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Содержание

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THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN RAILWAYS

The condition of our railways, and their financial prospects, should interest all of us. It has become a common remark, that railways have benefited everybody but their projectors. There is a strong doubt in the minds of many intelligent persons, whether *any* railways have actually paid a return on the capital invested in them. It is believed that one of two results inevitably takes place: in the one case, there is not business enough to earn a dividend; in the other, although the apparent net earnings are large enough to pay from six to eight per cent. on the cost, yet in a few years it is discovered that the machine has been wearing itself out so fast that the cost of renewal has absorbed more than the earnings, and the deficiency has been made up

by creating new capital or running in debt, to supply the place of what has been worn out and destroyed. The Illinois Central has been pointed out as an example of the first kind; the New-York Central, of the second; while the New-York and Erie is a melancholy instance of a railway which, never having enough legitimate business of its own, has worn itself out in carrying at unremunerative rates whatever it could steal from its neighbors. The general opinion of the community, after the crash of 1857, was, that all our railways approximated more or less closely to these unhappy conditions, and it was merely a question of time as to their final bankruptcy and ruin. Even now, when they have recovered themselves considerably, and are paying dividends again, capitalists are very shy of them.

It is our belief, contrary to the current opinion, that during the next decade such a change will have taken place in the condition of our railways, that we shall see them averaging eight to ten per cent, dividends on their legitimate cost. We propose in the present article to give the reasons which have led us to this conclusion.

The causes to which may be traced the languishing condition of our railways may be stated as follows:—Financial mismanagement; imperfect construction; and want of individual responsibility in their operation.

The financial mismanagement of our railways has arisen from precisely the opposite cause to that which has made British railways cost from two to three times as much as they should have

done. Their excess of cost was owing to their having too much money; ours to our having too little. They were robbed right and left for Parliamentary expenses, land-damages, etc. The Great Northern, from London to York, three hundred and fourteen miles, expended five millions of dollars in getting its charter. Mr. E. Stephenson says that the cost of land and compensation on British railways has averaged forty-three thousand dollars per mile, or as much as the total cost of the railways of Massachusetts.

American railway-companies have never been troubled with too much money. They have usually commenced with a great desire for economy, selecting a "cheap" engineer, and getting a low estimate of the probable cost. A portion of the amount is subscribed for in stock, and the next thing is to run in debt. "First mortgage bonds" are issued and sold. The proceeds are expended, and the road is not half done. Another issue is sold at a great discount, and yet another, if possible. As the road approaches completion, the desperate Directors raise money by the most desperate expedients, such as would bankrupt any merchant in the country in his private business. Sometimes the road has vitality enough to work itself out of its troubles; but in other cases, unfortunately too numerous, it passes into the hands of the bond-holders, and all it can earn goes to remunerate trustees, and pay legal expenses, commissions, etc.

The financial mistakes of our railways have been, endeavoring to do too much with too little money, and crippling themselves

with a load of debt that no project could stand under. This has led, as a matter of course, to the second evil,—Imperfect construction. The projectors of a new railway have thus reasoned with themselves:—"The average cost of our railways has been between forty and fifty thousand dollars per mile, and this one, no doubt, will reach those figures before we get through. But it will never do to talk so, or we could not get the money to build it. Mr. Transit, our engineer, says it can be opened for twenty thousand dollars per mile, and we will earn money enough to finish it by-and-by." So they go on, and, to get the road open for the small sum attainable, everything has to be "scrimped" and pared down to the lowest scale. The cuttings are taken out just wide enough for the cars to pass through, and the ends of the ties overhang the edges of the embankments. Temporary trestle-work of wood is substituted for stone bridges and culverts. Some reckless fellow tosses down the iron as fast as a horse can trot, and the road is opened.

Another way in which imperfect construction is inevitable is where companies admit their inability to be their own financiers by giving some influential contractor his price, and allowing him to "do his own engineering," in consideration of his taking such securities as they have to offer, and which he undertakes to float by means of his superior connections. Having the thing his own way, and being naturally anxious to build his road for as little money as possible, he pares down everything even below the standard of embarrassed railway-boards. If the road will only

hold together until he has sold his bonds, it is all he asks. If the business is good, the road will perhaps be finished, or what is thought to be finished, some day or other. If business is dull, nothing is done, and the bridges and trestle-works remain such murder-traps as that on the Albany Northern Road which broke down last year.

But it is not with such miserable apologies for railways that we have to deal. It is on our really valuable roads, like the main lines in Massachusetts and New York, that we shall show that the evils of imperfect construction are felt, and will be felt, until a thorough reconstruction has taken place. It was observed some time ago that the returns of the Massachusetts railways for 1856 showed that there were 1,325 miles open, costing on an average $46,480 per mile, or $61,611,721 in all. The receipts per mile of road were $7,217, the expenses $4,260, leaving a net earning of $2,957, or 40 per cent. of the whole. This was equal to 6.42 per cent. on the whole cost of the railways.

For the same year the returns of all the railways in Great Britain showed that there were 8,502 miles open, costing $173,040 per mile, or $1,506,826,363 in all; and that the receipts per mile of road were $13,296, the expenses $6,249, leaving a net earning of $7,047, or 53 per cent of the whole. This was equal to a dividend of 3.97 per cent. on the whole cost. These figures showed, that, however extravagantly the British railways had been built, they certainly were worked more economically than our own.

At first view it might be thought that the economy was due to their greater business; but further inquiry showed, that, from the better shape of American cars, and from the wants of the public requiring fewer trains, the actual receipts per mile run of Massachusetts trains were $1.83 against $1.44 of British trains. The expenses per mile run of Massachusetts trains were $1.08, while those of British trains were only 63 3/8 cents. Could Massachusetts railways be worked as cheaply, the result would be that they could declare nine per cent. dividends on their cost, instead of six.

Here offered a rich reward for investigation. Accordingly two gentlemen well known to the railway world, Messrs. Zerah Colburn and Alexander L. Holley, made a trip to England for the purpose of discovering how it was that John Bull could work his railways so much cheaper than Brother Jonathan. The results of their investigations are embodied in a handsome quarto volume, illustrated with numerous drawings, which has been subscribed for by most of the railways and prominent railway-men throughout the country. It is not too much to say, that the effect of it, in directing the attention of American railway-managers to the weak points of their system, has resulted already in a saving to the stockholders of our railways of millions of dollars.[1]

[1] The statistics of the English railways given in this article are taken from the volume here referred to. Because some cunning English contractors in South America took advantage of the statements in this book to depreciate the American railway system and American civil engineers, for their own private advantage in obtaining work,

More than half the cost of operating a railway consists of the repairs of track and machinery and the cost of fuel and oil. These expenses are exactly proportional to the mileage of trains. It was soon seen that the greater economy of British railways was almost entirely confined to these items.

The cost of "maintenance of way" upon English railways was 10 1/2 cents per mile run, against 25 cents on those of Massachusetts. The cost of repairs of cars and engines was nearly the same on both. The cost of fuel per mile run was 6 1/2 cents, against 15 cents. While English trains are from 20 to 30 per cent. lighter than ours, they average 25 per cent. faster, so that practically these conditions must nearly balance each other. In alignment the English roads are superior to ours, and as to gradients they have some advantage; although grades of 40 to 52.8 feet per mile are quite common. In climate they have less severe difficulties to contend with; although their moist weather, the nature of their soil, and their heavy earthworks involve much extra expense. In prices, the advantage is at least 20 per cent, in their favor.

These considerations might account for an economy of 30 per cent. as compared with our expenses for maintenance of way, but they cannot account for the great actual economy of 60 per cent. which we have seen. We must seek farther to find the explanation

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some Americans have been so foolish as to decry the book altogether, as traitorous to the interests of the country. Such mingled bigotry and conceit, shrinking from just criticism, would fetter all progress but fortunately it is rare.

of this, and we soon discover it by comparing the condition of the road-beds and tracks on the railways of the two countries.

The English railways are thoroughly built, are not opened to the public until finished, and no expense is spared to keep them in order. American railways are too often put in operation when half finished. The consequence is, they never are finished, and are continually wearing out,—not lasting, on an average, more than half as long as they should, if once thoroughly constructed. Wooden bridges are allowed to rot down for want of protection. Rails are left to be battered to pieces for want of drainage and ballast. One road spends thirty-four thousand dollars a year for "watching cuts," and fifty-five thousand more for removing slides that should never have taken place. Everything is done for the moment, and nothing thoroughly. Who can wonder that this system tells upon the cost of maintenance of way?

The amount of fuel burned is the exact measure of the resistance to be overcome, and a rough track must necessarily require a larger amount of fuel. The English roads now generally burn bituminous coal; most American roads burn wood; but these being reduced to the same equivalent quantity, it will be found that the American roads burn nearly twice as much as the English.

That the cost of the repairs of American cars and engines is not more is attributable solely to their superior design. An English engine and cars would be battered to pieces in a few months on our rough roads, on account of their rigidity and concentration

of weight; while those of America, by yielding to shocks both vertically and horizontally, escape injury. American cars and engines are as much superior in design to the English as their roads excel ours in solidity and finish.

But it will be asked, Shall we imitate the notorious extravagance of British railways built at a cost of one hundred and seventy-three thousand dollars per mile?

The answer is plain. The only thing about them to be imitated is their thorough and permanent construction. That this need not involve extravagance is evident from the fact that the actual cost of construction has been only eighty-eight thousand dollars per mile of double-track railway, including all the costly viaducts, tunnels, and bridges, which in many cases a more judicious location or a bolder use of gradients would have avoided. The remainder of their cost is made up of law and Parliamentary expenses, engineering and management, land and damages, interest on stock, bonuses, dividends paid from capital, etc., etc., amounting to eighty-five thousand dollars per mile. The folly of all this has been seen, and neither the financial nor the engineering errors of that day are now repeated. To show that a better system prevails, it is only necessary to state that between 1848 and 1858, 390 miles of first-class single-track railway have been opened at an average cost of $46.692 per mile, and in all that relates to economical maintenance are not inferior to any in the kingdom.

Such railways as these, costing no more than our own, we

would hold up for imitation. How, then, do they differ from ours? or rather, what must be done to put ours into the same condition of economical efficiency?

In the first place, stone culverts and earth embankments should replace wooden structures, wherever possible. As fast as wooden bridges decay, they should be replaced with iron; and if the piers and abutments require it, as is too often the case, they should be rebuilt in a substantial manner.

The tubular iron bridge we do not recommend, on account of its excessive cost. For short spans of sixty feet and under, two riveted boiler-plate girders under the track make a cheap and permanent bridge, and can be manufactured in any part of the country. For large spans there are several excellent forms of iron trusses, Bollman's, Fink's, or, still better, the wrought-iron lattice.

Cuttings should be widened, if not already wide enough, so as to admit of good ditches along the track. The slopes should be dressed off and turfed. This costs little, and prevents the earth from washing down and choking up the ditches, and much of that terrible nuisance, dust.

The secret of all good road-making, whether railways or common roads, lies in thorough drainage. Until our railways are well drained, it is of little use to try to improve the condition of the track. "In an economical view," says Mr. Colburn, "the damage occasioned by water is far greater than the utmost cost of its removal. The track is disturbed, the iron bruised,

the fastenings strained, the chairs broken, the ties rotted, the resistance and thereby the consumption of fuel increased, and the whole wear and tear greatly enhanced."

Next to drainage in importance is plenty of good ballast. The New-England roads are well ballasted, as a general thing; but in the West, where gravel is scarce, they do not trouble themselves to find a substitute. Even the great New York and Erie road, after ten years' use, is only half ballasted, which accounts for its being more than half worn out.

