and in his picture of the Day of Judgment, he paints thee thus among the infant demons, the young spirits of evil.

Meanwhile thou growest apace, becoming ever more and more beautiful, not in the childish beauty of rose bloom and snow, but in the loveliness of wondrous and mysterious thoughts, which flow to thee from other worlds; and though thy languid eyes droop wearily their fringes, though thy cheek is pale, and thy breast bent and contracted, yet all who meet thee stop to gaze, exclaiming: *'What a little angel!'*

If the dying flowers had a living soul inspired from heaven; if, in place of dewdrops, each drooping leaf were bent to earth with the thought of an angel, such flowers would resemble thee, fair child!

And thus, before the fall, they may, perchance, have bloomed in Paradise!

A graveyard. The Man and George are seen sitting by a grave, over which stands a gothic monument, with arches, pillars, and mimic towers.

The Man. Take off thy hat, George, kneel, and pray for thy mother's soul!

George. Hail, Mary, full of grace! Mary, Queen of Heaven, Lady of all that blooms on earth, that scents the fields, that paints the fringes of the streams ...

The Man. Why changest thou the words of the prayer? Pray for thy mother as thou hast been taught to do; for thy dear mother, George, who perished in her youth, just ten years ago this very day and hour.

George. Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee! I know that thou art blessed among the angels, and as thou glidest softly through them, each one plucks a rainbow from his wings to cast under thy feet, and thou floatest softly on upon them as if borne by waves....

The Man. George!

George. Be not angry with me, father! these words *force* themselves into my mind; they pain me so dreadfully in my head, that I must say them....

The Man. Rise, George. Such prayers will never reach God!

Thou art not thinking of thy mother; thou dost not love her!

George. I love her. I see mamma very often.

The Man. Where, my son?

George. In dreams—yet not exactly in dreams, but just as I am going to sleep. I saw her yesterday.

The Man. What do you mean, George?

George. She looked so pale and thin!

The Man. Has she ever spoken to you, darling?

George. She goes wandering up and down—through an immense Dark—she roams about entirely alone, so white and so pale! She sang to me yesterday. I will tell thee the words of her song:

'I wander through the universe,  
I search through infinite space,  
I press through Chaos, Darkness,  
To bring thee light and grace;  
I listen to the angels' song  
To catch the heavenly tone;  
Seek every form of beauty,  
To bring to thee, mine own!

'I seek from greatest spirits,  
From those of lower might,  
Rainbow colors, depth of shadow,  
Burning contrasts, dark and bright;  
Rhythmed music, hues from Eden,  
Floating through the heavenly bars;  
Sages' wisdom, seraphs' loving,  
Mystic glories from the stars—  
That thou mayst be a Poet, richly gifted from above

To win thy father's fiery heart, and *keep his changeful love!*

Thou seest, dear father, that my mother does speak to me, and that I remember, word for word, what she says to me; indeed I am telling you no lie.

The Man (*leaning against one of the pillars of the tomb*). Mary! wilt thou destroy thine own son, and burden my Soul with the ruin of both?...

But what folly! She is calm and tranquil now in heaven, as she was pure and sweet on earth. My poor boy only dreams ...

George. I hear mamma's voice now, father!

The Man. From whence comes it, my son?

George. *From between the two elms before us glittering in the sunset*. Listen!

'I pour through thy spirit  
Music and might;  
I wreath thy pale forehead  
With halos of light;  
Though blind, I can show thee  
Blest forms from above,  
Floating far through the spaces  
Of infinite love,  
Which the angels in heaven and men on the earth  
Call Beauty. I've sought since the day of thy birth

To waken thy spirit,  
My darling, my own,  
That the hopes of thy father  
May rest on his son!  
That his love, warm and glowing,  
Unchanging may shine;  
And his heart, infant poet,  
*Forever be thine!*

The Man. Can a blessed spirit be mad? Do the last thoughts of the dying pursue them into their eternal homes?

Can insanity be a part of immortality?... O Mary! Mary!

George. Mamma's voice is growing weaker and weaker; it is dying away now close by the wall of the charnel house. Hark! hark! she is still repeating:

'That his love, warm and glowing,  
Unchanging may shine;  
And his heart, little poet,  
*Forever be thine!*

The Man. O God! have mercy upon our unfortunate child, whom in Thine anger Thou hast doomed to madness and to an early death! Have pity on the innocent creature Thou hast Thyself called into being! Rob him not of reason! Ruin not the living temple Thou hast built—the shrine of the soul! Oh look down upon my agony, and deliver not this young angel up to hell! Me Thou hast at least armed with strength to endure the dizzying throng of thoughts, passions, longings, yearnings—

but him! Thou hast given him a frame fragile as the frailest web of the spider, and every great thought rends and frays it. O Lord! my God! have mercy!

I have not had one tranquil hour for the last ten years. Thou hast placed me among men who may have envied my position, who may have wished me well, or who would have conferred benefits upon me—but I have been alone! alone!

Thou hast sent storms of agony upon me, mingled with wrongs, dreams, hopes, thoughts, aspirations, and yearnings for the infinite! Thy grace shines upon my intellect, but reaches not my heart!

Have mercy, God! Suffer me to love my son in peace, that thus reconciliation may be planted between the created and the Creator!...

Cross thyself now, my son, and come with me.

Eternal rest be with the dead!

Exit with George

A public square. Ladies and gentlemen. A Philosophe. The Man.

Philosophe. I repeat to you, that it is my irresistible conviction that the hour has come for the emancipation of negroes and women.

The Man. I agree with you fully.

Philosophe. And as a change so great in the constitution of society, both in general and particular, stands so immediately before us, I deduce from such a revolution the complete destruction of old forms and formulas, and the regeneration of the whole human family.

The Man. Do you really think so?

Philosophe. Just as our earth, by a sudden change in the inclination of its axis, might rotate more obliquely ...

The Man. Do you see this hollow tree?

Philosophe. With tufts of new leaves sprouting forth from the lower branches?

The Man. Yes. How much longer do you think it can continue to stand?

Philosophe. I cannot tell; perhaps a year or two longer.

The Man. Its roots are rapidly rotting out, and yet it still puts forth a few green leaves.

Philosophe. What inference do you deduce from that?

The Man. Nothing—only that it is rotting out in spite of its few green leaves; falling daily into dust and ashes; and that it will not bear the tool of the moulder!

And yet it is your type, the type of your followers, of your theories, of the times in which we live....

They pass on out of sight.

A mountain pass.

