

the parts." As Comte advanced, he also more and more came to separate physical and chemical phenomena from vital, and to regard them as distinct. In his subordination of all things to Unity—to Human Nature as it appears from a study of History—Comte may even be said to have reduced all things under the dominance of an Idea or a Thought. Only in the Superior can we find the explanation of the Inferior—in man the explanation of nature. Yet since he sought in the moral as in the material order arrangements subjected to laws, he held he was still faithful to Positivism. "As Biology consists in the knowledge of the mutual action and reaction of organisms and of physical surroundings, philosophical history is the knowledge of the mutual action and reaction of organisms and of social surroundings." Therefore everything was, he believed, still regarded in its relations, not in its causes. Instead of explaining human life and history, either theologically or metaphysically, the founder of Positivism still only explains phenomena by phenomena. It is notable, however, that in coming back, even in appearance, to the original point of view, and making man the measure of all things, especially in more and more giving the reins to his affections and imagination, he returned, as it were, to the faith of the childhood of humanity. Indeed, he regarded Positivism as a return to Fetichism, only the Fetichism is no longer viewed as absolute, but as merely relative. Yet, although qualified in this way, it is impossible to believe that Comte himself, and his disciples—for it is impossible to human nature—hold themselves in the state of equipoise which such a belief implies. When, as the result of all his efforts and exertions, the author of the Positive philosophy came to the conclusion that Love is the secret of man and of the world; that intellect is, and ought to be, only the servant of the heart; and that as intelligence is above material existence, so are our moral and our emotional faculties above intelligence; it is impossible, we say, to think that Comte held this in the kind of mere provisional manner spoken of, which would have been equivalent to almost not holding it at all. Although, therefore, Comte saved his consistency by professing to limit the uses and applications of the Subjective Method in the way we have seen, he yet in reality, for his own satisfaction, for the satisfaction of his heart and mind, was led back to the old standpoint which in metaphysics and theology he opposed and despised—of explaining everything by reference to man.

He was thereby brought very near to the point of view of Christianity, while, by professing to deal only with relations without any knowledge of Causes, he remained faithful to Positivism, and reconciled the latter in a certain vague manner

with Religion. The practical issues were certainly in harmony with Christianity, as might have been expected from the apostle of *Altruism*, the devout and faithful student of the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*. To live for others was Comte's motto, and to adore Will and Love in all nature was the end of the worship of the Religion of Humanity. The Religion was still nominally without a God; and from the relative view of Positivism there could be no belief in immortality. To the last, amid all the devotional longings of his heart, Comte maintained his view of the relative nature of all our knowledge, and refused to see the Absolute, to which both his thoughts and affections seemed more and more to tend. Considering the direction in which he was going, it seems hardly too much to hope that, had he lived longer, he might at length have come to acknowledge that only in the development of the Infinite in human life—in the reconciliation of the Finite and Infinite in Humanity as a historical fact—can full satisfaction be found for the problems, of which he presented partial and provisional solutions; and that the Relative is inexplicable by itself, and in reality *is* nothing, unless there be an Absolute as the background and reason of its reality.

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ART. I.—*Memoir of the Right Honourable Hugh Elliot.* By the
COUNTESS OF MINTO. Edinburgh, 1868.

THE position of a diplomatist is, in some respects, less favourable to the gratification of personal ambition than that of an officer of rank in the army or the navy. The most important part of the diplomatist's work is unseen, and is unknown to the great body of his countrymen. He may convey to his Government the most ample details of his proceedings, but, in most cases, it would be inexpedient and in many injurious to the national interests to make these public. If, for example, he has succeeded in conducting, with consummate ability, to a satisfactory conclusion, discussions which threatened to produce a rupture between his own Government and that to which he is accredited, he has rendered an important service to the State; but it can rarely be desirable to make public in detail all that passed in the course of such a negotiation. It is generally more conducive to the maintenance of a good understanding between the parties, that these details should be kept out of sight, if not forgotten; but without a knowledge of these, of all the difficulties he has had to contend with, and of the manner in which he surmounted them, the diplomatist's merits cannot be duly appreciated. He must therefore be content, in most cases, even on occasions of the greatest success, to forego the popular appreciation which attends success in the other branches of the public service. Such, at least, was the position of our ambassadors and envoys in the last century.

For diplomatists, however, who have been men of mark in their generation, there may come a time, but not till they and their contemporaries have passed away, when some friendly hand, shaking the dust of many years from the papers they have left, gives a truthful picture of a man who, it may be,

was known and admired at almost every court in Europe, revives the memory of his talents, accomplishments, and public services, and contributes authentic materials for the history of the times in which he lived.

This is what, in the memoir of her grandfather, Lady Minto has done with much ability and judgment, and with a candour, vivacity, and grace, that make doubly attractive the story of a life which, even in rougher hands, could not have failed to be full of interest. The available mass of papers appears to have been such as would have furnished materials for several volumes; but although the labour of selection must have been great, and often perplexing, we do not doubt that it was wise to compress the memoir into a single volume. It is to be regretted that equal self-denial has not always been exercised by those who have undertaken similar tasks. It is better for both subject and author that the readers of a Memoir or a "Correspondence" should wish the book to be longer than that they should complain of its being too long.

"With the laudable desire," says Lady Minto, "to begin at the beginning, I should gladly trace the manner in which my grandfather's earliest years were spent, but unfortunately I have no means of doing so; the oldest letter in my possession is of the date of 1762, when he was ten years old, and was living with his family at Twickenham; and in none of the subsequent letters have I found any internal evidence as to the locality which they looked upon as home. In none is there any allusion to favourite haunts, to gardens or games, to dependants or pets; nothing to show affection for home as a place. Strong family affection has been ever a characteristic of the race, and to be together was at all times an object of tenderest longing, but where the meeting should take place seems to have been a matter of indifference."

"I therefore suppose that during the youth of the family their parents led an unsettled life, probably dividing their time between Parliamentary duties in London and visits to relations in Edinburgh, occasionally living at Lochgelly and occasionally at Minto. It is possible, too, that the home life may not have been of the kind to make itself remembered with unmixed pleasure. Sir Gilbert was a grave, highly cultivated man, immersed in politics, and, like all fathers of his time, he seems to have inspired his family with as much awe as admiration.

"Lady Elliot, clever, high-spirited, and imaginative, was not, like one who filled her place in after years,

'Blessed with a temper, whose unclouded ray,
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day.'

Her preference for those of her children who most resembled herself was openly avowed, and in Isabella and Hugh, she cultivated rather

than repressed the uncontrolled sensibility, the romantic impulsiveness of character, and 'high imaginings,' which, in the case of the sister, probably increased constitutional tendencies to the extent of rendering them morbid, and which in that of the brother diminished the successfulness of his career and the happiness of his life. Her eldest son Gilbert and her youngest daughter Eleanor, were not supposed by her to be of the porcelain clay of which the rest were made, and her allusions, soon after Hugh left her, to Gilbert's coldness of manner, as compared with Hugh's more demonstrative nature, is not less striking, when we find that she lived to give her entire confidence to her eldest son, and to be on terms approaching to estrangement with the younger.

"To a want therefore of home sunshine, it is possible that we may in part ascribe the fact that the letters written from home deal chiefly with news, with politics, or with advice, while those addressed there by the absent sons, are confined to matters affecting their studies and pursuits.

"From their earliest years the boys were training for the world.

"'Life,' says Byron, 'has no Present,' but childhood is the time of life which should form an exception to the rule, a time when stores of mental as of bodily health may be laid up in days of careless enjoyment.

"At twelve years old Hugh was with his elder brother in Paris, learning French and *l'usage du monde* under the auspices of David Hume."

In 1762, Mr. Liston, afterwards Sir Robert Liston, a well-known and much respected diplomatist, became the tutor of the boys Gilbert and Hugh, with a salary of £25 a year, bed, board, and washing. Towards the end of 1764 they were sent with their tutor to Paris, where they spent two years at the military school directed by the Abbé Choquart. "While there they made the acquaintance of Mirabeau, a boy of their own age, for whom the school of l'Abbé Choquart had been specially selected as being more like a prison than a school. No complaints of harsh treatment have, however, been recorded in the letters of the Elliots."

On their return from Paris in 1766, the boys were sent to Edinburgh, to be under the superintendence of Professor George Stuart, who, in the spring of the following year, writes, "In everything where Hugh's age admits (he was barely fifteen) he is really wonderful." And again: "I never had occasion to see two brothers so contrasted, and indeed I should find it a more difficult task to manage Hugh, were it not for the example of his brother. He is lively, agreeable, and popular. No wonder if his vivacity is now and then above his reason. As it is he needs a very sharp eye." A further account of Hugh Elliot at this time will be found in Dr. Somerville's *Life and Times*:—

"At this period of their lives," Lady Minto informs us, "Hugh got into scrapes by 'mixing too much salt with his repartees;' while Gilbert ran some danger of finding that sweets have their 'soure' too. It was surmised at home that he neglected his law-books for the society of a young lady of his acquaintance; but his defence seems to have been complete when he wrote to his mother that, 'after all, it had only made him take up Thomson's Seasons once or twice instead of his Roman History;' and he proceeds, perhaps in self-justification—'this town is proving idler every day. It is already much thinned. There are at present in Edinburgh above a thousand people perfectly idle. The journeymen tailors have for some time given up their work, insisting on higher wages. The masons and carpenters have all followed their example.'"

In 1768 the brothers went to Oxford, and, soon after his arrival, Hugh wrote a letter to his father, giving an account of the life there. They had been dining with Dr. Markham, who questioned them about their studies, and gave them his advice with regard to them.

"In short," says Hugh, "I think he endeavoured to recommend everything that is taught here, and dis-recommend everything which is not taught here. . . .

"We are told we must take great care never to speak upon politics, or prefer any other University to this. . . . Pray, papa, if anybody asks you how we like Oxford, don't tell them that we find fault with anything, for I never saw people so bigoted to any place in my life, and they are jealous of the least thing that can be construed against it."

Two years later both brothers were again at Paris, and Hugh writes,—“As soon as we were equipped we waited upon Mr. (Horace) Walpole, who seems to be as dry and cold a kind of gentleman as I ever saw.” They found Madame de Boufflers—Walpole's *Idole du Temple*—at her studies in her bedroom. She said, “if she had time she would set about translating Mr. Smith's Moral Sentiments. ‘Il a des idées si justes de la sympathie.’” Hugh slyly adds, “This book is now in great vogue here—this doctrine of sympathy bids fair for cutting out David Hume's Immaterialism, especially with the ladies, ever since they heard of his marriage.”

“Madame du Deffand has told us to come to her *petits soupers* whenever we please.” This lady is well known as the correspondent of Voltaire and of Horace Walpole. Her society, we are told, was composed of all that was eminent in France, either by intellect or position. In a letter to Walpole she describes the young Elliots as very amiable, perfect in their knowledge of French, gay, gentle, well-bred, good-looking, and agreeable to every one. They were also well received by Madame Geoffrin, whose saloons were frequented by such men

as Montesquieu, the *Encyclopédistes*, l'Abbé Delille, La Harpe, &c., and by Mademoiselle l'Espinasse, an authoress of some note. She was the friend of M. d'Alembert, who, in concert with Diderot and secretly assisted by Voltaire, started the *Encyclopédie*, designed to undermine religion and monarchy in France. This was then considered the most distinguished intellectual society to which a youth could obtain access in Europe, and it was sought accordingly. It was brilliant and immoral. Few of the women were considered, and probably many of them did not desire to be considered, immaculate, but they were clever and accomplished, and there has, perhaps, been no epoch in France or elsewhere, in which the destructive force of mere intellect, uncoupled with rank or wealth, and divorced from religion and morals, has been manifested in such power as at that time in Paris. The men who were the guiding lights of the society we are speaking of—the Philosophers, as they were called—Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, and others of that sect, deliberately sapped the foundations of the social and political fabric of France, already damaged by vice and corruption, and prepared the ground, if they did not lay the train, for the mine which, in its explosion some years later, broke up the whole framework of society, and blew monarchy, aristocracy, morality, and religion to the winds. The political principles which they inculcated and diffused may be inferred from the declaration attributed to Diderot, that "Mankind will never be happy and free till the last of kings has been strangled with the bowels of the last of priests,"—and France acted as if she had accepted the spirit at least of this dictum. We all know what followed. Flying from anarchy, France sought the protection of military despotism, and having drunk too deeply of military glory, reeled and fell. After a time, another outbreak of republicanism drove her to the same shelter, and under the vigorous discipline of the second empire, she now seems to be gradually recovering her sober senses.

It is worthy of remark that amongst the admirers of this Republican philosophy of Liberty and Equality, none professed greater admiration than Frederick of Prussia and Catherine of Russia, perhaps the most despotic and arbitrary sovereigns in Europe. They kept up a familiar, but, on their part, deferential correspondence with Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, and other notabilities of that school, and invited them to Berlin and St. Petersburg. Voltaire, as every one knows, resigned his appointments at Paris and settled at Berlin, as the king's friend, chamberlain, and guest. But they quarrelled, and Voltaire had the mortification to discover that his Royal friend had become tired of him, and had privately avowed his intention, as he ex-

pressed it, "when he had squeezed the lemon to throw away the rind."

Catherine made the purchase of Voltaire's library an occasion for conferring upon him a pecuniary benefit. She invited D'Alembert to St. Petersburg to conduct the education of her son—afterwards the Emperor Paul—and there to complete the *Encyclopédie*, which had been denounced in France; and when he, warned no doubt by Voltaire's experience at Berlin, declined her very liberal and flattering proposals, she wrote to him a letter (November 19, 1762), in which she endeavoured to prove that it was his duty to accede to her request, adding—"In this whole letter I have argued only from what I have found in your writings; you would not contradict yourself." She also purchased Diderot's library, which she left with him, at the same time appointing him keeper of it with a liberal salary; and having induced him to visit St. Petersburg, she received him with the most flattering attentions. "Diderot," says a writer who had special means of obtaining accurate information, "unfolded his principles on the liberty and rights of nations with his usual enthusiasm and eloquence. The Empress seemed to be delighted with them; but she was not at all the more disposed to put them in practice. 'M. Diderot,' said she, 'is a hundred years old in many respects; but in others he is no more than ten.' Perhaps her Majesty's private opinion was not more in favour of the wisdom of Voltaire, though she never spoke of it but with the deference due to the foremost dispenser of fame." Both the King and the Empress bestowed flatteries and largesses on the leading literary men of the day, in order that their own praises might be sounded throughout Europe; and they effected their object. They no doubt regarded the Republican Philosophy which they professed to admire in the same light as they did abstract propositions in science, which it was interesting to discuss or to hear discussed, but which had no immediate or practical bearing upon their duties as Sovereigns. They lived to take a different view of the effect of such teaching.

But the young Elliots do not appear to have been influenced by the views of the French society in which they occasionally mingled, and in the autumn of 1770 they both left Paris, the elder, Gilbert, to resume his studies at Christ Church, thereafter to engage in public life, and to become Viceroy of Corsica, Envoy Extraordinary to Vienna, President of the Board of Control, Governor-General of India, and first Earl of Minto.

The younger, Hugh, proceeded to Metz to study military science. While yet a child, he had received from General Scott of Scotstarvet a commission in the British army, in accord-

ance with a practice then too common to be regarded as blameable. From that time he had been led to look to the army as his profession, his studies had been directed with a view to prepare him for it, and it was his own ardent desire and ambition to seek distinction in pursuing a military career. But quite unexpectedly, when he had completed his education, Lord Barrington refused to ratify the appointment. This refusal, whatever may have been the motive that dictated it, was then looked upon as a cutting insult, which was to be resented by the family and their friends; and it is perhaps not too much to say that Hugh Elliot never entirely overcame the mortification. His ardour for military distinction had become a passion. The short and brilliant essay in arms which he soon afterwards had an opportunity of making, served to inflame that passion; it continued to burn and burst forth long after he had apparently settled to his diplomatic work, and probably it never was altogether extinguished. He seems to have felt that his true vocation was military, and, although he acquired distinction as a diplomatist, he was probably right.

In the hope that he might obtain employment in the Austrian army with the rank of captain, which had been conferred upon him with that view, he set out in 1772 for Vienna, and although he failed in his object, he gained the friendship of Lord Stormont, who, afterwards writing to a friend (not of the Elliot family), says with reference to Hugh, "The sweetness of his disposition, the manner in which the *elements are blended* in him, the variety of his accomplishments and pursuits, make him a young man so much after my heart, that I often lament in secret I am not the father of such a son, though God knows I never was less disposed than at present to try my chance." Madame de Thun, too, who was one of the most agreeable, cultivated, and sensible women in Viennese society, said of him, years afterwards, "Such as he was at eighteen, so would I wish my son to be."

Thirsting for military employment, Elliot pushed on to Warsaw, where he was favourably received by the King, Stanislas Augustus, whose person and manner he describes as "strikingly engaging and manly." Stanislas was not a man of elevated birth; his grandfather had been steward of a small estate belonging to the Sapeiha family. He had himself accompanied the British ambassador, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, to St. Petersburg, as an unofficial secretary, had become one of the favoured lovers of the Empress Catherine, had by her been placed, with the connivance of Prussia, and almost by force of arms, upon the throne of Poland, and was now (1772) about to become the victim of her ambition.

The partition of Poland was on the eve of being perpetrated, the forces of the three Powers were closing round their prey, and the feuds and contentions of the Poles, fomented and fostered by foreign agency, made any attempt at resistance hopeless. "I never was so moved with any scene," writes Elliot to his father, "as with the first aspect of this Court. Remorse or despair get the better of the forced cheerfulness with which they endeavour to veil the approach of ruin, slavery, and oppression."

From Warsaw, Elliot set forth to join the Russian army, then employed in Moldavia against the Turks, and finding that operations were suspended, and negotiations in progress, he took the opportunity to visit Constantinople and Shumlah, where the head-quarters of the Turkish army lay. This displeased his father, who accused him of seeking amusement rather than employment, and ordered him home. But by this time hostilities had been resumed, and Hugh Elliot, rightly considering it inconsistent with his honour to leave the army at such a moment, excused himself on that ground. In the actions that speedily occurred, the young Englishman so distinguished himself as to attract the attention not only of Generals Soltikof and Potemkin, but of Marshal Romanzow. The Marshal wrote to the British ambassador at St. Petersburg in the highest terms of Mr. Elliot's gallantry and conduct, which, he said, he had also considered it his duty to report to the Empress. M. Pouschkin, Russian ambassador in London, was desired to report to the English Government the very strong expressions of approbation with which Marshal Romanzow had mentioned the young Englishman in his despatches to his own Government, and Sir Gilbert was mollified by the high encomiums bestowed upon his son.

From Moldavia Mr. Elliot returned to Warsaw, where he received intelligence of his nomination as minister to the Court of Munich. His military life had terminated, and his diplomatic life was to begin, at the age of twenty-two.

In June 1774, he arrived at Munich, accompanied by Mr. Liston, who had been his tutor, and was now his secretary, but did not yet hold any official appointment. The young minister had little or no public business to transact with the Court of Bavaria, but Munich was a post of observation from which the intrigues and manœuvres of the greater powers could conveniently be observed and reported. Whatever his duties were, they seem to have been performed to the entire satisfaction of his Government. The Court of Bavaria appears to have been as loose and frivolous as it has been since that time. For an amusing account of it we must refer to the *Memoir*, and recom-

mend to such as may be wearied with the lax frivolities of that mimic and miniature Versailles, to turn to the very sensible and clever letters of Madame de Thun to Elliot, which are those of a thoughtful, kind, and judicious friend.

Lady Minto has adopted the arrangement of giving alternate chapters of home and foreign intelligence, and we hardly know which is the more attractive. The letters of Lady Elliot, of the sisters, and indeed of nearly all the female correspondents, are charming, so also is much of the narrative. Let us take at random the following reference to Minto. Every one who has, or can look back to, an hereditary home, round which family reminiscences, traditions, and affections cluster, will appreciate the current of feeling that runs through it :—

“Parliament was dissolved in October, and, before the new one had assembled, the family left Minto, none of them ever to return, except Gilbert, whose home it was to be, and Isabella, who went there once only, and for a very short period, on a visit to her brother. It does not appear that any of them, except, perhaps, Sir Gilbert himself, entertained any affection for the place, and the ladies certainly considered that going down there ‘was a great breach in society.’ The love of Minto, which we now guard like some hereditary spell, came in with a stranger, for Gilbert’s wife was the first who is said to have ‘loved Minto passionately.’

“But the Minto of those days was not the Minto of these. The sheet of water which now reflects laburnums and rhododendrons in sight of the windows, was then a narrow burn running under banks shaggy with thorns; where the flower-garden is now, stood a dismal little church in a corner dark with yews, and dreary with unkept graves; the manse, surrounded by a few untidy cottages, overlooked the little glen, and was near enough to the house for the minister to see the family as they sat at dinner in the round room on the ground-floor, known as the ‘big room’ by uncles and aunts, and as the ‘school-room’ by the children of to-day. The rocks may have been finer than when no woods hung like drapery on their sides, but from the old castle one must have looked down on muirs and heaths where now lie the woods of the Lamblairs, or the green slopes and corn-fields which smile in pleasant Teviotdale.

“The green hills are possibly the only feature in the place which remain unchanged, though the village which clusters at their feet is new.

“In those days roads were few, and drains were not, and the dwellers in a land where high farming triumphs will sometimes lament the days when fences were odious and turnips undiscovered. Yet, on the whole, though sunny days may then have shown bright stretches of whin or of heather which have disappeared now, we must admit that we live on a drier soil, and in a more ‘innerlie’ country, and have a greater variety of cheerful pleasures than fell to the lot of our forefathers; so peace be to their ashes! even though they did not care for Minto.”

In 1776 Sir Gilbert Elliot died. His eldest son Gilbert succeeded as fourth baronet, and thenceforward took an active part in public affairs. In the same year Hugh was transferred from Munich to Berlin, then, as now, one of the most important diplomatic posts in Europe. Frederick the Great was still in full vigour. He had secured his conquest of Silesia, under the guarantee of all the powers that were parties to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. He had instigated, promoted, and assisted in the partition of Poland, and had obtained his share of that unfortunate country, and the plunder of its inhabitants. He was the greatest military genius of his time, and one of the most astute and unscrupulous statesmen. To his fame as a king and a warrior he desired to add that of a philosopher, a poet, and a wit. He was vain, arbitrary, and overbearing, capricious in his humour, and when out of humour ready to say something offensive to every one who came in his way. That he did great things, and in so far was a great man, is unquestionable; that in small things he was often coarse, mean, and insolent, is equally undeniable. He was feared by many, loved by few, and trusted by none.

The state of Europe was unsettled. France, with a feeble court, a corrupt government, shattered finances, a discontented people, and a vast amount of unemployed intellect assailing the existing institutions, was in that uneasy state which precedes and forebodes revolution. The financial and other reforms undertaken by the Emperor Joseph II. had alienated the affections of Hungary, driven the Netherlands to revolt, and produced uneasiness and discontent in the hereditary dominions of Austria. Gustavus III. had effected a revolution in Sweden, and had usurped despotic power, to which his subjects were not prepared to submit, and which his army was not disposed to sustain. The King of Denmark and Norway was in a state of imbecility, and quarrels and intrigues in the palace distracted that spirited nation, and paralysed its power, at that time not inconsiderable. Poland had been destroyed. The smaller States of Germany, overrun by contending armies, had little weight in the political scale. Italy was but a battle-field for foreign hosts. Spain had still a navy, and colonies which supplied her with gold and silver, and she might be useful as an ally; but her military power was now of small account. England was engaged in the American war, in which she suffered humiliating military disasters that damaged her reputation in Europe, though they were in some measure counterbalanced by naval victories. Russia, whose alliance with Prussia had been studiously cultivated by Frederick, and cemented by their concert in the partition of Poland, was intent upon her aggrandizement in the East,—where she

was adding to her conquests from year to year at the expense of the Turks,—occupied nearer home with the affairs of Poland, harassed in the Baltic by the hostility of Sweden, and had not yet appeared in Central and Western Europe as a great military power. Prussia, therefore, although geographically weak, was strong in the valour and reputation of her army and the genius of her King, whose Court became the centre of many intrigues and ambitious schemes. The Envoy at the Court of Frederick did not sleep on a bed of roses; and to have been selected for that post was a proof of the estimation in which Mr. Elliot was held by his Sovereign and the Cabinet.

After mentioning his arrival at Berlin, the Memoir proceeds—

“The Court to which my grandfather was now accredited was as unlike as possible that which he had just left. In place of the gay and dissipated Munich, he found a capital of regular and handsome architecture indeed, but in ‘the streets of which reigned an air of dejection at noon-day, scarcely any passengers being seen except soldiers.’ The only court held there was that of the Queen, the neglected wife of Frederick the Great; to her all presentations were made, and her receptions, at rare and stated intervals, were the only royal entertainments at which Berliners were called upon to assist; but so parsimonious were the habits of the Court, that the occasional glimmer of an old lamp in the staircase of the palace was sufficient to make a passer-by exclaim—‘Her Majesty doubtless holds high festival to-day!’ and so scanty were the provisions at the royal table, that those who had the honour of partaking of them previously fortified themselves with a repast at home. Thiébault tells us, that on one occasion a great lady especially recommended by Her Majesty to the care of the assistants, received for her entire portion one preserved cherry!

“The fête-day of the Queen was the grand gala of the year, for then Frederick honoured her with his presence, and taking off his military boots for that day only, appeared for the space of half-an-hour in silk stockings, which, ungartered and ill-fitting, fell in folds around his legs.

“No less unlike to the splendours of Nymphenburg was the residence of the Prussian King at Potsdam, ‘rather a military station than a city. Guards and hussars constituted half its inhabitants;’ while the little palace of Sans Souci, a quarter of a mile off, consisted only of one range of apartments on the ground floor. ‘A sandy barren soil and groves of gloomy fir gave an air of melancholy to the surrounding scenery,’ says an English traveller whose words I have before quoted; and after expatiating on the evidence of military despotism apparent throughout the land, he adds—‘The Prussian monarchy reminds me of a vast prison, in the centre of which appears the great keeper occupied in the care of his captives.’”

An old friend, who knew Berlin, hearing of his appointment, writes to tell him that “on y traite les ministres à la Vénit-

tienne; la cour et la ville ont peu de communication avec eux, les personnes auxquelles ils se lient, et les maisons qu'ils fréquentent deviennent mêmes suspectes."

Lady Minto has found "no letters from Mr. Elliot describing his first impressions of Berlin; but in the letters addressed to him there are passages which throw some light both on the reception he met with, and on his own views of the place and people.

"Thus Mr. Brydone, writing on the 2d May 1777, says,—'It gave me great pleasure to know you have met with so agreeable and so gracious a reception: I was sure, indeed, this would be the case, as you are exactly the character the king likes.' And Madame de Thun writes:—'J'ai été bien agréablement surprise de voir par votre lettre que mes alarmes sur les désagrémens que je croyais que vous trouveriez dans la société de Berlin sont inutiles, et que vous êtes si content de votre séjour; l'éloge que vous en faites, quelque pompeux qu'il soit, ne me tente cependant pas, et je vous avoue que je ne me fais pas l'idée d'une société sur laquelle la subordination s'étend, ni des agrémens d'une ville qui doit son existence au fer et au feu, encore moins d'une capitale qui est un camp; où on ne peut faire campagne gaiement.

"Vraiment si je ne savais pas combien on est charmé de passer son temps avec vous, je croirais qu'il doit y avoir à Berlin d'autres agrémens, moins hérissés de balonnettes, de tambours, et de manœuvres, puisque Harvey, que je ne crois pas militaire aussi passionné que vous, y reste si longtemps.'

"My grandfather's military tastes had led him to form an enthusiastic admiration for the great soldier of his age, and no doubt the military manœuvres which formed the staple amusement of Berliners were peculiarly interesting to him, but as Madame de Thun shrewdly surmised, Berlin had other attractions too."

The other attractions here alluded to were those of the beautiful Mademoiselle de Krauth, "sans contredit la plus belle personne de ce pays," of whom we shall see more presently; but we must first refer to another matter.

The envoy had been but a few months in Berlin when circumstances occurred which affected unfavourably his position at that Court. Two agents from the revolted colonies in America arrived there; and the British Government, informed of their movements, and having reason to believe that Frederick had been secretly intriguing with the Americans, instructed the envoy to watch the proceedings of these "rebel agents." Their presence at Berlin, which was known to Mr. Elliot, and which in any case could not have been concealed from him, was formally announced to the British envoy by the Prussian minister, with an assurance that "the King of Prussia had too high a sense of the regal dignity to give his sanction to the rebellious colonies by receiving their emissaries, who were therefore obliged to maintain the strictest incognito." Mr.

Elliot, however, had what he considered sufficient reasons for not being satisfied that he could, in this case, rely with confidence on Frederick's "high sense of the regal dignity;" he therefore endeavoured to obtain more precise information. Offers, which he accepted, were made to obtain for him, secretly, the papers of the American agents, but, the risk being found too great, those offers came to nothing. Mr. Elliot, impatient at being thwarted, and anxious to procure evidence of the secret objects of the American emissaries to Berlin, happened to say, at his dinner-table, that he would gladly give a sum of money to any one who should bring him their papers. This was overheard by a German servant, who thereupon, without further authorization, broke into the apartments of the Americans at an hotel in which they had put up, forced open the bureau, and carried off bodily the papers it contained.

The master of the house, who had previously been tampered with unsuccessfully, instantly accused Mr. Elliot's servant of the theft, and the police were pursuing their inquiries when Mr. Elliot came forward, declared himself to be solely responsible for what had occurred, acknowledged the guilt of his servant, and admitted his own indiscretion in having expressed himself as he did. The papers were promptly restored to their owners, and Mr. Elliot submitted himself entirely to the judgment of the King of Prussia, acquitting his own Court of any share in so unjustifiable a transaction. This was, no doubt, a very judicious as well as a very proper course if the papers contained, as was believed at the time, matter that in some measure compromised the King. He could not desire that any such matter should be made public; he knew that Elliot was not a man who would shrink, if pressed too far, from defending himself or exposing the King. Frederick, however, gave a gracious answer, to the effect that he should wish the subject to be dropped, and it was dropped, at Berlin. But Mr. Elliot thought it his duty to recommend that he should be recalled, because the credit of his Court might possibly suffer from the conduct of its representative.

Mr. Liston had been sent over at once with letters explaining the circumstances. Lord Suffolk censured Mr. Elliot, attributing what had occurred to unwarrantable excess of zeal and want of discretion, advised him to "abstain from vivacities of language, and to control and discourage so criminal an activity on the part of his dependants." He was at the same time informed that "the generous conduct of the King of Prussia" on the occasion made it unnecessary to recall him.

While Frederick informed Mr. Elliot that he wished the matter to be dropped, and was desirous that it should not be further discussed at Berlin, he held totally different language

elsewhere. Mr. Eden, in a private letter, says—"When you were told that the outrage was forgiven, we had absolute proof that you were only told so, and that it was likely to be seriously resented."

Lady Minto appends to her account of this extraordinary affair a note in the following terms :—

"My attention having been called to the discrepancy between the account given in the text of this transaction and that to be found in the 6th vol. of Mr. Carlyle's *History of Frederick the Great*, I have only to say, that I have translated all but verbatim Mr. Elliot's letter on the subject to the Prince of Prussia, and have accurately copied the most important passages relating to it from Lord Suffolk's despatches and Mr. Eden's letters; and that no papers, public or private, containing any different version from that given in the text, have been preserved in the mss. of my grandfather."

On the whole, we are disposed to regard the account given in the Memoir as probably more accurate than that which Mr. Carlyle, relying on the materials he used, has given in his *Life of Frederick*. He seems to believe that this outrage was instigated or connived at by the British Government; but that view, which would in some degree exonerate Mr. Elliot, cannot be reconciled with the letters of Lord Suffolk of 1st August and of Mr. Eden of October 1777, which were strictly confidential, and have now for the first time been made public.

"From that time," we are told, "he (Mr. Elliot) never recovered the ground which he seems originally to have occupied in the king's good graces, nor does he appear to have adopted Mr. Eden's conciliatory advice, nor to have sought to regain the Royal favour by attentions and deference.

"The king condescended to '*bouder*' the young envoy—the latter affected to disregard the king—the king, growing gradually more and more hostile to England, amused himself by twitting her representative with the failures of her policy, and the unsuccessfulness of her arms; and the minister retaliated by replies, of which the sarcasm was equally delicate and sharp."

The "replies" here referred to are so characteristic of the man that they cannot be altogether omitted, and one or two of them may as well be given here as in the chronological order of their occurrence.

The recall of M. Maltzahn from London, and the appointment to that post of an "ill-conditioned fellow, merely to spite the English cabinet," gave occasion to the following repartee :— "What do they say of — in London?" asked Frederick tauntingly. "Digne représentant de Votre Majesté," replied Mr. Elliot, bowing to the ground.

"For some time the relations between England and Prussia had not been cordial, and Frederick showed his bad humour by not addressing a word to Mr. Elliot at several successive levées. Mr. Elliot was indignant, and burning to be revenged. When at length, on the arrival of intelligence that Hyder Ali had made a successful and destructive inroad into the British territories in the Carnatic, Frederick broke his long silence, asking—'M. Elliot, qui est ce Hyder Ali qui sait si bien arranger vos affaires aux Indes?' Elliot promptly replied—'Sire, c'est un vieux despote qui a beaucoup pillé ses voisins, mais qui, Dieu merci, commence à radoter.' Mr. Elliot related this anecdote to my informant with much exultation, adding—'Sir, it was a revenge that Satan might have envied.' And Satan's envy might have reached its acmé when the news of Hyder Ali's reverses produced an ebullition of spite from the King which gave Mr. Elliot an opening for a second and no less ready rejoinder. Commenting on the expressions of gratitude to Providence which accompanied the official narrative of Sir Eyre Coote's victory, the King remarked—'Je ne savais pas que la Providence fût de vos alliés.' 'Le seul, Sire, que nous ne payons pas,' was the reply."

Mr. Elliot spent the year 1778 in Berlin. "The spring found him attending the deathbed of his old friend, the Lord Marischal." He was the eldest son of Lord Keith, Hereditary Earl Marischal of Scotland, whose title, which dated from the days of Malcolm Canmore, was attainted, and his estates forfeited in consequence of the prominent part he took in the Jacobite "rising" of 1715. His son, however, continued to be called Lord Marischal. "Born in 1685," he had served under Marlborough, had left his native country after the failure of the Pretender's attempt in 1715, and, with some other Jacobite gentlemen, entered the service of Spain. When his younger brother, Marischal Keith, attached himself to the King of Prussia in whose service he ultimately fell, Lord Marischal also settled at Berlin. He was much respected, was employed by Frederick on important missions, and seems to have been generally loved and admired. Mr. Elliot, in a letter to his brother, passes a high encomium upon him—

"Experience gained in the school of adversity, great penetration, sound judgment, retentive memory, made him equally instructive and entertaining. He will long be cited in this country as a model of wisdom, benevolence, and virtue. I sincerely loved and honoured him. I have just learnt that an accident destroyed lately a considerable part of his correspondence, which would have thrown great light upon the principal characters of those times, when, to use his own expression, 'we were fighting for a king and not for an empire.'"

Lady Minto mentions that a few days before his death, Lord Marischal summoned Mr. Elliot to his bedside,—“You may

perhaps," he said, "have some commission to give me for Lord Chatham. I shall see him in a day or two." He knew that Lord Chatham had died a fortnight before. "If it were worth while," writes Mr. Elliot, "to form any wish concerning so indifferent a circumstance as the manner in which one would choose to take leave of a scene that flies from us, 'Que je meurs comme ce juste,' would be mine."

The successive military failures in our attempts to regain the American colonies had produced a general feeling of depression, and even of uneasiness, at home, and of satisfaction or exultation abroad. Our ally of Prussia, when it became evident that both France and Spain would take a part against us, seemed to speculate on the possibility of our downfall. "Hugh Elliot, young, spirited, and full of military ardour, had many a mortification to devour in silence while acting as England's representative at a Court of whose sentiments he thus writes to Lord Suffolk," on the 5th of June 1778:—"As to this Court, it is composed of individuals thoroughly ill-inclined to Great Britain, but too sensible of their own situation not to know that the day is perhaps not far distant when the existence of their power may depend upon its assistance." But in the midst of alarm at home and evil expectations on the Continent, he ever maintained a serene front and confident demeanour.

Thiébauld says:—

"Souvent dans la société on parlait de cette guerre à M. Elliot, et ceux qui cherchaient à lui plaire en paraissaient quelquefois effrayés, surtout après que les Français se furent déclarés pour les Américains. Jamais il ne répondait qu'en montrant une parfaite sécurité.

"'Tout ce qui peut nous arriver de pire,' disait-il à la fin, 'c'est qu'au lieu d'être le premier peuple du monde, nous serons le second.'"

In July the war of the Bavarian succession broke out. Frederick, who had already commenced that rivalry with Austria for supremacy in Germany, which we have lately seen decided in favour of his successors, appealed to arms rather than permit Austria to make good her claims to the Electorate of Bavaria, which would have given her a decided preponderance. The King of Prussia set out to join his army, carrying with him all the princes of the blood and *élite* of the male society of Berlin. "How far Mr. Elliot profited by this may be guessed by the more frequent mention in his correspondence of the fair Made-moiselle Krauth." Letters from travellers returned home inquire tenderly for "la belle des belles," or more irreverently refer to Hugh's taste for "cabbage." "Beware of Miss Cabbage," writes one, "for she is artful, and knows very well you love her." "If you feed on sprouts," says Sir J. Harris, then

at St. Petersburg, "you will find them hard of digestion." But it was already too late to argue or laugh him out of his love for Krauth. In the last two years he had lost his father, his mother, his brother Alick, his friend and "patron" Lord Suffolk, "whose kindness had never flagged," and some of his most intimate friends, and he felt the necessity of forming new ties. "M. Elliot," says Thiébault, "était devenu éperdument amoureux de Mademoiselle Krauth," and in July 1779 he returned to England, on leave, to prepare his family for the declaration of his marriage, which had taken place privately before his departure. It was an unfortunate alliance. The lady was well-born, was reputed an heiress, and possessed acknowledged beauty; but she proved to be deficient in good sense and right feeling, and he was ultimately obliged, by her flagrant misconduct, to divorce her after the birth of her second child, which, however, did not survive. For two or three years he appears to have lived a tranquil, and, on the whole, a happy domestic life with his young and beautiful wife at Berlin, but his position at the Court was not agreeable:—

"No one can tell," wrote Mr. Elliot, "the misery of appearing in public here in moments of disgrace and defeat. In my public despatches I dwell less upon the general ill-humour of the King, and his particular dissatisfaction with England, than I might be warranted to do, were it not an ungrateful task to expose the weakness of humanity in prey to the infirmities of age and an irritable constitution. It is sufficient to say that sudden starts of passion hurry him (the King) beyond the bounds of reason. In one of these Maltzahn was recalled; and since the Chancellor's disgrace none of his Majesty's ministers count upon the stability of their places."

Frederick's temper had become abominable, and his caprice absurd:—

"Priests and academicians were made to feel the force of the royal will. On the 30th May 1780 the first were ordered to perform a mass, and the second to assist at it, for the repose of the soul of M. de Voltaire!—a solemn satire, at which the spectators, struck with a sense of its absurdity, 'observed neither decorum nor decency.'"

In 1782 a change of Government at home, consequent on a change of policy with reference to America, was followed by the recall of Mr. Elliot from Berlin, on the alleged ground that he was not personally agreeable to the King. The rumour of his recall reached Berlin before it reached Mr. Elliot, and appears to have called forth strong expressions of regret from the Princes, and from almost every one about the Court. Even the King expressed himself in terms laudatory of Mr. Elliot. The truth appears to be that the new ministers had great difficulty in finding places for their followers, and that Mr. Fox, then at the

Foreign Office, was unable to resist the importunities of his colleagues, who wanted the post at Berlin for one of their own friends. However this may be, Elliot was recalled. But Mr. Fox assured Sir Gilbert that his brother should be appointed to another diplomatic post. In July of that year the Rockingham ministry was broken up by the death of its chief, and in September Lord Grantham notified to Mr. Elliot his appointment to Copenhagen. On the 29th he writes to his sister informing her that he had accepted the appointment, which he thinks exceedingly handsome on the part of those who made it, adding, "I was very humiliatingly treated by the demigod of the blackguards."

Mr. Eden, writing to Elliot on the 8th August 1778, says, "The pretence taken for putting your talents under an extinguisher does not palliate the injury. Lord Derby wanted an employment for Mr. Stanley, who was first meant to be named but was not sufficiently skilled in languages; Lord Cholmondeley was next named, and went out with the ministry that named him; Lord Hyde is now talked of." Mr. Eden's letter concludes with some amusing gossip. "The King's situation," he says, "is undoubtedly much enfranchised. It was not ill said by H. Walpole that the crown devolved to the King of England on the death of Lord Rockingham. Hare says that his friend Fox is promoted from the service of the King of England to that of the King of Egypt (Pharaoh). Their remark on the defection of the Duke of Richmond was that his Grace would not *go out* with any man."

"The early part of the winter of 1782," says Lady Minto, "found Mr. Elliot at his new mission at Copenhagen; his wife had urged upon him so strongly the danger to her own health and that of her child, which might arise from a winter journey, that he had consented to leave her till spring under the charge and roof of her mother. A generous nature would have felt grateful for the trust implied in a compliance with her wishes on such a point, but hers was light and arid as her native sands, susceptible of the slightest impression, and of the deepest retaining no trace.

"Madame de Verelst wrote to him constantly after his departure, and always with ample details of her daughter's looks, health, etc. That her letters were scarcely of the kind likely to satisfy a sentimental disposition may be gathered from the style of a note which contains hardly anything but the following passage:—'*Ma fille se porte bien, s'occupe de sa musique, et bien plus longtemps de sa toilette; je ne crois pas qu'elle vous aime comme par le passé—non; mais je me flatte qu'elle a de l'amitié pour vous; elle sentira qu'une femme n'est estimée qu'autant qu'elle est bien avec son mari.*'

"Mrs. Eden's hair must have stood on end if she had read the above specimen of German sentiment. Under these circumstances the

winter passed. The very beginning of spring was signalized by the unfortunate events which made my grandfather's private history the nine days' wonder of half the capitals of Europe."

The time arrived when his wife should have joined him, but she positively refused to leave Berlin. The letter which intimated her determination was couched in terms which convinced him that it had been dictated, and having had from various sources intelligence of her misconduct, and reason for some uneasiness about his child, on whom her mother's fortune was settled, he set out at once from Copenhagen, travelled with unprecedented rapidity, and entering Berlin under a feigned name, got possession of his child and his wife's criminal correspondence, and with these returned to Copenhagen, having first written to the Baron Kniphausen, his wife's cousin and seducer, an insulting letter, in which he intimated his intention to return speedily to Berlin for the purpose of exacting satisfaction from the Baron. He had hazarded his appointment by leaving Copenhagen without permission, but he now demanded leave of absence to return to Berlin for the arrangement of his affairs. Meantime Kniphausen spoke big, practised pistol-shooting, and endeavoured to get a second, but for some time without success. The Baron himself was dismissed from the service of Prince Henry, and being threatened with arrest passed into Mecklenburg. There Mr. Elliot, who had searched for him at his usual residence, came up with him at three o'clock in the morning, at a small road-side inn, and entering his room demanded instant satisfaction. This being refused, he broke his cane over the shoulders of the handsome Baron, who made no resistance, and who, even then, was in no haste to resent the insult. At length, after repeated excuses and delays on the part of the Baron, a meeting was arranged, when after firing three shots, the last of which slightly wounded Mr. Elliot, the Baron made a humble apology in writing, and therein acknowledged the falsehood of some of his previous statements. He was ostracized by the society of Berlin, and Mr. Elliot received from the Princes, Princesses, and many others, hearty congratulations on the chivalry of his conduct throughout the whole course of that distressing affair. He made arrangements for his divorce, and ultimately returned to Denmark on the best footing with his mother-in-law, Prince Henry, and all his Berlin connexions. The King of Prussia on hearing of what had occurred exclaimed, "Was I not right when I said that he would make an excellent soldier?"

"Thus again Hugh Elliot stood alone in life; his household gods lay shattered round him; the mother who would have mourned over him

was gone ; and though his family sorrowed for his sorrows, it was with a feeling not unmingled with congratulation at the severance of so deplorable a connexion. 'Thank God,' says Isabella, after his return from Berlin, 'you have got safely away from all those strange people.'"

At Copenhagen he was received with cordiality by those families amongst the higher ranks whose society he must have most desired to cultivate, but—

"Dispirited and suffering in body as well as in mind, he held aloof as far as was compatible with his position from the world around him, and occupied himself with 'his child, his books, and his thoughts.' He relates with pride the growth of his little girl's vocabulary, and the increasing intelligence of her remarks ; and the 'dear pretty little Bella' becomes a prominent personage in the letters he writes and receives.

"To his family he describes himself as resuming old studies for her sake—learning that he might instruct."

But though depressed, his energy and zeal for the public service were not abated, and the high spirit, which could not endure what he considered a slight or an impertinence, flashed forth from time to time as of yore. As an instance of this we may refer to what occurred when Paul Jones, the noted pirate, having been employed in the naval service of Russia, came to Copenhagen, and was there received "with singular marks of distinction." He was presented to the Royal Family by the French minister, Baron la Houze, who also took him to call for the British envoy, and left their cards. The visit not being returned the French minister asked Mr. Elliot at Court, in presence of a numerous circle, if he was aware of the visit. Mr. Elliot said that he was, and requested the Baron to observe that they had not been admitted. "Why?" demanded the Baron ; to which Mr. Elliot replied, "You will never be admitted to my house in such company."

In the autumn of 1783 Mirabeau fled to England, where he renewed his acquaintance with Sir Gilbert Elliot, and we cannot refrain from extracting the amusing account of their old schoolfellow, which Sir Gilbert wrote to his brother Hugh :—

"I was lately agreeably surprised by a note dated *Hatton Street, Holborn*, from our old persecuted school-fellow Mirabeau, who has fled to England for safety, and has nothing but his pen to trust to for support. I found him as ardent a friend as I left him, and as little altered as possible by twenty years of life, of which six have been consumed in prison, and the rest in personal and domestic troubles. He is very much ripened in his abilities, which are really considerable, and has acquired a great store of knowledge. . . . Mirabeau is as

overbearing in his conversation as awkward in his graces, as ugly and misshapen in face and person, as dirty in his dress, and withal as perfectly *suffisant*, as we remember him twenty years ago at school. I loved him, however, then, and so did you, though, as he confesses, you sometimes quarrelled with him, being always somewhat less patient in admitting extreme pretensions than me. His courage, fortitude, spirit, talents, application, and, above all, his wrongs and sufferings, should rather increase than weaken our affection for him, and I am really happy in welcoming and perhaps serving him here. I brought him with me the other day to Bath, where he made such hasty love to Harriet, whom he had little doubt of subduing in a week, and where he so totally silenced my John Bull wife, who understands a Frenchman no better than Molly housemaid, where he so scared my little boy with caressing him, so completely disposed of me from breakfast to supper, and so astonished all our friends, that I could hardly keep the peace in his favour; and if he had not been called unexpectedly to town this morning, I am sure my wife's endurance, for I cannot call it civility, would not have held out another day. He says he shall sell his estate when his father dies, settle for good in England to be naturalized, it being absolutely impossible to live in France with any sort of security. In the meantime he is writing books and pamphlets for bread."

A characteristic letter from Mirabeau to his old friend Hugh Elliot will be found in the appendix to the Memoir; but we must return to Copenhagen, where things were in a strange condition.

The King, Christian VII., had fallen into a state of hopeless imbecility. The Queen, Caroline Matilda, sister of George III. of England, and known in Denmark as Queen Matilda, had conducted the Government, which was then a despotism, though mild, till 1772, when she was banished, and her *favourite* Struensee, who had been her physician, and had become Prime Minister, was beheaded. Thereupon the Queen Dowager, step-mother of the King, assumed the control of affairs, and conducted them in the interest of the King of Prussia, who had won her by parsimonious presents and profuse flattery.

The Prince-Royal, afterwards Frederick VI., son of the King and the banished Matilda, was still a boy of fourteen, but possessed of remarkable self-possession, prudence, and courage for one so young, when Count Bernstorff, nephew of the former minister of that name, who had for some time maintained a secret correspondence with the Prince, unfolded to Mr. Elliot his views and plans. The existing Government had alienated the affections of the people, and the most influential men in the country were prepared to unite with the Prince to overturn it. But this could not be accomplished until after His Royal Highness had attained his legal majority, which would not

be until he was sixteen. The secret was well kept, and when the time arrived, on the 14th April 1784, the Prince-Royal took his seat at the Council, and read a memorial explaining his views, which involved a total change in the Government. A second memorial prayed the King to enact that, in future, orders by himself in the Cabinet should not be valid unless countersigned by the Prince-Royal. No serious objections were made; the King signed the documents presented to him, and the desired change was effected. The party of the Queen-Dowager was, however, so much incensed, that fears were entertained for the personal safety of the Prince, and these were intimated to the British minister. Mr. Elliot had, of course, no instructions for his guidance in so unexpected a contingency; but on his own responsibility he took the manly and decided course that might have been expected from his character. He let the Prince know that should the opposite party resort to violence he should ask leave to appear openly in His Royal Highness's defence; and as a number of English ships had opportunely arrived, he had little doubt of procuring assistance from their crews and other persons attached to him in Copenhagen. It was unnecessary, however, to have recourse to such measures. "Thanks be to God," he says, "the personal resolution, constancy, and prudence of the Prince-Royal have alone overcome every obstacle."

The Government at home expressed great satisfaction with Mr. Elliot's conduct throughout the whole of these delicate transactions. The King highly approved of the line taken by his representative. Lord Carmarthen, then at the Foreign Office, regarded the singular degree of confidence reposed in him by Count Bernstorff, from his first arrival in the country, as "a proof of the high opinion which that eminent person had conceived of Mr. Elliot's ability, judgment, and secrecy," and from many of his influential friends he received cordial congratulations. The result, which without the concurrence of the British minister could hardly have been attained, was not merely that the nephew of George III. had secured his proper position in the State,—the people of Denmark and Norway had been relieved from a rule which they disliked and despised; and the friendly relations with Denmark, to which both the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt attached great importance, and which had been imperilled by the policy of the Queen-Dowager, were re-established on a satisfactory footing. In 1784-5, looking to the progress of events in France, and to the condition of the north of Europe, this was a matter of no small moment.

A great part of 1785 was spent by Elliot in England, when he had several interviews with Mr. Pitt, with whose great ability he was much struck. In the following year he returned

to Copenhagen, well informed as to the foreign policy of that minister, which was specially directed to the maintenance of the balance of power.

In the north, that balance had long been endangered by the ambition and the overbearing policy of Russia, to which Sweden and Denmark would doubtless have succumbed, had they not received support from other Powers, and especially from France. But in 1784-5 the condition of things in France was such as to disable the Government from taking so prominent and influential a part in the affairs of the north of Europe as it had been wont to take. It was struggling with formidable difficulties at home. To maintain the balance of power in the Baltic, which really meant to preserve the integrity and independence of Denmark, and more especially of Sweden, it was necessary that some substitute should be provided for the support which those kingdoms had received from France, but which could no longer be relied on.

The relations of Sweden and Russia, notwithstanding occasional treaties of amity, and even of defensive alliance, had been essentially hostile in spirit since the time of Charles XII. In Russia the national feeling of animosity against the Swedes was intense, and still is inveterate; the great and growing power of Russia pressed upon Sweden with a weight that was intolerable, and the insatiable craving for territorial aggrandizement that afflicted, as with a disease, the rulers of the most extensive and most sparsely peopled empire that has its capital in Europe, was a source of constant uneasiness to their weaker neighbours. Sweden especially had reason to dread the Tsars, and no less the Tzarinas, who, by successive tragical revolutions, were raised to the throne of the Muscovite Empire. Each and all of them, by open force, or by secret intrigue and corruption, had sought to break down or to undermine the power of the successors of him whom fortune deserted on the field of Poltowa. Of the Sovereigns and rightful heirs to the throne of Russia, many have been "put out of the way," so many that M. de Talleyrand hearing it alleged that the Emperor Alexander was one of these, quietly observed, "*C'est la mort naturelle de ces gens-là*;" but whoever succeeded the policy was still the same. Territorial aggrandizement still continued and continues to be, *per fas et nefas*, the policy of Russia.

The monarchy of Sweden, like that of Poland, had long been elective, and the means which had been so effectual in ruining the latter of these kingdoms were perseveringly applied to the former. Of the influential men in Sweden a large proportion were in the pay of Russia. Those who were discontented with their own Government found employment and favour at St.

Petersburg, and in the early part of the reign of Gustavus III. Stackelberg and Osterman, the Russian ambassadors, who disbursed large sums for the purposes of corruption, even affected to control the deliberations of the Senate and the proceedings of the Court. Gustavus, impatient of this domineering influence, and irritated by the authority which the Senate assumed a right to exercise over his domestic affairs in subservience to that influence, determined in 1776 to make at least an attempt to free himself from this double yoke. He so far succeeded, that he broke up the Senate, dispersed the Diet, and assumed despotic power, with the concurrence and even applause of the lower orders, with whom he was exceedingly popular. This *coup-d'état* produced a burst of indignation at St. Petersburg as violent as if the King of Sweden had been a revolted vassal.

Attributing to hostile designs the collection of a Russian army on the Dneiper, while Catherine, accompanied by the Emperor Joseph II., was making her famous progress through her southern provinces, Turkey, in August 1787, declared war against Russia. Gustavus, thinking the opportunity favourable, paid more than one visit to Copenhagen with a view to induce the Prince-Royal, whose paternal aunt he had married, to enter with him into an alliance against Russia. But he failed in that object. Denmark had concluded, in July 1746,¹ a convention with Russia, by which they reciprocally engaged to afford each other a stipulated amount of aid by sea or land in the event of either being attacked, or threatened with attack, and Denmark, though she concealed the existence of this convention, remained faithful to her engagements.

Failing at Copenhagen, Gustavus renewed the old alliance of Sweden with the Ottoman Porte, which undertook to furnish a subsidy, payable annually, during the war, and at once advanced a considerable sum.

As soon as he was thus provided with the means, the King commenced his preparations. The activity in the arsenals of Stockholm, and the movements of troops, attracted the attention of the Russian ambassador, who demanded, but failed to obtain, a satisfactory explanation. Russia was thus fully informed of what was passing at Stockholm, and Catherine therefore returned to St. Petersburg sooner than she had intended, but nevertheless she denuded her northern provinces of troops to

¹ The treaty of 1773, referred to in the Memoir, merely regulated the terms of the exchange of Slesvick and Holstein for Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, and there is no reason to suppose that any secret articles were attached to it. But to the convention of 1746 there were appended secret articles, which have never, it is believed, been made public, but which it is supposed related specially to Sweden.

reinforce the army of Potemkin in the south. In 1788 the Swedish fleet put to sea, and the King, crossing the Gulf of Bothnia with a considerable force, put himself at the head of his army in Swedish Finland. The panic at St. Petersburg was great. The junior members of the imperial family were, as a matter of precaution, sent off to Moscow. Catherine herself stood firm, and made such dispositions as she could for the defence of her capital. But her reliance was not on these. She confidently predicted, and doubtless had good reason to anticipate, the defection of many of the Swedish officers. Those predictions were fulfilled. When the Swedish army came before Fredericksham, which it was ordered to attack, the officers refused to advance, and the men, under their influence, when appealed to, grounded their arms. The King was no longer safe in his own camp, and hearing at the same time that the Danes, under Prince Charles of Hesse, accompanied by the Prince-Royal, had invaded Sweden from the side of Norway, and were marching upon Gottenburg, he recrossed the Gulf of Bothnia by sea, running the risk of being captured. Finding that disaffection had spread among the upper ranks at Stockholm, he sought support from the peasants, who were much attached to him, and especially amongst the sturdy miners of Delecarlia, who on former occasions had risen in defence of their Sovereign.

Meanwhile the Swedish fleet had fought a desperate action. Russia had prepared a fleet, destined for the Mediterranean, to operate against the Turks in the Archipelago. It was ready to sail, and was therefore in readiness to encounter the Swedes, who had entered the Gulf of Finland, and approached Cronstadt. The Russian fleet was commanded by Admiral Greig, a Scotchman, and many of the ships composing it were commanded by British officers who had been thrown out of employment at home after the termination of the American war. But when the fleet was about to sail an unexpected difficulty occurred. Paul Jones had been employed by the Empress, and was to hold a high command under Admiral Greig. The British officers, with one accord, and without a single exception, went to the Russian Admiralty, refused to serve under a renegade and a pirate, and tendered their resignation. The idea of such a proceeding had never presented itself to the mind of any Russian of whatever rank, and the authorities were greatly embarrassed, but at length, finding that argument was unavailing, and seeing that the emergency was urgent, they gave way, and Paul Jones, who had made himself obnoxious on other grounds, was dismissed. The British officers suffered severely in the action, which was indecisive ; but Admiral Greig, having speedily

refitted at Cronstadt, resumed operations before the Swedes were prepared, and, having surprised their fleet in Sveaborg, shut them up there. The condition of the King of Sweden had thus become desperate.

It was in this unpromising state of things that Mr. Elliot set out for Stockholm to communicate personally with the King, in order, if possible, to devise means for his preservation, and for thus giving effect to the views of his own Government. He knew that arrangements were being concerted with Prussia to maintain the balance of power in the north, and therefore to support Sweden, and that 16,000 Prussian troops were ready to enter Holstein if the Danish and Norwegian forces invaded Sweden :—

“On my arrival in Sweden,” writes Mr. Elliot, “after a search of eleven days I traced the King wandering from place to place, endeavouring to animate his unarmed peasants to hopeless resistance. His very couriers were ignorant of his abode. At length, exhausted with fatigue and illness, I reached the King at Carlstadt, upon the 29th of September. Here I found his carriage ready to convey him to a place of greater security; without generals, without troops, and with few attendants, he was devoid of every means of defence. The King’s own words were, that ‘I found him in the same situation with James the Second, when he was obliged to fly his kingdom, and abandon his crown.’ He was on the point of falling a victim to the ambition of Russia, the treachery of Denmark, and the factious treason of his nobility. In the sincerity of distress the King also added, ‘to the mistakes of his own conduct.’”

On being assured of support from Great Britain and Prussia, Gustavus consented to adopt “all those measures which I thought most suitable to his situation.” By Mr. Elliot’s advice he now resolved to throw himself into Gottenburg and there make a stand. On the way thither intelligence from Berlin confirmed the assurances previously given by Mr. Elliot, and confirmed his confidence in the envoy. While the King hastened to Gottenburg, where he arrived on the 3d October, Mr. Elliot despatched a courier to the Danish camp with letters which pointed out to the Princes the danger they would incur by persevering in the course they were pursuing. This communication appears to have had some effect, for the King writes on the 4th to Baron d’Arnfeldt, “Il faut que le courier d’Elliot ait fait impression, puisque l’on croit que les ennemis se soient arrêtés à Uddevalla.” On the 6th, Mr. Elliot joined the King in Gottenburg. While he pursued his negotiations he employed his military knowledge in strengthening the defences, “and,” he says, “the voluntary offer of assistance from the gallant spirit of the English seamen, then in that harbour, ready to man the

batteries under my command, would, I trust, have helped to render the Danish attack of a very doubtful issue, had those very preparations not had the more desirable effect of inducing the Prince of Hesse to treat for an armistice of eight days, in which interval the Prussian declaration arrived, and I was confessed to have been no less the saviour of Holstein than of Gottenburg, Sweden, and its sovereign. . . . To so circumscribed a period had the distresses of the King reduced the possibility of retrieving his affairs, that had I reached Carlstadt twenty-four hours later than I did, or been less fortunate in concluding the first armistice before the expiration of forty-eight hours, Gothenburg must have fallen; and I have the authority of the King, seconded by the whole voice of the country, to say, in that case, there would have been no safety for the sovereign in his own dominions, and nothing less than a successful war, carried on by foreign powers, could have rescued Sweden from a dismemberment by Russia and Denmark."

Such a success could not be achieved without causing mortification to the parties whose plans had been frustrated, and perhaps exciting envy in the breasts of others. Mr. Elliot was accordingly assailed, and to this circumstance Lady Minto no doubt justly attributes the tone of self-assertion that is to be observed in these despatches, and which is altogether foreign to his usual style. But the King of Sweden and the Municipality of Gottenburg were profuse in their acknowledgments; the Prince of Hesse was hardly less so; the Prince-Royal of Denmark, in the presence of his officers, called him "*l'ami commun du Nord*." The Russian and Danish ministers, however, intrigued against him in England, complaining that he had outstepped his instructions; but the Duke of Leeds conveyed to him His Majesty's high approval of his proceedings, informing him that he might show the despatch to Count Bernstorff, the Danish Prime Minister; and Mr. Ewart writes from Berlin:—

"Count Herzberg (Prime Minister of Prussia) begs me to repeat to you the strongest assurances of his esteem and admiration, adding that the extraordinary ability you had displayed not only justly entitled you to the appellation of an excellent minister, but to that of a distinguished statesman, since you had acted much more in the latter capacity than in the former by having directed the whole of the operations entirely yourself.

"His Prussian Majesty, in a long conversation I had with him the other evening, paid the most flattering compliments to you, and to the whole of your conduct on this critical occasion. I don't wonder that Count Bernstorff likes you much better as a man than as a minister."

Few diplomatists have ever had an opportunity of rendering

so important a service, and no one who has been fortunate enough to have that opportunity, has made better use of it for the advancement of the public interests.

We learn from the Memoir that, "in 1790, Mr. Elliot came home on leave, and was sent by Mr. Pitt on a secret mission to Paris. Beyond the mere fact that he was so sent, the correspondence tells nothing of this mission." There is, however, we are told, one allusion, years afterwards, in the letter of a brother diplomatist, who, writing about another delicate negotiation, says, "If you could have been sent to conduct it as successfully as you did your mission to Mirabeau," etc. etc.

Lady Minto does not seem to have been aware that Earl Stanhope, in his *Life of Mr. Pitt*, refers to Mr. Elliot's negotiations in Paris at this time (vol. ii. p. 56), and subjoins a letter addressed to him by Mr. Pitt early in October 1790, in which that minister explains his views, and conveys minute instructions for Mr. Elliot's guidance. At page 59, *et seq.*, there will also be found extracts from what is described as a very long letter from Mr. Elliot to Mr. Pitt, reporting the course of his proceedings, and intimating his intention to set out immediately for England, for the purpose of personally communicating to Mr. Pitt what had passed between him and the Diplomatic Committee of the National Assembly, with which he had been in confidential negotiation.

There is reason to believe that the result of these negotiations had a very important influence on the discussions then pending between the British and Spanish Governments with reference to an outrage committed by the Spaniards on British subjects at Nootka Sound, and for which we had demanded redress. Had the Court of Spain been assured of the support of France, which it had been led to expect, it can hardly be doubted that it would have persevered in refusing the reparation which we had demanded, and in that case war would have been inevitable. It is evident from Mr. Pitt's letter that early in October he anticipated war, and Lord Stanhope states that the British minister (at Madrid) "became convinced that, rather than yield, the Court of Spain was resolutely bent on war. Ere long, however, the formidable fleet, far superior to the Spanish, which we had with so much expedition made ready for sea, produced a powerful effect. Nor did the Spaniards fail to notice the doubtful prospects of the promised French alliance. Rather suddenly, at last, on the 28th October, the two ministers signed a convention," etc. etc.

These dates are worthy of attention. Early in October, when our naval preparations were known to be nearly completed, war was believed to be imminent. On the 26th of that month, Mr.

Elliot reported the satisfactory conclusion of his negotiation with the French Committee, and on the 28th of the same month the Spanish Court suddenly yielded. It is difficult to believe that these two events were not closely connected. The natural inference appears to be that the Spanish Government suddenly yielded when it became aware of the resolution of the French Diplomatic Committee not to unite with Spain in a war against England. That resolution, having virtually been adopted a considerable time before it was formally communicated to Mr. Elliot, must have been known at Madrid some days before the convention was signed, and it was the only event that could account for the sudden change in the views of the Spanish Court at the precise time when that change occurred.

Lord Stanhope could not have known that Mr. Elliot and Mirabeau had been schoolfellows, and retained the mutual feelings of kindness which had then been generated—that in fact they were old and familiar friends,—or he would not have attributed to Mr. Elliot's "very popular opinions" the familiarity of their intercourse in 1790. We are not aware that Mr. Elliot ever entertained such opinions, and certainly in the correspondence now published there is nothing that leads us to suppose that he did. Neither are we at all satisfied that he had gone to Paris solely of his own accord, though he probably desired it to be believed that he had. Lady Minto tells us, on the authority, as we suppose, of the correspondence, that he was sent by Mr. Pitt; and the first sentence of Mr. Pitt's letter is couched in such terms as would hardly have been addressed to a mere volunteer. He says, "I am extremely glad to find, by your letter, that you have succeeded so well in opening a confidential intercourse with the leaders of what appears to be the ruling party in France." This seems to imply a previous understanding that he was to endeavour to open such an intercourse. But after all, it is of little consequence whether he was sent because of his known intimacy with Mirabeau, or whether, having gone of his own accord, his intercourse with that remarkable man led to his being employed to negotiate with him and his party. There can, we think, in either case, be no reasonable doubt that Mr. Elliot rendered an important service to his country. Had he failed at Paris, the war with Spain would not have been averted, and we should, in that case, have had war with France also. That we then escaped those evils, and obtained from Spain the reparation we demanded, was, we believe, mainly due to the diplomatic success achieved by Mr. Elliot at Paris.

We should gladly have followed Mr. Elliot's career to its

close, and should especially have desired to give some account of his services at Naples before and after he accompanied the royal family in their flight to Sicily; but we have already exhausted our space, and must refer to the Memoir such of our readers as may be interested in the story of a Court with which the name of Nelson at that very time was so closely connected.

We cannot, however, take leave of these Memoirs without explaining that in following, perhaps too closely, the course of Mr. Hugh Elliot himself, we have left untouched what to many will be the most attractive part of the book—we mean that series of charming letters which, for the most part in a very lively and playful way, throw so much light on the state of public feeling and the views and proceedings of men high in the councils of the nation, during an eventful period of our history.

ART. II.—ALFRED DE MUSSET.

WE English are too apt to say that there is no true poetry in France. To a certain extent this is the case. The French language does not lend itself to those harmonious and imaginative utterances which we call poetry. It is better suited to rhetorical declamation and expository prose ; the abstract terms and nasal sounds which render it unfit for verse not jarring on our sense of propriety when used in oratory or narration. Yet sometimes there arises a true poet, a real singer, in France, uniting the force and fire of Northern passion with French subtlety and logical precision. One of these was Alfred de Musset, a man whom Frenchmen of this century hold most dear, whose words they have by heart, and whose sentiments are echoed in the breasts of thousands. It is worth while to look closely at this poet, for English writers may learn much both from his excellences and defects. His language exactly embodies the thoughts and feelings which he wishes to express. It is never redundant or defective, never inverted like Tennyson's, or obscure like Browning's, or melodiously meaningless like much of Swinburne's. The good and bad things of the mind are shown through its thin veil with equal clearness, and there is no conscious effort to restrain the truth. Delicate shades of meaning and subtle emotions are reflected with such fulness in his verse that we seem to come into direct contact with the living spirit of the writer. At the same time, De Musset knows when to stop,—when to rein in the steed of fancy, and to check the flow of metaphor. He is never extravagant or spasmodic in expression. While reasoning on the deep problems of humanity, he avoids becoming oracular ; and while abandoning himself to anguish, he maintains a perfect equability of utterance, evincing true artistic mastery. In these respects he is essentially a French poet,—logical, precise, obedient to law. Again, he has the power of expressing what by its nature is vague in feeling. Thoughts to which music alone seems capable of giving utterance are not distorted or exaggerated in his words. These eulogies are chiefly applicable to his lyrical poetry. In his prose works and dramatic sketches we find a far greater intemperance of language, spasmodic exaggeration, improbability, and extravagance of every kind, than can be paralleled by any equally artistic productions of the English Muse.