Much has been said and written on the necessity of a good joint for the rails, and many are the inventions for securing this object,—"compound rails," "fished joints," "bracket chairs," "sleeve joints," etc., etc. But without better road-beds no form of superstructure will last, and with road-beds as good as they ought to be almost any simple and easily adjusted arrangement will answer well enough.

But a more important matter than all these, so far as the economy of maintenance is concerned, is the quality and shape of the iron rails, forming one-eighth of the whole cost of our railways. Where companies, instead of buying rails, are selling bonds, they have no right to complain, if the iron turn out as worthless as the debentures. But where they pay cash, they can insist on good iron, and will get it, if they will pay the price, which will rule from eighteen to twenty dollars per ton over that of the poorest article. Nor should the shape and weight of the rail be overlooked. Experience, that stern schoolmaster, has taught us,

that, while heavy rails of seventy pounds to the yard, and over, of ordinary iron, go to pieces in three or four years, sixty-pound rails of well-worked and good iron will last more than double that time. The extraordinary durability of the forty-five pound rails made for the Reading Railway Company by the Ebbw Vale Company in 1837 is well known to railway men.

A short calculation will show the superiority, in point of economy, of light and good rails to heavy rails of an inferior quality. A seventy-pound rail requires 110 tons to the mile, costing, at 860 per ton, $6,600. At the end of four years this has to be re-rolled at a cost of $30 per ton, or $3,300 more. This is equal in eight years to an annual depreciation of $1,237 per mile. A sixty-pound rail requires 94 tons to a mile, costing for the best iron that can be rolled $80 per ton, or $7,520 per mile. This would last eight years, and the annual depreciation would be $940 per mile, or $297 less than the other. The 30,000 miles of American railways are thus taxed annually nearly nine millions of dollars for preferring quantity to quality.

In England, it is the custom to retain the best engineering talent upon railways, after as well as during construction. In this country, as soon as the engineer has made out his "final estimate," he is dismissed with as little ceremony as a daylaborer. We employ the best mechanical engineers that we can find to look after the repairs of our engines and cars; while the road, which is more important, and upon the good condition of which we have seen that the success or failure of a railway

as a commercial enterprise may depend, is handed over to some ignorant fellow whose only qualifications are industry and obedience.

There are no unmixed evils in this world. The impecuniosity of American railways, besides causing the bad results which we have described, has had a good effect upon the training of American engineers. Being obliged to do a great deal with a little money, they have steered clear of those enormous extravagances which have characterized the works of such engineers as the late Mr. Brunel, colossal less in proportions than cost. It has been well observed, that there was more talent shown on a certain division of the New-York and Erie Railway, in avoiding the necessity for viaducts, than could possibly have been exhibited in constructing them. This remark is a key to the difference between the old English and the American systems of civil engineering. The one is for show, the other for use. We say the *old* English system, because a better practice has now arisen. Cost is looked to as well as splendor; and there is no engineer now in England whose reputation, would sustain him in constructing such monuments of extravagance as the Great Western Railway or the Britannia Bridge. American civil engineers have not been fairly treated. The wretched construction of many of our railways, and the uneconomical condition of all, have been cast against them by their English brethren as a reproach. But the faults of construction, we have shown, are attributable to another cause. No engineer of standing would lend himself to many of

the schemes that have been pushed through in the West. But in order to build a "cheap" road, it is only necessary to get a "cheap" engineer, and that is a commodity easily picked up. If their ignorance and blunders tarnish the fair fame of the profession, it cannot be helped. But if American engineers of standing had been allowed to finish the railways begun by them, and to take care of them and see that they were not abused after they were finished, our railway securities would be quoted at higher rates than they now are.

Although there are many civil engineers of standing and experience who have been thrown out of employment by the general stoppage of public works, and who are better qualified to take care of that costly and delicate machine, a Railway, than men whose knowledge is entirely empirical, yet few railways employ a resident engineer. Those that follow this practice are generally supposed to do so because he is a relative of some Director, and wants a place, and not because such an officer is really required.

"Construction accounts," says Mr. Colburn, "can never be closed, until our roads are *built*. To attempt it only involves a destruction account of fearful magnitude. Under our present system, we are *perpetually rebuilding* our roads, not realizing the *life* of our works, and thereby running capital to waste."

"With good earthwork, thoroughly drained, well-ballasted tracks, rails of good iron, correct form, not exceeding 60 pounds per yard, and properly supported at the joints, the ties properly

preserved, and the whole maintained by a judicious system of repairs, the average working expenses might unquestionably be reduced by as much as 18 cents per mile run."

The mileage of the Massachusetts railways for 1859 was 5,949,761 miles run, and the expenses of operating $0.93, being a saving of 15 cents over those of 1856, amounting to $892,464. If, by a judicious expenditure of $5,000 per mile, a still further saving of 18 cents per mile run could be made, it would amount, on the present mileage, to $1,070,956 per annum, which, the receipts being equal, would return eight per cent. on the increased capital of sixty-eight and a half millions of dollars.

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We have thus shown the combined effects of financial mismanagement and imperfect construction upon our railway property. But there is a third evil to be cured before it can become productive.

Under the present system of railway management, everybody is busy getting rich at the expense of the stockholders. Railway men are as honest as the average of mankind, but there is no reason why they should be more so; and if their temptations are greater, a certain percentage of them will inevitably yield to those temptations,—just as statistical tables show that the average number of arrests for drunkenness and disorderly conduct is greater on Sundays and holidays than on working-days.

A few years ago it was impossible to compare the results of the working of one railway with those of another. The returns were so ingeniously made out, that only one thing was certain, —the amount of dividend that it pleased the Board of Directors to declare. If this was three or four per cent. for the half-year, the stockholders were delighted, and passed a vote of thanks to those worthy gentlemen for devoting so much valuable time to their interests gratuitously. What if a dividend was not earned? it was easy enough to raise money in Wall Street on the Company's paper, until some excuse could be found for a new issue of bonds or stock. But those benefactors of the human race, Tuckerman and Schuyler, put a stop to all this. After their proceedings became public, and still more certainly after the crash of 1857, if railways did not earn a dividend, they had to say so. This led to investigations, and stockholders became "posted," as the phrase is. Chiefly by the exertions of one newspaper, the "Boston Railway Times," railway companies were shamed into giving their reports in such form as to distinguish the expenses per mile run, for fuel, oil, repairs of road, machines, etc., etc. This gave a common standard of comparison; and, as we have seen, it was made use of to discover in what particular departments English railways were worked more economically than our own. This has led, as we have also seen, to a great reduction in the cost of operating; and the revival of railways, as an investment, dates from that time, 1857-8.

But there is something more wanted yet. As we have said,

railway men are not out of the reach of temptation. Let the various officers of a railway manage it so as not to exceed the average expense of other roads of their State, and their reputation stands high. Let them reduce their expenses below the average, and their power is despotic. If they are men of ability, they can do all this,—operate their road for less than many others, run their trains regularly and without accident, even treat the public with civility, and make themselves rich, in a few years, by percentages and commissions on the cost of supplies, and by other modes, which, perhaps, had better not be referred to here. If any one doubt this, let him take pains to inquire how large a proportion of railway-men get rich in a few years on salaries of from one to two thousand dollars per annum. Nor can this be prevented; for every new check is only a transfer of power from intelligent to ignorant hands; and ignorance, however honest, is a more expensive manager and easier victim than knavery. There is but one remedy. Make it for men's interest to reduce the expenses of operating to a minimum. Make it for their interest to do so, by allowing them to share in the profits, and then the question is solved, and you have a thousand vigilant guardians of your property day and night. Let all supplies be furnished by public competition under sealed tender, as is done in the army and navy, and on the large railways of Great Britain.

There are, no doubt, practical difficulties in the way of carrying out these changes, as there are in introducing all new systems. You have to meet the doubts and suspicions of those

who are unacquainted with them, the opposition of interested parties, and the general feeling which influences all men to let well enough alone. But that there are no insuperable obstacles in the way is evident from the fact that this system has already been partially applied on a railway doing a very large business, the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore, under the able superintendence of S. M. Felton, Esq., who, in his last Report, says, "It still works well, and is productive of much saving to the Company.[2] It promotes regularity in running the trains, and in all branches of our business. It diminishes accidents, *by bringing home the responsibility directly upon individuals* instead of the corporation."

There is a great deal of significance in this last remark. Every one knows, that, when an accident happens on a railway, "no one is to blame,"—which means, that everybody should have so much blame as can be expressed by a fraction whose numerator is unity and whose denominator represents the whole number of employees. Such an infinitesimal dose of censure, contrary to the homeopathic doctrine, always produces infinitesimal results.

To what is the extraordinary success of the Hudson's Bay Company owing,—that wonderful organization which rules the wilds of British North America with a discipline which has no parallel in the history of mankind, except that of the order of

[2] The cost of operating this railway for 1859, as per last Report, was only 37.4 per cent. of the receipts, while that of the railways of Massachusetts for the same year was 56.9 per cent. The result is a dividend of 8-1/2 per cent. on capital, after paying the interest on bonded debt.

Jesuits? Simply to the fact, that every man whose duties require intelligent action is a partner of the Company, shares in its gains, and loses with its losses. And so it should be with our railway-employees. Instead of excusing waste of time and property by the stereotyped phrase, "The Company is rich and can stand it," they would strive to exercise a rigid economy, knowing that at the end of the week their pockets would be so much the heavier.

To show how the thing should be done would involve matters of detail which would be out of place here. What we desire to show is the principle. Instead of paying all men alike, good, bad, and indifferent, let the amount of a man's wages depend on his skill and intelligence; the more he shows, the better let him be paid. In almost every department of manufacturing and commercial business this is done. Why not in railway management?

We subjoin a tabular statement of the railways of the world, made up to 1857, except those of the United States, which are for 1858-9.

— |Name of country. |Cost per|Receipts |Percentage of| Percentage of | | | mile. | per mile| expenses to | net earnings | | | | of road.| receipts. | to total | | | | | capital. | |–|–|–|–|–| |Great Britain |$173,040| $13,296 | 47 | 4.00 | |Australia | 169,225| 6,810 | 72 | 1.02 | |India | 51,400| 8,645 | 42 | 4.09 | |France | 128,340| 13,530 | 44 | 6.58 | |Belgium | 81,955| 10,790 | 58 | 5.48 | |Austria | 92,325| 13,430 | 54 | 6.75 | |Prussia | 72,430| 9,915 | 45 | 7.44 | |Other German States| 66,160| 7,085 | 63 | 5.52 | |United States

| 41,376| 6,170 | 60 | 5.51 | –

From this it will be seen how much economy of working has to do with paying a dividend,—as in the case of the Indian railways, where, although the receipts are very small, the prime cost and expenses of working are also very small, and they divide 4.09 per cent, while the Australian railways, whose cost and expense of working are large, can pay only 1.02 per cent. It is proper to say, however, that this was during the "gold fever." Railways are now built in Australia for $50,000 per mile.

The railways of the United States occupy a very favorable position, both as to cost and amount of receipts per mile. During the last ten years, the principal efforts of their managers have been directed toward increasing the receipts. During the next ten, their policy will be to diminish the working expenses, leaving the receipts to increase with the natural growth of the country, and avoiding unhealthy competition for that delusive phantom, "through-trade," which has lured so many railways to financial shipwreck and ruin. If this policy be steadily followed, we shall see railway stocks once more a favorite investment.