The Man. I have labored many years to discover the final results of knowledge, pleasure, thought, passion, and have only succeeded in finding a deep and empty grave in my own heart!

I have indeed learned to know most things by their names—the feelings, for example; but I *feel* nothing, neither desires, faith, nor love. Two dim forebodings alone stir in the desert of my soul—the one, that my son is hopelessly blind; the other, that the society in which I have grown up is in the pangs of dissolution; I suffer as God enjoys, in myself only, and for myself alone....

Voice of the Guardian Angel. Love the sick, the hungry, the wretched! Love thy neighbor, thy poor neighbor, as thyself, and thou shalt be redeemed!

The Man. Who speaks?

Mephistophiles. Your humble servant. I often astonish travellers by my marvellous natural gifts: I am a ventriloquist.

The Man. I have certainly seen a face like that before in an engraving.

Mephistophiles (*aside*). The count has truly a good memory.

The Man. Blessed be Christ Jesus!

Mephistophiles. Forever and ever, amen!—(*Muttering as he disappears behind a rock:*) Curses on thee, and thy stupidity!

The Man. My poor son! through the sins of thy father and the madness of thy mother, thou art doomed to perpetual darkness—blind! Living only in dreams and visions, thou art never destined to attain maturity! Thou art but the shadow of a passing angel, flitting rapidly over the earth, and melting into the infinite of ...

Ha! what an immense eagle that is fluttering just there where the stranger disappeared behind the rocks!

The Eagle. Hail! I greet thee! hail!

The Man. He is as black as night; he flies nearer; the whirring of his vast wings stirs me like the whistling hail of bullets in the fight.

The Eagle. Draw the sword of thy fathers, and combat for their power, their fame!

The Man. His wide wings spread above me; he gazes into my eyes with the charm of the rattlesnake—Ha! I understand thee!

The Eagle. Despair not! Yield not now, nor ever! Thy enemies, thy miserable enemies, will fall to dust before thee!

The Man. Going?... Farewell, then, among the rocks, behind which thou vanishest!... Whatever thou mayst be, delusion or truth, victory or ruin, I trust in thee, herald of fame, harbinger of glory!

Spirit of the mighty Past, come to my aid! and even if thou hast already returned to the bosom of God, quit it—and come to me! Inspire me with the ancient heroism! Become in me, force, thought, action!

Stooping to the ground, he turns up and throws aside a viper.

Curses upon thee, loathsome reptile! Even as thou diest, crushed and writhing, and nature breathes no sigh for thy fate, so will the destroyers of the Past perish in the abyss of nothingness, leaving no trace, and awakening no regret.

None of the countless clouds of heaven will pause one moment in their flight to look upon the thronging hosts of men now gathering to kill and slaughter!

First they—then I—

Boundless vault of blue, so softly pouring round the earth! the earth is a sick child, gnashing her teeth, weeping, struggling, sobbing; but thou hearest her not, nor tremblest, flowing in silence ever gently on, calm in thine own infinity!

Farewell forever, O mother nature! Henceforth I must wander among men! I must combat with my brethren!

A chamber. The Man. George. A Physician.

The Man. No one has as yet been of the least service to him; my last hopes are placed in you. Physician. You do me much honor.

The Man. Tell me your opinion of the case.

George. I can neither see you, my father, nor the gentleman to whom you speak. Dark or black webs float before my eyes, and again something like a snake seems to crawl across them. Sometimes a golden cloud stands before them, flies up, and then falls down upon them, and a rainbow springs out of it; but there is no pain—they never hurt me—I do not suffer, father.

Physician. Come here, George, in the shade. How old are you?

He looks steadily into the eyes of the boy.

The Man. He is fourteen years old.

Physician. Now turn your eyes directly to the light, to the window.

The Man. What do you say, doctor?

Physician. The eyelids are beautifully formed, the white perfectly pure, the blue deep, the veins in good order, the muscles strong.

To George.

You may laugh at all this, George. You will be perfectly well; as well as I am.

To the Man (aside).

There is no hope. Look at the pupils yourself, count; there is not the least susceptibility to the light; there is a paralysis of the optic nerve.

George. Everything looks to me as if covered with black clouds.

The Man. Yes, they are open, blue, lifeless, dead!

George. When I shut my eyelids I can see *more* than when my eyes are open.

Physician. His mind is precocious; it is rapidly consuming his body. We must guard him against an attack of catalepsy.

The Man (*leading the doctor aside*). Save him, doctor, and the half of my estate is yours!

Physician. A disorganization cannot be reorganized.

He takes up his hat and cane.

Pardon me, count, but I can remain here no longer; I am forced now to visit a patient whom I am to couch for cataract.

The Man. For God's sake, do not desert us!

Physician. Perhaps you have some curiosity to know the name of this malady?...

The Man. Speak! is there no hope?

Physician. It is called, from the Greek, *amaurosis*.

Exit Physician.

The Man (*pressing his son to his heart*). But you can still see a little, George?

George. I can *hear your voice*, father!

The Man. Try if you can see. Look out of the window; the sun is shining brightly, the sky is clear.

George. I see crowds of forms circling between the pupils of my eyes and my eyelids—faces I have often seen before, the leaves of books I have read before....

The Man. Then you really do still see?

George. Yes, with the *eyes of my spirit—but the eyes of my body have gone out forever*.

The Man (*falls on his knees as if to pray; pauses, and exclaims bitterly*): Before whom shall I kneel—to whom pray—to whom complain of the unjust doom crushing my innocent child?

He rises from his knees.

It is best to bear all in silence—God laughs at our prayers—Satan mocks at our curses—

A Voice. But thy son is a Poet—and what wouldst thou more?

The Physician and Godfather.

Godfather. It is certainly a great misfortune to be blind.

Physician. And at his age a very unusual one.

Godfather. His frame was always very fragile, and his mother died somewhat—so—so ...

Physician. How did she die?

Godfather. A little so ... you understand ... not quite in her right mind.

The Man (*entering*). I pray you, pardon my intrusion at so late an hour, but for the last night or two my son has wakened up at twelve o'clock, left his bed, and talked in his sleep.

Will you have the kindness to follow me, and watch him to-night?

Physician. I will go to him immediately; I am very much interested in the observation of such phenomena.

Relations, Godfather, Physician, the Man, a Nurse—assembled in the sleeping apartment of George Stanislaus.

First Relation. Hush! hush! be quiet!

Second Relation. He is awake, but neither sees nor hears us.