What French poets generally want, in comparison with ours, is a keen sense for nature, and a power of portraying natural objects. They cannot show a song like those of Shakespeare, a

sonnet like some of Wordsworth's, or an ode like Shelley's to the Sky Lark. Both melody and freshness fail them in these compositions. Yet De Musset approaches us in this respect. He can put on canvas a fresh morning in the woods of Fontainebleau, or a rainy night in one of the close streets of Paris, or an Italian landscape full of sunlight. But the French artist achieves his end by a different process from that of the English. He does not lose himself in his subject, or catalogue its details with minute fidelity. He looks inward, copying the image stamped on the soul's retina, selecting the most prominent points, and representing them with reference to his own state of feeling. His picture is a piece of man, and all the man within us thrills while gazing on it. The touches are as few and delicate as possible. Emotion, and not description, predominates. Shelley's "Lines written in Dejection at Naples" fairly represent De Musset's mode of treating nature. He does not, as in the "Ode to the West Wind," seize some passionate idea, and carry it through all its phases, building up a fugue of gorgeous images and swift-winged thoughts, eddying about the central subject, departing from it and returning, pouring in fresh lights, and leading the mind through labyrinths of suggestion and association. There is no such redundancy of imagination in De Musset. Again, in verisimilitude he falls far below the English poets. His stories are improbable. His characters are not like life. There is a want of coherency, and a flimsiness about his conceptions of human action, which betray national levity and defective dramatic power. The French language, as we have before remarked, is adverse to poetry; and the French people have ways of looking at things which seem to us essentially prosaic, even vulgar, from their want of earnestness and depth. They are too fond of comparing natural beauty to the silks and satins of feminine attire. Again, they talk too frequently of "Seraphin" and "Cherubin," lowering the solemnities of Christian legend to mere prettiness. We are constantly reminded by these religious allusions of the gummed lilies and gilding of a fashionable shrine, or of the pictures of St. Francis and the Sacré Cœur stuck into prayer-books. There is also something flimsy in their language of the passions. "Le cœur pris d'un caprice de femme," occurring in a very solemn and otherwise even sacred poem, has a Parisian hollowness and glitter which is disappointing. Their appreciation of the classical mythology again bears the same mark of pettiness. It is a pinchbeck Greek which speaks of "Les Nymphes Lascives," "Les Sylvains Moqueurs," "Vénus Astarté," "Prométhée, frère aîné de Satan," as different from true Greek as the French pictures in the Louvre are different from the Venus Victrix. The metal in

all these cases when struck yields a thin and tinkling sound. De Musset shares these national defects. Of his other faults it would not be difficult to make a long list, prominent in which must stand vanity, flippancy, and a sentimental sort of sensuality. Against these we have to set reverence, tenderness, love, and the aspirations of a spirit seeking in vain for satisfaction. Such is the poet we would introduce to English readers—full of contradictions, and demanding as much of pity as he inspires of admiration.

In noticing his poems we propose to treat them rather with reference to their subjects and to the personal character of the man than as works of art. His style must be studied before it can be fully appreciated. Its beauty depends upon a limpid purity of language and exquisiteness of expression which cannot well be analysed. But great interest, independent of its form, attaches to his poetry, as the articulate cry of a man who suffered much during a period of transition, and who truly felt whatever he expressed in words. Like Rousseau, like George Sand, like other French writers of the highest eminence, De Musset is greatest—is indeed only truly great—when he records his own emotions. The main topics, which, viewed in this light, his works suggest, are the scepticism and the aimless want of interest in life experienced by Frenchmen during the first half of this century, the Nemesis of Faith and the Nemesis of Love which brought De Musset to despair, moral corruption resulting from social anarchy and intellectual hopelessness; in all, a sorry picture, rendered tolerable by the strength and sweetness of the poet who had fallen on such disjointed days. What he says about society, the world, and God will rouse an echo in many hearts. Those who are unable to accept the old theological explanations of the world, but who are yet indisposed by education, prejudice, or want of power to receive a new system of the universe, whose hearts still yearn after the peace and æsthetical beauty of the Catholic religion, while their heads repudiate its creeds as lifeless, cannot but feel that De Musset has faithfully represented their disquietude of soul, the struggle of religious aspiration and repugnant scepticism, by which they are unnerved and rent asunder. It is curious to notice that while De Musset was singing songs of suicide, deploring the old age of the world, and weeping over crucifixes dashed in pieces by Voltaire, Auguste Comte was building up his system to explain the past, the present, and the future of mankind, and to expand a prospect of illimitable hope. The poet and the man of science lived on separately year by year. The one truly showed to us the want of the age, its beggary and emptiness. Did the other exhibit the satisfaction for which it

craved? At any rate, their coincidence reminds us of the uninterrupted cycles of the world—an old age ending in despair, a new one taking up the morning song of expectation.

Louis Charles Alfred de Musset, best known as a poet by the last of his baptismal names, was the son of M. Musset Pathay, a member of an old aristocratic family which had dropped its title during the Revolution. Alfred was born at Paris on the 11th of November 1810, and died there on the 1st of May 1857. He received his education at the Collège Henri Quatre, where he was the fellow-student of the Duc de Chartres, for whom he seems to have retained through life a sentiment of loyal friendship. In the course of his studies he distinguished himself by his general ability, and especially by his aptitude for metaphysics. Like Shelley, he was one of those subjective thinkers in whom the border-ground between philosophy and poetry can hardly be discerned. Thought and feeling are with them one faculty, the speculations of their intellect receiving colour from their sentiments, and their emotions leading them in turn to abstract meditations. The result of Alfred's early metaphysical studies may be traced throughout his poems. Their tone of decided and painful scepticism is that of one who has been convinced of the futility of metaphysics, whose faith has given way to restless speculation, but who has no power to cast aside his doubts and be content with life or some fixed system. Having impartially reviewed all the theosophies of the world, he cannot find the stamp of Divinity more clearly impressed on one than on the others. The difference between this orthodoxy and that orthodoxy, between one philosophy and another, seems to him a difference of race and age, and nothing more. All he knows is that he is unable to accept any one of them as ultimate, and satisfactory to his own reason. When his friends ask him if he is a Catholic, he answers: "To be sure; and I am also very fond of the gods Lath and Nesu. Tartak and Pimpocan appear to me incontrovertible. What do you say of Parabavastu?" and so on through a list of deities. The process of comparative analysis has yielded him a kind of theory of the history of Thought. He sees how men have passed from faith to faith, from one absorbing system to another, with intermediate periods of decay, stagnation, and despair; and he believes that it has been his lot to fall upon one of these barren ages, upon a pause amid the music of the world, an interstellar space of frost and darkness. What is past is past. He sees it all clearly, and without illusions. What is to come is still uncertain. He cannot forecast it. He is only conscious of a want, yearning impotently backward to dead creeds, and stretching blind hands forward into vacancy.

In the *Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle*, De Musset sketches with great power the sleep which descended upon France after the dissolution of the Empire, when children born between two battles, with the sound of trumpets in their mother's ears and the fury of conquest in their father's hearts, a febrile anxious brotherhood, were growing up to find the world at peace and no scope left for them in life. Politically speaking, De Musset had fallen on a stagnant period of relapse. The Revolution swept away old boundaries of opinion and old modes of life: the Empire came with fresh enthusiasms, new creeds, and boundless prospects of activity: that disappeared like a dream, and France was told to settle down into the jog-trot of the past. Willingly perhaps would she have tried at least to do so; but the road was lost—blasted and broken up by gunpowder, drenched with blood and strewn with skeletons, encumbered by the blackened ruins of hearths and homes. Men like De Musset in such an age could not advance, could not retreat. They sat down in the middle of the path and wondered at the wrecks around them—wrecks of thrones, and creeds, and altars, and societies. "Who shall dare relate," exclaims De Musset, "what then was passing in the schools and colleges of France? Grown men were doubting everything, and young men were denying everything. The poets sang of despair; boys left their schools with brows serene, fresh cheeks, and blasphemy upon their lips. Their heads were full of Byron and Goethe, but their hearts, too light to wrestle and endure, withered like broken flowers. So sank the principle of death, coldly, without convulsion, from their brains into their vitals. We were not passionate for evil, but indifferent to good; instead of despair, insensibility possessed our souls. Children of fifteen sitting carelessly beneath the flowering shrubs, whiled away their time with converse fit to shake the rigid alleys of Versailles with horror. Christ's sacrament, the host, that deathless symbol of celestial love, was used for letter-wafers: children spat upon the bread of God."

In truth, France answered to the description given of the moon: the volcanoes of the Revolution had reduced it to cinders, and the breath of infidelity had frozen it to ice. There was no more air to breathe; the stillness was of death and inanition. De Musset, with strong passions and vehemence of soul, born to act, if action had been possible, but now compelled to stagnate in this wilderness, fell a hopeless prey to ennui. Ennui fixed upon his life and sucked it like a vampire. The word ennui we have appropriated in a very restricted and inadequate sense. We use it to mean a kind of yawning and uncomfortable lack of interest in life. This meaning is included

in the French acceptation of the term. But their ennui is something deeper and more tragic. A sorrow which has taken the light out of life, doubts that weigh like nightmares, jealousy driving its victim to despair and murder,—all these may be the sources of the torment, which in itself unnerves the body, relaxes the will, obscures the intellect, and saps the moral nature of a man. De Musset's ennui is described in these lines :—

“ Partout où, sous ces vastes cieux,
J'ai lassé mon cœur et mes yeux,
Saignant d'une éternelle plaie ;
Partout où le boiteux Ennui,
Trainant ma fatigue après lui
M'a promené sur une claie ;

Partout où, sans cesse altéré
De la soif d'un monde ignoré,
J'ai suivi l'ombre de mes songes ;
Partout où, sans avoir vécu,
J'ai revu ce que j'avais vu,
La face humaine et ses mensonges ;

Partout où, le long des chemins,
J'ai posé, mon front dans mes mains,
Et sangloté comme une femme ;
Partout où j'ai, comme un mouton,
Qui laisse sa laine au buisson,
Senti se dénuer mon âme.”

He here enumerates the restlessness, the unhealed wound of passion ; the poet's effort to grasp, Ixion-like, at phantoms ; the enduring sense of unreality in life ; the misanthropy engendered by profligate courses and contact with the selfishness and treachery of sin ; the causeless tears ; the painfulness of an unoccupied existence, wasted by waysides and homeless—all of which are ingredients in ennui. Such lines could not have been written except in an age of stagnation and unbelief. Ennui has been reckoned among the causes of decay ; we may also look at it inversely as a product of decay. The Greek and Roman languages have no one word for ennui, because the thing itself, except in a restricted sense, was almost unknown to their active and healthy social life. *Tædium vitæ*, or *fastidium*, the disgust of life, has been described by two Latin poets—by Lucretius, in his celebrated lines at the end of the third book ; and by Ennius, in words scarcely less memorable. But the ancients did not often feel this *tædium*, because the duties of the family, the army, and the State kept them occupied ; while pleasures of the sense, heightened by physical exercises, were not esteemed dishonourable. Under the Empire politics became less active ;

debauchery grew tasteless and extravagant; scepticism, religious, social, and philosophical, prevailed; the disgust of life proclaimed a decaying existence. Then Christianity, taking the *tedium vitæ* in the world for granted, turned it to account, and revealed a new spring of action in a life beyond this world. We do not hear much of ennui again in its most aggravated form until the beginning of this century. In the cloisters, truly, it must have largely prevailed; and the author of the *Imitatio Christi* constantly reminds us that "a life without a purpose is relaxed and vague and mawkish;" but vigils, penance, fasting, prayers, and psalmody, were specifics then against all devils, blue as well as fiery. If a man had a chapel to kneel in, a priest to shrive him, and a heaven to win, he dared not talk of ennui. Goethe's "Faust," Byron, and De Musset, show it under three different aspects. A political age had passed away; the strong solvents of the Renaissance had worked deeply upon all beliefs, and Christianity began to fail in supplying a motive for action beyond the aims and objects of this world. Life itself had seemed sufficient to the Greeks and Romans, till it failed beneath them. Christianity had shown that an object placed beyond this life could react with energy upon the world we live in. But De Musset disbelieved in Christian creeds. "Je suis venu trop tard dans un monde trop vieux." "I find nothing in life but anguish, tyrannous passions, treason, and regrets. The old lure held out by Christianity has no charm for me; I should like to follow it blindly, but my eyes are wide open and I see through its flimsiness." Ennui with him was now complete—not merely a *tedium vitæ*, but also a despair of anything beyond. De Musset passed his whole life like one of the doomed wretches for whom Persius wished—

"Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictâ."

The promises of faith hung out before him, but he could not touch them; the pleasures of life had tasted sweet when he first seized on them, but long ago had turned to ashes in his mouth. His ennui was absolute.

This digression may perhaps be pardoned, because the melancholy which we have attempted to characterize lay at the root of all De Musset's words and actions, and because it is just in this respect that his poetry so faithfully reflects the spirit of the years in which he lived. He never chose a profession or took part in politics, but tried, by stimulating passions, to create a kind of interest in life, declining gradually in power and fertility of intellect, until his sudden death by heart-disease at the age of forty-seven. Before he was eighteen he began to write poetry, and formed the acquaintance of Sainte Beuve, Victor Hugo

De Vigny, and others—the great writers who, one by one, are dying out, like stars before the day, in France. De Musset, in later life, looked back to the friends of his youth¹ with tender sadness. At this early period De Musset felt the influence of Delavigne and André Chenier. As his genius developed itself and grew in strength, he seems to have been attracted to the satires of Reignier, a rugged and pithy Juvenal of the age of Henri Quatre,² whom he always held in admiration, and from whom he caught what we should call a Popian piquancy of style. Voltaire and the sceptics of the eighteenth century furnished him with a purely negative view of life. Later on he took to the study of Shakespeare and Byron. It was the fashion among the romanticists of France to admire Shakespeare, but De Musset, at any rate, did not succeed in catching his dramatic power. The comedies which he produced are French—sprightly, neat, vivid, and amusing; but his tragic sketches lack the Shakespearean coherency of action and verisimilitude of character, without maintaining the dignified monotony of the old French style. In Byron he found a more congenial spirit. Both poets wrote from and of themselves, seeing the whole world through the spectacles of their own discontent. Many traces of the study of Byron may be found scattered up and down De Musset's poetry. His "Namouna" is almost professedly an imitation of "Don Juan." But it is in nervous strength of language and logical power of thought that they most resemble one another. Superficial students may fancy that De Musset was but a French echo of our Byron. This, however, is not the case. They grew up under similar influences, and expressed a similar condition of restlessness. But their differences are manifold—as numerous as the differences between their nations. Later in life, De Musset studied Boccaccio, and wrote two charming tales, "Simone" and "Silvia," in his style, adapting it to modern uses, like Keats in "The Pot of Basil," but with more simplicity.

In 1833, De Musset had already become celebrated by the publication of *Les Contes d'Espagne et d'Italie*, *Namouna*, and *La Coupe et les Lèvres*. He had just produced "Rolla,"—"le plus passionné des poèmes," as a recent French critic styles it,—when he met George Sand. He was then the spoiled child of literature and fashion,—a handsome dandy, with light curling hair. As a member of the old nobility, he frequented the best houses in Paris, while he won the admiration of artistic coteries by the boldness of his love affairs, no less than by the beauty of his

¹ See the lines written to M. Charles Nodier—*Nouvelles Poésies*, p. 242.

² See the lines about Reignier in De Musset's "Sur la Paresse"—*Nouvelles Poésies*, p. 194.

poems. At the age of twenty-three, he had run through all kinds of dissipation, and acquired an experience of life which most men never gain before they die. The friendship which he formed for Mme. Dudevant was the great event of his life. They met with a desire to know each other, founded on reciprocal admiration, and became inseparable companions for a period of some months, productive of most serious results to the young poet. We need not enter into the details of their relation to each other. It is enough to remind the reader that George Sand founded her novel of *Elle et Lui* upon this passage of her life, that Alfred de Musset introduced it into his autobiographical *Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle*, and that Paul de Musset, his brother, wrote an answer to George Sand, entitled *Lui et Elle*. The poet's friends accused her of having ruined his life by her agitating influence, and of having forced him into dissipation by her infidelity. This accusation, however, is groundless. Besides other poems, Alfred had written "Rolla" before he met with Mme. Dudevant; and his own confessions are forcibly corroborative of the picture which she draws of him. It need scarcely be remarked to English readers how revolting was the bad taste which could induce a woman to dissect the character of her old lover, and to dress up the history of their *liaison* under the disguise of most transparent art. After a careful comparison of the three fictions we have mentioned, we believe that *Elle et Lui* and *Les Confessions*, taken together, may be fairly referred to as giving a correct picture of the poet's mind. But it is the concern of nobody to find out which book most faithfully records facts in themselves of little interest. Both artists were to blame, Alfred de Musset being, by his own confession, jealous, violent, morose, and difficult to please; while there were other causes which prevented their connexion from becoming permanent. De Musset never forgot that he was "Gentilhomme Français;" and though he lived at ease like a Bohemian among artists, he reminded them at times of his social superiority. This weakness—a kind of childish vanity fostered by the double life he led, and by the prejudices of his relatives—seems to have pursued him through his whole career. In the winter of 1843-4, Mme. Dudevant and he travelled together in Italy. De Musset fell ill at Venice of a brain-fever, and was nursed through it by his companion, whom he left in some respects an altered man, with the wound in his heart which afterwards he could not heal. After his return from Italy, as a memorial of the feelings which had there possessed him, De Musset wrote four poems, called *Les Nuits*. In these he holds communion with his Muse through the hours of a night in May, soft, tender, and melancholy; a night in

December, long and terrible and solitary ; a night in August, passionately calm ; a night in October, full of anguish, hatred, consolation, and forgiveness. These impassioned outpourings of the soul had the character of music. They resemble sonatas of Beethoven, expressed in words of singular elegance and dignity. Like them they seem to carry us into the stillness of the night, through which we hear the voices of the poet and the Muse audibly communing with no uncertain speech. The man himself is revealed to us with his essential griefs and aspirations and regrets ; his conscious martyrdom, his vain desire to love, his recollections of an innocent industrious past, his indignation and despair. In *La nuit de Décembre* the poet tells of a form which, throughout his life, in all his wanderings, has from time to time appeared at his side. We give the verses in which he questions the Vision as to its nature, and also the Vision's reply :—

“ Mais tout à coup j'ai vu dans la nuit sombre
 Une forme glisser sans bruit.
 Sur mon rideau j'ai vu passer une ombre ;
 Elle vient s'asseoir sur mon lit.
 Qui donc es-tu, morne et pâle visage,
 Sombre portrait vêtu de noir ?
 Que me veux-tu, triste oiseau de passage ?
 Est-ce un vain rêve ? est-ce ma propre image
 Que j'aperçois dans ce miroir ?

Qui donc es-tu, spectre de ma jeunesse,
 Pèlerin que rien n'a lassé ?
 Dis-moi pourquoi je te trouve sans cesse
 Assis dans l'ombre où j'ai passé.
 Qui donc es-tu, visiteur solitaire,
 Hôte assidu de mes douleurs ?
 Qu'as-tu donc fait pour me suivre sur terre ?
 Qui donc es-tu, qui donc es-tu, mon frère,
 Qui n'apparais qu'au jour des pleurs ?

LA VISION.

— Ami, notre père est le tien.
 Je ne suis ni l'ange gardien,
 Ni le mauvais destin des hommes.
 Ceux que j'aime, je ne sais pas
 De quel côté s'en vont leurs pas
 Sur ce peu de fange où nous sommes.

Je ne suis ni dieu ni démon,
 Et tu m'as nommé par mon nom
 Quand tu m'as appelé ton frère ;
 Où tu vas, j'y serai toujours,
 Jusques au dernier de tes jours,

Qu'j'irai m'asseoir sur ta pierre.
Le ciel m'a confié ton cœur.
Quand tu seras dans la douleur,
Viens à moi sans inquiétude.
Je te suivrai sur le chemin ;
Mais je ne puis toucher ta main,
Ami, je suis la Solitude."

With these four pieces may be joined the "Letter to Lamartine," which dwells on the same theme of passion wasted, of "invincible love" betrayed by a false woman. The following lines, transcribed from this "Letter," will give a just notion of De Musset's power to transfuse the picture of a common city street with his own passionate anguish. The words do not bear to be translated:—

"Tel, lorsque abandonné d'une infidèle amante,
Pour la première fois j'ai connu la douleur,
Transpercé tout à coup d'une flèche sanglante,
Seul, je me suis assis dans la nuit de mon cœur.
Ce n'était pas au bord d'un lac au flot limpide,
Ni sur l'herbe fleurie au penchant des coteaux ;
Mes yeux noyés de pleurs ne voyaient que le vide,
Mes sanglots étouffés n'éveillaient point d'échos.
C'était dans une rue obscure et tortueuse
De cet immense égout qu'on appelle Paris ;
Autour de moi criait cette foule railleuse
Qui des infortunés n'entend jamais les cris.
Sur le pavé noirci les blafardes lanternes
Versaient un jour douteux plus triste que la nuit,
Et, suivant au hasard ces feux vagues et ternes,
L'homme passait dans l'ombre, allant où va le bruit.
Partout retentissait comme une joie étrange ;
C'était en février, au temps du carnaval.
Les masques avinés, se croisant dans la fange,
S'accostaient d'une injure ou d'un refrain banal.

Dieu juste ! pleurer seul par une nuit pareille !
O mon unique amour ! que vous avais-je fait ?
Vous m'aviez pu quitter, vous qui juriez la veille
Que vous étiez ma vie et que Dieu le savait ?
Ah toi ! le savais-tu, froide et cruelle amie ?
Qu'à travers cette honte et cette obscurité,
J'étais là, regardant de ta lampe chérie,
Comme une étoile au ciel, la tremblante clarté ?
Non, tu n'en savais rien, je n'ai pas vu ton ombre ;
Ta main n'est pas venue entr'ouvrir ton rideau.
Tu n'as pas regardé si le ciel était sombre ;
Tu ne m'a pas cherché dans cet affreux tombeau

Lamartine ! c'est là, dans cette rue obscure,
 Assis sur une borne, au fond d'un carrefour,
 Les deux mains sur mon cœur, et serrant ma blessure,
 Et sentant y saigner un invincible amour ;
 C'est là, dans cette nuit d'horreur et de détresse
 Au milieu des transports d'un peuple furieux
 Qui semblait en passant crier à ma jeunesse :
 ' Toi qui pleures ce soir, n'a tu pas ri comme eux ?'
 C'est là, devant ce mur, où j'ai frappé ma tête,
 Où j'ai posé deux fois le fer sur mon sein nu ;
 C'est là, le croiras-tu, chaste et noble poète,
 Que de tes chants divins je me suis souvenu."

This letter, in which De Musset implored the sympathies of the elder poet, provoked from Lamartine a tardy and severe response. In 1849 he spoke of De Musset—at that time thirty-nine years old—as:—

" Enfant aux blonds cheveux, jeune homme au cœur de cire,
 Dont la lèvre a le pli des larmes ou du rire
 Selon que la beauté qui règne sur tes yeux
 Eut un regard hier sévère ou gracieux ;
 Poétique jouet de molle poésie,
 Qui prends pour passion ta vague fantaisie."

There was truth in this rebuke ; and if we choose to look only at the weak side of De Musset's genius, we must admit that Lamartine's verses have correctly analysed the greater poet's character. It is, however, an incomplete verdict, and this Lamartine confessed when, after De Musset's death, he pronounced a brilliant panegyric on his genius.

If we wish to gain a conception of De Musset's history during this portion of his life, we must seek for it in *Les Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle*—a tale founded upon the events of his own life. Of his faults he was acutely conscious, reading his spirit like a book, and setting down what he there found with frightful and magnificent lucidity. He complained that two angels possessed him, one good, the other bad. Often when he lifted up his voice to bless, the evil spirit made him curse ; and when he sought for blasphemies, the angel brought him songs of love, and prayers, and hymns of triumph. He hated solitude, for it was filled with hideous phantoms and remorse ; but yet he carried it about with him, for ever lonely and for ever disappointed, seeking heaven and grovelling on earth, no friend of God, and yet disdainful of mankind. Death made him tremble ; yet his fancy dwelt upon its horrors, drawing lively images from the grave, and pondering upon the secrets of destruction. His soul thirsted for love ; yet he

sought it in dry places : he saw it fly before him, and pursued it with the greater energy from his incapability of seizing it. Desire with him became a passion, and he loathed its satisfaction, passing on from aim to aim without repose. To know that anything was unattainable sufficed to make him yearn for it. He wore his vice and unbelief like badges, yet boasted he had kept the depths of his soul undefiled, and cried to God from the darkest gloom of self-reproach. His works reveal passionate love for God and man, mixed up with want of faith in either. The heart which he had tried to stifle and succeeded in corrupting, was always crying like a child for comfort, and receiving none. He indulged in excesses of all kinds to drown tormenting thoughts, and to reduce the irritation of his blood. Everything oppressed his disordered nerves. His sleep was uneasy, his days agitated, his work unequal. Conception made him tremble, and production cost him physical disturbances of the most painful kind. Headaches, palpitations of the heart, and spectral apparitions plagued his rest. He was one of those, to use the words of George Sand, "whom God ordains to wander in the storm and to create in anguish. His suffering and his doubt, and what he called his chastisement, were the conditions of his glory." Of all this Alfred de Musset was conscious, too conscious. Every line of his best poetry seems wrenched from him by pangs and agonies. Every aspiration is a regret. He never enjoys or hopes to enjoy, but only seems to know what joy means by some recollection of the past. What physicians call *dysæsthesia* and *hyperæsthesia* tormented him. He was the most morbid poet of a morbid age.

Many traits in the weak outline we have sketched remind us of Byron and Shelley. They suggest *Alastor* and *Manfred*. But De Musset was really different from either. We do not think that, as a poet, he was intellectually so great as either Byron or Shelley. But his personal sufferings were more acute. His scepticism was more simple. While Byron professed carelessness, and Shelley, in revolt against Christianity, invented a system of his own, De Musset plainly longed for faith and had none, loved God after his own fashion, and did not believe in Him. While Shelley dreamed of mystical affection, and Byron glowingly described his passions, De Musset told of a heart corrupted by sensuality, and unable to attain to love. He is less complex than the English poets ; but his art approaches nearer to reality. We feel the man more in reading him, and are less led astray to wonder at his affectations, or to admire his imaginative powers. De Musset had a stronger sympathy for actual life than Shelley. We see this in his tales and in the verses written to his friends. He was a man of the world, not a poet

living among phantoms. He surpassed both Byron and Shelley in gaiety and ease, and the power of telling a simple story. Nothing can be more lively than his comedies, more pungent than his satires, more graceful than his verses of society, or fresher than his picture of Mimi Pinson, the grisette of Paris.

De Musset never grew to be man. He remained a child. He never opened a new vein of poetry, but continued to regret the past and to rehandle his own subjects, so that Heinrich Heine said, "*Alfred de Musset à trente ans était un jeune homme d'un bien beau passé.*" The poet felt this of himself, and told his brother: "I am the poet of youth; I ought to pass away in my youth like spring. I should not like to live beyond the years of Raphael, and Mozart, and the divine Malibran." This, however, he was destined to endure. He overlived his genius, and died long after he had ceased to produce what might add to his fame. His juvenility had something Greek in it. Had he been born at a proper age in the world's history he might have been an Athenian. As it was, he resembled a man trying to lead a Greek life in modern times, and striking against the stumbling-blocks of education and society. Had he really been an ancient Greek, the unaffected sensuousness of his nature would not have produced the debasement which ensues on violations of popular morality. His soul would not have been tortured by the unsolved doubts of religious scepticism. His nerves would have been calmed by exercise and soothed by the continual sight of beauty. His poetry would have been like that of Theognis or Meleager, some of whose couplets seem to strike the key-note of his sentiments.

The comparison which De Musset institutes between himself and Raphael, Mozart, and Malibran, is not a little remarkable. It leads us to inquire whether the precocious development and early death of many men of genius are not necessary conditions of their existence as artists. We are apt to say what wonders Shelley, Keats, or Raphael, or Mozart would have produced had they not been cut off in their prime! Yet De Musset furnishes us with the example of a poet who attained maturity without excelling the productions of his youth, and who survived his powers. It is also noticeable that the character of De Musset's genius was similar to that of those great men whom we have mentioned. He used his life up quickly, burned his soul out in the efforts of creation, and could not create without some previous pang of vehement and exhausting emotion. When the pains of his scepticism ended in the stagnation of indifference, and his senses had been blunted by excitement, then De Musset ceased to be a poet. There would seem to be

two classes of artists—those in whom feeling predominates, whose works are wrenched from them by suffering; and those who never lose the control of reason, who calmly plan, manipulate, and labour at their fixed conceptions. Poetry with the one class is an ichor which they will not stanch, but which consumes their life away. They would rather die than cease to sing, and cannot sing without a struggle. It is their own soul which they pour forth in their poems. “Filling up,” as Ennius says, “for men to drink, verses of flame drawn from their very marrow.” The other class of artists work deliberately, thinking of their subject, mindful of their art, requiring only the stimulus of reflection, and needing no preparatory storms. They are masters of their feelings, while the others are like seers saying what the god compels. Far greater in the scale of natural endowments, far more worthy of the admiration of mankind, are the Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Leonardo, Michael Angelo, Händel, Milton, who belong to the deliberative class. But we often love the others more. Mozart’s airs breathing the passions which destroyed him, Beethoven’s sonatas, each one of which reveals some contest of his soul, Shelley’s *Alastor*, conscious of the doom in store for him, De Musset’s *Rolla* on the brink of suicide—all these speak to us with a moving power which the grander utterances of the universal artists often lack. Therefore, setting aside the prejudice of race, we can understand the enthusiastic preference which a recent French historian of English literature expresses for De Musset over Tennyson. He compares the deliberative poet, revolving bygone epics in the Isle of Wight, dwelling upon the past, and touching its most varied strings with a commanding artist’s hand, yet never thrilling our deepest emotions—he compares him with the Frenchman in his mire and in his misery, suffering but creating, failing but producing, snatching live thoughts with anguish from a tortured brain, and holding them before our eyes yet palpitating with the pangs of birth, but Pallas-like in their magnificence. There is no doubt which poet is the happier, better, wiser man. It is clear which poet is the more respectable and likely to improve the race.

De Musset, like a true Frenchman, was fond of the stage. He wrote for it, and frequented the society of the principal actors of the day. For Maria Felicia Malibran he entertained the highest admiration. He recognised in hers a genius similar to his own; she was one in whom the woman predominated over the artist, and she killed herself by the continual excitement of her passions on the stage. These lines addressed to her seem to have a hidden reference to himself:—

“ Ne savais-tu donc pas, comédienne imprudente
 Que ces cris insensés qui te sortaient du cœur
 De ta joue amaigrie augmentaient la pâleur ?
 Ne savais-tu donc pas que, sur ta tempe ardente,
 Ta main de jour en jour se posait plus tremblante
 Et que c'est tenter Dieu que d'aimer la douleur ?

Ne sentais-tu donc pas que ta belle jeunesse
 De tes yeux fatigués s'écoulait en ruisseaux
 Et de ton noble cœur s'exhalait en sanglots ?
 Quand de ceux qui t'aimaient tu voyais la tristesse,
 Ne sentais-tu donc pas qu'une fatale ivresse
 Berçait ta vie errante à ses derniers rameaux ?

Oui, oui, tu le savais, qu'au sortir du théâtre,
 Un soir dans ton linceul il faudrait te coucher.
 Lorsqu'on te rapportait plus froide que l'albâtre,
 Lorsque le médecin, de ta veine bleuâtre,
 Regardait goutte à goutte un sang noir s'épancher,
 Tu savais quelle main venait de te toucher.

Oui, oui, tu le savais, et que, dans cette vie,
 Rien n'est bon que d'aimer, n'est vrai que de souffrir.
 Chaque soir dans tes chants tu te sentais pâlir.
 Tu connaissais le monde, et la foule, et l'envie,
 Et, dans ce corps brisé concentrant ton génie,
 Tu regardais aussi la Malibran mourir.

Meurs donc ! ta mort est douce, et ta tâche est remplie.
 Ce que l'homme ici-bas appelle le génie,
 C'est le besoin d'aimer ; hors de là tout est vain.
 Et, puisque tôt ou tard l'amour humain s'oublie,
 Il est d'une grande âme et d'un heureux destin
 D'expirer comme toi pour un amour divin ! ”

His conception of the poet's character, again, answers to the picture we have drawn of him. The following lines express, it seems to us, with exquisite delicacy and precision, that type of intellect to which the Shelleys and De Mussets of the world belong :—

“ Celui qui ne sait pas, quand la brise étouffée
 Soupire au fond des bois son tendre et long chagrin,
 Sortir seul au hasard, chantant quelque refrain,
 Plus fou qu'Ophélia de romarin coiffée,
 Plus étourdi qu'un page amoureux d'une fée,
 Sur son chapeau cassé jouant du tambourin ;

Celui qui ne voit pas, dans l'aurore empourprée,
 Flotter, les bras ouverts, une ombre idolâtrée ;
 Celui qui ne sent pas, quand tout est endormi,
 Quelque chose qui l'aime errer autour de lui ;

Celui qui n'entend pas une voix éplorée
 Murmurer dans la source, et l'appeler ami ;
 Celui qui n'a pas l'âme à tout jamais aimante,
 Qui n'a pas pour tout bien, pour unique bonheur,
 De venir lentement poser son front rêveur
 Sur un front jeune et frais, à la tresse odorante,
 Et de sentir ainsi d'une tête charmante
 La vie et la beauté descendre dans son cœur ;
 Celui qui ne sait pas, durant les nuits brûlantes
 Qui font pâlir d'amour l'étoile de Vénus,
 Se lever en sursaut, sans raison, les pieds nus,
 Marcher, prier, pleurer des larmes ruisselantes,
 Et devant l'Infini joindre des mains tremblantes,
 Le cœur plein de pitié pour des maux inconnus ;
 Que celui-là rature et barbouille à son aise ;
 Il peut, tant qu'il voudra, rimer à tour de bras,
 Ravauder l'oripeau qu'on appelle antithèse,
 Et s'en aller ainsi jusqu'au Père-Lachaise,
 Traînant à ses talons tous les sots d'ici-bas ;
 Grand homme, si l'on veut ; mais poète, non pas."

From the last few lines it will be seen that De Musset hated pretenders and hypocrites of all kinds no less than Heine, and had as keen an eye for them. His contempt for self-sufficient mediocrity, for good society—"called good," as Goethe says, "whenever there is not in it the material for the smallest of poems"—for "immortal journalists" and members of the French Academy, those "druggists of good taste distilling the sublime from classical recipes" for "canting hypocrites who put their virtues on with their white gloves when they go out to dine," is refreshing. He knows a sham and does not snarl but only laughs at it, so lightly, carelessly, and confidently that the thing breaks like a bubble. *Dupont et Durand* is an ironical dialogue which, with the greatest possible appearance of good faith and *naïveté*, exposes ignorance, vanity, and baseness in all their ugliness to universal ridicule by means of simple description. De Musset, though lenient to the passions of mankind, was intolerant of meanness, deceit, hypocrisy, and treason. For these he kept a whip and flourished it at times with Juvenalian scorn.

By far the finest of De Musset's poems, taken as a whole, is "Rolla." If asked to select the poems of Shelley which express his own peculiar genius, displaying his range of subjects and his style to the best advantage, we should answer "Alastor," "Adonais," and "Epipsychidion." In like manner "Rolla" seems to us to exhibit De Musset's genius in all its force. He dwells upon the scepticism which disturbed his soul, the Nemesis of passion, and the extravagance of youth which had

for him so great a charm. He presents us with a series of the most vivid pictures, delicately sketched, and glowing with that lustre which is the glory of his style. "Rolla" must be read to be appreciated. Poor and weak are the attempts of a reviewer to explain his admiration for a poem, or, by means of illustrations and analyses, to lay bare the beauties which have charmed him in a complete work of art. His function resembles that of the traveller or geographical discoverer. He visits distant lands, brings back a report of their wealth and excellence and splendour, condemns what seems worthy of censure in their customs, and by description raises a desire in other men to view the scenes which he has traversed. But he cannot take them by the power of eloquence to gorgeous landscapes and famed cities of the past. They must go there for themselves. To help them as a guide is the utmost of his power.

The most striking thing in "Rolla" is the mixture of an almost pathetic religious scepticism with a sentimental immorality that is very shocking to English taste and feeling. The union of the two is characteristic of De Musset. He does not disguise the fact that the decay of old religious faith has sapped the foundations of character and exposed men to the assaults of vulgar sensuality. Yet, running through the whole of this strange poem we trace a tone of intense desire for purity that has been lost, for faith that has been cast aside. What the Germans have called "*Sehnsucht*"—a feeling vague, yet powerful, of yearning and regret combined—tinges the whole of "Rolla." This *Sehnsucht* is a feverish desire of the spirit. It finds its best expression in the music of the church, in the longings of the monastic hymn-writers after their heavenly country, in the passionate exclamation of St. Augustine, "Grant us, Lord, thy peace, the peace of repose, the sabbath peace, the peace of thy sabbath that hath no evening." But though this passion of the soul properly belongs to the yearnings of belief, there is also a *Sehnsucht* of scepticism, and this is what De Musset expresses with a wonderful fidelity. In minds like his a kind of Pantheism had succeeded to the atheism of the last century. He was not contented with the gross and coarse solutions of the deepest problems offered by Voltaire and Diderot and D'Alembert. He had in his youth imbibed their doctrine and felt its force. But his poet's nature regretted the tender and sublime beliefs of orthodoxy. Unable to accept them, he exclaims, "Neither as a child, nor when a schoolboy, nor after I became a man, had I frequented churches. My religion, if I had one, had no rite or symbol, and my God was formless, unrevealed." This is language such as our poet Arthur Clough might have used. But De Musset could not stop here. He had not the

firm conscience, the inflexible honesty "as of some transcendental man of business," which characterize the Englishman. He sold his soul to vain longings after the idols of the worship he had quitted. He plunged himself in sensuality that brought remorse. He complained against fate for having so misplaced him in darkness, and was not content to wait in patience for the dawn. Even in a July night, between the dying of one day in the west and the birth of another in the east, there is a pause of gloom. In such a pause, says De Musset, are we. We remember the past day; the pageant of its sunset blazes in our memory. But it is gone, never to be again, and for us remains the darkness and the cry, "Watchman, what of the night?" The English poet equally feels all this; but he holds fast by his own conscience, knowing that the voice which spake from the cloud of Sinai is still speaking, and that man's own soul is an oracle. Therefore he is stoical, and possesses himself in righteousness. The French poet wails because he has lost sight. He goes astray in the gloom after every will-o'-the-wisp. He makes the most of his pain and suffering for want of light, and tries to attach himself to what Goethe has called "the eternal feelings" by impressing upon his soul the barren stigmata of an unhappy scepticism.

After this preamble we may approach a little closer to the poem. It begins with a series of impassioned apostrophes, in which De Musset sets forth the nature and causes of this desolation of his soul. It is possible that those who are not in a position to sympathize with such scepticism, may fancy that these apostrophes are blasphemous. Their language is open and candid. But the tone is so sincere, so profoundly touched with the pathos of intense regret, that we must acknowledge that these passages only affect us with a sense of their solemnity:—

"Do you regret," he begins, "the days of ancient Greece, when each wave held a nymph, when Aphrodité, daughter of the bitter sea, wrung her locks dry and fertilized the earth? Do you regret the days, when after Rome had been swept down beneath the northern avalanche, the world's great age began anew, and awoke like Lazarus from the sleep of death? Do you regret?"

"Christ, I am not of those who come with trembling feet to pray at Thy mute shrines. I am not of those who strike their breasts beside Thy Calvary, and kiss Thy bleeding feet. I stand with head erect beneath Thy sacred aisles, where the faithful round the pillars kneel and murmur to the wind of psalms like reeds beneath the northern blast. I have come too late into a world too old. From an age without hope springs an age without fear. On our cross of ebony Thy heavenly form hath fallen into dust.

"Yet still permit the least believing son of this unfaithful age to kiss that dust, and to weep upon the frozen earth, which took life from Thy death, and which will die without Thee. O now, my God! who will restore its life? With Thy purest blood Thou gavest it fresh youth. Jesus, what Thou didst, who shall do again? We, old men born but yesterday, who shall renew our youth?"

"The earth is as old and ruinous; she shakes her head as hopelessly as when John trod the sea-beach, and the dying mother heard his words, and trembled with childbirth, feeling in her womb the stirrings of another world. The days are come again of Claudius and Tiberius. All now, as then, is dead with time, and Saturn has no children left to eat; but human hope grows weary of maternity, her breast bruised with giving suck, she sleeps in her sterility."

So the cry of anguish bursts from the poet's lips, and gives the key-note to his inspiration. "We old men, born but yesterday, who shall renew our youth?" The tree that dies down in the winter hopes for spring, and feels through all its branches life asleep and ready to break forth. But the tree that has been withered by the slow decay of years, and by a poison at its root, feels nothing, and will never stir, winter and summer; dews by night and sun by day pass over it unheeded. So are we: the ages have passed; their cycles are completed: nought remains. Love itself is dead, and everywhere we see the ghost of love:—

"Nothing is fair; to good and bad we are alike indifferent. Where is the poison which has brought us to this death in life, where is the blasting breath which has passed over us?"

"Voltaire, do you sleep satisfied, and does the ghastly smile still hover on your fleshless bones? Your century, they said, was young and immature for what you taught; *ours* ought to please you, and your men are born."

So begins a second apostrophe, which smacks somewhat too strongly of French rhetoric, addressed to the "Deicides" of the last century. It is the spirit of Voltaire that has made France barren of faith. This is the worm which has gnawed upon the tree of life:—

"The want of hope and faith has travailed and brought forth the want of love and fear. Hypocrisy is dead; we care no more for priests: but virtue, too, is dead; we have lost sight of God. From this wilderness, this horrible dead world, whither shall we escape?"

"Live, man, live, and be careless of destiny. Nay, but I cannot. In spite of my own will the Infinite torments me. I cannot think of it without a mixture of horror and hope. To Horace and Lucretius I reply, Do what we will, I suffer; it is now too late; the world has worn itself to old age. A boundless hope hath passed across the earth,

and we *must* lift our eyes to heaven. What then remains for me? My reason in revolt tries vainly to believe, my heart to doubt. To whom shall I appeal? What friendly voice will heal this heart which doubt has wounded?"

Thus, feebly and barely, we have attempted to condense the prologue to the story of "Rolla," by introducing some parallel passages from the poem called "Espoir en Dieu" to set forth the feeling of De Musset with regard to matters of belief. Perhaps some apology may be expected from us by our readers, for the paraphrase of much that is repellent to their better instincts. But without some sketch of the sort it would have been impossible to present to them the French poet as he really is, or to justify that analysis of his *Sehnsucht* with which we started.

Jacques Rolla is a character impossible in English society. His father gives him a nobleman's education, and leaves him with a slender fortune at the age of twenty. Rolla laughs at the notion of working for his bread, divides his fortune into three parts, and tells his friends that at the end of three years, having spent each portion of his heritage in a twelvemonth's fit of pleasure, he will shoot himself. He keeps his word. We need not follow him in his course. At the close of the three years, when the means of life are exhausted, and the sin of his soul is complete, Rolla meets, in a place where we should least expect it, that which he had denied and scorned and blasphemed against—the spirit of Love. On this catastrophe De Musset has exhausted all the resources of his genius. In spite of its essentially hideous and morbid nature, it leaves an ineffaceable impression of pathos on the mind. The picture is wonderfully vivid, and the feeling, though perverted, is intense. But Rolla cannot go on living. He dies, as he had fore-determined, by his own hand, having for a moment loved, and therefore for a moment lived. Is it possible, from this farrago of French sicklinesses—gilded and made gorgeous, it is true, by genius, yet still loathsome—to extract any sensible moral of any sort? The moral De Musset wished to draw was this:—irreligion produces an incapacity of belief in God or man; profligacy destroys the faculty of loving. The Nemesis of faith, the Nemesis of love, the punishment of an adulterous and godless generation,—these are the themes which "Rolla" is meant to illustrate. It is the one lesson that De Musset had to teach.

French critics blame us for the monotonous prudery of our art. And this censure is a panegyric. If it is impossible to teach morality without such a display of the worst things in human nature as "Rolla" contains, then poetry had better cease. We are sincerely of opinion that De Musset wished to present an appalling and not a fascinating spectacle in "Rolla." He desired to warn men by his own example, just as he wished that some

ruined gambler in life had warned him at its outset. But he could not resist the attractions of his subject. He could not escape the disease of his own mind. His sympathy with Rolla is stronger than his hatred for the profligacy of the debauchee. And the sentiment with which he greets him at the close of his disgraceful career is a strange piece of misapplied melodramatic charity. Fortunately for us English Philistines, the final impression produced by a poem like "Rolla," in spite of its prodigious power, is almost a ludicrous one.

But De Musset has written poems in a style different from that of "Rolla." If there we see the yearnings of anguish, the following lines reveal the sublimity of resignation :—

"Créature d'un jour qui t'agites une heure,
De quoi viens-tu te plaindre, et qui te fait gémir ?
Ton âme t'inquiète, et tu crois qu'elle pleure :
Ton âme est immortelle et tes pleurs vont tarir.
Tu te sens le cœur pris d'un caprice de femme,
Et tu dis qu'il se brise à force de souffrir,
Tu demandes à Dieu de soulager ton âme :
Ton âme est immortelle, et ton cœur va guérir.
Le regret d'un instant te trouble et te dévore ;
Tu dis que le passé te voile l'avenir.
Ne te plains pas d'hier ; laisse venir l'aurore :
Ton âme est immortelle, et le temps va s'enfuir.
Ton corps est abattu du mal de ta pensée ;
Tu sens ton front peser et tes genoux fléchir.
Tombe, agenouille-toi, créature insensée :
Ton âme est immortelle, et la mort va venir.
Tes os dans le cercueil vont tomber en poussière,
Ta mémoire, ton nom, ta gloire, vont périr,
Mais non pas ton amour, si ton amour t'est chère :
Ton âme est immortelle, et va s'en souvenir."

The simplicity of such lines as the following is very touching. The poet expresses nothing but a personal emotion. There is not a single word of poetical diction so called ; the poetry we feel flows simply from the truth of sentiment. It reminds us of Heine's.

"J'ai perdu ma force et ma vie,
Et mes amis et ma gaité ;
J'ai perdu jusqu'à la fierté
Qui faisait croire à mon génie.
Quand j'ai connu la Vérité,
J'ai cru que c'était une amie,
Quand je l'ai comprise et sentie,
J'en étais déjà dégoûté."

Et pourtant elle est éternelle,
Et ceux qui se sont passés d'elle
Ici-bas ont tout ignoré.

Dieu parle, il faut qu'on lui réponde.
Le seul bien qui me reste au monde
Est d'avoir quelquefois pleuré."

We cannot call this poem exactly healthy. It has a tearfulness about it which suggests self-indulgence. The philosophy expressed in such lines as the following:—

"L'homme est un apprenti, la douleur est son maître ;"

"Rien ne nous rend si grands qu'une grande douleur ;"

"Les plus désespérés sont les chants les plus beaux,
Et j'en sais d'immortels qui sont de purs sanglots :"

resembles that of Shelley, but it is exaggerated and sentimentalized by the French poet. We are reminded of a period in European literature when martyrdom was courted as a mark of genius, and poets wrote to one another of their "crosses" much as Dr. Johnson and Burke might have discussed their "parts." Extravagances of all sorts were suffered so long as they professed to be the aspirations of a spirit toward sublimity. Passion extenuated all irregularities of life or art.

Perhaps the farewell song which we shall next transcribe surpasses anything De Musset wrote in melody and elegance, and calm and self-respect:—

"Adieu ! je crois qu'en cette vie
Je ne te reverrai jamais.
Dieu passe, il t'appelle et m'oublie ;
En te perdant je sens que je t'aimais.
Pas de pleurs, pas de plainte vaine.
Je sais respecter l'avenir.
Vienne la voile qui t'emmène,
En souriant je la verrai partir.
Tu t'en vas pleine d'espérance,
Avec orgueil tu reviendras ;
Mais ceux qui vont souffrir de ton absence
Tu ne les reconnaitras pas.

Adieu ! tu vas faire un beau rêve,
Et t'enivrer d'un plaisir dangereux ;
Sur ton chemin l'étoile qui se lève
Longtemps encore éblouira tes yeux.

Un jour tu sentiras peut-être
Le prix d'un cœur qui vous comprend,
Le bien qu'on trouve à le connaître,
Et ce qu'on souffre en le perdant."

With this extract we must close our slight review of De Musset's poetry. Had we dwelt upon his exquisite gaiety we might have called attention to the song of "Mimi Pinson,"¹ and to the comedy "A quoi rêvent les jeunes filles."² Had we wished to criticise his dramatic power, we should have reviewed some farces, and shown how delicately he had sketched his characters and made them speak in dialogues of pointed brilliancy. "La Coupe et les Lèvres" might have served to illustrate his tragic style, and his incompetence to follow "Faust" and "Manfred" in the dramatic analysis of a single character. All his earlier dramatic tales in verse are lamentable instances of what the French call the "décousu" in writing. He works them out by means of characters and incidents wholly improbable, and their really splendid scenes are rendered ludicrous by grotesque juxtapositions or defiled by impurity. "Le Saule" is a poem of this type, fantastic beyond the limits of good taste, and ridiculous in its catastrophe. The French, when they strain pathos to a certain point, forgetting nature, and stretching forward to an ideal of their own conception, often end in the bathos of mere ranting melodrama. This happens to De Musset at times. His imagination is more extravagant than his language; and the reverse of this being the case with English poets, we are startled from our theories of artistic propriety by finding hyperbolic sentiments expressed in words precise and simple.

Some of De Musset's peculiar levity is well exemplified in the dedication to "La Coupe et les Lèvres," where, when a friend asks him if he loves wisdom, he replies, "Oh yes! and I love good tobacco too, and claret, especially when it is old," and so on, through a list of things great and small. "Les Marrons du Feu" is a comedy in which he plays with the crime and misery of human nature for the sake of making them ridiculous. "Mardoche" and "Namouna" are both written in this style of mocking merriment. But hidden beneath all of them lies a true feeling for the woes of life. He seems, like Democritus, to laugh in order to keep himself from crying. In "Suzon" a more sinister aspect of his genius is developed. This is a truly hideous poem—a nightmare of the vilest vice—a product surely of the poet's dysæsthesia, when labouring under the double incubus of Voltairean atheism and romantic sentimentality. Whether De Musset penned these lines with a smile upon his lips, or fury in his heart, or coldly as a piece of painting, it is hard to say. Nothing but his youth could excuse so monstrous a work of art. This and "Don Paez" and "Portia" belong to the same period—the period of his boyhood,—when he sought excitement heedlessly, and reflected in his poems all the per-

¹ *Nouvelles Poésies*, 223.

² *Premières Poésies*.

turbations of a life of pleasure. What his theories at that time were like we see from these lines in "Les Vœux Stériles:"—

"O médiocrité, celui qui pour tout bien
T'apporte à ce tripot dégoûtant de la vie,
Est bien poltron en jeu, s'il ne dit : Tout ou rien.

De Musset played for all—played out the sum-total, and rose from the green-table with nothing at a very early age. "Was there no ruined gambler," he exclaims, "to meet me at the threshold of life and warn me back?" At twenty-one this is his language; and let it not be forgotten that he lived to reach the age of forty-seven. "Les Vœux Stériles" and "Les Secrètes Pensées de Raphaël, Gentilhomme Français" are both autobiographic poems.

"Simone" and "Silvia" show the ease with which he told a story—not the least gift for which an artist may be thankful. Mr. Palgrave, in an article on De Musset, published in the *Oxford Essays* for 1855, gives high praise—overstrained praise we think—to De Musset as a writer of little stories. This kind of writing is easier and more common in France than in England, though we excel the French novelists in all the highest qualities of narrative art.

"L'Espoir en Dieu" is an argumentative poem on theology, less remarkable than passages in "Rolla," and somewhat in the style of Pope. The prayer, however, with which it concludes, is one of the simplest and most delicate expressions of reverent aspiration mingled with regret and doubt that has been embodied in the language of poetry. "A la Malibran," "Après une Lecture," "Le Treize Juillet," and the "Réponse à M. Charles Nodier," are instances of the poet's noble sympathy with what is great in the artistic character—the weakness and pangs of which he shared in so remarkable degree—and of his fervent friendships. In the "Souvenir" and "Souvenir des Alpes" and "A mon Frère revenant d'Italie" the pathos of the past is borne like music to our souls. Satire is wielded with a firm hand in "La Paresse," while many of the addresses to friends and ladies are excellent verses of society. The lines upon the birth of the Comte de Paris, and the answer to Becker's song "Sie sollen ihn nicht haben, den freien Deutschen Rhein," exhibit a strong sense of nationality. But De Musset was not a patriotic poet; he belonged to the order of Anacreon rather than to that of Tyrtaeus. Moreover, his political sympathies had nothing in them to awake inspiring song.

This slight enumeration shows that De Musset's genius traversed a wide field. It reached its height about the year 1836, and languished for the one-and-twenty years which elapsed between that date and his death.

He had the rare gift, for a French poet, of feeling nature and of expressing it, a concrete force of imagination hitherto almost unknown in the literature of his nation. He had the rare gift, for an English poet, of expressing a subtle feeling vividly and with simplicity, and the sincerity of absolute unaffectedness. He performed the task, which all true poets ought to undertake, of representing his own age. But he had not either intellectual power or moral dignity enough to lead it and inaugurate a new period.

He was essentially selfish, thinking his own life the end and object of existence, cherishing its pains and pleasures for the sake of strengthening its intensity, and for the want of any fixed guide following the sky-rocket of delirious passion. In this way he lost the universal and objective view of men and of the world which more normal and temperate poets retain throughout their delineations. His art truly reflected his life. It is a constant oscillation between aspirations and realities, between the mud in which he blindly wallowed and the pure air of his dreams. He never thought of working out a saner theory of life in any form of social activity, but tried to realize the wild ideals he had formed, and felt aggrieved when fact and practice would not answer to his fancies.

No poet sets more nakedly side by side the clay and spirit of our double nature, filth and refinement, blasphemy and veneration. No one displays wisdom and folly, pain and pleasure, purity and foulness, in more extreme antagonism. No one wishes more and wills so little. No one is less philosophical and more anarchical than Alfred de Musset.

ART. III.—*Reports to the Secretary of State for Indian Council on Railways in India by the Government Director of the Indian Railway Companies.* V.Y.

INDIA, that word of repellent property, the very utterance of which seems sufficient to clear the House of Commons of all but a special sprinkling of its members,—India, it would appear, is rapidly reaching a stage of progress likely to invite the personal inspection of many of its English owners. For, a system of railway communications, already far advanced towards completion, promises at an early date to afford an easy means of enabling any one among us to visit the country, and be divested of his prejudices regarding it.

And this gift of railways to India is the greater, seeing that they are not merely, as on their first introduction to England, an improvement on an existing state of communication, represented by travelling at ten miles an hour on turnpike-roads. In the East the locomotive is now invading tracts of country where roads, in any fair sense of the word, have hitherto been unknown; where the progress of the traveller was restricted to the walking pace of himself, his horse, or his draught-oxen; and where, indeed, during the annual rainy season, ten miles would have been reckoned a fair day's journey.

In point of fact, up to a comparatively recent period, a comprehensive tour of travel through India was possible only under two widely different conditions,—that of the religious mendicant, who, burdened with no baggage beyond his staff and his rosary, trudged his way afoot, subsisting on the alms everywhere offered him in the name of God; or that of the Government official whose position afforded means and facilities of overcoming the many obstacles, which to other men must have been almost insuperable.

In Eastern India the Ganges offers a fair means of water-carriage far along its valley. In Western India a much less perfect waterway is found in the Indus. Add to these, an excellent road leading from Calcutta upwards to the Punjab, with certain branches of a more or less perfect kind, and a very few hundred miles of fair highways in the neighbourhood of Madras and Bombay, and we exhaust the list of communications which, even a score of years ago, comprised the routes perennially available throughout the Great Peninsula. Certain other roads there were; tracks very tolerable during fair weather, but which, during the annual monsoons, and for some time afterwards, became impassable to all traffic, save, in the best cases, to such exceptional items as a lightly-laden mail-

gig, or a pack-pony capable of struggling through the quagmire-like consistency which these roads then assumed; but in most instances altogether impracticable even for these. Indeed, those men whom duty or dire necessity occasionally compelled to travel during the rains, found not unfrequently that their best chance of progress lay in leaving the line of road, and struggling across the miry land alongside.

Such was the state of India about the years 1852-1853, when locomotives first passed along the short lines, which as experiments had been constructed at Calcutta and Bombay. Yes! strange as it may seem to us, who have come to accept without question the cosmopolitan character of the benefits of railways, it is to be noted that the proposal to introduce them to India was by some regarded as a measure the practicability of which required to be established by actual experiment on the spot.

The success of these short lines at once dispelled all doubts on this point, and at the same time assisted in settling a question that had long undergone discussion, the question as to the agency to be intrusted with this new system of communications. And this question certainly deserved much consideration.

In England undertakings of this kind are readily provided for by private enterprise. But in India this sort of enterprise was then unknown. Bound by custom, and indeed by religion, to hereditary occupations, the natives of the country were little likely and little able to enter on so novel a field of work. Nor was it probable that they would embark their money in the new venture. For native capitalists can usually command a very high rate of interest for any outlay they choose to make. In fact, the largest dividends likely to be realized by the most successful railway fall far short of the return which banking, usury, and other kindred and time-honoured expedients of the Eastern investor, can at any time insure.

On the other hand, in those days the class of English traders in India confined their operations almost entirely to that one of the three great sea-ports in which their business lay. Of the interior of the country they knew, and probably cared to know, little else than that it was inhabited by a people who produced cotton and who consumed Manchester piece goods. Like sensible merchants, moreover, they preferred adhering to their legitimate business to embarking in outside speculations; while such of them as happened to have become capitalists were usually too intent on carrying their money to England to be tempted to lay it out on an Indian investment.

If private enterprise were to be the agency employed, it was clear that this must be sought for in England. And yet even

there it seemed difficult to find. For, rightly or wrongly, India was not at that time regarded as a favourable field for the investment of English money.

City men, who launched fearlessly into schemes in the most ephemeral of the Republics of South America, shook their heads incredulously if asked to embark in anything connected with the East. Something more tangible than even the best grounded hope of success could alone tempt the English capitalist. In short, he required a guarantee from some substantial source that his capital should be preserved safely, and should afford him a return regularly. Evidently such a guarantee could be given in this case only by the then rulers of the country—the East India Company.

But to the Company a guarantee presented many objections. Apart from its tendency to promote lavish expenditure, by removing the incentive to economy which is afforded by personal responsibility, the system seemed to saddle the guarantors with certain onerous obligations in case of failure, at the same time that they were deprived of any prospect of profit in the event of success. The bargain appeared to them a one-sided one, in which the risk must be theirs, the gain that of the other party to it. Was it not possible, they asked themselves, to adopt some other course of procedure, by which they might confer on India the benefits of a railway system at the actual cost of the works, and thereby save the large profits looked for by strangers?

Circumstances, certainly, seemed to favour the practicability of such a scheme. For, under the paternal system of government then existing in India, the State undertook duties which in England are committed to individuals or associations. Such roads, canals, wharves, or harbours as the country possessed,—in short, all the means of communication or accommodation then provided for the community,—had been carried out at the cost of the Government or its predecessors, Hindu and Mussulman, under the immediate agency of public servants. The occasional exceptions to this rule were constructions undertaken by individuals from motives of charity or in fulfilment of religious vows, and these almost invariably assumed the shape of wayside wells and rest-houses for travellers, or reservoirs for supplying water to poorer brethren. A large corps of engineer officers required by the State for purposes of war, was in time of peace organized into a department charged with the construction and maintenance of public works. Here was an agency at hand well acquainted with the peculiarities of the works and the workmen of the country. Might it not be increased and modified to an extent capable of enabling it to construct such railways as might be required?

Such was the view then favoured by the East India Company, and by them impressed on the consideration of Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of that day. His Lordship, however, from his extensive experience of State enterprises in India, as well as in England, foresaw the evils of such a project. While acknowledging the efficiency of the Public Works Department of India, he proceeded to point out to the authorities in England that its strength was inadequate to meet even existing wants, and that it would prove an easier task to obtain from England a body of civil engineers possessing the special skill that was requisite, than to train the large staff of recruits which alone could render the Department able to undertake extensive railway works. He further pointed out that these works, if thus undertaken, must at all times be liable to serious interruptions, owing to the withdrawal of the officers on the occasion of their services being required in military operations—a common contingency to the Corps of Engineers in India. Averse altogether to the State entering upon what he regarded as a purely commercial venture, he foresaw that this venture, if committed to influential English capitalists, must lead to the extensive introduction into India of English money and English men—a result which he urged would greatly tend to develop the dormant resources of the country, and effectually strengthen the British rule; besides infusing into the community a spirit of self-reliance—a want sadly felt in India, where the habit of the people is to lean on the State for the supply of every need.

The opinions thus forcibly urged by Lord Dalhousie in the end prevailed. In the course of the year 1853, an arrangement, which had already been adopted towards the promoters of the short experimental lines, was developed into agreements with certain associated companies, who engaged to construct, and afterwards manage, the sections of a comprehensive system of railways of which they obtained separate concessions. These undertakings—we will embrace all lines guaranteed up to the present time, that is, guaranteed under the original understanding—for the Oude and Rohilcund line guaranteed in 1867 may be regarded as belonging to a new era of Indian railways—these undertakings, representing about 5000 miles of railroad, were as follows:—

1. The East Indian Railway, connecting Calcutta with Delhi, and forming the eastern portion of the through route between Calcutta and Bombay—1501½ miles. (No. on map, 1.)

2. The Great India Peninsula Railway, whose bifurcations diverging from Bombay form the western portion of the communication between Calcutta and Bombay, and between Madras and Bombay—1266½ miles. (No. on map, 5.)

3. The Madras Railway, completing the last-mentioned communication, and also connecting its terminus, Madras, with a port on the Malabar coast of Western India—825 miles. (No. on map, 4.)

4. The Punjaub Railway, Indus, Flotilla,* and Scinde Railway may be regarded as one line, which, leaving Delhi, the northern terminus of the East Indian Railway, passes through Lahore, the capital of the Punjaub, and thence sweeping westward by Mooltan and southward by steamers along the Indus, thus places Calcutta in unbroken correspondence with Kurachee, a sea-port near the mouth of that river—Punjaub Railway 566 miles; Scinde Railway 109 miles. (No. on map, 7, 8, 9.)

5. The Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway, leading from Bombay to the fertile province of Guzerat, and capable of extension to Delhi, in passing through the native states of Rajpootana—312½ miles. (No. on map, 6.)

6. The Eastern Bengal Railway, a line leading from Calcutta in a north-easterly direction—159 miles. (No. on map, 2.)

7. The Calcutta and South-Eastern Railway, a short line of 29 miles, proceeding from Calcutta to a point on the neighbouring coast. (No. on map, 3.)

8. The Great Southern of India Railway, which connects the Madras Railway with Negapatam, a sea-port on the eastern coast of the continent—168 miles. (No. on map, 10.)

The chief conditions of the contracts of concession entered into by the East India Company—which we shall hereafter include under the term “the Government”—and the several Railway Companies, were as follows:—

I. That the Government should make over to the companies, free of charge, and for a term of ninety-nine years, the land required for the railways.

II. That upon all money properly spent on the works and rolling stock of the railways, interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum should be paid, or rather advanced, by the Government, for a period of ninety-nine years.

All sums received by the companies as the proceeds of traffic should be paid into the Government treasury. After meeting the expense of working the railways, the remainder of the proceeds, if any, should, in the first instance, be devoted to repaying to the Government the five per cent. guaranteed interest of the current year. Should a surplus be then available, half of it to be employed to refund to the Government arrears of interest accumulated while the railways were under construction, or during periods when they yielded a less return than five per cent.; the remaining half of the surplus to be given to the shareholders over and above the guaranteed interest.

When all interest thus advanced by the Government had

been repaid, the entire net earnings of the traffic would be available for a dividend to the shareholders. And, should this dividend exceed ten per cent. of the outlay, it would be competent for the Government to cheapen the cost of travelling by calling for a reduction of the companies' tariffs, such as would still permit of a return of ten per cent.

III. That after the lapse of ninety-nine years, the lands, works, and all property of the companies, should be surrendered to the Government.

IV. That at any time after one of these railways had been open for traffic for three months, it was in the power of the company concerned in it to require the Government to purchase the works at their actual cost.

V. That at the respective dates of twenty-five years and fifty years after entering into the contract, the Government could exercise the right of purchasing the entire property of any company, at a price to be determined by the market value of its stock during a preceding period of three years.

VI. That the mails of the Government should be carried on these railways free of charge, and their troops and stores at rates lower than the ordinary tariff.

VII. That the Government should determine the route of each railway; should approve of the works proposed for it; should control the expenditure required for it; and should regulate the tariff and manner of working it.

VIII. In the case of any company failing to fulfil its engagements, provision was made for the undertaking being carried out by the Government.

It is to be noted that the guarantee was not absolute. The Government engaged to advance to the companies interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum on their outlay. After a line was completed, so long as the receipts from its traffic were not less than the expenses of working that traffic, the shareholders would receive a return of at least five per cent. But if the expenses exceeded the receipts, then the excess would have to be provided out of the guaranteed interest; thereby proportionately diminishing the dividend below five per cent. The latter contingency, however, was improbable—indeed, almost unknown in railway experience.

Condition No. 3, requiring the surrender of the lines to the Government at the end of ninety-nine years, could be avoided at any time before the expiration of that term by the companies requiring the Government to purchase their property as provided by condition No. 4.

Condition No. 4 further secured to the shareholders the recovery of their outlay in the event of their undertaking proving unsuccessful.

Condition No. 5, viz., the right of the Government to purchase the lines, would evidently be insisted on only in the event of their proving very successful; in which case the shares of the companies would have acquired a higher market price than their original value; so that the seller would part with his property at a premium.

Meanwhile, in India, the hasty examinations of the country which had sufficed to determine the general direction and limits of each line were being replaced by accurate surveys, a task of no common danger and difficulty to the engineers employed on this duty. Turned adrift at times in an almost trackless, unmapped waste, ignorant of the language spoken by its scanty semi-savage people, the engineer had to cut his way through dense jungles, or scramble along the ledges of ugly precipices—likely resorts of the tiger—and after a harassing day's work under a fierce sun, aggravated occasionally by the obstruction of the inhabitants or the no less irritating apathy or blunders of the awkward assistants whom he had himself to train to their task, he might at nightfall find it no easy matter to discover in this wilderness the solitary tent where lay his only hopes of food and shelter. New to the country, its customs and its climate, and looked upon as an adventurer in this land of officialism, his perennial labours entailed an amount of risk, annoyance, and fatigue little known in the tours of their districts undertaken by Government servants during the healthy cold weather of India, when commodious suites of canvas apartments, ample supplies of well-trained servants, and the eager assistance and adulation offered by the people to any representative of the BURRA SARKAR—the Great Government—render such a progress pleasant enough.

No Ordnance surveys were here available to indicate the steps likely to lead to favourable results. Nor could much information or assistance be obtained in the important work of determining the means of crossing the large rivers with which the country abounds. At times, indeed, investigations of this kind awoke the religious opposition of the dwellers on their banks, who for ages had been taught to regard their stream as a sacred thing, incapable of being spanned by human hands. Why then, they asked themselves, should they assist the impious efforts of an infidel Englishman to accomplish that which their sacred writings assured them to be unattainable? And in truth this sort of superstition seemed in certain cases almost justifiable, when the rivers which formed their subject came to be considered. For it happens not unfrequently in India that what in the heats of summer is a tiny stream, meandering through a wide valley of sand, becomes during the periodical

rains a mighty moving flood, many furlongs wide, many fathoms deep, and rolling onwards with irresistible force. And as these floods vary with the circumstances of each year—with the melting of snows at their mountain sources, and the amount of the rainfall along their course—it follows that the designer of a bridge must here contrive to obtain traces of the greatest freshets known to have occurred; and this information is not easily to be got among a people in no instance able to appreciate exactitude, and, in the instance of natural phenomena of this kind, apt to regard the operation of recording them as useless, if not profane. Indian rivers, too, often present another obstacle to the engineer, in compelling him to make provision for future changes in their course; the soft friable alluvium through which many of them flow offering a feeble resistance to floods, and thereby inducing frequent formations of new channels, widely different from those of even a previous year.

But difficult as these detailed surveys proved to be, they had in one way or another to be pushed on apace. English directors and English shareholders, eager to see their works set agoing, could not comprehend that the task of their engineers differed from that of a like nature in Europe, where special appliances and facilities for this purpose abound; while the Government, on their part, were naturally anxious that India should have the use of her railways as quickly as possible; and they at the same time saw that the sooner the lines were earning money, the earlier would be the arrival of that day when their revenues would suffice to restore the advances made to them in the shape of guaranteed interest.

In the case of these railways, fortunately, no delays such as are common to English ones had to be met in the shape of Parliamentary warfare. The only retarding influences to which they were subject in their early days were the many and elaborate references and discussions which each proposal connected with them had to undergo at the hands of the long series of authorities whose opinions had successively to be ascertained. And as this process in the first instance took the shape of those voluminous vehicles of Anglo-Indian business termed Minutes, and as these Minutes had afterwards to undergo revision in the old grey mansion that used to stand in Leadenhall Street, and had eventually to afford a ground of agreement or contention between the gentlemen who sat there and the directors who represented the various companies concerned, it resulted, on occasions, that matters were somewhat slow in reaching a settlement. On the whole, however, it cannot be said that much injury arose out of deliberative detentions of this kind.