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IN A FOG

A few minutes before one o'clock on the morning of Sunday, the 8th of February, 1857, Policeman Smithers, of the Third District, was meditatively pursuing his path of duty through the quietest streets of Ward Five, beguiling, as usual, the weariness of his watch by reminiscent Æthiopianisms, mellifluous in design, though not severely artistic in execution. Passing from the turbulent precincts of Portland and Causeway Streets, he had entered upon the solitudes of Green Street, along which he now dragged himself dreamily enough, ever extracting consolations from lugubrious cadences mournfully intoned. Very silent was the neighborhood. Very dismal the night. Very dreary and damp was Mr. Smithers; for a vile fog wrapped itself around him, filling his body with moist misery, and his mind with anticipated rheumatic horrors. Still he surged heavily along, tired Nature with tuneful charms sweetly restoring.

As he wound off a tender tribute to the virtues of the Ancient Tray, and was about sounding the opening notes of a requiem over the memory of the lost African Lily, surnamed Dale, one o'clock was announced by the bell of the Lynde-Street Church. Mr. Smithers's heart warmed a little at the thought of speedy respite from his midnight toil, and with hastening step he approached Chambers Street, and came within range of his relief post. He paused a moment upon the corner, and gazed around.

It is the peculiar instinct of a policeman to become suspicious at every corner.

Nothing stirring. Silence everywhere. He listens acutely. No sound. He strains his eyes to penetrate the misty atmosphere. He is satisfied that order reigns. He prepares to resume his march, and the measure of his melancholy chant.

Three seconds more, and Policeman Smithers is another being. Now his hand convulsively grasps his staff; his foot falls lightly on the pavement; his carol is changed to a quick, sharp inhalation of the breath; for directly before him, just visible through the fog, a figure, lightly clad, leans from a window close upon the street, then clambers noiselessly upon the sill, leaps over, and dashes swiftly down Chambers Street, disappearing in the darkness.

Gathering himself well together, in an instant, Mr. Smithers is off and away in pursuit. His heavy rubber-boots spatter over the bricks with an echo that startles the sober residents from their slumbers. Strong of limb, and not wholly unaccustomed to such exercise, he rapidly gains upon the fugitive, who, finding himself so hotly followed, utters a faint cry, as if unable to control his terror, and suddenly darts into one of the numerous narrow passages which connect Chambers and Leverett Streets.

Not prepared for this sharp dodge, Mr. Smithers is for a moment unable to check his headlong plunges, and shoots past the opening a yard or two before the wet sidewalk affords him a foothold.

In great wrath, he turns about, and gropes his way cautiously through the lane in the narrow labyrinth of which the fugitive has disappeared,—always cautiously, for there are precipitous descents in Hammond Avenue, and deep arched door-ways, from which a sudden onslaught might be dangerous. But he meets no interruption here. Emerging into Leverett Street, he with difficulty descries a white garment distantly fluttering in the feeble light of a street-lamp. Any other color would have eluded him, but the way is clear now, and it is a mere question of strength and speed. He sets his teeth together, takes a full breath, and gives chase again.

Mr. Smithers has now passed the limits of his own beat, and he fears his adventure may be shared by some of his associates. For the world he would not have this happen. Nothing could tempt him at this moment to swing his rattle. His blood is roused, and he will make this capture himself, alone and without aid.

He rapidly reconsiders the chances.

"This fellow does not know the turns," he thinks, "or he would have taken Cushman Avenue, and then I should have lost him."

This is in his favor. On the other hand, Mr. Smithers's action is impeded by his heavy overcoat and rubber boots, and he knows that the pursued is unincumbered in all his movements.

It is a fierce, desperate struggle, that mad race down Leverett Street, at one o'clock on Sunday morning.

At each corner, the street-lamps throw a dull red haze around, revealing the fugitive's slender form as he rushes wildly through.

Another moment, and the friendly fog shelters and conceals him from view.

Breathless, panting, sobbing, he ere long is forced to relax his speed. The policeman, who has held his best energies in reserve, now puts forth his utmost strength.

Presently he gains upon the runaway so that he can detect the white feet pattering along the red bricks, rising and falling quite noiselessly. He ejects imprecations upon his own stout boots, which not only fail to fasten themselves firmly to the slippery pavements, but continually betray by their noisy splashing his exact position.

As they pass the next lamp, Mr. Smithers sees plainly enough that the end is near. The fugitive touches the ground with only the balls of his feet, as if each step were torture, and expels his breath with unceasing violence. He does not gasp or pant,—he groans.

Just at the bend in Leverett Street, leading to the bridge, there is a dark and half-hidden aperture among the ill-assorted houses. Into this, as a forlorn hope, the fugitive endeavors to fling himself. But the game is up. Here, at last, he is overhauled by Mr. Smithers, who, dropping a heavy hand upon his shoulder, whirls him violently to the ground. Having accomplished this exploit with rare dexterity, he forthwith proceeds to set the captive on his feet again, and to shake him about with sprightly vigor, according to established usage.

Mr. Smithers next makes a rapid but close examination of his prize, who, bewildered by the fall, stares vacantly around,

and speaks no word. He was a young man, apparently about twenty years old, with nothing peculiar in appearance except an unseasonable deficiency in clothing. Coat, waistcoat, trousers, boots, hat, had he none; shirt, drawers, and stockings made up his scant raiment. Mr. Smithers set aside the suspicion of burglary, which he had originally entertained, in favor of domestic disorder. The symptoms did not, to his mind, point towards delirium tremens.

Suddenly recovering consciousness, the youth was seized with a fit of trembling so violent that he with difficulty stood upright, and cried out in piteous tones,—

"For God's sake, let me go! let me go!"

Mr. Smithers answered by gruffly ordering the prisoner to move along with him.

By some species of inspiration—for, as the era of police uniforms had not then dawned, it could have been nothing else—the young man conceived the correct idea of the function of his custodian, and, after verifying his belief, expressed himself enraptured.

All his perturbation seemed to vanish at the moment.

The affair was getting too deep for Mr. Smithers, who could not fathom the idea of a midnight malefactor becoming jubilant over his arrest. So he gave no ear to the torrent of excited explanations that burst upon him, but silently took the direct route to the station.

Here he resigned his charge to Captain Merrill's care, and,

after narrating the circumstances, went forth again, attended by two choice spirits, to continue investigations. On reaching Chambers Street, he became confused and dubious. A row of houses, all precisely alike excepting in color, stood not far from the corner of Green Street. From a lower window of one of these he believed that the apparition had sprung; but, in his agitation, he had neglected to mark with sufficient care the precise spot. Now, no open window nor any other trace of the event could be discovered.

The three policemen, having arrived at the end of their wits, went back to the station for an extension.

There they found Captain Morrill listening to a strange and startling story, the incidents of which can here be more coherently recapitulated than they were on that occasion by the half-distracted sufferer.

On the morning of Saturday, February the 7th, this young man, whose name was Richard Lorrimer, and who was a clerk in a New-York mercantile house, started from that city in the early train for Boston, whither he had been despatched to arrange some business matters that needed the presence of a representative of the firm. It chanced to be his first journey of any extent; but the day was cheerless and gloomy, and the novelty of travel, which would otherwise have been attractive, was not especially agreeable. After exhausting the enlivening resources of a package of morning papers, which at that time overflowed with records of every variety of crime, from the daily

murder to the hourly garrote, he dozed. At Springfield he dined. Here, also, he fortified himself against returning ennui with a supply of the day's journals from Boston. Singularly enough, five minutes after resuming his place, he was once more peacefully slumbering. The pause at Worcester scarcely roused him; but near Framingham a sharp shriek from the locomotive, and the rapid working of the brakes, banished his dreams, and put an end to his drowsy humor for the remainder of the journey. It was soon made known that the engine was suffering from internal disarrangement, and that a delay of an hour or more might be expected. The red flag was despatched to the rear, the lamps were lighted, and the passengers composed themselves, each as patiently and as comfortably as he could.

Lorrimer felt no inclination for further repose. He was much disturbed at the prospect of long detention, having received directions to execute a part of his commission that evening. Comforting himself with the profound reflection that the fault was not his, he turned wearily to his newspaper-files.

A middle-aged man with a keen nose and a snapping eye asked permission to share the benefit of his treasures of journalism. As the middle-aged man glanced over the New-York dailies, he ventured an anathema upon the abominations of Gotham.

The patriotic pride of a genuine New-Yorker never deserts him. Lorrimer discovered that the maligner of his city was a Bostonian, and a stormy debate ensued.

As between cat and dog, so is the hostility which divides the

residents of these two towns. So the conversation became at once spirited, and eventually spiteful.

Boston pointed with sarcastic finger to the close columns heavily laden with iniquitous recitals, the result of a reporter's experience of one day in the metropolis.

New York, with icy imperturbability, rehearsed from memory the recent revelations of matrimonial and clerical delinquencies which had given the City of Notions an unpleasant notoriety.

Boston burst out in eloquent denunciation of the Bowery assassin's knife.

New York was placidly pleased to revert to a tale of bloodshed in the abiding-place of Massachusetts authority, the State Prison.

Boston fell back upon the garrote,—"the meanest and most diabolical invention of Five-Point villany,—a thing unknown, Sir, and never to be known with us, while our police system lasts!"

New York quietly folded together a paper so as to reveal one particular paragraph, which appeared in smallest type, as seeking to avoid recognition. Boston read as follows:—

"The garroting system of highway robbery, which has been so fashionable for some time past in New York, and which has so much alarmed the people of that city, has been introduced in Boston, and was practised on Thomas W. Steamburg, barber, on Thursday night. While crossing the Common to his home, he was attacked by three men; one seized him by the throat and half strangled him, another sealed his mouth with a gloved hand, and

the third abstracted his wallet, which contained about seventy-five dollars in money."

This was from the "Courier" of that morning. New York had triumphed, and Boston, with eyes snapping virulently, sought another portion of the car, perhaps to hunt up his temper, which had been for some time on the point of departure, and had now left him altogether.

Lorrimer took to himself great satisfaction, in a mild way, and laughed inwardly at his opponent's discomfiture.

Presently, the vitalities of the locomotive having been restored, the train rolled on, and Lorrimer took to calculating the chances of fulfilling his appointment that evening. He at length abandoned the hope, and resigned himself to the afflicting prospect of a solitary Sunday in a strange place.

At eight o'clock, P.M., the Boston station was achieved. Then followed, for Mr. Lorrimer, the hotel, the supper, the vain search for Saturday-evening amusements, and a discontented stroll in a wilderness of unfamiliar streets, with spirits dampened by the dismal foggy weather.

He found the Common, and secretly admired, but longed for an opportunity to vilify it to some ardent native. His point of attack would be, that it furnished dangerous opportunities for crime, as illustrated in the case he had recently been discussing. He looked around for some one to accost, and felt aggrieved at finding no available victim. Finally, in great depth of spirits, and anxious for a temporary shelter from the all-penetrating

moisture, he wandered into a saloon of inviting appearance, and sought the national consolation,—Oysters.

While he was accumulating his appetite, a stranger entered the same stall, and dropped, with a smile and a nod, upon the opposite seat. "I wouldn't intrude, Sir," he said, "but every other place is filled. It's wonderful how Boston gives itself up to oysters on Saturday nights,—all other sorts of rational enjoyment being legally prohibited."

Lorrimer welcomed the stranger, and, delighted at the opportunity of a bit of discussion, and still cherishing the malignant desire to injure somebody's feelings in the matter of the Common, opened a conversation by asking if Boston were really much given to bivalvular excesses.

The stranger, who was a strongly built and rough-visaged man, with nothing specially attractive about him, except a humorous and fascinating eye-twinkle, straightened himself, and delivered a short oration.