Physician. I beg that you will all remain perfectly silent.

Godfather. This seems to be a most extraordinary malady.

George (*rising from his seat*). God! O God!

First Relation. How lightly he treads!

Second Relation. Look! he clasps his thin hands across his breast.

Third Relation. His eyelids are motionless; he does not move his lips, but what a sharp and thrilling shriek!

Nurse. Christ, shield him!

George. Depart from me, Darkness! I am a child of light and song, and what hast thou to do with me? What dost thou desire from me?

I do not yield myself to thee, although my sight has flown away upon the wings of the wind, and is flitting restlessly about through infinite space: it will return to me—my eyes will open with a flash of flame—and I will see the universe!

Godfather. He talks exactly as his mother did; he does not know what he is saying, I think his condition very critical.

Physician. He is in great danger.

Nurse. Holy Mother of God! take my eyes, and give them to the poor boy!

George. My mother, I entreat thee! O mother, send me thoughts and images, that I may create within myself a world like the one I have lost forever!

First Relation. Do you think, brother, it will be necessary to call a family consultation?

Second Relation. Be silent!

George. Thou answerest me not, my mother!

O mother, do not desert me!

Physician (*to the Man*). It is my duty to tell you the truth.

Godfather. Yes, to tell the truth is the duty and virtue of a physician!

Physician. Your son is suffering from incipient insanity, connected with an extraordinary excitability of the nervous system, which sometimes occasions, if I may so express myself, the strange phenomenon of sleeping and waking at the same time, as in the case now before us.

The Man (*aside*). He reads to me thy sentence, O my God!

Physician. Give me pen, ink, and paper.

He writes a prescription.

The Man. I think it best you should all now retire; George needs rest.

Several Voices. Good night! good night! good night!

George (*waking suddenly*). Are they wishing me good night, father?

They should rather speak of a long, unbroken, eternal night, but of no good one, of no happy dawn for me....

The Man. Lean on me, George. Let me support you to the bed.

George. What does all this mean, father?

The Man. Cover yourself up, and go quietly to sleep. The doctor says you will regain your sight.

George. I feel so very unwell, father; strange voices roused me from my sleep, and I saw mamma standing in a field of lilies....

He falls asleep.

The Man. Bless thee! bless thee, my poor boy!

I can give thee nothing but a blessing; neither happiness, nor light, nor fame are in my gift. The stormy hour of struggle approaches, when I must combat with the *few* against the *many*.

Tortured infant! what is then to become of thee, alone, helpless, blind, surrounded by a thousand dangers? Child, yet Poet, poor Singer without a hearer, with thy soul in heaven, and thy frail, suffering body still fettered to the earth—what is to be thy doom? Alas, miserable infant! thou most unfortunate of all the angels! my son! my son!

He buries his face in his hands.

Nurse (*knocking at the door*). The doctor desires to see his excellency as soon as convenient.

The Man. My good Katharine, watch faithfully and tenderly over my poor son!

Exit.

## THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSCRIPT

### Ballads of the War

He lay on the field of Antietam,  
As the sun sank low in the west,  
And the life from his heart was ebbing  
Through a ghastly wound in his breast.

All around were the dead and the dying—  
A pitiful sight to see—  
And afar, in the vapory distance,  
Were the flying hosts of Lee.

He raised himself on his elbow,  
And wistfully gazed around;  
Till he spied far off a soldier  
Threading the death-strewn ground.

'Come here to me, Union soldier,  
Come here to me where I lie;  
I've a word to say to you, soldier;  
I must say it before I die.'

The soldier came at his bidding.  
He raised his languid head:  
'From the hills of North Carolina  
They forced me hither,' he said.

'Though I stood in the ranks of the rebels,  
And carried yon traitorous gun,  
I have never been false to my country,  
For I fired not a shot, not one.

'Here I stood while the balls rained around me,  
Unmoved as yon mountain crag—  
Still true to our glorious Union,  
Still true to the dear old flag!'

Brave soldier of North Carolina!  
True patriot hero wert thou!  
Let the laurel that garlands Antietam,  
Spare a leaf for thy lowly brow!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From an incident narrated in the newspaper account of the battle of Antietam. The reader will be reminded by it of Mrs. Browning's 'Forced Recruit at Solferino.'



## DOES THE MOON REVOLVE ON ITS AXIS?

As this question has elicited considerable discussion, at various times, the following may be considered in elucidation.

A revolution on an axis is simply that of a body turning entirely round upon its own centre. The only centre around which the moon performs a revolution is very far from its own proper axis, being situated at the centre of the earth, the focus of its orbit, and as it has no other rotating motion around the earth, it cannot revolve on its own central axis.

A body fixed in position, or pierced and held by a rod, cannot revolve upon its centre, and when swung round by this rod or handle, performs only a revolution in orbit, as does the moon. The moon, during the process of forming a solid crust, by the constant attraction of the earth upon one side, only, became elongated, by calculation, about thirty miles (from its centre as a round body) toward the earth; consequently, by its form, like the body pierced with a rod, is transfixed by its gravitation, and, therefore, cannot revolve upon its own central axis.

The difference of axial revolution of a wheel or globe, is simply that the former turns upon an actual and the latter upon an imaginary axle, placed at its centre. Now, by way of analogy, fasten, immovably, a ball upon the rim of a revolving wheel, and then judge whether the ball can perform one simultaneous revolution on its own axis, in the same time that it performs a revolution in orbit, made by one complete turn of the wheel; and if not (which is assuredly the case, for it is fixed immovably), then neither can the moon perform such revolution on its axis, in the same time that it makes one revolution in orbit; because, like the ball immovably fixed upon the rim of the wheel, it, too, is transfixed by gravitation, from its very form, as if pierced with a rod, whose other extremity is attached to the centre of the earth, its only proper focus of motion, and, therefore, cannot revolve upon its own central axis.

A balloon elongated on one side, and carrying ballast on that side, would be like the moon in form, and when suspended in air, like the moon, too, in having its heaviest matter always toward the centre of the earth. Now let this balloon go entirely round the earth: it will, like the moon, continue to present the weightiest, elongated side always toward the centre of the earth; it, consequently, like the moon, cannot revolve upon its own central axis, as gravitation alone would prevent this anomaly, in both cases.