Indeed, in more than one case, the interval thus interposed between conception and construction afforded an opportunity of perceiving and adopting advantageous improvements on original intentions. The general result of these possibly too protracted preliminary discussions, it is only fair to admit, has been satisfactory. A comprehensive, well-according system of communication has been provided, at a moderate price, for our Eastern Empire, which can compare favourably with the disjointed, inharmonious sections which, at much cost, have been linked together to form the railway routes through the United Kingdom.

As a necessary preliminary to the process of construction the land required for the railways had to be provided by the Government. This was a simple matter enough where a line happened to pass through waste lands belonging to the State. In these the engineer was suffered to stake out his works without regard to deviations of feet, or indeed of furlongs, from his original surveys. But the case was different where ground under cultivation, or otherwise occupied, was concerned. There, the steps necessary for placing the site of their line at the disposal of the railway officers entailed a more complicated procedure. In the event of tenants of the soil consenting to transfer such portions of their holdings as were required by the companies, immediate entrance could be afforded to the workmen, on the understanding that the occupier should be compensated by the Government for his concession, and that his rights of way and water should be duly provided for by the railway companies.

And here it must be observed, that in those parts of India where irrigation is employed in aid of cultivation, the right of water is a question that requires somewhat more attention than it needs in England. On our railways, indeed, all requisite provisions for water are fully met by furnishing bridges and culverts for the passage of clearly-defined streams which happen to be crossed. But in a country dependent on irrigation this measure is insufficient. There, arrangements must in addition be made for the free flow of the irrigating waters over the fields intersected by the line; and this at times involves no small trouble to effect, for the variations of level in these fields are very slight, but also very irregular. So that, to insure the complete submersion of every part of them, openings have to be made at frequent intervals in any railway embankment constructed across them. And, after all, it often happens that the wants of water-way can only be ascertained by seeing the effects which the works, after completion, actually produce on the adjoining country. Even at this advanced stage it may be found

necessary to insert fresh conduits or culverts to meet any deficiency on this score.

It was only natural that these irrigation accommodations should form occasional grounds of discussion between the engineers of the companies and the officers of the Government, who, under the designation of collectors, are in effect deputy-governors of large districts of land. In the interests of their employers, the engineers wished to cut down to the smallest number possible channels which increased the cost of construction very considerably, besides creating delays in the completion of works, whose progress, as a rule, was more dependent on the masonry than on the embankments or cuttings; while the collector very properly consulted the interests of his Government in insisting on an effective preservation of the means which raised the crops on which the revenue of his district depended; and at the same time felt it his duty to protect the rights of the ryots committed to his care.

In cases where the occupier of the land objected to give it up, the collector had recourse to a procedure provided by an Act passed by the Government of India to meet such contingencies. According to its provisions, the Government were entitled, after serving due notice on the tenant and arranging to settle all his claims to compensation by arbitration, to enter into possession of the soil. Possibly these preliminary steps may have seemed simple enough to those who framed this Act, and were no doubt easily applied in the early days of the railways and in outlying places where few people were found to call in question the legality of any act of so important a man as the collector of a district. In after times, however, and indeed from the outset in the neighbourhood of large towns and English attorneys, the application of these preliminaries was rendered a dilatory operation; so that many months, and in some instances several years, elapsed before the companies could there break ground.

At the cities which form the terminal stations of the great lines, the land thus required was frequently of very considerable value—a value, in fact, which came to be estimated according to so low a unit as a square foot of surface; while, in more than one locality, the site demanded by a railway company had, so to speak, to be created—that is, to be reclaimed from the bed of the sea.

Singularly enough, the obligation thus undertaken by the Government to provide not only a site but a surface of soil, led incidentally to the encouragement of one of the most unfortunate schemes that ever engulfed the money of shareholders. At Bombay, a few years ago, the local government, in their anxiety to furnish the Bombay Baroda and Central India Rail-

way Company with ground for a station, as well as with suitable means of access to it, granted to some enterprising individuals the concession of reclaiming a large piece of an inlet of the sea, which is there called Back Bay; the concessionaries agreeing on their part to give out of their reclamation the space necessary for the accommodation of the railway. After some hundreds of yards had been reclaimed, and some millions sterling had been expended, it was found necessary to suspend the operations of the Company, to the ruin of many shareholders, and the delay of the Railway Company's station works.

In occasional instances a railway passes through the territories of a native prince more or less independent of the English Government. In these much trouble was encountered in getting possession of the necessary land; not so much on account of the disinclination of the ruler to accommodate the railway, as on account of his aversion to part with his sovereign right of jurisdiction over any portion of his dominions.

He could not in reason be expected to contemplate with any satisfaction the creation of a narrow belt of alien territory, effectually severing his States and yielding no allegiance to him; while, on the other hand, it was evidently unsuitable that a railway, although provided with the use of the land it occupied, should nevertheless be subject in its future operations to such duties and such justice as the native lord of the soil might choose to impose.

In giving up such portions of his property, moreover, the owner was liable to be deprived of a large source of income in the shape of transit dues levied on all merchandise passing through his country. And tolls of this kind, exacted not only at his frontiers, but also at intermediate towns, fords, ferries, and passes, constitute much of the revenue of many a rajah whose possessions happen to lie across some frequented line of traffic. To provide a means of continuing to levy such taxes on the future through traffic of a railway, was in some instances out of the question. Consequently the British Government were there compelled to compensate the sufferers.

In dealing with these questions, the procrastinating, evasive native agents, who in reality rule such territories under the name of Minister or Dewān, raised doubts and demands, which, when solved, were usually succeeded by a series of fresh claims and objections. And the disposal of these ever-recurring impediments occupied much time, owing to the complicated channels through which alone affairs relating to the native States of India can be dealt with. At each native court of any importance an English officer, called a Political Agent or Resident, is appointed to carry out that odd mixture of con-

cussion and subserviency which constitutes the policy of the Indian Government towards its feudatories. Trained up from early youth to fulfil such duties, an officer in this position of isolation from his countrymen is apt to attach undue importance to any matter affecting the little kingdom which constitutes his world. His duties, which consist principally in exchanging visits of ceremony with the members of the miniature court to which he is accredited, and in forwarding periodic despatches to the office of the Foreign Department at Calcutta, detailing the rumours that happen to have been catalogued by his assistants since the date of the last communication of the kind ; these very duties tend to make him attach more weight to doing business punctiliously than to doing business promptly. Nay, the very code of etiquette by which his functions are regulated—a code which prescribes the number of paces he may venture to advance in receiving an honoured guest, no less than the number of days he must suffer to elapse before replying to a letter—insures that business shall not be transacted with undue haste in his office. A railway engineer eager to set his works agoing, or a contractor still more intent on finding employment for men and cattle kept idle at his expense owing to entrance to the land being denied to them, might possibly wonder that the ostensible source of delay should lie in so recondite a matter as the omission by the scribes of the Darbar of some usually-offered Persian compliment of more or less respectful signification ; but to the Political Agent such an incident might appear momentous—a fresh step perhaps in the policy of insubordination which evil-disposed counsellors were pressing on a prince, in any case disposed to look for some other source of interest than the opium-pills and nautch-girls which content so many sovereign wards of our paternal Government in the East. And, after all, the Political Agent might possibly judge aright. For among Oriental nations the very form of salutation is no uncommon vehicle of defiance.

To insure uniformity a standard gauge of five feet six inches, a medium between the broad and narrow gauges of England, was prescribed for adoption on all Indian railways.

It was arranged that in each case a single line of rails should be laid in the first instance, but the width of bridges, tunnels, and other special works, should at once be made sufficient to permit of the addition of a second track when future increase of traffic should render such extra accommodation necessary.

Each railway had a terminus on the sea, or formed part of a system with such a terminus. From these terminal stations

had to be forwarded the permanent-way materials, iron-bridge work, and heavy timber required for the various works on the lines.

And some idea of the difficulty of this task may be formed from the fact that up to the end of 1867 more than three and a half millions of tons' weight of railway materials had been shipped from England to India; while the means in early days available to pass these from the coast to the interior consisted chiefly of clumsy carts drawn by bullocks, and conveying at most a quarter of a ton. Moreover, as roads rarely existed, these carts had to make their way across the country as best they could.

These circumstances alone would have rendered necessary the course that was actually adopted—that of constructing the portions of the lines next the sea in the first instance, so as to obtain facilities of transit for the material of inland sections. In the case of water-carriage being available along the direction of a line, it was of course possible to proceed with the construction of its entire length at once.

For the construction of the Indian railways two methods presented themselves to the choice of the companies: the method adopted in England, of intrusting the works to a contractor; and the plan hitherto followed in India, of carrying these out under the direct superintendence of their designers,—a plan which, being associated with the Public Work Department of the Indian Administration, is usually known in India as the Departmental system.

Both methods had their advocates, and both were in effect employed; the latter however to a small extent compared with the other. And, notwithstanding the advantages that might have been expected from an organization which seemed likely to save the large profits that otherwise would go to a contractor, the result showed this departmental system to be neither economical nor efficient. It taxed too much the energies of the engineers, and hampered the exercise of their professional skill by laying on them a load of responsibility in accounting for expenditure. In short, it tended to turn an able and highly-paid engineer into an unwilling and indifferent keeper of accounts. And eventually, when experience led to the provision of a proper supply of subordinates to supplement the engineers, it was found that the staff thus organized was cumbrous and costly compared with that which an energetic contractor would have found sufficient for the same extent of works. Here, as elsewhere, it became apparent that the efforts towards energy and economy on the part of agents serving a far-off corporate company are feeble contrasted with those insured under the personal pres-

ence of a contractor whose livelihood depends on the attainment of these results.

It was of great importance that the contractors intrusted with the Indian railways should be men of acknowledged means and character; not only with a view to the direct interests of their employers, but also in regard to their relations with the natives of the country. Cruel treatment or inability to pay their workmen might lead to serious consequences in a land where individuals may be mild in temperament, but where a mob gathering under a sense of injustice or of insult to their faith or their women are not slow to redress their grievances after their own rough fashion; thereby forming a commencement of tumult and trouble capable of being quelled by nothing short of an armed force.

And yet, contractors of a high class could not be expected to embark readily in work in a strange country, where altered circumstances rendered useless all their abilities to estimate the amount of a tender; unless, perhaps, on conditions which, while securing a margin of safety for them, imposed an exorbitant price on their labour. Accordingly, as a means of satisfying both parties to the contract, it was in most cases arranged that a schedule should be prepared detailing the price at which each description of work should be performed; whether masonry, earth-work, carpentry, iron bridges, or the many sub-classes of these, and every other operation incidental to the construction of a railway; and that all payments should be regulated by the quantity of each class of work which the engineers of the company might from time to time certify to have been executed by the contractor.

The contractors, on their part, proceeded to carry out their undertakings with that vigour which characterizes this enterprising class of men. Labour, materials, roads of access and means of conveyance, all these things had now to be sought for and provided among a people little ready to serve, or even assist, adventurous Englishmen who could not claim a connexion with the All-Powerful Sarkar. That any individuals apart from the State should take in hand vast projects, such as railways were said to be, seemed to a native of India a matter to be disbelieved, and certainly a matter to be distrusted.

However, good arrangements and liberal wages soon overcame all scruples on this score. Labourers who, under the old native rule, were forced to work for a dole of rice, or who, if paid a pittance of money at irregular intervals, had seen one half of their earnings appropriated by fraudulent pay-

masters, might on these railway works receive good wages, paid weekly, if necessary daily. And this system of daily payments is no small boon to men who live literally from hand to mouth; whose wages go directly from the hand that earns them to the shopkeeper who supplies the materials of the daily meals; whose earthly possessions are represented by the few yards of cotton cloth that form their turbans and gird their loins, in addition to the rough goat's-hair blanket that constitutes a mantle by day and a covering by night. To prevent the extortion of grain-dealers who prey on this simple, thriftless race of workmen, shops, or rather open-air stalls, were established by the contractors, where provisions could be obtained at rates as reasonable as those of the nearest market-town, while abundant supplies of water were provided, often at a considerable cost. Hospitals and good medical attendance were further furnished for the sick.

In short, so well satisfied were the labourers with their employment, that the fear of dismissal was usually sufficient to keep them orderly and attentive,—a result very different from that predicted by certain Anglo-Indian officials, who dreaded that the natives might be ill-treated by the rough-and-ready subordinates employed on the railways.

Men from far-off villages flocked into the works, bringing with them their wives and little ones, for whom they raised rough huts capable of affording the small amount of shelter required during the eight rainless months of the working season; and labouring along with the women and children—for all sexes and almost all ages here found employment—contrived to live comfortably, and in addition to lay by a small sum of savings to carry to their distant homes when the approach of the annual rains called them away to cultivate their fields.

When possible, the system of piece-work was adopted; that is, the labourer, instead of receiving a fixed rate of hire, was paid according to the work he did. This system by degrees extended itself to petty contracts, which gangs of fellow caste-men or families undertook, with profit to themselves and their employers; and eventually a class of enterprising native contractors sprang up, whose operations embraced large bridges, station buildings, and even the entire works of several miles of railroad.

The cost of work varied so much, not only on different railways, but on different sections of the same railway, that it is difficult to arrive at any trustworthy average of its value. It may, however, be interesting to hear the words which an engineer, well acquainted with English as well as Indian railways, wrote

regarding the cost of work in Western India in 1855—a time when most of the main lines were being actively constructed:—

“The Hindu would be paid 5½d., and the ‘navvy’ (English) 3s. 6d., a day; but then the former could turn out barely one-third of the work that the latter would do, so that the relative economy of the two classes would be as two to one, or thereabouts, in favour of this country (India). There is another important consideration which also impairs the efficiency of country labour upon railways. The number of men which it is possible to employ upon a work is frequently limited by its form and dimensions and the proper mode of execution, and since one Englishman does the work of three natives, it is evident that greater force can be put upon it at the same time, in the one case than in the other, and the rate of progress be proportionally increased. Here, however, the climate tells in favour of this country, and when the advantages of constant fine weather for eight months of the year are taken into account, the despatch is very nearly assimilated in both cases. Thus does nature strike a balance between country and country and man and man.

“The following may be received as a fair comparison of the various classes of English and native labour:—

CLASSES OF LABOUR.	Average rate of pay per diem.		Proportion of work done by each.		Relative cost of labour in each country.	
	England.		Bombay.		England.	
	s. d.	s. d.				
Masons, . . .	5 0	1 2	2½	1	2	1
Bricklayers, . . .	5 0	1 2	4	1	1½	1
Carpenters, . . .	5 0	1 2	3	1	1½	1
Miners, . . .	5 0	0 9	3	1	2½	1
Excavators, . . .	3 6	0 5½	3½	1	2	1
Labourers, . . .	2 9	0 4½	3	1	2½	1

“It is apparent from this table, that the difference of cost between skilled and unskilled labour is less in England than in Bombay, a result which is fully borne out by the comparative scarcity of the former in this country. We would also remind our readers examining this table, that the comparison is made between simple labour only, and that the economy in favour of Bombay would be most materially reduced if it were instituted between the cost of work actually executed, because, in that view of the question, English labour would have the powerful aid of all its appliances and superiority of system, while India would suffer from its defective and clumsy methods, and from a variety of drawbacks and disadvantages peculiar to native customs.”

Since the foregoing remarks were written, the prices of food and labour have, in most districts of India, increased consider-

ably, owing to the amount of gold, or rather of silver, which has of late years been paid to that country for cotton. It is fortunate for the shareholders of Indian lines, that before that increase took effect a large portion of their works had been completed, and that contracts had been entered into for the completion of a still larger portion.

The great extent of the lines, no less than the natural obstacles encountered, rendered it necessary that many formidable works should be undertaken; above all, in the case of the bridges required for the passage of the large rivers that are frequently met with.

That by which the East Indian Railway is carried across the Sone consists of twenty-eight spans, each composed of iron girders 150 feet long,—its total length, inclusive of massive masonry piers, being little short of a mile.

While, as examples of a widely different kind of bridge work, may be mentioned the numerous long and lofty viaducts on the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway—gossamer-like structures of iron resting on slender cast-iron columns, screwed into the beds of the streams they cross.

But perhaps the most remarkable of the works constructed in connexion with these lines, are those by which the Great Indian Peninsula Railway is carried across a chain of hills in the neighbourhood of Bombay, known as the Ghaut range.

This line of precipices, stretching for several hundred miles parallel to the western coast of India, resembles a great retaining-wall—here averaging 2000 feet in height—which separates a narrow belt of land fringing the sea from an elevated plateau, which from their crest extends far eastward into the heart of the continent.

This great barrier seemed to interpose an obstacle, not only to the efforts of man, but to the operations of Nature. For the very clouds which the south-west monsoon brings up in masses from the ocean, are here arrested and compelled to discharge their rains, thereby forming a belt of intense rainfall, extending a few miles on each side of the mountain tops. The country to leeward, that is, to eastward, being thus shielded from the storms which then deluge the coast lands, offers a charming climate at that season; the straggling patches of cloud which contrive to pass across the hills being just sufficient to screen the sun, and refresh the soil with occasional showers. While, in addition, the keen air of this upland affords a bracing contrast to the relaxing atmosphere which then prevails in Bombay, and, indeed, in all the low-lying districts of India.

Before the days of railways this barrier offered a serious obstruction to the interchange of traffic between Bombay and extensive inland districts, of which that port is the natural outlet. At

two points only could it be conveniently crossed by carts. At one of these points, seventy miles south-east of Bombay, a road had been constructed in the time of Sir John Malcolm, which, although useful, was exceedingly steep and tortuous; a fact painfully proved by the draught-oxen, dead, or dying from exhaustion, which might be seen sprinkled along its course—above all, towards the end of the hot season, when efforts to pass cotton and grain to the coast before the setting in of the rains had to be made with animals for which the then burnt-up country offers not a blade of grass. The other road that has been mentioned was carried across the range at a point seventy miles further north. Of a later and better construction, this still involved a long and severe ascent.

Besides these, the only means of communication between the coast and the table-land were bridle-paths, following the course of the rugged gorges which occur at intervals along the line of Ghauts—paths practicable only for lightly-laden pack-ponies or bullocks.

Circumstances rendered it necessary that this range should be crossed at two points by the bifurcations of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, which, diverging near Bombay, lead respectively in the direction of Calcutta and Madras. This object has been attained by means of inclined planes, constructed in the immediate neighbourhood of the two cart-roads which have just been described. That to the north is known as the Thull Ghaut Incline, the other as the Bhore Ghaut Incline.

This latter is, if anything, the more formidable undertaking of the two. Beginning its ascent along a short spur here thrown out from the main range, this incline continues its upward winding way through long tunnels piercing the hardest basalt, across viaducts spanning ravines of great width and depth, often along what is simply a large notch cut in the face of a precipice. Somewhat higher than half way up the hill is a semi-zigzag or reversing station, where the powerful locomotives used for the special service of this incline pass from what has hitherto been the front of a train to the other end, which in turn proceeds foremost up the remainder of the road.

In short, in the words of a sailor, the passage of the incline is made in two tacks; the engine, however, being the only part of a train that "goes about."

The length of this plane is nearly sixteen miles, in course of which it surmounts a height of upwards of 1800 feet, its average inclination being 1 in 48, its maximum 1 in 37. Its construction occupied upwards of seven years, during which as many as 40,000 labourers were occasionally at work on it at one time.

Its completion was almost coincident with the death of the man who made it—James Berkley.

It is a great monument of a great engineer.

Taking into consideration the many adverse circumstances under which the Indian Railways were constructed, it cannot be denied that the works are on the whole satisfactory. Certain imperfections there undoubtedly have been, as brought to our notice from time to time in those brief and sometimes startling statements, which, under the head of telegraphic news from India, convey to us in a condensed, and occasionally, indeed, in a highly intensified form, all the intelligence of Eastern events which most of us ever care to know. But in justice to the men who have made the lines, it is well to bear in mind the extent of the works of which such failures form an inconsiderable fraction. It is also only fair to reflect on the obstacles encountered in their construction. Above all, the obstacles offered by a climate in which for nine months of each year no rain is available to assist in the consolidation of earthworks; where the drying up of the streams and wells renders it often necessary to carry for a distance, on the backs of men or of cattle, every drop of water wanted for the mortar of a bridge or retaining-wall, and where the scarce and valuable fluid is apt to be used in slaking thirst rather than in slaking lime—to the ruin of the masonry concerned. While, during the remaining months a rainfall, represented in some cases by an aggregate vertical measurement of ten feet, puts the loose friable soil which makes up an embankment to a very rough test; at the same time that the rapidly swelling streams effectually put a stop to bridge operations—if, indeed, they do not happen to undo the work of many previous months, by sweeping before them coffer-dams, timber stagings, and other accessories of this kind of construction.

Interruptions were also encountered in the shape of that scourge of India—cholera; outbreaks of which on various occasions destroyed or drove away in terror labourers who with much difficulty had been gathered together; while a yet more serious interruption was offered by the Indian mutiny of 1857, which entirely stopped the progress of various lines, besides destroying many of the results of past labours. This mutiny burst on India so suddenly that it found engineers and other Englishmen employed by the railway companies in localities completely isolated from their countrymen. Not a few of these men had to fight for their lives. To the skill and courage of some of them the safety of more than one of the little strongholds which in those trying times were hastily improvised for the English men, women, and children overtaken

in outlying districts by the storm of blood, was, in the main, undoubtedly due. The name of at least one among them is inscribed in the roll of men considered worthy to wear the Victoria Cross—For Valour.

Thanks to the information afforded by Mr. Juland Danvers in the Blue-books compiled by him each year in his capacity of Government Director of the Indian railways, we are enabled to gather almost at a glance the position which these enterprises occupy as regards their progress, no less than their prospects of success.

On the 1st of May 1868 it appears that nearly 4000 miles of them were open for traffic; and that upwards of 1000 miles—in addition to 630 miles of a lately sanctioned line, the Oude and Rohilcund Railway—were under construction. In the course of the year 1870 there seems reason to hope that an unbroken line of railway may be available between Calcutta and Bombay, and another between Madras and Bombay. Already the former line is so far advanced at each of its ends that it has been adopted as the route for the mails passing between England and the seat of its Government in the East,—Bombay thus becoming the sea-gate through which the postal communications of Europe and India are henceforth to flow.

Through communication has for some time been established between Calcutta and Delhi, distant upwards of 1000 miles apart; between Madras and Beypore, a port on the coast of Malabar; and between Bombay and Nagpore, an important city of Central India; while, by means of the links offered by the Scinde Railway, the Indus, Flotilla, and the Punjaub line, an unbroken route is open between Lahore, the capital of the Punjaub, and Kurrachee, the port of the Indus.

The precise cost of the Indian railways cannot yet be accurately stated, seeing that large portions of them are still under construction. From the accounts of several thousand miles of them already furnished, however, there seems reason to conclude that the average outlay per mile will not be more than £17,000.¹

In all some £70,000,000 have already been expended. And it is estimated that about £20,000,000 in addition will be required to complete the 5000 miles we are now looking at, as also the Oude and Rohilcund line of 630 miles, which belongs to the newer order of things. The figures we here give cover the cost of single line of rails, furnished with bridges, tunnels,

¹ In the report published in the *Times* of the speech delivered by the Right Hon. W. N. Massey, at Liverpool, on the 29th October last, the late Minister of Indian Finance is said to have stated the cost of the East India Railway at £30,000 per mile. But this estimate seems much in excess of the accounts of that line which have already been rendered.

and other special works adapted for a double line. They also include ample siding accommodation and passing-places at stations, and indeed embrace very considerable lengths of double line in the neighbourhood of large stations. They further comprise the cost of a liberal supply of rolling stock.

Contrary to forebodings uttered by men whose knowledge of the country well entitled them to be heard, the natives of India at once took kindly to railway travelling. Scruples of religion or of caste yielded to the ease and economy which the new means of conveyance offered; due attention being of course paid by the railway companies to such prejudices as were capable of being accommodated without undue inconvenience. Separate carriages, or compartments, for instance, were provided for women, in deference to the dislike which the people of the East entertain to their wives and daughters being looked at by strangers. And, where circumstances permitted the arrangement, efforts were in early days made to afford distinct accommodation for certain castes, and above all for certain outcasts. Here, however, as in Europe, it was soon apparent that the railway is a sad leveller of social distinctions; so that in a short time Brahmans of the purest strain of blood were to be seen penned up in the cattle-truck-like vehicles which form the third-class carriages of India, in close and contented contact with Pariahs, whose very presence under the same roof would in former times have been held to involve pollution.

As a curious instance of compensation for these tendencies towards weakening the influence of caste and other social trammels of the Hindu faith, it is worth while noting a result of an opposite character which the railways threaten to bring about; by which, in fact, certain interests of that creed seem likely to be promoted in a considerable degree. We allude to the facilities afforded for visiting the many shrines which the country contains; certain of which, indeed, are believed to possess virtues, extending to the eternal salvation of such of the faithful as visit them: an end formerly attainable in few instances by far-off residents,—by none, indeed, but sturdy fellows who could walk the weary way which led to their remote situations, or by rich men who could meet the large outlay incurred by palanquins or other means of conveyance adapted for the difficult country that had to be traversed.

Now-a-days devotees of all degrees of wealth or strength have a cheap means of carrying out such pilgrimages, and in effect they do avail themselves of this to a large extent.

On certain sacred days of the Hindu calendar more than one Indian railway provides special trains for purposes of this kind; on which occasions, moreover, there is frequently held a Holy

Fair, where large numbers of people dispose of the past year's produce, and lay in the next year's supply of clothing and cooking-pots. Ranged side by side may there be seen the wares of Europe, India, China, and Central Asia.

There, by means of the neighbouring railway, the merchant from the sea-coast is able to deal directly with the cultivator in the interior, who comes to barter his cotton and grain against the goods manufactured by the foreigners; thus saving to both parties the twofold profit formerly swallowed up by the rapacious middleman. The benefits of such direct transactions were specially apparent in the case of the large sums of money which the high price of cotton caused to be received by India after the outbreak of the late civil war in America. Such sums would in former days have enriched the few agents and bankers who then commanded the entire out-turn of the land. But thanks to a new order of things, attained only by the help of railways, this influx of money went to benefit the general body of the cultivators: a result which shows itself in the increased comfort and prosperity of this class, in the improved condition and description of animals employed in their field operations (and in his draught-oxen, the countryman of India takes much delight), no less than in the superior clothes worn by the men, women, and children in the cotton districts.

Above all, this diffusion of wealth is apparent in that essential requisite of an Eastern household—the array of cooking-pots. A dozen years ago these were of cheap earthenware. At present, in the provinces producing cotton, they are almost always of brass—a difference which, in the mind of the native, is the strongest distinction definable between penury and competence.

To suit the low rates of wages, and, indeed, of prices generally prevailing in India, the tariff of fares on the Indian lines is for the third class of conveyance considerably less than that of England; and the experience of this cheap travelling shows it to be at least as remunerative as the opposite policy pursued by railway managers in this country.

The arrangements and accommodation met with on Indian railways differ little from those found in England. Indeed, the stereotyped models of the mother country have here been followed with a fidelity which might well have been relaxed in certain points in consideration of the climate and customs of the East. In stations intended for a passenger traffic almost entirely composed of third-class travellers (for out of 13,764,354 persons carried by the Indian railways in the year 1867, no less than 13,074,980 were third-class passengers), the chief thing to be desired is ample shelter. Now,

the system of obtaining this shelter in Europe, which consists in providing broad platforms under lofty wide-spreading roofs is imperfectly adapted to the natives of India. To them a railway journey is an important undertaking, preceded in many cases by a long and toilsome walk, and attended with the prospect of an equally fatiguing march at its close.

Unable, from their easy-going disposition, to penetrate the mysteries of time-tables, or indeed to appreciate any exact measurement of time, they incline to avoid all chance of missing a train by the precautionary proceeding of presenting themselves at the station they are to start from very long before the hour at which it is due.

This feeling, no less than the ordinary habits of their life, prompts many to allow themselves on such occasions enough time to go through the various processes of preparing and eating the one daily meal which constitutes the chief support of the people of Hindustan—an operation which their easily-carried cooking-pots renders simple enough.

Indeed, at many stations on the Indian lines the court-yard in front is, for a considerable time before the passage of each train, crowded with groups of families, creeds, or castes, patiently waiting their time of departure—squatted on the ground in the posture assumed by squirrels while eating nuts, and passing their leisure in cooking, eating, chatting, or smoking the gurgling water-pipe.

For such travellers the costly accommodation offered on the platform of a spacious station is evidently ill suited. Their wants would be better met by the provision of large inexpensive sheds, semi-detached from the station-buildings, and well supplied with water for man and beast—in short, rest-houses, such as exist in various forms in Eastern countries, and which by the peoples of those lands are looked upon as necessary complements to any highway for travellers. Of late, it is true, some efforts have been made to provide accommodation of this modest but useful kind; but in India, as at home, railway managers appear slow in perceiving that the present policy of attending only to the comfort of a few first-class passengers is erroneous.

The chief revenue of Indian passenger-traffic, as already seen, arises from third-class travellers. Surely, then, their needs deserve more attention and outlay than are now bestowed on them!

The carriages of the Indian railways, too, differ in no very important respects from those seen elsewhere. There the English type, based on the old stage-coach, is still prevalent. As a protection against the sun, an extra covering is placed at an interval of some inches from the ordinary roof. To insure coolness, too, the cushions and supports for the backs of travellers

are, in the first-class carriages, made of cane-work ; while venetian blinds are provided to exclude the glare of the sun. Certain first-class saloon carriages are also available, fitted in a few cases with arrangements for affording beds to travellers, after the fashion of America. This sort of sleeping accommodation is likely to be largely required during the long journeys, which, on the completion of the through communications, will be entailed by a direct passage between Calcutta and Bombay, or Madras and Bombay ; or the yet longer route from Calcutta to Peshawur.

Third-class passengers are here conveyed in covered waggons, devoid of either seats or windows ; or, to speak more correctly, the upper part of the sides is omitted. By this means fresh air is admitted freely to the seething mass of human beings, who, by being kept in a standing position, can be packed more closely than is consistent with the comfort of the inner individuals, especially during journeys undertaken in the heats of summer.

In saying that no seats are available, however, it is well to bear in mind that such things are not much used by natives of India, who prefer to rest on the ground, or, in this case, on the floor of a carriage, posed in a fashion already mentioned, and possible only for races with calveless legs.

The frugal habits of the natives, excepting perhaps a few of the prodigal sons of Islam, lead them for the most part to sink prejudice or social position in view of the economy of a third-class ticket ; and this saving they are eager to supplement by avoiding any extra payments for the luggage they happen to have with them.

And as on the Indian lines every pound of luggage has to be paid for, it follows that strenuous efforts are made by travellers to carry their effects into their carriages—a formidable undertaking, when, as often happens, those comprise the cooking-pots, bedding, and wardrobe of an Eastern household.

The guards and station-porters are of course on the outlook to prevent such practices, and loud and frequent are the altercations arising between them and the owners of bundles thus arbitrarily removed to the luggage-van. For these individuals usually proceed to pour forth an argumentative supplication, couched in the flowery language of the East, somewhat to the following effect :—“ Oh, Protector of the Poor ! What words are these I hear ? Behold this most insignificant of parcels ! Look at it ! Of a truth it is nothing ! It is absolutely less than nothing ! ! ” etc. etc.

In truth, the despatch of a train from any large station of an Indian railway is a scene of confusion of a very picturesque kind. The brightly-coloured dresses of the crowd striving to

secure places ; the various costumes and demeanour of those composing it, the rapid gesticulations of the nervous Hindu, contrasting with the dignified repose of the Moslem gentleman ; the loud shouts of lost friends looking for each other ; the efforts of the waddling women to drag along their screaming children, and at the same time veil their faces from the eyes of strange men ; all these make up for the moment a very Babel of sights and sounds. Here the jealously-guarded inmate of a Zenāna is carried in a palanquin close up to the entrance of a carriage, and shot out on its floor much after the manner of treating a sack of flour ; the operation being overlooked by a burly Nubian with a singularly shrill voice, and aided by a shrivelled-up old woman, who busies herself in carefully closing the venetian blinds of the reserved compartment occupied by her mistress, and in arranging on its floor the Persian rugs and cushions required to make the lady comfortable,—not forgetting the *calleoon* (the water-pipe) and sweetmeats which assist so largely in whiling away the time of these Lights of the Harem.

A little further along the platform the crowd is being cleaved asunder by white-robed men girt with broad red shoulder-belts, who, with shouts and sticks, clear a passage for an eminent official personage who is to travel by the train. In his wake follow half-a-dozen other messengers, equipped like those who went before him, and bearing brass breast-plates on which are blazoned in large letters the title of the office which their master holds. Into the carriage which he enters they place an array of red morocco leather covered despatch-boxes, filled with papers, wherewith to beguile the journey,—papers probably relating to all sorts of subjects, from messages in cipher regarding the most important political affairs, to long and trifling correspondences concerning the pay of some unfortunate subaltern. So comprehensive are the questions which claim the attention of even the highest Government officers in India, of even the Viceroy himself.

While, just as the train is about to start, there arrives a party of our countrymen, booted, spurred, and otherwise equipped in Indian sportsman fashion, on their way to the meet of a hog hunt at a neighbouring station on the line. Well provided too, they seem, with provender, judging by the luncheon-baskets their servants carry, and from which the necks of various bottles are seen to protrude. But precautions of this kind are here absolutely necessary ; refreshment-rooms being almost unknown, or at best but indifferent sources of supplying even tolerable food to hungry travellers.

Before the train can be got ready for a start the guard has to go through a deal of work. In fact, in the end, he is usually

obliged to lay hands on the stragglers wandering up and down the side of the train in search for friends, or on the outlook for a carriage full of fellow caste-men; and thrusting these in succession into the nearest compartment able to receive them, he is thus at length enabled to sound his signal-whistle, and betake himself to the comparative quietude of his brake-van.

The question which above all others connected with Indian railways is likely to interest many of our readers, is that of their success as commercial undertakings; in short, the question as to whether or not they pay.

A perfect answer on this subject cannot, of course, be pronounced at present, seeing that important sections of the system are yet unfinished. From the fragments, however, already in operation, sufficient data have been gathered to enable a tolerably accurate estimate to be formed of the eventual results.

During the year 1867, against a sum of £3,237,937, received from the Government as guaranteed interest, an amount of about £2,500,000 was repaid by the companies from the net profits of their traffic.

In the case of the East Indian Railway and of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the results of the last three years seem to warrant the assumption that there the requisite five per cent. already earned is likely to be continued, and equally likely to be increased. Indeed, on more than one occasion this dividend has been already exceeded; and this surplus, let it be borne in mind, has been obtained from the lengths of line open for traffic; at the same time that the net earnings these brought in had, in the computation of dividends, to be extended to the capital expended on several hundred miles of railroad as yet under construction, and therefore in an unproductive state.¹

This return, moreover, has been reaped from what may be termed local traffic; that is, from traffic along the two end-ports of the great through routes between Eastern and Western India, that hitherto alone have been completed.

The through traffic which may certainly be expected to flow a couple of years hence along these great highways may fairly be considered as a likely source of large additions to present receipts.

Moreover, the net profits of several of these lines seem capable of constituting a larger fraction of the gross receipts than they now do, by a reduction of the present high charges for conducting the traffic. The attention which has been directed

¹ Since these words were put into type, the revenue account of the Madras Railway for the half-year ending in May last has been published. It shows that on that line also the net profits have at length very nearly reached the rate of five per cent. On one portion of this railway the net profit was equal to eight per cent. on the outlay.

to this subject, and the experience that has by this time been gained of the management of Indian railways, has already led in some instances to a considerable economy of working expenses. Much, however, yet remains to be effected in this direction.

A source of large annual cost is the highly paid class of Englishmen whom it has hitherto been found necessary to employ in various capacities on these lines; and this item of account might be much reduced by the substitution of natives of the country, who, as experience has proved, can be trained to do many now highly paid duties at a cheap rate, and with perfect efficiency. Certain employments, it is true, must in all likelihood continue to be filled from Europe—above all that of the engine-driver, which requires a greater amount of natural nerve than is considered a usual endowment in Indian races. At the same time, it is fair to say, that an excellent class of native stokers has been trained, who, on occasions, have shown themselves well qualified to act as substitute drivers in the absence of their principals.

As stationmasters, clerks, and, in short, in almost all but the very highest offices of railway employment, the natives of the country have proved their fitness, as regards steadiness, sobriety, and attention. The chief point in which their employment is open to objection is one which results from the time-honoured system of perquisites, which throughout the East are apt to be regarded as the main sources of remuneration in any service,—as a striking example of which we may mention the by no means unfrequent cases, in which the signal-man engaged to attend to the gates at a level crossing, proceeded without hesitation to levy a toll on every man and animal that passed his lodge. These demands, which were, in most instances, paid without question, in the shape of small coin, or more frequently in the form of a handful of grain, a fagot of firewood, or other samples from the loads borne by man or beast, were, of course, soon discovered and put a stop to. They served, however, to show the strong hold which this kind of usage possesses on a people who, in point of fact, have come to designate it as “*The Custom*” (*Dustooree*).

This custom unfortunately has been put in practice by native officials of a higher grade than gatekeepers.

Not long ago it was discovered that many among them were deriving large sums of money from native merchants, who desired the cotton they held stored at inland stations to be passed down to the coast before other bales which had a prior claim to transit.

By these means the bribing parties got their produce into a

favourable market before the close of the export season ; while, owing to the want of rolling stock, and to gaps then existing on the line on which these practices took place, the owners of the bales thus left behind suffered a severe loss.

The cost of working the traffic of Indian railways is also swelled by heavy charges for maintaining the roadway and rolling stock in good order. The alternations of a climate in which sleepers are soaked almost incessantly for several months, and parched with a hot wind for several other months, tell severely on all wood-work.

The injury, too, which tropical rains effect on embankments reduced by long baking by the sun to the state of a brittle cake or of a fine powder, is often increased owing to the difficulty of obtaining good material for ballast for the line. Fortunately it has been found that the jarring motion communicated to the sleepers by the passage of trains over them is effectual in saving them from the ravages of white ants, from which much damage was looked for. Any sleeper of less perishable material than wood would be a great source of saving on these lines. Iron-pot sleepers have been tried, it is true, and in some instances have been said to be successful. But there does not appear a great inclination on the part of the companies to extend the use of them.

The alternations of climate, of course, cause great tear and wear to rolling stock. Every possible means, however, is taken to meet this evil by obtaining all iron-work requisite for carriages and waggons of the very strongest description, and in using these in constructing the stock in India, where teak, one of the most durable woods in the world, is available.

In Eastern India supplies of fuel are obtained cheaply from the coal-fields of Burdwan and its neighbourhood. But in other parts of the peninsula, the necessity of importing coal from England, Australia, or at times Labuan, causes a heavy expenditure in the locomotive departments.

In the valley of the Nerbudda, traversed by the through line between Calcutta and Bombay, deposits of coal have been discovered, and, indeed, a company is now in existence for working mines sunk at several points along these beds. As yet, however, the out-turn of these mines is insufficient to afford any important supply of fuel ; although it is said that, so soon as the opening of this through route shall have placed them in communication with a market, the company will be prepared to furnish large quantities for consumption. Regarding the quality of this coal very conflicting statements and analyses have been published. Such is the importance, however, of good fuel for railways in that part of India that supplies of

even a very middling quality would there be a welcome discovery.

The system of Government control under which the Indian railways have been constructed, and are now managed, deserves a few words of description, above all at the present time, when the principle of conducting the railways in our own country is forming a subject of debate.

The double dualism which the Indian system embodies does at first sight certainly seem an undesirable machinery of management.

In England there are two separate sets of authorities—the directors, who represent the shareholders of each company, and the Council of India, presided over by a Secretary of State.

In India, again, the interests of each company are in charge of a managing agent who, in turn, is in communication with the Government of that Presidency or Province in which his employers' line happens to lie.

In each country the acts and proposals of the representatives of the companies are subject to revision, and even rejection, by the Government authorities.

Moreover, arrangements that have undergone this preliminary process in India are still liable to be thrown out by the subsequent double review through which they have to pass in England.

So complicated a series of checks certainly appears to offer undue opportunities for delays and disagreements among the many authorities who compose it.

To increase, too, the risks of conflicts of opinion in India, the exercise of the Government control there was committed to officers of the Corps of Engineers, who, fairly or unfairly, were apt to be looked on by the civil engineers employed by the companies as but imperfectly acquainted with the specialities of that railway construction which they were delegated to superintend. While, further dangers of disagreement lay in the disposition, attributed to Anglo-Indian officials to treat the gentlemen employed by the companies with somewhat less deference than would be shown to servants of the State; and, on the other hand, in the still stronger disposition not unlikely to be entertained by tetchy individuals among these gentlemen to resent with undue ardour such slights, or imaginary slights, as men so circumstanced are apt to lay themselves out to look for.

That collisions of opinion did arise from such likely sources of irritation is undoubted; but these, on the whole, have been rare, and, indeed, chiefly occurred during the earlier days of the railways, when over-zealous officers of the Government occa-

sionally exercised their superintendence with a hypercritical attention to details, which was quite in accordance with the powers they possessed, but which was not the less utterly incompatible with the energetic execution of the works.

It also happened at times that the agents and engineers of the companies proceeded to display their impatience of the control imposed on them by attempts to ignore all such shackles—a futile effort, seeing that the power which the contracts between the Government and the companies conferred on the former was in this respect absolute, and admitted, moreover, of being enforced by a strong measure, namely, that of the Government withholding the supplies necessary to carry on work—a proceeding placed within their reach by a clause in these contracts, which ordered that all moneys subscribed by the shareholders should be paid into the public treasuries, and be only withdrawn on the authority of the Government.

Time, however, eventually proved that, cumbrous as this regulating machinery appeared it nevertheless could be made to work very satisfactorily. A Committee of the House of Commons appointed in 1858 to inquire into this subject, reported that no material delay in the operations of the Indian railway companies appeared to have been occasioned by Government interference; on the contrary, they considered that the progress of the Indian lines contrasted favourably with those in England. This Committee at the same time stated it to be their belief that while this control was necessary for the interests of the State, it had in addition proved beneficial for the companies' shareholders.

In England the operation of the control is simplified as much as possible by the presence of a representative director of the Government at the meetings of the board of direction of each company. By this arrangement the views of each party can be discussed with a convenience and a promptitude unattainable in written letters. Questions of detail that in the course of a correspondence might involve dilatory references, are thus often able to be set at rest by a few words of personal communication with officers of the company in attendance at these board meetings. Fortunately, too, the interests of the Government are here represented by a gentleman whose experience and character go far to get over the difficulties which, it must be confessed, seem inseparable from his functions.

But, faulty as this entire regulating process may be liable to become, it is only fair to point out certain good results which have followed its application to Indian railways.

In these the sums of money spent under the two great heads of capital and revenue have been recorded with a mathematical

precision unknown in the confused concoctions of figures which represent the accounts of most British lines. Payments of dividends, although no profits be available to divide, and all similar expedients practised in the case of railways at home, are impossible under the Indian system, by which all sums earned from traffic are paid without exception into a Government treasury to a separate revenue account; from which such amounts as are required for working expenses are withdrawn by cheques bearing the counter-signature of a Government officer. This officer, on his part, also audits the entire expenditure of the particular lines placed under his care, and has thereby excellent means of judging of the propriety of any expenditure for which his counter-signature may be asked; as also of the claim which it may have to be classed as a charge against revenue or against capital. In fact, the English tendency to an undue favouring of the former head of account is effectually prevented by a provision which causes many doubtful items which among us are unhesitatingly ascribed to capital expenses to be in the first instance debited against revenue; leaving it in the power of the companies to afford such proofs as may warrant a subsequent transfer to the other heading. There need, therefore, be little apprehension that any dividend declared by an Indian railway has not been actually earned.

But, indeed, objectionable or not, it is plain that in the Indian railways this Government control was an unavoidable consequence of the guarantee.

The Government virtually engaged to answer for the success of these lines, and was therefore bound in self-protection to claim a controlling voice in their management.

Conditional as was the guarantee given in this instance, it was quite sufficient to render possible certain objectional consequences. The principle it involved—that of insuring a fair return on as much money as a railway happened to cost—was even capable of leading its promoters to conclude that it was no disadvantage that this expenditure should be large. For the giver of such a guarantee it was evidently important that this outlay should be economized; in order to limit the extent of his obligation, no less than to extinguish it in the end, by rendering the railway self-supporting—an object attainable only by keeping the works within a cost corresponding to the receipts eventually to be expected.

The interests of the two parties were here so clearly opposed that each required a distinct safeguard.

Without such a safeguard there could have been no guarantee. Without a guarantee there would have been no Indian railways.

The results of this guarantee are certainly such as seem to

warrant a wider application of it to meet the wants of India. The prudent policy which the Government authorities pursued in the early days of Indian railways—a policy which prompted them to limit as much as possible the extent of a liability which not a few among them looked on as a likely source of loss—may by the light of actual experience now undergo advantageous modification. This liability, as we have already seen, has virtually ceased on two great lines, comprising between them 2800 out of the 5000 miles of the original system; and of the £700,000, which represented the interest actually paid by the Government during 1867, at least a half must be regarded as repaid by savings effected in the transport of troops, stores, and mail-bags. So long ago as 1864, the annual economy effected under these heads amounted to £200,000.

These gains to Government may easily be realized by any one who happens to have seen European troops, or, indeed, any troops, on the line of march in India. One day's railway journey now disposes of an undertaking which in former days used to be a month's progress of a large canvas town, carried on the backs of numerous elephants and camels, or occupying long strings of bullock-carts; during which month, moreover, the cost of this camp-equipage and of the hordes of camp-followers it involved, was increased by the extra marching money drawn by every officer and man of the force *en route*.

That these attained results are tending to increase the disposition of the Indian authorities to encourage the development of the present railway system, may be gathered from a despatch addressed in the beginning of the present year by H. M. Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy of that country. But even yet there seems an excess of prudence in the precautions prescribed for observance in the attempt to attain this object. Accomplished facts surely warrant the Government in now taking a larger view than they have hitherto done of their duties as the landlord of India. Their property there is certainly in an excellent state, so far as regards light burdens in the shape of mortgage. Indeed, every penny that, up to the present time, has been spent on public works, including upwards of £20,000,000 sterling advanced as interest to railway companies, has been defrayed out of the current revenues. Even yet the total amount expended on its railways (£75,000,000), represents not more than a year and a half of income.

Unfortunately, this careful system of procedure involves serious delays in the provision of works of urgent importance. To understand this fact, it is only necessary for us to imagine the long period England might yet have had to wait for her

railways, her system of drainage, indeed, even for her turnpike and statute-labour roads, if a similar course had been followed in this country,—if the yearly progress of the railways had been dependent on the surplus obtainable by a Chancellor of the Exchequer; if the roads had been made commensurately with the accumulation of such sums as our country squires contrived to leave unspent from the income of each year.

Without entering indiscriminately on the many works, which a few years ago were clamorously called for by certain classes among us, but which of late seem to have been dropped, simultaneously with the demand for that Indian cotton, which the cessation of the American civil war has now rendered no longer essential to the mills of Lancashire,—without, then, beginning on so broadcast a system of improvements, much good might gradually be done by a liberal outlay on roads and bridges. In truth, any effort of this kind must of necessity be a gradual one; the limited supply of labour available in most parts of India alone imposes an effectual restriction on the progress of public works.

It is only to be regretted that the inclination to liberality which the Government seems beginning to show, had not been exhibited some few years earlier. Had a series of well-conceived projects of public improvement for India been offered as fields of investment during the year 1865, it is probable that any reasonable amount of capital might have been obtained in London on terms favourable to the Government. Money, which then disappeared in the shares of bubble companies, might now be existing in the shape of debentures of a Public Works Loan for India, or possibly as shares in undertakings enjoying the guarantee or subvention of the Indian Government. Even at the present time an admirable opportunity presents itself. For amidst the all but universal distrust which still overclouds the English Money Market, the confidence placed by the public in the guarantee of the Indian Government is shown by the high price the Indian Railway Stocks command. Money sufficient to carry out extensive railroads, high-roads, and irrigation works, might now be raised without difficulty, and on easy terms—possibly at a somewhat lower rate of interest than five per cent.

The year of scarcity upon which there is reason to fear India is now entering, affords a further powerful argument in favour of immediate action; for works of the nature we describe would afford remunerative occupation for multitudes of men and women who seem in danger of dying of starvation if left to their ordinary resources.

But to be effectual, our action must be immediate; and, indeed, nothing need hinder its instantaneous inception.

Already, in the records of Canon Row, there are the amplest data required to carry out several most important works. Already there are at hand agents able to undertake them.

In place of continuing to wait for a comprehensive report on the subject, which has long been said to be in preparation in India, we would venture to suggest that the home authorities should now issue orders for the execution of certain projects which they themselves have acknowledged to be useful, and sure to be remunerative.

Let them overcome the embarrassment of choice, which hitherto has prevented them undertaking any one scheme, lest by chance it should turn out that a more important one had been overlooked. There are so many of urgent importance, that it matters not in what order they be taken in hand.

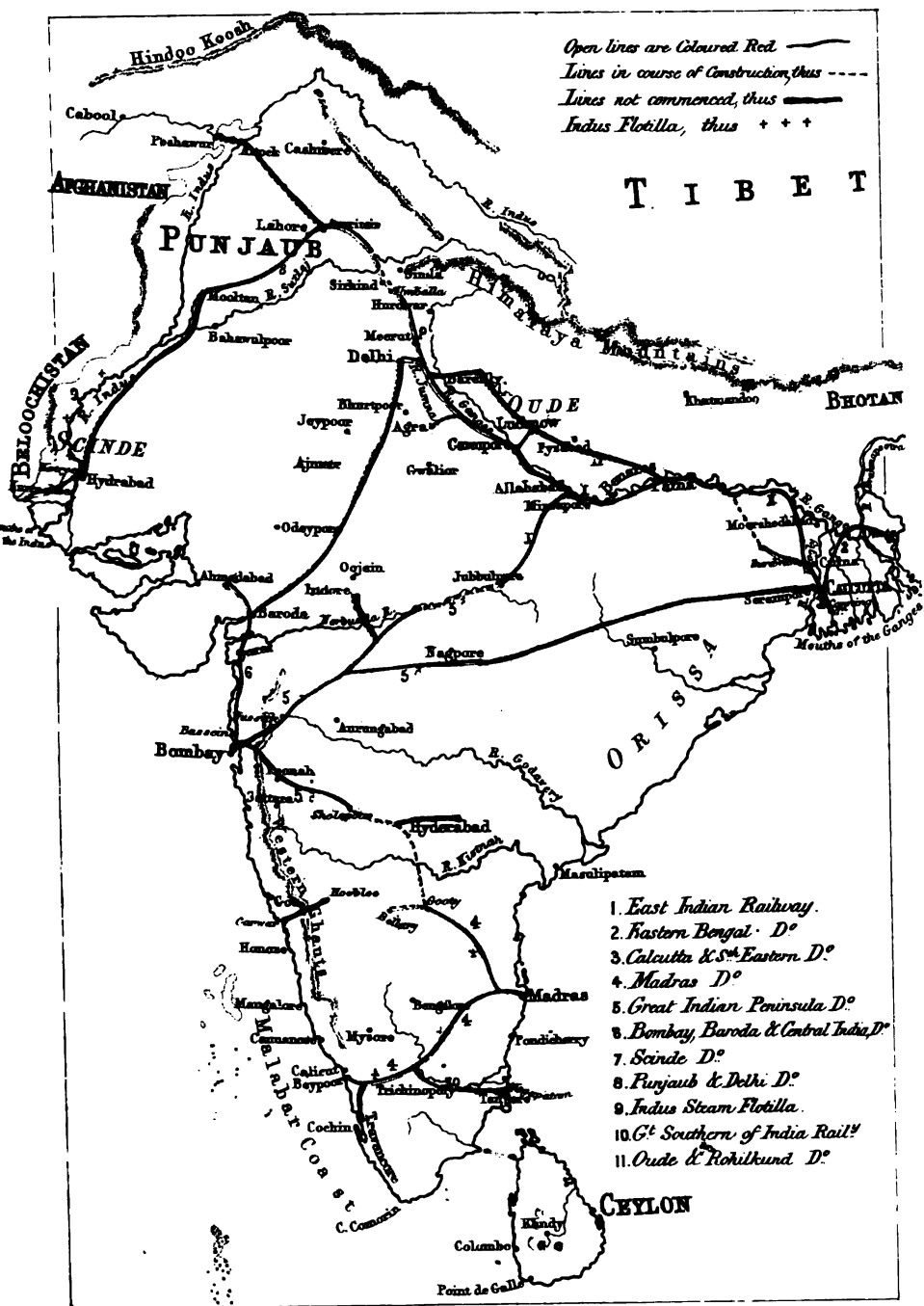
A glance at the map which we here append for reference will show the small proportion which the existing railways bear to the wants of the great continent over which they stretch as arterial channels—useful, it is true, but requiring to be supplemented by a good network of subordinate lines.

Even in the case of the railways already provided, much remains to be done to enable the country they traverse to reap the full benefits they offer. At the present time, for want of proper means of access, more than one railway station is, at certain seasons, all but inaccessible. The advantage of a thousand miles of railway, in short, are there rendered unavailable for want of a few miles of fair roads. For all purposes of traffic such stations are, for the time being, "*en l'air*," to borrow an expression from a soldier.

To meet these needs proper approaches must be provided; in ordinary cases in the shape of good roads; and in certain cases in the form of tramways, or even branch railways.

The duty of furnishing the first of these requirements, at all events, seems fairly to lie on the State, which is here the owner of the land. But, indeed, this duty may be looked upon as a point of importance secondary to the interest the Government plainly possesses in this matter. The benefits they would derive from such roads are twofold: the advantage which their property would enjoy from being opened up to favourable markets, as well as from miles upon miles of it which now lie waste being thus made capable of being reclaimed into rent-paying fields; and the further advantage which would arise from increasing the prosperity of the railways, and thereby relieving the finances of the State from all obligation on account of guaranteed interest; an obligation already exceeding £3,000,000 sterling per annum, but which, as we have already seen, the remunerative nature of certain lines has reduced to £700,000.

MAP SHEWING THE RAILWAYS IN INDIA IN 1868.



J. Bartholomew, Lith. Edin.

Scale of English Miles

0 100 200

400 600

800 1000

By thus developing the traffic the Government might, out of half the profits in excess of five per cent., soon regain the £11,000,000 at present outstanding on this score against the various lines.

The benefits which India has already derived from her railways, and the further benefits which their completion and extension are sure to afford, hardly admit of exaggeration.

By means of them those famines which at times devastate one of its provinces, while in others the superabundant supplies of grain fail to find a consumer, may be greatly mitigated, if not altogether averted. Had a railway connected Orissa with Lower Bengal, it is almost certain that thousands of human lives, lost in the years of scarcity that have hardly yet passed over that unhappy province, might have been saved.

Supplies of food might thus have been poured into the country, and able-bodied men might at the same time have been conveyed to earn a livelihood in districts where their labour would have been acceptable.

The part the railways have played in opening up new markets to vast districts of production, and thereby bringing back to the cultivator a fair share of the price which the ultimate consumer pays for his produce, has already been noticed. Indeed, the operation of this improved system of trade promises to bring about the reform of an evil which hitherto has preyed upon the agricultural classes in that country—the evil of money-lenders, who, in localities isolated from large markets, are enabled to combine to keep the ryots in a state of thralldom.

Owing to the absence of competition, as well as of capital, the village banker usually contrived to monopolize the right of purchasing the produce of the fields farmed by his little community. By taking advantage of their improvident habits; by furnishing money to them to launch out into extravagant entertainments on the occasion of a birth, a marriage, or a death; by doling out subsistence-allowance at one time, and seed for their soil at another; the banker sooner or later managed to forestall the crops of his entire neighbourhood. To the rustics whom he held in his bonds a year of plenty brought little relief from the consequences of a season of scarcity. Did not those mysterious, craftily-manipulated lines of figures in their creditor's ledger prove that no harvest, however abundant, could possibly repay the advances he had made to them? The debt was beyond the power of a lifetime to discharge. Nay, it was certain that it must descend to sons, and, in fact, be bequeathed to an endless line of heirs. Such hereditary debts are looked on as sacred obligations by a Hindu: their repudiation might affect the eternal welfare of ancestors.

On behalf of the banker, however, it is but fair to say that in the state of the society in which he lived, his operations, although objectionable, were at the same time not without certain advantages. In fact, he was an essential element in the economy of the village community as then circumstanced.

Now-a-days, however, his usurious aid is rendered unnecessary owing to the facilities afforded by railways for the transmission of inland produce to the export markets. Indeed, the agents of the merchants at the coast often traverse the country, competing for the supplies of cotton, grain, or seeds which may be on sale; and at the same time obtaining orders for cotton cloths, bar-iron, sheet-copper, and the various manufactures imported from Europe for the Indian market.¹

In this way, too, the cultivator buys his clothes at a much cheaper rate than heretofore.

Transactions of this direct kind, moreover, serve to stir up the trading energies of the inhabitants; and must greatly tend to bring into circulation the large amount of silver coin, which distrust, engendered by past oppression and troublous times, has caused to be hoarded up by all classes for several generations. And this bullion, if thus made available, might do much good in a country, rich, it is true, in resources, but ill-furnished with the capital by which alone these can be turned to a profitable account.

The influence of railways in erasing the prejudices of creed and the privileges of caste is very great. Recognising no distinctions of classes, other than those of different-priced carriages for conveyance—open alike to the holiest Brahman and the veriest Soodra—the railroad is here indeed a social leveller. During the construction of the lines, many natives of inferior castes proved more eager to enter the service of the contractors, and more accommodating to the wants of these gentlemen, than men of higher grades of the Indian social scale. By energy and diligence they rapidly passed into well-paid positions, and in many cases became substantial sub-contractors. In like manner, too, have many low-caste men established their fortunes in the management of the traffic of the railways.

And such men having acquired independent means, and

¹ By purchasing cotton at the place of production, the merchant is enabled to classify each quality of it correctly, which is the first step towards establishing the real work of the Indian variety.

Hitherto inferior descriptions have been largely used to adulterate cotton, that of itself would have commanded an excellent price; and consequently the entire out-turn of India came to be distrusted and depreciated.

The cultivator too has now a chance of reaping the benefit of care in securing his crop, which is offered to him by selling it to a buyer who is willing to give a good price for good samples.

having also imbibed European ideas from the Englishmen they constantly meet, are naturally impatient of social trammels which subject them to the scorn and exactions of fellow-beings less rich, and probably less intelligent, than themselves; and whose only claim to superiority consists in the name of Brahman which they bear.

The example of these successful self-raised men of course acts as an incitement to others to shake off the irksome shackles of caste; and attempts at freedom of this kind are further assisted by the easy means now existing for escaping from local bonds and associations to another part of the country, where the career of the adventurer may be pushed under more favourable circumstances than at his own home.

To our countrymen whose duties call them to pass many of the best years of their life in India, the railways immensely improve the conditions of existence.

In a case of severe illness it often happens that the only hope of saving the Englishman lying sick at some inland station, consists in giving him a change of air. Often has a doctor said of such a patient, "Ah, poor fellow, he might pull through if we could only get him sent home, but a journey to the coast would kill him." For, a journey of this kind frequently involves many days' jolting in springless carts over roads resembling the dry bed of a mountain-torrent. And, during the rainy season, travelling becomes still more troublesome. Indeed, at that time of the year, more than one military station in India becomes a mere island surrounded by a sea of liquid mud, the fair-weather roads through which soon melt into the same state of mire. Neighbouring rivers which a month ago, might have been passed by a traveller dry-shod, now become raging torrents; at times altogether impassable by the fords or ferries that constitute the only means of crossing them.

The advent of a railway to a station of this kind resembles a special intervention of Providence. Such interventions, it must be confessed, too rarely manifest themselves in India in the shape of ordinary roads and bridges. For, these works, although probably existing in the form of designs of various dates, and many shapes prepared by the Public Works Department, seem incapable of getting beyond that embryotic stage.

Engineer officers, overflowing with honest zeal, may have prepared project after project to supply works, whose cost might, in a few years, be recouped out of the increased land revenue they would assuredly bring in. But such well-aimed efforts can seldom survive the deliberations and discussions they have to undergo at the hands of the many authorities whose sanction is required for the funds necessary to carry them out. Stifled

soon after their entrance into the region peopled by Secretaries and Members of Council, they find a premature grave in the pigeon-hole of some Government office book-case.

In vertical catacombs of this kind, which garnish the walls of public offices in India, there repose in peace the neatly labelled remains of projects innumerable; some of them possibly unsound, but many well worthy to be revived and embodied.

The intermittent manner in which public works are carried on by the Government in India renders it doubtful whether it be desirable for the State to retain in its own hands the construction of certain lines required to complete the present railway system. As a reason for such a course, it has been urged that these lines being chiefly needed for political purposes, do not offer the hopes of commercial success which are likely to induce individuals to take them in hand.

And this reason may, in some cases, possess certain force. At the same time, should these works be carried out by direct Government agency, there is a risk of their progress being interrupted or retarded by the many contingencies which await all efforts of the Public Works Department. Above all, the funds required for each year's operations must be liable to such uncertain conditions of supply as the failure or abundance of opium, or the high or low price that it happens to yield to the Indian revenue; or not impossibly to the caprice or whim of some Minister of Finance, whose short exile from the House of Commons is insufficient to render him acquainted with the country whose finances he regulates; and whose efforts are usually engrossed in cutting down all expenditure so as to enable him to show a good surplus in his annual budget.

In the railways the State finds a powerful political aid. By increasing the comfort and prosperity of the people they conduce to create contentment, which, in every country, is the essential condition of successful Government.

By providing a rapid and easy means of communication between the most important strategical points of the country, they enable large bodies of troops to be quickly concentrated to quell insurrection or repel invasion.

They at the same time allow of the force of European soldiers required to preserve the peace of India, being stationed in localities in its hills, which offer a climate much like that of their homes; where their health and their vigour may remain unimpaired by the heat and epidemics which decimate English garrisons in the plains; and from which elevated quarters they may, at a moment's notice, be conveyed, in a state of the highest physical efficiency, to any spot where their services may be called for.

That arrangements of this kind must eventually be made for our soldiers in India seems certain. The excessive rate of mortality amongst them, and the difficulty of getting recruits in these days of high wages, call for some special provision for their preservation. Already every fighting man procured from England costs the State upwards of a hundred pounds. Moreover, by means of a well-planned system of trunk lines, supplemented by the necessary branches (including, of course, means of access to the foot of the mountains on which these stations would be placed), the effective power of troops might be so largely increased as to permit of the number of Europeans requisite to garrison India being greatly reduced.

Of the lines necessary to complete our strategic communications in India, two, certainly, claim our urgent attention—a line from Lahore to Peshawur which would place our northern stronghold in railway communication with the sea, and a line to connect Mooltan with the Scinde Railway, and thus supersede the present unsatisfactory journey by steamers, which links the Punjab system of railways with Kurrachee, their natural outlet on the ocean. For, the river Indus, on which these steamers at present ply, cannot be looked on as a fairly navigable channel—so uncertain are its shoals, so difficult are the conditions of sailing along it without irksome interruptions.

Secondary to these, but also of great importance, is the extension of the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway from some point near its present northern terminus at Ahmedabad to Delhi; so as to place the capital of Upper India and the States of Rajpootana in connexion with Bombay, which, so far as distance and convenience are concerned, appears the seaport best suited for the trade of these extensive marts. And, seeing that Bombay has been chosen as the port through which the principal overland traffic from Europe to India is hereafter to pass, it may also be found necessary to shorten the railway route between it and Calcutta by continuing as far as the latter city the branch of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway which at present terminates at Nagpore.

A branch line is required to place Hyderabad, the important and turbulent capital of the Nizam of the Deccan, in connexion with the Great Indian Peninsula Railway; as also another branch from the north-eastern line of the same railway to Indore, the capital of His Highness the Maharajah Holkar, and the great mart of Malwa opium. And to afford an outlet for the great cotton districts of the Southern Mahratta country, a line should be constructed from Carwar, the newly-opened port to the south of Goa inland towards Hooblee.

Other lines there are, possibly of equal importance with those

we now happen to name, but which are scarcely so ready for immediate construction, owing to the absence of the necessary information regarding them.

Strengthened by a comprehensive net-work of railways, our Government might devote to the peaceful progress of India much energy and much money hitherto engrossed by precautions of a military character.

Defective communications have all along been the weak point in our occupation of the country. They formed one of the chief incentives to the great rebellion, which not long ago threatened our very existence in the East; for it is beyond a doubt that the Sepoy mutineers largely based their hopes of success on the possibility of cutting off in detail the English garrisons sprinkled far and wide over the land.

Since that time this incentive to revolt has been gradually disappearing. In the case of the city which then formed the focus of insurrection it has already vanished.

In 1857 Delhi was distant by at least a month's march from Calcutta. To-day an army of men in every way ready to take the field may be moved from one of these places to the other in forty-eight hours,—thanks to Indian railways.

- ART. IV.—1. *A Selection from the Works of Robert Browning.*
 Lond. 1865.
 2. *Selections from the Poetical Works of Robert Browning.*
 Lond. 1863.
 3. *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning.* 3 vols. Lond. 1863.
 4. *Dramatis Personæ.* Lond. 1864.
 5. *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning.* 6 vols. Lond.
 1868.
 6. *Essays on R. Browning's Poetry.* By JOHN T. NETTLESHIP.
 Lond. 1868.

ROBERT BROWNING, in his fortunes with the public, has been as the nobler grain, that takes the trials of a winter to bring its fruit to a harvest, not sooner than the sowings of spring. For long years, with whatever heartlessness of misgiving effort, he had to work in the cold shade of neglect, till, at length, those products of his, suddenly emerging to the light, which could not finally fail them, wave now in the eyes of the public as brightly and bravely—nay, some say, more brightly and bravely, than those of any of his contemporaries. It is well! We clap hands and cry *Evœ* with the rest.

Still this neglect, or the peculiarity of the fortunes of Browning, has not left his products uninfluenced; we fancy it traceable as well in the matter as the manner of these. For he who courts an objective expression is often obliged, notwithstanding, to recognise in it his own subject in solution. And it is thus, we think, that the notes of Browning are, for the most part, notes subdued, while their burthen, if never either weak whining or noisy lament, shows very generally as saddened (but ripe and full) human reflection. "They may churn and chide," he says,

"Awhile, my waves which came for their joy
 And found a horrible stone full-tide:
 Yet I see just a thread escape, deploy
 Through the evening-country, silent and safe,
 And it suffers no more till it finds the sea."

And so he would "bury sorrow out of sight," though it is natural too that surprised human nature should not, for very surprise, be always able to resist the question,—“Nay, but you who do not love her, is she not pure gold, my mistress? is there aught like this tress, and this tress,

And this, last fairest tress of all,
 So fair, see, ere I let it fall?"

He would "bury sorrow out of sight," but he must think it strange, nevertheless, "that they who spend their lives in praising," find nothing here to praise. Are they but dreams, then, he wonders, dreams never to be realized, those visions he has had of living "linked with love about, and praise, till life should end—when learned Age should greet my face, and Youth, the star not yet distinct above his hair, lie learning at my feet?" No; "You'll love me yet," he cries, "and I can wait your love's protracted growing; some seed is sure to strike, and yield, what you'll not love indeed, but maybe like." One sees thus that, consistently with what we indicate, there is sadness in his very hope: with soul subdued, even to the quality of its fate, the poet dare expect only to be liked, not loved. It is a similar mingled feeling that controls what may be taken, perhaps, as his attitude to fame. "Room after room," he hunts the house through for her, and, "Heart," he says, "fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her;" yet he sorrowfully admits "the day wears, and door succeeds door—she goes out as he enters, and 'tis twilight with such suites to explore, such closets to search." No sooner has he said this, however, than he bursts out again, in the old hope, with the impossibility that she should finally escape him. "Escape! Never, beloved!

While I am I, and you are you,
So long as the world contains us both,
Me the loving, and you the loth,
While the one eludes, must the other pursue."

This, then, is hope, but neither is fear far; for the very next lines follow with the exclamation, "My life is a fault at last, I fear," and the question, "But what if I fail of my purpose here?"—a question, which he answers—after a long, sad pause, conceivably—as all answer who foresee for themselves not the joy of life, but only its toil—

"It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And baffled, get up and begin again,—
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all."

The last line evidently depicts the worst yet. Hope itself is white there. "So the chase takes up one's life, that's all!" It is not fruit as fruit, then, that is, after all, to be expected,—all fruits mock—fruits there are none—the best possible result is the oblivion of occupation, and because it is oblivion. We are no longer as children on the earth, it seems, an earth in sunshine,—we have come to years of apprehension now, in the spreading

shadow. We have bit through the gold into the ash : it is the pursuit alone has value—a value in the oblivion it extends. We must have something to “take up” life.