"Bless me, Sir!" said he, "are you a foreigner? Why, oysters are the universal bond of brotherhood, not only in Boston, but throughout this land. They harmonize with our sharp, wide-awake spirit. They are an element in our politics. Our statesmen, legislators, and high-placed men, generally, are weaned on them. Why, dear me! oysters are a fundamental idea in our social system. The best society circles around 'fried' and 'stewed.' Our 'festive scenes,' you know, depend on them in no small degree for their zest. That isn't all, either. A full third of our population is

over 'oysters' every morning at eleven o'clock. Young Smith, on his way down town after breakfast, drops into the first saloon and absorbs some oysters. At precisely eleven o'clock he is overcome with hunger and takes a few on the 'half-shell.' In the course of an hour appetite clamors, and he 'oysters' again. So on till dinner-time, and, after dinner, oysters at short intervals until bed-time."

And the stalwart stranger leaned back and laughed lustily for a few seconds, until, abruptly checking his mirth, he, in solemn tones, directed the waiter to introduce ale.

Then occurred an interesting exchange of courtesies. Social enlightenment was vividly illustrated. The sparkling ale was set upon the table. In silent contemplation, the two gentlemen awaited the subsidence of the bead. Then, smiling intensely, they cordially grasped the flowing mugs; they made the edges click; they paused.

"Sir," said one, with genial blandness.

"Sir," responded the other, in like manner.

Contemporaneously they partook of the cheering fluid. Gradually each gentleman's nose was eclipsed by the aspiring orb of pottery. The mugs assumed a lofty elevation, then fell, to rise no more. The two gentlemen beamed with amity. Each respected the other, and the acquaintance was formed.

Lorrimer was charmed to meet an intelligent being who would talk and be talked to. He flattered himself he had exploited a "character," and was determined not to allow him to slip away. He cautiously broke to his new companion the fact that he was

a native of New York, and was a little surprised to see the announcement followed by no manifestation of awe, but only a lively wink. He reserved his defamatory intentions respecting the Common, and endeavored to draw the stranger out, who, in return, shot forth eccentricities as profusely as the emery wheel of the street grinder emits sparks when assailed by a scissors-blade.

Lorrimer learned that this delightful fellow's name was Glover, and rejoiced greatly in so much knowledge.

Mr. Glover ordered in ale, and Mr. Lorrimer ordered in oysters,—and from oysters to ale they pleasantly alternated for the space of two hours.

Cloud-compelling cigars varied at intervals the monotony of the proceedings.

At length the young gentleman from New York vanquished his last "fried in crumb," and victory perched upon his knife. Just then the gas-burners began to meander queerly before his eyes. Around and above him he beheld showers of glittering sparks,—snaky threads of light,—fantastic figures of fire,—jets of liquid lustre. He communicated, in confidence, to Mr. Glover, that his seat seemed to him of the nature of a rocking-chair operating viciously upon a steep slated roof. Mr. Glover laughed, and proposed an adjournment.

As they settled their little bills, Lorrimer thoughtlessly displayed a plethoric pile of bank-notes. He saw, or fancied he saw, his companion gaze at them in a manner which made him

restless; but the circumstance soon passed from his mind, until later events enforced the recollection.

When they walked into the open air, Mr. Lorrimer first became intimate with a lamp-post, which he was loath to leave, and then bitterly bewailed his ignorance of localities. Glover good-naturedly suggested that his young friend would do well to take up quarters with him, that night, and promised to conduct him wherever he desired to go, the next morning. His young friend was not in the humor for hesitation, and, distrusting his own perambulatory powers, gave himself up, without reserve, to Glover's guidance. Linked together by their arms, they sailed along, like an energetic little steam-tug, puffing, plunging, sputtering, under the shadow of a serene and stately Indiaman.

The fog had now gathered solidity, and hung chillingly over the city's heart. How desolate were the thoroughfares! The street-lamps gleamed luridly from their stands, serving only to make the dreary darkness visible. Lorrimer's late merry fancies were all extinguished as suddenly as they had blazed forth. Even his sturdy guide showed a depression and constraint that strangely contrasted with his former gayety. He vainly drew upon his mirth-account; there was no issue, "Beastly fog!" said he, "we might drill holes in it, and blast it with gunpowder!" They approached the Common, and the hideous structure opposite West Street glared on them like a fiery monster, and seemed exactly the reverse of the gate to a forty-acre Paradise. Sheltering

their faces from the wind, which now added its inconveniences to the saturating atmosphere, they struck the broad avenue, and pushed across towards the West End.

The wind sang most doleful strains, and the bending branches of the trees sighed sadly over them. Lorrimer was filled with an anxious tribulation, as he remembered the story of the villany that, two nights before, near the spot where they now walked, and perhaps at the same hour, had been perpetrated. An impulse, which he could not restrain, caused him to whisper his fears to his companion. Glover laughed, a little uneasily, he thought, but made no answer.

Soon they reached the opposite boundary of the Common, and continued through Hancock Street, ascending and descending the hill. While passing the reservoir in that dull gray darkness, Lorrimer felt as if under the shadow of some giant tomb. Hastening forward, for it was growing late, they threaded a number of the short avenues of Ward Three, and at length, when young New York's endurance was nearly exhausted, reached their destination in Chambers Street. It must have been the fatigue which, as they crossed the threshold, propelled Mr. Lorrimer against the door, causing him to stain himself unbecomingly with new paint.

They mounted the stairs, and entered a comfortable apartment, in which a fresh fire was diffusing a most welcome glow, and a spacious bed luxuriously invited occupancy. Lorrimer had but one grief, which he freely communicated to his

host,—his fingers were liberally decorated with dark daubs, to which he pointed with unsteady anguish.

"It's a filthy shame!" said he, with more energy of manner than certainty of utterance.

A section of the chamber was separated from the rest by a screen. Into this retreat Glover disappeared, and immediately returned with a bottle, from which he poured an acid that effaced the spots. "It will wash away anything," said he, laughing.

Lorrimer was superabundantly profuse in thanks, and announced that his mind was now at ease. By some mysterious process, not clearly explicable to himself, he contrived to lay aside a portion of his dress, and to dispose himself within the folds of balmy bedclothes that awaited him. In forty seconds he was dreaming.

Nearly an hour had elapsed when he half woke from an uneasy slumber, and strove to collect his drowsy faculties. His sleep had been disturbed by frightful visions. He had passed through a scene of violence on the Common; he had been engaged in a life-and-death struggle with his new acquaintance; he had been seized by unseen hands, and thrown into a vast vault. His brain throbbed and his heart ached, as he endeavored to disentangle the bewildering fancies of his sleep from wakeful reality.

He lay with his face to the wall, and the grotesque decorations of the paper assumed ghostly forms, and moved menacingly before his eyes, thrilling him through and through.

In a few moments the murmur of voices close at hand aroused

him more effectually. He then recollected the incidents of the night, and reproached himself for his wild excesses, and his reckless and imprudent confidence in a stranger. He dreaded to think what the consequences might be, and again became confused with the memories of his distressing dreams.

Three facts, however, were fastened upon his mind. He could not forget Glover's singular glance at his roll of bank-notes,—the hesitation to converse about the garrote,—nor the bottle of acid which would "wash away anything." Would it wash away stains of blood?

The sounds of subdued conversation again arrested his attention. He listened earnestly, but without changing his position.

"Speak softly," said a voice which he recognized as Glover's, —"speak softly; you will wake my guest."

Then the words failed to reach him for a few moments. He strained his ears, and hardly breathed, for fear of interrupting a syllable. Presently he was able to distinguish a few sentences.

"Do you call this a profitable job?" said a strange voice.

"Oh, very fair,—worth about fifty dollars, I should guess. I wouldn't undertake such a piece of work at a smaller chance," said Glover.

"Shall you cut the face?" said the other, after a minute's pause.

"Of course," was the answer; "it's the only way to do it handsomely."

"Hum!—what do you use? steel?"

"Steel, by all means."

"I shouldn't."

"I like it better; and I have a nice bit that has done service in this way before."

From Lorrimer's brow exuded a deadly sudor. His heart ceased to palpitate. His muscles became rigid; his eyes fixed. His terror was almost too great for him to bear. With difficulty he controlled himself, and listened again.

"Can it be done here?" asked the strange voice;—"will not the features be recognized?"

"There is nothing deeply marked, except the eyes," said Glover, "and I can easily remove them, you know."

"You can try the acid."

"The other way is best."

"I suppose it must be done quickly."

"So quickly that there will be no chance for any proof."

Lorrimer gasped feebly, and clutched the bedclothes with a nervous, convulsive movement. He had no power to reflect upon his situation; but he felt that he was lost. Alone and unaided, he could not hope to combat the evil designs of two men, a single one of whom he knew was vastly his superior in strength. His blood seemed to cease flowing in his veins. He thought for an instant of springing from the bed, and imploring mercy; but the nature of their conversation, with its minutiae of cruelty, forbade all hope in that direction. His brain whirled, and he thought that reason was about to forsake him. But a movement in the room

restored him to a sense of his peril.

He saw the shadows changing their places, and knew that the light was moving. He heard faint footsteps. Hope deserted him, and be closed his eyes, quite despairing. When be opened them a minute later, he was in darkness.

Then hope returned. There might yet be a means of escape. They had left him,—for how long he could not conjecture; but now, at least, he was alone. What a flood of joy came over him then!

Swiftly and softly he threw off the bedclothes, and by the uncertain light of the fire, which was still glimmering, found his way noiselessly to the floor.

His trembling limbs at first refused to sustain him, but the thought of his impending fate, should he remain, invested him with an unexpected courage. Passing around the foot of the bed, he approached the door of the chamber.

As he moved, his shadow, dimly cast by the flickering embers, fell across the mouth of the inclosure whence Glover had brought the acid. He shuddered to think what might be hidden by that screen. He burned with curiosity, even in that moment of danger. For a moment he even rashly thought of seeking to penetrate the mystery.

Treading lightly, and partially supporting himself by the wall, lest his feet should press too heavily upon some loose board and cause it to rattle beneath him, he reached the door. It was not wholly closed, and with utmost gentleness he essayed to pull it

open. With all his care he could not prevent it from creaking sharply. His nerves were again shaken, and a new tremor assailed him. Tears filled his eyes. His heart was like ice, only heavier, within him.

He stood for a minute motionless and half-unconscious. Then recovering himself by a powerful effort, he advanced once more. Without venturing to open the door wider, he worked through the narrow aperture, inch by inch, stopping every few seconds for fear that the rustle of his shirt against the jamb might be overheard. At length, by almost imperceptible movements, he succeeded in gaining the head of the staircase.

Then he believed that his deliverance was near at hand. He had thus far eluded detection, and it only remained for him to descend, and depart by the outer door.

Bending forward at every step to catch the slightest echo of alarm, he felt his way down through the darkness. The difficulty at this point was great. As one recovered from a long illness finds his knees yield under him at the first attempt to descend a staircase, just so it was with Lorrimer. At one time a faintness came over him, and he was obliged to sit down and rest. A movement above aroused him, and, starting up, he hurriedly groped his way to the street-door.

The darkness was absolute. He could discern nothing, but, after a short search, he caught hold of the handle and turned it slowly. The door remained immovable. By another exploration he discovered a large key suspended from a nail near the centre

of the door. This he inserted in the lock, and turned—with all the caution he could command. It was not enough, for it snapped loudly.

A voice from the head of the stairs cried out, "Who is there?"

Lorrimer was appalled. He shook the door, but it remained fast. Like lightning he passed his hand up and down the crevice in search of a hidden bolt. He found nothing, and felt that he was in the hands of the murderers;—for he could entertain no doubt of their design. In the agony of desperation he flung out his arms, and a door beside him flew open. He entered, and rushed to a window, which was easily lifted, and out of which he threw himself at the moment that a light streamed into the apartment behind him.