As well might it be said that a horse, harnessed to a beam, and going round a ring, or an imprisoned stone swung round in a sling, make each one simultaneous revolution on their axes, when their very positions are a sufficient refutation! or that the balls in an orrery, attached immovably to the ends of their respective rods, and turning with them (merely to show revolutions in orbits), perform each a simultaneous revolution on their axis, when such claim would be simply ridiculous, since the only revolution, in each case, has its focus outside of the ball, therefore orbital only; and so, too, with the moon, whose motion is precisely analogous, and prejudice alone can retain such an unphilosophical hypothesis as its *axial* revolution.

## LUNAR CHARACTERISTICS

The moon, in consequence of its orbital revolution, having no connecting axial motion, has always presented but one side to the earth, so that in process of forming a crust, from its incipient molten state, it became, by the constant attraction of the earth upon one side, elongated toward our globe, now generally admitted to be by calculation about thirty miles, and proved by photographs, which also show an elongation. The necessary consequence of this constant attraction upon one side, has been not only to intensify volcanic action there, by the continued effect of gravitation, so long as its interior remained in a molten state, but from the same reasoning, to confine all such volcanic action exclusively to this side of the moon. Thus we have the reason for the violently disrupted state which that luminary presents to the telescopic observer, exceeding any analogy to be found upon our globe, as the earth's axial motion has prevented any similar concentrated action upon any particular part of its surface, either from solar or lunar attraction. Another marked effect of the elongation of the moon toward the earth has been to elevate its visible side high above its atmosphere (which would have enveloped it as a round body), and in consequence into an intensely cold region, producing congelation, in the form of frost and snow, which necessarily envelop its entire visible surface. These effects took place while yet the crust was thin and frequently disrupted by volcanic action, and wherever such action took place, the fiery matter ejected necessarily dissolved the contiguous masses of frost and snow, and these floods of water, as soon as they receded from the fiery element, were immediately converted into lengthened ridges of ice, diverging from the mountain summits like streams of lava. Hence many of the apparent lava streams are but ridges of ice, and in consequence, depending upon the angle of reflection (determined by the age of the moon, which is but its relative position between the sun and earth), all observers are struck with the brilliancy of the reflected light from many of those long lines of ridges.

The general surface of the moon presents to the telescopic observer just that drear, cold, and chalk-like aspect, which our snow-clad mountains exhibit when the angle of reflection is similar to that in which we behold the lunar surface. In consequence, its mild light is due to the myriads of sparkling crystals, which diffusively reflect the rays of the sun.

As an attentive observer of the moon, I have been much puzzled to know why none of the hosts of observers, or scientific treatises, have taken this rational view of such necessary condition of the moon, deduced from the main facts of its original formation, here named and generally conceded. In the place of which, we still have stereotyped, in many late editions on astronomy, the names and localities of numerous seas and lakes, which advancing knowledge should long since have discarded.

Besides the above conclusions, which necessitate a snowy covering to the moon, none of the planets exhibit that drear white, except the poles of Mars, which are admitted to be snow by all astronomers, as we see them come and go with the appropriate seasons of that planet; whereas the continents of Mars appear dark, as analogously they do upon our earth, under the same solar effulgence. The analogy of sunlight, when reflected from our lofty mountains (at say thirty or forty miles distant) not covered with snow, viewed under the most favorable circumstances of brilliant light and the best angle of reflection, with no more of intervening atmosphere, always present sombre tints; whether viewed with the unaided eye or through a telescope. Such analogy clearly proves that no objects short of an absolute white could present such an appearance as light does upon lunar objects, viewed with high powers, in which the same drear white remains, without any greater concentration of light (as we can see objects in the moon whose diameter is five hundred feet) than is presented to our unaided eye from our own mountain masses. In viewing the moon with high powers, there is, in fact, a much greater amount of visible atmosphere intervening than can possibly apply in beholding objects on our earth, at even a few miles' distance, since if we look at lunar objects with a power of one thousand times, our atmosphere is thus magnified a thousand times also.

The main physical features of the visible half of the moon, with a good telescopic power, present an enormously elevated table land, traversed, here and there, with slightly elevated long ridges, and the general surface largely pitted with almost innumerable deep cusps or valleys, of every size, from a quarter of a mile to full thirty miles in diameter; generally circular and surrounded with elevated ridges, some rising to lofty jagged summits above the surrounding plain. These ridges, on their inner sides, show separate terraces and mural precipices, while their outer slopes display deeply scarred ravines and long spurs at their bases. These cusps, or deep valleys, are the craters of extinct volcanoes, and in their centres have generally one or two isolated sub-mountain peaks, occasionally with divided summits, which were the centres of expiring volcanic action, similar to those that exist in our own volcanic regions. Besides which the Lunar Apennines, so called, present to the eye a long range of mountains with serrated summits, on one side gradually sloped, with terraces, spurs, and ravines, and the other side mostly precipitous, casting long shadows, which clearly define the forms of their summits—all these objects presenting the same dead white everywhere.

Doubtless the farther side of the moon, which has not been subject to the same elongating or elevating process, nor the above-named causes for volcanic disruption, presents a climate and vegetation fitted for the abode of sentient beings. This side alone presenting an aspect of extreme desolation, far surpassing our polar regions.

It is generally stated in astronomical works, that shadows projected from lunar objects are intensely black, owing, it is stated, to there being no reflecting atmosphere; whereas in my long-continued habit of observation, those shadows appear no more black than those on our earth, when they fall on contrasting snowy surfaces. The reason for which, in the absence of a lunar atmosphere, to render light diffusive, is the brilliant reflection from snow crystals, upon all contiguous objects, which lie in an angle to receive the same, and in consequence I have often observed the forms of objects not directly illuminated by the sun.

The occasional apparent retention of a star on the limb of the moon, just before or after an occultation, seen by some observers, and thus evidencing the existence of some atmosphere, is doubtless due to the slight oscillations of the moon, by which we see a trifle more than half of that body, during which the atmosphere of its opposite side slightly impinges upon this.