Not yet, however, has “the lightly-moved and all-conceiving spirit of the poet” arrived at term. There can be no repose now, but on the altar of religion, borne up in the sanctuary for ever. He surely knows that “God above is great to grant as mighty to make, and creates the love to reward the love: the time will come—at last it will.” God makes the world “dark” for him, he says, “because He needs him—just saves his light to spend;” but “His clenched hand will unclothe at last,” and all His ways prove but as “machinery meant to give his soul its bent, try him, and turn him forth sufficiently impressed.” “Others,” he exclaims, “mistrust and say, but time escapes, live now or never,—I say, what’s time? leave now for dogs and apes, man has for ever!” “Heedless of far gain, greedy of quick returns, bad is our bargain:” he throws on God. It is “to God’s breast he speeds;” there laying “his spirit down at last, he will lie where he has always lain.”

Thus through the chequer of hope and gloom he looks up in faith; and in such a mood it is conceivable how there should be so little bitterness in Browning. The lesson has sunk too deep; the castigation has gone home in softness and maturity: the rich nature has kissed the rod, and there is no room in it for the petty—no possibility for the sour. It is indeed difficult to catch any note of scorn, or grudge, or discontent in Browning. He has a gentle contempt of his own, at most, for the mean present, “where, after its kind, the mastiff girns, and the puppy pack of poodles yelp;” where “the praise that might yield returns” is withheld, and “the handsome word or two that might help” refused. Sooth to say, it is no pleasure, either, simply “to watch the olive and wait the vine, and wonder when the river of oil and wine will flow.” It flows, in turtle and claret, for Hobbs and Nobbs and Nokes and Stokes, he knows. These, nevertheless, he will not envy. No; the wronged great souls turn their backs to this world, and the wrong it does. He will only ask magnanimously (magnanimously, if a little ruefully), “What porridge had John Keats?” Nay, so subdued is this great soft soul, so dead is the world in it, that even the sudden turn to fame shall find him, for his part, well-nigh indifferent.

“ . . . Who summoned those cold faces that begun
To press on me and judge me? Though I stooped
Shrinking, as from the soldiery a nun,
They drew me forth, and spite of me . . . enough!

These buy and sell our pictures, take and give,
Count them for garniture and household stuff."

He thinks of the praise that was withheld, of the handsome word or two of help refused; and asks himself, why should he smite the rock for such as they, "who stood and mocked—'Shall striking help us?' who drank and sneered—'A stroke is easy!' who wiped their mouths and went their journey, throwing him for thanks,—'But drought was pleasant!'"?

"Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;
Thus the doing savours of disrelish;
Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;
O'er-importuned brows becloud the mandate,
Carelessness or consciousness—the gesture."

Thus "he bears an ancient wrong about him, sees and knows those phalanxed faces;" but will turn from them and choose his portion; for even, "if at whiles," he says,

"My heart sinks as monotonous I paint
These endless cloisters and eternal aisles
With the same series, Virgin, Babe, and Saint,
With the same cold, calm, beautiful regard,
At least no merchant traffics in my heart;
The sanctuary's gloom at least shall ward
Vain tongues from where my pictures stand apart."

And so, "when a soul has seen by the means of Evil that Good is best,

The uses of labour are surely done;
There remaineth a rest for the people of God:
And I have had troubles enough, for one."

In this way, then, we have a picture—and, if in scattered words that were otherwise meant, a true picture—of the prevailing mood of Browning, the mood due to what we have named the peculiarity of his fortunes. He is built silently on his trust in God, and he does his day's work—work that shall be the unimpassioned representation of so many men and women, unrelated to, and at a distance from, himself. "He stands on his attainment—this of verse, alone allowed him in a life; verse and nothing else he has to give;" but this verse shall be "so many utterances of so many others, not of him." This last avowal, as seen, we have not taken altogether *au pied de la lettre*: we have presumed to see "him" in the "others," the subject in the object; and, so far, we dare to say, without serious error or intolerable injustice.

It is the lot of ships unused, we hear, to "rot and rust and

run to dust, and all through worms i' the wood;" and so it might have been with the unused, or neglected, Browning. So it might have been, but for the trust that supported effort! It is hard to rouse, however, by the mere voice of duty, the solitary soul that should have been borne up, filled, kindled by the attention of its fellows and the sympathy of its kind: hence, probably, not the mood only, but the defects of Browning. For there are defects in Browning which—while his mere peculiarities repel the mass—distress his student. Of this the poet himself is not unaware, and names it perhaps at its nearest when he supposes his friend to call to him,

"Stop playing, poet! may a brother speak?
'Tis you *speak*, that's your error. *Song's* our art:
Whereas you please to *speak* these naked thoughts,
Instead of dressing them in sights and sounds.
. . . Grown men want thought, you think;
Thought's what they mean by verse, and seek in verse:
Boys seek for images and melody,
Men must have reason—so, you aim at men."

Nay, in the same passage, the poet does not restrict his reference to this, his first capital defect,—the preponderance of speech over song, namely; but extends it to his second as well: "Why" he conceives the same supposititious friend to ask,

"Such long prolusion and display,
Such turning and adjustment of the harp,
And taking it upon your breast, at length,
Only to speak dry words across its strings?"

That, we apprehend, is an allusion to the peculiar tediousness, prolusory, interlusory, and conclusory, which is apt at times, and not unfrequently, to overfall Browning,—in the experience, at all events, of the very willingest of his readers: Nor is either defect unintelligible. Song is the voice of success, not failure; while the motion, that a man in default of other incentive must of his own accord incur, is discontinuous and slack. The sweetest, greatest bard that ever lived, if he must sing and sing only to hint of his own, unnoticed and unknown, would, no less frequently than Browning, falter and fall into prose and prosiness. Browning's fortunes, then, will not be denied, probably, to have considerably influenced his writings. But these we must now see something more in detail, and we proceed to the realization of our special purpose in the present essay—a review proper, namely, of the poetical works of Robert Browning.

He whose first approach to Browning is by way of the hand-

some little volume that tops our list, is not likely, we fear, though offered of the best at times—"Caliban," "Artemis," "Roland," "Rudel," "Youth and Art," "Dts Aliter Visum," etc.—to be met at once by what is called a favourable impression. The very portrait of the author, on which the volume opens, may, at a first view, engaging as it is, disappoint. We have our own notions in advance, it seems, of what the poetical is or should be; and this brave countenance, honest, thoughtful, kindly, with the pleasant shrewdness in the eyes, is too real, it may be, for the preconceived ideal. Genius, however, is no respecter of persons, but gives its turn to every variety, from the weeping Horace to the sighing Virgil, from the scrofulous Johnson to the rickety Pope, from the "elvishness" of Chaucer to the Prospero-magnificence of Shakespeare. Between individual and individual, whether in hull or in skull, there will be found as broad a difference in any twenty of the orchestra (musicians all) as in any twenty of the pit. The sacred fire tries every temperament; no soldier of the army but has his turn of the torch. It is not in the outward reality of his portrait, then, that we shall seek for the true Browning, but in the inward ideality of his thought, to which, as poet, his words alone give access.

Here these words, as is so common with the best, as is so common with what is simply good, impress not, in the beginning, favourably. Like all original writers, Browning has a flavour of his own, of which, in the first taste, the newness repugns. He indeed whose standards of poetry have been successively acquired, as is most likely, so far at least as recent literature is concerned, from Scott and Byron, from Coleridge and Wordsworth, from Shelley and Keats and Tennyson, may rise from his first burst of reading into the sixty-two pieces that form this collection with a general sense of failure. He has read in a mood of censure, we will say, in which there have been but few breaks of applause. His dissatisfaction has been almost constant, and he cannot allow it to have been redeemed by what glimpses of success he is willing to acknowledge. Compared with the standards in his mind, this poetry, it may be, even surprises. It is so completely different, so wholly disparate, that it is at once felt to be foreign, and *must* be faulty. It is tame, too, he thinks; tame, insipid, colourless. It is something unaffecting, plainly; something uninteresting; something inconsiderable. It is prevailingly symbolical—that he thinks he sees; but he thinks, also, it is unhappy in its kind. Either the externality, he says, is so much an externality, or else the internality is so much an internality—that is, either the symbol

itself is so hard and rude, or the meaning is so inextricably deep in it, that, while the concealment is perfect, the revelation is null. A weak, soft, plaintive, pleading thing, it is mostly—a breath conversationally low, he thinks; a small thin stream that runs by, almost uninfluenced by rhythm, almost unchecked by rhyme; broken only at times against single words like stones in mid-current, or losing itself and disappearing under the angle of an inversion. A descriptive touch, or a tone of tenderness, he cannot deny at intervals; but where, he asks, is the splendour of imagery, the rush of inspiration, the proud wave of exultant and transporting sound? There are no *passages*, he complains; nothing to strike. Rhyme, rhythm! why, in that low colloquial plaint, measure at all is hardly to be recognised. That is, whereas measure with us English usually consists of shorts and longs alternated to musical or passionate effect, here it seems all longs or all shorts, to no effect but that of prose. One can make music, he thinks, out of the usual calculated recurrence of iambuses, and passion out of breaks with spondees, etc., but one can make neither music nor passion where it is all spondees, or all pyrrhics, or at random either. What measure there is here, then, is to be pronounced mechanical merely; there is but the tact of time in it, the come and go of accent; tune there is none—we have line upon line, instead, that is flatly prose. No: music it cannot be called, that mere monotonous croon, that mere monotonous chime; croon or chime of such monotony that in so homogeneous an element even the unequal lengths of the lines look factitious somehow—the result, as it were, of an arbitrary clipping, and an arbitrary laying down.

Then, apart from the measure, there is the manner of the narrative, of the statement, to strike him. We are to understand, it seems, only by nods and becks; direct speech is never vouchsafed us—hints must suffice, and in such painfully rough, cramped, crabbed, foreshortened fashion too! Then the train of thought is hard, peculiar, subjective, so abrupt and sudden in its turns, too, from who knows what to who knows where, that there is often a sense of dislocation present. So, speech incongruous he frequently pronounces it; incongruous with itself, incongruous with its place. It does not come home, he cries, with a sense of success to humanity; it is cold, it is alien; it is cold, alien, and inapplicable. It is disturbed, confused, obscure. It is awkward, *saccadé*, harsh. In fine, there is hardly an invitation to explore what is so indirect, what is so difficult, what is so inconsiderable; and he closes the volume, muttering to himself, perhaps, these words of the poet's own:

"All the critics call my thoughts false, and my fancies quaint, and my style infirm, and its figures faint, and more blame yet."

Such expressions we may suppose to represent not untruly, perhaps, the state of mind that follows a first reading of this volume of Browning's. But, happily, this state of mind is not the last; for "all the while a misgiving will linger, truth's golden o'er us, although we refuse it." Perhaps it is only that his "fugue taxes the finger, but, learning it once, who would lose it?" Perhaps "could we but take his intent, a master were lauded, and sciolists shent." This misgiving will not leave us rest, then; we go back, and we look closer. Dissatisfaction does not even now disappear, it may be; but we find light-points form—light-points after light-points—in what was but nebula before. For example, here is one:—

" EPITAPH IN THE CATACOMBS.

"I was born sickly, poor and mean,
A slave: no misery could screen
The holders of the pearl of price
From Cæsar's envy; therefore twice
I fought with beasts, and three times saw
My children suffer by his law;
At last my own release was earned:
I was some time in being burned,
But at the close a hand came through
The fire above my head, and drew
My soul to Christ, whom now I see.
Sergius, a brother, writes for me
This testimony on the wall—
For me, I have forgot it all."

This is so simple and so pure, that it is no wonder the reach of it escapes notice at first. It is very perfect, however; there is not a stroke wanting, and every stroke is true. Christianity has made of the sickly despised slave a meek, sweet hero, and he speaks dispassionately from the calm of the other side. "At last," he says, "my own release was earned." Patience, then, seems to have abridged a whole world of suffering and probation, as it were, into a single brief moment! He was some time in being burned! Then it is Sergius writes:—it is not he—he "has forgot it all!" These few words light up an even infinite picture: the picture of the world in the highest mood it ever has known, perhaps ever will know—under the cross! Few words, but so severely simply chaste, that they were fittingly inscribed—black—only in the transparent purity of a Greek

marble. No one can doubt, after these lines, that Browning can be a master—is a master.

But light-points here are not limited to this short specimen ; there are others, and of a larger radiance—"Artemis," "Caliban," "Roland," etc.—any one of which, unique, transcendent in its quality, would alone suffice to render the little volume of a quite substantial value. These greater poems we shall leave for after consideration, and shall turn now to what justification may be found for the volume even in the lighter pieces. We shall take first a little group, which, more than any other in the minor productions, is remarkable for what is peculiar to Browning, and—in that sphere—distinctive of him. This group is constituted by such poems as "Cristina," "Any Wife to any Husband," "The Worst of It," "A Woman's Last Word," "Dis Aliter Visum," "Youth and Art," "A Light Woman," "By the Fireside," and "A Lover's Quarrel." The first four of these—and from the *Dramatis Personæ* we may fitly add to them "Too Late"—are eminently those soft, low, plaintive, pleading things to which there was already allusion, and which, characteristic of Browning in his minor vein, can hardly be said to be found in any other poet. They are still to a second reading indirect enough ; but it were to do them injustice to call them tame. Their measure is the peculiar crooning chime or chiming croon already mentioned, and they otherwise well illustrate the obscurity and other disappointing strangenesses named.

Almost all such characteristics we see in "Cristina," for example. Here we have a man of poetic depth, and a rare purity of feeling, blaming—to some one else it may be—a woman who had "fixed" him with one of those looks in which two souls feel for the moment as if they were eclipsed into each other. These eclipses, to call them so, are in reality not rare in human experience, and, we should say, mostly mean nothing ; but the lonely enthusiast in the poem thinks otherwise : he will have it that mutual love, presumably with all its social consequences, should have followed this particular experience of his own (of his own, for obviously he has no warrant, so far, to extend it to the lady). So he goes on grumbling, "She should never have looked at me, if she meant I should not love her,"—two lines, we may remark in passing, that exemplify the conversational pitch formerly named as a characteristic of these poems. He rejects the objection that the lady meant nothing, or only sought to gladden his lone shore with a pearl from the sea—her sea, that in its generosity and wealth felt the simple need, the simple yearning to do so. He admits that the look

might have been without consequence for other men, but insists that in his case the lady knew better :—

“ Oh, we 're sunk enough here, God knows !
 But not quite so sunk that moments,
 Sure though seldom, are denied us,
 When the spirit's true endowments
 Stand out plainly from its false ones,
 And apprise it if pursuing
 Or the right way or the wrong way
 To its triumph or undoing.”

There are flashes, he continues, single sudden impulses, in the light of which all honours and ambitions, all the past life's garnitures disappear, and it (the light) alone is seen to be the life's work. So, the objector with whom he converses, or figures himself to converse, need not doubt but that Cristina knew perfectly well that the eclipse meant nothing less than the meeting of two souls made for each other since long ages, and whose only business in life, “ whose life's sole work,” was to find each other, or else, failing, have their amount of bliss in the world to come lessened by as much as their union would have brought. Yes, yes ; “ this she felt as, looking at me, mine and her souls rushed together—Oh, of course, next moment,

The world's honours in derision,
 Trampled out the light for ever :
 Never fear but there 's provision
 Of the devil's to quench knowledge,
 Lest we walk the earth in rapture !”

But if she had lost him, not he her ; he had caught God's Secret ; he would pass life's remainder, grown perfect in the knowledge that her soul was his. This, evidently, is pure high feeling ; but it points, perhaps, to a philosophy of love—not restricted to this poem—that is, on the whole, a little too Rosicrucian for mortals. It may be very prosaic to say so, too, but surely no conventional impropriety can be brought against the lady, unless in so far as, forgetting the tinder he was, she looked at him at all. This little poem illustrates, not badly perhaps, both in matter and manner, Mr. Browning's peculiar obscurity. In the second stanza there is a good example of that difficulty so common in his writings, that derives from inverted construction—an expedient he cannot resist allowing himself at times, however predetermined he may be to speak always quite naturally straight on in a single conversational jet :—“ Her look said no vile cant, sure, about ‘ need to strew the bleakness of some lone shore with its pearl-seed that

the sea feels :” a reader cannot be counted on to perceive at once that it is the sea “feels” the “need,” or even that the “pearl-seed” is *its*.

“Any Wife to any Husband” is to be understood as representing what any wife, in dying, might say to her husband; but we must be careful to recognise that the speech here is not that of a woman to a man, but of a *wife* to a *husband*,—that is, of a wife that is a wife to a husband that is a husband. In this light, one can see that the differences of the male and female natures are very delicately put. The woman’s natural little solitudes—not mere jealousies—even her natural little vanities, but in the midst of a faith and love so much more simple and entire than those of man, are very skilfully touched. There are turns and peculiarities of expression, however, that render the poem very obscure in passages. In the first stanza, we never feel quite sure that the word “bitterest” ever gets its grammatical consequent; in the second we are put at fault by a tense that seems to refer to the *now*, when it must refer to a *then*; in the third, the “fading” is not clear, though, possibly, it is that of the lady’s beauty, were she permitted to live; and in other stanzas similar sources of obscurity might be pointed to. The “pride” to which she is to trust at last, is also something of a difficulty, as likewise the closing phrase. As regards the latter, is it that the wife, even while expressing the firmest faith in her husband’s fidelity, turns suddenly, almost pettishly, to the wall with “And yet it will not be”? The finest verse is where the lady says, “Might I die last, and show thee!”

“The Worst of It,” pitched in a similar key to that of the last poem, may be almost called a foil to it, for if we had there the advantage on the side of the woman, we have it here on that of the man. The poem is a husband’s lament over his unfaithful wife, whom he follows, however, in a very high tone of feeling, only with love and prayer. The “worst of it” is, that “in Paradise, if we meet, I will pass and turn my face.”

“Too Late” is a tale of unfortunate love in somewhat the same strain. There is genuine passion in it, but passion, surely, extravagant at last, and very questionably expressed.

“A Woman’s Last Word” is an exquisitely tender little poem. The poet tells us in it, not what a woman’s last word literally does say, but what it would say, if it could and did really speak itself.

But of all the poems in this group, the best, probably, is “*Dts Aliter Visum*,” or “*Le Byron de nos Jours* :” a pleasant little picture it is of human nature and human life in the

midst of those graphic little touches which, at the hands of Browning, always yield so much delight. "Youth and Art" is a similar tale, and of similar excellence; only, that to the failed loves of Kate Brown and Smith the artist, there is given a very captivating turn of humour. "A Light Woman" is very short, but it constitutes a situation exceedingly striking, and, without obscurity, is in Browning's best manner. "A Lover's Quarrel" and "By the Fireside," resembling each other in some respects, are a little different from the rest of the group, but yet belong to it. The former is a simple natural picture, full of little figures of fancy, like so many smiles, so many gurgling little laughs, not the less engaging for the heart, half of hope, half of apprehension, from which they are feigned to rise. The latter, a love-story in reverie, contains some strikingly picturesque stanzas, among others that are characteristically obscure, or otherwise faulty. Before the dreamer's eye a vista opens back to Italy, and that dearest scene in the story of his love, when the two hearts met, the two souls mingled. What concerns the lover is very delicate and sweet; but, on the whole, it is the felicitous fixing of Italian scenery in words almost as incisive as engraving that gives its value to the poem; whose strength, for the rest, is, so to speak, not undispersed by that inertia, that lingeringness and loiteringness, that are not unfrequent in Browning. Especially between stanzas viii. and xx., both inclusive, is it that we have this direct description of Italy in November. Wood, rivulet, lake (with Pella on its marge), Alp "that meets heaven in snow," path over boulder-stones by the straight-up rock, lichens, ferns, chestnuts, creepers, mosses, etc. etc., are all fairly brought before us. Perhaps we might object to "those rose-flesh mushrooms," that were "undivulged" last evening, nay, that "bulged a sudden coral nipple in to-day's first dew, at which a flaky crew of toad-stools peep," as only equivocal products of the warm and warmed fancy of poetry and love. The lover or the poet who can see nude nymphs in mushrooms, and leering satyrs in toad-stools, ought to be himself Italian, or at least French. The one-arched bridge with the pool under it, "danced over by the midge," is a picture at a word which one would never weary to gaze at. The accessories, too (the steeping hemp, etc.), are so vividly Italian. There is a fine effect in stanza xx., where loneliness is realized to us by the words, "The place is silent and *aware*—it has had its scenes, its joys, and crimes—but *that is its own affair*." How were it possible better to represent the stubborn hang-dog look of the consciously-guilty solitude—and *the threat* in it? The silence of the same spot is equally admirably given

in xxxiii. One almost feels as if this poem were the record of an experience of Browning's own. What if *his* were the autumnal tree from which fell for him that last best leaf of unexpected love? What if it were *he* and *she* that stood upon that bridge with the wood above, and the pool beneath, and the threat of the chapel from the dark gorge at the side? Here is a picture—may it last for ever—eternal as the scene on the Greek urn of Keats!

As hinted, the poem has its faults. Stanzas xxi. and xxii., for example, are particularly obscure. That "path grey heads abhor" is hard to realize. The backward path pursued with Leonor has been into the past; but how should recollection lead to a crag's sheer edge at which youth stops, but not grey heads? Then, that Age should 'threaten grey heads, and they contemn, "till they reach the gulf wherein youth drops, one inch from our life's safe hem,"—the single result is confusion and opacity that may not be penetrated. Suppose we conceive the "grey heads" to mean *middle-age*, the poet's own time of life, it is intelligible that such grey heads dislike to turn to the past and the sudden precipice where youth (*their* youth) stopped, and even, perhaps, that they still press on, contemning the threats of age, as if young; but, after hearing that they do not stop where youth stops, we cannot understand how, going further, they reach the gulf in which youth (supposed to be left behind) drops! These (with those that concern the autumnal tree), the only allegorical verses in the poem, are also, perhaps, the only obdurately difficult ones. Towards the end, we have more hints in reference to the poet's peculiar philosophy of love, and transcendental theory of the purpose of marriage.

All the poems in this group would bear to be spoken of in detail, yielding abundant pearls both for discussion and quotation; but the limits of such an article as the present can evidently afford no sufficient space. Nay, the scope of this remark must be extended now to the remaining groups, with a rapid concluding word on which—but adding to them the few miscellaneous pieces of any mark this very full collection omits—we must now content ourselves. Of these the more notable are, perhaps, the following:—"The Last Ride Together," "Porphyria's Lover," "Before and After," "The Lost Leader," "A Serenade at the Villa," "Abt Vogler," "Master Hugues," "Nationality in Drinks," "Home Thoughts," "Instans Tyrannus," "The Englishman in Italy," "In a Gondola," "Waring," "Time's Revenges," "The Statue and the Bust," "Rudel," "Rabbi Ben Ezra," "A Grammarian's Funeral," "A Toccata of

Galuppi's," "Apparent Failure," "Up at a Villa," etc. In almost all of these there is the usual proportion of obscure verses, but everywhere also there are descriptive patches or belts that lie revealingly on objects like glares of light from some optical instrument. In "Nationality in Drinks," we have a fine, light, happy play of fancy—a fancy withal that has a rare, subtle, and peculiar incisiveness in it; and in what concerns England an interesting trait of the man Browning. There is rich love in the poem entitled "In a Gondola," but there is too much also of what the Germans call *Gesuchtes*—laboured importation, shall we say? That is, it is not spontaneous enough, we see a great deal of external effort—no little trouble in express collection from afar. For a love-poem, then, there is a want of concentration in it—it is infected with the general tendency to diverge, and linger, and loiter, and lose time on the merely accessory. It is soft and boneless somehow, too long and loose, and, so to speak, *conceited*. Still it is a piece of very pure workmanship. There is the beat of the true man's heart in the "Lost Leader;" "Rudel" is exquisite; "Instans Tyrannus" is a poem of rare and remarkable excellence; and the usual descriptive power—often with much more—is especially prominent in "The Englishman in Italy," "Waring," "Time's Revenges," "Up at a Villa," "Apparent Failure" (a photograph of the Morgue), etc. The "Home Thoughts from the Sea" constitute a picture so surpassing, and are, at the same time, so short, that we allow ourselves to quote them:—

"Nobly, nobly, Cape St. Vincent to the North-West died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest North-East distance, dawned Gibraltar grand and
grey;

'Here and here did England help me: how can I help England?'
—say,

Who so turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa."

Is not that the completest Turner that ever appeared in words? One cannot help fancying a bit of white chalk somewhere—over Cadiz, say (the bluish Trafalgar will stand for the indigo).

It must be acknowledged, then, that in feeding the taste grows, that objections lessen, and that the rare purity of much that is in these poems, only too transparent at first, becomes in the end visible. Still we know not that there is the stuff of popularity in them. Their subjects are, in general, remote from vulgar interests, and nestle in little out-of-the-way corners

of humanity, which, however fascinating to a few psychological students, offer no room for those flights that so take the broad instincts of the uninvestigating public. To the great majority of readers these pieces, we fear, are tame, monotonous, languid, prolix and piecemeal, obscure and difficult—obscure and difficult, especially, from that psychological indirectness that would compress paragraphs into a hint and sentences into a sign. Their picturesqueness, so genuine as it often is, degenerates not unfrequently also into the *outré* and the *baroque*. The contemplated single breath of free colloquiality, taken perfectly at times, only results at others in expedients of diction and syntax that betray the mechanical necessity still present, and darken the sense. Then from part to part there is a want of fusion; unevennesses, stony inequalities appear rather, and so it is that the word “piecemeal” has been used. What is wanting mostly is, not ever and anon “clear accents,” tender and true and pure, but that “great language,” that big-mouthed rapture, that triumphant power, which, by a word, by the turn of a phrase, seizes all into a focus of meaning—into a single blaze of splendour and music and emotion. It would appear as if to chip and fit and inlay without a cheer in the present, had, not indeed robbed the deft hand of its cunning, but left it listless, wandering, and slack. The swift assured movement, the promptitude, the alacrity of success—it is that surely that, so far, is mostly wanting to Browning. He has no taste but his own to work for: hence the listless wilfulness that, rugged, cramped, and crabbed by fits, saunters on again at languid length, loose, uncertain as a creeper, sliding from shelf to shelf, now with long weak shoots, and now with short morose turns. Hence, too, the plaintive croon, it may be, that is ever remonstrating with something or somebody.

But we have to remark here, finally, that the faults of these pieces are largely due likewise to a certain aim at novelty—partly unconscious, doubtless, but partly also conscious. With such poems before us, indeed, as we have already seen, this novelty, whether in matter or manner, will hardly be denied, and we have no intention to insist on it at length. We shall permit ourselves a word or two only in reference to its connexion with peculiarities of the mode of statement, of the measure, and of the diction.

The peculiarity in the mode of statement which we mean here, is not that indirectness, already spoken of, that refers to a whole, and in its construction from the first, but a certain indirectness of detail, to which, perhaps, the most exasperating portion of Browning's obscurity is owing. The reader has simply to recall “Cristina,” or any other poem of the group in which it has been

included, to realize what is meant by indirectness of construction from the first; while, whether of the one or the other indirectness, it will be difficult to find a better example than "James Lee" in the *Dramatis Personæ*. As a whole, it is the usual low, slow, crooning plaint of an unhappy wife,—who contrives to tell her woes so obscurely, all the same, that it would be almost bold to claim any clearer intelligence, after a dozen readings, than after the first. Nor in details is the case otherwise. Individual images are acknowledged, as well as a general drift of meaning; but if the whole cannot be clearly, or satisfactorily, or indeed tolerably co-articulated, neither can the parts. May we not pretend in the end, for all that, to sufficient light whereby to know that the trouble of the artist is a failure, and has nowhere reached even such partial success as would warrant—especially after a *dozen* readings!—any continuation of trouble on our part? It is, indeed, difficult to forgive Browning for such things as this. Works of art are works of art,—to be seen, and understood, and loved; but psychological guesses thrown out to the public (as a public) are scarcely excusable. If the question is, whether shall Browning be the deeper to hide, or the public the keener to find, it is easy to understand on whose side the advantage will lie. So it is in the riddle before us, where we are challenged by Browning—"Devinez, devinez," as the French children have it in the evening—to tell James Lee's character from what his wife is permitted to say to us. Now, in a general reference, it is not difficult to perceive that the whole poem is the lament of a wife over her husband's infidelity; but it is not easy to go further. It is impossible, for example, to give any account of the nine positions in or from which the lament is made. At the window, by the fire-side, in the doorway, along the beach, on the cliff, under the cliff, among the rocks, beside the drawing-board, on deck: these are the positions; and in the first place, is there any necessity of reason or fact for this series and sequence of them? Are they but accidents of fancy, or are they dictated by considerations that would regard them as typical of the successive necessary stages in this domestic drama—stereotyped in nature so that a reader *must* come to understand them, and the burthen laid in them? In a word, are they arbitrary or necessary? If the former, what right has the poet to put them to humanity as what humanity will, from humanity (and its laws), be able to interpret? If subjective merely, why should they be so placed as to appear to demand an objective interpretation? But, unsatisfactory in their number and series, these positions are no less unsatisfactory in themselves. "At the window;" the lady is at the window of reflection, we shall say, and contrasts the

now with the then. Summer is gone—the sunshine of joy, the bird (voice) of gladness. No breeze of happiness blows longer and the heaven of hope, the consummation in the future over the present, is deranged. But (2.) she turns to him and questions this, till (3.), in the counterstroke of hope against hope, she will not believe it, and asks all that was, again to be. Later, "by the fireside," the shadow has fallen deeper. For the light of the sky on her pale cheek, we have now that of the fire on her moist eye, as she nurses her foot and dreams. Their fire is of shipwreck-wood—there is no flame of love for them now, but in the wrecks of the old. So is reference to sailors, who, in sad mistake, from the sea, gnash their teeth at their fire, their (still apparent) happiness, with revulsion to herself, there, watching her husband, while she feels the planks of their love are just about to give way ("Now, gnash your teeth," she cries ironically to the feigned sailors). Expression here, too, probably from necessities of rhyme and rhythm, is forced to make a tangle of the thought-sequence. She begins stanza iv., for example, by wondering about the old-world pairs who perhaps lived in their cottage before them; and immediately reverts, without a single tie of association, to the metaphor of the sailors. All—under what necessity we know not, but under none, surely, that should exist for an artist—is most confusingly put. Then they are in France, it seems. Why France? What does that add? Is it a temptation of rhyme? Or, if something specific (in some anecdote of an actual James Lee, say) has legitimately enough introduced France, is it stupidity on our part not to know that, when we are not told it, and have no opportunity given us to know it?

"In the doorway" the moan continues. Swallow, sea, fig-tree, vine, all figure, in felicitous metaphor, the coming desolation. But even in their poverty why should there be desolation, were there but love, she thinks. "Along the beach" she reasons with her husband, and gives utterance to some exceedingly natural, true, and touching notes of the every-day grief; that of a wife who sees her husband's love depart before poverty, perhaps to vice in the sun, and is obliged to hear his cruel reflections, that make her very virtues faults. "On the cliff" it is the poet speaks—not the wife; and treats us to one or two of his graphic touches—the turf and the rock (whose conversion into metaphors for the situation was hardly worth the pains). "Under the cliff" continues the moan, most happily with reference to the wind and the hound (the nun is too factitious), but ends—when the inverted commas end (why these?)—in an opacity absolutely impenetrable. We can see, however, something of the husband's history pictured. Misfortune was, at first, and to him

young, but example for his sake. Still he could not turn it into the divine lesson, and act, work, like a man. He knows what defeat is, he who sees all the same only the future triumph, and meantime throws all the consequences of defeat on the poor wife. (Or has this verse a diviner reference?—No! in that case he were He.) Verse 10 is so impenetrable, that, though told to judge if he learn what the wind means in its moaning, we find ourselves utterly unable to judge, and would fain know what we are to say he learned (is it that all must change?), and if by the instinct of youth; for we understand the lesson attributed to years, but in vain search for its relevancy. The next two verses are equally hopeless; though, perhaps, there is something about how such natures as her husband's flatter themselves they see their luck turn at last (or, more likely, become aware of approaching death?), at the same time we cannot help believing those mysterious lines that circumscribe beauty and the subsequent bliss as but suggestions of the rhyme (unless, indeed, death is meant). Finally, as regards this position, the last four verses are surely beyond the power of any interpreter, though we think it probable that the lady surmises experience of change to be her probation, and that it was impossible for her to draw one beauty (her husband's love) into her heart's core—and keep it changeless, but that it is bitter we cannot control change, which is the law, or command death, death at the noble moment?

"Among the rocks" we have two stanzas: the first, another happy (admirable, indeed) descriptive stroke, which the second would fain fit—but hardly successfully—into an excellent lesson against expecting to love only what is worth love, etc. "By the drawing-board" refers to the Hand of love God sent us. Is she the little girl who sees how coarse her hand is, and who will amend it? "On deck," we may suppose the lady to have left her husband, and here the human wail of the loving wife against the reproaches of the poverty-maddened, unloving husband is—once realized—very beautiful, and incisive to the quick. It is not agreeable, however, to be obliged to tell the poet the hard truth that such wives no longer please—their sisters at least. Women know better now-a-days; they perorate at learned associations on their Rights, sneer at white slaves, and call Imogens, and Desdemonas, and Amelias, and Enids, and James Lee's wives, fools.

"A tenure of breath at a man's decree, .
And rapture to fall where his foot might be,"—

the great brutal man's foot!—Never! It is not quite certain, indeed, that these strong-minded sisters are not in the right of

it, that a word may not be said for James Lee himself, and that that submitting saint, his wife, may not have faults of her own. It is just possible that much of her virtue may be due to hysteria, and that the long sallow-cheeked, large moist-eyed seraph, who only looks and sighs, may be very much inferior to the round apple-cheeked, bright sparrow-eyed cherub, who, all the while nimbly piping her cap-border, or whipping her egg for the tea-cake, can unfalteringly give her husband her mind, or her nail either, much to his benefit, worldly and unworldly, both.

In illustration of the obscurity derived from Browning's gratuitous indirectness, we have dwelt purposely long. Such obscurity must not be allowed to pass as a constituent of art, and Browning is unjust to himself in it, for in such a case what critic will venture exposition? That cloud may really be either a camel or a whale: shall we deserve the laugh, when some time hereafter, as Browning tells his own story, it comes out that all the time it was only a whale was meant? Who is disgraced by a wrong answer at a game of guesses? and should any creation of an artist prove such? Here, "friend, your fugue taxes the finger," indeed; but the tax is wanton, and to express pride in it were anything but a grace. Nor, in this instance, is it to be suggested, "learning it once, who would lose it?" For this of James Lee is about as hard a thing, as hard an easy thing, as is to be found anywhere in Browning, and takes time enough; but how much of it will remain with us?—anything but the descriptive touches?—with perhaps a mere incorrect vague echo from the plaint?

As already intimated, we are not restricted to this poem of "James Lee" for examples of indirectness, whether in whole or in detail. Precisely the same features may be pointed out in all these miscellaneous poems, not less in the most successful, perhaps, than in the least. We have only to refer to "Cristina," "By the Fireside," etc., as instances in point. Nay, in what we have pronounced the best of all these minor pieces, the "Dis Aliter Visum," the reader will be at no difficulty for obscurities that depend on indirectness. "The Lost Mistress" is a short poem of only five verses, yet the same macula pervades it. Of all the speeches ever made by a lover to the mistress that rejects him, this surely is one of the strangest. He gets immediately into a dream on rejection, and asks her out of it if truth sounds bitter, tells her to hark the sparrows, maunders about having noticed to-day that the leaf-buds on the vine are woolly, and *she* knows the red turns grey. Nor can an echo of tenderness at last be allowed to redeem, in such random subjective irrelevancies, what it is useless to attempt to realize. Then is "My Star" any better? Has anybody come to see that strange lumi-

nary that stops like a bird and furls like a flower ; or to fathom the red and blue it dartles ? This too, then, is but a semi-articulate allegory, that converts simplicity and ease into complexity and pain—meaninglessness.

Another little thing that adorns by an exquisitely descriptive nicety or two the meeting and parting of a pair of lovers, is difficult to some for long, in consequence of the ambiguity of the word "him." The path of gold, which is for the sun, appears at first to be for the lover and his boat. Such exquisite niceties, and so destroyed, we find in "A Serenade at the Villa" also. Here whatever is direct is excellent, whereas whatever is marked by the inverted commas of indirectness is as difficult to intelligence as a fog to the sight. "One Way of Love," "Another Way of Love," "Women and Roses:" these are trifles, yet their obscurity, or even (in the two last) their absolute unintelligibility, is something exceedingly remarkable. With such poems as "Before and After," and "Respectability," we are not very differently situated. The drift of the first of these—the state of the case as it shows before a duel, and after the same—is plain ; but then it is so difficult to get the details to coalesce, that it constitutes an excellent example of Browning's obscurity proper, an obscurity that has no business whatever to be where it is, an obscurity that but a very few touches of the pencil would completely remove. As for "Respectability," it must be pronounced absolutely unyielding ; we should be inclined to think it a bit of irony at the world of gigs, and *à propos* of Guizot receiving Montalembert at the Institute ; but then the lovers who are above convention, who watch the Seine, etc. ? *Devinez, devinez !* Using our *mouchoirs de poche*, we respectfully "give it up."¹

We come now to the aim at novelty as illustrated by the measure of Browning. Leaving for notice further on the two or three poems that begin the first volume of the *Works*, we stop at "Through the Metidja to Abd-El-Kadr" as at once a very remarkable example of peculiarity in this kind, and such as has certainly been attempted by no man but Robert Browning. This piece consists of forty lines, and not only does every line end in the rhyme *ide*, but in every stanza of eight lines, there occur two lines which repeat this same rhyme in their own midst. Nay, in every stanza of eight lines, the refrain "as I ride, as I ride," occurs thrice ! The result is, then, that throughout the whole poem, there reigns the most extraordinary monotony both to eye and ear. This monotony, no doubt, is intended to represent the wearying and dizzying sameness of

¹ A friend *devines* that the Guizot-Montalembert allusion is to the worthlessness of convention : *ça y est ?* Or are Guizot and Montalembert the lovers ?

the desert and its glare; but this effect is not accomplished without, surely, a very decided sacrifice of sense. And how could it be otherwise? What variety of meaning can there be within the constriction of that perpetual ride and gride? Nay, one is tempted to ask, Can any meaning abide in that perpetual tide, in those inversions and mere calentures of speech, into which all is wryed for the single necessity that is everywhere descried? However clever, then, the persistent rhyme may be, must not the piece itself be pronounced a failure? A certain other little trial of novelty we find in "Meeting at Night," where of six lines the two nearest, the two most distant, and the two intermediate, rhyme respectively together. In this case, perhaps, it may be worth while simply remarking that the rhymes of the first and last (the two most distant) lines, at least, are quite lost. In "Love among the Ruins," we have a very remarkable example of the search for the originality in question. The first stanza of this poem runs thus:—

"Where the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep
 Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or stop
 As they crop."

This versification shows at once as unusual, and unusual to a purpose. It would be difficult to find anywhere a more successful verse—successful in that physical sound which gives realizing breadth to the airiness of thought. How clearly in the light of the very measure these solitary pastures lie before the eye, miles upon miles, in the quiet-coloured end of evening, with the sheep half-asleep, that stray or stop as they crop! Surely a more perfect landscape was never more perfectly conveyed by words—words ordered into the very lengths and turns that give focus to the whole! The single phrase, "the quiet-coloured end of evening"—what a breadth of suggestion there is in it, in such a context! But here, we are led to say further, Browning startles us with a key-note that, perfectly true to itself in the first verse—true in the agreement of sound to sense, that is—presently gets lost in the others. In the poem before us we cannot call any verse successful—in the same way successful—except the first, the key-note. We are disposed to extend the same remark to other poems. In the "Toccata of Galuppi," for example, which is a very excellent production, we think the crossing alternation of the Toccata at its perfection in the first verse, the key-note, and not so well marked in the others.

The "Lover's Quarrel" may be mentioned as another instance of express novelty in verse. The stanza in which it is composed, though consisting of seven lines, has only two rhymes. There is no doubt that Browning exults in the resulting difficulty, and may point with pride to a spiritual freedom that not mocks, but uses, its mechanical trammels. In the small poem "De Gustibus," observe in i. a felicity dependent on similar elements. The five last lines have but one rhyme, and it gives a mechanical effect in perfect assonance to the spiritual mood. We may instance, as relevant here also, the single rhyme in the seven lines of those magnificent "Home-Thoughts from the Sea." But we cannot follow this aspect of our subject into complete detail. Let us end by referring to the measure in "Too Late," "The Worst of It," and "Dis Aliter Visum." The first of these consists of twelve stanzas, but each stanza is in its construction double, the two last lines of the former half finding no rhymes till the two last lines of the latter half. As regards "The Worst of It,"—here, in a stanza of six lines, the first, third, and last lines rhyme together, as also the second with the fifth. The fourth line is thus left odd, but it finds a rhyme for itself in its own midst. In the "Dis Aliter Visum" there is, in this respect, greater novelty still. In its stanza of five lines, the first has to wait for a rhyme till the last, while the two lines preceding the last rhyme together, leaving the second again seemingly odd and unrhymed. In this line, very curiously, however, the last word is made to rhyme always with the last but two. This last appears to us the most successful as well as the best-marked example of the novelty in question. The tink-a-tink at the end of the second line is, perhaps, especially effective. On the whole, however, we do not think that the results of the enterprise are sufficiently encouraging to induce its further prosecution. Occasionally the rhymes are so wide apart, that they are as good as lost. And, generally, we may assume now the mechanical part of versification to have reached such a stage that the poet who seeks originality for himself in that kind, only wastes time on what is futile, and debars a better. How many readers, indeed, are at all aware of the peculiarities signalized?

We cannot leave this matter of novelty in versification without reference to at least one signally successful example in that kind. It is "One Word More." Tennyson delighted us all lately with his exquisite "experiment" in the metre of "Catullus." Of this metre, that of "One Word More" must remind us. It is not the same, however, but quite as charming. Browning tells himself here that he writes these lines "the first

time and the last time." He knows well what they are, and their relation to himself. He is a man "who works in fresco," but for the moment he has stolen "a hair-brush, curbed the liberal hand, subservient proudly, cramped his spirit, thronged its all in little, made a strange art of an art familiar, filled his lady's missal-marge with flowerets." All this he has done with rare felicity, and though, habitually, "he blows through bronze," must be admitted to breathe here equally well "through silver." This poem, too, is not more delightful in manner than in matter. Here for once Browning comes forward intentionally in person, and in such devotion before his "Moon of Poets," that the sorriest reader is for the nonce ennobled.

From measure we pass to diction, and in similar connexion with the aim at novelty.

We are accustomed on the English stage to a mode of declamation traditionally stereotyped. Whatever is to be said there must be said in the throat, with biassed breath, knit brows, and mouth from ear to ear. Very curiously this English peculiarity has not escaped Hegel. When in Paris he had an opportunity of seeing, on Tuesday the 18th of September 1827, the Othello of Kemble; and the experience seems to have had a singular effect on him. He found the exhibition something quite peculiar, wholly national, and altogether different from what in that nature was usual in Germany. He attributes much of it to the English language; but, ever and anon, he complains, the words are so rapidly spoken, or so painfully shrieked! "Such passion, diction, and declamation," he says, "were inconceivable by any German actor or public; described it cannot be; what specially strikes is the frequently recurrent, deeply prolonged, slowly solemn, or even lion-like growling tones and utterance—and then again the expulsion, like *Schnarren*—of the syllables." *Schnarren* is untranslatable, but it doubtless refers to those hoarse, *saccadé*, gur-gur, throat-accented sounds that are so effective with us when the projecting chin is seen the while to make energetic play against the stretched mouth. It is to be hoped that actors will arise to redeem us from these well-merited reproaches, and restore our stage to the simplicity of nature that prevails in the German and French theatres.

Now what obtains on our stage, obtains also, *mutatis mutandis*, in our poetry. There, too, we find a biassed breath of conventional or traditional affectation. Our poets, like our actors, require a certain attitude, a certain convulsion, to induce inspiration—this, too, although England, as both Hegel and Lamartine remark, is emphatically, and *par excellence*, the land of poetry. This peculiarity of ours Browning would seem to

know, and not less to shun. In a word, he would attain in his diction to a perfect simplicity of nature. Hence the conversational tone which we now know so well. Of the poets with whom this century began, we have heard it remarked lately, that Wordsworth is the most widely and deeply influential. This is not our belief, however. The poets whom we believe to have been, and to be still, the central fires of inspiration to this generation, are those chapleted youths, Shelley and Keats. The proofs of this are so conspicuous to our minds that we shall not state them; but we hold Browning for one to be of this opinion. We know not that he has ever anywhere named Wordsworth, but we know that alone, of all very recent poets, both Keats and Shelley are more than once mentioned by him, and with all that absolute idolatry which is felt for these young men by every reader who bears within him any appreciable portion whatever of the tuned instrument. It is probable, indeed, that no poets that ever lived have possessed as instinctively as they that power of an intellectual perception, as it were *in* music, emotion, and image, that constitutes the essential element of poetry. It is impossible to say, indeed, that the influence of Shelley and Keats can be seen *outwardly* in Browning. Nevertheless, to the best of our belief, it is their analytic imagery that gives impulse to his psychological triumphs as well as to his irresistible external description. That he has gone long and willingly to school to Wordsworth we doubt not; still we think that, in diction at all events, he has applied his relative lesson negatively. Wordsworth, as we know, has, so to speak, two simplicities—one of his lyrics, and the other of his blank verse. Neither, probably, has quite pleased Browning. Both have appeared to him, it may be, not truly simple enough, not truly natural enough. He has found the one too bald, perhaps too infantine; and the other too hollow, too artificially exalted, too artificially inflated. The one, in its simplification, may seem to have thinned itself to a lisp, or discharged itself of burthen almost into a blank; and, in the other, the lashing of the tail that should by gradual spires intervolve all into the due consummation of sense ecstatically rapt to the giddy brink of nonsense, may have been too glaringly manifest. In avoidance of the faults of both extremes lies, perhaps, the origin of Browning's peculiar mode of statement, whether in blank verse or rhyme. In his rhymed pieces, for example, there is an attempt at a perfectly natural flow that shall ascend into the rising inflection, rather than fall, as is so common in the lyrics of Wordsworth, into the namby-pamby clench of the falling inflection. (Not but that the namby-pamby influence of this

clench is much better illustrated in Scott with His pages, knights, and ladies gay, All in their tournament array, By castles deep and dun.) This is easily realized by a reference to the majority of the smaller poems of Browning, especially in their openings. "Here's the garden she walked across, arm in my arm, such a short while since;" "Would it were I had been false, not you;" "Stop, let me have the truth of that;" "If one could have that little head of hers;" "How well I know what I mean to do;" "So far as our story approaches the end, which do you pity the most of us three?" "That was I you heard last night;" "I said—then, dearest, since 'tis so;" "Fortù, Fortù, my beloved one, sit here by my side:" these lines will probably strike the key-note of what it is desired should be felt. The poem "Mesmerism" will be found also an excellent illustration in point, and equally so "Porphyria's Lover." The latter is a peculiar little poem. On it goes colloquially from beginning to end, stepping with such never-failing promptitude and perfect assurance from rhyme to rhyme (in a certain technical complexity too), but yet apparently unaware of the presence of a single one of them. In illustration of what is characteristic of Browning, the poem is not confined to rhyme and rhythm either. Only Browning's peculiar nature, for example, can reconcile us to the ways of either lover, whether as regards propriety or as regards probability. In the close, too, which winds up the information of the lovers having sat together all night long, with the line, "And yet God has not said a word," we have one of those surprises, to which we are not unaccustomed in Browning, of an apparent irrelevance, from which every attempt at reconciliation recoils futile.

Browning's blank verse, as we shall see again, is singularly pure, and it is characterized by an analogous rejection as well of affected simplicity as of affected complexity. Still the necessity of verse is the necessity of verse, and even Browning, who will have only a natural gush, without a single air or accent as of an occasion, a single usual affectation that gives the conventional pitch, is obliged at times to capitulate. It is precisely from this source that we have the hardness of Browning. He would always say, and never sing-song, what fits the place; still in the very necessity to say—one single thing that is—he is obliged to resort at times to hard omissions and hard inversions, which almost completely darken out what they are only there to preserve. With this, however, and without any attempt at detailed proof or illustration, we shall here leave the consideration of diction. Compulsory results of rhyme and rhythm, involuntary disturbances that contort the contemplated

simple Saxon of Browning, can be found in almost all his poems. To point to one example, the exigency of rhyme is certainly at its strongest in "Through the Metidja to Abd-El-Kadr," and there the reader will find to his hand sentences syntactically strained, and words in a forced or awkward use, which may serve to guide him to the like faults elsewhere.

We have probably now made good, then, our imputation to Browning of a certain aim at novelty in mode of statement, measure, and diction, with which, we think, that strangeness and hardness that shock in his writing and interfere with his popularity are largely connected. We must recollect at the same time that we have seen as yet only smaller pieces. Browning himself acknowledges Moxon's *Selection*, with which hitherto we have been almost wholly occupied, to be but a little gathering from the lightest of his poems, and avows that it "contentedly looks pale beside the wonderful flower-show of his illustrious predecessor." Perhaps as we proceed further other views may open—perhaps even in the selection that is second on our list we may find much that is different. And it is even so: there is more in the second selection than "lightest pieces;" it is to Browning himself "perhaps a fair sample of the ground's ordinary growths," and it certainly contains, what cannot be said to be wanting in the first selection either, some of his most perfect poems. Of these latter we shall proceed now to a review, but shall take our material from the three volumes of the published works, together with the collection, *Dramatis Personæ*, that followed them. The most convenient edition of the works of Browning is undoubtedly that (in six volumes) which is last on our list; but, though we have gathered from it what additions it possesses, it came too late for general use towards the present essay.

Of the great and important works to which we have now arrived, as of many of the others indeed, Browning is pleased to consider the prevailing character dramatic, and with reason, so far as the *personæ* of a drama are concerned. So far, on the other hand, as the word implies a reference to action, its application here were less warrantable; for in Browning the latter element is quite subordinate, and, beside the former, hardly to be mentioned. Browning's characteristic, in fact, were, perhaps, better named by the phrase psychological analytic-synthetic reproduction than by the word drama or dramatic.

The "Cavalier Tunes" however, on which we will say a word before passing to the so-called plays, may be very allowably named dramatic. They are emphatically what they name themselves—*Tunes, Cavalier Tunes*. The reproduction is perfect. They have a genuine music in them, a genuinely martial

stamp and tramp; and they are full of the bold, wild, free, reckless, cavalier sauciness. There is a military brevity, a blunt reality, in the very words, which, too, are felicitously in place. The measure has the true historical ring in it, and is perfectly in character with the wild, brave, cup-quaffing, clan-proud, knave-scorning, fighting man who is supposed to bellow it:—

"Ha! Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed parliament swing:
So Hampden to hell, and Pym to his knell,
England, good cheer! Rupert is near!"

And then the boom of the ever-present chorus:—

"Marching along, fifty score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song."

The "Rouse," however, is probably the best of the tunes. Its chorus, in especial, cannot be surpassed for what in sound and movement gives body to the very soul of manly heartiness, aroused and awake and determined, bluffly determined:—

"King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's in Hell's despite now,
King Charles!"

That concluding King Charles comes down with a settling weight—like a very lid, at once of rhythm and resolution.

Among the "Tunes" we may fitly include that poem of similar spirit, "How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix," as itself a tune. There is a picturesque reality throughout in it that is very genuine. The start through the gate into midnight—the great yellow star that comes out to see—the cattle in the mist black against the sun—the steeds that fail—the steed that succeeds: all here is very perfect, and it goes to the heart.

Of the plays of Browning we naturally take the "Paracelsus" first. Paracelsus, though a Swiss by birth, may be regarded as the earliest representative of that movement which is usually referred to "the Italian philosophers of the transition period." The European mind, at the end of the fifteenth century, had reached, we may say, puberty. Full of strange unhappiness, new wants, yearnings, and the sense of unknown possibilities, stimulated by the education it received, and the names it heard—Madeira, the Azores, the Cape, America, Diaz, Vasco di Gama, Columbus, Regiomontanus, Copernicus, Lully, Gunpowder, the Printing-press, Glass, Watches, Violins, the Free Cities, Cusanus, Ficinus, Agrippa—still in connexion with a supernatural element, too, through the Church, it looked forth

from tumultuous dreams and unimaginable presentiments, flushed, upon a world flushed. Nature was divine, a goddess; life was one, the world was one—an organism in which each was all, and all was each. For the supernatural element, it was no longer necessary after all to wait for the *there*; the *here* was supernatural, and to the secrets of the supernatural there was entrance through the *magna opera* of *philosophia occulta*. So, greedy of the consummation, it rushed to know—to enjoy. Of such wild fermentation the soul of Paracelsus was the seat; clouds and sunshine, lightnings, the splendours of heaven, and the gleams of hell! The most passionate hopes, the most adventurous activities, were, but all too plainly, in the end, then,—all intermediate triumphs notwithstanding,—to be quenched in desperate defeat and the fiercest madness! This is the poetry of Paracelsus; but in the common histories we have his prose. There he is but a wandering and foul-tongued charlatan, and, in the latter part of his career, drunken. Prose this, and very squalid prose. It is unjust, however, for, with all his faults, Paracelsus was emphatically both a physician and a philosopher, as a word or two will demonstrate.

The central idea of Paracelsus is, and without prejudice to the doctrine of a God, that the universe and all the contents of the universe constitute but a single life. A common element exists for him everywhere. What is Mars in heaven, is iron on earth, and in man bile. The one world divides, as it were, into three, nevertheless: an elemental, an astral, and a divine—the objects respectively of Philosophy, Astronomy, and Theology. Man, specially, is the focus of all; he is the Microcosm, and explains the Macrocosm; which, in its turn, explains him. For each is known in the other. Both are the works of God, and the works of God are either those of nature or those of Christ. The works of nature are contemplated by Philosophy, of which the instrument is the understanding, or the natural light. The works of Christ fall to be considered in Theology, of which the instrument is faith. (This distinction, in a very prominent manner adopted by Hobbes, is still common.) Philosophy and Nature are to each other as *idea* and *ideata*: the one is an invisible nature, the other a visible philosophy. (This again is an important distinction, not easily to be dispensed with by either Schelling or Hegel.) The final cause of creation is, that all that is, be understood, and all that may be, completed. (And so here, too, we see that what was proposed by Paracelsus more than three hundred years ago is the *ratio essendi* still clung to.) It is man now, that, by his knowledge and action, realizes this final cause. Man himself, therefore, is specially the end of creation. The *Fiat* that terminated God's solitude was the first act of

creation, and gave birth to the *materia prima*, the seed of all things. This is the *mysterium magnum*, the *Yliastron* in which all things are as in their *limbus*. God is triune, and trinity is the law of the universe. It is thus [that the *Yliastron* itself becomes resolved into *Sal*, *Sulphur*, and *Mercurius*—the archetypal spirits of what these substances are to us. All bodies consist of these. All things are concealed in all things. But by separation there are produced the various elements, and all further individuation.

The stars themselves have an elemental nature, and are but as bodies to invisible astral spirits. Of this region man, too, holds, who, deriving his body from the elements of earth, owes his spirit (principle of life) to the sidereal powers. Imagination, now, seeks nutriment for the spirit in the thoughts of the sidereal region, as hunger seeks nutriment for the body in the elements. The spirit, as astral, is longer-lived than the body, and may appear after the death of the latter: still it dies. The soul proper, however, the seat of eternal reason, which comes from God, and holds of the divine world, is immortal. The elements decide on our temperament, the stars on our mortal destiny, but we are good or evil from the soul, which is free to choose either. Paracelsus assumes spirits even for the elemental world,—sylphs, gnomes, salamanders, and what not. These spirits, as elemental, are without the soul proper, and can only participate in it through intermarriage with man.

The soul, now, has its nourishment in Christ, and attains to blessedness only in resignation to God. Faith is to the soul what hunger is to the body, and imagination to the spirit. Faith is the result of revelation, of the reading of the Bible, and of prayer. Faith is superior to the natural light: the latter, which is Pagan, may exist without the former; but the former is not without the latter. Philosophy, then, according to Paracelsus, must regard Theology as its corner-stone; and he is perfectly sincere in his faith in Christ, and in his devotion to the Bible, which he seems to have commentated at some length. He shares in the Protestant enlightenment of the time, however, and respects Wickliffe and Luther.

Paracelsus completes the three theoretical sciences by the addition of the practical art of Alchemy, which to him, be it remarked, is exemplified in baking and brewing, and concerns mutations or conversions only. The alchemist proper, in short, only purifies things, and what is purest in each is its quintessence, tincture, elixir, or arcanum. So the business of the alchemist is to possess himself of these. The quintessence of man, as sum of the whole, would be mightiest and best; hence the power of the mummy, though derived only from what is

dead. It is in reference to these tinctures, etc., perhaps, that the charlatan shows, but, though warning ever against phantasticism, it belonged to the time that Paracelsus should often mistake for experience what was really phantastic.

Medicine, as the science of man, rests on the three sciences of philosophy, astronomy, and theology, and applies the art of alchemy. The true physician is the ideal of the sage, and the artist dearest to God. Medicine unites the two elements which are indispensable to science: *speculation*, which, without *experiment*, yields *phantasticism*, and *experiment*, which, without *speculation*, yields *empiricism*. (And did Bacon say anything more, or better?) True experience and clear philosophy are the results of the union. The physician has to determine, from relative knowledge, what diseases are terrestrial, sidereal, or from God, and the theory of the cure depends on that of the cause. The physician, then, entertains not the delusion that it is he who cures, but only nature; his business being only to support, and remove what might oppose nature. Paracelsus really saw the importance of watching nature, urged its necessity, and actually learned from his watching much that now benefits us. In medicine to this day, the spirit he carried in the terrible pommel of his sword, his Azoth (laudanum), to say nothing of Mercurius, etc., is far and away the most powerful agent the physician knows. In medicine Paracelsus began a new era, as well by opposing Galen, Avicenna, and the humoral pathology, and by restoring the authority of Hippocrates, as by substituting rational simples for the barbarous and unmeaning combinations of the absurd and far-fetched ingredients of the ancients. His numerous followers attest this. In Philosophy, again, he also marked an epoch by opposing Aristotle, and initiating those notions which the Italian philosophers developed.

This, the Paracelsus of philosophical history, is not precisely the Paracelsus of the young Browning. And yet it is almost true that the poet, as he says himself, has taken "only very trifling liberties with his subject, and that his dramatic scenes might be slipped between the leaves of any memoir of Paracelsus by way of commentary." Nevertheless, truth here depends rather on the scantiness of the memoirs than on the historical state of the case; for Browning only uses Paracelsus as a vehicle for his own dreams of genius, but accounting to himself, at the same time, for Paracelsus's failure in life with considerable psychological probability. The poem, written by a youth of twenty-three, is on the whole an eloquent and powerful performance, but it is void of matter to a tenuity that may not be breathed, monotonous and wearisome to irresistible blankness. The writing is everywhere unexceptionable, and the verse animated often, or even picturesque;

but both are rhetorical, perhaps, or oratorical, rather than poetical.

The story is an exceedingly simple one. Paracelsus, a youth of genius, would leave his friends—Festus and Michal, the wife of Festus, the former the wise, admonishing, believing friend, the latter a being pure, or colourless (or null) as the angels that are in heaven—to fulfil the mission to which he knows God calls him; and that is to find the secret of the universe, by travelling into far lands. The first of the five parts of the poem is taken up with saying no more than that, but with a wonderful prolixity of abundance. The second part finds Paracelsus accounting to himself for now nine years' labour. He is astounded and bitter at the insignificance of his gains; and the ravings of Aprile, a moon-struck poet, convince him of his blunder in seeking knowledge only, and not love also. In the third part, then, we find Paracelsus, without longer waiting for the full fruition of his young hopes, attempting to realize the lesson by instructing his fellows (as Professor at Basil) in the store of truths which he has acquired. To the old bitterness, however, he seems only to have added the new bitterness of the results of his experience of men in teaching—an experience which has led him to a certain amount of charlatanism, to a certain admixture of falsehood with the truth he reveals. In the fourth part, detected and humiliated, Paracelsus resolves to pursue the same search for truth, and the same contempt for men, but also to *enjoy*, though inclined to look on death as the only goal. In the fifth part, the scene falls on the result of the whole—Paracelsus dying miserably in an hospital at Salzburg; and under the rainbow before the tomb we have his ultimate word of wisdom, the lesson of his life. The abundance we have noticed is the single element throughout; an element, as said, in which we gasp for breath, for something that is more than an endless flood of formal words with very scanty filling. Striking and original imagery does not fail certainly, but still the tendency is to extend or exhaust what is auxiliary merely, and so overbear the principal interest. In the leave-taking scene, one of those halcyon moments in which the spirit is deep, excellent passages occur, which we would willingly quote if space allowed. We must content ourselves, regretfully, with an allusion or two. Thus we see the poet's eye on nature in such an expression as this, "That plant shall never wave its tangles lightly and softly, as a queen's *languid* and imperial arm, which scatters crowns among her lovers." Here, too, there is the same desire, not to speak conventionally, but to see the fact and find the words that name it, "That last look destroys my dream, that look—

As if where'er you gazed, there stood a star !
 How far was Würzburg with its church and spire
 And garden walls and all things they contain
 From that look's *far alighting* ?"

His dissuasion of Paracelsus Festus happily calls, "A solitary brier the bank puts forth to save our swan's nest floating out to sea." There is much that is excellent in the warning of Festus, "See that it is really a mission thou hast, and not merely the deceptive yearning for one." The irony of Paracelsus, then "the sovereign proof that we devote ourselves to God, is seen in living just as though no God there were," comes happily home to much that Festus says. Emulation, followed by fits of blank idleness, with bursts of scorn, and—to the one friend—with overflowing confidences, that pour out all the wondrous plans and dreams and hopes and fears: this well describes the youth of genius. It is not historically correct, we may remark, to represent Paracelsus as despising *Great Works*, the secret and sublime, etc.; and probably no man of the time would have been better pleased than he to possess "a sullen friend to do his bidding," etc.

Near the beginning of Part II. there is rather a fine commentary on the adage, "Time fleets, Youth fades, Life is an empty dream," to which we can only refer. In this part, Aprile, the moon-struck poet, is but a weak conception. Are we to see the process of winning a soul to love in that extravagant interchange of empty speeches? Aprile exclaims to Paracelsus, "Ha, ha! Our king that wouldst be!" And Paracelsus returns, "Ha, ha! Why crouchest not?" Then we have "Ah, fiend," and "Poor slave." Aprile loves so intensely, that he is unable to work, and becomes mad. Nevertheless, he would do such grand things—as sculptor, as painter, oh, such marvels—and as poet run through the whole gamut, in high life, in low life—oh, he would, and he would! How, from anything that has been said or done by either, they should end this part in such ecstasies as—"Para. God, he will die upon my breast! Aprile! Apr. To speak but once, and die! yet by his side: Hush! hush!"—is utterly unintelligible. It is utterly unintelligible, indeed, how to the end Aprile should be represented as having worked such wonders upon Paracelsus, and that to the end Paracelsus should rave about him. In all this we must be pardoned for holding the feebleness of conception and execution to be remarkable.

In the following part, there are sometimes passages, melodramatic, and reminding of what we have already spoken of as *stagey*, as when he cures a prince "all through pure whim." "He had eased the earth for me," he says, "but that the droll

despair which seized the vermin of his household tickled me!" "Here drivelled the physician," he continues, "there quaked the astrologer; here a monk fumbled with a sudary of the Virgin, while another piebald knave"—"I cursed the doctor and upset the brother, brushed past the conjuror, vowed that a cross-grained devil in my sword"—"and ere an hour—"!! Yet, weak as all this is, we are not sure but that the reader is well pleased with it; for, so, he is occupied for a moment with what in those long sands of speech has at least the appearance of an object. To represent Paracelsus as scoffing at a sudary of the Virgin is again scarcely historically correct; for he was noted for his devout Mariolatry. It is probably, too, equally incorrect in the same reference, that Paracelsus should express doubts of God, or of God's goodness. Expressions in that tenor, such as we find on pages 74, 77, and 130, are perhaps not in place in the mouth of Paracelsus, who believed absolutely in God and Christ, and worshipped Mary.

It will not be necessary to follow the poem in detail to the end. The various speeches still continue to be spun out to a length to which no patience is equal. The dying speech of Paracelsus, for example, whatever there be to praise in it, is surely all too long-winded for a man that dies with the closing words of it. As hinted, however, what is said is always, on close inspection, so excellent, that it is only with remorse we do not find ourselves warmer lovers. Indeed, were it our cue to refer to remarkable passages, that were easy throughout. We may mention now, in Part III., the description of his audience by Paracelsus, a description that says something, and with success. Here, too, there is a striking allusion to Luther. As quiet a revelation of earliest morning as can well be found anywhere occurs also at page 92, and is followed, on the succeeding page, by a description, almost equally good, of later morning. In the two remaining parts, there are also many spirited passages, as Paracelsus's account in Part IV. of how his audience fell from him. In short, we come to the end of the poem with a sense of having passed through excellence, though excellence that wearied, for there was all too much of it. Water, we know, is a very good thing, nay, the "best;" but we may well drink our fill of it without draining the pitchers of Aquarius. "Paracelsus" will always be remarkable, nevertheless, for its exuberance of young wealth, especially as the work of a youth of twenty-three. It is an immense advance on the "Pauline" of two years earlier, from the impotent raving of which one wonders Browning was ever saved into anything articulate at all. Though his Paracelsus, too, comes never up to an artistic representation of the historical Paracelsus,—

"good draughtmanship and right handling being far beyond the artist at that time,"—we must concede to Browning, even then, no small amount of psychological power in depicting the temperament of genius in its dreams and in its possible failure to realize them. On the whole, we may conclude here by saying of Browning's "Paracelsus" what Lord Macaulay said of Southey's "Thalaba:" "We doubt greatly if it will be read fifty years hence, but we are quite sure that, if read, it will be admired."

"Strafford" followed "Paracelsus" in two years, and is not a success. Sometimes, especially in the opening, there is certainly the appearance of an animation, an interruption, a cross-fire, and a bustle that gives a striking air of reality to the scene; but it is not to be trusted: the art by which it has been produced will be found external merely, and there is little to the purpose said; it is, on the whole, a kind of make-believe. The piece generally is tame, and without action; and the characters, historically, are not to be depended on.

Four years later than *Strafford* came "*Pippa Passes*." This is a dramatic poem, and not a play for the stage. With much that is to be admired, as is only to be expected at the hands of Browning, neither is it a success. The novelty of the plot is not accepted by the reader as the zest it was intended for, and is judged, rather, a clutch at originality somewhat desperate. The manner in which *Pippa*, the mill-girl, bursts, in her very first words, into such a "Holla! ye pampered jades of Asia," as that "boiling of day over night's brim," gives a false key-note that controls the whole from the beginning. Not that excellent things are not said, but too much is said, and then that is not said that were felt to be pat to the situation. The actions, again, in which the poor girl unconsciously takes part by her songs, are not pleasant ones. One cannot bring one's-self to be satisfied with the tale of that "superb, great haughty *Ottima*," murdering anybody, young or old, for that puling *Sebald* with his *cherman* lip—no, nor with that of the sculptor and his equivocal bride—nor yet with either of the two dull dim things that follow. As said, we are dissatisfied with the key-note; we find the first words sadly tumid, and forced, and out of place in the mouth of the mill-girl. We may be faintly amused by her surprising the sunbeam in her basin with the water from her ewer, but we cannot set ourselves at ease with the martagon, or the St. Agnes' nipple, or the flesh bunch on the Turk bird's poll—or, indeed, much more. There is a good deal of yellow passion in the first part, but the yellow is the yellow of paint, and non-natural. *Sebald's* description of *Ottima's* house before he knew her, and hers of the lightning that searched for them, guilty, in

the wood, are both passages of remarkable power. What interest there is in Pippa Passes seems to end with the first part. The last two parts are, as said, dull and dim, and we cannot get to like the second. Pippa's songs are often very gracious, and do much to redeem the general dreariness; but is it reasonable to expect us to accept that modest, mercenary, vulgar, virginal model of fourteen years of age, Phene, or that stupid statuary Jules, or these stupider, unmeaningly-malicious, students, or that stupidest "Schramm with his pipe"? Then Bluphocks—of hideous names the most hideous, especially for an Englishman—what are we to make of him? In short, we find Pippa Passes to abound in what is forced, and strained, and hectic: how in these mincing, interminable speeches of Jules, for example, we long for a curse, a threat, a good oath or two—anything that had a touch of kind in it!