When Mr. Lorrimer had finished relating to Captain Morrill, with all the energy of truth, the more important of the above circumstances, that officer arose, and, calling to his assistance a couple of his force, started out in great haste in the direction of Chambers Street. Lorrimer, who had been provided with shoes, hat, and coat, went with them. After a little search, a row of houses with windows close upon the street was found. More diligent examination showed that the door of one of these was freshly painted. A vigorous assault upon the panels brought down the household. Mr. Glover, and another person whose voice was identified by Lorrimer, were marched off with few words to the station. Mr. Lorrimer's clothes were rescued, and an officer was left to look after the premises.

Mr. Glover, on arriving at the station, expressed great indignation, and employed uncivil terms in speaking of his late guest. Under the subduing influences of Captain Merrill's treatment, he soon became tranquil, and subsequently manifested an excess of hilarity, which the guardians of the night strove in vain to check. But he answered unreservedly all the questions which Captain Morrill put to him. His statement ran somewhat thus:—

"I met this young man, for the first time, a few hours ago, at an oyster-saloon on Washington Street. We drank a good deal of ale, and he lost his balance. I kept mine. I saw he had a pretty large amount of money, and doubted his ability to keep as good a watch over it as he ought to. So I took him home with me. On the way he would talk uneasily about garrote robberies, but I refused to encourage him.

"You want to know about that alarming conversation? Well,"—(here Mr. Glover was so overcome with merriment, that, after a proper time, the interposition of official authority became necessary,)—"well, I am an engraver. My business is mainly to cut heads. Sometimes I use steel, sometimes copper. My brother, who is also an engraver, and I were discussing a new commission. I told him I should make use of a good bit of steel, which had already been engraved upon, but not so deeply but that the lines could be easily removed, excepting the eyes, which would have to be scraped away. My allusion to proof is easily explained: it is common for engravers to have a proof-impression

taken of their work after it is finished, by which they are enabled to detect any imperfections, and remedy them.

"I am very sorry that my young friend should have considered me so much of a blood-thirsty ruffian. But the ale of Boston is no doubt strange to him, and his confusion at finding himself in a large city quite natural. Besides, his suspicions were in some degree reciprocated. When I saw him flying out of the window, I was convinced that he must be an ingenious burglar, and instantly ran back to examine my tools. I am glad to find that I was wrong. If he will return now with me, he shall be welcome to his share of the bed."

Mr. Lorrimer politely, but positively, declined.

Captain Morrill urbanely apologized to Mr. Glover, and engaged himself to make it right in the morning; whereupon Mr. Glover withdrew in cachinnatory convulsions. Mr. Lorrimer was instructed to resume his proper garments, and was then conveyed safely to his hotel, where he remained in deep abstraction until Monday, when, after transacting his business, he took the afternoon return-train for New York.

The case was not entered upon the records of the Third District Police.

* * * * *

THE GRANADAN GIRL'S SONG

All day the lime blows in the sun,
All day the silver aspens quiver,
All day along the far blue plain
Winds serpent-like the golden river.
From clustering flower and myrtle bower
Sweet sounds arise forever,
From gleaming tower with crescent dower
Our banner floats forever.

Its purple bloom the grape puts on,
Pulping to this Granadan summer,
And heavy dews shake through the globes
Scarce stirred by some bright-winged new-comer,
On gyon brown hill, where all is still,
Where lightly rides the muleteer,
With jangling bells, whose burden swells
Till shaft and arch rise fine and clear.

As one by one the shadows creep
Back to their lairs in hilly hollows,
A broader splendor issues forth
And on their track in silence follows;
A fuller air swims everywhere,
A freer murmur shakes the bough,
A thousand fires surprise the spires,

And all the city wakes below.

What morn shall rise, what cursed morn,
To find this bright pomp all surrendered,
These palaces an empty shell,
This vigor listless ruin rendered,—
While every sprite of its delight
Mocks fickle echoes through the court,
And in our place a sculptured trace
Saddens some stranger's careless sport?

Oh, gay with all the stately stir,
And bending to your silken flowing,
One day, my banner-poles, ye creak
Naked beneath the high winds blowing!
One day ye fall across the wall
And moulder in the moat's green bosom,
While in the cleft the wild tree left
Bursts into spikes of cruel blossom!

Ah, never dawn that day for me!
O Fate, its fierce foreboding banish!
When all our hosts, like pallid ghosts
Blown on by morning, melt and vanish!
Oh, in the fires of their desires
Consume the toil of those invaders!
And let the brand divide the hand
That grasps the hilt of the Crusaders!

Yet idle words in such a scene!
Yon rosy mists on high careering,—
The Moorish cavaliers who fleet
With hawk and hound and distant cheering,—
The dipping sail puffed to the gale,
The prow that spurns the billow's fawning,—
How can they fade to dimmer shade,
And how this day desert its dawning?

Forget to soar, thou rosy rack!
Ye riders, bronze your airy motion!
Still skim the seas, so snowy craft,—
Forever sail to meet the ocean!
There bid the tide refuse to slide,
Glassing, below, thy drooping pinion,—
Forever cease its wild caprice,
Fallen at the feet of our dominion!

* * * * *

THE HUMMING-BIRD

May 9th.

To-day, Estelle, your special messenger, the Humming-Bird, comes darting to our oriel, my Orient. As I sat sewing, his sudden, unexpected whirr made me look up. How did he know that the very first Japan-pear-bud opened this morning? Flower and bird came together by some wise prescience.

He has been sipping honey from your passion-flowers, and now has come to taste my blossoms. What bright-winged thought of yours sent him so straight to me, across that wide space of sea and land? Did he dart like a sunbeam all the way? There were many of them voyaged together; a little line of wavering light pierced the dark that night.

A large, brave heart has our bold sailor of the upper deep. Old Pindar never saw our little pet, this darling of the New World; yet he says,—

"Were it the will of Heaven, an osier-bough Were vessel safe enough the seas to plough."

Here he is, safe enough, not one tiny feather ruffled,—all the intense life of the tropics condensed into this one live jewel,—the glance of the sun on emeralds and rubies. Is it soft downy feathers that take this rich metallic glow, changing their hue with every rapid turn?

Other birds fly: he darts quick as the glance of the eye,—

sudden as thought, he is here, he is there. No floating, balancing motion, like the lazy butterfly, who fans the air with her broad sails. To the point, always to the point, he turns in straight lines. How stumbling and heavy is the flight of the "burly, dozing bumblebee," beside this quick intelligence! Our knight of the ruby throat, with lance in rest, makes wild and rapid sallies on this "little mundane bird,"—this bumblebee,—this rolling sailor, never off his sea-legs, always spinning his long homespun yarns. This rich bed of golden and crimson flowers is a handsome field of tournament. What invisible circle sits round to adjudge the prize?

What secret does he bring me under those misty wings,—that busy birring sound, like Neighbor Clark's spinning-wheel? Is he busy as well, this bit of pure light and heat? Yes! he, too, has got a little home down in the swamp over there,—that bit of a knot on the young oak-sapling. Last year we found a nest (and brought it home) lined with the floss of willow-catkin, stuck all over with lichens, deep enough to secure the two pure round pearls from being thrown out, strongly fastened to the forked branch,—a home so snug, so warm, so soft!—a home "contrived for fairy needs."

Who but the fairies, or Mr. Fine-Ear himself, ever heard the tiny tap of the young bird, when he breaks the imprisoning shell?

The mother-bird knows well the fine sound. Hours? days? no, weeks, she has sat to hear at last that least wave of sound.

What! this tiny bit of restless motion sit there still? Minutes

must be long hours to her quick panting heart.

I will just whisper it in your ear, that the meek-looking mother-bird only comes out between daylight and dark,—just like other busy mothers I have known, who take a little run out after tea.

Can it be, that Mr. Ruby-Throat, my *preux chevalier*, keeps all the sunshiny hours for himself, that he may enjoy to the full his own gay flight?

Ah! you know nothing, hear nothing of woman's rights up there, in that well-ordered household. Were it not well, if we, too, could give up our royal right of choice,—if we could fall back on our strong earth-born instincts, to be, to know, to do, one thing?

See how closely our darling curls up his slender black feet and legs, that we may not see this one bit of mortality about him! No, my little immortal does not touch the earth; he hangs suspended by that long bill, which just tethers him to its flowers. Now and then he will let down the little black tendrils of legs and feet on some bare twig, and there be rests and preens those already smooth plumules with the long slender bodkin you lent him. Now, just now, he darts into my room, coquets with my basket of flowers, "a kiss, a touch, and then away." I heard the whirr of those gauzy wings; it was not to the flowers alone he told his story. You did well to trust this most passionate pilgrim with your secret; the room is radiant with it. Slow-flying doves may well draw the car of Venus; but this arrow tipped with flame darts before, to tell of its coming. What need of word, of song,

with that iridescent glow? Some day I will hear the whole story; just now let the Humming-Bird keep it under his misty wings.

I have heard of a lady who reared these little birds from the nest; they would suck honey from her lips, and fly in and out of her chamber. Only think of seeing these callow fledglings! It is as if the winged thought could be domesticated, could learn to make its nest with us and rear its young.

Bountiful Nature has spared to our cold North this one compact bit from the Tropics.

* * * * *

I believe we allow that birds are very highly organized creatures,—next to man, they say. We, with our weary feet plodding always on the earth, our heavy arms pinioned close to our sides!—look at this live creature, with thinnest wing cutting the fine air! We, slow in word, slow in thought!—look at this quivering flame, kindled by some more passionate glance of Nature! Next to man? Yes, we might say next above. Had it not been for that fire we stole one day, that Promethean spark, hidden in the ashes, kept a-light ever since, it had gone hard with us; Nature might have kept her pet, her darling, high, high above us, —almost out of roach of our dull senses.

What is our boasted speech, with its harsh, rude sounds, to their gushing melody? We learn music, certainly, with much pains and care. The bird cannot tell if it be A sharp or B flat,

but he sings.

Our old friend, the friend of our childhood, Mr. White of Selborne, (who had attended much to the life and conversation of birds,) says, "Their language is very elliptical; little is said, and much is meant and understood." Something like a lady's letter, is it not?

How wise we might grow, if we could only "the bird-language rightly spell"! In the olden times, we are told, the Caliphs and Viziers always listened to what the birds said about it, before they undertook any new enterprise. I have often thought I heard wise old folk discoursing, when a company of hens were busy on the side-hill, scratching and clucking together. Perchance some day we shall pick up a leaf of that herb which shall open our ears to these now inarticulate sounds.

Why may we not (just for this summer) believe in Transmigrations, and find some elder civilization embodied in this community of birds,—all those lost arts taken wings, not to fly away, but to come flitting and building in our trees, picking crumbs from our door-steps?

Do they say birds are limited? Who are we that set bounds to this direct knowledge, this instinct? Mathematical, constructive, they certainly are. What bold architect has builded so snug, so airy a house,—well concealed, and yet with a good outlook? We make our dwellings conspicuous; they hide their pretty art.

We wiseacres, who stay at home, instead of following the seasons round the globe, should learn the art of making happy

homes; yet what housekeeper will not hang her head in shame and despair, to see this nice adaptation of use to wants, shown each year in multitudes of nests? Now, only look at it! always just room enough,—none to spare. First, the four or five eggs lie comfortably in the small round at the bottom of the nest, with room enough for the mother robin to give them the whole warmth of her broad red breast,—her sloping back and wings making a rain-proof roof over her jewels. Then the callow younglings rise a little higher into the wider circle. Next the fledglings brim the cup; at last it runs over; four large clumsy robins flutter to the ground, with much noise, much anxious calling from papa and mamma,—much good advice, no doubt. They are fairly turned out to shift for themselves; with the same wise, unfathomable eyes which have mirrored the round world for so many years, which know all things, say nothing, older than time, lively and quick as to-day; with the same touching melody in their long monotonous call; soon with the same power of wing; next year to build a nest with the same wise economy, each young robin carrying in his own swelling, bulging breast the model of the hollow circle, the cradle of other young robins. So you see it is a nest within a nest,—a whole nest of nests; like Vishnu Sarma's fables, or Scheherazade's stories, you can never find where one leaves off and another begins, they shut so one into the other. No wonder the children and philosophers are they who ask, whether the egg comes from the bird, or the bird from the egg. Yes, it is a *Heimskringla*, a world-circle, a home-circle, this nest.