## A GLANCE AT PRUSSIAN POLITICS

### PART II

We come now to the beginning of the present stage in the development of constitutional government in Prussia. It will have been noticed that the promises of Frederick William III. were not that he would grant a strictly popular constitution. His intention was that the different estates of the realm should be represented in the proposed national diet, the constitution recognizing a difference in the dignity of the different classes of inhabitants, and giving to each a share in the national government proportionate to its dignity. His son, at his coronation, promised to maintain the efficiency of the ordinances of June 5, 1823, and to secure a further development of the principles of this (so-called) constitution. Encouraged by this assurance, the Liberals labored to secure from him the full realization of their hopes. Frederick William IV. was just the man with whom such exertions could be used with good hope of success. He was intelligent enough to be fully conscious of the fact and the significance of the popular request for a constitution, and, though of course personally disinclined to reduce his power to a nullity, he had yet not a strong will, and had no wish to involve himself in a conflict with his subjects. Accordingly, in 1841, he convoked a diet in each province, and proposed the appointment of committees from the estates, who should act as counsel to the king when the provincial diets were not in session. These diets in subsequent sessions discussed the subject of a national diet, and proposed to the king the execution of the order issued in 1815. At length, February 8, 1847, he issued a royal charter, introducing, in fact, what had so often and so long before been promised, a constitution. The substance of the charter was that, as often as the Government should need to contract a loan, or introduce new taxes, or increase existing taxes, the diets of the provinces should be convoked to a national diet; that the committees of the provincial diets (as appointed in 1842) should be henceforth periodically, as one body, convoked; that to the diet, and, when it was not in session, to the committee, should be conveyed the right to have a *deciding* voice in the above-mentioned cases. April 11, 1847, the diet assembled for the first time; January 17, 1848, the united committee of the estates.

How long the nation would have remained contented with this concession to the request for a national representation under ordinary circumstances, is quite uncertain. In point of fact, this constitution hardly lived long enough to be christened with the name. Early in 1848 the French Revolution startled all Europe—most of all, the monarchs. They knew how inflammable the masses were; they soon saw that the masses were inflamed, and that nothing but the most vigorous measures would secure their thrones from overthrow. Frederick William Was not slow to see the danger, and take steps to guard Prussia against an imitation of the Parisian insurrection. On the 14th of March he issued an order summoning the diet to meet at Berlin on the 27th of April. Four days later he issued another edict ordering the diet to convene still earlier, on the 2d of April. This proclamation is a characteristic document. It was issued on the day of the Berlin revolution. It was an hour of the most critical moment. There was no time for long deliberation, and little hope for the preservation of royalty, unless something decided was done at once. He might have tried the experiment of violently resisting the insurgents; but this was not in accordance with his character. He preferred rather to resign something than to run the risk of losing all. Accordingly he yielded. In this proclamation, after alluding to the occasion of it, he publishes his earnest desire for the union of Germany against the common danger. 'First of all,' he says, 'we desire that Germany be transformed from a confederation of states (*Staatenbund*) to one federal state (*Bundesstaat*).' He proposes a reorganization of the articles of union in which other representatives besides the princes should take part; a common army; freedom of trade; freedom of emigration from one state to another; common weights, measures, and coins; freedom of the press—in short, all that the most enthusiastic advocate of German unity could have

asked. At the same time was published a law repealing the censorship of the press. On the 21st of the same month he put forth an address, entitled 'To my people and to the German nation.' In this, after saying that there was no security against the threatening dangers except in the closest union of the German princes and peoples, under one head, he adds: 'I assume to-day this leadership for this time of danger. My people, undismayed by the danger, will not abandon me, and Germany will confidently attach itself to me. I have to-day adopted the old German colors, and put myself and my people under the venerable banner of the German Empire. Henceforth Prussia passes over into Germany.' But all this was more easily said than done. Whatever the German people may have wished, the other German rulers could not so easily overcome their jealousies. The extreme of the danger passed by, and with it this urgent demand for a united Germany.

But the diet came together. The king laid before it the outline of a constitution, the most important provisions of which were that there should be guaranteed to all the right to hold meetings without first securing consent from the police; civil rights to all, irrespective of religious belief; a national parliament, whose assent should be essential to the making of all laws. These propositions were approved by the diet, which now advised the king to call together a national assembly of delegates, elected by the people, to agree with him upon a constitution. This was done; the assembly met on the 22d of May, and was opened by the king in person. He laid before the delegates the draught of a constitution, which they referred to a committee, by whom it was elaborated, and on the 26th of July reported to the assembly. The deliberation which followed had, by the 9th of November, resulted only in fixing the preamble and the first four articles. At this time an order came to the assembly from the king, requiring the members to adjourn to the 27th, and then come together, not at Berlin, but Brandenburg. The reason of this was that the assembly manifested too much of an inclination to infringe on the royal prerogatives, and that its place of meeting was surrounded by people who sought by threats, and, in some cases, by violence, to intimidate the members. The king was now the less inclined to be, or seem to be, controlled by such terrorism, as the fury of the revolutionary storm was now spent; the militia had been summoned to arms; and had not hesitated to obey the call. The troops, under the lead of Field-Marshal Wrangel, were collected about Berlin. The majority of the National Assembly, which had refused to obey the royal order to adjourn to Brandenburg, and was proceeding independently in the prosecution of its deliberations respecting the constitution, was compelled, by military force, to dissolve. Part of them then went to Brandenburg, and, not succeeding in carrying a motion to adjourn till December 4, went out in a body, leaving the assembly without a quorum. The king now thought himself justified in concluding that nothing was to be hoped from the labors of this body, and therefore, on the 5th of December, dissolved it.

Some kings, under these circumstances, might have been inclined to have nothing more to do with constitution making. If we mistake not, the present king, with his present spirit, would have thought it right to make the turbulent character of the convention and of the masses a pretext for withholding from them the power to stamp their character on the national institutions. Such a course might probably have been pursued. The king had control of the army. The excesses of the Liberals began to produce a reaction. The National Assembly, during its session in Berlin, after it had been adjourned by the king, had resolved that the royal ministry had no right to impose taxes so long as the assembly was unable peaceably to pursue its deliberations, and designed, by giving this resolution the form of a law, to lead the people in this manner to break loose from the Government. This attempt to usurp authority was doomed to be disappointed. The assembly, having overstepped its prerogatives, lost its influence. The king found himself again in possession of the reins of power. It rested with him to punish the temerity of the people by tightening the reins, or on his own authority, without the coöperation of any assembly, to give the nation a constitution. To take the former course he had not the courage, even if he had wished to do so; besides, he doubtless saw clearly enough that, though such a policy might succeed for a time, it would ultimately lead to another outbreak. He had, too, no great confidence in his power to win toward his person the popular favor. With all his talents and

amiable traits, he had not the princely faculty of knowing how to inspire the people with a sense of his excellences, and was conscious of this defect. He chose not unnecessarily to increase an estrangement which had already been to him a source of such deep mortification. He therefore issued, on the 5th of December, immediately after dissolving the National Assembly, a constitution substantially the same as that which still exists, with the statement prefixed that it should not go into operation until after being revised. This revision was to be made at the first session of the two chambers, to be elected in accordance with an election law issued on the next day.