The "Return of the Druses" is sufficiently interesting. There is love in it—there is imagery—there are sentiments: but one forgets it—Djabal, Khalil, Anael, Raghib, Ayooob, and all the rest of them—so soon! Nor does the "Blot in the 'Scutcheon" remain longer with us. There is stuff, however, in "King Victor and King Charles," and in "Colombe's Birthday." In the former, which is well and manly written, and with an assonance to reality everywhere, the gentle nobleness, the sweet, weak heroism of Charles, are really striking, and go far to form a new, original, and effective character. "Colombe's Birthday," again, is a pleasing love-poem.

We have seen no play as yet, however (leaving "Paracelsus" as first-fruits of the young poet in a category by itself), that comes up to the dramatic pieces of the author of "Philip Van Artevelde." There is in the writings of Henry Taylor a moderation, a natural calm, a touching grace, and (in "Artevelde") in the midst of an unsurpassed historical panorama, to which nothing we have yet seen of Browning's can be at all held to approach. Taylor is eminently poetical, by no means inferior, so far, to Browning in that respect, while surely he is infinitely more satisfactory in dramatic movement, in dramatic abundance, so to speak, in dramatic directness, dramatic *vraisemblance*. The evolution of character in the plays of Taylor, too, is superior to that in any of Browning's plays that have yet been considered. Specially as regards "Colombe's Birthday," we may say that, while, as Elizabethan in tone and otherwise, it irresistibly recalls to mind the dramatic vein of Barry Cornwall, it cannot be held to reach that vein. There are in the "dramatic scenes" of that exquisite poet a tenderness and a reality that much excel what is to be found in that kind in the "Colombe" of Browning.

We now approach Browning's specific work, that which will

determine his fame and place in the future. And in this reference we have first to consider the remaining contents of the volume before us—"Luria," namely, "A Soul's Tragedy," and "In a Balcony." With these we are at once in a higher region; for all three of them are peers to Browning's greatest works. The abstract foundation of "Luria" is the distinction between the universal and the individual, with the necessary subordination of the latter. This theme, however, is beyond the writer's own consciousness, who, siding with the weaker cause, involuntarily testifies to his own error by the death he is obliged himself to execute on it. In this drama, that is, the lesson intended by Browning, is, unless we err, the value of the individual—the subordination of all interests, social and political, to the production of a single heroic man. "Paracelsus" already expressed this doctrine in the splendid lines at page 87, "'Tis in the advance of individual minds that the slow crowd should ground their expectation eventually to follow," etc.; and here in "Luria" we have it still more broadly put, as in the passage at page 425, "A people is but the attempt of many to rise to the completer life of one," etc. The question thus is not of the State, not of policies, not of "battle's loss or gain," but—"where find heroes for our sons to see?" Yet the very person in the play to whom it is given to enforce this lesson, has to be appalled, almost even as he speaks, by the hero's death. The actual lesson, then, is perhaps the very opposite of the one designed—for the piece is a tragedy, and if the heroic individual really rise into a mighty moral triumph, it is here only *beside* the universal; and against the universal, he is actually shivered by the very suspicion of an intended touch to it. The individual, should the universal have at all to come in regard, must seal his very victory by defeat. We have here problems, however, on which we cannot linger.

But, so to speak, more concretely viewed, we may say that the single subject of the piece is Luria: it is his character, his greatness, his magnanimity, that is alone to be realized. All the other persons in the drama are there only to magnify his greater by their less. They are so many arrows that from his coat of proof fall; so many stones from catapults to move him that can move him not; so many tempters and tormentors, that, foiled, crowd round him at the last, to kneel, but, even in the moment, suddenly rise up in horror, over his corpse in their midst—his corpse, which they are there to glorify and drape.

Luria is the Moor of Florence even as Othello is the Moor of Venice, and grandeur is the supporting soul of both. But for Othello, then, there had been no Luria? That is probably so, and Shakespeare and Shakespeare's Othello have their own Valhalla. Still the creation of Browning has a substantiality of its

own, and Luria is a mighty figure. For him there is no Desdemona ; his is an abstract mistress—that mistress is Florence. He is "nearer Florence than her sons"—Florence is his "visible Head." This Luria, this great passionate soul of the "expansive and explosive" Eastern race, has seen, and been seized with admiration of what he saw, the peculiar power of those "absorbing, concentrating" Northern men, who can give "Thought's character, and permanence (for Northern thought is slow and durable) to the too transitory feeling of the East, which, quick and transient, comes, and lo, is gone!" The heart and centre of this Northern thought, the home and birthplace of these calm men who have so taken his imagination, seems to him Florence, the beautiful Florence. To Florence, then, it is, as to an ideal mistress, that he devotes himself, with a heart brimful of loyalty and love ; and it is so we find him when the rising of the curtain presents him to us, the master of war, the irresistible leader, whose Florentines are even now so posted that the Pisans confronting them are in his hands. But it is just then, at the pinnacle of power, that reverse comes. Florence, in the person of her statesman Braccio, distrusts her successful general. And so it is that Luria, in such a moment and in such a place, is surrounded by agencies that compel him, natured as he is, to leave his dead body as the splendid testimony to the grand loyalty of his crushed, indignant soul.

The foil to Luria is Braccio. If Luria represents the cause of the heroic individual, it is for the universal that Braccio stands. To him, "where is the matter of one moth the more singed in the candle at a summer's end?" "Florence is no simple John or James," he says : "Florence exists because these pass away ; she is a contrivance to supply a type of man, which men's deficiencies refuse." His concern is, not where find Lurias, but where find Florences,—for our sons to see. True to this concern, then, and warned by the past, which has ever seen success prove too much, "even for the best and bravest of ourselves," who "still have fallen away before ambition," and invaded the liberties of the State, Braccio quite approves that Florence should henceforth allow only the foreigner to lead her troops, "reach height by height the glory, then descend into the shame." This shame he has prepared for Luria, who has reached that glory. From reluctant testimony, he has made out the *appearance* of a case against him, which, however, is only "for the doting fools at home" (why in play-books are they "always doting fools at home" ?) ; he for his part wills only the catastrophe, deserved or undeserved. Such are the motives of the action, and such the position of the drama when the first scene opens.

A word on the subordinate characters will now go far to complete the picture as we have space to exhibit it. Husain is here, with the familiar influence of a comrade and a countryman of Luria, to fan the idea of revenge upon these ungrateful foreigners, that is at once to hand. Jacopo, the secretary of Braccio, gives some picturesque glimpses of Luria, and supports the action of the piece by his instinctive faith in, and involuntary reluctance to proceed against, the greatness of Luria, as well as by his contribution to the general penitence in the end. Tiburzio is the Pisan general, "a very noble presence—Braccio's visage upon Puccio's body—calm and fixed and good," a character of the antique type, whose noble sense of nobleness it is—"he being the chivalric soul we know"—that is a principal motive in the piece, whether in trial or justification of Luria. Domizia is the only lady, and she, "remembering her whole house's fall," through fall of two previous successful generals that belonged to it, is there, as Braccio secretly both knows and wills, to make Luria the instrument of her revenge, in inducing him, when his disgrace shall come, to lead his army against Florence. Domizia is a female name, and we are told also that she is "a noble Florentine lady:" such clues are certainly required towards specification of her sex; for, so far as her speeches are concerned, she might quite as well have been a man. Domizia's part is the weakest in the drama. It is no compliment to the understanding of Luria that he could be blind—if he was blind—to that her function, which could scarcely lie hid from anybody else; or indeed at all tolerate her mouthings. Puccio is the blunt, bluff, brave, and honest soldier, who, superseded by Luria, cannot but cark and carp. These carpings constitute the *case* against Luria. Poor Puccio is ill at ease in his rôle of tale-bearer, nevertheless, and generally ends his information with qualifications that neutralize or reverse it. His part in the general atonement at the end is spirited and characteristic. The action of the play, then, we may say again, is the goading of Luria, on the part of these people, into a noble indignation and despair, draped by their own grief and futile penitence.

Braccio's and Luria's are the only characters of importance, then—Luria's being incommensurably the best. Braccio is thoroughly the statesman, the man of intellect, who despises the "fighting-people," regarding war but as a low necessity, and fearing the inferior masters it often imposes on a State. "Brute force shall not rule Florence," that is his resolve. To his educated eye, what a State is, is evident; it is "Florence takes up, turns all one way the soul" of every citizen that is born to her; before her universal, then, every opposing indi-

vidual must perish. He is not without his own misgivings, for the nobleness of Luria—of whom Jacopo tells him, "That man believes in Florence, as the saint tied to the wheel believes in God"—*will* break in on him; but still on the broad human nature of the Moor he goes, and all unswervingly advances to his policy. "Man seeks his own good at the whole world's cost:" never doubt but that it is so with this Moor, this mercenary, this Luria—an alien, and "our inevitable foe!"

Such as Braccio is, then, the politician, cold, concentrated, unbelieving, but brave, unflinching, self-possessed, and as absolutely a man of honour as the Moor himself, he acts as an excellent foil to Luria—the Numidian lion, terrible in the lightnings of his rage, but grand—scarcely scornful, grieved—in his magnanimity. How we see him, this Numidian lion, when Jacopo would describe the careless greatness of the unsuspecting hero that comes and goes, and speaks and orders, but also rests sometimes!—

"I see him stand and eat, sleep stretched an hour
On the lynx-skins, yonder; hold his bared black arms
Into the sun from the tent-opening; laugh
When his horse drops the forage from his teeth,
And neighs to hear him hum his Moorish songs."

Another glimpse of this great soul we get when he draws with charcoal on his tent-wall—the while the watch makes its report at midnight—a Moorish front, as if completing the unfinished Duomo,—and yet again a glimpse, as in midst of the council he is "busily repairing the half-effacement of his Duomo sketch!" All through the first two acts, the character of Luria is particularly striking. He is elastic, vigorous, hopeful; and the general movement has the ring in it of reality and life. The writer is himself buoyant in fact, for he is still fresh from his start, and the work is buoyant—Luria is buoyant. This buoyancy we see in his very first entrance, as, catching his own name on the lips of Braccio, he exclaims "And Luria, Luria, what of Luria now?" Then, how like a soldier he cries out, "These Lucchese are not arrived—they never will arrive. And I must fight to-day, arrived or not." Yet the hour of battle comes to him too fast—he would delay the final blow, because "peace follows it," "the calm studious heads come out again—the penetrating eyes," with all the humming bustle of the arts and industries of life,—"but Luria—where will then be Luria's place?" "Then I may walk and watch you in your streets," he says,—

"Leading the life my rough life helps no more,
So different, so new, so beautiful—

For very lone and silent seems my East
 In its drear vastness : still it spreads and still
 No Braccios, no Tiburzios anywhere !”

Yet, on Domizia's exclamation, “ He should have been one of us,” he cries, “ Oh, no !

Not one of you, and so escape the thrill
 Of coming into you, of changing thus,—
 Feeling a soul grow on me that restricts
 The boundless unrest of the savage heart !
 The sea heaves up, hangs loaded o'er the land,
 Breaks there and buries its tumultuous strength ;
 Horror, and silence, and a pause awhile :
 Lo, inland glides the gulf-stream miles away,
 In rapture of assent, subdued and still,
 'Neath those strange banks, those unimagined skies !”

Such sad tones are but for a moment, nevertheless—all the springy lightness of the warrior is resumed in an instant at the trumpet's sound—“ My Lucchese at last !” The interview of Luria and Tiburzio is a noble scene :—“ You ?” Luria exclaims ; “ 'tis—yes . . . Tiburzio !

You were the last to keep the ford i' the valley
 From Puccio, when I threw in succours there !
 Why, I was on the heights—through the defile
 Ten minutes after—saw with my own eyes,
 While I drove down my battle from the heights !”

Tiburzio has intercepted Braccio's letter, bidding the Signory to end the trial, and pass Luria's sentence, and would win Luria to the Pisans by this revelation of the treachery of the Florentines. Luria will neither be tempted nor enraged out of his allegiance, however ; he will not break seal and read—

“ And act on what I read ? What act were fit ?
 If the firm fixed foundation of my faith
 In Florence, which to me stands for mankind,
 —If that breaks up, and, disimprisoning
 From the abyss . . . Ah, friend, it cannot be !”

Still he would see these people, test them once ; but, left alone, his heart melts, and he expresses the resolution to abide by Florence in that grand monologue at pages 383-384. He does try them, to a certain extent, notwithstanding, and very nobly ; but, in the end, on sound of Tiburzio's trumpet—“ The answer ! Thus :—*[tearing the paper]*—The battle ! That solves every doubt !”

We cannot follow this fine drama throughout, and regret the loss to our statement by the insufficient quotation. We may

remark that the latter acts are by very nature heavy, and the writing itself, perhaps somewhat too tedious and long drawn out, but many successful passages occur, and the character of Luria goes on growing to the end, when, with death in his veins, he receives, in the sad grand silent triumph of a great nature, the mingled penitence and homage of all—Puccio, Jacopo, Domizia, Tiburzio, Braccio himself—who had wronged him by the small humanity they put upon him. Braccio's character grows, too, and, whether in conception or execution, is no unworthy work. Still Luria—it is Luria that is the life of the drama. It is his heart that beats everywhere in it, and his great limbs stretch themselves throughout the whole of it, making it, so, indeed a whole. How one bows deep over the misjudged hero! How one gets to love the man!—exulting in the soldier's voice, the soldier's step of him! Ah! "Where's a heart that's not with Luria in the multitude?" "From rear to van, no heart but felt the quiet patient hero!"

"Our troops will catch up Luria, close him round,
Partake his fortunes, live or die with him."

Oh, the noble, kindly graciousness, the cordial brother's bearing of this Moor, that is surely nothing less than brother to that other elder Moor, the Moor of Venice! That is it; it is a true brother to Othello Browning gives us, nor shall the precedence of the one abate the other! Since Shakespeare, in good truth, there is no more Shakespearian character in English literature than Browning's Luria.

So far as the portrayal of character is concerned—dependent on keenest insight into the inner springs of humanity—"A Soul's Tragedy" we are almost inclined to name Browning's dramatic masterpiece. It is, in a certain way, slight, perhaps; but then its success is perfect. For poetry Luria is, of course, even infinitely superior; but we know not where a nicer, truer dissection of the human heart is to be found than is accomplished in the Chiappino of Browning. The author Browning, one might almost say, has a secret scorn for his own self: again and again—in Paracelsus, Sordello, Chiappino—we have portraits under his hand, pictures of the weakness of what we may call the representative character. The man of strong emotion and strong words, that naturally delivers himself by tongue or pen or pencil, is not necessarily a man of strong will or of strong deeds. Such men, notwithstanding the fascination of their leopard's skin and leopard's grace, are not always heroes. Now this is the theme of "A Soul's Tragedy," which quite succeeds in exhibiting to us, and in every characteristic turn, a dastard, an arrant coward of the representative order. The sole purpose

of the piece, indeed, is the unmasking and disclosure of the facile, word-big, slight Chiappino; and the subordinate characters, as but accessory to this, call for but little comment special to themselves. What one wonders at a little, perhaps, is how Ogniben should, without apparent opportunity, have contrived to get all his knowledge of the true state of the case. Eulalia, too, and even Luitolfo—though in him steadfast common-sense, that does the pertinent act and withholds the useless, is well put—seem to us, at first, too conscious of being but lay figures, of playing but accessory parts. Eulalia, we think, hardly lives herself into the realities of her place, or Luitolfo either.

The figure of Chiappino is delicious, perfect, cut to the nail. The little piece opens on him and Eulalia waiting the return of Luitolfo (the affianced lover of the latter, and closest friend of the former), who is now with the Provost of the town, begging recall of his sentence of banishment against Chiappino. Chiappino, then, is the man who sees further, knows better, feels more truly, and speaks more boldly than his fellows. An independent republican, he! alone right, alone virtuous, he is, of course, also the most misused of mankind, who, of course, too, are all slaves and cowards. Eulalia speaking her anxiety in consequence of Luitolfo's protracted stay, Chiappino ceases to ruminate his wrongs, and gives them air. He only laughs to think that her speaking had robbed him—whom nothing in the world was left save a little pride in such destitution—of a blessing he knew only by its loss—silence, silence to ruminate his wrongs! No one loves him—he has no right now even to his own flesh and blood. All tell lies—he too has caught the lying trick from the liars he has lived with. But he would speak truth, God's truth. He would have his tongue, his features, at once show the soul, and God alone approve. "My God, were't not for Thee!" He thanks God, he ever said, "You sin," when a man did sin, or glared it at him, or pointed him out to God therefor. He won't submit to the new Provost; he will resent for mankind each shrug, and smirk, each beck and bend, each . . . "O all you do and are I hate!" His gratitude just equals their service. He loved Eulalia, too; but Luitolfo's slight, free, loose, and incapacious soul could say all,—he, the great soul, nothing. Luitolfo must load him with benefits—that was the fiercest stroke. Luitolfo never saw them as such, but ought so to have seen them; that would have been straightforward; then he—but now his tongue was tied. Still it must be him Eulalia loves. He cannot believe she loves Luitolfo; it must be but a bond of habit. True; Luitolfo paid his fines, spoke a good word for him, held him up in evil fortune—it had not looked so well to let him drop. He, in the same circum-

stances, be as they! He, to his friend, his country, and his love, be as Luitolfo and these Faentines! He'll not curse . . . God bears with them—well may he; he simply says . . . God curse this townful of born slaves, bred slaves, branded into the blood and bone, slaves, etc. etc. The piece is short and simple, but we cannot follow it throughout. Chiappino's manly squeeze of the wrist till there is a cry of pain we may mention as another delicate little stroke. Then his call to his friend, "Lock arms—that's right." Again, under suspense while waiting for the crowd to come and take him disguised as Luitolfo, so characteristically he says, "How the people tarry! I can't be silent . . . I must speak or sing—how natural to sing now!" The poor fellow, quaking in expectation, feels that he must speak or sing! From that time on, too, the sort of fevered exaltation, hectic loftiness, that comes upon him, is true to the life. In truth to life everywhere indeed, in perfect seizure of the salient points, and of the words that yield them, this little piece is not excelled by anything else in Browning. The character lives. The machinery acts so perfectly too; all is to time and place so prompt! Nay, all is so light and easy, and latently good-humoured, that suddenly at last it all appears a mere play on the part of his friends to expose and correct Chiappino—a mere good-natured mystification to bring the simpleton out—for, after all, is he not a simpleton, this Chiappino? The ready omniscience of Ogniben, the composure of Eulalia, the out-of-place stupidity of Luitolfo—all we took offence at, seems now a merit, and has meaning. In some of Luitolfo's speeches, it seems as if the secret could not contain itself—an involuntary rhodomontade breaks out, as when he cries: "Ah, they come! Fly you; save yourselves, you two! The dead back-weight of the beheading axe! the glowing trip-hook, thumb-screws, and the gadge!" And is it not mere chaff, if we may use the word, when he says, "Nay, Chiappino, we are friends still: I dare say there is some proof of your superior nature in this starting aside, strange as it seemed at first; so my horse" etc.? Nay, surely Eulalia herself chaffs Chiappino, when she talks of his "ready parts and pregnant wit," and cries, "See how your words come from you in a crowd!" When Chiappino, in the greatness of his new office, elects not to marry Eulalia after all, and asks, "What do I lose?" Eulalia's rejoinder, "Nay, I only think what do I lose?" is a glib indifference that also betrays the secret make-believe of the whole business. Why, even Chiappino has an air of playing here, thus to give up in mock-heroics his love for Eulalia—"a mere sexual instinct" for the wider intellectual love of all the mighty dead, and illustrious living! Nay, on the part of the crowd itself, there is a

slight tone of exaggeration, as of a conscious play: they call Chiappino "our thrice-noble saviour, who rose in solitary majesty and—how does one go on saying?—dealt the godlike blow;" then positively they chaff the disguised Luitolfo openly, as about his uncle and the rest of his cautious stock. And so, with a hearty laugh, all are bowed out at last, as in a merry little play with one's friends at home. Chiappino himself, slinking off "round the north-west gate," has only stolen into the closet to change his dress. Luitolfo and Eulalia both wait to shake hands or go home arm-in-arm with him. On the part of Ogniben, we may add, there is some excellent fooling, and no little wisdom—things political, moral, human, and others well worth study. Will it not be thought wickedness on our part, for example, if we commend the following little *morceau philosophique* to Mr. Mill:—"I help men to carry out their own principles; if they please to say two and two make five, I assent, so they will but go on and say, four and four make ten"? Browning, in this little piece, which is quite masterly, is certainly at his easiest, his lightest, and, it may be, his deepest.

"In a Balcony" is remarkable, in regard to love, not for what were properly named passion, perhaps, but for a peculiarly intense purity of feeling. We have here in play three natures of unusual sincerity and power; and the almost superhuman exaltation of the result is hardly to be wondered at. So it is that at the very end, when Norbert says, "We are past harm now," and Constance, clasped to Norbert, replies, "On the bosom of God," we do not take offence as at a phrase exaggerated or blasphemous, but are rather, as it were, still further intensified by it. In short, in no poem has the Western idea of love, as contrasted with the sensual one of the East, been more purely, more intensely expressed. The flame of Tennyson himself is coloured—is yellow to this. This poem, indeed, will prove a main pillar of the reputation of Browning: his workmanship and handling are here mature.

We would notice in a single group now such poems as these:—"Karashish," "Cleon," "A Death in the Desert," "Bishop Blougram," "Sludge the Medium," "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Andrea del Sarto," "How it Strikes a Contemporary," "Holy Cross Day," "Caliban," etc. All these are—in a phrase that has been used already—psychological analytico-synthetic reproductions; and it is the skill which realizes such that is characteristic of Browning, and differentiates him from his fellows. Of the pieces named, all are so excellent, and in the same kind excellent, that it is difficult to place them in any order or gradation of merit. "Karashish" and "Cleon" resemble each other both

in matter and in manner: they are both exquisitely written, as almost all these pieces are, and—a praise capable of the same extension—lucid throughout. In matter, they both picture the contact of moribund Paganism with nascent Christianity. The figure of Lazarus is very striking in "Karshish;" and in "Cleon" we have a fine Pagan statement of the one Pagan want and misery; in *naïve* blindness, too, to the healing that lay for it in the "Christus, whom one called Paulus, a barbarian Jew, and certain slaves, preached." "A Death in the Desert" has many, so to speak, clear crystalline passages; but it is diffuse to vacuity, and exegetical to anachronism. "Sludge the Medium" sins also, beyond all hope of excuse, by length and weariness, and is at the same time unequal—not consistent with itself—not true to the vulgarity and scampdom with which it so admirably begins, and, if possible, more admirably ends. Even "Bishop Blougram," though with less reason, may be charged with some excess of the limits of interest and attention; for the rest, its theme being, on the whole, religious, we may take it up again with reference to that whole subject. We may include here, in this remark, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," in which, as is well known, there occur, with reference, let us say, to Zion Chapel and St. Peter's, some of the most felicitous and characteristic of Browning's descriptive achievements. "Fra Lippo Lippi" and "Andrea del Sarto" are fairly eminent in the group, and it is difficult to prefer either to the other, though, on the whole, the "Lippi" is perhaps the more characteristic and the fuller of points. Browning's "Caliban" is, in this kind, an absolute feat: it is no small matter to contrive to think under the skull of another man, but to think under that of a monster like Caliban—this, after Shakespeare, has been reserved for Browning. The picture—and very much from the effectiveness of the close—is, in its success, even terrible. Setebos has heard the prattling of him, Caliban; Setebos is offended;—there scuds his raven, that hath told him all. A storm has wrapped the world at once:—White blaze—a tree's head snaps—and there, there, there, there! His thunder follows! "Lieth flat and loveth Setebos! maketh his teeth meet through his upper lip" in penitence! There, surely, is analytic, reproductive power that is veritably appalling. But, like all here, the poem must be read as a whole,—quotation were but injustice. It is very tempting, nevertheless, to quote Caliban's conceived self-will in regard to the crabs, as also to add to it xxv. of the "Roland." Both are illustrations quite transcendent of what is called free-will, but is only spurious will, self-will. So to treat the crabs is to do, plainly, exactly as one likes; but this also, as plainly, is not to be free, but bound, in what one does. One is

free only when one can allege a *reason*—and that is a motive—for what one does.

Before passing to the little group of poems which we reserve for the last, we must briefly notice a few other pieces of super-eminent merit, which still remain to challenge admiration and remark. "The Glove," for example, is worth a moment's consideration, if for nothing but the involuntary reference to the *Hand-schuh* of Schiller. Browning has the advantage of coming after Schiller; still the resultant success is beyond the advantage: the Englishman is to the German as poetry to prose. Apart from the poetry, too, there is what we may call the humanity of the occasion; and in this, likewise, the Englishman is superior. In Browning's poem we have a natural reason for the assemblage, for example. Then for Schiller's brawling lion, tiger, and leopards—externally and mechanically there to "pile the agony high"—among which no man could have appeared and lived, we have in Browning the single lion, infinitely more majestic in himself, and grander in his solitude, with his eye so fixed on his distant Africa, that a possibility is really given of lifting the glove unharmed. With the Englishman, too, there is a good reason why the glove was thrown. Then, in the end, the fate of De Lorge is a very happy addition on the part of Browning. "Saul" is one of Browning's grand efforts; but it is, possibly, too long for its interest; above all, too long for its peculiar measure. The first sight of Saul, in the darkness of his tent, is especially striking. In the tenth strophe, the image of the mountain, from which its year's snow has suddenly fallen, is positively sublime; but greatly more sublime David's return at the end. "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," with its felicity in every way, we can only mention. It suggests the subject, however, of Browning's mastery in all the mechanical expedients of versification. In rhyme, especially, he is without an equal. We have such examples, for instance, as—fabric, dab brick; perorate, zero rate; examine it, Lamb in it; Vichy, is she; crony owes, Mark Antonios; leaps ache, keep-sake; scriptures, equipped yours; robe ease, obese; council, gown sell; try psaltery, drysaltery; sunk Ohs, trunkhose; forethought, worth aught; instinct, quince-tinct; hell free, belfry; fur-suit, hirsute; continue, pin you; cap pen, happen; syntax, tin-tacks; inquisitive, visit, I've; ins and outs, thin sand doubts; went trickle, ventricle; duke rust, blue crust; equine, weak wine; garlic, star-like; *bals paré*, R.A.; Æthiop, wreathy hop; havoc, *vin de grave*, Hock; indebted ease, Iketides; etc. That such rhymes should not stick or stop, or jerk or jolt, but *flow*, is, in that kind, a great mechanical triumph. The last examples are alone and *sui generis*.

The "Childe Roland" is one of those themes, on which, in general, we hold poetry, or simply human effort, to be only wasted. Its creative nucleus is the resolution to evolve from nothing, to develop in the air, what shall be the weird and wonderful itself. Things that are to be extorted from nothing but the goaded vacuity of imagination, have, however, never the air of human life, but always that of dreams, and dreams are hardly ever of any worth to hold. There is no lesson in their mere instability and change, their mere incoherency and non-nature. The fancy that would *kythe* flowers in its own void womb, is but competent to gum-flowers, and gum-flowers are but sorry substitutes. Something of this we see in such a poem as Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott," which is similarly conceived. The single line in Shakespeare, "Childe Roland to the dark tower came," with the inference that he came to fight some giant owner of the tower, and free its imprisoned captives—this alone shall serve as basis to a creation of wonders! And certainly, in its way, Browning's "Childe Roland" is quite as successful as may well be wished—perhaps very much more so than any piece of the sort. When successful, however, the success is due, after all, to introduction of the element of human reality, as in v. and vi., where the dying man hears his friends discourse as if the end were already there. These stanzas are certainly very admirable. It would be difficult to surpass also the power of picturesque description in xiii. and xiv., where we have the thin dry blades and the one blind horse. About the little river, too, xix., xx., and xxi. may be named marvellous for power. Other excellent passages follow, likewise, but the closing scene, with the dying sunset and the hills, is the finest of all. As a *tour de force*, then, "Childe Roland" is a success; but still we say, let us have the fixed light of waking day for the fickle *crépuscule* of doting dream. Our dislike to experiments in verse—at this time of the day—is similarly conditioned.

"Artemis Prologises" is a poem of even absolute merit. Tennyson has been justly celebrated for the classical spirit and finish of such poems as "Cenone" and "Ulysses;" but, compared with this poem of Browning, these of Tennyson are simply romantic. "Artemis Prologises" is as simple, severe, firm a piece of classical purity as ever was inscribed upon an antique marble. There is in it only what can be called the perfection of exactest speech, and with scarce an image or accessory that a Greek would disavow. We object only to the modern and romantic phrase, "mooned fronts." For workmanship, the "Tartuffe" of Molière is, perhaps, the most absolute literary perfection in existence. Browning's poem is not a great work

as that is, but its perfection of workmanship is at least not inferior.

In the romantic vein, "Count Gismond" is as happy as "Artemis" is perfect in the classical. It is a piece of genuine humanity, and psychology and romance have equally a place in it. To find out the power of this poem, we have but to read it aloud: then, now the surged chest, now the swollen throat, and now the proud tears will bring easy decision. What perfect art! How the first stanza strikes at once the true key-note, and the poem must be a success thenceforward! What happy thought, to relieve the narrator, arrived at the horror, by the appearance of Gismond at the gate with his two boys—a shaft of the golden present, to make endurable, nameable, that appalling past! Then Gismond's brief, decided action—every unit of an act in it precisely what the heart owns—with the intent watching of the unmistrusting woman! The event! "God took that on Him—God had set Himself to Satan—I was bid watch Gismond for my part!" This poem is all it would be.

We stand now by the little group in these poems which has been reserved, according to previous hint, to be final and supreme. This group consists of "The Bishop orders his Tomb at St. Praxed's," "My Last Duchess," "Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister," and (Browning's *chef-d'œuvre*) "The Flight of the Duchess." It is to be acknowledged at once that, in the choice of these four poems to conclude with, something of a subjective bias must mingle; for, with such productions as "Caliban," "Artemis," "Lippi," etc., to say nothing of the dramas, still in recollection, it would be scarcely reasonable to pretend for them any exclusive superiority. That is really so; and, in a general way, we conceive almost all the pieces which have been mentioned since "Luria" to constitute together but a single pantheon of peers. Still the fact is that we cherish for these four quite a peculiar favour, and that, in especial, we think ourselves right in assigning to "The Flight of the Duchess" a place in the very apex of the crown. It is peculiarly here, then, that amplitude of discussion may seem to be required. Yet, again, of all Browning's poems, at least the three first of the four are precisely those, perhaps, which are the most generally known, and the most heartily relished; and amplitude of remark in their case might appear superfluous, or be resented as impertinent. All things considered, however, it will not be necessary to say more than a word or two. On the "Bishop of St. Praxed's," for example, there is no pretext to dwell—all is so plain in it. That dying Bishop with his poor worldly heart and all undoubting faith—the Christian temple 'mid the Pagan ruins: these are matters to impress the least initiated. What, indeed,

strikes us most, probably, is this simple faith of the Bishop; who will lie in pride within his nine pillars of peach-blossom marble, upon his slab of basalt, with the blue lump of lapis-lazuli poised between his knees, watching old Gandolph!—Gandolph who (curses!) got the advantage of him in that southern corner for his tomb, but who will only gnash his teeth now over his paltry onion-stone. When tired of Gandolph, too, there is a glimpse for him of the pulpit o' the Epistle side, and he can always follow with his eyes the angels in the dome, "and hear the blessed mutter of the mass, and see God made and eaten all day long!" This through centuries, upon his slab, amid his pillars, with Pans and Nymphs, Moses, the Saviour, and St. Praxed, some tripod, thyrsus, or a vase or so, upon his frieze—this, and thus, till the last trumpet! "So leave me in my church, the church for peace, that I may watch at leisure if he leers—old Gandolph, at me, from his onion-stone!"

What is specially remarkable in "My Last Duchess," perhaps, is the peculiarity of art in it, whereby a single stroke has power to yield a double portrait. Thus it is not only the natural-hearted Duchess, the true rich woman, who had a smile for all, we see, but the poor mummy of a Duke as well who tells the story. This is great skill on the part of Browning,—a happy and very original thought. The direct portrait is not one whit more firmly limned than the reflex one. Perhaps, indeed, one delights more in the fastidious old coxcomb, out of whose veins ceremony and pride have driven the blood, leaving him but a clothed and fumigated and embalmed self, with a false sense of dignity and a false love of art, than in the sweet glad woman, whose ruddy truth he could only freeze into inevitable death.

The "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" is probably a more perfect specimen of the same peculiarity of art than even "My Last Duchess." In it, too, we have a double portrait, one direct, and one reflex, the latter the stronger. Rather, perhaps, we should say here, that both portraits are painted, if with some direct strokes, by a variety of reflexes. The concentrated vindictiveness, the beastly lusts and appetites, the grovelling and blasphemous superstition of the one mean, malicious brother, a weak, impure, unkindled soul, a potter's failure, who, in Brother Lawrence, instinctively feels and hates his own opposite, but with imputation to him of all his own vices, is, after all, but as a mirror in which we can see the simple laboriousness, the cheerful diligence, the decorous cleanliness and propriety, the loyalty and harmlessness, of the other, innocent honest brother. It will be difficult to find anything

anywhere more successful than this Soliloquy, in what it seeks to accomplish. The characters are conceived—and not less realized—to the marrow; the scene lives—*simpliciter* lives to the poet, whose telling words make it, in turn, no less live to the reader. The story is simply this. Brother Lawrence's "priestliness" has turned the stomach of the soliloquizer's "beastliness." Lawrence is a careful, cleanly, patient, painstaking, simple man. He has a goblet for his own drinking, marked with an L. He has a spoon of his own, and he always himself scrupulously cleans and lays by his own platter. The poor unwitting man is kindly courteous withal, in all simplicity bids *Salve tibi* to his brother, and, sitting down beside him, to his shudder, talks to him of the crops, and of the weather, and of the failure this year of cork-trees and gall-nuts, then innocently asks him the Latin name for paraley—till the devil that is in his brother can hold out no longer, and he must fling himself forth, and stamp and tear himself for relief. Returning, he sees Lawrence at work all unconsciously in his garden, and cannot help stopping to watch him, and soliloquize, "Gr-r-r—there go, my heart's abhorrence! Water your damned flower-pots, do!" This the hatred—then the superstition of the wretch, how characteristic it is, as he urges it against Brother Lawrence, that he never, as *he* does, lays his knife and fork cross-wise in honour of Christ, or illustrates the Trinity, and frustrates the Arian, by drinking his watered orange-pulp in three sips, but drains it in one gulp! And so the piece goes on from bad to worse, till this poor rascal finds the nipping of Lawrence's fruits and flowers on the sly not enough, and is willing to sell his soul to Satan (counting on a flaw in the indenture!), could he but see blasted, "that rose-acacia we're so proud of," when "*Hy-Zy-Hine* . . . 'St, there's vespers! *Plena gratia*, Ave, Virgo! Gr-r-r, you swine!" The *Hy-Zy-Hine* represents the sound of the bell—*Hy*, as it opens its mouth left, *Zy*, as it pours itself out right, and *Hine*, as it drops its own extinguisher on its own sound in the midst. This soliloquy, then, plainly, is a little triumph, and we know not, were we asked to show Browning at his nearest, and best, and shortest—we know not that we could preferably hold up any other specimen.

Still, of all that Browning has written, it is, to our belief, "*The Flight of the Duchess*" that must receive the palm. This for several reasons. Among these reasons we cannot, on the whole, assign the subject, the matter; and yet, in general, the decision of selection is, and ought to be, so conditioned. Matter must, in all interests, be allowed to be the great and deciding consideration. Neither is this altogether to be denied here. Only, in that reference, there are other works of Browning which seem

to possess a graver and more important matter. Such, we may say, is the case with "Luria" for example. Nevertheless, this too is to be said for "The Flight of the Duchess" that what matter it holds is nowise inferior to Browning's matter generally. That premised, we say at once that we ground our preference of this poem for the first place among the products of Browning on the newness and elaboration of its form, with special consideration of its length. The newness of the vein alluded to is seen at once in the opening thirty lines. The peculiar racy bluntness and the peculiar descriptive speech contained in these lines, were for the first time heard in England when this poem was published some thirty years ago. As a boy, the present reviewer first read these lines in a paper in the *Examiner*, and since then they have never ceased to ring through his head in all the charm of their peculiarity and newness. We wish we had space once again to quote them here, but they have been so often quoted that the reader can scarcely fail to be acquainted with them. "You're my friend;" "I was the man the duke spoke to;" "I helped the duchess to cast off his yoke, too;" "So, here's the tale from beginning to end, my friend!" "Ours is a great wild country;" "If you climb to our castle's top, I don't see where your eye can stop;" "For when you've passed the corn-field country . . .;" "And so on, more and ever more, Till at last, for a bounding belt, Comes the salt sand hoar of the great sea-shore;" "And the whole is our duke's country." These notes will probably sufficiently recall some recollection of the whole. They will be seen at once to involve what is new and peculiar, and of a rare and original descriptive power and raciness. We assert then for this poem the first place in the works of Browning, we may say again, because of the excellence, not of its material alone, but of its material and execution combined, and in such width of compass. The tone of the piece is indeed externally light; but that must not tempt us to assign it to a subordinate class. We have here a tragedy, but—as might be its course in real life—transacted almost in the everyday language of comedy. We seem in it to be presented with a piece of humanity just as it occurs—the interference of the gipsy being all that can be called extraordinary, and that, probably, being precisely the only agency that would cohere with the general design (the duchess has gipsy blood). A piece of simple humanity! and the player that represents it an honest huntsman, bluff and blunt, and with a genuine ring in him instead of the grins and ha-ha, curse-ye accents of *dramatis personæ* usually. Indeed, this poem, too, has the same double character that we have seen already, and is not more valuable for what it directly tells, than for the reflex that falls back from

it on the single narrator. He, this single narrator, is no subordinate personage: duke, duchess, and duchess-dowager may all be what they may, it is this stout hearty woodsman, with the man's blood, and the man's sense, and the man's voice of him,—there, now with his sixty years, his Jacynth in the mould and his children beside her,—there, with his boar-spear for staff, and his skinful of Cotnar for scrip—it is this hale, sun-tanned, weather-proven, perfect sample of bluff humanity, that is the principal personage, the veritable hero. He loved that little lady, spite of his Jacynth, loved her as a woman, but with a love that placed her in a charmed circle apart from him as his lady, only to be *served*—with his heart's blood. There are those in this world who express *priggish*—there is no other word—wonder that this serving-man should be a hero and the duke a fool. The irony of this man's "No, my Lord," is to be heard daily, however, in the mouths of other huntsmen, or gardeners, or sailors, or what not. Civilisation is not dependent on university-training—it is not to be read out of books only—it is in the air—and may be richly, fully amassed even in the humblest. *E contra*, vulgarity may be found rampant in high regions, even in the possessors of the breeding-ground of articulation and expression—the breeding-ground, not less, of self. Wordsworth's pedlar is not alone for heart and brain; there are other such pedlars in common life, perhaps on the weaver's bench or the cobbler's stool. But returning—how it does one good to hear this *man's* blunt brave accents! The reader can hear them for himself even in the little specimen above—can hear for himself there the brave, frank, open, hearty carelessness, as it were, with which this bold rough woodsman at once, and without ceremony—certainly without misgiving—seizes his audience. The pitch of blunt colloquial ease, with the sound of reality in every tone of it, is caught from the first, and fairly preserved to the very last word—that emphatic "Amen," that, as it were, would overbear sorrow with sauciness. (We hear the gulp of the sob in it.) It is precisely such a story as such a narrator would tell, and the poet is wholly one with his own character. Really, what grand heartiness this is, and what a smack of manliness in every syllable! A fine, bold, off-hand out-spokenness it is, that calls things by their rough right names, but never coarsely. The tide of speech never languishes, never dawdles; it is rich, racy, nervous throughout—almost, we might say, robust and rollicking. What a free grace, too, what a charm of methodic unmethodicness, what a fascinating picturesqueness there is in those double rhymes and free loose lines! There is indeed a very perfection of rhymes here, single, double, or repetitive, a very perfection of verse, a very perfection of art.

The labour that realized this poem must have been simply enormous. How bitterly, during all these thirty years, must not little points of it—

"On a lathy horse, all legs and length,
With blood for bone, all speed, no strength;
They should have set him on red Berold,
With the red eye slow consuming in fire,
And the thin stiff ear like an abbey spire,"

have every now and then occurred to him, the author? With what bitterness must he not observe still—after these thirty years—that a poem, which, as the perfection of workmanship, is the perfection also of lucidity, and in every word and line and thought and image of it, is still discussed as uncouth and barbarous, as unintelligible or meaningless! How hard, hard it is that work should not be seen! But, considering that thirty years could separate the boy that then read (as said) in the *Examiner* from the man that now speaks in these pages, perhaps it may occur to us to think, how long-suffering we must be with time, and with our contemporaries in time!

We have no room here to enter on a special analysis of the only poem of note not yet mentioned, for which the materials are to hand. This poem, as will be understood at once, is "Sordello." We must content ourselves with protesting against its being accepted as a success, and against the fallacious conversion of obscurity and unintelligibility into mystery and depth. To our mind, Browning is as badly used when "Sordello" is praised, as when the "Flight of the Duchess" is blamed. Both in execution and theme, in short, "Sordello," as it seems to us, is a sad failure—a failure unredeemed, unless perhaps by glimpses now and then of the scaly back and breast of the supple, stout old warrior Salinguerra, or by the description of the horrors at the beginning of Book iv., which, however, is questionable both in taste and art.

Now were the place to discuss those points in philosophy, religion, etc., which bear on the concrete character of Browning, as well as to determine, in general sum, the rank of his products beside those of contemporary or other poets; but for this likewise space fails. We may permit ourselves to say only, that the career of Browning is still far, we trust, from term, and his greatest work, perhaps, still to produce. Nay, what if this should be the case as well with reference to Tennyson? What, if we may expect these two men, now fairly shoulder to shoulder in the front, to agonize themselves as it were, even like our great English dramatists of old, in mutual emulation for our benefit? Could we but pit them against each other, what

supreme result might we not anticipate? Perhaps not only Milton, but even Shakespeare—No! that is impossible; of poets, never will the world see a mightier master of the first class than Shakespeare; never a mightier master of the second class than Milton. These two are fixed stars, and will keep their calm place for ever and for ever, in the silent blue, unchanged. But the same blue has room still—place in it for other, newer stars, which shall not infringe upon the glory of the old. Our Carlyle, for example,—he is not Shakespeare, he is not Milton, nor Burns, nor Hume. But neither his place nor his praise is the less on that account. They are great, and very great; but their greatness shall be no prejudice to the greatness of him great, who has swept through the souls of a generation, with a power possessed in an equal degree by no other Englishman that ever lived. He is not they, they are not he. He—if they are Shakespeare and Milton, and Burns and Hume,—he is Carlyle. Hume has had vast width of literary dominion—Voltaire yet a vaster—but neither Hume nor Voltaire, nor any other, ever strook through his contemporaries with such light and lightening as Carlyle. Carlyle, then, as much as any of them,—perhaps more than any of them,—is to be styled *der Einzige*: he is Carlyle the Only. In the same way may Browning and Tennyson hope that for them, too, there shall be vacant places in the future to which their own fair rivalry may in independence raise them. For Browning, especially, surely even now it is that there are splendid possibilities toward. The uncertain chisel of fitful hope, he, no longer,—bowed and broken in undeserved neglect,—plies slackly: he has received the freedom of the estate, and can do nought unwelcome. He is a master crowned: he has but to speak. May we not expect him now, then, warmed into confidence, strung into strength, to smite, even with one light stroke, from the rock, such statue as, for power and majesty and glow of lineament, had been all-impossible in the past? Nor were, indeed, we may say, such statue unwelcome now—now that the element, indicated as having hitherto failed Browning, has been at length accorded him. Lusty with wine and oil, the mood of Tennyson has been for years assured and irresistible. Sound, colour, emotion, image—all have been mighty with him, and fused in a breath. With Browning hitherto, be his triumphs what they may, this, on the whole, has not been so. We cannot deny it: beside that full, flushed, victorious mood of Tennyson, as of one who has fed on nectar and ambrosia, the mood of Browning, in comparison, has looked, not seldom hitherto, dispirited and rebuked, as of one to whom fasting has been more familiar than abundance, blame than praise. We see, then,

what is wanted for Browning, at least in larger presence, more apparent power. It is the pinion of assurance and security ; the single flight in one full swoop, the one and ever-ascending gust of genius. And, for this, it may be, in these better days, we are warranted to look. Much as we glory, then, in "Luria" and "Chiappino"—in "Artemis," "Caliban," "Roland"—in "Gismond" and the "Balcony"—in "Karshish," "Cleon," "Lippi," "Sarto," "Saul"—in the "Soliloquy"—in "St. Praxed's"—in the "Duchess's Portrait" and the "Duchess's Flight," we would fain still have, at the hands of Browning, one great and comprehensive work, which, adequate to his genius, we might set beside the "Princess" and the "Idylls" and the "In Memoriam." Is it for Browning to be represented only by toy-gems and brilliants, however exquisite ? Shall his be but scattered chambers and interrupted chapels ? Shall he not raise a palace over many chambers, a minster over many chapels ? Hitherto, indeed, Browning has probably despised colour. He mentions "Naddo's staring nosegay's carrion bloom," and has avowedly no rivalry for "flower-shows." Not unaware, however, of what may wake music or stir emotion, and with even a wealth of imagery at will, he has his own other and higher gifts of analysis, thought, and vision. Browning, then, even should he be inferior from the first to Tennyson in all that splendour of imagery and richness of sound, and overpowering tenderness of emotion and absorbing gust of inspiration, which are Tennyson's, and so peculiarly and prodigally Tennyson's, is not yet under any necessity to quail. In colour, music, genius-gust, "the garland and the singing robes," Milton, perhaps, is as superior to Shakespeare as Tennyson is to Browning ; yet, in the end, the higher seat is not Milton's. As there, then, with Shakespeare and Milton, so it may be here with Browning and Tennyson. Yet great as is our love for Browning, we cannot allow ourselves to become unfaithful to an earlier and equal love conceived for Tennyson, and, in a dramatic reference, which is here the determining consideration, we would point to the vast passionate power in that kind which is present in "Maud," and the "Princess," and the "Idylls of the King." Nay, even in a psychological reference, and psychology is the bow of Browning, we would point to the "Stylite," and the "Farmer," and the "Grandmother," and we would ask, Is it not true that these, in their own way, are unexcelled by anything of a like kind in Browning ? But, be that as it may, it is still true that if Browning shall ever make good for himself a higher place than Tennyson's, he will be only able to accomplish this by superior excellence in an element dramatic. And so it is that we call to Browning—who has still in that direction steps to take, if he would occupy

the height—for more, and again more, and always more in that kind. Does not the drama, indeed, seem but the natural consummation of psychology? and should not the latter be, at all hazards, perfected and matured into the former? Should not action come, in effect, as life to psychology, striking character into spontaneous evolution, as it were in the fire of trial? Already essentially dramatic, so far as the *personæ* are concerned, Browning, then, has only to add this failing element, to achieve, as at least seems likely, a place in the dramatic poetry of England that shall be nearest Shakespeare's. Another "Tempest," another "Midsummer Night's Dream:" in these there is stuff, perhaps, that we can never again expect from mortal. But Browning has already, in characters at least, given us a younger brother to the great "Moor of Venice:" are further triumphs in the kind impossible to him? Why should we or he despair of another "Winter's Tale," or "Cymbeline," or "Taming of the Shrew," or "Merchant of Venice"? Nay, why should we or he despair of another "Lear"? That is it: let Browning give us—but whispering in his ear, Spare composers that sweat of brow, and burn "Sordello"—another "Cymbeline," another "Taming of the Shrew," another "Lear."

Mr. Nettleship, referring a moment to the last work on our list, is evidently an accomplished and well-meaning man, who deserves thanks. He finds allegory—even in those mushrooms!—overmuch in Browning, however; and, so, sermonizes overmuch himself, perhaps. He is best on "Sordello," the story of which he is at great pains to detect and connect. This will save labour; it had saved ours, if known in time.

ART. V.—WAS THE MARTYR WISHART PRIVY TO ANY CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE LIFE OR LIBERTY OF THE CARDINAL BEATON ?

AN old accusation against the martyr George Wishart has in recent times been revived,¹ and the countenance which it has received from so able and dispassionate a writer as Mr. Hill Burton renders it necessary that the grounds on which it is based should be again submitted to examination. Wishart is accused of having been privy, during the last two years of his life, to a conspiracy formed among the leaders of the English party in Scotland against the life of Cardinal Beaton. And though it is not alleged that the Cardinal was aware of his complicity in this conspiracy when he consigned him to the flames, there can be no doubt that, if the fact could be established, it would have the effect of relieving that dignitary to a certain extent from the odium which has always attached to him as the author of Wishart's judicial murder, and of throwing a dark shade over the name and memory of the Scottish martyr.

At the outset, it is necessary to bring to the reader's recollection certain matters pertaining to the history of Scotland in the period immediately preceding the death of Wishart, which took place in the spring of 1546. About three years and a half before that date, that is, in the close of the year 1542, was fought the disastrous battle (if it can be called a battle) of Solway Moss, in which a Scottish army, numbering, it is said, no fewer than 10,000 men, having been thrown into a state of disorder and insubordination by the ill-advised elevation of Oliver Sinclair, one of the King's favourites, to the supreme command, over the heads of its natural leaders, was surprised and put to the rout by a small body of English troops, many Scottish noblemen and gentlemen, including the Earls of Cassilis and Glencairn, being taken prisoners, or rather surrendering themselves without resistance into the hands of the English. This disastrous affair was followed shortly after (Dec. 14, 1542) by the death of James v., and the crown of Scotland thus falling to the infant princess Mary, who had been born but a few days before, and whose misfortunes thus began with her birth, as they ended only with her death, the English king, Henry VIII., at once formed the natural project of at length, after centuries of almost unceasing hostility, uniting the two kingdoms by a marriage between the Scottish queen and his son Edward, who was her senior only by a few years. In furtherance of this

¹ By Mr. Fraser Tytler, who was ably answered by the late Mr. David Brown, Edinburgh, in the *Christian Monitor*, vol. iii. (1823), p. 475.

design he released on parole the Scottish nobles who had fallen into his hands, on their coming under solemn engagement to co-operate cordially with his agents in bringing about the desired union, and leaving with him hostages as pledges of their fidelity. Along with these nobles returned the Earl of Angus and his brother Sir George Douglas, whom the hostility of James had compelled at an earlier period to take refuge in England, where they had been hospitably received and entertained by Henry. These returned nobles now became the leaders of the English party in Scotland, and as the Earl of Arran, the head of the house of Hamilton and heir-apparent to the crown, who had been appointed Governor (Dec. 22, 1542) during the minority of Mary, for a time fell in with their views and policy, the scheme of Henry seemed likely to be crowned with success. Negotiations were entered into, issuing in a formal agreement, which received the sanction of the Scottish Parliament (August 25, 1543). But the current of popular feeling in Scotland running strong against the English alliance, and the Governor having gradually detached himself from the English party, chiefly through the influence of his abler brother, the Abbot of Paisley, who had returned to Scotland in April 1543, the French party, led by the Cardinal and Queen-Mother, gained the ascendancy, and the projected and almost accomplished alliance with England was broken off. This change in the Scottish policy was followed by the recall of the English ambassador, Sir Ralph Sadler (to whose State papers, which throw a flood of light on the history of this period, we shall have frequent occasion to refer), the invasion of Scotland in the ensuing spring by an English force under the command of the Earl of Hertford, the burning of Edinburgh (May 8, 1544), and the wasting with fire and sword of a great part of the country.

There is no doubt that Cardinal Beaton was the principal obstacle to the success of Henry's policy, and that Henry himself, being well aware of this, was exceedingly anxious to get him out of the way, and not very scrupulous as to the means he employed for this purpose. In the spring of 1542-3, when Sir Ralph Sadler arrived in Scotland, he found the Cardinal in confinement, and was instructed to endeavour, by every means in his power, to prevent his release, or, what would answer Henry's purpose still better, to have him removed into England.—*Sadler State Papers*, i. 104, 106, 110. The able ambassador carried out his instructions with his wonted zeal; he even appears to have dropped a hint now and then that the Cardinal might be disposed of in a still more effectual manner than by imprisonment, whether in England or Scotland. He tells us himself that, on one occasion (March 1542-3), after receiving the assurance of the Governor "that the Cardinal should never come out of prison except it

be to his farther mischief," he replied, that "it were pity but he should receive such rewards as his merits did require" (*Sadler State Papers*, i. 77); and about the same time we find him reminding the Earl of Angus and his friends of their engagements to Henry, and in particular of their promise to give him "due and faithful advertisement who were sure to their party for his purpose, and who were lets to the same, with their advice what should be expedient to be done from time to time for the advancement of his enterprise, and for removing all the impediments and obstacles against it."—*Sadler State Papers*, i. 102.¹ These intrigues bore no immediate fruit. The Cardinal, as we have seen, regained his liberty. The treaty of alliance was not ratified, and Henry resolved to extort by force and terror what he had failed to obtain by less violent means.

On the 5th of November 1543, Sadler was compelled by the violence of the popular feeling against the English alliance to leave Edinburgh and take refuge in the fortress of Tantallon, near North Berwick, which belonged to the Earl of Angus, the leader of the English faction. But before taking this step he appears to have entered into relations of a very intimate description with a person whose name must hold a prominent place in the present investigation, the Laird of Brunston. This person has usually been ranked among the ardent friends of the Reformation; but we have no doubt Mr. Tytler has formed a much truer estimate of his character, when he describes him as "a dark and busy intriguer," who entered into the service of Henry as a spy on the movements of the Governor and the Cardinal.—*History of Scotland*, vol. v. 299, 344. His diplomatic talents and energetic and unscrupulous character appear at an early period to have attracted notice. When we first meet with him, in the close of 1539, he is on a mission to Rome, bearing letters from the Cardinal to his agent in that city. Being shipwrecked on the English coast, the letters of which he was the bearer fell into the hands of Henry, who made use of them in vainly attempting to undermine the credit and influence of Beaton at the Scottish Court. At this time Brunston was already a person of some repute; his name being well known to the Scottish king, James v.—*Sadler State Papers*, i. 25. In 1543, when we next meet with him, his reputation as a diplomatic agent is established. He maintains friendly relations with all parties, and is employed by all parties in turn. On the 6th of May, the Governor, Arran, speaks of sending him on a mission to the French king; and on the 20th August he proposes to send him on a similar mission to England.—*Sadler*, i. 186, 280, 281; *Hamilton Papers*, p. 81. Upon another occasion (20th May)

¹ Compare with this a Minute of King Henry's preserved among the Hamilton Papers, of date January 8, 1542-3.—*Maitland Club Miscellany*, iv. p. 72.

we find him the bearer of an important message from the Cardinal to the Governor.—*Sadler*, i. 206. Yet even at that time he appears to have fully resolved to attach himself permanently to the English interest. He had already, along with the Sheriff of Ayr, had several interviews with Sadler, at which “he greatly pretended his service” to Henry.—*Sadler*, i. 166. Later in the same year (20th August) Sadler writes of him to the King, as one “well affected to your Majesty.” But it was not till the commencement of November, when Sadler was under the necessity of quitting the capital, that he appears to have fixed on him as a proper person to act the part of a secret agent or spy, to keep him informed, during his compulsory absence from Court, of the movements of parties. During that month, accordingly, we find Brunston in constant correspondence with Sadler at Tantallon. On the 7th November, only two days after leaving Edinburgh, Sadler receives from him a letter, a copy of which he sends in cipher to the English Court. Three days later another letter arrives, in which he says that he “durst not come in person for fear of suspicion.” Two days later, on the 12th, these fears are got over, for he does present himself at Tantallon, and has a long conference with Sadler, from which it appears that he is still on terms of confidential intercourse both with the Governor and the Cardinal, and avails himself of his opportunities to obtain information for the English ambassador. The 16th brings another letter, in which Brunston, after excusing himself for being so long in writing (though he had been at Tantallon only four days before), asks him to thank the King for the letter he had received from his Majesty, “the contents whereof,” he writes, “I shall not fail to fulfil, so far as God will give me grace;” adding, “if there be any pleasure or service your Lordship would I did, let me know, and it shall be done to the uttermost of my power.” Finally, ten days later, we find Sadler sending in cipher to the King “certain advertisements” which he had received from Brunston, “who sheweth himself most desirous to do such service as might be acceptable to your Majesty, and, except there be no truth in Scottishmen, undoubtedly mindeth the same in his heart to the uttermost of his power.”—*Sadler State Papers*, i. 332, 337, 338, 342, 343, 345. In the beginning of December, Sadler being recalled to England, the correspondence between him and Brunston ceases. And it is not till the middle of the April following that we recover traces of Brunston’s movements, in a letter addressed to King Henry by his lieutenant in the North, the Earl of Hertford. As this letter forms the sole ground of the charge against Wishart, which it is the object of this paper to investigate, we give it in full, along with the King’s reply:—

1. THE EARL OF HERTFORD TO KING HENRY VIII.

"Please it your Highness to understand that this day arrived here with me, the Earl of Hertford, a Scottish man called Wysshert, and brought me a letter from the Laird of Brunston, which I send your Highness herewith. And, according to his request, have taken order for the repair of the said Wysshert to your Majesty by post, both for the delivery of such letters as he hath to your Majesty from the said Brunston, and also for the declaration of his credence, which (as I can perceive by him) consisteth in two points; one is, that the Laird of Grange, late Treasurer of Scotland, the Master of Rothes, the Earl of Rothes' eldest son, and John Charteris, would attempt either to apprehend or slay¹ the Cardinal at some time when he shall pass through the Fyfe land, as he doth sundry times to St. Andrews; and in case they can so apprehend him, will deliver him unto your Majesty: which attemptate he saith they would enterprise, if they knew your Majesty's pleasure therein, and what supportacion and maintenance your Majesty would minister unto them after the execution of the same, in case they should be pursued afterwards by any of their enemies. The other is, that in case your Majesty would grant unto them a convenient entertainment for to keep 1000 or 1500 men in wages for a month or two, they, joining with the power of the Earl Marischal, the said Master of Rothes, the Laird of Calder, and others of the Lord Grey's friends, will take upon them, at such time as your Majesty's army shall be in Scotland, to destroy the abbey and town of Arbroath, being the Cardinal's, and all the other bishops' and abbots' houses and countries on that side the water thereabouts, and to apprehend all those which they say be the principal impugnators of the amity between England and Scotland; for the which they should have a good opportunity, as they say, when the power of the said bishops and abbots shall resort towards Edinburgh to resist your Majesty's army. And for the execution of these things, the said Wisher saith that the said Earl Marischal and others afore named will capitulate with your Majesty, in writing under their hands and seals, afore they shall desire any supply or aid of money at your Majesty's hands. This is the effect of his credence, with other sundry advertisements of the great contention and division that is at this present within the realm of Scotland, which we doubt not he will deliver unto your Majesty at good length." [Dated, Newcastle, 17th April 1544.]—*State Papers, King Henry VIII.*, vol. v. pp. 377, 378.

2. THE LORDS OF THE COUNCIL TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

"After our most hearty commendations unto your good Lordship: These shall be to signify unto you that this bearer Wishert, which came from Brunston, hath been with the King's Majesty, and for his credence declared even the same matters in substance whereof your Lordship hath written hither, and hath received for answer touching the feat against the Cardinal,—that, in case the lords and gentlemen

¹ In the copy of this letter contained in the Hamilton Papers, p. 95, the words "or slay" are omitted by a strange inadvertence. So in G. Chalmers's *Life of Mary*, vol. ii. p. 405.

which he named shall enterprize the same earnestly, and do the best they can to the uttermost of their power to bring the same to pass indeed, and thereupon not being able to continue longer in Scotland, shall be enforced to flee into this realm for refuge, his Highness will be contented to accept them, and relieve them as shall appertain. And as to their second desire, to have the entertainment of a certain number of men at his Highness's charge, promising therefor to covenant with his Majesty, in writing under their seals, to burn and destroy the abbots', bishops', and other kirkmen's lands, his Majesty hath answered that (for as much as his Highness's army shall be, by the grace of God, entered into Scotland, and ready to return again before his Highness can send down to them, and they send again and have answer for a conclusion in the matter) his Highness thinks the time too short to commune any farther in it after this sort. But if they mind effectually to burn and destroy, as they have offered, at his Majesty's army being in Scotland, and for their true and upright dealings with his Majesty therein, will lay in to your Lordship, my Lord-Lieutenant, such hostages as you shall think convenient; his Highness will take order that you, my Lord, shall deliver unto them one thousand pounds sterling for their furniture in that behalf, which his Majesty's pleasure is you shall cause to be paid unto them in case they shall break with you in this matter, and deliver you such hostages as aforesaid.—Thus fare your good Lordship heartily well. From Greenwich, the 26th of April 1544."—Haynes' *State Papers*, i. 32, 33.

Now from these letters, viewed in the light of the negotiations and intrigues of the previous year, which have been already briefly noticed, we learn—

1. That Sadler had communicated (more or less fully) to Brunston Henry's desire to have the Cardinal, who was the principal obstacle to the success of his policy, removed out of the way, either by seizure and transportation to England, or otherwise.

2. That Brunston, who had, as we have seen, attached himself as a secret agent to the English service, readily entered into the project, and was now at length authorized to communicate to his Majesty the names of three gentlemen who would undertake, on certain conditions, to apprehend and deliver the Cardinal into his hands, or even to "slay" him should seizure be found impracticable.

3. That in order to communicate this intelligence to the Earl of Hertford, and afterwards to Henry himself, Brunston despatched as a confidential messenger a Scotsman named Wishart, whom he intrusted both with letters, and also with an oral message or "credence."

It is this "Scottishman named Wishart," whom certain writers of eminence, especially in recent times, have attempted to identify with George Wishart the martyr. And it is our design in the present paper to examine the grounds on which this identification rests. These grounds are two :—1. The name ;

and, 2. The alleged intimacy of George Wishart the martyr with Brunston and his associates.

1. As to the name. "Naturally enough," says Mr. Hill Burton, "it is maintained that Wishart the martyr cannot be the same man as the Wishart, a Scotsman, who entered so earnestly into the business of killing the Cardinal. There were other Wisharts in those days, and as they cannot be identified, it were better that the scandal should lie generally among them. It is, however, likely that, if there had been another Wishart so important as to have close communication with Hertford, Sadler, and other statesmen, and to get private audience of Henry VIII., he could be identified."¹ This passage contains several statements for which there is no sufficient warrant. For, in the first place, it is incorrect to describe the business in which the Scottishman called Wishart was engaged as "the business of killing the Cardinal." The offer which Brunston alleges was made to him by Norman Leslie and his friends, was to "apprehend or slay," Beaton, and "in case they can so apprehend him" to deliver him to Henry. The "slaying" was evidently thought of only as an alternative in the event of their failing to take him alive. It is true that in the following year (1545) "the killing of the Cardinal" was a subject of correspondence between Henry and his agents on the one side, and the Earl of Cassilis, Sir George Douglas, and the Laird of Brunston on the other. But there is no trace whatever of "the Scottishman called Wishart" having had any share in these subsequent negotiations. His name never again appears in the correspondence. Then, in the second place, Mr. Burton's view of the "importance" of the "Scottishman called Wishart" is surely very exaggerated. He seems to look upon him as a person of influence, a leader in the plot, whom we ought to be able to identify without much difficulty; and he does so on the ground that he had close communication with Hertford, and was even admitted to a private audience of the King. But Mr. Burton does not need to be informed that many persons were in those days admitted to private communication with Sadler and Hertford, and even with Henry, who were by no means persons of standing and influence. If a secret agent arrived at the camp or at the court, bearing despatches or intrusted with an oral communication of importance, he was naturally closeted at once with the general or the king; not because he was a person of distinction, but because he was a secret agent, whose instructions must be communicated directly to the principals in the government, and could not safely be confided to subordinates.² And this is evidently the character which the

¹ *History of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 466.

² For a case in point we may refer to Mr. Burton's *History*, vol. iv. p. 266.

"Scottishman called Wishart" bore, and the reason of his being admitted to a confidential interview with Hertford, and also with Henry. His name recurs four times in the two letters given above, and there is nothing in the way in which he is mentioned to indicate that he bore any higher rank than that of a confidential servant or agent. He is "a Scottishman called Wysshert," "the saide Wysshart," and again "the saide Wisher," and in the King's letter "the bearer Wishert, which came from Brunstone."¹ *He is not a commissioner to treat*; he is simply the bearer of letters and a "credence," which having communicated to the King he "receives the King's answer" and returns.

Finally, on this point, even though the letters did represent the "Scottishman called Wysshert" as a person of some importance (which we have seen they do not), it would not by any means follow that the said "Scottishman" was George Wishart the martyr. The Wisharts formed a numerous clan in the Mearns, several members of which had risen to high eminence both in the Church and in the State. James Wishart of Pitarrow was Justice-Clerk during the reign of James v., and John Wishart (whom Bishop Keith and Principal Robertson conjecture to be the "Scottishman" of Hertford's letter) rose to a position of still higher eminence under Mary and James vi. Mr. Laing also, in his edition of Knox's *History* (vol. i. p. 536), mentions several *George Wisharts*, one of whom was a bailie of Dundee in 1560, and for several years previously. So that we may safely conclude that in the year 1544 there was more than one Wishart "important" enough to be employed as the confidential agent and messenger of the Laird of Brunston.

2. But it is alleged, secondly, that the martyr Wishart is known to have been intimately associated with Brunston, and that this fact, taken in connexion with the name, renders it extremely probable that he is the person mentioned in Hertford's letter. This is the main ground on which the charge against George Wishart rests, and accordingly those who believe or suspect him to have been guilty in the matter insist upon it very strongly. According to Mr. Tytler, Brunston was "Wishart's great friend and protector;" he affirms that on Wishart's return from England, which he places in July 1543, the Laird of Brunston was among his "chief supporters," and that there is reason to believe that the conduct of Brunston and the other partisans of England was influenced by Wishart's counsels.—*History of Scotland*, vol. v. pp. 342, 343. Now, how stand the facts, as known? Wishart suffered martyrdom on the 1st March 1545-6, having been apprehended at Ormiston on

¹ It was probably not without a purpose that Dr. George Mackenzie in copying Hertford's letter substituted *Mr. Wishart* for "a Scottishman called Wishart."

the 16th of the preceding January. In the beginning of December 1545, *i.e.*, about six weeks before his apprehension, he had arrived in Lothian, "the gentlemen of the west having written to him that he should meet them at Edinburgh, for they would require disputation of the bishops, and that he should be publicly heard."—*Knox*, i. 131 (Laing's edition). Notwithstanding his outlawry, he insisted on preaching publicly in Leith. Thereafter, says *Knox* (i. 134) "the gentlemen of Lothian, who then were earnest professors of Christ Jesus, thought not expedient that he should remain in Leith, because that the Governor and Cardinal were shortly to come to Edinburgh; and therefore they took him with them, and kept him sometimes in Brunston, sometimes in Langniddry, and sometimes in Ormiston, for those three diligently waited upon him." It thus appears that for a few weeks in December 1545 and January 1545-6, Wishart, whose life was in constant danger, was waited upon and protected by the Laird of Brunston and two other gentlemen of Lothian who were earnest reformers; and we are farther informed that they were with him when he was apprehended at Ormiston. But this is all we know of Wishart's connexion with Brunston. We have no evidence whatever that Wishart had any intimacy or even intercourse with Brunston except during the six weeks which preceded his apprehension; and even then, it is to be noted, he did not repair to Brunston of his own accord; it was Brunston and his friends who "took him and kept him," and "awaited on him." And yet Mr. Tytler has ventured to speak of Brunston as already in 1543 "Wishart's great friend and protector," and one of his "chief supporters," and guided by his "counsels," though there is not a particle of evidence that Wishart had received any protection from Brunston, or had had any intercourse, correspondence, or connexion of any kind with him previous to December 1545. We find it difficult to repress a feeling of indignation at what, if things are to be called by their right names, can be described by no other term than a falsification of history; and this, we should hope not with the intention, but certainly with the effect, of casting a cloud over the fair fame of a man who was loved and venerated by all who knew him as one of the purest and noblest of mankind.¹

¹ Mr. Tytler is strangely inconsistent in his statements regarding Wishart. In his historical remarks on the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, appended to the fifth volume of his *History*, he says (p. 377), "The fact of the existence of a conspiracy for the assassination of Beaton, which was fostered in England, and carried on by Brunston and Wishart, was thus fixed beyond question." Yet at p. 344 of the same volume he had written, "It is possible that the Reformer (*i.e.* George Wishart) was ignorant of the true character of Brunston, a dark and busy intriguer, who for more than two years had been organizing a conspiracy for the assassination of the Cardinal."