You remember that little, old, withered man who used to bring us eggs; the boys, you know, called him Egg Pop. When the thrifty housewife complained of the small size of his ware, he always said,—

"Yes, Marm, they be small; but they be monstrous full."

Yes, the packing of the nest is close; but closer is the packing of the egg. "As full as an egg of meat" is a wise proverb.

Let us look at these first-fruits which the bountiful Spring hangs on our trees.

"To break the eggshell after the meat is out we are taught in our childhood, and practise it all our lives; which, nevertheless, is but a superstitious relict, according to the judgment of Pliny, and the intent hereof was to prevent witch-craft [to keep the fairies out]; for lest witches should draw or prick their names therein, and veneficiously mischief their persons, they broke the shell, as Dalecampius hath observed." This is what Sir Thomas Browne tells us about eggshells. And Dr. Wren adds, "Least they [the witches] perchance might use them for boates to sayle in by night." But I, who have no fear of witches, would not break them, —rather use them, try what an untold variety of forms we may make out of this delicate oval.

By a little skilful turning and reversing, putting on a handle, a lip here, a foot there, always following the sacred oval, we shall get a countless array of pitchers and vases, of perfect finished form, handsome enough to be the oval for a king's name. Should they attempt to copy our rare vases in finest Parian, alabaster, or

jasper, their art would fail to hit the delicate tints and smoothness of this fine shell; and then those dots and dashes, careless as put on by a master's hand!

Are not these rare lines? They look to me as wise as hieroglyphics. Who knows what rhyme and reason are written there,—what subtile wisdom rounded into this small curve,—repeated on the breasts and backs of the birds,—their own notes, it may be, photographed on their swelling breasts like the musical notes on the harp-shell,—written in bright, almost audible colors on the petals of flowers,—harmonies, melodies, for ear and eye? Has this language, older than Erse, older than Sanscrit, ever got translated? I am afraid, dear, the key has been turned in the lock, and thrown into the well.

The ornithologists tell us that some birds build nicer nests, sing sweeter songs, than their companions of the same species. Can experience add wisdom to instinct? or is it the right of the elder-born,—the birthright of the young robin who first breaks the shell? Who has rightly looked into these things?

I half remember the story of a beautiful princess who had all imaginable wealth in her stately palace, itself builded up of rare and costly jewels. She had everything that heart could desire,—everything but a roc's egg. Her mind was contracted with sorrow, till she could procure this one ornament more to her splendors. I think it turned out that the palace itself was built within the roc's egg. These birds are immense, and take up three elephants at a time in their powerful talons, (almost as many as Gordon

Cumming himself, on a good day's hunt,) and their eggs are like domes.

Now, do not you be like the foolish princess, and desire a roc's egg; it will prove a stone, the egg of a rock, indeed. Be content rather with this ostrich-egg I send you; with your own slender fingers lift the lid;—pretty, is it not, the tea-service I send you? The tidy warblers threw out the emptied shells; one by one I picked them up, and have made cups and saucers, bowls and pitchers for you: a roc's egg never held anything one-half so fine.

You will say I am a fairy, as brother Evelyn says, when I relate to him the fine sights and sounds I have seen and heard in the woods. No, but the little silent people are very good to me.

Let me, then, go on my bird's-egging and tell you one more fact about our fairy, our Humming-Bird. Audubon says "that an all-wise Providence has made this little hero an exception to a rule which prevails almost universally through Nature,—namely, that the smallest species of a tribe are the most prolific. The eagle lays one, sometimes two eggs; the small European wren fifteen; the humming-bird two: and yet this latter is abundantly more numerous in America than the wren in Europe." All on account of his wonderful courage, admirable instinct, or whatever it is that guards and guides him so unerringly.

> You see we may well love him whom
> Nature herself loves so dearly.

"Ce que Dieu garde est bien gardé."

Ah, Estelle! your bonnie birdie, with his wild whirr, darting back and forth like a weaver's shuttle weaving fine wefts, has got into my head; not "bee-bonneted," but bird-bonneted, I go. Yes, this day shall be given to the king, as our country-folk say, when they go a-pleasuring. I am off with the little wool-gatherers, to see what thorn and brier and fern-stalk and willow-catkin will give me. Good-day! good-day!

Your own

SUSAN, SUSY, SUE.

P. S. "May our friendship never moult a feather!"

* * * * *

CHESS

Schatrenschar, the Persian, who could count the stars one by one, who is known to have been borne, (by the Simorg, the Eternal Fowl,) at midnight, first to the evening star, and then to the moon, and then set down safely in his home,—and Al Kahlminar, the Arabian, who was a mystic seer, and had conversed face to face with the Demons of the Seven Planets, approaching also, on one occasion, so nigh unto Uriel that his beard was singed by the sun, wherein that angel resideth,—these, ten million years ago, lived in their palaces on adjoining estates and lands. But about the boundary-line atwixt them they could not agree: Schatrenschar maintaining that he had lived there longest, and had a right to choose where the wall should be built between himself and a later comer; Al Kahlminar declaring that the world was not made for Schatrenschar,—furthermore, that the Astronomer had paid nothing for the land, and had already more than he could attend to, since his chief devotion was manifestly to the estates he was reputed to own in Venus and the moon. They came to no decision; and it was beneath the dignity of these men, who prided themselves on being confidants elect of invisible and superior worlds, publicly to wrangle about the gross soil of this. Nevertheless, Schatrenschar, at last, losing patience, cried,—

"Al Kahlminar, 'tis but by the grace of Yezdan, who hath

commissioned me to watch the sacred stars, which reveal not themselves to the violent, that I am saved this day from flogging thee!"

To this the Seer: "O Schatrenschar, thou must have left in some of thy other worlds, mayhap in Venus, the limbs which can cope with these."

"Nay," replied the Astronomer, discerning some truth in that remark, "but I am not alone, Al Kahlminar; I have within my palace two valiant knights, skilled with the steed and the spear, who are ready to go forth in my stead at a word."

"And I," answered the Mystic, warming, "have two godly priests, men skilled by the orthodox beheading of heretics into the aim and valor of Arjoon himself. Your knights cannot stand before these messengers of Heaven; they will tremble like aspen-leaves, lest Allah be wroth, if they receive harm."

"If thou shouldst bring forth thy priests, Al Kahlminar, then would I confront them and thee with the two elephants which my brother sent me lately from Geestan, on each of which I can place a rook with a slave cunning with the javelin, before which thy priests will flee; for the animals see no difference between priests and other mortals;—the elephant is sagacious, neighbor!"

"And I," said the other, "haye riches, which thou hast not. Whatever thou hast wherewith to extend thy line into my lot, I can oppose with an equal force,—nay, with a stronger."

Schatrenschar hereupon paused in deep meditation. Presently a subtile thought struck him. He took a parchment-leaf and

drew thereon a diagram; and after inscribing several hieroglyphic characters, he cried out,—

"Hearken, Al Kahlminar; hast thou not heard it among the sayings of Sasan, that the battle is not always to him who hath the superior physical force? Suppose that in our encounter thy forces stood here, as marked on these squares: by what stratagem couldst thou reach me, who stand here with even fewer and weaker men? If thou canst tell as much without my assistance, I will yield the boundary-line; for it will show thee to have a calculation equal to my own, as well as riches."

Al Kahlminar pondered long, suffered manifold headaches, closed not an eyelid for a week, but could not give answer. The Mystic was used to seeing only those things to see which the eyes must be closed. At length Schatrenschar opened the problem to him, which so delighted his heart that he clave unto him, and besought him that their estates should be one, and that he would use his (Al Kahlminar's) riches as his own. A bower was built midway between their houses, wherein they sat for hours over other diagrams, contrived first by the Astronomer afterward by the Mystic: and out of it arose a curious and knightly play which beareth to this day the name Schatrenschar.

* * * * *

Perhaps this last line of the old Sanscrit story is the only veracious thing in it. Perhaps it is all true. Who can answer? Was

there ever a great thing whose origin was not in some doubt? If so with the Iliad, with Platonic Dialogues, with Shakspearian Plays, how naturally so with Chess! The historic sinew of the above would seem to be, that Schatrenschar, the Oriental word for Chess, is the name of a very ancient and learned astronomer of Persia; how much mythologic fat has enveloped said sinew the reader must decide. Philological inquisition of the origin of the low Latin *Scacchi* (whence the French *Echecs*, Ger. *Schach*, and our *Chess,*) has led to a variety of conclusions. Leunclavius takes it from *Uscoches*, famous Turkish banditti. Sirmond finds the word's parent in German *Schächer* (robber) and grandparent in *Calculus*! Tolosanus derives *check-mate* from Heb. *schach* (to prevail) and *mat* (dead). Fabricius favors the idea we have given above, and says, "A celebrated Persian astronomer, one Schatrenschar, invented the game of Chess, and gave it his own name, which it still bears in that country." Nicod derives it from *Xeque*, a Moorish word for Prince or Lord. Bochart maintains that *Schach-mat* is originally Persian, and means "the king is dead." We incline to accept this last opinion; and believe, that, though the game must have originated with some person, perhaps Schatrenschar, yet it reached its present form and perfection only through many touchings and retouchings of men and generations. Pope's translation of the "Odyssey" has led many persons to think that chess was known to the ancient Greeks, because, in describing the sports of Penelope's suitors, the translator says,—

"With rival art and ardor in their mien,
At Chess they vie to captivate the Queen."

But there can be little doubt that this is an anachronism.

In short, we may safely conclude that the game is of purely Oriental origin. The Hindoos claim to have originated it,—or rather, say that Siva, the Third Person of their Trinity, (Siva, the Destroyer,—alas! of time?) gave it to them; Professor Forbes has shown that it has been known among them five thousand years; but words tell no myths, and the Bengalee name for Chess, *Shathorunch*, casts its ballot for Persia and Shatrenschar; —though India may almost claim it, on account of the greater perfection to which it has brought the game, and the lead it has always taken in chess-culture. India rejoices in a flourishing chess-school. The Indian Problem is known as the perfection of Enigmatic Chess. And if Paul Morphy had gone to Calcutta, instead of London and Paris, he would have found there one Mohesh Ghutuck, who, without discovering that he was a P. and move behind his best play, and without becoming too sick to proceed with the match, would have given him a much finer game than any antagonist he has yet encountered. This Mohesh, who was presented by his admiring king with a richly-carved chess-king of solid gold nine inches high, not only plays a fabulous number of games at once whilst he lies on the ground with closed eyes, but games that none of the many fine native and English players of India can engage in but with dismay. Fine,

indeed, it would have been, if the world could have seen in the youths of Calcutta and New Orleans the extreme West matched with the extreme East!