The two chambers met February 26, 1849. After a session of two months, during which the lower chamber showed a disposition to modify the constitution more than was agreeable to the king, the upper chamber was ordered to adjourn, the lower was dissolved, and a new election ordered. The new Parliament met August 7. The revision was completed on the last of January, 1850. On the 6th of February, the king, in the presence of his ministers and of both chambers, swore to observe the constitution. Before doing so, he made an address, in which he explained his position, alluding in a regretful strain to the scenes of violence in the midst of which the constitution had been drawn up, expressing his gratitude to the chambers for their assistance in perfecting the hastily executed work, calling upon them to stand by him in opposition to all who might be disposed to make the liberty granted by the king a screen for hiding their wicked designs against the king, and declaring: 'In Prussia, the king must rule; and I do not rule because it is a pleasure, God knows, but because it is God's ordinance; therefore, I *will reign*. A free people under a free king—that was my watchword ten years ago; it is the same to-day, and shall be the same as long as I live.' The ministers and the members of the two chambers, after the king had sworn to support the constitution, took the same oath, and in addition one of loyalty to the king. The new government was inaugurated. Prussia had become a limited monarchy.

It is at this point appropriate to take a general view of the Prussian constitution itself. It has been variously amended since 1850, but not changed in any essential features; without dwelling on these amendments, therefore, we consider it as it now stands.

As to the king: he is, as such, wholly irresponsible. He cannot be called to account for any act which he does in his capacity as monarch. But his ministers may be impeached. They have to assume and bear the responsibility of all royal acts. None of these acts are valid unless signed by one or more of the ministers. To the king is intrusted all executive power; the command of the army; the unconditioned right of appointing and dismissing his ministers, of declaring war and concluding peace, of conferring honors and titles, of convoking the national diet, closing its sessions, proroguing and dissolving it. He *must*, however, annually call the Houses together between November 1 and the middle of January, and cannot adjourn them for a longer period than thirty days, nor more than once during a session, except with their own consent. Without the assent of the diet he cannot make treaties with foreign countries nor rule over foreign territory. He has no independent legislative power, except so far as this is implied in his right to provide for the execution of the laws, and, when the diet is not in session, in case the preservation of the public safety or any uncommon exigency urgently demands immediate action. All such acts, however, must, at the next session of the Houses, be laid before them for approval.

The ministry consists of nine members, under the presidency of the minister of foreign affairs; besides him are the ministers of finance, of war, of justice, of worship (religious, educational, and medicinal affairs), of the interior (police and statistical affairs), of trade and public works (post office, railroad affairs, etc.), of agricultural affairs, and of the royal house (matters relating to the private property of the royal family). The supervision exercised by the ministry over the various interests of the land is much more immediate and general than that of the President's cabinet in the United States. Now, however, their authority in these matters is of course conditioned by the constitution and the laws. The ministers are allowed to enter either House at pleasure, and must always be heard when they wish to speak. On the other hand, either House can demand the presence of the ministers.

The legislative power is vested in the king and the two Houses of Parliament. The consent of all is necessary to the passing of every law. These Houses (at first called First and Second Chambers, now House of Lords and House of Delegates—*Herrenhaus* and *Abgeordnetenhaus*) must both be convoked or prorogued at the same time. In general a law may be first proposed by the king or by either of the Houses. But financial laws must first be discussed by the House of Delegates; and the budget, as it comes from the lower to the upper House, cannot be amended by the latter, but must be adopted or rejected as a whole.

The House of Lords is made up of various classes of persons, all originally designated by the king, though in the case of some the office is hereditary. They represent the nobility, the cities, the wealth, and the learning of the land. Each of the five universities furnishes a member. The king has the right to honor any one at pleasure, as a reward for distinguished services, with a seat in this body. Of course, as the members hold office for life, and hold their office by the royal favor, it may generally be expected to be a tolerably conservative body, and to vote in accordance with the wishes of the king.

The House of Delegates consists of three hundred and fifty-two members, elected by the people, but not directly. They are chosen, like our Presidents, by electors, who are directly chosen by the people. Two hundred and fifty inhabitants are entitled to one elector. Every man from the age of twenty-five is allowed to vote unless prohibited for specific reasons. But strict equality in the right of suffrage is not granted. The voters of each district are divided into three classes, the first of which is made up of so many of the largest taxpayers as together pay a third of the taxes; the second, of so many of the next richest as pay another third; the last class, of the remainder. Each of these divisions votes separately, and each elects a third part of the electors. The House of Delegates is chosen once in three years, unless in the mean time the king dissolves it, in which case a new election must take place at once.

As to the rights of Prussians in general, the constitution provides that all in the eye of the law are equal. The old distinctions of classes still exists: there are still nobles, with the titles prince, count, and baron; but the special privileges which they formerly enjoyed are not secured to them by the constitution. The king can honor any one with the rank of nobility; but the name is the most that can be conferred. In most cases the right of primogeniture does not prevail, so that the aristocracy of Prussia is of much less consequence than that of England. The poverty which so often results from the division of the estates of nobles has led to the establishment of numerous so-called *Fräuleinstifter*—charitable foundations for such a support of poor female members of noble families as becomes their rank. Many of these institutions were formerly nunneries. It is further provided by the constitution that public offices shall be open to all; that personal freedom and the inviolability of private property and dwellings shall be secured; that all shall enjoy the right of petition, perfect freedom of speech, the liberty of forming organizations for the accomplishment of any legal object; that a censorship of the press can in no case be exercised, and that no limitation of the freedom of the press can be introduced except by due process of law; that civil and political rights shall not be affected by religious belief, and that the right of filling ecclesiastical offices shall not belong to the state. Only 'in case of war or insurrection, and of consequent imminent danger,' has the Government a right to infringe on the above specified immunities of the citizens and the press.

The foregoing is all that need be given in order to convey a general idea of what the Prussian constitution is. It is in its provisions so specific and clear, that one would hardly expect that disputes respecting its meaning could have reached the height of bitterness which has characterized discussions of its most fundamental principles. The explanation of this fact is to be sought in the mode of the introduction of the constitution itself. The English constitution has been the growth of centuries; the Prussian, of a day. The latter, moreover, was not, like ours, the fundamental law of a new nation, but a constitution designed to introduce a radical change in the form of a government which, during many centuries, had been acquiring a fixed character. It undertook to remodel at one stroke the whole political system. Not indeed as though there had been no sort of preparation for this change.