Notwithstanding the reckless character of Mr. Tytler's assertions, they have been repeated by later historians. Thus Dr. Cunningham, in his *Church History of Scotland*, i. 251, writes:—"It is just possible that the Wishart mentioned in the Earl of Hertford's letter may not have been the martyr, but his close intimacy at that time with every one of the conspirators leads one to suspect that it was." By "at that time," we suppose Dr. Cunningham means the time when Hertford's letter was written; and if so, we hesitate not to affirm that the statement is entirely without foundation. For there is no proof whatever that, at the time when that letter was written, Wishart was on terms of "close intimacy" with *any* one of the conspirators.

A statement to the same effect appears in Mr. Burton's *History*, and there it assumes a still more extraordinary form, for he asserts that, "to the observer from without, Wishart the martyr is part of the group occupied in the affair" (i.e. of "killing the Cardinal"); "removing him from that group breaks it up almost more than the removal of any other—of Leslie, Ormiston, or Brunston" (iii. 466). According to Mr. Burton, therefore, the martyr was not only accessory to the projected murder, he was one of the leaders in the plot; a principal leader, whose removal from the group of conspirators would break it up more than that of any other. It is well that Mr. Burton qualifies his assertion by stating that this is the aspect the "group" assumes to an "observer from without;" for of a truth the observer must indeed be very far without to whose eye the "group" can assume any such aspect. Certainly those *within* the group, the conspirators themselves, do not seem to have been aware of the prominent position which the martyr held among them. Very many letters of the period are still extant: there is the Sadler correspondence of 1543, in which we have a full account of the intrigues of Angus, Cassilis, Sir George Douglas, and other leaders of the "group," with the English monarch, and yet, strange to say, in that entire correspondence the name of Wishart is not once mentioned; there are the State Papers of 1545, which contain the letters that passed between Henry's ministers and Cassilis, Sir George Douglas,¹ and Brun-

¹ It is not the object of the present paper to apologize for or palliate the conduct of the Earl of Cassilis or Sir George Douglas in the "affair," but after reading the State Papers it appears very doubtful whether these men had any serious intention to assassinate the Cardinal. Their offer to do so seems to have been made solely for the purpose of hoodwinking Henry, who had threatened that "he would no longer feed them with money as he had done, unless he saw some more fruit thereof than he had done hitherto." They wished to make up for the lack of activity in his service, of which he complained, by large offers and promises. This was ultimately the conviction of Sadler and of Henry himself (*State Papers*, Henry VIII., vol. v. 339, 471, 499; *Haynes*, i. 35, 38), whom we accordingly in September 1545 find on the outlook for other agents to accomplish his designs against

ston, regarding the "affair" of killing the Cardinal, and yet in not one of these papers does the name of Wishart ever appear; there are accounts of various meetings of leaders of the "group" during the years 1543-1545, and of bonds and engagements they entered into, and yet at not one of these meetings was Wishart present, and to not one of these bonds or engagements was he a party. Notwithstanding, somehow, to the eye of Mr. Burton, Wishart forms part of the group, and so prominent a figure in it that if he be removed it is broken up and vanishes into empty air. Strange that it was in very deed the removal of that principal conspirator that gave the "group" a consistency which it never had before, so that, deprived of his presence and counsels, they accomplished easily and at once what under his pretended leadership they had for years plotted in vain. No doubt Wishart was the killer of the Cardinal; but it was the dead, not the living Wishart.

Such is the frivolous evidence on which George Wishart has been convicted by several of our historians of complicity in the plots for the murder of Beaton. We have still to present the evidence upon the other side, which may be distributed under three heads—1. Wishart's devout and saintly character; 2. The manner in which he is known to have been occupied after his return to Scotland; and, 3. The date of his return.

1. With regard to the first of these points—his personal devoutness and saintliness of character,—we are aware that Dr. Cunningham has made certain remarks, which Mr. Burton quotes with applause, as to the piety of the sixteenth century being of a sterner kind than that of the nineteenth, and "modelled more after the examples of the Old Testament than according to the spirit of the New." And he adds: "The truth is, it was accounted right to take vengeance on oppressors; it was peculiarly the Lord's work. To hew Agag in pieces, to smite the prophets of Baal, to scatter the proud in the imagination of their heart, was a work to which the faithful were called, and which they must not shrink from performing." Of course then, if this be so, we must doubtless expect, in reading the history of that unhappy century, ever and again to meet with dark conspiracies formed, and assassinations perpetrated, by preachers of the Reformed Doctrines. And yet, somehow, instances of this description are singularly difficult to meet with; so that, except the Cardinal (*State Papers*, v. 512). No doubt the Queen-Mother was right when she said of Sir G. Douglas that he was "as wily and crafty a man as any was in all Scotland" (*Sadler*, i. 116). Compare in the Hamilton Papers, p. 73, 74, an offer by the Laird of Buccleugh "to deliver the infant Queen to the English;" on which Mr. G. Chalmers remarks—"If he made the offer here alleged, it must have been a banter, or to sound what Henry would be at."

in the case of Wishart, who, according to these gentlemen, had the courage to act out his stern creed, the practice of the prophets of those times must have fallen far short of their principles. But to treat the subject with the seriousness which it deserves, such remarks as those just quoted do not touch a character like Wishart's. For his was a character of peculiar sanctity and nobleness, inspiring the deepest love and veneration in all who came within the range of his influence. The account given of him by his Cambridge disciple, Emery Tylney, is so well known that we need not quote it in full. Let the last sentence suffice: "If I should declare his love to me and to all men, his charity to the poor, in giving, relieving, caring, helping, providing, yea, infinitely studying how to do good unto all and hurt to none, I would sooner want words than just cause to commend him." And Knox, who also speaks of him from personal knowledge, describes him as "a man of such graces as before him was never heard within this realm, yea, and are rare to be found yet in any man." He constantly speaks of him as "the servant of God;" he also styles him, "the innocent servant of God," "that innocent," "the meek lamb;" and in relating how he was treacherously given over to the Cardinal, he hesitates not to employ the following language: "And so, small inversion being made, Pilate obeyed the petition of Caiaphas and his fellows, and adjudged Christ to be crucified" (i. 144). Archbishop Spottiswoode also testifies of him that he was "a man of great knowledge and pleasant utterance, endued also with many rare virtues, humble, modest, charitable, and patient even to admiration."¹ And these testimonies to his character are quite in unison with every recorded act of his life, and with his whole behaviour during his trial, condemnation, and death. On one occasion when he was debarred from preaching in the Kirk of Mauchline, and his friends offered to force an entrance, he stayed them, saying, "It is the word of peace that God sends by me: the blood of no man shall be shed this day for the preaching of it."—*Knox*, i. 128. When he heard, while in Ayr, that the plague had broken out in Dundee, he resolved at once to return thither, for he said: "They are now in trouble, and they need comfort; perchance this hand of God will make them now to magnify and reverence that word which before, for the fear of men, they set at light price." When an attempt was made shortly afterwards to assassinate him, and the excited

¹ Even Bishop Keith wrote of him:—"He is reckoned to have been the worthiest person of all those who supported the new doctrines in this kingdom."—*Hist.* i. 103. To this statement, Keith's editor for the Spottiswoode Society attaches a long note, the character of which may be judged of by the first sentence: "Bishop Keith would not have recorded this eulogium on Wishart if he had been aware of certain actions of his life, now ascertained on the most undoubted authority."

multitude burst in and would have put the murderer to death, he took him in his arms and said, "Whosoever troubles him shall trouble me." We need not refer to the meekness and magnanimity he displayed when on his trial and at the stake: in the records of martyrdoms there is nothing more Christlike. And yet this is the man who we are asked, upon the flimsiest evidence, to believe was employed by the Laird of Brunston as his secret agent and message-bearer in plotting the seizure or slaughter of Cardinal Beaton, and the destruction of "the abbey and town of Arbroath, and all the other bishops' and abbots' houses and countries" in that district of Scotland.

2. We have in Knox's History an account of Wishart's life and occupations from the date of his return to Scotland till his death, which account is utterly inconsistent with the idea of his having been during that period an accomplice, along with Brunston, in a conspiracy against the life of the Cardinal. "The beginning of his doctrine," says Knox, "was in Montrose.¹ Therefrom he departed to Dundee, where he taught the Epistle to the Romans, to the great admiration of all that heard him." Compelled to quit Dundee, he repaired to Kyle, the central division of Ayrshire, where he "began to offer God's word, which was of many gladly received." There he preached commonly in the church of Galston, and also in Mauchline and Ayr. On receiving intelligence of the outbreak of the plague in Dundee, he returned, as has been said, to that town, "to the great joy of the faithful." There, on the morrow after his arrival, he preached, choosing for his pulpit "the head of the East Port of the town," those stricken with the plague, with their attendants, being without the gate, the uninfected within. He continued his ministrations among the people of Dundee till the plague had almost ceased, "not sparing to visit them that lay in the very extremity, and causing minister all things necessary to those that might use meat or drink." From Dundee he proceeded, towards the close of 1545, to meet "the gentlemen of the west" at Edinburgh, which led, as we have seen, to his apprehension and martyrdom. Now, reasoning from this historical sketch of Wishart's movements and occupations while in Scotland, we may remark—(1.) that in order to identify the "Scottishman called Wishart" of Hertford's letter with the martyr, it is necessary to suppose that the latter was in Lothian in the spring of 1543-4, in conference with Brunston, a circumstance which, if true, could scarcely have been unknown to Knox, who was that year tutor in the families of Brunston's friends, the Lairds of Langniddry and Ormiston, and if known to him would not have been left unrecorded; but

¹ The chief town of his native district, from which he had been expelled six years before for reading the Greek Testament with his pupils.

Knox gives us not the slightest hint of Wishart's presence in Lothian previous to the close of 1545. And further, (2.) if the "Scottishman called Wishart" be identical with the martyr, we must be prepared to believe that one of the most earnest and single-minded servants of God who ever lived, interrupted those labours of love, to which he was so devoted, that when not engaged in them he looked on himself as "differing nothing from a dead man, except that he ate and drank" (*Knox*, i. 134), for the purpose of carrying letters to the English Court—letters, too, the contents of which were very little in harmony with "the word of peace" which God had sent him to preach.¹ Add to which, (3.) that, as Mr. Laing has remarked, "being denounced or put to the horn, and liable to summary arrestment and execution, Wishart could not have undertaken the task, at such a time, of carrying letters and messages between the conspirators."—*Knox*, i. 537.

3. Another point of considerable importance still remains to be investigated, viz., the date of Wishart's return to Scotland. In 1538 he had been compelled to fly from his country on a charge of heresy. The following years he spent in England, Germany, and Switzerland. In 1543 we find him in Cambridge, a member of one of the colleges; and his return to Scotland has usually been placed in the following year. Mr. Tytler, however, asserts with great confidence that he must have returned in July 1543, adding in a note, "The date of his arrival is important, as it marks the commencement of his preaching, and has been mistaken by Knox and all our ecclesiastical historians. All are agreed that Wishart arrived with the Commissioners, and they certainly arrived in the interval between the 16th and the 31st of July 1543." Dr. Cunningham simply echoes the affirmation of Tytler, without thinking it necessary to add any explanatory note. Mr. Burton is more cautious; but without condescending upon an exact date, he evidently inclines to the same opinion. On looking into the authorities, we are disposed to think that the matter is not quite so clear as Mr. Tytler and Dr. Cunningham imagine, and that "Knox and all our other ecclesiastical authorities" were probably right after all. Certainly Knox, who was in close attendance on Wishart in December 1545, ought, one would imagine, to have known whether he had returned to Scotland in 1543 or 1544. Having informed himself, as we know he did, of the several places in which Wishart had preached, and of various incidents connected

¹ What Mr. Burton says of Knox with reference to the assassination of Rizzio, may surely be said of Wishart with even greater truth,—that it is very unlikely "that he should have compromised his position as a minister of the Word by either executing or plotting an assassination."—iv. 311.

with his preaching, he could scarcely have been ignorant or mistaken as to whether the preaching, of which he gives us so graphic an account, had extended over one or two years. The point, however, is not without difficulty.

So far as we are aware, the only informants to whom we can appeal in determining it are Emery Tylney and John Knox. It is true that Mr. Tytler and Dr. Cunningham connect certain popular tumults, resulting in the destruction of ecclesiastical buildings, which are said to have occurred in Dundee towards the close of 1543, with the presence of Wishart. But the connexion of Wishart with these outrages, though confidently affirmed by the writers just mentioned as an ascertained fact, is merely an inference of their own—an inference too from disputed, and we believe erroneous, premisses. The authorities which record the tumults do not ascribe them to Wishart's presence and preaching, do not even mention Wishart's name in connexion with them. And what makes it quite certain that he had no part in these disturbances, is the fact that on his trial his accusers made no reference to them whatever, which they would not have failed to do had he been at all concerned in them. Especially when we are informed that one of the charges against him was, that he had in his preaching declared it to be "vain to build to the honour of God costly churches, seeing that God remaineth not in churches made by men's hands," we may be quite sure that if his accusers had been able to allege against him actual complicity in the destruction of churches or other ecclesiastical buildings they would have done so. That they actually made no such charge against him is sufficient to prove that no such charge could have been established, and consequently that, if the tumults in question did take place in the close of 1543, Wishart could not have been in Dundee at that time, for had he been there his enemies would to a certainty have connected them with his presence.¹

Turning, therefore, to the statements of Emery Tylney and John Knox, let us consider to what conclusion they point in this matter.

¹ The entry in the *Diurnal of Occurrents* is—"In this tyme (Oct. 1543) thair was ane greit heresie in Dundie: thair thai destroyit the kirkis and wald have destroyit Abirbrothok kirk, war not the Lord Ogilbie." The inference of Mr. Tytler and Dr. Cunningham is that Wishart was present in Dundee at the time, and had "excited the populace by his invectives." And this they assert, not only without a vestige of authority, but in the face of the known fact, that at Ayr and Mauchline he prevented his friends, not from destroying the churches, but even from taking forcible possession of them for his own use, and in the face also of Wishart's own declaration on his trial that he had "affirmed ever that churches should not be destroyed, but should be sustained and upholden, that the people might be congregated in them to hear the Word of God preached."—*Knox*, i. 166.

Tydney's statement is that "about the year of our Lord 1543 there was in the University of Cambridge one Master George Wishart, commonly called Master George of Bennet's College," that while in Cambridge it was his custom "to give his apparel to the poor, some weekly, some monthly, some quarterly, as he liked, saving his French cap, which he kept *the whole year* of my being with him," and that "he went into Scotland with divers of the nobility who came for a treaty with Henry VIII." This statement is not sufficiently precise to determine conclusively the date of Wishart's return; but so far as it goes it obviously points to the year 1544, if it can be shown that in that year "divers of the nobility came to England for a treaty with Henry."

The statement of Knox is much more precise and definite. It is as follows:—"In the midst of all the calamities that came upon the realm after the defection of the Governor from Christ Jesus, came in Scotland that blessed martyr of God, Master George Wishart, in company of the Commissioners before mentioned, in the year of God 1544."—Vol. i. p. 125.

Now this statement contains no fewer than three notes of time, fixing the date of Wishart's return. For it informs us that he returned—

(1.) "In the midst of the calamities that came upon the realm after the defection of the Governor from Christ Jesus," *i.e.* (as Knox himself explains, p. 109), after the Governor, having passed secretly from Edinburgh to Stirling, had "subjected himself to the Cardinal, and to his counsel, received absolution, renounced the profession of Christ Jesus, his holy Evangel, and violated his oath that before he had made, for observation of the contract and league with England." The date of this transaction is September 3, 1543.

(2.) "In company of the Commissioners afore mentioned," *i.e.*, as would seem, the ambassadors mentioned p. 102, who were "sent from the Parliament to King Henry in commission," to conclude a peace and arrange the marriage between the infant Queen Mary and Prince Edward, Henry's son.

(3.) "In the year of God 1544," *i.e.*, the year commencing 25th March 1544, according to the usage of that period.

The third of these notes of time speaks for itself. The first also points to the same year, and cannot be reconciled with the date assigned by Mr. Tytler to Wishart's return. For in July 1543, "the defection of the Governor from Christ Jesus" had not yet taken place, and consequently the realm could not have begun to suffer, still less have been in the "midst of," the calamities which came on it after that defection. Moreover, in the part of his History immediately preceding the mention of

Wishart's arrival, Knox gives a detailed account of the invasion of the English force in May 1544, which led to the burning of Edinburgh, and was otherwise most disastrous to the country; adding, "This was a part of the punishment which God took upon the realm for infidelity of the Governor, and for the violation of his solemn oath—but this was not the end;" and then he goes on to mention the arrival of French troops in June 1545, and the "loss and detriment to the commonwealth" resulting therefrom (p. 123). And, therefore, when he immediately subjoins (p. 125), "In the midst of the calamities which came on the realm after the defection of the Governor, came into Scotland Master George Wishart," we naturally conclude that he intended to place that event certainly not earlier than May 1544, when the first English invasion took place.

It thus appears that two out of three of the notes of time furnished by Knox undoubtedly point to the year 1544 as the year of Wishart's arrival in Scotland. But there is a difficulty in reconciling this date with the third note of time which we obtain from the same source, viz., the return of "the Commissioners afore mentioned." The only Commissioners mentioned by Knox in the previous pages of his History, are those who were appointed in March 1543 to negotiate a treaty of peace between England and Scotland, and a marriage alliance between the two royal families. These Commissioners (at least certain of them) returned to Scotland in July of the same year, having completed the negotiation. And if Wishart returned along with them, of course July 1543 must be the date of his return. And this, accordingly, is the date fixed on by Mr. Tytler and Dr. Cunningham. But in fixing on this as the true date, these writers ignore altogether the other two notes of time given by Knox, both of which clearly point to the year 1544; although, when three notes of time are given for the same event, which cannot be made quite consistent with one another, one would suppose it the more reasonable and the safer course to follow the two which agree, rather than the one which differs from both the others.

But is it quite certain that the second note of time points to a different year from the first and the third? We are not sure that it is. For in looking into the history we find that in 1544, as well as in 1543, there returned from England certain Commissioners, who also had been appointed to negotiate a treaty with Henry. In this case, indeed, the Commissioners represented not the Governor and Parliament, but two of the chief nobility, the Earls of Lennox and Glencairn;¹ but as

¹ Ultimately; but at first four Earls were parties to the negotiation, viz., the Earls of Lennox, Angus, Cassilis, and Glencairn.—*State Papers*, v. p. 361.

these nobles were at that time the leaders of the English party in Scotland, the transaction was one of considerable importance, and it was followed by great results. The commission is given in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xv. p. 19, and the treaty in the same volume, pp. 22-26. It was concluded at Carlisle on the 17th May 1544, and bears the signatures of William Earl of Glencairn, Robert Bishop of Caithness (brother to the Earl of Lennox), Thomas Bishop (Lennox's secretary), and Hugh Cunningham (Glencairn's son), the two last acting as Commissioners for the Earls of Lennox and Glencairn. These Commissioners are often referred to in the State Papers of the spring of 1544 (vol. v. pp. 361, 362, 366, 370, 373, 378, 381, 385, 386, 389), and they are uniformly styled "Commissioners," whereas those of 1543 are as uniformly styled "Ambassadors." Now we think it extremely probable that Knox either confounded the return of the second Commissioners with that of the first, or (what is perhaps more likely) that he regarded the second commission as the continuation of the first. Both sets of Commissioners were despatched under English influence. Both were assisted by the Earl of Glencairn, whose name is attached to both treaties, and in each case stands first among the Scottish negotiators. Had the first treaty taken effect, the second would not have been thought of. The second commission may therefore not without reason have been regarded by Knox as a continuation of the first; and when he wrote that Wishart arrived in Scotland in company of the Commissioners afore mentioned, he was probably thinking of the Commissioners of 1544, though his language, strictly interpreted, applies only to those of 1543.¹

If this explanation be accepted, the various parts of Knox's statement are at once brought into harmony with one another; and the date of Wishart's return to Scotland fixed to May 1544. But if that be so, of course the "Scottishman called Wishart," who came from Scotland in the preceding April as the bearer of Brunston's letters and credence, must have been a different person altogether.

But we have done. We think sufficient evidence has been adduced to show that Mr. Burton has been much too precipitate in pronouncing George Wishart to be a "fallen star," and that, despite what he calls "the ugly revelations of the State Papers," the pure lustre of the martyr's name is still undimmed.

¹ The language of Emery Tylney also applies rather to the Commissioners of 1544 than to those of 1543: "divers of the nobility who came to England for a treaty with Henry."

ART. VI.—*Die Amazone: Novelle.* Von FRANZ DINGELSTEDT.
Zweite Auflage. Stuttgart, 1869.

THE name of Franz Dingelstedt is not so well known in this country as it deserves to be. He is one of the few living German writers entitled to rank as men of genius, and his genius is of a kind rare in all countries, but particularly in Germany, combining as it does the qualities of a true poet and a brilliant humorist. His career has been in every respect a successful one. Born in 1814, at Halsdorf in Hesse, he became a professor in the University of Cassel at the early age of twenty-two, and made his first appearance in literature and public life as an ardent champion of popular rights and reform. The result of his earliest publication, *Songs of a Cosmopolitan Watchman* (Hamburg, 1840), was his removal to Fulda, soon after which he resigned his chair. In the following year he surprised his political admirers by accepting the offices of Councillor of State to the King of Württemberg, and Royal Librarian at Stuttgart. He has since then had various offices and distinctions conferred upon him. As Director of the Court theatre, successively at Weimar, at Munich, and at Vienna, he acquired that thorough knowledge of the theatrical and artistic world, which is displayed so happily in his latest production. His wife, Madame Dingelstedt, is also known on the Continent as one of the most distinguished singers of Germany. In the interval between 1840 and the present year he has published a considerable variety of works, both in poetry and prose, the most recent of which we are now about to introduce to our readers. It belongs to a class of novels of which *Wilhelm Meister* is the most celebrated and important example—the Art novel,—and of which it must be said that they are generally, not excepting that great masterpiece, less interesting as stories than as vehicles for conveying information or reflections on the various subjects that come within the compass of the term Art. *The Amazon* is liable to no such criticism. While throughout imbued with the artistic spirit, and to painters and musicians especially interesting, it is a genuine story of life and passion, of which the interest never flags from the first page to the last. The author's knowledge of the everyday world, in addition to his special experience in the world of art, has enabled him to give a breadth and tone to his pictures of life which greatly increase their interest and value. The events of the story occupy only three days,—the author in this, as in other respects, exhibiting a marked dramatic tendency,—but in that brief period there is compressed enough of variety and excitement to satisfy any

reasonable taste. And with all this there is nothing sensational or spasmodic,—neither murder, nor forgery, adultery, nor suicide. We meet absolutely no villains or reprobates, only pleasant and cultivated society, with just enough of human frailty and unheroic qualities to give reality and the piquancy of contrast. We find strong and natural feeling, contending interests and passions, delicate and difficult situations, sparkling dialogue, graphic description, all irradiated by the light of genuine humour and wit.

Our purpose in this article is to give our readers, so far as possible, the means of judging of the work for themselves, and if they do not feel grateful for this introduction, we shall be disposed to think, with Falstaff, that there is no virtue extant.¹

We are introduced at the outset to a motley procession of pilgrims under the escort of an old fellow styled Father Winter, a quondam *valet-de-place*, now a picture-dealer, and newspaper art-correspondent, towards the studio of the distinguished painter Roland, whose fame is in all the exhibitions:—"At the head marched Frenchmen, not in lively conversation, but in the silent earnestness which characterizes Young France. In the main body moved Old England, red-haired and blue-veiled, with hat upon the back of the head, and eye-glass on the nose. The rear was brought up by Germany, united Germany, quarrelling in all the dialects mentioned in its famous national song, over the works and the merit of the artist for whom the present monster visit was intended. A connoisseur from Florence on the Elbe, maintained that Roland was the first Realist among contemporary painters, whereupon a far-travelled female enthusiast from the Butter Market in Bremen replied: 'Excuse me; he stands at the top of the Idealists, as his dying Roland shows.' Another opinion, from Frankfort-on-the-Maine, placed him, on the ground of his celebrated 'Village School,' among the *genre* painters, and in conclusion, Cologne voted for placing him upon the same level, as animal painter, with Rosa Bonheur and Herring; you had only to compare his no less celebrated 'Veterinary Hospital,' published in lithograph as a prize for the members of the Lippe-Bückeburg Art-Union." The sagacious Father Winter tells them that they are all wrong. Herr Roland is animal painter, *genre* painter, portrait painter, and historical painter, all at the same time. His fundamental principle is, that the artist must,

¹ *The Amazon* has not yet been translated in this country, but there is an American translation, by Mr. J. M. Hart (Messrs. Putnam, New York), which we have generally adopted in the following pages, wherever it seemed to us that nothing better could be substituted. Mr. Hart's version, though not free from defects, is, on the whole, entitled to the praise of being racy and spirited.

like nature, be capable of everything, though perhaps less good in one thing than in another. There are no departments, no schools; only good and bad pictures. Herr Roland is furthermore an odd genius. He accepts no orders, even from royalty, unless he has complete freedom in the choice of subject, time of delivery, price, and everything. He once flung down-stairs a Russian prince who wished to burst open the doors of his studio. At another time, he showed all his art-treasures to a travelling apprentice, in "appearance a white-washer, or something of the sort," and called him his worthy colleague, adding, with a smile, "We are all paid by the foot and yard."

The artist's residence lies far out of town, a strange-looking place, more like a farm run to waste than an art palace; the house is a one-storey building with a square vine-covered tower, and a low wing, shaded by tall trees, from which a terrace slopes to the river's edge. In the yard surrounding the house is a miscellaneous collection of birds and beasts, partly relics of the stock of a travelling menagerie which the artist had bought up, and out of which he found the materials for two of his most famous pictures, "The Veterinary Hospital" and "The Circus Maximus." At last the travellers reach the door of the mansion:—"A middle-aged man, with expressive head and dark beard, dressed in a bright green short coat, on his head a red fez with blue tassel, opens the door, and remains dignifiedly bowing upon the threshold. Can it be Roland himself?! Certainly, it is he, it must be he. The enthusiast from Bremen has recognised him at the first glance, although she has never seen him. Thus exactly she had pictured him to herself. She precipitates herself upon him: 'You are Herr Roland. Bremen is my native town.' Here Father Winter's cooling hand, armed with her own parasol, is laid upon her arm. 'Madam,' he cries to her, 'this is not Herr Roland; this is Herr Raff, called Raffael, the castellan of Rolandseck.' Another dignified bow. Hereupon Father Winter and Raff, called Raffael, exchange, first a friendly shake of the hands, then silver snuff-boxes, and finally a pair of significant glances. The left eye of Raff, called Raffael, asks winkingly, 'What do you bring to-day?' Father Winter's right eye smirks back, 'Respectable people and foreigners; may admit them; fee fair, perhaps even handsome.' After which mute dialogue Raff, called Raffael, with an inviting gesture of the hand, and preserving his plastic attitude, calls out, 'If you please.' And they all follow him, Bremen somewhat slowly and abashed.

"Herr Raff, called Raffael, was known to some of the friends of art in the party. No wonder, for he had been immortalized as member of three academies before he entered Roland's house.

Whoever had been in Düsseldorf had seen him, as Ritter Toggenburg, or as an Uhlandic Sunday shepherd, in two master-pieces of that tender school, 'The Last Sigh,' and 'Shepherd with Flock on Sunday.' In Berlin he had stood, or rather lain, as model for an afflicted Job, and in Dresden he had been hung several times as Judas Iscariot, in a fox-coloured beard. He served art with body and soul—chiefly, however, with the former, which, in his devotion, he could metamorphose in the most Protean fashion. For Old Testament characters, which he was especially happy in representing, he had his beard powdered grey or white; for Moses, it was divided into two tips; for Jeremiah, it was almost clean shorn. Preparatory to his Judas he went about for half a year dyed red in the wool. No face was too difficult for him, no position too fatiguing; and as regarded the foreshortenings and distortions of the body, so justly called for by the severe historical style, Raff accomplished, in such conceptions, downright wonders. He could sit down so that he would afterwards be unable to rise again without help, and the critics pronounced his forced positions possible only on canvas. In this respect, as well as in the capacity of expression of his head, he was assisted by an inborn talent. Raff, called Raffael, was a native of Berlin, where his mother rose and fell with the ballet: his father he had never known."

The one grief of Raffael's life is that his master, deeply as he reverences him, lacks the ornament of a title; he is not even Professor, much less Councillor, only Herr Roland, even as his servant is Herr Raffael—nothing more:—" 'Humph,' he would murmur to himself, 'my old master looked very differently, even though he couldn't paint. Sky-blue with silver embroideries, enough to make one's eyes water; on the breast a milky way of stars; ribbons like a rainbow. Our visitors came in coach-and-four; the princes called him "Dear Privy Councillor," the princesses "Dear little Director," the lackeys "Excellency." We knew what and where we were. But here—God a' mercy! Such a good-for-nothing swallow-tail as this here, such an every-day fig-leaf anybody can wear, I myself just as well as the master. Where then is the difference; what becomes of dignity, art?'"

Under the guidance of this important personage the visitors are shown through the artist's rooms, getting such instruction on the subject of the pictures as the expected fee, "fair, perhaps even handsome," seemed to deserve. At last Herr Raff twitches his fez, and informs the company that there are no more pictures to show at present. But to go without seeing the master—Rome without the Pope—seemed out of the question. At last the Hanseatic lady summons courage:—"She has a letter for

the master from Bremen, her native town. Would somebody procure her admittance into the tower?" Father Winter and Herr Raff both decline the attempt, but at last good-natured Herr Stark, the senior pupil, undertakes it, the lady declaring that she will not leave the place without standing in his presence. At last she is ushered into the tower, and seeing two gentlemen, salutes the wrong one, who stiffly points to the Simon Pure. What does the enthusiastic daughter of the Weser see? "No trace of a youthfully fair Raffaelic head encircled with soft ringlets, nor a majestic Albrecht Dürer countenance enframed in a manly beard, like Raff's. No Turkish dressing-gown, no artist's blouse and slouch hat. No; a face, a form, a dress such as thousands of mortals possess who are not immortal." Then follows the unromantic portraiture of the hero, taken from his passport:—"Age thirty-five; stature, middling; hair, brown," etc. etc. A closer examination, shows that the features are those of no ordinary man, and his voice is at once melodious and commanding. He welcomes the visitors, reads the note, regrets that his studio has nothing more to show, and ends with a polite bow. "The enthusiastic Hanseatic lady had meanwhile collected her wits, and, with a piercing glance at the envious curtain, stuttered out the question—whether the famous Amazon were not to be seen?—'Amazon?' asks the artist in return. Hereupon an uncle or cousin from Bremen produced a copy of the morning paper, in which the visitor was called upon to admire in the master's studio a new creation, surpassing all previous ones, the Amazon, the portrait of a prominent star in the world of art. Roland smiled, and the little serpents round the corners of the mouth began to play merrily. He regretted that the confound—, the complimentary daily press had once more given an item that was news to the person concerned.—'Perhaps a very brief look, a peep?'—'Impossible; the picture is hardly commenced. Moreover, Herr Raff must have mentioned to you (here the tone of command became more audible) that I am engaged; a lesson.' Herr Raff caught the hint. Stepping forward he took off his fez with exquisite and easy politeness, and said: 'If you please?'

"After several dissatisfied curtseyings on both sides the caravan set itself once more in motion. Father Winter brought up the rear; Roland accompanied them to the little staircase; Raffael, with whom the visitors shook hands abashed, went as far as the door. Here Winter and Raffael come to an understanding once again, in brief but significant symbolic language. 'Scarcely fair,' murmurs Raff, inspecting the contents of his right hand. Father Winter shrugs his shoulders: 'The Amazon is to blame. A pinch at parting?' Raff shakes his head, his

beard curls in angry waves. He disappears behind the house-door, which is closed with gentle energy. Father Winter leads his flock in silence over the grass-grown court-yard, the Frenchmen repeatedly admiring the peacock, the Englishmen the dog, the Germans the poultry. Both sexes and all nationalities concur in the opinion that Herr Roland is not very attractive or affable. Bremen sighs. The album which she has brought with her, with the intent of committing highway robbery upon Roland, has to be borne back by her uncle without the master's autograph.

"The latter had, in the meanwhile, returned to his tower and shut the door behind him. A dark, curly head peeped from behind the curtain; a silvery voice inquired: 'Are they gone?' 'For good,' replied Roland: the other gentleman adding, petulantly: 'At last!' Whereupon a young girl—no, a sylphid—glided into the room, and taking the vexed gentleman by the arm, begged coaxingly: 'Only a short half-hour, *cher* papa, and you are free.'"

The sylphid is the only daughter of the petulant gentleman, Hans Heinrich Krafft, merchant and banker, the richest man in the capital, who entered it forty years ago with a knapsack on his back and a double louis-d'or sewed into his vest. His country is indebted to him for numerous great works and institutions, which have not been unprofitable to himself. He is studiously simple in his dress and profession, wishing to be known only as a plain honest citizen. His soul is in his business, and he has never had any time to love, scarcely even to marry, though he did happen to make a romantic marriage. His wife died early, and all his affections, apart from his business, are now centred in his daughter.

"Armgard is the image of her mother, the counterpart of her father: small and delicate, a Titus head with dark curls, in it two sparkling black eyes, an impertinent *nez retroussé*, and childlike dimples in the cheeks and chin. She wears gloves No. 6½, and will never in her life outgrow her girl-shoes. Report says she has been brought up well, but with terrible strictness, and Armgard takes good care not to contradict it. In the household, of which she is the sole manager, everything is according to her father's wish, 'plain and simple,' his favourite motto rules here also. She must not even call her papa Thou, but You, after the antiquated fashion of the lowlands, of which he is a native. Every morning and evening she kisses his hand. . . . Fräulein Armgard all this while changes her dress three times a day, and possesses, for her own private use, two riding-horses and three different equipages, a coupé, a calèche, and an Americaine, in which last she drives the strict Papa Krafft with

her own fair hands—all such trifles Herr Krafft does not observe. A man who has his head so full, cannot have his eyes everywhere. Furthermore, Armgard has unlimited credit, both at the bank and in the heart of her father. The great calculator knows that in so doing he does not run any danger. Early in life his daughter enjoyed independence, and reached as it were, mental majority. She receives and visits as she pleases. It devolves upon her to do the honours of the house, which is one of the most hospitable in the city, and is especially frequented by foreigners of distinction. The centre of a brilliant circle from her youth, persecuted from her childhood with offers of marriage as the richest heiress in the country, Armgard has remained on that very account 'cool to her very heart,' not to say cold. . . . She frequents balls, concerts, theatres. She sings Italian, but only a little, because she has no taste for music. She reads French and English; German books she considers dangerous: their earnestness, their sentimentality, is infectious. There is only one thing that she has been pursuing for some time with passion—drawing and painting. . . . Passion for the art or for the master? 'That is the question;' a question which is dividing public opinion in the city into two camps. So much at least is certain, that Fräulein Krafft has free entrance into Roland's inaccessible studio, while he, on the other hand, is on the most familiar terms with the house of Krafft. He, to whom it is an abomination to play the part of loungeur at routs, or of lion at solemn banquets; he, who, the more he holds aloof from society, is all the more persecuted by it,—he is never absent on Sundays from those small, charming soirées, at which only a select few are assembled, and which are magically illuminated, not by the dazzling chandeliers of all the drawing-rooms, but by a few shaded lamps in Armgard's boudoir. In the spring Roland and Armgard take country drives together, in the well-known *Americaine*, to make studies from nature, attended only by an aged English lady, Mrs. Henderson, who, in the course of time, has been promoted from nurse to governess, from governess to companion. What wonder then, that Roland's pupils regard it as already settled that Fräulein Krafft must sooner or later become their mistress?"

Herr Krafft has to be at the Stock Exchange at one o'clock, and won't sit any longer. "Flattery and caressing were of no avail, except in affording the silent observer, Roland, a nice little *genre* picture—two seasons. The father played the part of winter; he was dressed in black. The daughter looked the very personification of smiling, charming spring. She wore a white jacket, embroidered with lilac; a high lilac silk dress

with loose ribbons; yellow-laced and yellow-fringed boots, after the becoming fashion to which the Emperor Caligula is indebted for his name. Violet-breathing Spring embraced with both arms gloomy Winter, in hopes to melt him. But he would not melt, despite the close fire of the two black eyes, which with a roguish glance called upon Roland for help. 'Just see how cruel papa is to me to-day,' she complained; whereupon Roland replied: 'When Herr Krafft has once said No, there is an end of it. Besides, I myself have not much time to spare; I expect the Amazon at twelve o'clock.' The Amazon again! Who can she be? Evidently no insignificant person, for at the announcement of her appearance the Spring sky became overcast, while upon the face of Winter a half-smile began to beam. He rejoined: 'Have I said No? Not that I know of! To prove that I am no tyrant, I will sit here till near twelve. If we hurry I can still be at the Bourse in time.' 'We will go together, papa,' interrupted Armgard hastily; 'I will drive you there. I have ordered Jack here with the ponies at twelve. You know that Jack is punctual, and my ponies are fast.'"

We are not long of discovering the cause of the stern banker's sudden change of mind. Meantime, his daughter proceeds to work, in the course of which the artist interrupts her and warns her against affecting a style and idealizing. Herr Krafft has no great objection to have his wrinkles softened a little, but the master is inflexible and protests:—"You know two heads which have kept German art busy for many a year: Schiller and Goethe. Schiller has been so much characterized and *styled*, that he has come to have a nose as sharp as a knife, such as no living man ever wore on his face. Goethe's locks have been so rumpled by academic hairdressers, his forehead, temples, cheeks, so badly spoiled, that his fine countenance, full of intelligence and life, threatens to stiffen into a myth. Beware of style, Fräulein Krafft. Do not flatter your father. He does not need it. All flattery, whether spoken, written, printed, painted or chiselled, is an act of violence towards the subject and towards nature, an attempt to make him better than nature has made him.'"

Roland fortifies his opinion by quoting a similar remark made the other day by Count Wallenberg. At the mention of his name Armgard colours, and there follows some further conversation in reference to the Count, from which we gather that he is not uninteresting to the young lady, and that her sagacious parent is aware of it. He openly rallies her on the subject, and begins to talk quite confidentially before Roland about her choice of a husband. At last the sitting is over, and

while Herr Krafft is examining the portrait, in which he finds the stern lines of his face just a little too deeply reproduced, the sound of the Amazon's approach is heard. "Roland put away Armgard's easel and went to open the door. She washed her hands behind a screen, pressed her flat little hat—adorned with a knot of violets and a lilac veil—down upon her forehead, and urged their departure. Herr Hans Heinrich Krafft, however, who had previously been in such haste, seemed to have forgotten in some inexplicable manner his business hours. He buttoned up his black walking-coat, not, however, without unnecessary force, rubbed carefully his fine black hat to the proper smoothness, and pulled on his dark-coloured gloves, all with perfect composure, and with the scrupulosity of a man who is far from being indifferent to his outward appearance. Consulting his chronometer he said to Armgard, 'Five minutes past twelve. Jack and the ponies are not punctual, or they would have been announced already. However, we are in no hurry. You can drive me there in half an hour, and we cannot dash away from here without taking leave of Roland and greeting his guests.' Armgard smiled, but her smile had a little dash of bitterness.

"The noise of approaching footsteps now became audible from the adjoining studio. Roland hastened forward and opened the door. Hasty steps up the short stairway, a loud farewell from without: 'Addio, diva!' and the Amazon stepped—soared—no, she sprang with one bound into the room.

"'Am I again too late?' asked the new-comer, in an incomparable soprano voice that vibrated through the high tower like the full tone of a bell. 'Always in season,' was Roland's answer, accompanied by a hearty shake of the hand.—'Perhaps, for the first time, too early,' she added softly, on perceiving Krafft and Armgard. But this mistrustful 'aside' was lost in the warm embrace in which the master's pupil and model, Armgard and the Amazon, threatened to devour each other.

"Your hand upon your heart, fair reader: is it not true that when we girls rush at each other so violently on an everyday occasion and exchange such ardent kisses, as though we had not seen each other for years, or wished to take a hurried leave before a little trip to the North Pole—may not, in such cases, a hundred be wagered against one, that inwardly we should like that very moment to stab each other with the first convenient shawl-pin?

"Herr Krafft, for his part, welcomed the Amazon with a youthful gallantry of the old style. He said solemnly: 'How late a sunrise—at twelve o'clock noon!' Whereupon the lady thus addressed, with a ringing laugh, threw aside her bonnet,

pointed to her hair, which, be it once for all confessed, was of the most undeniable, brilliant red, and exclaimed: 'Sun, Herr Krafft? You mean to say, comet. You may be thankful that I have left my tail outside.' " Flinging herself into an easy chair, she laughingly describes the *cortège* that accompanied her to the studio:—"As she reclines there, the Amazon, she is a beautiful woman, beautiful as a picture. Should the gracious reader, with an upward turn of the nose, remind us of the red hair, we must respectfully inform him that he knows not what is beautiful; let him go to school to Titian and the Venetians, here and there to Rubens. Fox-red hair or brownish red, with the inevitably accompanying freckles, we have no wish to palm upon him as beautiful. But of the right colour, pure, molten, fluid gold, rather thick and vigorous than long, by nature wavy, spun out at the temples and on the neck in short ringlets that defy every touch of the comb—such hair shines upon a woman's head like a bright crown of beauty—beauty not regular, but all the more fascinating. Our heroine possesses everything that is suited to such hair: a dazzling white complexion, a pair of tempting cheeks, neck, shoulders, arms and hands such as every painter could wish for in his model, and a form whose outlines are far from running into autumnal fulness, yet betray the glowing maturity of summer. The eyes of the Amazon are of a peculiar shade and quality; whether black, grey, green, or blue, no one can say with confidence, because they reflect all these colours, according as the light falls upon them from without or the spirit within is moved. Old General Schall, with an excellent comparison, calls them Nixie-eyes, they are so elemental, so moveable, so full of expression. Her mouth appears, at the first glance, too large; but when we have seen the pearls which it contains, and heard the pearls which it pours forth, we hang entranced upon the pouting, dark-red lips, so long as they are open, and even when they are closed."

The name of this fair dame is Seraphine Lomond, her age twenty-eight, and she is one of the most popular *prima donnas* of the day. She now enters into conversation with the banker, who seems entirely to have forgotten his engagement on 'Change. She wants to draw more money: he warns her against reckless expenditure, has long wished to read her an earnest lecture upon that, and—a short significant pause—upon much besides. Finally, he appoints an hour for a private interview with her, and winds up by kissing her hand with great fervour; upon which he and Armgard take themselves away.

"The Amazon, who had risen at their departure, now paced up and down the studio with long tragedy steps. Suddenly she

stopped in front of Roland, who had seized his maul-stick, and was ready to go to work. 'What is the matter with the bank princess to-day?' she demanded hastily. He shrugged his shoulders. 'I heartily dislike this little personage, who plays the fine lady, with her artificial composure and affectation, with her mysteries, and long lessons in your studio. I don't know why you don't take her instead of me for the model of your Amazon. She, with her maul-stick, her riding-habit, and her coach-whip, is ten times more an Amazon than I am. And what fragrance she leaves behind her! A perfume-shop is nothing to it. Violet pomade, violet essence, violet powder; violets without end. I like violets in the open air, in the meadows, in the woods. But here the odour deadens all healthy nerves. I must have fresh air. This is stifling.'

"She impetuously opened a small sash in the great window of the studio and leaned out. Roland stepped up to her and spoke in his quietest tone, laying his hand on her shoulder: 'When you have cooled down we will proceed to work.'—'Work,' she muttered, 'nothing but work. I escape from a three-hour piano rehearsal into a two-hour sitting. This evening a philharmonic concert awaits me, to-morrow morning a conference with my agent, then a conference with papa Krafft, then a conference with the superintendent. Day after to-morrow evening, grand opera. And always and in everything I am left to myself, without protection or support from without. Oh, how sick and weary I am of this wretched life, which blind, stupid people even envy. If they only knew how gladly I would exchange with any negro slave!'

"Roland suffered this outburst of the artist-soul,—which met with a gentle response in the chords of his own, only, however, in harmonious solution of the harsh dissonances,—to expend itself. After somewhat of a pause, he said, apparently to himself rather than to the singer: 'Spring is at last in earnest. Its quiet, peaceable, artistic activity does one good to look at. In a night, with the same palette that it has used for thousands and thousands of years, it colours my old chestnut trees green. The brown buds, when they burst open, are as though freshly varnished; the young undeveloped leaves, full of wrinkles, are like the faces of new-born children.'—'Have little children wrinkles?' demanded the *prima donna* with open eyes.—'Delicate little wrinkles around the eyes, the mouth, the nose, like old persons.'—'How ugly the crying little bambini must look with them!'—'There is nothing ugly in nature, just as there is no sudden transition. Her movement is ever in a circle, swallowing up the end in the beginning. Winter and spring run imperceptibly into one another, like two different

and yet kindred keys. Every creature feels the difference. Look, even Jacob knows, without any almanac, that spring is at hand. He sits up there, the frosty old fellow, in the top-most bough of the ash tree, and suns his sly old head. Ho, Jacob, Jacob!' A large raven slowly fluttered down to the window, perched upon Roland's shoulder, then, turning his head, looked alternately at him and at the singer, and pecked at the gold medallion which the latter wore on her neck. The black gallows-bird was the last remaining article in the inventory of the old veterinary hospital. His favourite place was on the top of the master's easel, where he would sit for hours, burying his head in the ruffled feathers of his back. In their long intercourse, Roland had succeeded in teaching the old bird a trick which was greatly admired by all the pupils; whenever he cried: 'Jacob, I am too warm,' Jacob would perch upon his head and fan it with his great, black wings.

"Roland, wishing to pacify and divert his model as he would a child, stroked the tame bird and made him go through his difficult performance, first on his own head, then on the singer's. The sharp claws becoming entangled in her blue net, she was forced to take it off, in doing which her hair, which she had only arranged with a few pins, came loose, and fell down over her shoulders in a golden shower, scattering electrical sparks. 'Seraph, how beautiful you are!' exclaimed Roland. 'Marie could not have arranged your hair more beautifully or more happily for our picture.'—'You find beauty everywhere,' she smiled.—'Just as you find harmony everywhere; even in your own pure high-minded soul, when you do not, with perverse cruelty, strike the golden chords too rudely.'—'Forgive me, brother, for having been wild and reckless once more. It was not intended for you.'—'But it pains me for your sake.'—'Don't quarrel now, Roland. I will be good and sit for you—still, quite still.'—'That is right; come, Jacob; to work.'—The raven flew up to the top of the easel, while Roland arranged a steel blue helmet in the loose, waving hair. 'I shall not,' he said, 'plague you with your robe to-day. Face, hair, and helmet will give us both enough to do. If you are going to leave in a fortnight, the head must be well advanced by that time.' She sighed: 'Ah, I wish I were already away.'—'Not I, Seraph; nor you either, in sincerity. It will be hard for you to go, as it will be for us to let you go.'—'Us?'—'All of us. On that account you must at least leave your picture behind, finished, for me, for all; sit as you know how: let your head fall a little, rather more to the right; that is excellent. If you can hold out, only one hour, not two, you shall share with Jacob a plate of cakes and a cup of *café noir*.'—'Instead of the

cakes a cigarette, and I agree!' replied the model.—'Domestic Regulations, § 5: "Thou shalt not smoke, except in the billiard room."—'That is a law which we impose upon strangers, only to break it ourselves. We will drink coffee together there in the corner, under the oleanders, smoke our pipe of peace, and you shall tell me your fairy-tale, the long-promised one.'—'What one is that?'—'Your history; past, present, and future. Will you?'—'If you have sat patiently.'—'I shall be like stone.' Profound silence reigned in the tower. Only through the window-sash, which remained open, there came the fresh rustling of the branches and the twittering of the early singing birds by the brook. How easy to paint in such a place, secure against every interruption, in a swelling, impetuous spring-tide mood, alone with a model who abandons herself to the master, not only with dazzling beauty, but with all the practice and skill of her own artistic perceptions. His eye sparkled as it plunged alternately into the deep lake of those nixie-eyes and the golden stream of hair; his hand flew, although at times trembling, in among the colours of his palette and along the canvas. Occasionally a smile, a glance, a familiar inclination of the head, would hurriedly pass between them. The entire ecstasy of a morning of creation was compressed into one sacred hour."

This charming repose does not last long, however. The Amazon breaks the silence by inquiring who is to be the Theseus, the hero of the piece, the subject of which has been taken from a recent opera by the celebrated maestro, Bullermann, and represents the moment in which the victorious queen of the Amazons gives his life to the treacherous hero, and then takes her own. The painter has not yet decided. She asks why he does not take himself. He laughingly says that he is not a Greek. Theseus must be a man of graceful form and attractive air,—a lady-killer, in short. Count Wallenberg, for instance, in golden armour instead of uniform,—he would quite represent the painter's ideal. "But not mine," says Seraphine.—"Why not?"—"Because." This little passage disturbs the mood of inspiration, the lady becomes fidgety, and finally jumps from her chair, where she finds some hair-pins sticking under the cushion. Roland thinks they may have been left by the model who sat there yesterday. "Or by Fräulein Armgard, whom you have been painting to-day, instead of giving her a lesson. I won't sit any longer on this chair—I will not." "Silence again prevailed in the tower, but it was an oppressive, sultry silence. The singer took a rapid turn through the apartment and then said, not to Roland, but as involuntarily speaking to herself, 'I could never love or marry a painter; jealousy

of his models would kill me.'—Roland burst into laughter as spontaneous and as loud as though this confession had really delighted him. Then taking her by the hand he replied: 'And your future *fiancé* or your husband?—is he also to be jealous of all first tenors that clasp you for minutes together to their breathless bosoms; of countless melancholy bassos, who, as tender fathers, carry you behind the scenes in their arms, or who, as enraged uncles, drag you over the stage by this charming golden hair in order to administer to you, in front of the prompter's box, their curse in the deepest F or FF?'—'Those are the straw men of the theatre. Who thinks of them, when singing with them?'—'And these are the straw women of the studio. One never thinks of them when painting.'—With these words Roland pushed the chair to one side and threw the fatal hair-pins to the floor."

Peace being again restored, and the sitting over, this artistic couple have their coffee together, light their cigars, and the artist proceeds to fulfil an old promise, by telling the story of his own life. Born the son of a shepherd in the German Tyrol, he changed his vulgar name of Meyer for that of Roland, an English gentleman, his first best friend and patron.

How he fared in his first love-suit is capitally told. In his early career of sign-painting, he took as his model for a female Turk, to figure over a tobacconist and grocer's shop, the black-eyed daughter of the house, with whom he fell deeply in love. "I soon came to an understanding with Christine, for that was the name of the odalisque. She inspired me to make a formal offer of marriage to her worthy parents, assuring me that her mother had been gained over by her eloquence. So, one fine Sunday morning, arrayed in my first black coat, hat in hand, my heart beating high, I ascended the short staircase that led from the shop into the family apartments. The table was already laid; out of the kitchen there came a most seductive odour, unmistakably from a Saint Martin's goose stuffed with apples. Christine received me winking, simpering, evidently full of confidence, and without the least doubt as to the complete success of my suit. She pointed covertly to a fourth place at the table, as if to say, the goose and I, we are yours, for certain; only go ahead! The mother sat at the window and knitted the stocking of my fate. Papa was making up his week's accounts at a *secrétaire* in one corner of the room, over which a perpetual lamp was glimmering; his frown betokened an ominous deficit. Despite the seductive sign before the shop, rappee and Virginia had been dull, no demand for herrings, oil quiet, soap alone lively, the profits on which are very small. He

received me with dignified reserve, listened in silence to my long, carefully prepared speech, without interrupting me, turning all the while upon his writing-stool, and when I had ended, solemnly closed his journal and ledger with a snap. 'Your suit, Herr painter Meyer,' he replied after solemnly clearing his throat, 'can only be gratifying to me, to my wife, and my daughter. However, before proceeding farther, please tell me what o'clock it is.'—Taken aback, I stammered out that it was something past twelve. 'You think so, but a merchant is in all matters exact. Have the kindness to consult your watch and give me the exact time.'—'My watch? I have none.'—'Does that mean that you do not possess such an article, so necessary to an orderly man, or that you have left it at home?'—'I have none at all, neither here with me nor at home.'—'Then we regret,' he said, descending from his elevated seat, 'to be under the necessity of refusing you our daughter. A man without a watch is no husband for her. Young gentleman, find a watch first, and then a wife. Not even a watch! Christine, serve up dinner. It is . . . '—here he drew complacently his Nürnberg egg in its tortoise-shell case out of his breeches pocket, and let the seal and golden chain flash a ray of annihilation in my eyes,—'It is twenty minutes past twelve. Now you know what time it is. At your service in all other particulars.' He bowed, mamma stood up and dropped a curtsey and a stitch, either in terror or compassion. Christine had disappeared, with a parting glance which said to me, 'Not even a watch! If I had known that!'"

His first stroke of good fortune is not less amusingly described:—"I told you with what fiery zeal I set up my easel and yearned after employment. I vowed, above all things, to be true, never to flatter. Hear how I stood the test. My first customer was a baker, Frau Maier by name. She kindly called me 'cousin' and inaugurated the sittings, which were held in her 'best room,' with a breakfast of cakes, of her own manufacture, and morning bitters, likewise of her own manufacture. A little sweetening of the task could do no harm. Frau Maier was a mature beauty of some fifty summers, and weighed a good two and a half cwt. She appeared in a low-necked silk dress with short sleeves, while around her bare neck was entwined, serpent-like, a gold chain supporting a pair of glasses. I modestly ventured to inquire whether she might not wish to put on a ruffe or a cape. She replied with a decided negative, not understanding why she should cover up her neck, which was short enough already. With a sigh I placed her weak spot, that is to say her strong one, in the most discreet light possible,

and went to work. The outlines of the head could be disposed of tolerably well. But when I came to the lower parts of the face, which terminated in a majestic chin, several storeys deep, I grew dizzy, and broke out into a cold perspiration. First with my eyes, then with my crayon, I wandered disconsolate over those mountains of flesh, not knowing where the chin terminated and the bosom commenced. The sitting was brought to an abrupt conclusion. The next morning I inspired my courage with two, perhaps even three glasses of bitters, and energetically set out upon my pilgrimage, resolved to bring order into the chaos—above all, to remain faithful to my vow of truthfulness. I worked like a butcher-boy, while every now and then my colleagues, the bakers, with their shirt-sleeves rolled up, their faces white and knowing, would look over my shoulder, laughing in secret. Even the master came, shook his head, and went. The third day—no breakfast. A bad omen. No visits from the bakery either. Only the boy came in once, made a demoniacal face, and ran away, crying: 'The mistress looks as if she had the gottre.' My two and a half cwt. became profoundly perturbed. Frau Maier shed bitter tears. Herr Maier scolded me for a booby, and wanted to know if I took his better-half for a spoon-goose. My future was at stake, my art-journey to Rome and Paris. Should my first customer leave me dissatisfied, no need for me to remain, my occupation was ruined. A painful struggle arose in my heart. At last the genius of truth, vanquished, lowered his banner, my vow was broken. I closed my eyes; one vigorous stroke and the double chin disappeared, the mountains died away in gentle, undulating contours, nothing remained but a tempting fulness. Of course the fourth sitting brought with it a rainbow of peace, in the shape of many-coloured liqueurs. After completing the picture—a speaking likeness, so everybody found it—the 'cousin' had to take dinner every Sunday at the baker's. The grateful Frau, lighter by fifty pounds, recommended me to her entire family connexion, among them a town-councillor, to whom I gave a Roman nose instead of a congenital potato one, and the daughter of the resident physician, who had a squint, but whom I prudently painted in profile. Success was mine—what is success, Seraph? Then it was the height of my ambition to coin one German provincialist per week into silver, to lay aside a few thousand florins in twice fifty-two weeks. To her, my baker woman, I am indebted for this fortune. Peace to her adipocere." At the conclusion of his narrative, the artist tells Seraphine, that now having reached, perhaps, the summit of his fame, he asks himself what is the difference between him and his humble brothers and sisters whom

he has provided for at home, "What is happiness? I repeat again. Seraph, do you know?"

"The singer, who had followed Roland's narrative in silence, arose and laid her hand upon his shoulder. He remained sitting in his chair, thoughtful and fixedly gazing, as though the story of his life had called up restless, rest-destroying spirits. She spoke with a tone of emotion: 'Yes, I know what happiness is; know it because I have it not, know it in and from you. Happiness is peace. Your powerful spirit floats, in immovable equipoise, high above the wavering and wandering of our artist-paths, that aspire and relapse alternately. You have reached your goal. Your works, your pupils, have borne your name abroad throughout the world. You are happy because you make others happy.'—'Do not deceive yourself,' he answered soberly, almost sadly; 'I am weaker than you suppose. What I have accomplished as a painter, others estimate and over-estimate; I alone feel wherein I fall short of perfection, how far, how unattainably far the true, the highest aim still lies above me. Feel how it is beating and surging here within'—here he pressed her hand to his heart—'storms of the wildest kind, the autumnal equinox of my life, which descends, day by day, hour by hour.'—'You, Roland, in the fulness of your vigour, at the climax of your fame?'—'I have reached the fatal boundary-line between youth and age, I look back upon laborious beginnings, look forward to dreary solitude. I am lacking in the conditions of the simplest, most essential human life, which no one can violate with impunity, not even the most favoured: a home, fixed domestic ties. I have grown up as a tree without roots, always pushing upwards, turned toward what is without. This absence of what is nearest and most natural cannot be compensated for by work, by any achievement in art. Of what avail to soar aloft, if you stand alone on the summit, all alone? And I shall stand alone, entirely alone, if your path once more separates from mine. Have you decided to go, have you really?'

"He grasped Seraphine's two hands and held them in his own, looking into her eyes with deep emotion. She slowly disengaged herself. A faint shiver passed over her, as she replied hesitatingly and with averted countenance: 'I do not know yet. Within a few days I must come to a decision; not, however, without calling in your assistance. There will surely be a quiet hour in which to exchange my confessions of a weak soul for this chronicle of your youthful days.'

She then tells him that she has an offer from an American Barnum to go on a great international opera trip for five years round the world, and that she may fix her own terms. "Roland

hears her impatiently, and paces the room in indignation. 'Five years!' he exclaimed; 'you surely do not think of consenting; you cannot?'—'Why not? I am as free as the bird in the air—an outlaw. And think of what I can make, since I am at liberty to insert into the contract the figures which denote my value.'—'I know you well enough to know that gain will not decide you.'—'Perhaps!—though, if it is a considerable gain——! Then you forget that my weakness for *café noir* and Turkish tobacco attracts me, magnetically as it were, towards the East.'—'Do not jest upon grave life-questions.'—

Seriously, then; there is no remaining here for me. Every year the old migratory spirit comes over me, only it does not impel me towards the North, but towards the South, to our common paradise, now lost. Brother-heart, think of our mule-back rides among the Campanian hills, our excursions on the moonlit gulf!

"She flew to a pianino that stood concealed in the farthest corner of the room. An overpowering dithyramb swept over all the chords. Gradually the white fingers composed themselves to more measured accords. Above them rose, gently at first, in breathings scarcely audible, then gradually swelling, at last rolling forth in the fullest, most thrilling power, a voice so full of soul and expression, so pure, so heavenly clear, as though it sounded from the clouds, from the choir of cherubim and seraphim, and not from the lips of an earth-born woman. She sang: 'Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blüh'n?' in a simple manner, but with that artistic geniality and perfection which can inspire the most familiar theme with the glowing life of an improvisation, and which irresistibly sweeps away every listener in the whirlwind of the artist's own mood. The query: 'Kennst du es wohl?' ascended in staccato, like a scarcely suppressed sobbing, from which an outcry of the most intense home-sickness, the startling call, 'Dahin, dahin!' tore itself loose, only to die away, lispingly, in the agonizing sigh: 'Möcht ich mit Dir, O mein Geliebter, zieh'n!' The incomparable picturesqueness of the words and the glowing hue of the tones united in producing an illusion that dimmed every sense,—a Fata Morgana of Italy. There it lay, near in vision, touch and hearing, the sacred, the ardently longed-for land of dreams and wonders. Its golden fruits were fragrant, its west wind blew softly through the open window. Outside no longer rustled the bare, bleak linden-tops, but the high laurel, the still myrtle; and the waterfalls of Tivoli thundered and foamed, the colonnades, the marble statues of the Villa Albano peered out, mysteriously white, from the dark green. . . . Dahin, dahin!

"Roland lay spell-bound at the feet of the dangerous enchantress, listening with suspended breath, both hands pressed to his face. She drew him still deeper within her magic circle, by adapting Mignon's last prayer directly to him :

'Dahin, dahin,
Geht unser Weg. O Bruder, lass uns ziehn !'

"She then closed with a brief after-play : a few vanishing accords, in which the soul, distended almost to bursting, might vibrate itself to rest. She looked around at Roland—What is this ? He does not move ; but tears, bright tears, trickle through his fingers. Involuntarily she raises her arms ; she will fly to him as though on azure seraph's wings, will embrace, will cheer him. . . . But the spell is suddenly broken. A third person has, unnoticed, joined their circle. Through the door there comes a loud clapping of hands and the repeated acclamation : 'Brava, bravissima ! Da capo ! Fuora !'

"The moment, a decisive one perhaps, was gone. Seraphine's wings drooped. Roland rubbed his forehead, and, with the smile of an awakened somnambulist, rose to greet the intruder—or was it a preserver ?"

The gay intruder is the often mentioned Count Augustus von Wallenberg, Ambassador-Extraordinary, and Minister-Plenipotentiary, etc. etc., the most popular of ministers, both at Court and among his friends, a born aristocrat, but generally esteemed a thoroughly "good fellow." "Wallenberg's external appearance has already been described by Roland on a previous occasion : a nice head, dark hair, crafty eyes, a delicate little beard, a slender figure. We merely add that this external appearance possesses, in all its details, the genuine diplomatic property of betraying nothing, neither age nor character. The Count could be set down as fifty, or as twenty-five. He is not large, and not small, not handsome, still less is he ugly. His eye, for all its good-natured glances, is concealed behind a drooping eyelid, as though behind a discreet curtain. Having been in foreign service ever since his childhood, and gone through all the Courts of Europe, and even one or two missions over the seas, his language too has no recognisable peculiarity. In his dress he is elegant enough not to be elegant after the present fashion, which regards comfort as the supreme law. Sum total : an *homme distingué*—one who is in nothing distinguishable." The lively diplomatist makes himself quite at home, notwithstanding his manifest intrusion at an interesting moment, and after some pleasant chat the fair singer takes her leave. Then ensues a confidential talk between the artist and the diplomatist. Roland tells his friend that he begins to

weary of his loneliness, to desire a home and a fire-side, wife and child, in fact, he believes he is in love.—"My best wishes at all events. But love and marriage are widely different matters. A man can love without marrying, and marry without loving. Marriage is, at our time of life, confoundedly serious, not to say hazardous. We know only too well what we give up, and too little what we receive in exchange. Marriages of affection or of passion are, in the main, only a success in early youth. The sphere of maturity is the marriage of reason."—"Which I abominate," hastily interposed Roland.—"But which," replied Wallenberg, "is and ever will be the most salutary for a genuine artist-soul. After all, everything depends upon the other half, the object of your choice."—"Advise me, Wallenberg."—"Advise and guess then! Fräulein Krafft?"—"That was the advice of jealousy," said Roland, smiling.—"Indeed? Fräulein Armgard and myself have stood for years upon the strictest footing of armed neutrality. I suggested her first, because the town persists in regarding her as something more than your pupil."—"She is not the one."—"Who then?"—Roland pointed to the door through which Seraphine had disappeared.—"No?"—The artist nodded violently.—"Not that one, not the Amazon?" cried Wallenberg, pointing to the easel.—"She and no one else."—"Are you beside yourself, Roland?"—Whereupon the diplomatist, with real or affected panic, threw himself into a chair. Roland looked at him, in amazement at the impression his disclosure had made. After a significant pause, Wallenberg resumed: "You wish to marry Fräulein Lomond?"—"On the spot, if she will have me."—"Impossible, Roland!"—"Why?"—"A man doesn't marry a *prima donna*."—"Why not?"—"Singers are frescoes; we admire them from a distance, we adore them, we even love them to distraction. But marry? Never!"—"I ask you once more: Why not?"—"Because we don't select a volcano for our hearth."—"Exaggeration."—"Because no lasting union can be spun from untameable passion, unaccountable freaks, insatiable or *blasé* moods."—"As though your ladies of the best society were never troubled with *vapeurs* and *migraines*, that sour the life of a tormented husband! Far better endure the ocean tempests of a deep but sincere artist-soul than the petty spite and spleen of a faithless little pond."—"Are you willing to go shares with the hydra-headed public in your wife, the highest and best of a man's possessions?"—"If she loves me she will abandon the stage."—"To leave you again at the end of a year and return to it."—"Then she practises her art as I do mine, free and unrestrained."—"You, Roland, the husband of a singer, a king-consort, a shadow? Always to play second fiddle, to carry

music-books, to wrangle with directors, to manage fault-finding critics with the horse-whip, and laudatory ones with bank-notes, to shake hands suspiciously behind the scenes, to ride on the back seat of the old theatre carriage. . . . You, Roland; you, with your pride, your uncontrollable love of liberty?!" He proceeds in the same strain to recommend the banker's daughter as a far wiser choice, the very difference of their character and pursuits giving a promise of happiness not to be expected from the fusion of two artist lives in one, mutually embarrassing and destroying each other. "But I do not love Armgard, she does not love me," says the passionate artist.—"And do you love Seraphine? Are you beloved by her?"—"I . . . do not know. There are hours in which I believe both, and days in which I doubt both."—"See now Do not deceive yourself," and the cunning diplomatist goes on to warn his friend against rashly concluding that the charming intercourse hitherto existing between him and the beautiful singer could continue after they became man and wife. He winds up, "It is not well, Roland, it really is not well. So far as I am acquainted with Seraphine, she loves nobody. Whom is a *prima donna* to love, whom can she love? Herself, in her part, on her stage, in her public. As soon as she loves another, any one in particular, she abandons herself and her art. The theatre should, like the Catholic Church, exact a vow of celibacy from its priests. Leave heaven its stars; the stage heaven as well. 'We do not desire the stars,' says Goethe. . . ."

These sage counsels do not quite please Roland, but the result of a brief meditation is, that he requests his good friend the Count to go as his confidential agent to Seraphine, reconnoitre the position, and according as his observation turns out, either advance with the best offer he can make for him, or withdraw to the *status quo*. This kind of love-making is not much to our taste, but the plan of the story perhaps required some such cause of complication. While Roland leaves the studio for a while, the Count begins to meditate. He begins to feel somewhat envious of his friend, and, as he calls up the image of the fair Seraphine, the idea of winning her seems to him something more desirable than it had ever appeared before. His reverie is broken by the entrance of Herr Krafft, who has suddenly come back to the studio in the hope of finding Seraphine still there. Now follows another unexpected disclosure. The banker takes the opportunity of seeking the Count's advice on a matter of grave importance. His daughter will shortly marry. The Count congratulates the father, and the future bridegroom still more. The banker has never desired to control his daughter's

inclinations, but, unless he is much mistaken, he thinks her choice has fallen on their friend Roland. The Count is sure it could not have fallen on a better man. "Two brides at once," thought he to himself, "what luck the fellow has!" Coming to the point, the banker asks if the Count advises the marriage. The Count puts the counter question, "Does Roland love Armgard?" Herr Krafft thinks he does, and proceeds to arrange the thing all square. The marriage will be over in three months. But then comes the gist of the business. "'But then the father's house has become empty and desolate. The old man has got accustomed to female company, to some fair, presiding creature at his side. He cannot endure the strange solitude. What shall he do? What do you counsel him, dear Count?'" He renews his youth in the happiness of his children; he dandles his grandchildren on his knees.'" "You imagine him too much as a venerable greybeard. Let us suppose that he can still make some pretensions to the world. . . . You understand me, Count?" "Not entirely, Herr Krafft," smiled Wallenberg, who had long since detected what the other was aiming at, but secretly enjoyed the pleasure of making him unbosom himself fully. "But a famous diplomatist like you should catch every hint, every half-word." "Evidently you overrate me, Herr Krafft." "In the name of Heaven, then! I must blurt it out: I wish to marry again, marry . . . her there (pointing to the picture), the Amazon! Now laugh at me, as loudly as you please; but afterwards give me, as a man of honour, as a man of the world, as friend of our family, your advice; I ask it with reference to both plans."

"Krafft walked to the window and drummed on the panes with his fingers. Count Wallenberg remained in his chair, as astonished as a diplomatist well can be, almost at a loss for an answer. Had he been alone he would have burst into a Homeric peal of laughter at this prank of fortune, which had made him, in one hour, the confidant of two men so different and yet coinciding in their aims. He, the Ambassador-Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary, beheld himself elevated to the position of marriage-broker for a banker and painter. . . . Enough to make one laugh one's-self to death. And yet Wallenberg laughed not. The fascinating image of Seraphine, the new Helena, rose before him, ever higher and brighter. He lost himself so profoundly in the contemplation of her picture on the canvas that he well-nigh forgot Krafft's presence and the entire position of affairs."