There is no call for any one to vindicate this game. Chess is a great, worldwide fact. Wherever a highway is found, there, we may be sure, a reason existed for a highway. And when we find that the explorer on his northward voyage, pausing a day in Iceland, may pass his time in keen encounters with the natives,—that the trader in Kamtschatka and China, unable to speak a word with the people surrounding him, yet holds a long evening's converse over the board which is polyglot,—that the missionary returns from his pulpit, and the Hindoo from his widow-burning, to engage in a controversy without the *theologicum odium* attached,—the game becomes authentic from its universality. It is akin to music, to love, to joy, in that it sets aside alike social caste and sectarian differences: kings and peasants, warriors and priests, lords and ladies, mingle over the board as they are represented upon it. "The earliest chessmen on the banks of the Sacred River were worshippers of Buddha; a player whose name and fame have grown into an Arabic proverb was a Moslem; a Hebrew Rabbi of renown, in and out of the Synagogues, wrote one of the finest chess poems extant; a Catholic priest of Spain has bestowed his name upon two openings; one of the foremost problem—composers of the age is a Protestant clergyman of England; and the Greek Church numbers several cultivators of chess unrivaled in our

day." It has received eulogies from Burton,—from Castiglione,—from Chatham, who, in reply to a compliment on a grand stroke of invention and successful oratory, said, "My success arose only from having been checkmated by discovery, the day before, at chess,"—from Comenius, the grammarian,—from Condé, Cowley, Denham, Justus van Effen, Sir Thomas Elyot, Guillim, Helvetia, Huarte, Sir William Jones, Leibnitz, Lydgate, Olaus Magnus, Pasquier, Sir Walter Raleigh, Rousseau, Voltaire, Samuel Warren, Warton, Franklin, Buckle, and many others of ability in every department of letters, philosophy, and art. We know of but one man of genius or learning—who has repudiated it,—Montaigne. "Or if he [Alexander] played at chess," says Montaigne, "what string of his soul was not touched by this idle and childish game? I hate and avoid it because it is not play enough,—that it is too grave and serious a diversion; and I am ashamed to lay out as much thought and study upon that as would serve to much better uses." Looked at simply as a diversion, chess might naturally impress a man of intellectual earnestness thus. It is not a diversion; a recreation it may be called, but only as any variation from "the shop" is recreative. But chess has, by the experiences of many, sufficiently proved itself to have serious uses to men of thought, and in the way of an intellectual gymnasium. It is to the limbs and sinews of the mind—prudence, foresight, memory, combination, analysis—just what a gymnasium is to the body. In it every muscle, every joint of the understanding is put under drill; and we know,

that, where the mind does not have exercise for its body, but relics simply on idle cessation for its reinforcement, it will get too much lymph. Work is worship; but work without rest is idolatry. And rest is not, as some seem to think, a swoon, a slumber; it is an active receptivity, a masterly inactivity, which alone can deserve the fine name of Rest. Such, we believe, our favorite game secures better than all others. Besides this direct use, one who loves it finds many other incidental uses starting up about it,—such as made Archbishop Magnus, the learned historian of Sweden, say, "Anger, love, peevishness, covetousness, dulness, idleness, and many other passions and motions of the minds of men may be discovered by it."—But we promised not to vindicate chess, and shall leave this portion of our topic with the fine verse of the Oriental bard, Ibn ul Mûtazz:—

> "O thou whose cynic sneers express
> The censure of our favorite chess,
> Know that its skill is Science' self,
> Its play distraction from distress.
> It soothes the anxious lover's care;
> It weans the drunkard from excess;
> It counsels warriors in their art,
> When dangers threat and perils press;
> And yields us, when we need them most,
> Companions in our loneliness."[3]

[3] Translated in that excellent periodical, which no lover of chess should be without, *The Chess Monthly*, edited by Fiske and Morphy, New York. (Vol. i. p. 92.)

Now that the Persian poet has touched his lyre in our pages, we will not at once pass to any cold geographical or analytical realm of our subject, but pause awhile to cull some flowers of song which have sprung up on good English soil, which the feet of Caïssa have ever loved to press. No other games, and few other subjects, have gathered about them so rich a literature, or been intertwined with so much philological and historical lore. Not the least of this is to be found in the English classics, from which we propose to make one or two selections. We begin where English poetry begins, with Dan Chaucer; and from many beautiful conceits turning upon chess, we select one which must receive universal admiration. It is from the "Booke of the Duchesse."

"My boldnesse is turned to shame,
For false Fortune hath played a game
At the Chesse with me.

"At the Chesse with me she gan to play,
With her false draughts full divers
Sho stale on me, and toke my fers:[4]
And when I sawe my fers away,
Alas! I couth no longer play.

[4] Mediaeval name for the Queen, (originally the Counsellor,)—the strength of the board.

"Therewith Fortune said,' Checke here,
And mate in the mid point of the checkere
With a paune errant.' Alas!
Full craftier to play she was
Than Athalus, that made the game
First of the Chesse, so was his name."

In the early part of the seventeenth century, Thomas Middleton wrote a comedy styled "A Game at Chess," which was acted at the Globe (Shakspeare's) nine times successively. It seems to have been a severe tirade on the religious aspects of the times. The stage directions are significant: for example:—Act I., Scene 1. *Enter severally, in order of the game, the White and Black houses*. Act II., Scene 1. *Enter severally White Queen's Pawnes and Black Queen's Pawnes*. The Prologue is as follows:—

"What of the game called Chesse-play can be made
To make a stage-play shall this day be played.
First you shall see the men in order set,
States, and their Pawnes, when both the sides are met;
The houses well distinguished: in the game
Some men entrapt, and taken to their shame,
Bewarded by their play: and in the close
You shall see checque-mate given to Virtue's foes.
But the fair'st jewel that our hopes can decke
Is so to play our game t'avoid your checke."

The play excited indignation in the partisans of the Romish

Church, and was not only suppressed by James I., but at the demand of the Queen its author was imprisoned, and was relieved only by a witty verse sent to the King.

The last which we have room to quote is anonymous, and of date near 1632. It may have been written by the celebrated divine, Thomas Jackson, of Corpus-Christi College, whose discourse comparing the visible world to a "Devil's Chess-board" evidently suggested the familiar etching in which Satan contends with a youth for his soul. The lines are entitled:

THE PAWNE

"A lowly one I saw,
With aim fist high:
Ne to the righte,
Ne to the lefte
Veering, he marchèd by his Lawe,
The crested Knyghte passed by,
And haughty surplice-vest,
As onward toward his heste
With patient step he prest,
Soothfaste his eye:
Now, lo! the last doore yieldeth,
His hand a sceptre wieldeth,
A crowne his forehead shieldeth!

"So 'mergeth the true-hearted,
With aim fixt high,
From place obscure and lowly:
Veereth he nought;
His work he wroughte.
How many loyall paths be trod,
Soe many royall Crownes hath God!"

It is very clear that the pawns in chess represent the common soldiers in battle. The Germans call them "peasants" (*Bauern*); the Hindoos call them *Baul*, or "powers" (in the sense of *force*); and that each of these, if he can pursue his file to its end, should win a crown has always given to this game a popular stamp. These pawns are doubtless, next to knights, the most interesting pieces on the board: Philidor called them "the soul of chess."

At an early period Asiatic chess was divided into two branches,—known amongst players as Chinese and Indian. They are different games in many respects, and yet enough alike to show that they were at some period the same. The Chinese game maintains its place in Eastern Asia, Japan, etc.; in the islands of the Archipelago, and, with very slight modifications, throughout the civilized world, the Indian game is played. Indeed, there is no difference between Indian and European chess, except that in the former the Bishop is called Elephant,—the Rooks, Boats,—the Queen, Minister: the movements of the pieces are the same.

Of Chinese chess some description will be more novel. Their chess-board, like ours, has sixty-four squares, which are not

distinguished into alternate black and white squares. The pieces are not placed on the squares, but on the corners of the squares. The board is divided into two equal parts by an uncheckered space, which is called the River. There are nine points on each line, and forty-five on each half of the board. They have the same number of pieces with ourselves. Each player has a king, two guards, two elephants, two knights, two chariots, two cannon, and five pawns. Each player places nine pieces on the first line of the board,—the king in the centre, a guard on each side of him, two elephants next, two knights next, and then the two chariots upon the extremities of the board; the two cannons go in front of the two knights and the pawns on the fourth line.

The king moves only one square at a time, but not diagonally, and only in an *enceinte*, or court, of four squares,—to wit, his own, the queen's, queen's paw and king's pawn's. Castling is unknown. The two guards remain in the same limits, but can move only diagonally; thus we have in our king both the Chinese king and his guard. The elephants move diagonally, two squares at a time, and cannot pass the river. Their knight moves like ours, but must not pass over pieces; he can pass the river, which counts as one square. The chariots and cannon move like our castles, and can cross the river. The pawns always move one step, and may move sidewise as well as forward,—taking in the same line in which they move; they cross the river. The cannon alone can pass over any piece; indeed, a cannon can take only when there is a piece between it and the piece it takes,—which intervening

piece may belong to either player. The king must not be opposite the other king without a piece between. All this certainly sounds very complex and awkward to the English or American player; and our game has the preferable tendency of increasing the power of the pieces, (as distinct from pawns,) rather than, with theirs, limiting their powers and multiplying their number. However, it is probable, whatever may be the respective merits of the two games, that neither of them will ever be altered; the Chinese, who can roast his pig only by burning the sty, because the first historic roast-pig was so roasted, will be likely to continue his chess as nearly as possible in the same form as the celestial Tia-hoang and the terrestrial Yin-hoang played it a million years ago. In Europe and America we have all complacently concluded, that, when David said he had seen an end of all perfection, it only indicated that he was unacquainted with chess as played in accordance with Staunton's Handbook.

But it is only the Indian game which has had a development equal to the development of the civilized arts. This has been chiefly through what are called by the Italian-French name of *gambits*. There is much prejudice, amongst a certain class of chess-players, against what is called "book-chess," but it rarely exists with players of the first rank. These gambits are as necessary to the first-rate player as are classifications to the naturalist. They are the venerable results of experience; and he who tries to excel without an acquaintance with them will find that it is much as if he should ignore the results of the past and put

his hand into the fire to prove that fire would burn. If he should try every method of answering a special attack, he would be sure to find in the end that the method laid down in the gambit was the true one. An acquaintance, therefore, with these approved openings puts a player at an advanced starting-point in a game, inexhaustible enough in any case, and where he need not take time in doing what others have already done. Although we design in this article to refrain, as much as possible, from technical chess, it may be well enough to give a list of the usual openings, and their key-moves.

PHILIDOR'S DEFENCE. (*Philidor*, 1749.)

White. Black. 1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 2. P. to Q. 3d.

GIUOCO PIANO. (*Italian*.)

1. P. to K. 4th 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 2. Kt. to Q.B. 3d. 3. B. to Q.B. 4th. 3. B. to Q.B. 4th. 4. P. to Q. 3d or Q.B. 3d.

RUY LOPEZ'S KNIGHT'S GAME. (*Lopez*, 1584.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 2. Kt. to Q.B. 3d. 3. B. to Q.Kt. 5th.

PETROFF'S DEFENCE. (1837.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d.

Q. PAWN OR SCOTCH GAME. (*So named from the great match between London and Edinburgh in* 1826, *but first analyzed as a gambit by Ghulam Xassitrt, Madras,* 1829.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 2. Kt. to

Q.B. 3d. 3. P. to Q. 4th.

SICILIAN GAME. (*Ancient Italian MS.*)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to Q.B. 4th.

EVANS'S GAMBIT. (*Captain Evans*, 1833.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 2. Kt. to Q.B. 3d. 3. B. to Q.B. 4th. 3. B. to Q.B. 4th. 4. P. to Q.Kt. 4th.

KING'S BISHOP'S GAMBIT.

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. B. to Q.B. 4th. 2. B. to Q.B. 4th.

KING'S KNIGHT'S GAMBIT.

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. P. to K.B. 4th. 2. P. takes P. 3. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 3. P. to K.Kt. 4th. 4. B. to Q.B. 4th. 4. B. to K.Kt. 2d.