The general advance in national culture, the general anticipation of the change, as well as the actual approaches toward it in the administrative measures of Frederick the Great and Frederick William III., paved the way for the introduction of a popular element in the Government. Nevertheless, the actual, formal introduction itself was sudden. The constitution was not, in the specific form which it took, the result of experience and experiment. And, as all history shows, attempts to fix or reconstruct social systems on merely theoretical principles are liable to fail, because they cannot foresee and provide for all the contingencies which may interfere with the application of the theories. Moreover, in the case of Prussia, as not in that of the United States, the constitution was not made by the people for themselves, but given to them by a power standing over against them. There was, therefore, not only a possibility, as in any case there might be, that the instrument could be variously interpreted on account of the different modes of thinking and difference of personal interests, which always affect men's opinions; but there was here almost a certainty that this would be the case on account of the gulf of separation which, in spite of all the bridges which often are built over it, divides a monarch, especially an absolute, hereditary monarch, from his subjects. In the case before us, it is certain that the king conceded more than he wished to concede, and that the people received less than they wished to receive. That they should agree in their understanding of the constitution is therefore not at all to be expected. The most that the well wishers of the land could have hoped was that the misunderstandings would not be radical, and that in the way of practical experience the defects of the constitution might be detected and remedied, and the mutual relations of the rulers and the ruled become mutually understood and peacefully acquiesced in.

What the Prussian Conservatives so often insist on, viz., that a constitutional government should have been gradually developed, not suddenly substituted for a form of government radically different, is therefore by no means without truth. Whether we are to conclude that the fault has been in the process not beginning sooner, or merely in its being too rapid, is perhaps a question in which we and they might disagree. On the supposition that the present state of intelligence furnishes a sufficient basis for a constitutional government, it would seem as though the last fifty years has been a period long enough in which to put it into successful operation. All that the present generation know of politics has certainly been learned within that time: if the mere practical exercise of political rights is all that is needed in order to develop the new system, there might at least an excellent beginning have been made long before 1850. When we consider, therefore, that the Government, after taking the initiatory steps in promoting this development, stopped short, and rather showed a disposition to discourage it entirely, these clamors of the Conservatives must seem somewhat out of taste. To Americans especially, who can accommodate themselves to changes, even though they may be somewhat sudden, such pleas for more time and a more gradual process may appear affected, if not puerile. It must be remembered, however, that to a genuine German nothing is more precious than a process of development. Whatever is not the result of a due course of *Entwicklung*, is a suspicious object. Anything which seems to break abruptly in upon the prescribed course is abnormal. Whatever is produced before the embryonic process is complete is necessarily a monster, from which nothing good can be hoped. The same idea is often advanced by the Conservatives in another form. The Liberals, they say, are trying to break loose from *history*. A prominent professor, in an address before an assembly of clergymen in Berlin, defined the principle of democracy to be this: 'The majority is subject to no law but its own will; it is therefore limited by no historically acquired rights; history has no rights over against the sovereign will of the present generation.' By historically acquired rights is meant in particular the right of William I. to rule independently because his predecessors did so. By what right the great elector robbed the nobles of their prerogatives, and how, in case he did wrong in thus disregarding *their* 'historically acquired rights,' this wrong itself, by being continued two hundred years, becomes, in its turn, an acquired right, is not explained in the address to which we allude. The principal fault to be found with such reasoning as this of the Prussian Conservatives, is that it is altogether too vague and abstract. There can be no development without something new; there can be,

in social affairs, nothing new without some sort of innovation. Innovation, as such, can therefore not be condemned without condemning development. Moreover, development, as the organic growth of a political body, is something which takes care of itself, or rather is cared for by a higher wisdom than man's. To object to a proposed measure nothing more weighty than that it will not tend to develop the national history, has little meaning, and should have no force. The only question in such a case which men have to consider is whether the change is justified by the fundamental principles of right, be it that those principles have hitherto been observed or not.

What makes the arguments of the Conservatives all the more impertinent, however, is the fact that the question is no longer whether the constitution ought to be introduced, but whether, being introduced, it shall be observed. This is for the stiff royalists not so pleasant a question. Prussia is a constitutional monarchy; the king has taken an oath to rule in accordance with the constitution. It may be, undoubtedly is, true that none of the kings have wished the existence of just such a limit to their power; but shall they therefore try to evade the obligation which they have assumed? The Conservatives dare not say that the constitution ought to be violated, for that would look too much like the abandonment of their fundamental principle; they also hardly venture to say that they would prefer to have the king again strictly absolute, for that would look like favoring regression more than conservatism. Yet many have the conviction that an absolute monarchy would be preferable to the present, while the arguments of all have little force except as they tend to the same conclusion. The point of controversy between them and their opponents is often represented as being essentially this: Shall the king of Prussia be made as powerless as the queen of England? Against such a degradation of the dignity of the house of Hohenzollern all the convictions and prejudices of the royalists revolt. Such a surrender of all personal power, they say, and say truly, was not designed by Frederick William IV. when he gave the constitution; to ask the king, therefore, in all his measures to be determined by the House of Delegates, is an unconstitutional demand. It is specially provided that the *king* shall appoint and dismiss his own ministers; to ask him, therefore, to remove them simply because they are unacceptable to the House of Delegates, is to interfere with the royal prerogatives. The command of the army and the declaration of war belong only to the king; to binder him, therefore, in his efforts to maintain the efficiency of the army, or in his purposes to wage war or abstain from it, is an overstepping of the limits prescribed to the people's representatives.