The conversation is resumed. The Count assures the grey-bearded lover that he feels honoured by his confidence. "'Your age, your position, to say nothing of your splendid fortune,

justify you completely in thinking of a second marriage.'—'Are you serious?'—'Perfectly so. Women innumerable would accept your hand with gratitude, so to speak. You could make some one happy, and you deserve to be happy yourself.'—'I never yet have been happy, strictly speaking, my dear Wallenberg. I had no time. I could begin now and take the time.'—'Still, do not be precipitate, either with Fräulein Armgard's marriage or your own. You are pretty well acquainted with our amiable *prima donna*?'—'Fräulein Lomond frequently visits my daughter; besides, I attend to her little business matters.'—'She is well off, is she not?'—'As you take it, Count. Her fortune might determine many another man to a proposal; not me, however. I can, in a single operation on 'Change, to-morrow for instance, when the stock of our new South-West Railway will be sold, make more than Fräulein Lomond in a whole year.'—'Indeed?'—'Why, you do not wish to compare her little bit of sing-song with my work, my responsibility?'—'Assuredly not.'—'Her deposit in my bank, snug as it is, is next to nothing in my eyes. What attracts and captivates me in the divine Amazon—and has done so longer than I will confess to you or to myself—is her power of fascination, her talent, her character.'—'The caprices and passions of the singer are not to be overlooked.'—'The salt of marriage, my friend, the true spice, such as is needed for a man in the fifties. All the fire that she now lavishes on the boards will go towards illuminating and warming my house, my old age. Her voice, her incomparable silver voice, will belong to me, to me alone; I will coin it into social capital in my salon, the first in the city.'—'And you have no apprehensions of being ruled by a young wife who has been accustomed to command?'—'The more the better, Count Wallenberg. It will do me good in my very soul to follow the guidance of another will than my own. Let her rule, she shall rule. If she wishes to travel, we will travel. Play,—I will break all the banks for her. . . . Wallenberg, that woman has bewitched me!'

"So saying he departed, the raging wolf, leaving his sheep's skin behind him, not merely the costly fur in which Armgard had been painting him, but also that outer wrapping of the cold man of business, the strict paterfamilias, which he had hitherto preserved with such anxiety. Who had looked for such heat underneath the snow? Certainly not Count Wallenberg. For his eye followed the banker with even greater amazement than it had previously followed the artist. 'Two fools instead of one!' he exclaimed to himself. 'But I will show you a third, Gustel Wallenberg, who is a still more wretched fool than either.'"

The result of the Count's cogitations is that he has been a
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great blockhead to stand so long, like the ass of Buridanus, between two charming girls, unable to choose, till both are snatched away from him, and that with his own assistance! Shall he not, before it is too late, improve the opportunity for doing a little diplomacy on his own behalf? Meantime, he and Roland go arm in arm to the carriage that is to convey them to dinner at the Count's country house.

The incidents hitherto related have all occurred on the Friday. Next day we are introduced to the *prima donna's* quarters, the arrangements of which are graphically described, including a brilliant portrait of her majordomo and factotum, Signor Beppo. It is ten o'clock in the morning, but *la diva* has not yet appeared, while a miscellaneous assemblage of visitors crowds her ante-chamber. Here we have one of the best passages in the work, describing the wonderful new piece by the great maestro Bullermann, the very sum and climax of the "Music of the Future." The humour of this description must be appreciated by those least conversant with the vagaries of the musical world.

A group is assembled around the open Bösendorfer piano. Herr Bullermann, the composer of the "Amazon," is expounding to the editor of the semi-official *Morning News*, the basso Herr Braun, and the Ritter von Blumenberg, the tendency and character of his latest musical production, *The Deluge*. With a modesty equal to his power of prophetic vision, he announces it as the absolute work of art of the future. The master of the school that takes its name from the "Wagon" is left miles behind; he lies immeasurably far below. Similarly all the limits and forms of art are victoriously set at naught. *The Deluge* is neither oratorio nor symphony, still less can it be or is it intended to be considered a musical drama. "Universal history become Music" would be the only suitable description of the work. Its representation calls for a theatre like the Circus Maximus in size and arrangement; one semicircle set apart for the audience, the other for the orchestra, while the singers and actors have their place in the middle. Like the dramas of the Greeks, the piece begins at sunrise, under the open sky, and closes, after the necessary pauses, at midnight, under cover. It borrows from the Mystery-stage of the Middle Ages the three-fold division of the stage, Heaven, Earth, and Hell; from modern times, all the marvels of painting and mechanics. The piece is divided into seven parts, the mystic number seven (seven days of creation, seven colours of the rainbow, etc.) running significantly through the entire piece in septima chords. The opening is idyllic: the awakening of nature at sunrise. A herd of cows with bells—no anachronism, since Tubal Cain had already discovered brass—a train of camels, are driven over the

stage, *in natura* of course. Shepherds, also *in naturalibus* as much as possible, sing, dance, play. Thereupon the patriarchal life is unfolded in all its purity: Noah and his daughters enter. (Noah, Herr Braun, deep bass.) Then comes an interlude in hell: a fallen angel (the chief tenor) is sent upon earth by Satan,—a humoristic bass-buffo,—to ruin the young human race. He succeeds only too well; who does not know the irresistible power of the high C over weak, feminine souls? Fourth part: gigantic orgies; all three compartments join in. In the topmost storey the angel choirs weep; in the middle, drinking, gambling, love-songs are bellowed forth; underneath, howl the triumphant dithyrambs of the demons, among whom the sixteen contrabassos, *unisono*, laugh in scorn. Thereupon the stage, the entire house, is eclipsed, a cover being suddenly thrown over it. The deluge, with its real waters rising from point to point, from tone to tone. Noah builds the ark; magnificent chorus of journeymen carpenters chopping in time. Chorus of the drowning, *decrescendo*, while the orchestra, the deluge, ascends higher, higher, higher, to the last flageolet notes of the first violin. Deep silence. The ark is seen floating. Sixth part: Noah's doves fly forth; the flapping of their wings imitated to perfection by striking the wood of the violin-bow upon the strings. The waters fall, fall, fall; with a jerk through the entire orchestra the ark comes aground on Ararat. Thank-offering of Noah and his rescued ones; joyful chorus in heaven (Seraphine—first seraph), despair in the nether-world, whither the first tenor returns in a musical effort which stands between *Don Juan* and *Tannhäuser*, but high above them both. A septima accord rises with the lunar rainbow, and fades away in melodious colouring. Seventh part: establishment of the culture of the grape, conceived in the antique spirit, so that Noah, like Bacchus, represents the founder of civilisation. Bacchantic finale.

"The author, Herr Bullermann, was giving his faithful admirers a slight idea of this creation on the piano. With respect to the singer Braun, he had a sure game beforehand; the latter was already charmed with the part of Noah, and contemplated executing it, especially the drinking scenes, in a masterly manner, a mild degree of intoxication to be indicated by abrupt fugues on the French horn. 'Could he hold out?' inquired Ritter von Blumenberg, the most sober-minded of the small but select audience. In lieu of a reply, Braun stood up and struck his chest, which resounded like a barrel. . . . A born Noah! Herr Braun is six feet tall, like most bassos, disproportionately broad, like a great many of them, and has a slightly rubicund nose, like some of them. The machinery, however, caused the

somewhat anxious and critical Ritter von Blumenberg more scruples than Father Noah's capacity of endurance. 'How will you make the deluge?' he demanded, shaking his head.—'By forcing-pumps; nothing easier.'—'How are you going to make it rain?'—'By means of water poured down upon high plates of glass. A thin gauze curtain spread in front will make the illusion perfect. Besides, the house is in semi-obscurity, and the ear will aid the eye by hearing the rain in the orchestra.'—'But the rainbow?'—'Optical instruments of colossal dimensions will produce it with more splendour than nature herself.'—'And the doves?'—'Have you never heard of goats being trained for the stage? Of carrier-pigeons?'—'The ark, then?'—'The ship in the *Africaine*.'—'Magician of a thousand tricks! He has an answer to everything.'—'Say, he is all in all,' exclaimed the man of the *Morning News* enthusiastically: 'Poet, composer, manager, decorator, mechanist. Bullermann, you are a universal genius!'—The maestro smilingly inclined his head; leaving it undecided whether he found universal genius too much or too little. The friends embraced each other across the piano; a sight for the gods: the official press and the Music of the Future in heart-felt unison."

Only a few months before, the *Morning News* had been denouncing the music of the future as madness and its leaders as asses, while the *Evening Journal* was their champion. Now it was all the other way. The papers had changed sides, but the hostility between them raged the more fiercely. The representative man of the one was Meyer Hirsch, and of the other Hirsch Meyer. Both were in the house at this moment, but they must not be allowed to meet, or the consequences may be disastrous. "And yet—if there ever were two mortals intended by blood, vocation, the closest affinity of soul, to be a pair of bosom-friends, Hirsch Meyer and Meyer Hirsch are these mortals. They belong to that interesting genus of manimals which a modern statesman has attempted to christen with the name of 'Newspaper Jews.' They are, both of them, far from directing the editorial management of their papers: they only supply the *feuilleton* with articles upon art matters, mixed news, crimes, and calamities. The semi-official *Morning News* follows the Government through thick and thin. The editor-in-chief is a man of rank and position, who directs and is directed from the minister's antechamber. It is distinguished by its corrections, which come limping along regularly four weeks after the occurrence of the events, and which never tell what has taken place, but only deny, in oracular style, what is said to have taken place. Just the reverse the *Evening Journal*, which runs ahead of the opposition, likewise through thick and thin. It is the

property of a stock-company, that speculates in liberalism according to the daily money-market. Is the paper suppressed in any one State, one of the principal shareholders leaves immediately, to do penance on the spot and promise amends. Confiscations, on the other hand, are favourite measures, often brought about on purpose to bull the market. Imprisonment-terms are served out by Hirsch Meyer, according to a fixed tariff. His speciality is theatrical criticism ; but he also writes brilliant leading articles. If the Chambers are convened, he thunders against untimely extravagance ; the Government bills are not yet complete, the committees unprepared. Are they adjourned, Hirsch Meyer thunders on the other side : woe to the country where the voice of popular representation is suppressed. He has just dashed off, at the singer's writing-table, this glowing improvisation upon fly-leaves : "Fusion of parties—confusion of the Ministry."

How the *prima donna* brings these two worthies for once together forms an amusing interlude, and affords an illustration of Continental journalism, to which we would fain hope no parallel could be found in this country. Hirsch Meyer, of the *Evening Journal*, is writing in her cabinet. Meantime she enters the saloon and disposes briefly of her visitors. "'And now to you, my friends!' continued the goddess. Ritter Blümchen, overjoyed, hastened forward and seized one of her hands, Bullermann the other, the man of the *Morning News* hunted in despair for a third. 'I regret that I am obliged to dismiss you also. I need rest to-day for to-morrow. *Au revoir*. Stop, Herr Hirsch Meyer, I beg you to follow me a moment into my cabinet.'—'Meyer Hirsch, gracious lady.'—'All the same, I shall expect you.'

"The sun disappeared as it had appeared, in storm-clouds. The Ritter and the composer left ; the *Morning News*, uncertain as to what should follow, knocked timidly at the door of the cabinet. The two hostile brethren, surprised and enraged, stood suddenly face to face. Seraphine smiled, pulled open a drawer of her writing-table, in which gold, silver, bank-notes, jewelry, letters, cards, *étuis*, lay huddled together in a confusion peculiar to herself, and, catching up a pair of scissors, she said : 'Before I go I should like to do one good deed, by firmly uniting, for a short while at least, two irreconcilable enemies.'—'Impossible, never!' was the reply.—'Let me make the attempt. Do you see this bank-note?' She showed them a hundred-thaler Prussian bill, and, cutting it with an artistically undulating line into two unequal parts, offered one to each of the opponents. 'Be united,' she exclaimed, and disappeared into her bedroom, leaving the two critics to themselves. They

had involuntarily taken the singer's strange farewell card from her hand, and, in mute amazement, they first looked at her vanishing form, then at each other. Meyer Hirsch awoke from the spell before Hirsch Meyer, and ran hastily out of the house; Hirsch Meyer ran after Meyer Hirsch still more hastily. And indeed the artist's wish was gratified, though only for a single hour. The world saw Hirsch Meyer and Meyer Hirsch, a sight never before beheld, first enter together a bookbinder's shop and perform a mysterious operation with paste and brush. Thereupon they went, still together, to the exchange office in the Red Rose, from which they emerged with flushed countenances, only to run away in opposite directions as of old. Nobody has ever solved the riddle of this close and yet, alas! but fleeting friendship between *Morning News* and *Evening Journal*."

At twelve o'clock the diplomatic Count makes his appearance, and is received in special private audience. He tells Seraphine that he has come on a mission from two great powers, bearing, like a certain ancient Roman, two offers in his toga,—offers of marriage. "'Only two?' says Seraphine, 'not a week in the year goes by without bringing me at least that number. Whenever a merchant is on the point of ruin, whenever a young cavalier casts about him for means to fill his stables in suitable style, the first speculation they think of is my hand. The hand of a singer is common property. Let Signor Beppo conduct you into his secret archives; one large, full compartment bears the inscription: "Offerte di matrimonio."—"Of course you understand that I would not be the bearer of such messages. Those that I bring are serious, honourable suits. In the left side of the toga,—carefully folding the lappets of his coat—is hid no less a suitor than Herr Hans Heinrich Krafft; you see how his weight almost tears to pieces the antique folds.' Seraphine smiled, but without the least sign of surprise. The ambassador continued: 'For every year that he may be thought to have in undue excess of you he generously lays down a million; his house you are already familiar with. He offers you his heart, and that with all the passionateness of late affection.'

"The smile disappeared. The singer played thoughtfully with the tassels and fringes of the divan. After a brief silence she said: 'And the counterpoise to this weighty first offer? Carthage had the choice between war and peace, Sir Ambassador. Whom does the right side of the toga conceal?'—"A friend, Fräulein," was the very earnest reply; 'the painter, Roland.' Seraphine grew pale, even to her very lips. The hand that had been toying with the silk tassels, clutched them firmly to conceal its violent trembling. There ensued an oppressive silence,

in which one might hear every faint tick of the *vieux-boule* clock on the writing-table, well-nigh also the quicker, clearer beat of the Amazon's heart. Count Wallenberg watched her sharply; he felt no less moved than she was. Having regained her composure, she said, looking fixedly at the diplomatic mediator: 'You call yourself Roland's friend, Count. I believe you to be such. Have you then, as such, approved of his suit?'—He hesitated—'Openly and frankly, like an ancient Roman.'—'Well then, openly and frankly, not like an ancient Roman, but as his and your friend: No!'

"Seraphine sprang up, or rather was on the point of springing up. The Count caught her hand, which was icy cold, so cold that he could feel it through her glove, and restrained her." The Count then expounded to her his theory of contrast as the true foundation of happiness in marriage. Seraphine asked if Roland had heard this exposition also—if he admitted its truth?—"His reason must, whether his heart is willing or not."—"It is not willing then?" interposed Seraphine, and it seemed as though there were a lurking hope, a half tone of exultation in her last question.—'His heart, like yours, is a genuine full-blooded artist's heart. It does not know what it wishes. To-day it dreams of you, to-morrow of Armgard. But it will be rudely awakened from its dream as soon as it has entered upon a union by which the iron voice of reason has not been consulted.'—'Enough; I beg you to excuse me a few moments.' With these words Seraphine slowly rose and withdrew into her bedroom. Count Wallenberg remained alone; a smile, not of dissatisfaction, played around his delicate, firmly-set mouth. Perhaps Theseus thought he already held the Amazon's girdle in his hand? Softly, softly!

"In the darkest corner of the sleeping apartment stood a *prie-dieu*, and above it a small marble statue of the Virgin and Child. Seraphine knelt down, for a prayer without words: 'Madonna, Mother of God, blessed Protectress, see, I come to Thee, not in the empty jugglery of an opera prayer—no, Madonna, but in holy, fervid earnestness. Aid me in the sacrifice that I am making. At Thy feet I lay my bleeding heart, with all its secret, foolish, O and yet so sweet, desires. Receive it. It is thine; it cannot be his. To him give all the happiness that I must forego. . . .

"Amen,' she softly breathed, and arose. The art of the actress came to the aid of the woman. She stepped to her dressing-table and cooled her glowing face with the powder-brush. Without a tear in her eyes, but also without a smile on her lips, she reappeared before the double wooer. Her golden hair shone around her white brow like the halo of a martyr. 'Count,' she

said with a clear voice, 'I thank you for your wise counsel. What is more, I shall follow it. Say to your friend, that his offer does me high honour and gratifies me exceedingly, that it has almost touched me, but that, upon mature deliberation, I have given heed to the voice of experience and friendship, yours, Count Wallenberg, and preserve my freedom. I earnestly desire that Roland, too, may be governed by you, and soon, very soon, announce to me his engagement with Fräulein Krafft.'" Wallenberg then tables the banker's proposal, which the *prima donna* proceeds to discuss, to his astonishment, in quite a business-like manner, overruling the diplomatist's objections on the score of difference of age, etc., as inconsistent with his own theory. At last he tells her that he has a third offer in his breast-pocket, "over the place where the heart beats," and gracefully presents his own card. Seraphine laughs out, somewhat to his discomfiture, and treats it as a joke. He proceeds to assure her that he is deeply in earnest, and presses his suit with all the skill of an accomplished man. Seraphine thanks him for his confidence and for his offer, which has the advantage of forcing her to a decision on pending questions of vital importance. She asks for time for consideration. He accepts this as a favourable token. Then she delivers an impassioned defence of herself and her class.

"Of one thing you may be sure, that I am worthy of you, Count Wallenberg. This hand can be laid without trembling in that of every man of honour, even the best, the highest; it is free from every blemish.'"—'Who doubts it, my dear Seraphine?'—'You, yourself, in secret. Do not deny it, Wallenberg. You declared, just now, that you could neither offer nor claim the firstlings of love. And then I know our gentlemen of the best society. Their youth they pass in the questionable atmosphere of the *demi-monde*; their mature age behind that Chinese wall with which society—what chiefly goes by that name—shuts itself off from the outer world. The notions of female virtue and excellence that they derive from both spheres are not of the best. If they come in contact with the pariah-folk of the theatre, then the Baron, the Count, the Prince, has only to imitate Cæsar: come, see, conquer. He coolly throws the singer, the actress, his handkerchief, confident that it will not be rejected if it contains a set of diamonds or a pocket-book full of bank-notes.'"—'What a gloomy view you take of life!'—'It is that of your order, Count; but, heaven be praised! not the right one. I stand up here for my profession, although I was not born or bred for it. In the semi-obscurity, the impurity of the stage, there is still to be found pure, vigorous womanhood, as well as in your

saloons, or in the rooms of burgher houses. Yes, better, because it has to withstand more difficult trials. Out upon the cheap virtue of your young girls of the cultivated classes, who cannot deceive the eye of an only too-experienced mother, and then, as soon as they are away from it, cajole and deceive their husband behind his back, or to his very face! Reckon up where there is the greatest amount of seduction and abduction, of marriage vowed and broken, on our stage or on yours! And yet how exposed we are, from the very first step in our elevated, bright, yet slippery path, to the delicate and the coarse attentions of individuals, the intoxicating applause of the multitude, to unrestrained intercourse with the most dangerous men! She who wishes to stand firm there, must be able to rely upon herself, to control herself. With pride I can say: I have done it. My life lies exposed to the eye of the world; there is not a false step in it. My past will not reflect the least shadow upon the house that I may enter as a wife, were it ever so brilliant."

The conference ends very amicably, and before its close Seraphine reveals to the Count the story of her life. This is about the weakest though not the least amusing part of the book. Possibly the witty author may have meant it for a burlesque. It turns out that the *prima donna* is not what she has hitherto passed for, a German, but a *Scotchwoman*, and not only so, but the daughter of an Earl,—the Lady Mary Menteith! Her name of Lomond she borrowed from the queen of Scottish lakes, on whose banks she had spent so many happy days, before she made up her mind to avoid a distasteful marriage, by flying from her native land, leaving her hat and shawl, with the oars of her skiff, floating on the waters of the loch. There are some comical touches in this bit of biographic romance, such as the description of the old Earl of Menteith, as the chief of a clan, for ever at war with his neighbours, and withal a Scottish repealer, "hating equally Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston."

The next scene of the story introduces us to the diplomatic residence of the Count. Here we have a capital portrait of a young diplomatist of a school not unknown to us at home. The indefatigable Hirsch Meyer has been in the Count's rooms, trying to pick up some scraps of political information. "When he had taken his departure the young man rose, who had been sitting concealed behind English and French newspapers, marking with a red pencil whatever might be of importance to the Count. It was his *attaché*, Prince Paul Sess of Neussess-Sessenheim, who had recently joined the embassy, and at that particular moment was exercising the functions of the secretary, in the latter's absence. The young statesman, son of a man

who had been in his day an omnipotent prime minister, fresh from the university, brought with him the fame of profound learning, and passed for a prominent, hope-inspiring power in the diplomacy of his country. At the very first glance he appeared as the perfect contrast to his chief, Count Wallenberg. Where this latter is, or appears to be, too light, the other is, or appears to be, too heavy. He belongs to the most recent youth of our times, as they spring up with frightful uniformity in all our great cities, chiefly characterized by the common trait of being older than extreme old age. Whoever seeks after geniality, fondness and talent for society, agreeable manners, especially towards the other sex, loquacity, and good-humour, let him knock at the doors of the boys of fifty and upwards; men below that age, especially the greybeards between twenty and thirty, are, on entering the world, above all these qualities, which they look down upon as frivolous and old-fashioned. Born and reared amid grave events and struggles, ever surrounded by materialistic aspirations, with a head full of positive knowledge, and a heart devoid of all ideals, they begin where their fathers left off. Their sole longing and striving is, to achieve success, to grow rich or famous in a night, to obtain a position. All else appears to them superfluous, if not worse. They speak but little, eat and drink little, dance not at all except on command, ride only according to the doctor's prescription, and take up the turf or play either as a matter of social obligation or to win. So are they all, our young English Lords, the Marquises of France, the Russian Knese, the Italian Principi, the German Counts and Barons: all *one* race, even in external appearance. With their pale, hard countenances and close-cut hair, their wide sleeves and baggy pantaloons, their thick double-soled shoes and grey felt hats, they look like a new crop of Roundheads, Puritans in miniature; such, however, as believe in nothing but success, and have no other religion than egoism; fanatics of the worst sort, the cold sort.

"Prince Paul—a splendid specimen of this species, the most perfect greybeard of three-and-twenty—rose from his work at Hirsch Meyer's departure and said thoughtfully: 'Are you not afraid, Minister, of this journalist compromising us?'—'By means of the empty envelope of a telegram?'—'Hm! stolen or lost despatches, letters that have fallen into the wrong hands, have caused mischief enough.'—'My dear Paul, no one then would be free from anxiety for his paper-basket.'—'I burn the contents of mine every evening.'—'Mine here is emptied by my servant. Whether now he sells the stamps and seals to collectors, or whether a poor newspaper Jew speculates for once with a scrap of the refuse, what is the difference?' Changing

the subject, the Count demanded: 'Nothing new by the mid-day post?'—'A circular message from our Government to its foreign agents. It explains its commercial policy in the most pacific spirit, and enjoins us to maintain everywhere the best understanding with foreign cabinets, and to give this emphasis abroad.'—'When the Herr Minister preaches peace, there must be something in the wind, perhaps the beginning of the end. We must be watchful. No news from America?'—'None. And yet Marvál says that an important message might come at any hour from our secret agent in Liverpool.'—'I wager that it will again come like the thief in the night. Do not have me awakened, except in a case of extreme urgency. I have passed a sleepless night and need rest. You have the key to the cipher. The matter can lie over till to-morrow, I reckon.'—'With your permission I will bivouac in the hotel and send for Marvál. An interesting investigation will help us to pass the time. Professor von Siebold has sent me some rare specimens of crustacea. Just think,' continued the young Puritan, becoming as excited as it was possible for him to become, 'Siebold has discovered in a small shell a still smaller crab, concerning which it has been impossible, until now, to guess how it could get inside. It is now ascertained that the crustacean drives out the mollusc and occupies its house. I am going to examine the fellow under my lens.' Count Wallenberg looked at his scientific *attaché* in amazement. 'Do you know,' he said smilingly, 'that you yourself, under the microscope, would be an incomparably more interesting little animal than your sea-crab? One at your years, my dear Paul, generally investigates lobsters and oysters from other motives than those which actuate Herr von Siebold.'—'The study of molluscs is my speciality, Count, and my relaxation.'—'In a sleepless night?'—'I never need more than four hours sleep.'—'At your age? When you are as old as I am, you will not sleep at all.'"

The elder diplomatist proceeds to give some excellent advice to his premature young assistant, tells him that he works too much, not always in the right way, that the diplomatist is often least idle when he seems most idle: the Count's own greatest successes in diplomacy were achieved, not by despatches and notes, but at a hunt or a ball. The diplomatist must not sacrifice his freedom of position and *coup d'œil* to laborious working up of details. More may be done by mere inertia than by excessive activity. Talleyrand's golden rule must be ever remembered, "*Point de zèle!*" The same great master's definition of his art is not less worthy of remembrance, "Diplomacy is good common sense applied to the great business matters of the world." A definition, by the way, which very nearly corre-

sponds to the more recent teachings on the subject, by precept and example of two such opposite statesmen as Mr. Bright and Lord Stanley. The austere young disciple listens with attention but secret contempt to the exposition of his chief, and proceeds to develop his own ideas of the work, and the principles of the new school of diplomacy to which he aspires to belong. It must follow the tendency of the age, and direct it. It must become positive, the promoter of international commercial policy, the mediator between nations and their most pressing wants, the guardian of universal prosperity and morality. This requires study of history and elaborate investigation. Prince Paul has been prosecuting his researches into the history of diplomacy ever since his second year at college. He has been collecting materials for a history of the subject, and has extended his studies as far back as the Greek-Byzantine epoch. With such a work he hopes to win the laurels of a Thucydides, "And the wrinkles of a Socrates," laughs the incorrigible Count, and prays that his forehead may be preserved from both. "That," he adds, "is the difference between us old diplomatists and you modern ones—we make history, you write it."

Wallenberg now retires to his divan, and arranges his plan of operations. His ally, Hirsch Meyer, shall insert an *on dit* in the *Evening Journal*, to the effect that the Fräulein Lomond is about to retire from the stage, to bestow her hand on a gentleman enjoying a high social and diplomatic position, but with whom she will match on equal terms, being herself, it has been discovered, of noble birth. This premeditated indiscretion will, the Count thinks, have the effect of engaging Seraphine, of burning behind her the bridge of retreat to the stage. Herr Krafft will be compensated for the rejection of his suit by getting the son-in-law of his choice, and the fair rich Armgard will be more than sufficient smart-money for Roland. Just as these cogitations are being concluded the artist is announced, and the Count hastens to inform him of the important discovery communicated by Seraphine. Roland breaks out: "She has confided this to you? She kept it secret from me for years; from me, her friend, her brother. True, if she is a fine lady, a nobleman must be nearer to her than an artist."—"Stop, Roland, Seraphine is an angel."—"She was one even before she became your equal, Count."—"You are bitter and unjust. I shall say nothing more until you have composed yourself." After an oppressive pause, during which they sat in silence, each lost in his own meditations, Roland resumed, with a tone of forced composure: "Pardon my hastiness, Wallenberg, and my anguish. I forebode everything. Let me know what I ought to know, what I must know."—Thereupon the Count, omitting names and

details, narrated what the singer had told him, prudently commencing at the end, the history of her youth. He built up a wall of separation between her and Roland, so that the latter could see a fresh stone added with every word. The peasant's son from the Tyrol began to feel the national vein throb within him; he thought—and Wallenberg's artfully confused narrative confirmed him in the belief—that Seraphine's refusal was dictated by an awakened feeling of social rank. Her past intimacy was set down to the score of art; the singer was willing, it is true, to associate with the painter, not the born lady, however, with the son of a shepherd. She would turn her back upon him and the stage together, and withdraw to the bleak upper regions of society. Adieu, fair dream, adieu!" The diplomatist follows up his advantage, makes no mention of Krafft's proposal, but boldly burns up his own ships and confides to Roland what has passed between himself and Seraphine, assures him of Krafft's desire to have him for a son-in-law, and of Armgard's favour for him, and strongly recommends him to strike the iron while it is hot, and ask her hand. Roland starts away for Krafft's, and the diplomatist thinks the game is won.

In the next chapter, the graphic power and satiric vein of the author are well displayed. We are introduced to the counting-house of the banker. The reader is called upon to take off his shoes at the threshold of the Temple of Mammon, or at least his overshoes, if he happen to be burdened with such protection against the dirt and thorns of life's pilgrimaga. "Off with your hats, all ye, of whatever rank and age, with the exception of the venerable Hebrew, the lovely daughter of the tribe of Judah, who follow in our train. Let them keep their heads covered in Old Testament fashion, for we are about to enter the temple of that God whom their chosen race, with prophetic glance, adored sundry millenniums ago in the desert—the golden calf." The address of this shrine is in common parlance Krafft Street, No. 30. The street itself is a monument of the great speculator's genius. An enterprising architect bought the ground and commenced to build, on the strength of a credit opened for him by Herr Krafft. The enterprise proved too much for the architect, and the banker saw himself forced, against his will of course, to stop the credit at the eleventh hour. The half-finished street lay dismantled, and the industrious workmen, out of employment, went about in despair. The public spirit of Herr Krafft faced the emergency. He bought the buildings for half what they had cost, finished them, and then either sold them for three times the sum, or rented them at such a rate as to produce ten per cent. The grateful town-council named the street after the public-spirited banker, while

the unfortunate architect was denounced as a swindler. At the corner of the street stood the dwelling-house and business premises of Herr Krafft:—"The two sides of the Krafft house, sharply separated, represent two worlds. On the side towards Krafft Street business rules, Herr Hans Heinrich Krafft; while Fräulein Armgard Krafft looks out upon the Königsplatz. The first half is occupied by vast cellars, where the samples of oil, spirit, and other liquid articles are kept; the ground-floor is allotted to the bank for working men; on the first floor are the offices; on the second the cashiers' rooms; in the third storey and still higher, across the court-yard and into the back buildings, extend the warerooms for groceries, wool, grain, hemp, hops, etc. etc. For the firm of Hans Heinrich Krafft does not only banking, but also wholesale commercial business. The granaries are situated between the railway stations and the harbour, forming a small town by themselves. The taxes and customs annually paid by the firm are written with five figures, the first of which is not a one. Its number of *employés* exceeds the contingent furnished by many a member of the Bund, and on pay-day, turbulent Saturdays, ten cashiers have enough to do to fill the open hands at the various pay-windows. . . . And yet Krafft—the Herr Principal, as he permits himself to be called, after the old fashion, by every one of his people, from the book-keepers down to the youngest volunteer or porter—knows all his men by sight. His memory, both for figures and for persons, is terrible, and his ubiquity, even in the darkest corners of his kingdom, borders on the fabulous. Where he is least expected, there he suddenly appears, always in black or in white, and always on foot. No mortal eye has ever seen him with an umbrella or overshoes. The dexterity of his arm puts to shame the most skilful grain-measurer in the granaries, his quickness at figures confounds the ablest heads in the counting-house, and, in emergencies, the speed of his big feet outdoes even the jog-trot of the old grey nag that brings the letters four times a day from the General Post-Office."

On the particular Saturday when we are introduced to the interior of this great establishment there is unusual stir and bustle in Krafft Street. "Saturday is the great day, on which, at four o'clock, subscriptions for the South-West Railway will be received at the banking-office of Herr Hans Heinrich Krafft. Another public-spirited enterprise of vast scope. Only a short time before, Krafft had explained the prospectus to the Finance Minister in a secret conference. For an hour and more the two potentates, so closely related, and yet not always in accord, walked up and down his Excellency's room in confidential conversation. Child-like spirits, they enjoyed the sight of the

early swallows building their nests before their very eyes in the curves of the Ionic capitals close by the windows. 'A happy prognostic for your undertaking,' said the Minister graciously. 'What a head you have! What a pity that you cannot be induced to take charge of one of the bureaux of my department.'—'With a few thousand florins a year for a salary, your Excellency,' smiled Krafft. 'No, I am not of the right kind to be an official. I am and shall remain a citizen, plain and simple. Each one must serve the State after his own fashion. Permit me to abide by mine.'—'The State will serve you in turn, as long as I have any share in its administration. As to the rest, you are right, neighbour,' added the Minister with a sigh. 'Nothing like personal freedom. Most willingly would I resign my portfolio into your hands on the spot.'—'Gracious heavens, Herr Minister. I should make a fine figure at the green council-board, or on the bench of martyrdom in front of the Chambers. We are in our right place, both of us. Let us remain there.'—'And friends too,' concluded the Minister, with an honest shake of the hand. Hereupon they discussed some other private affairs of His Excellency, whose fortune Herr Krafft had taken charge of as a special favour. It was agreed that His Excellency should take an interest in the South-West Railway to the amount of a good round sum, and they separated upon the most cordial understanding. The Herr Minister accompanied Herr Krafft, who had come in disrespectful overcoat, through the antechamber, filled with uniforms and black dress-coats, to the door, which the servant opened for the parting guest with Oriental salaams. Downstairs, under the Ionic columns, the porter saluted with his outstretched staff infinitely more devoutly than before a Councillor of the first class, almost with as much devotion as before His Excellency, and was only too happy when Krafft said to him in a friendly manner, 'Well, Niklas, on a certain Saturday you too can announce yourself in the counting-house; there will be a little account kept for you.'

"Great was the astonishment when, only a few days after this so tenderly concluded interview, the semi-official Meyer Hirsch fired off an article against the new railway. The *Morning News* warned its readers against excessive speculation, and showed that the Government, which had given no guarantee for the payment of interest, washed its hands of all responsibility. None but the initiated saw that this very article had been agreed upon in the conference itself. The administration wished to display its independence of Herr Krafft, to preserve its position of strict impartiality. The public, however, mistrustful of every official utterance, read between the lines that the

bureaucrats looked with unfavourable eyes upon this enterprise of a man of the people, and grudged poor folks a sure profit. It was replied to in the same spirit by an article of Hirsch Meyer's in the *Evening Journal*. The fuss on both sides did its duty, and produced the desired result.

"This became most palpably manifest on Saturday afternoon. Even before three o'clock, the human tide, swelling from minute to minute, pressed on to Krafft's house. In a short time the street was packed full, and still the rising tide rushed in both from the Börsenplatz and the Königstrasse. Men of business, officials, moneyed gentry, workmen, even servants, pressed forward to subscribe, all the more eagerly when it was announced that the lists would soon be closed, and all subscriptions proportionately reduced, on account of an undoubted excess. This report had such an alarming effect, that armed policemen, and mounted guards had to be summoned, the street closed and barriers put up before the doors of No. 30, just as at the ticket-box of a theatre a little before the commencement of some unusual performance. We find some of our old friends drifting about in the raging flood: here Signor Beppo had brought his bit of poverty, there Father Winter's venerable head rises above the tide, deep red and dripping with perspiration; Maestro Bullermann cannot protect the fainting widow on his arm in any better manner than by crushing her against the wall; Hirsch Meyer and Meyer Hirsch struggle on opposite sides, as usual, for a choice place on the stone at the corner, from which they can overlook and describe the scene. The shrieks of female voices, the laughter and roaring of the men, the useless cry of order by the gens d'armes, blows and kicks, choruses by the envious or the inquisitive from the adjoining windows, the exultation of the mischievous street urchins,—all these separate discordant sounds combine to form an infernal symphony worthy of the idol to whom it is offered, and who sits up there, behind locks and bars, in the Holy of Holies of his temple, the fire-proof safe, unapproachable but ever surrounded afresh by the swarms of his raging devotees, dead, and yet daily demanding and devouring his living human sacrifices.

"Roland drew back dispirited, in time to avoid being swept away by the roaring stream. He had either not thought or not known of this great event of Saturday. And yet his excited mood called so imperatively for some final result, some decision, that he regained his courage and discovered a way of access to old Krafft through the entrance to Armgard's apartments, on the Königsplatz. A servant led him—the well-known friend of the family—without hesitation up a side-stair covered with green carpet, the communication between father and daughter,

into the counting-house. Here order, peace, quiet reigned. The roar of the flood was wafted up from below like the dashing of the sea against a dyke. Only the new hands peeped out at the windows, grinning whenever a woman's shawl was trampled upon in the crowd, or a man's coat-tails torn off. The older *employés*, used to such battles, worked on undisturbed, standing in pairs at the heavy oak desks, over which hung gas-lamps with green shades. Nothing was to be heard but the scratching of the steel pens, the rustling of the leaves of the huge books, the crumpling of smaller and thinner slips of paper, known as bills of exchange, the whispering of a couple of voices that were rapidly making some computation, in duplicate, to prevent mistakes. On the side-tables copying-machines and stamping-presses were unceasingly at work. Noiseless as shadows, the occupants of these dismal apartments glided from one room or one desk to another. An office servant, likewise a shadow in invisible grey livery, handed round the 'Vesperbrod,' consisting of coffee and cakes, bread and butter and fruit, which was devoured hastily, in silence, and standing. And each desk, each room, each man even, looked like all the rest; the same prices-current hung on the walls, the same railroad and telegraph-maps, the same daily almanacs, the same lists of coins; in the corners stood the same basin-stands, above them hung the same white towels marked with the same red characters, H. H. K. . . . Fie upon this imperfect human race! It has successfully invented sewing-machines; why not writing and counting machines? Then we should at least hear in such a money-manufactory the whirling of wheels and the wheezing of steam, as in all the others! But no; in the temple of the demon, in the immediate presence of his gloomy majesty, nothing is suitable but silence, the silence of the grave!"

The soul of the artist is oppressed by the atmosphere of the counting-house. He is silently directed, by point of pen, from room to room, till at last he finds himself in presence of the presiding genius, who is closing peremptorily an unpleasant dialogue with his aristocratic father-in-law, a broken-down Knight of St. John. The old man has come a-begging, and has been told that the banker can do no more for him, but that his annuity will be regularly paid. The banker makes no secret of the matter to Roland, tells him that the old man is a hopeless devil, and as a specimen relates how, after giving him one day a handful of gold, he found him breakfasting sumptuously off silver at the Nimrod Club, when he condescendingly saluted him before a numerous company, adding, "Sorry I can't invite you to join me. But you know our regulations—civilians not admitted." Such persons, said Herr

Krafft, must be snubbed, and made to feel the power of purse-pride *versus* pride of ancestry. Roland's momentary suspicion that this lesson may be meant to apply also to him is dispelled by the frank and confiding manner of his intended father-in-law, who tells him that he has seen his daughter, and that he may be assured of her filial compliance with his wishes. He then shows Roland his room, in return for his frequent views of the artist's studio. "Roland took the desired survey, but only with a slight feeling of discomfort at being lost in a strange world. The counting-room of the principal was the same as those of his *employés*. Between the two windows stood the writing-table, covered with heaps of newspapers, stacks of letters, mountains of ledgers, bound in canvas or leather, and tipped with brass at the corners; a chaos for every eye and every hand but the master's. A cane-bottomed chair in front of the table completed the picture of hardness and simplicity. So also the standing-desk, which was not a whit more elegant or comfortable than all the others. The four walls were lost to sight behind cases that overflowed with pasteboard boxes, books and pamphlets, all marked with the numerals of the year and the name of the country to which they had reference. All five continents were here represented. In one corner stood timidly the narrow leather-covered sofa; in another, a small table, on which a bit of black bread and two Borsdorfer apples represented the 'Vesperbrod' of the millionaire. A couple of stray cane-bottomed chairs invited one to stand. Nowhere a flower, a picture, a carpet, a soft curtain, a coloured cover; everything bare and prosaic, cold and bleak. And for this to be banker and wholesale dealer!"

The merchant saw what was passing in the artist's mind, and tells him that he must not judge by appearances. Even this prosaic world of his has its secret poetry. Yonder blue pasteboard box is the cradle of a South American republic; within that other, bearing the label "Melbourne," is hidden the first introduction of Australian wool into Germany, and so on. "'I do not deny,' he adds, 'that it would have been pleasing to me to have my son-in-law undertake the continuation of my life. But that cannot be. Still, dear Roland, there is a practical side to your art, where we can meet and work together, with my means. I can picture to myself a future for you of laudable activity, which shall embrace and gradually control all German exhibitions, academies, collections. If we buy up whatever is good wherever we find it, offer premiums for the best, give aim and direction to contemporary art by means of exhibitions on a grand scale, place German and foreign art upon a good basis, found societies for mutual aid and loans . . . ?'—Then we should be

art-dealers, Herr Krafft, not artists. To me a wholly unknown region, whither I cannot follow you, even in fancy.'—'Then you can at least follow me one step into my cabinet of curiosities,' said Krafft, opening the door of an alcove by the side of the counting-room. Roland saw a small, low bed of plain deal, with a blue and white checkered pillow, a straw mattress and a horse-blanket; near by, a closet, in which were hung up a blouse, a pair of leather breeches, a pair of high boots, a leathern apron full of seams and spots, the shoulder-straps of a porter, and an oil-skin cap.—'Here you see the commencement of my fortunes, Herr Roland,' explained the millionaire, not without solemnity and pride. 'That is my first couch, which I purchased with the labour of my hands, after years of toil and thrift; I have never slept better than upon this straw mattress. In that closet I have preserved the dress, the tools with which I began my present career as a day-labourer. When I wish to compose myself, or to learn humility, I take refuge here. Sit down with me a moment on the hard bed. Hans Heinrich Krafft will tell you how he became a merchant.'" And then he tells the story of his early fortunes, which need not be recited here.

The dialogue that follows is interrupted by the entrance of the banker's chief clerk, who announces that the crowd has broken in the barriers and is attacking the counting-house. The police are not strong enough and the military have been sent for. The great capitalist hears the announcement with calmness, and gives directions to have a few shares reserved for Messrs. Hirsch Meyer and Meyer Hirsch, so that the press may be kept in mind. Presently a cashier rushes in to say that all the shares are disposed of, and that the mob pours in more fiercely than ever, and wildly shouting for Herr Krafft. "To your place, sir!" thundered the banker, "I shall come when I think it time. In no case before the military arrive. We need their interference, for the sake of the market." At last the moment for action has come. "Let us bring the play to a close," says Herr Krafft, and flinging up the window, he sternly inquires of the mob what they want of him? "Shares, scrip," was the vociferous reply. "You claim," he said, "without any right or manners," and proceeded to administer a lecture to the crowd, telling them, in conclusion, to send him a deputation, and that he would listen to them, but not to a turbulent mob. So saying he let down the window with a bang, and the broken panes fly over the heads of the crowd. The soldiers have now arrived, and are halting with fixed bayonets, the mob sullenly drawing back at their approach. Three deputies come seeking audience of the banker; he receives them like a potentate, but with the condescension of a good man, a

plain citizen. After hearing their complaints and their suspicions that all the shares are being given to the rich and none to be reserved for the poor, he addresses them:—"I am nothing more than you are: a man of business, who works for his living, the son of a peasant, a plain, simple citizen. I began in a smaller way than any of you; but I will never forget that I am flesh of your flesh, blood of your blood. Facts have proved it. I will give you a fresh proof to-day. Go home and tell the people who have sent you: Hans Heinrich Krafft will give up the share which his house has subscribed to the South-Western Railway in favour of the less wealthy citizens of this city. This sum of five hundred thousand thalers shall be divided up *pro rata* among the subscriptions under five hundred dollars."—"Heaven bless you, Herr Krafft," stammered out the court cooper, and the grain-broker tried hard to shed a tear of gratitude; the confidential clerk, Herr Lange, the third of the group, caught at the hand of the patron, to kiss it, with emotion. Krafft drew it back angrily. 'No self-abasement, Herr Lange,' he said. 'We are men of the people; let us behave as such. God bless you, gentlemen. You know my purpose. Make it known to the good people waiting outside, and rid me of them without delay. Let the subscription be conducted quietly and in good order. Adieu, children!'—The deputation withdrew. A few minutes afterwards there was heard a thundering hurrah: 'Hurrah for Herr Krafft! Three cheers for Father Krafft!' He showed himself at the window, nodded quickly and soberly, and motioned to them to disperse. While the tumult was subsiding, Krafft and Roland retired into the private counting-room. 'You have,' the latter said, 'spoken nobly, acted nobly.'—"I have made a bargain, nothing more, nothing less; moreover, not a bad one."—"How so?"—"In three months I shall buy at 70, perhaps still lower, what I am now to give up to them at 90."—"You know that beforehand?"—"With mathematical certainty. The public expects an Eldorado in the South-Western Railway, as it does in every new enterprise. The undertaking is a good one, it is true, or I should not have ventured upon it. But one must be able to wait until the fruit is ripe. The small holders cannot do that; they sow to-day and to-morrow they wish to reap. At the first payment their heart and their purse are all right. At the second or third, both are gone. Upon the least rise they will throw the paper, for which they were ready to break each other's necks, upon the market, and so depreciate their property. But if some fortuitous circumstance should cause a pressure upon the money market, then they drop all that they have, in a perfect panic, for any price. I shall watch this

moment, and buy. In a year or so, when the line is finished and its communications complete, the shares that were subscribed for at 90, and which I shall have bought at 60 to 70, will touch 100, or higher.'—'That is to say,' said Roland thoughtfully, 'you will gain at the expense of those people whose confidence you have aroused, then satisfied with objects of artificial value, and finally drained for yourself.'—'Business is business,' replied the familiar harsh voice. 'Unless I become a counterfeiter or a forger I can do nothing more than convert other persons' money into my own; of course, in an honest way.'—'And you do this without fearing lest one day some one mightier and luckier than you should do the same to you?'—'I must be prepared for that; I am prepared.'—'Also for the storm, not one of your own creating, but one sent by the wrath of God, that shall scatter all this paper splendour of our times, and reduce this appalling social inequality of ours to a universal zero?'—'Let us quietly abide this Last Day,' laughed the banker, taking the artist by the arm. 'And now to my daughter,' he said; 'she will be anxious about her father, impatient for the master.'"

Before we come to the interview that follows, let us see what has happened in the interval. Herr Krafft had communicated to his daughter in the morning his kindly intentions regarding herself, Roland, and Seraphine. They are not quite agreeable to her, but she controls her feelings as becomes a little female diplomatist. After a two hours' communing with herself, she makes up her mind, orders the ponies, takes a fierce drive round the Park, halts at the Court jeweller's shop in the Königstrasse, purchases a beautiful gift for Seraphine, and sends it to her straightway, with affectionate wishes for her father's success in his suit, and promises of filial obedience to her dear stepmother. She has not been long at home when a violent peal at the door-bell announces the approach of Seraphine. A very pretty interview and dialogue ensue, creditable to both young ladies. The passionate singer, with a bursting heart, but in perfect sincerity, congratulates Armgard on the happiness that is to be hers. As to Papa Krafft and herself, on the other hand, it cannot possibly be. She esteems him profoundly, but marry him she cannot. But her friend and Roland are made for each other. Wallenberg has convinced her of that. "Also that Roland loves me?" asks Armgard. "He does and must," says Seraphine. Armgard smiled. "And I must love him in turn, must I not?"—'When you know him, the grand, magnificent man, as I know him: yes! He is a child in disposition, a hero in moral force and dignity, in talent a very god! Girl, what a lot is yours at his side! Intimate communion with such a spirit,

living and moving in his ideas, abandoning yourself wholly to his mighty individuality, losing yourself in him and his creations. . . . Armgard, you will be the happiest woman on earth if you become his wife!' The singer embraced her friend passionately, and kissed her repeatedly. The former ill-will, the wild jealousy of the bank-princess, had disappeared from the Amazon's heart since she had sacrificed her secret inclination for the good of the man she loved, had resigned him in favour of Armgard. The chosen bride of her friend seemed to her a part of himself. She lavished the whole treasure of her love, which she could not reveal to him, upon the girl of his choice. Armgard's cheeks burned with kisses whose tender fire revealed that they had missed their true object. The shrewd child of the world, indeed, perceived what was taking place in Seraphine. It did not require much penetration to sound the depths of this open soul, which was not always clear to itself, but all the more intelligible to others. Armgard reciprocated her caresses, and drawing Seraphine's hand to her lips, said: 'I understand your heart, dear sister. Believe me, I understand it thoroughly. You are far more worthy than I am of the master, his love and his possession; you are his co-mate in spirit, akin in art.'—'I?' exclaimed Seraphine. As for her, she says, Roland does not think of her, except as one does of a good companion, a school friend. She is not good enough for him, with her wild humours and passions. How could she make him happy? No. Wallenberg was right: artists are not suited to marry one another. If she is to marry she must renounce the stage, and seek a match, not in quiet home life, but in the world of fashion. She then confides to Armgard the disclosure she had made that morning to the Count, prompted by a feeling of irritation at seeing him so grandly mounted on that very high horse, "the old-nobility hobby-horse of *mésalliances*." She would have him know that in that respect she was as good as he. Armgard is somewhat startled. Still more so, when the singer tells her of the Count's proposal, and her manner of receiving it. She takes for granted what the conclusion of the matter will be, and becomes slightly acrid in her observations. Seraphine assures her that the name she has made for herself is a thousand times dearer to her than that she inherited. In that case, says Armgard, it is surprising that she should wish to change it. There is only one Seraphine Lomond, but there are dozens of Countesses in every capital. She must not renounce her glorious art for an empty title. "'Ah, yes,' sighed the singer, 'the art itself is indeed high and magnificent; if only there were no handicraft along with it, inseparable from it, necessary to it! You do not know, Armgard, how degrading this handi-

craft is, how wearisome, how oppressive in the long-run. From without you see only the bright side of the stage—not, however, the shadows which the dazzling sun of the theatre casts upon it. Under the semblance of cheerful, artistic freedom and self-government, our profession conceals within itself the most pitiable dependence; dependence upon the manager, the director, an incompetent or malicious colleague, upon the public, the press, a hundred different, oftentimes contradictory influences. The brief intoxication of a single evening is purchased at the expense of unspeakably prosaic morning hours, where, in the grey twilight of the stage, the steamy atmosphere of the rehearsal-room, we "work," as galley-slaves work, under the rod of some perverse director, who rudely and abruptly stops us in the very middle of an inspiring passage, riveted to the same chain with unworthy artisans who impede where they should assist. And then the composers with their everlasting solicitations, the Bullermanns of the past, present, and future! And the public, with its caprices, its injustice, and its prejudices, to-day warm, to-morrow cool, lauding the bad to the skies, because it is the fashion, and blindly, stupidly trampling under foot the best, which it does not understand. And finally a criticism which we are the better able to estimate at its true value by our paying for it in hard cash." With this dark picture she contrasts the golden repose of the bank-princess. Armgard in her turn declares that the artist-life, if hard and full of struggle, is still a life, while hers is mere vegetation, and the spirited little woman finally bursts forth: "I swear to you, Queen of the Amazons, the poor little, abused bank-princess has her hours in which she would gladly give all the gold in her father's fire-proof safe for the glitter of your stage crown, in which she could cry out to the blue heavens from the depths of her worn and *ennuyé* maiden-heart: 'A million for a cloud—a storm!'"

In the midst of this interesting dialogue the tumultuous scene occurs which has been already described. After much agitation on the part of the ladies, the storm is hushed, and just as Seraphine is going, Herr Krafft and Roland enter. While the banker soothes his daughter, Roland and Seraphine greet each other, she pale as death, he flushed with emotion.—"The singer held out her hand to the painter, who only touched it with the tips of his fingers. His heart swelled to overflowing at the sight of his dear friend, now lost to him; anger, jealousy, pain, sorrow, love, choked his voice. 'My congratulations!' he stammered, almost inaudibly. 'Much has happened since yesterday. I take the deepest interest in this turn in your destiny.'—'Roland, what a tone to use with me!'"

—'The old one,' he said, shaking his head, 'has passed away irrevocably. You have become a great lady; or rather you always were, but now you will become a still greater one. Your appearance as an artist was only a starring performance, a piquant incognito; our friendship, a flitting dream. I awake and bid you adieu, gracious Countess.'—He turned away from her, and went up to Armgard, whose little hand he kissed with what for him was an unusual show of gallantry. The sight pierced Seraphine to the heart. Convulsively she pressed her right hand to her breast, and said to herself: 'Tis well. I can conquer it more easily with his assistance.' Commanding her feelings, she retires to confer with the old gentleman, leaving Roland and Armgard sitting, like a pair of model lovers, side by side on the sofa. The latter pair, however, soon come to an understanding, and discover, by mutual explanation, how the friendly Count has been playing the part of Puck in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* among them. Roland confesses that Armgard's wealth alarms him. Armgard frankly tells him that he does not love her: she knows "the place is engaged," and she knows for whom. She then assures him that Seraphine loves him in return, passionately, as only Amazons can; and proceeds to concoct a plan for outmanœuvring the Count, and crossing his theory of "cross-marriage." The artist and the singer must be brought together. "And the Count and the bank-princess," adds Roland. Armgard blushes, and says she may be left out of the game, and the Count also deserves to be punished, by being sent away empty-handed. Roland asks, "'Seriously, then, do you love Wallenberg?'—'If that is love which you feel for Seraphine, Seraphine for you—No. Such a love only favoured, great, poetic natures are capable of; not we common children of men.'—'But a certain little, worldly affection, a satisfaction with Wallenberg's elegant person, his rank, his *esprit*, his elegant manners, a secret longing to become Madame l'Ambassadrice and Frau Gräfin—this, my dear, shrewd, delicate, little pupil does feel; does she not? Frankness for frankness, Armgard, or I am out of the game!'" Armgard sprang up, opened a drawer in her writing-table, then a locked portfolio in the drawer, and pulled out a drawing, which she handed to Roland, with the words: 'This is my answer, master.' Therewith a wonderfully charming blush suffused her pale countenance up to the very roots of her dark curls; shamefaced, she hid it on Roland's shoulder. He examined the drawing, a portrait of Wallenberg in chalk, and said, gently raising her head: 'I pronounce my apprentice free for this work. It is the best that you have ever done. She who has drawn that can not only draw but also . . . love.'—'Yes,'

she said to him softly, and with deep feeling, 'I love him after my own fashion; but with all my heart.'—'Now I believe you,' replied Roland, smiling, 'in your willingness to make Seraphine and me happy. Our interests are the same; you must separate Wallenberg from Seraphine; I, Seraphine from Wallenberg.'"

So the plan is arranged, and Roland and Armgard are in the meantime to play the part of engaged lovers, which they do so well that Herr Krafft is consoled for his own rejection, poor Seraphine is wretched, and the Count, who presently joins the party, is thoroughly piqued. The Count has been busy with despatches; he has received important news from America and London—a brilliant victory for the South—the stability of the Union questioned—probable recognition of the Southern Confederation by England. Krafft is at once all alive: American bonds will fall dreadfully—he must hasten to the counting-house. Why? He will sell at once, that night, as much as he possibly can, that he may buy double, treble the quantity next week, when the market is at its lowest; for Krafft believes in the final triumph of the Union, and knows that he is safe. So he hurries to his counting-house, and Armgard, to assist him as confidential telegraph-clerk, accompanies him. Seraphine, bidding Roland a cold adieu, goes off under the escort of the Count. At the door-step, ready to receive her, is the faithful Beppo. "He held out to his mistress the *Evening Journal*, still damp, just come from the press.—'Una bellissima novella!' he snarled, his eyes sparkling with rage.—'What is the matter? Why do you terrify me?'—'Ecco!'—He pointed to an article under the heading: 'Latest News.'—'Read it,' said the singer to the Count, with the tone in which singers are wont to ask, first having seized the paper from Beppo's hand and hurried into her cabinet. Wallenberg had to deliver his own improvisation:—

"We learn, from trustworthy sources, that our highly honoured *prima donna*, Fräulein Seraphine Lomond, will, in to-morrow's performance of the "Amazon," the well-known aberration of the maestro of the future, Bullermann, not only take leave of our Court stage, to the regret of all, but will bid adieu to art and the theatre generally. She is about to be united in marriage to a gentleman occupying the highest social position among us. We can further reveal to the reader, also from trustworthy sources, that under the pseudonym Seraphine Lomond, the last surviving representative of one of the oldest families of foreign nobility has hitherto concealed herself from the public, but will speedily emerge from her romantic obscurity. From our point of view we attach, as might be expected, little importance to this latter circumstance; in our eyes the great singer ranks far above the aristocratic Fräulein. Still, it might serve as an explanation of the

haughty and disdainful manner in which this otherwise so estimable singer has been accustomed to treat her associates in art and the representatives of the independent press.—H(IRSCH) M(EYER.)"

When the Count has read reluctantly to the end, Seraphine breaks out upon him, "'For this knightly service, Count, I am under obligations. Until now I considered discretion to be a diplomatic quality.'—'There are cases in which the gravest indiscretion may become the finest discretion.'—'I do not understand that, it is . . . too diplomatic for me. But I do understand that this infamous article will rob me of the entire result of to-morrow evening. I shall demand satisfaction, through you. Not of this wretched Meyer Hirsch . . . '—'Hirsch Meyer, my dear friend.'—'All the same, my diplomatic friend. I shall myself deliver my card to Hirsch or to Meyer, perhaps to both, to be sure of the right one, *vous prendre congé*, with my riding-whip.'—'Seraphine!'—'Count? . . . I request you to hasten immediately to the printing-office. Have this report contradicted in the *Morning News*.'—'There is no edition to-morrow, Sunday.'—'Then suppress the entire *pasquil*, or write, in my name, a counter-declaration and have it placarded, by to-morrow morning, on every street-corner. Beppo will go to the director, the stage-manager, the leader of the orchestra; I shall not sing to-morrow.'—'My dear child!'—'We have not got so far yet, Count Wallenberg. I am neither a child, nor your dear child. True, I am a feeble, lonely woman, who must protect herself, and who will protect herself. You know my will. It is inflexible. Good-night, Count.'—With these words the weak, lonely woman disappeared into her sleeping apartment, and immediately thereafter an alarm-peal, similar to that of the morning, summoned Signor Beppo and the faithful Marianka, who looked askance at the departing Count as they hastened to her room."

Wallenberg hastens to the office of the *Evening Journal*. He is too late; the whole edition is disposed of, and cannot be recalled; the editor cannot assist him. With a curse he dashes away to the *Morning News*, and is shown into the room of the Hon. Privy-Councillor Editor. "'Best of friends,' said the Count, 'I break in upon you like a thief in the night. I do it in behalf of a beautiful woman; you will therefore pardon me.' 'Any motive that procures me the honour of your visit, Minister, is of importance.' 'Very much obliged! To-day's edition of the *Evening Journal* has an article about our Lomond, which has terribly excited her.'—'I have already read it,' smiled the Councillor, 'and may perhaps, without impropriety, congratulate the Minister.'—'Me? I had no idea of the news.

Fräulein Lomond has been favourably recommended to me, I may say she is my friend. She turns to me for protection. Would it not be possible for the official organ, since it is not published on Sunday, to come out this evening, or at all events, early to-morrow morning, with an extra sheet contradicting the organ of the opposition?—"An extra in theatre affairs would not look very suitable for a semi-official organ."—"True, I be-think me of an expedient. Insert in the extra an important item of news from New York, which no one knows but ourselves, and then add the contradiction, by way of postscript. It has local importance, at all events. Without it Fräulein Lomond will not sing to-morrow."—The Councillor accepted gladly the despatches from London and Liverpool, and, while making them up for the extra, summoned Herr Meyer Hirsch, 'our speciality in art matters,' to the office. Soon after, the extra was set up, printed, and issued. Immediately after the victory of the Confederates and the downfall of the Union, there followed, in the daintiest of Nonpareil:

"Our over-credulous colleague of the *Evening News* has again had an enormous canard palmed off on him. It is not true that Fräulein Lomond is to abandon the stage; not true that she is to give her hand to a gentleman of high social standing among us. Inasmuch as this maliciously-invented and equally maliciously composed article might prejudice our highly esteemed singer in her swan-song of to-morrow, we hasten to improve this opportunity of contradicting it, in accordance with the truth, leaving all its personalities, which do not concern us, to the liberal *Evening Journal* and its art-correspondent.—M(BYER) H(IRSCH)."

Having accomplished this piece of diplomacy, the Count winds up the evening at the house of Krafft, where Armgard makes a brilliant figure in the conversation. "Arm in arm Wallenberg and Roland slowly walked home smoking. The former said thoughtfully: 'You are a child of luck, friend Roland. In the little bank-princess you will draw the first prize in the marriage lottery.'—The artist, adding a bold move of his own invention to the pre-arranged cross-marriage, replied: 'And you do not even know, Count Wallenberg, that you as good as had this prize in your pocket?'—"I?"—"You! Armgard confessed to me a secret fondness for you, overcome, it is true. She has drawn your portrait, without any one's knowledge, a wonderful success, admirably conceived, but a little flattered."—"Flattered? Thank you. You artists must always be rude!"—"A double wrong, since I do it to you. Your sacrifice, even if it was an unintentional one, has made me the happiest mortal beneath yonder pale moon. If you could only have seen and heard the girl as I did this evening. She worked

for two hours with her father; he admitted that she was able to supervise every counting-house, every cabinet, with her knowledge of languages, her business insight, her sure and ready hand; and then her conversation at table, how easy and yet how full of meaning, sparkling with wit and talent! You do not realize how deeply I am indebted to you, my dear Count, for this treasure.'—'Pray, don't speak of it,' said the Count, becoming very monosyllabic. At the Landschaftsplatz the paths of the two night-wanderers diverged; Roland turned off to the suburbs, Wallenberg to his Prinzessinnenplatz. He walked slower and slower, he smoked faster and faster. His pull at the door-bell of the embassy was in the style of Seraphine's musical school: Tempest! The porter, the lackey, the valet-de-chambre rushed out in terror. In silence he ascended the stairs to the second storey, entered his sleeping-room, suffered himself to be disrobed . . . All at once he wildly dashed down his cigar so that the sparks flew all over the Smyrna carpet. 'Curse it,' he exclaimed loudly, 'that I should hit upon the wrong one!—The valet-de-chambre, carefully picking up or extinguishing the fragments, lisped: 'Does your Excellency order another?'—'Another what, blockhead?'—'Cigar, Excellency.'—'Go to . . . to bed!'—'Yes, Excellency. I have the honour of wishing a most obedient good-night!'"

Next day, Sunday, is the eventful day on which the *diva* Lomond is to sing her swan-song, positively her last appearance, perhaps, on any stage. There is great excitement and preparation. At length at the hour of five the theatre carriage comes for Seraphine, and she drives off amid an admiring crowd. At the obscure side-door of the theatre the carriage stops. "The head theatre-watchman, in grand uniform, opened the narrow iron door. Seraphine entered the twilight of the stage and drew a long breath in the home-like atmosphere that surrounded her, that indescribable peculiar stage atmosphere, a mixture of gas, oil, spirits, resin, dust, wood, canvas, leather, velvet, silk, wool, every conceivable subterrestrial and superterrestrial odour. On the boards, which she had to cross to reach her dressing-room, the chorus and ballet had assembled, already clad in their respective costumes of Amazons, Greek warriors and priests, to give her a stately welcome, forming an *espalier* through which she marched, Marie with her white basket proudly following. The carpenters, too, in their Sunday jackets, each with a nosegay in his button-hole, the wardrobe officials, male and female, the supernumeraries, brought the *prima donna* their kindly greetings. In the side-scene the stage-manager, basso Braun, in his robes of high priest, and Theseus, the first barytone, stood awaiting her. The manager kissed her

hand, Braun kissed her paternally on the forehead, Theseus fraternally on the cheek. Conducted by the two latter, the manager acting as guide, she ascended the short flight of steps up to her dressing-room. The door was opened; a dazzling flood of light burst upon her. All her companions from the opera, the drama, and the ballet, had assembled in the apartment, which was decorated with flowers, tapestry, and curtains. Upon the red-covered table in the middle of the room, amid candelabra and laurel wreaths with long bows, stood a silver Amazon shield, a masterpiece from the establishment of Kilian Brothers, the parting gift of the theatre to Seraphine. She stood there speechless, listened to the solemn oration of the senior member, the tragedy hero and father, Reissmüller, and received the shield from the hands of the tragedy mother, Madame Wandel-Schneider. In the middle of the shield was her portrait in medallion; the border represented the fight of the Amazons in embossed work, and on the reverse was the inscription: 'To the Queen of the Amazons, from her faithful people on the evening of her farewell.' Big tears rolled from the nixie-eyes; the singer could only stammer out a few incoherent words and embrace them in succession, until the manager, pulling out his watch, put an end to the affecting, and, for his performance, dangerous scene. Seraphine was left alone; she sat down in the *chaise longue*, to rest herself for a few moments before the contest, while Marie unpacked the contents of her basket: flesh-coloured socks, sandals, the silver helmet and coat of mail, the white tunic, embroidered with blue *à la Grecque*, the tiger-skin to be thrown over the shoulders and fastened by two silver claws, the sword and belt, and the indispensables of the toilette-table—rouge, brush, sponge, hair-powder, brushes, combs, hand-mirror. . . . Nothing was forgotten. The Amazon robed herself. When she had finished, and stood in front of the lofty mirror, that reflected the image of a perfectly beautiful woman, beautiful from the waving golden hair down to the fringes of the blue sandals, a smile, the first one that day, stole over the marvellously inspired countenance. She placed the helmet on her head, grasped with a firm hand the golden sceptre, and descended, with true queenly gait, to the stage where her people were awaiting her. But all at once she stopped in consternation. Something was wrong. 'Marie,' she cried, growing pale under her rouge, 'Marie, my horse-hair.'—'Jesu, Maria, Joseph, I have forgotten the horse-hair.'—'Miserable woman; to-day above all others.'—Marie has already disappeared. Soon the entire world behind the scenes knows that the *prima donna's* horse-hair has been forgotten. She never sings without having a horse-hair twisted around the little finger of the left hand;

an unfailing preventive of the *jettatura*, by which the entire theatre-folk swear from La Scala to San Carlo. Let not the gracious reader smile at such a superstition among a class that is not, in other respects, excessively credulous or primitive. The artists of the stage are noways inferior on this point to the shepherd, the huntsman, or the sailor. We know some stout fellows among them who will never go on the stage without first spitting three times behind them, be it carefully observed, and over the left shoulder. To undertake a new part on a Friday is too much for the boldest freethinker of the theatre. With the Amazon the success of the evening hangs suspended on a single hair, a horse-hair. A kingdom, not for a horse, only for a horse-hair!"

The faithful Marie procures the indispensable talisman from the tail of one of the old carriage-horses, and all is now ready. The second bell has rung, in a quarter of an hour the performance will begin. "The orchestra, all arrayed in dress-coats and white cravats, were tuning their instruments. Maestro Bullermann, who was to direct in person, hurried from desk to desk, making a few last corrections. Parterre and galleries were packed; the boxes and reserved seats were gradually being filled. The superintendent, as soon as he had greeted Seraphine, announced to her the expected attendance of the Court, both their Majesties, and the Family; the uniforms of the aides-de-camp and chamberlains were already visible in the background of the grand middle box.

"Seraphine took a peep at the house, which was buzzing like a swarm of bees, through that little hole in the curtain by which one can watch from the stage the interesting drama in the auditorium, at times no less interesting than that which is given on the boards. She looked for the left-hand corner seat in the third row of the parquet. It was empty. Often, how often had she seen Roland in that place; he always came early when she 'was on,' as the graphic art-expression of the stage tongue has it. Often their glances would meet, hers looking down through the round mite of a window—the mouth of the tragic mask—his looking upward, meeting unconsciously, magnetically as it were. But not to-day; Roland was absent. Wallenberg's ambassadorial box in the dress circle was also unoccupied. On the other hand, Armgard's slender form became visible in the box in the first row above. The Amazon precipitately drew back from her look-out into her tent, the curtains of which closed behind her. What if he should suddenly show himself, not in his parquet seat, but up there, in that box, behind her! She could not answer for her not breaking down at the sight, indifferent as to how her swan-song might terminate!