ALLGAIER GAMBIT. *(Johann Allgaier*, 1795.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. P. to K.B. 4th. 2. P. takes P. 3. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 3. P. to K.Kt. 4th, 4. P. to K.B. 4th.

MUZIO GAMBIT. (*Preserved by Salvio*, 1604.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. P. to K.B. 4th. 2. P. takes P. 3. Kt. to K.B. 3d. 3. P. to K.Kt. 4th. 4. B. to K.B. 4th. 4. P. to K.Kt. 5th. 5. Castles. 5. P. takes Kt.

SALVIO GAMBIT. (*Preserved from the Portuguese by Salvio*, 1604.)

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 4th. 2. P. to K.B. 4th. 2. P. takes P. 3. K.Kt. to B. 3d. 3. P. to K.Kt. 4th. 4. K.B. to Q.B. 4th. 4. P. to K.Kt. 5th. 5. Kt. to K. 5th. 5. Q.to K.R.'s 5th. (ch.) 6. K. to B. Sq. 6. K.Kt. to B. 3d.

FRENCH GAME.

1. P. to K. 4th. 1. P. to K. 3d.

These gambits may be classed under what are, in common phrase, termed "open" or "close" games; an open game being where the pieces are brought out into more immediate engagement,—a close game where the pawns interlock, and the pieces can less easily issue to the attack. An instance of the former may be found in the Allgaier,—of the latter in Philidor's Defence. These two kinds of games are found in chess-play because they are found in human temperament; as there are brilliant and daring Napoleons, and cautious, pertinacious Washingtons in war, so are there in chess Philidor and La Bourdonnais, Staunton and Morphy. In examining Mr. Staunton's play, for example, one is struck with the French tact of M. St. Amant's remark, made many years ago: "M. Staunton has the solidity of iron, but neither the purity of gold nor the brilliancy of the diamond." However much Mr. Staunton's ignoble evasion of the match with Morphy—after bringing him, by his letter, all the way from New Orleans to London, a voyage which would scarcely have been taken otherwise—may have stained his reputation as a courageous and honorable chess-player, we cannot be blind to the fact, that he is the strongest master of the game in Europe. With a fine mathematical head, (more at home, however, in the Calculus than in Algebra,)—with an immense power of reserve and masterly repose,—able to hold an almost incredible number of threads without getting

them entangled,—he has all the qualities which bear that glorious flower, success. But he is never brilliant; he has outwearied many a deeper man by his indefatigable evenness and persistance; he is Giant Despair to the brilliant young men. Mr. Morphy is just the *otherest* from Staunton. Like him only in sustained and quiet power, he brings to the board that demon of his, Memory,—such a memory, too, as no other chess-player has ever possessed: add to this wonderful analytic power and you have the secret of this Chess-King. Patient practice, ambition, and leisure have done the rest. He has thus the *lustre du diamant*, which St. Amant missed in Mr. Staunton; and we know that the brilliant diamond is hard enough also to make its mark upon the "solid iron."

Amongst other great living players who incline to the "close game," we may mention Mr. Harrwitz, whose match with Morphy furnished not one brilliant game; also Messrs. Slous, Horwitz, Bledow, Szen, and others. But the tendency has been, ever since the celebrated and magnificent matches of the two greatest chess geniuses which England and France have ever known, McDonnel and De la Bourdonnais, to cultivate the bolder and more exciting open gambits. And under the lead of Paul Morphy this tendency is likely to be inaugurated as the rule of modern chess. Professor Anderssen, Mayet, Lange, and Von der Lasa, in Germany,—Dubois and Centurini, at Rome,—St. Amant, Laroche, and Lécrivain, of Paris,—Löwenthal, Perigal, Kipping, Owen, Mengredien, etc., of London,—are all players of the heroic sort, and the games recently played by some of them

with Morphy are perhaps the finest on record. And certainly, whatever may be said of their tendency to promote careless and reckless play, the open and daring games are at once more interesting, more brief, and more conducive to the mental drill which has been claimed as a sufficient compensation for the outlay of thought and time demanded by chess.

We have already given some specimens of the Poetry of Chess. The Chess Philosophy itself has penetrated every direction of literature. From the time that Miranda is "discovered playing chess with Ferdinand" in Prospero's cell, (an early instance of "discovered mate,") the numberless Mirandas of Romance have played for and been played for mates. Chess has even its Mythology,—Caïssa being now, we believe, generally received at the Olympian Feasts. True, some one has been wicked enough to observe that all chess-stories are divisible into two classes,—in one a man plays for his own soul with the Devil, in the other the hero plays and wins a wife,—and to beg for a chess-story *minus* wives and devils; but such grumblers are worthless baggage, and ought to be checked. The Chess Library has now become an important collection. Time was, when, if one man had Staunton's "Handbook," Sarratt, Philidor, Walker's "Thousand Games," and Lewis on "The Game of Chess," he was regarded as uniting the character of a chess-scholar with that of the antiquary. But now we hear of Bledow of Berlin with eight hundred volumes on chess; and Professor George Allen, of the University of Pennsylvania, with more than a thousand! Such a

literature has Chess collected about it since Paolo Boi, "the great Syracusan," as he was called, wrote what perhaps was the first work on chess, in the middle of the sixteenth century.

But such numbers of works on chess are very rare, and when the reader hears of an enormous chess library, he may be safe in recalling the story of Walker, whose friend turned chess author; seven years after, he boasted to Walker of the extent of his chess library, which, he affirmed consisted of one thousand volumes *minus* eighteen! It turned out that eighteen copies of his work had been sold, the rest of the edition remaining on his hands.

Though these old works are like galleries of old and valuable pictures to the chess enthusiast, they contain very little that is valuable to the general reader. Their terms and signs are to the uninitiated suggestive of a doctor's prescription. But the anecdotes of the game are, many of them, remarkable; and we believe they are known to have less of the mythical about them than those told in other departments. One who knows the game will feel that it is sufficiently absorbing to be woven in with the textures of government, of history, and of biography. It is of the nature of chess gradually to gather up all the senses and faculties of the player, so that for the time being he is an automaton chess-player, to whom life and death are abstractions.

How seriously, even religiously, the game has always been regarded by both Church and State may be judged by the account given by old Carrera of one whom we have already named as probably the earliest chess author, as he certainly is one of the

greatest players known to fame. "In the time of our fathers," says this ancient enthusiast, "we had many famous players, of whom *Paolo Boi*, Sicilian, of the city of Syracuse, and commonly called the Syracusan, was considered the best. He was born in Syracuse of a rich and good family. When a boy, he made considerable progress in literature, for he had a very quick apprehension. He had a wonderful talent for the game of Chess; and having in a short time beaten all the players of the city, he resolved to go to Spain, where he heard there were famous players, honored and rewarded not only by noblemen, but also by Philip II., who took no small delight in the game. He first beat with ease all the players of Sicily, and was very superior in playing without seeing the board; for, playing at once three games blindfold, he conversed with others on different subjects. Before going into Spain, he travelled over all Italy, playing with the best players, amongst others with the Pultino, who was of equal force; they are therefore called by Salvio the light and glory of chess. He was the favorite of many Italian Princes, and particularly of the Duke of Urbino, and of several Cardinals, and even of Pope Pius V. himself, who would have given him a considerable benefice, if he would have become a clergyman; but this he declined, that he might follow his own inclinations. He afterward went to Venice, where a circumstance happened which had never occurred before: he played with a person and lost. Having afterward by himself examined the games with great care, and finding that he ought to have won, he was astonished

that his adversary should have gained contrary to all reason, and suspected that he had used some secret art whereby he was prevented from seeing clearly; and as he was very devout, and was possessed of a rosary rich with many relics of saints, he resolved to play again with his antagonist, armed not only with the rosary, but strengthened by having previously received the sacrament: by these means he conquered his adversary, who, after his defeat, said to him these words,—'Thine is more potent than mine.'"

Some of the earliest writers on chess have given their idea of the all-absorbing nature of the game in the pleasant legend, that it was invented by the two Grecian brothers Ledo and Tyrrheno to alleviate the pangs of hunger with which they were pressed, and that, whilst playing it, they lived weeks without considering that they had eaten nothing.

But we need not any mythical proof of its competency in this direction. Hyde, in his History of the Saracens, relates with authenticity, that Al Amin, the Caliph of Bagdad, was engaged at chess with his freedman Kuthar, at the time when Al Mamun's forces were carrying on the siege of the city with a vigor which promised him success. When one rushed in to inform the Caliph of his danger, he cried,—"Let me alone, for I see checkmate against Kuthar!" Charles I. was at chess when he was informed of the decision of the Scots to sell him to the English, but only paused from his game long enough to receive the intelligence. King John was at chess when the deputies from Rouen came to inform him that Philip Augustus had besieged their city; but

he would not hear them until he had finished the game. An old English MS. gives in the following sentence no very handsome picture of the chess-play of King John of England:—"John, son of King Henry, and Fulco felle at variance at Chestes, and John brake Fulco's head with the Chest-borde; and then Fulco gave him such a blow that he almost killed him." The laws of chess do not now permit the king such free range of the board. Dr. Robertson, in his History of Charles V., relates that John Frederic, Elector of Saxony, whilst he was playing with Ernest, Duke of Brunswick, was told that the Emperor had sentenced him to be beheaded before the gate of Wittenberg; he with great composure proceeded with the game, and, having beaten, expressed the usual satisfaction of a victor. He was not executed, however, but set at liberty, after five years' confinement, on petition of Mauritius. Sir Walter Raleigh said, "I wish to live no longer than I can play at chess." Rousseau speaks of himself as *forcené des échecs*, "mad after chess." Voltaire called it "the one, of all games, which does most honor to the human mind."

"When an Eastern guest was asked if he knew anything in the universe more beautiful than the gardens of his host, which lay, an ocean of green, broad, brilliant, enchanting, upon the flowery margin of the Euphrates, he replied,—'Yes, the chess-playing of El-Zuli.'" Surely, the compliment, though Oriental, is not without its strict truth. When Nature rises up to her culmination, the human brain, and there reveals her potencies of insight, foresight, analysis, memory, we are touched with a mystic beauty; the

profile on the mountain-top is sublimer than the mountain. But we must heed well Mr. Morphy's advice, and not suffer this fascinating game to be more than a porter at the gate of the fairer garden. Only when it secures, not when it usurps the day, can it be regarded as a friend. There is a myriad-move problem, of which Society is the Sphinx, given us to solve.

He who masters chess without being mastered by it will find that it discovers essential principles. In the world he will see a larger chess-field, and one also shaped by the severest mathematics: the world is so because the brain of man is so,—motive and move, motive and move: they sum up life, all life,—from the aspen-leaf turning its back to the wind, to the ecstasy of a saint. See the array of pawns (*forces*, as the Hindoo calls them): the bodily presence and abilities, power of persistence, endurance, nerve, the eye, the larynx, the tongue, the senses. Do they not exist in life as on the board, to cut the way for royal or nobler pieces? Does not the Imperial Mind win its experiences, its insight, through the wear and tear of its physical twin? Is not the perfect soul "perfect through sufferings" for evermore? For every coin reason gets from Nature, the heart must leave a red drop impawned, the face must bear its scar. See, then, the powers of the human arena: here Castle, Knight, Bishop are Passion, Love, Hope; and above all, the sacred Queen of each man, his specialty, his strength, by which he must win the day, if he win at all. Here is the Idea with reference to which each man is planned; it preexisted in the universe, and was born when he was born;

it is King on the board,—that lost, life's game is lost. By his side stands the special Strength into whose keeping it is given, making, in Goethe's words, "every man strong enough to enforce his conviction,"—his *conviction*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.