We have here hinted at the principal elements in the controversy between the opposing political parties of Prussia. It is not our object to enter into the details of the various strifes which have agitated the land during the last six years, but only to sketch their general character. The query naturally arises, when one takes a view of the whole period, which has elapsed since the constitution was introduced, why the contest did not begin sooner. The explanation is to be found in the fact that until the present king began to rule, the Liberals in general did not vote at the elections. It will be remembered that the previous king absolutely refused to deal with the assembly which met early in 1849 to consider the constitution, and ordered a new election. At this election the Liberals saw that, if they reflected the old members, another dissolution would follow, and they therefore mostly staid away from the polls. Afterward, when the constitution had been formally adopted, the Government showed a determination to put down all liberal movements; consequently the Liberals made no special attempts to move. The Parliament was conservative, and so there was no occasion for strife between it and the king. Not till William I. became regent in place of his incapacitated brother, in 1859, did the struggle begin. The policy of the previous prime minister Manteuffel had produced general discontent. The people were ready to move, if an occasion was offered. It is therefore not to be wondered at that, when the new sovereign announced his purpose to pursue a more liberal course than his brother, the Liberal party raised its head, and sought to make itself felt. The new ministry was liberal, and for a while it seemed as though a new order of things had begun. But this was of short duration. The House of Delegates, consisting in great part of Liberals (or, to speak more strictly, of *Fortschrittsmänner*—Progress men—*Liberal* being the designation of a third party holding a middle

course between the two extremes, a party, however, naturally tending to resolve itself into the others, and now nearly extinct) urged the Government to adopt its radical measures. The king began to fear that, if he yielded to all the wishes of the House, he would lose his proper dignity and authority. He therefore began to pursue a different policy: the more urgently the delegates insisted on liberal measures, the less inclined was the king to regard their wishes. He had wished himself to take the lead in inaugurating the new era; as soon as others, more ambitious, went ahead of him, he took the lead again, by turning around and pulling in the opposite direction. The principal topics on which the difference was most decided were the ecclesiastical and the financial relations of the Government. Although the constitution provides for the perfect freedom of the church from the state, the union still existed, and indeed still exists. The House of Delegates attempted to induce the Government to carry out this provision of the constitution. There is no doubt that the motive of many of these attempts to divide church and state is a positive hostility to Christianity. The partial success which has followed them, viz., the securing of charter rights for other religious denominations than the Evangelical Church (*i.e.*, the Union Church, consisting of what were formerly Lutheran and Reformed churches, but in 1817 united, and forming now together the established church), has given some prominence to the so-called *Freigemeinden*, organizations of freethinkers, who, though so destitute of positive religious belief that in one case, when an attempt was made to adopt a creed, an insuperable obstacle was met in discussing the first article, viz., on the existence of God, yet meet periodically and call themselves religious congregations. There are, moreover, many others, regular members of the established church, who have no interest in religious matters, and would for that reason like to be freed from the fetters which now hold them. There are, however, many among the best and most discreet Christians who, for the good of the church, wish to see it weaned from the breast of the state. But the great majority of the clergy, especially of the consistories (the members of which are appointed by the Government, mediately, however, now, through the *Oberkirchenrath*), are decidedly opposed to the separation; and, as they speak for the churches, the provision of the constitution allowing the separation is a dead letter. There is no denying that, if it were now to be fully carried out, the consequences to the church might be, for a time at least, disastrous. The people have always been used to the present system; they would hardly know how to act on any other. Moreover, a large majority of the church members are destitute of active piety; to put the interests of religion into the hands of such men would seem to be a dangerous experiment. Especially is it true of the mercantile classes, of those who are pecuniarily best able to maintain religious institutions, that they are in general indifferent to religious things. This being the case, one cannot be surprised at the reluctance of those in ecclesiastical authority to desire the support of the state to be withdrawn. Nevertheless it cannot but widen the chasm between the established church and the freethinkers, that the former urges upon the Government to continue a policy which is plainly inconsistent with the constitution, and that the Government yields to the urging.

A more vital point in the controversy between the king and the Liberals was the disposition of the finances. The House of Delegates, in the session lasting from January 14 to March 11, 1862, insisted on a more minute specification than the ministry had given of the use to be made of the moneys to be appropriated. The king at length, wearied with their importunity, dissolved the House, upon which a new election followed in the next month. The excitement was great. The Government seems to have hoped for a favorable result, at least for a diminution of the Liberal majority. The Minister of the Interior issued a communication to all officials, announcing that they would be expected to vote in favor of the Government. A similar notification was made to the universities, but was protested against. Most of the consistories summoned the clergymen to labor to secure a vote in favor of the king. But in spite of all these exertions, the new House, like the other, contained an overwhelming majority of Progress men. At the beginning of the new session in May, however, both parties seemed more yielding than before. Attention was given less to questions of general character, more to matters of practical concern. But at last the schism developed itself again. The king had

determined to reorganize and enlarge the army, to which end larger appropriations were needed than usual. The military budget put the requisite sum at 37,779,043 thalers (about twenty-five million dollars); the House voted 31,932,940, rejecting the proposition of the minister by a vote of three hundred and eight to eleven. A change in the ministry followed, but not a change such as would be expected in England—just the opposite. At the dissolution of the previous House the Liberal ministry had given place to a more conservative one; now this conservative one gave place to one still more conservative, Herr von Bismarck became Minister of State. The House then voted that the appropriations must be determined by the House, else every use made by the Government of the national funds would be unconstitutional. The king's answer to this was an order closing the session. A new session began early in 1863. The same controversy was renewed. The king had introduced his new military scheme; he had used, under the plea of stern necessity, money not voted by Parliament. He declared that the good of the country required it, and demanded anew that the House make the requisite appropriation. But the House was not to be moved. So far from wishing an increase of the military expenses, the Liberal party favored a reduction of the term of service from three to two years. The king affirmed that he knew better what the interests of the nation required, and, as the head of the army, he must do what his best judgment dictated respecting its condition. Thus the session passed without anything of consequence being accomplished. The House of Lords rejected the budget as it came from the other chamber, and the delegates would not retreat. Consequently another dead lock was the result. The mutual bitterness increased. Minister von Bismarck, a man of considerable talent, but not of spotless character, and exceedingly offensive in his bearing toward his opponents, became so odious that the delegates seemed ready to reject any proposition coming from him, whether good or bad. They tried to induce the king to remove him. But this was like the wind trying to blow off the traveller's coat. Instead of being moved by such demonstrations to dismiss the premier, the king manifested in the most express manner his dissatisfaction with such attempts of the House to interfere with his prerogatives. One might think that he had resolved to retain Bismarck out of pure spite, though he might personally be ever so much inclined to drop him. The controversy became more and more one of opposing wills. May 22, the House voted an address to the king, stating its views of the state of the country, the rights of the House, etc., and expressing the conviction that this majesty had been misinformed by his counsellors of the true state of public feeling. The king replied to the address a few days later, stating that he knew what he was doing and what was for the good of the people; that the House was to blame for the fruitlessness of the session; that the House had unconstitutionally attempted to control him in respect to the ministry and foreign affairs; that he did not need to be informed by the House what public sentiment was, since Prussia's kings were accustomed to live among and for the people; and that, a further continuance of the session being manifestly useless, it should close on the next day. Accordingly it was closed without the passage of any sort of appropriation bill, and the Government, as before, ruled practically without a diet.

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