"On the entrance of the King and the Queen, Bullermann's wand is raised, the overture begins. Death-like silence prevails in the house, packed to overflowing. The curtain rises with a rustle: the chorus of Amazons are holding a council of war over the captive Theseus. 'To judgment, to death! To death, to judgment!' ring the clear female voices again and again; the trumpets blow threateningly. Then the curtains of the royal tent are slowly pushed aside; there stands Antiope in all the triumphant splendour of her beauty, raising her sceptre with a gesture of command. A moment's storm of applause bursts through the house at her apparition; the entire mass of spectators rises like one man, white handkerchiefs are waved from the boxes, wreaths and flowers rain down from all sides upon the boards, the thunder of applause from thousands of throats overpowers, interrupts the music, until, at a signal from Bullermann, the orchestra joins in with three repeated flourishes. Not the first sibilant of an opposition; the appearance of the Amazon has overcome all her antagonists. Trembling with emotion, Seraphine bows her head to the hurricane, while the choristers gather up and bring to her the floral offerings. With a profound bow she takes one of the bouquets and lays it upon the altar of Mars, the steps of which are soon covered with these peaceful oblations. Gradually the waves of applause recede; with a trembling, yet clear, sonorous voice the singer begins: 'Who judges without me, the queen?' and, gaining in confidence and in fulness and power of tone with every measure, executes her great scene with the chorus of Amazons, at the end of which the Grecian hero is led in."

Never has Seraphine sung and played so magnificently. She is "superba," says Beppo, a severe critic, though a devout worshipper of the *diva*. At the close of the act, however, the triumphant queen reels into her dressing-room, bars the door, and lies helpless and moaning in Marie's hands. "Marie," she sighed, "he was not there!" He was nowhere to be seen. "It was decided then: he was to break with Seraphine. Not even her swan-song would he hear. . . . With anguish of heart the poor tormented woman donned her dingy, miserable costume, that matched her mood. Most gladly would she have welcomed an earthquake to swallow her up for the whole evening, from the whole world, so unspeakably indifferent to her. But no, she must go, must sing, must play. Herr Lindemann knocked at the door, the second act had already begun. Then came the grand terzetto between Antiope, Theseus and Phædra; after that, the Amazon's passionate monologue, beginning with an expressive solo on the violoncello. O heavens, had they but known—those clapping, bravo-calling, enchanted hearers—that

those were real, agonizing tears that she wept with the weeping instrument! Could they but have looked into that broken heart, from which arose, like an outburst of inmost feeling, the indignant plaint:

'Dass er mich verlassen,
Ich kann sie nicht fassen,
Die schreckliche That!

O Schmach ohne Gleichen,
Der Feindin zu weichen;
O schänd'ger Verrath!'¹

'That is no longer art,' exclaimed all the connoisseurs ecstatically; 'that is nature, the highest, purest nature!' They never dreamt, the happy ones, how right they were, or how wrong, too. But every noisy demonstration died away, and a cold shudder, more eloquent and more flattering than the loudest applause, ran through the house at the close of the monologue:

'Hört, ihr unsterblichen,
Hört mich geloben!
Helft, ihr Verderblichen,
Drunten und droben!
Rache geschworen
Sei ihm und ihr.

Er ist verloren,
Stirbt von mir.
Stiehlt meine Sehnen,
Weiht diesen Leib:
Tod dem Hellenen,
Tod seinem Weib.'²

Seraphine sang this curse—she gnashed and panted it more than she sang it—abruptly, sentence by sentence, after each one advancing a step further into the proscenium, raising her right hand higher and higher. Her bosom heaved. Her eye, no longer sparkling, nixie-like, but piercing like that of a fury, fell with a green serpent-glance upon a box in the second row; we know which one. Count Wallenberg, who was sitting in it—he had made a visit in the interlude, and was regularly caught—started back as though from a flash of lightning. He came within an ace of upsetting Armgard's opera-glass over the railing. The little bank-princess hid her smile in the bouquet which she was holding. Nobody understood the diplomatist's alarm better than she, the chief and counter-diplomatist, as no one except herself knew why the actress sang and played so wonderfully that day, or who it was that the Amazon's threatening glance had sought and not found."

Between the acts the King (doubtless old Ludwig is here portrayed) comes behind the scenes, presents Seraphine with

¹ That he has forsaken me,—
I cannot grasp it,
The horrible deed.
Oh! shame past compare,
To yield to the foe;
Oh! treachery vile.
² Hear, ye Immortals,
Hark to my vow!
Help, ye Destroyers,

Above and below,
The vengeance I've sworn
On him and on her;
He's doom'd to destruction,
He dies by my hands.
Harden my sinews,
Strengthen my frame;
Death to the Grecian,
Death to his wife!

the portrait of the Queen, and, after some gallant and kindly speeches, a kiss of the hand to Seraphine, and a fatherly salutation to her band of lightly-arrayed Amazons, withdraws. Then the last act, the most telling in the piece, began: "Had the stage-moon, pallidly shining through its blue panes of glass, exerted a soothing influence upon Seraphine, or had the artist in her risen triumphant and reconciliatory from the struggles of the woman? The soft music flowed like a cooling balsam over the burning wounds of her heart, that seemed to pour forth its life-blood to the very last drop in the Amazon's song to the moon, a classico-romantic variation upon the venerable '*Guter Mond du gehst so stille*.' . . . After the last notes had died away, the Amazons came to search for their queen. Their torches wandered through the mountain forest, winding down from rock to rock, until at last the fair corpse was found stretched out upon moss-covered rocks, under the shadow of a tall pine, her head thrown back, so that the unfettered golden hair hung down long and heavy, her right hand, from which the fatal weapon had slipped, drooping relaxed by her side. They covered her with the royal mantle, and, joining hands around her for the consecrated moon-roundelay, sang the low dirge:—

' Sie die noch gestern
Unter den Schwestern
Gleich wie die Ceder im Bergwald stand,
Wehe, sie fiel aus der schimmernden Höhe,
Wehe, wehe,
Fiel durch die eigene tapfere Hand.'¹

"Seraphine lay beneath the mantle, melting into soft tears. She felt as though she were some blissfully departed spirit, that catches from a distance the lamentations of those left behind, and is borne away by each wave of sound further and further from the shore of the living into the broad, still ocean of death. Whilst she lay there so motionless, her whole life passed in review before her eyes; reminiscences from the mists of her childhood, her flight, the commencement of her artist career, her radiant meeting with Roland, her arrival in the capital, her triumphs, that evening—all in blurred pictures, shadow-like. She was in a dream, and wished she might never awake. Yet she was rudely aroused by the falling of the curtain, the renewed tempest of applause, the calls, the farewell congratulations, that

¹ 'She, who but yesterday
Stood 'mid her sisters,
Stood as the cedars in mountain-wood stand,
Woe! from the glittering heights she has fallen,
Woeful! woeful!
Pierced by her own so valorous hand.'

relentlessly burst upon her. She must summon up her energies, must come out with tottering steps, once, twice, the third, the fourth time—nobody noted any longer how often—and still the showers of bouquets, verses, wreaths, rained upon her again and again. Confused, she stammered out a few incoherent words of acknowledgment and of farewell, and was at last at liberty to disappear in her dressing-room.

"There, for the first time, she found repose after the house and the stage had slowly disorged themselves. Her colleagues took compassion on her exhausted state, and left her alone. Marie was ordered to put out all the lights but one. The Amazon wished to die *da capo*: once more to dream over, this time for herself, and by herself, the dream of her earthly life, and come to a close with her entire past and its wealth of associations. She stretched herself upon her couch, as she had done upon the rocks, and covered herself with the mantle, for she felt warm; not disrobing, because she felt too bruised in every limb, too weak to slip off her stage finery and put on her blue wrapper. She only wished to dream, to dream. . . .

"She had not been lying there long before a quick step tore up the narrow stairway, a firm hand knocked on the door of the dressing-room. None but a man of this world walks so, knocks so. She starts up to listen. Away with the mantle; all her fatigue is forgotten. Even before Marie can open the door she is on the threshold, and falls with a cry of joy into Roland's arms: 'Roland, is it you once more?'—'Seraphine, you angel, you goddess!'—'Where have you been all this long, killing day?'—'In the wolf's den, the proper place for the monster,' laughed the master, radiant with inner delight, this morning in the wolf's den on the mountains, this evening in the gloomy parterre-box, that goes by that name.'—'Not at your post!'—'Here is my post, from which all the diplomatists and bankers on earth shall not drive me,' said Roland, leading Seraphine to the couch and falling at her feet.—'So you come back to your sister?'—'My sister? Never! To my only and ever-beloved, my bride, my wife! Will you be mine, you grand, you magnificent Amazon?'—'Yours for ever, my Theseus, my lord and master,' she replies with a flood of joyous tears, and, bending over the kneeling man, she enfolds him in her white nixie-arms, and buries him beneath the waves of golden hair.

"We will do like Marianka, the discreet Bohemian. We will creep out on tip-toe, shut the door behind us, and sit down on the threshold, to keep guard lest anything should disturb the happy ones, who have found each other again, in truth have found each other for the first time, in this overflowing, long-suppressed ecstasy of a pure and powerful passion. They read

for each other the riddle of their hearts, also the tormenting game of the last two days. Each word tears away a curtain from before their eyes, reveals to their enraptured gaze a fresh, magically illuminated scene—here a paradise of remembrance, there a heaven of the sweetest, surest hope. Alone, transported, as though they were not in the world, they dream not as the Amazon had thought to dream, but together, hand in hand, eye to eye. The artist's swan-song ends in a canticle of love."

The formal end of the story is of course the happy marriage of Roland and Seraphine, followed by that of the Count and Armgard, of Raffael and Marie. It concludes with a pleasant letter from the artist to the Count, dated at Cairo, announcing that a beautiful little Amazon has been there presented to him in a basket of Nile bulrushes, that Seraphine has broken her engagement with the American *impresario*, that the writer is hard at work making pictures and collecting wild animals, and that they are as happy as the day is long. The author, however, in a short postscript to the reader, protests against the supposition that the romance of his story ends here, and promises that if the reader is satisfied; and all goes well, they shall start from this resting-point on a fresh pilgrimage, at the end of a year and a day. For ourselves, we can say that we shall have much pleasure in bearing Herr Dingelstedt company when and whithersoever he may choose to lead the way.

ART. VII.—MR. BRIGHT'S SPEECHES—THE ELECTIONS.

To the general Election of 1868 all classes of the community looked forward with peculiar interest. A great experiment was to be tried. The struggles of many years had ended in an extension of the franchise, which no long time ago was by most regarded as an idle dream, by many as a terrible calamity. The dream had been realized, was the calamity impending? More than this: the principles which should regulate the future policy of this mighty empire were to be determined. The destinies of many nations, the well-being of generations hung in the balance. No greater or clearer issue was ever put before the electors of this country: it was a party contest in the highest sense—in that one body of our statesmen had chosen the better part, and it lay with the people to approve or condemn that choice. It was, we think, well-fitting that, on the eve of such an election, the speeches of the great orator to whom, more than to any man living, the new constituencies owe their existence, should be brought together—if for no other purpose, for the information and guidance of the electors.

It has been given to few public men to indulge a juster pride than may be Mr. Bright's at this moment. For thirty years he has taken part in political strife. He and his friend Mr. Cobden were forced into that strife by their sense of the iniquity of laws which taxed the bread of the poor in order to increase the wealth of the rich. At last, after years of agitation; after an enormous cost both of money and labour; after famine had so desolated the land that subscriptions were raised, in the uttermost parts of the earth and by the poorest among men, to rescue our fellow-countrymen from starvation; when society was shaken to its basis, and no statesman could be found to carry on the government; the Parliament yielded, and won what some consider a lasting claim upon our gratitude, by repealing the Corn-Laws. But, this great work accomplished, there yet remained much to do. The doctrines of Free-trade had to be maintained and extended. It was well worth while, to say the least, that the principles which guided our Foreign policy should be brought to the test of justice and good sense. Our government of India was not altogether beyond criticism. At home such matters as Pauperism, the Land-Laws, the Game-Laws, were not perfectly settled; and, above all, the duty, for it is now proved to have been a duty, of extending the franchise, required a persistent and powerful advocate. To these questions Mr. Bright addressed himself, with what consequences to

himself we all remember, with what results, at least as regards some of these questions, we now see. Through measureless abuse, through calumnies without number as without foundation, he held on his way; and at last he has his reward. But a short while ago, such an accomplished gentleman and just observer as Sir W. Stirling-Maxwell declared it as his opinion that Mr. Bright was the one public man who could find cause for self-congratulation in the events of the last two years. And in this hour of his triumph he has so borne himself that those who love him least cannot withhold from him their admiration and respect. We all remember, in the great debates of 1866, how often the legislation of the preceding twenty-five years was paraded as a reason against lowering the franchise. Not slight must have been the public services of the man who, in urging his own views, could meet that reason with the following noble retort—constraining a hostile House to forget the egotism in the indisputable truth:—

“Now, will the House believe for once that I am speaking to them from no party spirit, from no desire to do anything in the country or to the country more than they would wish? My view of the public interest is at least as conscientious and as honest as theirs can be. I have been misrepresented, and condemned, and denounced by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and by not a few writers in their press. My conscience tells me that I have laboured honestly only to destroy that which is evil, and to build up that which is good. The political gains of the last twenty-five years, as they were summed up the other night by the hon. Member for Wick (Mr. Laing), are my political gains, if they can be called the gains in any degree of any living Englishman.

“And if now, in all the great centres of our population—in Birmingham with its busy district—in Manchester with its encircling towns—in the population of the West Riding of Yorkshire—in Glasgow and amidst the vast industries of the West of Scotland—and in this great Babylon in which we are assembled—if we do not find ourselves surrounded by hungry and exasperated multitudes—if, now, more than at any time during the last hundred years, it may be said, quoting the beautiful words of Mr. Sheridan, that—

‘Content sits basking on the cheek of toil’—

if this House, and if its statesmen glory in the change, have I not as much as any living man some claim to partake of that glory? I know, and every thoughtful man among you knows, and those Gentlemen who sit on that bench and who are leading you to this enterprise, they know that the policy I have urged upon the House and upon the country, so far as it has hitherto been accepted by Parliament, is a policy conservative of the public welfare, strengthening the just authority of Parliament, and adding from day to day fresh lustre and dignity to the Crown. And now when I speak to you, and ask you to pass this Bill—when I plead on behalf of those who are not allowed

to speak themselves in this House—if you could raise yourselves for this night, for this hour, above the region of party strife—if you could free yourselves from the pestilent atmosphere of passion and prejudice which so often surrounds us here, I feel confident that at this moment I should not plead in vain before this Imperial Parliament on behalf of the English constitution and the English people.”—(Vol. ii. pp. 188-4.)

One of the first things that strikes us with regard to these volumes is their historical value.¹ In this they far exceed any collection of speeches which has been published of late years. Lord Macaulay's speeches have a considerable historical value; but slight in comparison with these. The yet more recent collections of speeches by Mr. Disraeli, by Mr. Lowe, and even by Mr. Gladstone, having reference exclusively to one subject—important indeed, but now settled in everything but detail—and only to one aspect of that subject; and being also penetrated with the note of party, have already lost all their political interest, and much of their political value. They remain antiquarian relics, and nothing more. But Mr. Bright's orations take a wider sweep. They are concerned with almost every one of the great topics which, through many stormy years, have agitated the public; and some of which remain for solution in the years to come; and the speaker, both when expressing his own views and when confuting the views of others, conveys a vivid picture of the feeling of the nation at the time. We must add that this historical value, and also the interest and value of the speeches as showing the growth of Mr. Bright's own opinions, might have been increased by more judicious editing. In the latter point of view it would, we think, have been an improvement had the “speeches on various subjects” come first. Several of them are earlier in date than any of those on special subjects (with the single exception, we think, of one on Maynooth); and on this account, as well because of the variety of themes they embrace, they would have been interesting as a “history of opinion.” Further, to answer fully this purpose, they should have been arranged in chronological order. Why this order has not been observed we cannot conceive. Thus we are taken from Free-trade in 1845 to Agricultural distress in 1851, and then back again to Game-Laws in 1845; from the Land Question in 1864 back to Peace in 1853, and Foreign policy in 1858. This is confusing and unsatisfactory. If there has been any attempt at grouping the topics, it has failed, as from their variety might have been foreseen; and we lose what is, in all collections of essays and speeches, a

¹ *Speeches on Questions of Public Policy.* By John Bright, M.P. Edited by J. E. Thorold Rogers. 2 vols. London, 1868.

source of interest and of benefit, the means of marking the advance in the author's style, and the growth of his opinions.

Again, the short notes introductory to each speech are susceptible of improvement. They need not be much longer, but they might with advantage be clearer and more specific. It requires some slight effort of memory, even on the part of persons not unobservant of public affairs, to recollect at once what Ministry was in office at some particular date fifteen or twenty years ago; and as years go on, and the popularity of these volumes increases, this difficulty will not diminish. To be sure, the reader can generally gather this from the speech itself; but he would come to the perusal of the speech with a much keener power of appreciation if he knew it before he began. Again, with regard to speeches in the House, the result of the divisions, or, if there was no division, the fate of the motion, should always be given. These may seem slight matters, yet they are not really so. They not only heighten the interest of the reader, they add to his instruction. It is just because we value these speeches not less highly than the editor values them, and anticipate for them the same future as the editor anticipates, that we make these suggestions. The trouble involved in carrying them out is a trifle compared to the resulting convenience and benefit. It is greatly to be desired that all who propose to study English politics should read these volumes, and should read them with every assistance which can gain their interest, and facilitate their apprehension of the truths conveyed.

Looking at these speeches in a literary point of view, no one can fail to be struck by the extreme beauty of the diction. And it is the beauty of simplicity. The marked characteristic of Mr. Bright's style is his use of pure Saxon English; and never perhaps since Bunyan wrote, has the varied richness of that language been more clearly shown. Hence the almost entire absence of what half-educated people think eloquence. You may read speech after speech without coming across a single "fine passage." Even when a gleam of colour richer than wont falls upon the page, the severity of style is preserved; as thus, speaking of slavery in America,—“At the birth of that great republic there was sown the seed, if not of its dissolution, at least of its extreme peril; and the infant giant in its cradle may be said to have been rocked under the shadow of the cypress, which is the symbol of mortality and of the tomb.” The two best scholars of our day who are also orators, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Lowe, in this—supposed to be the crowning gift of classical learning—are both surpassed by Mr. Bright. And how equal to any argument, to the expression of deepest

feeling, is "this majestic unaffected style," these passages may show:—

"I ask hon. Gentlemen, what are the taxes of a whole village, and what they mean? They mean bareness of furniture, of clothing, and of the table in many a cottage in Lancashire, in Suffolk, and in Dorsetshire. They mean an absence of medical attendance for a sick wife, an absence of the school pence of three or four little children—hopeless toil to the father of a family, penury through his life, a cheerless old age, and, if I may quote the language of a poet of humble life, at last—'the little bell tolled hastily for the pauper's funeral.' That is what taxes mean. The hon. Member for Dorsetshire spoke the other night in a manner rather flippant and hardly respectful to some of us on this question. But the labourers of Dorsetshire as well as the weavers and spinners of Lancashire are toiling, and must toil harder, longer, and with smaller remuneration for every single £100 that you extract in taxes from the people in excess of what is necessary for the just requirements of the Exchequer of the country. I hope I may be permitted to treat the question on this ground, and I ask the House to recollect that when you strike down the children in the cottage you attack also the children in the palace. If you darken the lives and destroy the hopes of the humble dwellers of the country, you also darken the prospects of those children the offspring of your Queen, in whom are bound up so much of the interests and so much of the hopes of the people of this country. If I defend, therefore, the interests of the people on this point, I do not the less defend the permanence of the dignity of the Crown."—(Vol. i. p. 527.)

"Thus, in spite of all that persecutions could do, opinion grew in the North in favour of freedom; but in the South, alas! in favour of that most devilish delusion that slavery was a Divine institution. The moment that idea took possession of the South war was inevitable. Neither fact, nor argument, nor counsel, nor philosophy, nor religion, could by any possibility affect the discussion of the question when once the Church leaders of the South had taught their people that slavery was a Divine institution; for then they took their stand on other and different, and what they in their blindness thought higher grounds, and they said, 'Evil! be thou my good;' and so they exchanged light for darkness, and freedom for bondage, and good for evil, and, if you like, heaven for hell. Of course, unless there was some stupendous miracle, greater than any that is on record even in the inspired writings, it was impossible that war should not spring out of that state of things; and the political slaveholders, that 'dreadful brotherhood, in whom all turbulent passions were let loose,' the moment they found that the presidential election of 1860 was adverse to the cause of slavery, took up arms to sustain their cherished and endangered system. Then came the outbreak which had been so often foretold, so often menaced; and the ground reeled under the nation during four years of agony, until at last, after the smoke of the battle-field had cleared away, the horrid shape which had cast its shadow over a whole continent had vanished, and was gone for ever."—(Vol. i. pp. 289-90.)

And also, as showing what genius and sincerity can dare, this appeal to the House of Commons in the very crisis of the Crimean War:—

“ At the same time there is growing up—and, notwithstanding what some hon. Members of this House may think of me, no man regrets it more than I do—a bitter and angry feeling against that class which has for a long period conducted the public affairs of this country. I like political changes when such changes are made as the result, not of passion, but of deliberation and reason. Changes so made are safe, but changes made under the influence of violent exaggeration, or of the violent passions of public meetings, are not changes usually approved by this House or advantageous to the country. I cannot but notice, in speaking to gentlemen who sit on either side of this House, or in speaking to any one I meet between this House and any of those localities we frequent when this House is up—I cannot, I say, but notice that an uneasy feeling exists as to the news which may arrive by the very next mail from the East. I do not suppose that your troops are to be beaten in actual conflict with the foe, or that they will be driven into the sea; but I am certain that many homes in England in which there now exists a fond hope that the distant one may return—many such homes may be rendered desolate when the next mail shall arrive. The angel of death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the beating of his wings. There is no one, as when the first-born was slain of old, to sprinkle with blood the lintel and the two sideposts of our doors, that he may spare and pass on; he takes his victims from the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, and the cottage of the poor and the lowly, and it is on behalf of all these classes that I make this solemn appeal.”
—(Vol. i. pp. 489-90.)

Not only are these speeches valuable as a mere lesson in style; they should be studied day and night by every one who desires to acquire the art of clear and persuasive speaking. A perception of their artistic excellence comes upon us gradually. The art is so subtle, so natural, that it is hard to detect it, much more to point it out. This we take to be the case with all the most perfect specimens of oratory. If readers would only confess it, we suspect the *first* impression produced by the master-pieces of Demosthenes to be that, except the scurrility, there is nothing so very wonderful after all. So is it, in a measure, with the speeches of Mr. Bright. Look, for example, at the famous Adullam speech. So simple it all seems—so obvious and easy. The simplicity of the style doubtless heightens this impression; but the real causes of it lie deeper. It is the skill with which the argument is built up—the lucid progress of thought—the way in which one idea leads on to another, as if in obvious and unavoidable sequence, that gives to the whole such

an effect of naturalness and ease. This is the perfection of the oratorical art—a perfection which study and long practice alone can give, and which even they can give only to one “to the manner born.”

We hear it often said that reporters have destroyed oratory—that men speak now with a fear of the next morning's newspaper too much before their eyes. Hence, it is alleged, the proper function of oratory, immediate effect, is neglected. Men speak not to those who at the moment hear, but to those who will thereafter read. Mr. Bright's speaking is little open to this objection. He can sway his audience at will—he plays on them like a pipe. And yet he does not fall into the other extreme. There is no want of substance in his speeches. They stand the test of the next morning well. His argument may be right or wrong. But it always is an argument which provokes and deserves careful discussion. And the delivery of that weighty argument has moved his hearers to enthusiasm. Few orators have combined these different, and seemingly opposite characteristics in such perfection.

Perhaps no English orator was ever so much feared as Lord Chatham. So far as we can now judge, his contempt was withering; his denunciation must have been hard to bear. Mr. Bright is not wont to indulge in the expression of contemptuous feeling; but when he is constrained to assail what he regards as a great wrong or a great wickedness, he rises to a fervour and majesty of condemnation which we know not to have been often excelled. No one who heard can ever forget his denunciation of the Ministry which could not conduct or conclude the Crimean War:—

“I am not, nor did I ever pretend to be, a statesman; and that character is so tainted and so equivocal in our day, that I am not sure that a pure and honourable ambition would aspire to it. I have not enjoyed for thirty years, like these noble Lords, the honours and emoluments of office. I have not set my sails to every passing breeze. I am a plain and simple citizen, sent here by one of the foremost constituencies of the Empire, representing feebly, perhaps, but honestly, I dare aver, the opinions of very many, and the true interests of all those who have sent me here. Let it not be said that I am alone in my condemnation of this war, and of this incapable and guilty Administration. And, even if I were alone, if mine were a solitary voice, raised amid the din of arms and the clamours of a venal press, I should have the consolation I have to-night—and which I trust will be mine to the last moment of my existence—the priceless consolation that no word of mine has tended to promote the squandering of my country's treasure or the spilling of one single drop of my country's blood.”—(Vol. i. p. 482.)

And as an example of the same powers, we would quote this passage from a letter to Mr. Watkin :—

“ When the time comes for the ‘inquisition for blood,’ who shall answer for these doings? You have read the tidings from the Crimea; you have, perhaps, shuddered at the slaughter; you remember the terrific picture,—I speak not of the battle, and the charge, and the tumultuous excitement of the conflict, but of the field after the battle—Russians in their frenzy or their terror, shooting Englishmen who would have offered them water to quench their agony of thirst; Englishmen, in crowds, rifling the pockets of the men they had slain or wounded, taking their few shillings or roubles, and discovering among the plunder of the stiffening corpses images of the ‘Virgin and the Child.’ You have read this, and your imagination has followed the fearful details. This is war,—every crime which human nature can commit or imagine, every horror it can perpetrate or suffer; and this it is which our Christian Government recklessly plunges into, and which so many of our countrymen at this moment think it patriotic to applaud! You must excuse me if I cannot go with you. I will have no part in this terrible crime. My hands shall be unstained with the blood which is being shed. The necessity of maintaining themselves in office may influence an administration; delusions may mislead a people; *Vattel* may afford you a law and a defence; but no respect for men who form a Government, no regard I have for ‘going with the stream,’ and no fear of being deemed wanting in patriotism, shall influence me in favour of a policy which, in my conscience, I believe to be as criminal before God as it is destructive of the true interest of my country.”—(Vol. i. p. 535.)

On one subject he felt, if it were possible, even more strongly than on the Crimean War, namely, on the great American struggle; and he characterizes, in language of just indignation, the conduct of those men who, in the pursuit of private gain, shrink not from disobeying the law and involving their country in deadly peril :—

“ There may be men outside, there are men sitting amongst your legislators, who will build and equip corsair ships to prey upon the commerce of a friendly power,—who will disregard the laws and the honour of their country,—who will trample on the Proclamation of their sovereign,—and who, for the sake of the glittering profit which sometimes waits on crime, are content to cover themselves with everlasting infamy. There may be men, too—rich men—in this city of London, who will buy in the slave-owners’ loan, and who, for the chance of more gain than honest dealing will afford them, will help a conspiracy whose fundamental institution, whose corner-stone, is declared to be felony, and infamous by the statutes of their country.

“ I speak not to these men. I leave them to their conscience in that hour which comes to all of us, when conscience speaks and the soul is no longer deaf to her voice. I speak rather to you, the working

of London, the representatives, as you are here to-night, of the feelings and the interests of the millions who cannot hear my voice. I wish you to be true to yourselves. Dynasties may fall, aristocracies may perish, privilege will vanish into the dim past; but you, your children, and your children's children will remain, and from you the English people will be continued to succeeding generations.

"You wish the freedom of your country. You wish it for yourselves. You strive for it in many ways. Do not then give the hand of fellowship to the worst foes of freedom that the world has ever seen, and do not, I beseech you, bring down a curse upon your cause which no after-penitence can ever lift from it. You will not do this. I have faith in you. Impartial history will tell that, when your statesmen were hostile or coldly neutral, when many of your rich men were corrupt, when your press—which ought to have instructed and defended—was mainly written to betray, the fate of a continent and of its vast population being in peril, you clung to freedom with an unfaltering trust that God in His infinite mercy will yet make it the heritage of all His children."—(Vol. i. 252.)

In a different style are many noble passages, penetrated with deep feeling, rich with a surprising beauty, where the orator, even in the darkest hour, refused to despair of the future of the great American Republic:—

"Coming back to the question of this war: I admit, of course—everybody must admit—that we are not responsible for it, for its commencement, or for the manner in which it is conducted; nor can we be responsible for its result. But there is one thing which we are responsible for, and that is for our sympathies, for the manner in which we regard it, and for the tone in which we discuss it. What shall we say, then, with regard to it? On which side shall we stand? I do not believe it is possible to be strictly, coldly neutral. The question at issue is too great, the contest is too grand in the eye of the world. It is impossible for any man, who can have an opinion worth anything on any question, not to have some kind of an opinion on the question of this war. I am not ashamed of my opinion, or of the sympathy which I feel, and have over and over again expressed, on the side of the free North. I cannot understand how any man witnessing what is enacting on the American continent can indulge in small cavils against the free people of the North, and close his eye entirely to the enormity of the purposes of the South. I cannot understand how any Englishman, who in past years has been accustomed to say that 'there was one foul blot upon the fair fame of the American Republic,' can now express any sympathy for those who would perpetuate and extend that blot. And, more, if we profess to be, though it be with imperfect and faltering steps, the followers of Him who declared it to be His Divine mission 'to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,' must we not reject with indignation and scorn the proffered alliance and friendship

with a power based on human bondage, and which contemplates the overthrow and the extinction of the dearest rights of the most helpless of mankind!

"If we are the friends of freedom, personal and political,—and we all profess to be so, and most of us, more or less, are striving after it more completely for our own country,—how can we withhold our sympathy from a Government and a people amongst whom white men have always been free, and who are now offering an equal freedom to the black? I advise you not to believe in the 'destruction' of the American nation. If facts should happen by any chance to force you to believe it, do not commit the crime of wishing it. I do not blame men who draw different conclusions from mine from the facts, and who believe that the restoration of the Union is impossible. As the facts lie before our senses, so must we form a judgment on them. But I blame those men that wish for such a catastrophe. For myself, I have never despaired, and I will not despair. In the language of one of our old poets, who wrote, I think, more than three hundred years ago, I will not despair,—

'For I have seen a ship in haven fall,
After the storm had broke both mast and shroud.'

From the very outburst of this great convulsion, I have had but one hope and one faith, and it is this—that the result of this stupendous strife may be to make freedom the heritage for ever of a whole continent, and that the grandeur and the prosperity of the American Union may never be impaired."—(Vol. i. pp. 242-3.)

"Now, whether the Union will be restored or not, or the South achieve an unhonoured independence or not, I know not, and I predict not. But this I think I know—that in a few years, a very few years, the twenty millions of freemen in the North will be thirty millions, or even fifty millions—a population equal to or exceeding that of this kingdom. When that time comes I pray that it may not be said amongst them that, in the darkest hour of their country's trials, England, the land of their fathers, looked on with icy coldness, and saw unmoved the perils and calamities of their children. As for me, I have but this to say: I am but one in this audience, and but one in the citizenship of this country, but if all other tongues are silent, mine shall speak for that policy which gives hope to the bondsman of the South, and which tends to generous thoughts, and generous words, and generous deeds, between the two great nations who speak the English language, and from their origin are alike entitled to the English name."—(Vol. i. pp. 194-5.)

"What I do blame is this. I blame men who are eager to admit into the family of nations a State which offers itself to us, based upon a principle, I will undertake to say, more odious and more blasphemous than was ever heretofore dreamed of in Christian or Pagan, in civilized or in savage times. The leaders of this revolt propose this

monstrous thing—that over a territory forty times as large as England, the blight and curse of slavery shall be for ever perpetuated.

“I cannot believe, for my part, that such a fate will befall that fair land, stricken though it now is with the ravages of war. I cannot believe that civilisation, in its journey with the sun, will sink into endless night in order to gratify the ambition of the leaders of this revolt, who seek to

‘Wade through slaughter to a throne
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

I have another and a far brighter vision before my gaze. It may be but a vision, but I will cherish it. I see one vast confederation stretching from the frozen North in unbroken line to the glowing South, and from the wild billows of the Atlantic westward to the calmer waters of the Pacific main,—and I see one people, and one language, and one law, and one faith, and, over all that wide continent, the home of freedom, and a refuge for the oppressed of every race and of every clime.”—(Vol. i. pp. 224-5.)

We have quoted these passages—and no reader, we are persuaded, will blame the length of them—in order to justify our assertion that, viewed merely as compositions, these speeches will reward careful perusal. But they have a deeper source of interest than this. Their literary excellence, great though it be, is secondary to their political importance. In point of political interest, in capacity for political instruction, they seem to us beyond any collection of speeches in the language. Doubtless this is owing, in some degree, to the lengthened period of time over which they extend, and the variety of subjects they embrace; but it is owing to something more also. It is owing, in no small measure, to the isolated position which Mr. Bright has so long occupied in English politics. This it is which gives to these speeches a value peculiarly their own. They are in no sense party speeches. They are not even debating speeches, in the ordinary sense. They are discussions of great public questions; but they are discussions of no question in its party aspect. To illustrate what we mean by an example:—About a third part of Lord Macaulay's brilliant and telling speech on the Maynooth vote in 1845 was devoted to a criticism of the position of the Ministry with regard to the measure. Mr. Bright in his speech dismisses that topic with the single sentence that “the right hon. Baronet has, from unforeseen circumstances, been connected in Opposition with a party of such a nature, that he never could promote any good measure whilst in power without being charged, and justly, with inconsistent conduct;” and then passes on, as if impatient, to discuss the question before the House. In some of his speeches—those, for instance, on University Tests, on the Sugar-Duties, on the exclusion of Judges from the House of

Commons—Lord Macaulay occupied, more or less, this higher level; but Mr. Bright never descends from it. Hence the peculiarly *lasting* value of these speeches.

Yet it would be an utter misapprehension to suppose that they are in any sense didactic dissertations. We shall have written and quoted to little purpose if our readers have not by this time become aware that, in their liveliness, their variety, their flexibility, they are emphatically speeches. What we mean is, that they are discussions of questions adapted to the forms of oratory. Even in argument, Mr. Bright confutes opposing views rather than replies to opponents. There is, indeed, abundance of personality; but persons are dealt with only in so far as they are identified with opinions. Yet the speeches are the very reverse of being heavy. Most of us have felt the charm of listening to the speaker; but no reader even of these speeches, we should think, ever found them dull. They are relieved from the possibility of this by many excellencies. Not only by the beauty of the style, but also by the acute and lucid reasoning. Always clear, always direct to the point, the sweep of the argument carries the reader along, demanding from him no greater intellectual effort than is requisite for intellectual enjoyment. Not less remarkable is the terseness with which the argument is stated. Nothing is over-done. Never was any great orator less verbose.

There is, as a rule, an absence of illustration. We feel somehow as if illustration would be out of place,—as if the speaker was too intent on his immediate subject to diverge from it at all. But the page is lit up with many a felicitous quotation from wells of English undefiled—Milton we should guess to be a favourite study. And it is enlivened by a rich vein of sarcastic humour. Nothing could have been happier than the “terrier-dog” party, without recognisable head or tail, composed of Mr. Lowe and Mr. Horsman; nothing more telling than the comparison of Lord Grey’s plan of conferring the franchise on doctors and lawyers *as such* to the elder Mr. Weller’s theory that a man must be a good judge of a legal point because he was a good judge of a horse; and every speech affords examples of some such happy hit. The following passage supplies a valuable solution of the puzzling difference between the political opinions of Englishmen abroad and of Englishmen at home:—

“It is the most curious thing in the world that whenever an Englishman leaves these shores—whether it is the effect of the salt air, or of sea-sickness, or the result of that prolonged meditation which a voyage of some weeks’ duration invites, I do not know—but whenever an Englishman leaves these shores the effect is to peel off, not the rags

of his body, but the verminous rags from his intellect and soul. He leaves behind him in England all the stupidity which some of us cherish, and he lands in Australia with his vision so clear that he can see things in a common-sense light."—(Vol. ii. p. 351.)

Perhaps the most direct value of these volumes consists in the political instruction which they afford. Their highest interest, on the other hand, is in the light they throw on the character of the speaker, and the evidence they supply of his political capacity. The first qualities which can belong to a public man are foresight and courage. It is not too much to say that Mr. Bright has, during the last thirty years, given more proofs of both qualities than any man in England. Conscientious he must be of exaggeration, of error; yet, looking at his career as a whole, how seldom has the event proved him entirely wrong; how often has it justified his wisdom; in how many instances has public opinion gradually turned from hostility into accord with his. We speak not only of his well-known triumphs; we do not exclude questions which he has been often told to leave to statesmen, as beyond his powers. Take the case of India. He foretold that the old government of India would be broken by rebellion: the Mutiny came, and the Company was abolished. Take our Foreign policy, always held to be Mr. Bright's weakest point. We suspect the defenders of Lord Palmerston's China War are now very much fewer and less zealous than when opposition to that war cost Mr. Bright his seat at Manchester. Take a yet stronger instance, the Crimean War. We do not propose to re-open the discussions connected with that war. We would only suggest the one question—How many men believe that England would again go to war in defence of the Turkish Empire? If any one does, we would recommend him to read Lord Stanley's speech the other day to his constituents. Again, on the question of our relations with the great European Powers, Mr. Bright has often expressed strong, and, as many have been wont to think, extreme views. These views, shortly stated, are that we have no right to bring upon our country the unspeakable calamities of war in order to redress the wrongs of others. Mr. Bright has been so often, and so unscrupulously misrepresented in regard to this matter, that, at the risk of quoting too much, we will quote his own statement of his own opinions:—

"I believe there is no permanent greatness to a nation except it be based upon morality. I do not care for military greatness or military renown. I care for the condition of the people among whom I live. There is no man in England who is less likely to speak irreverently of the Crown and Monarchy of England than I am; but crowns,

coronets, mitres, military display, the pomp of war, wide colonies, and a huge empire, are, in my view, all trifles light as air, and not worth considering, unless with them you can have a fair share of comfort, contentment, and happiness among the great body of the people. Palaces, baronial castles, great halls, stately mansions, do not make a nation. The nation in every country dwells in the cottage; and unless the light of your constitution can shine there, unless the beauty of your legislation and the excellence of your statesmanship are impressed there on the feelings and condition of the people, rely upon it you have yet to learn the duties of government.

"I have not, as you have observed, pleaded that this country should remain without adequate and scientific means of defence. I acknowledge it to be the duty of your statesmen, acting upon the known opinions and principles of ninety-nine out of every hundred persons in the country, at all times, with all possible moderation, but with all possible efficiency, to take steps which shall preserve order within and on the confines of your kingdom. But I shall repudiate and denounce the expenditure of every shilling, the engagement of every man, the employment of every ship which has no object but intermeddling in the affairs of other countries, and endeavouring to extend the boundaries of an Empire which is already large enough to satisfy the greatest ambition, and I fear is much too large for the highest statesmanship to which any man has yet attained.

"The most ancient of profane historians has told us that the Scythians of his time were a very warlike people, and that they elevated an old cimex upon a platform as a symbol of Mars, for to Mars alone, I believe, they built altars and offered sacrifices. To this cimex they offered sacrifices of horses and cattle, the main wealth of the country, and more costly sacrifices than to all the rest of their gods. I often ask myself whether we are at all advanced in one respect beyond those Scythians. What are our contributions to charity, to education, to morality, to religion, to justice, and to civil government, when compared with the wealth we expend in sacrifices to the old cimex? Two nights ago I addressed in this hall a vast assembly composed to a great extent of your countrymen who have no political power, who are at work from the dawn of the day to the evening, and who have therefore limited means of informing themselves on these great subjects. Now I am privileged to speak to a somewhat different audience. You represent those of your great community who have a more complete education, who have on some points greater intelligence, and in whose hands reside the power and influence of the district. I am speaking, too, within the hearing of those whose gentle nature, whose finer instincts, whose purer minds, have not suffered as some of us have suffered in the turmoil and strife of life. You can mould opinion, you can create political power,—you can think a good thought on this subject and communicate it to your neighbours,—you cannot make these points topics of discussion in your social circles and more general meetings, without affecting sensibly and speedily the course which the Government of your country will pursue. May I

ask you, then, to believe, as I do most devoutly believe, that the moral law was not written for men alone in their individual character, but that it was written as well for nations, and for nations great as this of which we are citizens. If nations reject and deride that moral law, there is a penalty which will inevitably follow. It may not come at once, it may not come in our lifetime; but, rely upon it, the great Italian is not a poet only, but a prophet, when he says,—

‘The sword of heaven is not in haste to smite,
Nor yet doth linger.’

We have experience, we have beacons, we have landmarks enough. We know what the past has cost us, we know how much and how far we have wandered, but we are not left without a guide. It is true we have not, as an ancient people had, Urim and Thummim—those oracular gems on Aaron’s breast—from which to take counsel, but we have the unchangeable and eternal principles of the moral law to guide us, and only so far as we walk by that guidance can we be permanently a great nation, or our people a happy people.”—(Vol. ii. pp. 397-399.)

The policy here set forth, and the setting forth of which entailed on Mr. Bright so much abuse, is exactly the policy (with the exception of the unhappy Luxemburg guarantee) which has been avowed and adopted by Lord Stanley, the Minister whose merits the Tory party have never ceased to exalt.

To take a crucial question of foreign policy: How entirely has public opinion come to accept Mr. Bright’s views as to the merits of the American War, and as to the conduct of our Government with regard to the *Alabama*. We do not, this journal never did, greatly blame the Government of that day. They did not do enough; but they did as much as any Government—save one of extraordinary vigour, such as England has seldom experienced—could have attempted in the state of public feeling at the time.¹ We all remember how the Tory opposition, led on by Lord Derby and the Irish fervour of Lord Cairns, forgot all morality and all law, and condemned the Government even for the seizure of the rams. The temper of the Opposition was then such that they were not ashamed to encourage the abettors of what was little short of piracy. Mr. Laird not only escaped condemnation; he was actually applauded. Emboldened by his foolish allies he ventured to insult Mr. Bright in the House, and the result was the following rebuke:—

“Then I come to the last thing I shall mention—to the question of the ships which have been preying upon the commerce of the United States. I shall confine myself to that one vessel, the *Alabama*. She was built in this country; all her munitions of war were from this country; almost every man on board her was a subject of Her Majesty.

¹ See *North British Review*, No. 80, May 1864.

She sailed from one of our chief ports. She is known to have been built by a firm in which a Member of this House was, and I presume is, interested. Now, Sir, I do not complain—I know that once, when I referred to this question two years ago, when my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford brought it forward in this House, the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Laird) was excessively angry—I do not complain that the Member for Birkenhead has struck up a friendship with Captain Semmes, who may probably be described, as another sailor once was of similar pursuits, as being ‘the mildest mannered man that ever scuttled ship.’ Therefore, I do not complain of a man who has an acquaintance with that notorious person, and I do not complain, and did not then, that the Member for Birkenhead looks admiringly upon the greatest example which men have ever seen of the greatest crime which men have ever committed. I do not complain even that he should applaud that which is founded upon a gigantic traffic in living flesh and blood, a traffic into which no subject of this realm can enter without being deemed a felon in the eyes of our law and punished as such. But what I do complain of is this, that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Birkenhead, a magistrate of a county, a deputy-lieutenant—whatever that may be—a representative of a constituency, and having a seat in this ancient and honourable Assembly—that he should, as I believe he did, if concerned in the building of this ship, break the law of his country, by driving us into an infraction of International Law, and treating with undeserved disrespect the proclamation of neutrality of the Queen.

“I will not detain the House on the question of the rams. The hon. Member for Birkenhead, or the firm or the family, or whoever the people are at Birkenhead who do these things, this firm at Birkenhead, after they had seen the peril into which the country was drifting on account of the *Alabama*, proceeded most audaciously to build those two rams; and it was only at the very last moment, when on the eve of a war with the United States on account of those rams, that the Government happily had the courage to seize them, and thus the last danger was averted.”—(Vol. i. pp. 134-5.)

The sympathy and applause of Mr. Laird's Tory friends may have consoled him under this. But that sympathy will quickly disappear, that applause will be hushed, if it shall prove that the sympathizers have to pay their share of the bill for the consequences of Mr. Laird's act, and that too because of the good sense of a Tory minister.¹

In Home politics take the question of our Land-Laws. Twenty years ago Mr. Bright expressed these views:—

“There is another point, with regard to intestate estates. I feel how tenderly one must speak, in this House, upon a question like this.

¹ The history of the *Alabama* business has been ably stated in an instructive pamphlet published about a year ago by Charles C. S. Bowen, Esq., barrister-at-law.

Even the right hon. Member for Tamworth, with all his authority, appeared, when touching on this delicate question of the land, as if he were walking upon eggs which he was very much afraid of breaking. I certainly never heard the right hon. Gentleman steer through so many sinuosities in a case; and hardly, at last, dared he come to the question, because he was talking about land—this sacred land! I believe land to have nothing peculiar in its nature which does not belong to other property; and everything that we have done with the view of treating land differently from other property has been a blunder—a false course which we must retrace—an error which lies at the foundation of very much of the pauperism and want of employment which so generally prevail. Now, with regard to intestate estates, I am told that the House of Lords will never repeal the law of primogeniture; but I do not want them to repeal the law of primogeniture in the sense entertained by some people. I do not want them to enact the system of France, by which a division of property is compelled. I think that to force the division of property by law is just as contrary to sound principles and natural rights as to prevent its division, as is done by our law. If a man choose to act the unnatural and absurd part of leaving the whole of his property to one child, I should not, certainly, look with respect upon his memory; but I would not interfere to prevent the free exercise of his will. I think, however, if a man die by chance without a will, that it is the duty of the Government to set a high moral example, and to divide the property equally among the children of the former owner, or among those who may be said to be his heirs—among those, in fact, who would fairly participate in his personal estate. If that system of leaving all to the eldest were followed out in the case of personality, it would lead to immediate confusion, and, by destroying the whole social system, to a perfect anarchy of property. Why, then, should that course be followed with regard to land? The repeal of the law would not of necessity destroy the custom; but this House would no longer give its sanction to a practice which is bad; and I believe that gradually there would be a more just appreciation of their duties in this respect by the great body of testators.

“Then, with regard to life interests; I would make an alteration there. I think that life-owners should be allowed to grant leases—of course, only on such terms as should insure the successor from fraud—and that estates should be permitted to be charged with the sums which were expended in their improvement. Next, with regard to the registry of land. In many European countries this is done; and high legal authorities affirm that it would not be difficult to accomplish it in this country. You have your Ordnance Survey. To make the Survey necessary for a perfect registry of deeds throughout the kingdom, would not cost more than 9d. an acre; and if you had your plans engraved, it would be no great addition to the expense. There can be no reason why the landowners should not have that advantage conferred upon them, because, in addition to the public benefit, it would increase the value of their lands by several years' purchase. Mr. Senior has

stated that if there were the same ready means for the transfer of land as at present exist for the transfer of personalty, the value of land would be increased, if I mistake not, by nine years' purchase. This is a subject which I would recommend to the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire, now distinguished as the advocate of the landed interest."

These words when first spoken were doubtless thought wild. So too, when fifteen years ago, Mr. Bright, in the House, alluded to the Game-Laws as an agricultural grievance, he was interrupted by loud laughter. Perhaps among the laughers were the then Tory members for Aberdeenshire, Kincardineshire, and Ayrshire. They may judge now whether their laughter was wise; and so with the Land-Laws. Have not these questions of primogeniture and law of entail, to say nothing of fixity of tenant tenure, been agitated on almost every hustings, at least in Ireland and Scotland? And are not the supporters of these laws now reduced to that most miserable of arguments, that they have but little effect either for good or evil? We have indeed advanced since 1849.

No detractor, however bitter, can deny to Mr. Bright the virtue of courage. Politics are the leading interest of his life; popularity is the chief basis of his power; and yet, not once or twice, he has counted popularity as nothing, has perilled all his chances of a public career in defence of truth and justice. A mob may be flattered as well as a monarch; and the most dangerous, as well as the most subtle of all mob-flattery, is when men of mark conceal or modify their convictions in deference to the prejudices of the hour. To that flattery Mr. Bright has never stooped. How few of our public men, though strong in wealth, in position, in political connexion, have shown examples of uncompromising and hazardous opposition to popular clamour, such as have ennobled the career of the so-called demagogue! In this fearless honesty Mr. Bright reminds one of Lord Macaulay. His rejection by Manchester in 1857 may be fitly compared with Lord Macaulay's rejection by Edinburgh in 1847.

Another characteristic we would claim for Mr. Bright will not be so readily conceded to him—a passionate love of truth. Here again he may be compared to Lord Macaulay. Both possessed this rare quality; to both it is often, and from similar causes, denied. In Lord Macaulay's writings it was obscured by the rhetorical habit of his mind; the exigencies of public speaking sometimes afford plausible reasons for denying it to Mr. Bright. An orator must, to a certain extent, be one-sided. He is always more or less of an advocate—supporting certain views; and even when there is least of this, his business is to present truths in a simple and attractive guise. Otherwise,

he will never succeed with a popular assemblage. Hence he generally presents but one aspect of a truth ; he cannot analyse closely or refine. Thus a recent writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette*¹ condemned Mr. Bright's censure of the course taken by the English aristocracy with regard to revolutionary France as inadequate and partial, because he did not take into account many causes which must have swayed them, among others the indiscreet attitude of the Opposition of the day. Doubtless had Mr. Bright been writing a study of the period, it would have been his duty to have done this fully and carefully. But then the result would have been an essay and not a speech. An orator must work always with a free hand and brilliant colours, and that is just the reason why the picture so often fades. Therefore very many even of Mr. Bright's pictures have faded. But in these volumes we have what deserves to endure. If there are of necessity exaggerations and deficiencies, it is easy to correct the one and to supply the other. What remains is a splendid body of English writing, fertile in instruction, suggestive of far-reaching political ideas ; with a love of liberty and truth glowing along each eloquent page.

Though for many years the best-abused man in England Mr. Bright has seldom condescended to justify his conduct or motives. In this he has, beyond doubt, judged wisely. Men in the foremost rank of public life owe it to their own dignity not to notice every passing slander. To their friends they owe it so to bear themselves that the world may believe in their self-reliance—in their consciousness of a rectitude which needs not constant assertion. It is often a duty to suffer calumny in silence. The one thing that can sting Mr. Bright into retort is the insinuation of unpatriotic motives. The heart of the speaker seems to beat in every sentence of his answer to that unworthy taunt :—

“ Do not suppose because I stand here oftener to find fault with the laws of my country than to praise them, that I am less English or less patriotic, or that I have less sympathy for my country or my countrymen than other men have. I want our country to be populous, to be powerful, and to be happy. But this can only be done—it never has been done in any country—but by just laws justly administered. I plead only for what I believe to be just. I wish to do wrong to no

¹ If we might, with unfeigned deference and great good-will, tender our humble advice to this journal, we would urge it to avoid falling into the groove of the *Saturday Review*. It has hitherto commanded general respect by its breadth and manliness ; it would be a great loss to journalism were it now to become “ superfine ”—judging everything and all men by the standard of a too fastidious good taste. For there is an extreme possible in this direction.

man. For twenty-five years I have stood before audiences—great meetings of my countrymen—pleading only for justice. During that time, as you know, I have endured measureless insult, and have passed through hurricanes of abuse. I need not tell you that my clients have not been generally the rich and the great, but rather the poor and the lowly. They cannot give me place and dignities and wealth; but honourable service in their cause yields me that which is of far higher and more lasting value—the consciousness that I have laboured to expound and uphold laws, which, though they were not given amid the thunders of Sinai, are not less the commandments of God, and not less intended to promote and secure the happiness of men.”—(Vol. ii. p. 358.)

Lastly, no candid reader of these pages can fail to see in them evidence of a profound sympathy with the poor and the wretched. No Tory device has been more persistently worked than that of imputing, to Mr. Bright and the whole Liberal party, indifference or worse towards the working classes, and that on the score of the Ten-Hours Bill. The foundation is as false as the slander is base. The Ten-Hours Bill was never, in any sense, a party measure. It was supported in a powerful speech by Lord Macaulay, then a keen Whig partisan. It was doubtless opposed by Mr. Bright, and, as he admitted the other day at Birmingham, opposed mistakenly. That opposition and that mistake was shared in by Lord Morpeth, the most benevolent of mankind. It was shared in by Sir Robert Peel, who, more than any Minister that has ever governed England, had it at heart to alleviate the hard lot of the working man. It was shared in by many of Sir Robert's leading Tory supporters. On this point, as well as in his leaning towards a voluntary system of education, Mr. Bright gives, as we think, too much weight to that canon of political economy which prohibits interference by the Government with freedom of individual action. As to the Ten-Hours Bill, he has, as we have said, admitted his error; and, judging from a recent speech, his faith in a voluntary system of education seems much weaker than it was in 1847. But, altogether apart from this, is it to be tolerated that, because men take a somewhat narrow view of the functions of Government, they are to be taunted with inhumanity? “There are things,” says Mr. Mill, “with which the State ought not to interfere, and there are others with which it is essential that it should interfere.” The hardest problem in statesmanship is to tell where the difference lies; and is it well that men who may chance to err in the solution of this problem, and who, if they err, do so on the safe side, should be exposed to so cruel an imputation? After all, it does not greatly matter. The calumny may have been

believed by some of those who spoke it, possibly even by some of those who heard it; but only by such as were ignorant of all the facts, and proof against any reason. Can any one refuse to recognise the true feeling of the words with which this oppressor of the poor closed a speech in Edinburgh about a month ago?—

“I ask you, as I ask myself a thousand times, is it not possible that this mass of poverty and suffering should be touched and should be reached? What is there that man cannot do if he tries? The other day he descended to the mysterious depths of the ocean, and with an iron hand he sought, and he found, and he grasped, and he brought up to the surface the lost cable, and with it he made two worlds into one. I ask, are his conquests confined to the realms of science? Is it not possible that another hand, not of iron, but of Christian justice and kindness, may be let down to moral depths, even deeper than the cable fathomed, to bring up from thence misery's sons and daughters, and the multitudes who are ready to perish? This is the great problem which is now before us. It is not one for statesmen only: it is not one for preachers of the Gospel only: it is one for every man in the nation to attempt to solve. The nation is now in power; and if wisdom abide with power, the generations to follow may behold the glorious day of which we in our time, with our best endeavour, can only hope to see the earliest dawn.”

But Mr. Bright, we are told, is a dreamer. His longing for reduced taxation leads him to believe in the coming of a time when war shall cease, or at least when it shall be no more known among the civilized nations of the earth. Now it is worthy of remark, that he has never discussed the policy of England in the light of such a belief. Never once, when any practical question was involved, as the China War, or the Crimean War, has he dealt with it on what is called the “peace at any price” theory. On the contrary, in all such discussions, so far as we remember, without exception, he has applied the true tests. He has asked whether the honour or interests of this country were involved, whether the objects of the war were reasonably within our reach, whether they were worthy of the necessary sacrifice; and surely it is by such considerations that questions of peace or war should be determined. But when he is not dealing with any present question, when his endeavour is to influence public opinion towards what he thinks right, why should not he tell us his dreams of a happier and a better time than this? He told his audience at Edinburgh that sometimes there passed across his mind—as a vision, or it might be a foresight of a reality—the idea of a time when the great pathway of nations shall be no more profaned by war, but guarded by all for the beneficent purposes

of peace. When an orator uses his powers for such ends, surely he is deserving of support? Why should the majority of our public writers refuse that support? Such expectations may be fond; but why should they be ridiculed? What good can come of calling them utopian; or of sneering them away by a reference to the millennium? We don't know much about the millennium. But if it mean an era of peace and of good-will among the nations, is it extravagant to believe that we can do something to speed on its coming? If any one were proposing now to act as if the millennium were here, it would be right to expose the danger of his counsel. But why should men who are striving by all practical means to restrain national rivalries—by extending the advantages of commerce, by extolling peace, and dwelling on the horrors of war, by urging arbitration, by assembling at congresses,—why should these men be discouraged? It may be “utopian” in them to hope to see the reward of their labours; it may be still more utopian to labour, as they mostly do, without such hope; but it is surely neither unrighteous nor unwise. On such matters to be enthusiastic—to be even utopian—is the highest wisdom. Victor Hugo said, pointing to a sword and a pen, “*Ceci tuera cela.*” And Louis Blanc, in his Letters on England, dreams his dreams too:—

“But suppress war! How? Have patience. The time is not yet come for acknowledging the reasonableness of quarrels between nations being peacefully settled, like quarrels between individuals, by a high judicial decision. The moment is not come for acknowledging that the Abbé de St. Pierre and Mably were something better than fools. The idea of an amphictyonic tribunal, intended to substitute the sovereignty of reason for the sovereignty of force, will not always be regarded as utopian. The world is still in a state of childhood. It will attain its majority, let us hope, and then, perchance, it will be found expedient to suffer no longer the happiness of nations to be weighed in that scale into which the Brennus of all countries, and the famous for insolence in all ages, have thrown the weight of their sword.”

Mr. Goldwin Smith has said that Mr. Bright's speeches are emphatically “counsels.” The general character of these counsels may be gathered from the foregoing pages; or, better, from the volumes themselves. Few of them will now be thought very “advanced;” none of them will be found to be beyond the limits of ordinary political discussion. But it is worth while to inquire in what spirit the new Parliament will approach the consideration of these counsels, and of others similar to them; or, in other words, to answer the question, What has been the result of the general election?

Altogether apart from the silliness of a narrow nationality, a Scotchman has reason to regard this election with feelings of pride. While the Liberal majority in England has been in all only 44; in Ireland, 31; Scotland, out of her 60 seats, has returned a Liberal majority of 46. This is something in itself; but there is more in it than appears. The causes which have brought about this result are all creditable to Scotland; some of them in marked contrast to the influences which have prevailed in England. The English press has exerted its utmost ingenuity in accounting for the Tory success in so many of the great English counties. Snobbery, dislike to Irishmen, fear of intimidation, are the motives, more or less venial, which have been suggested. The action of the clergy has been often brought forward, but the cause which has enabled the action of the clergy to have so much effect has not been frankly confessed. That cause we believe to be ignorance. We owe our comparative immunity from this evil of clerical influence, partly to the influence of the great Dissenting bodies; partly to the constitution of our Church, less favourable than Episcopacy to ecclesiastical domination; but mainly to the intelligence of the Scotch people. Thus, a Rev. Mr. Buche admits that, in canvassing against Sir John Lubbock, he "more than once pointed out" that Mr. Gladstone's policy is supported by atheists, Papists, Jews, and heterodox Christians. Yet more extraordinary have been the doings in South Shropshire, where we read that "a clergyman, finding that numbers of his parishioners had promised to vote for Mr. More, went about telling them that they were going to vote for the Pope, for the Queen to be beheaded, and Protestant clergymen to be burned for their faith." There has been nothing to equal this since Lord Macaulay's election-ballad in 1827:—

- "A letter—and free—bring it here—
 I have no correspondent who franks.
 No! Yes! Can it be? Why, my dear,
 'Tis our glorious, our Protestant Bankes.
 "Dear sir, as I know you desire
 That the Church should receive due protection,
 I humbly presume to require
 Your aid at the Cambridge election.
 "It has lately been brought to my knowledge,
 That the Ministers fully design
 To suppress each cathedral and college,
 And eject every learned divine.
 To assist this detestable scheme,
 Three nuncios from Rome are come over;
 They left Calais on Monday by steam,
 And landed to dinner at Dover.

- “ An army of grim Cordeliers,
 Well furnished with relics and vermin,
 Will follow, Lord Westmoreland fears,
 To effect what their chiefs may determine.
 Lollard's tower, good authorities say,
 Is again fitting up for a prison ;
 And a wood-merchant told me to-day,
 'Tis a wonder how fagots have risen.
- “ The finance scheme of Canning contains
 A new Easter-offering tax,
 And he means to devote all the gains
 To a bounty on thumbscrews and racks.
 Your living—so neat and compact—
 Pray, don't let the news give you pain—
 Is promised, I know for a fact,
 To an olive-faced Padre from Spain.' ”

The clergy of the Scotch Establishment have, as a rule, refrained from such unseemly conduct. But, had all the will been theirs to sully their cloth by such unscrupulous partisanship, had all the meanness been theirs to stoop to such deceit, they would have wanted the fine field on which to act. The agricultural mind does not lie so fallow here as south of the Tweed. Imagine a farmer of Perthshire or Mid-Lothian believing such idle babble ! Imagine him even listening to it !

Again, whether it be from some defect in the national character, or, as we would prefer to think, from the infrequency of leases, the English farmer appears to be less independent than the Scotch, more yielding to coercion. This much is certain, that the English farmer submits to grievances which would set a Scotch county in a flame. Take, for example, the Game-Laws. But the other day a paragraph went the round of the papers, describing a *battue* in Suffolk, at which Lord Huntingfield and party (including of course the Duke of Cambridge, whose special vocation seems to be the slaughtering of pheasants like barn-door fowls), killed in four days 5234 head of game. There are but few counties in Scotland represented by Tories ; and one such entertainment in each of them would remove this displeasing singularity. Our Game Laws are in some places pressed hardly enough. Our lairds last month did not stick at a trifle. But from some cause or other the bulk of our agricultural population (we must in the meantime except Haddington) is not so submissive under wrong, or so obedient to coercion as that of England.

Again, the *Times* declares that the recent elections have been marked by an “excessive manifestation of provincial sentiment.” The result has been a preference for ordinary men ; so

much so, that one writer anticipates for the new Parliament the epithet of "the dull." This may be true of England; it is not true of Scotland. Here local ties have been signally disregarded. English constituencies, animated, we suppose, by "provincial sentiment," have rejected men of intellectual distinction like Sir John Acton; men of culture and promise like Mr. Roundell, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Godfrey Lushington. Here we have had no such mistakes to regret. It is not too much to say that the Scotch constituencies, as a whole, have shown themselves superior to priestly arts; have honourably resented coercion; have steadily voted according to their political convictions, to the exclusion of all other considerations.

We gladly leave a topic which has an appearance of self-praise. Indeed, we should not have dwelt upon it so long, but for the lesson which we think may be gathered from it. That lesson we take to be that three things are wanted for England before she can attain electoral independence. These are, a thorough system of education; vigorous combination of the farmers against the landowners; and the ballot.

Passing from these less pleasing features of the subject, the fact remains, that this election has resulted in a greater triumph for Liberal principles than any election since 1832. It has returned a Liberal majority, to all present seeming resolute and compact; beyond question pledged to vigorous action in at least one great line of policy. The constituencies may have valued too slightly the claims of intellectual eminence; they may have been too greatly moved by local considerations; but one thing they have refused to tolerate—half-heartedness. Candidates have been chosen with many shortcomings; but, at least, they have been men as to whose meaning and purpose there was no room for doubt. The Cave has been scattered with a great rout. Lord Elcho is the one unrepentant Adullamite who has been sent back to Parliament. And he goes back, we are glad to say, incapable of future treason, because exposed as a foe. In fact the divisions and rebellion and selfish indifference of the last Parliament had their natural result. The electors resolved to secure, if it be possible, against such evils for the future. They were, accordingly, strict in exacting definite pledges from every candidate; they have bound them down, as it were, by distinct promises of loyalty to Mr. Gladstone. To have been in the Cave was the unpardonable sin; even Tea-room conspirators were looked upon with no friendly eye. In ordinary circumstances we should say that this had been carried too far; but in the present state of affairs the precautions of the electors were

not only excusable but wise. Our legislators required a lesson. They wanted to be taught that they must look for the feeling of the country to the country itself,—that the criticism of Pall Mall is not infallible—that the “tone of the Clubs” does not always reflect the opinion of the people. Without raking up the embers of past strife, we may be allowed to express a hope that this lesson has been taught thoroughly. We cherish, therefore, the belief that this temper of the electors will be reflected in the House, even when the immediate pressure of the hustings shall have passed away. So far as regards the class of society from which members of Parliament are taken, these elections have made little or no change. But we confidently anticipate a change in the tone of the House. The last House of Commons was fickle, capricious, and half-hearted; chosen with reference to no political principles whatever, but simply in respect of Lord Palmerston’s popularity. The death of that minister left it without any guiding motive; or, to put it more accurately, members felt themselves uncommitted to anything, and therefore entitled to indulge private, and often unworthy feelings, without any direct breach of party allegiance. There seems little likelihood that a similar state of things will recur. Members have gone back braced by contact with the decision and determination of their constituents; and even those who may incline to waver have been so straitly bound by pledges that they will find this hardly possible without disgrace. There is little danger of open mutiny; even the indifferent will assume a virtue if they have it not. Of one thing they may be sure, that it will be for their interest to do so. Lukewarmness was in several instances forgiven at the last election; it will not be forgiven a second time.

Some Liberals of a gloomy turn of mind foresee evil in the largeness of the majority; and despondingly recall the rapid break-up of the Reform Ministry. The cases are in many ways dissimilar. The majority sent up to support Lord Grey was very much larger than the present Liberal majority. It comprised many men of remarkable ability, eager for distinction; and many men of extreme views, which they were resolved to press. No such turbulent elements are present in this Parliament; extreme men and able men being alike conspicuous by their absence. The majority in 1832 was held together by no strong principle of cohesion: it was a sort of heterogeneous thank-offering to Lord Grey. Nobody knew what was to be the policy of that Government; they did not know themselves. The present majority, on the other hand, is pledged to vigorous action, at least in one line of policy, the carrying out of which will afford abundant occupation for some time to come. The

work that lies before the Liberal party cannot fail to have a wonderfully steadying effect. The forces that will array themselves in support of the Irish Church will do much to maintain discipline in the ranks of the assailants. The public would regard with just indignation the obtrusion of petty grievances or personal dislikes to the hindrance of the hard task which has to be accomplished. Doubtless the Liberal majority may break up; but it will not break up from the same causes which proved fatal to the majority of Lord Grey.

Mr. Disraeli has, no doubt, taken the wisest course for his party. It would be unjust to deny that he has also taken a manly and straightforward—though it may be an unusual—course. He has saved the time of the country and avoided a tedious discussion; he has relieved the Crown of the awkwardness of meeting Parliament with a speech predestined to disapproval; and he has frankly advised that his rival should be his successor. The credit due to him is not diminished by the consideration that the Royal Speech might have been a hard thing for his Cabinet to agree upon; nor even by the fact that the step he has taken will be to his own advantage in the future. Men may sometimes be allowed to be honest, although honesty is the best policy. Undoubtedly the step he has taken will be to his advantage. If he gains nothing else by it, he gains at least this, that he is not called upon to declare any policy of his own. How he would propose to deal with Ireland and the Irish Church he is not now bound to say: he simply denounces his opponent's proposals as "impracticable"—a vague, and therefore very formidable attitude of hostility. He is not bound to maintain any position himself; he is quite free to direct his attack on whatever may prove the weakest point of the enemy; and many weak points must of necessity be presented before all the details connected with the disendowment of the Irish Church can be worked out. On the other hand, as we have already said, this very fact will inspire the Liberal party with a certain strength. In the face of an astute foe there must be no slackness, no want of discipline. And it would be a very remarkable point of detail, regarding which it would be either seemly or prudent for the Opposition to challenge an issue involving their return to office.

Altogether apart from party considerations, we should regard any untoward occurrence as a serious calamity. The Liberals went to the country on the distinct issue of approval or disapproval of a definite line of policy. They got an answer triumphantly in their favour; and they are now in office for the express purpose of carrying that policy into effect. And not only has their policy been approved of; their

leader is regarded with peculiar confidence and favour by the great body of the people. In such circumstances failure would be a deep disgrace to the party. That, however, would be the least resulting evil. Such a failure would bring discredit on our whole system of Government. It would restore to power a party whose policy is nothing but opposition to the expressed wish of the nation ; it would frustrate the resolute determination of the people that justice shall be done to Ireland ; the consequent discontent would be no trivial or passing feeling. We confess, however, to indulging in a good hope. The Constituencies have done what they can to secure party loyalty. The work to be done requires it. And Mr. Gladstone is not the man at such a crisis to alienate it. The country hears much of his faults as a party leader ; and believes or heeds little. But, whatever these faults may be, it is not in an emergency like this that they will be shown. He has in him a dash of the "daring pilot in extremity ;" and it is in perilous seasons, when the waves run high, and when skill and boldness and fervour are wanted at the helm, that he will steer the ship most safely.

Few men have been called to govern England with happier omens than Mr. Gladstone. Pitt, when he had broken the Coalition, was perhaps more powerful ; Peel, in 1842, was not less so. But Pitt's power had its origin in Court intrigue, and that taint clung to it throughout. George III. was not the man to allow freedom of action to the minister whom he himself had made. Peel was hampered and finally overthrown by the prejudices and obstinacy of his party. It is the rare peculiarity of Mr. Gladstone's position that he enjoys a deep-seated popularity with the people ; that his policy—having been plainly laid before the nation—has been distinctly approved of at a general election ; and that a majority of a hundred has been sent to Parliament specially charged to render him loyal obedience. Rarely, if ever, has a minister attained to power in circumstances so favourable. And, as if to crown his good fortune, it is plain that the work of forming an Administration has been made easy to him by the good-sense and self-denial of the leading men of the party. Exactly in proportion to these advantages is the responsibility which rests with him. He is bound, not in the interest of his party—that were a trifle ; but in the interests of his country, to do all that in him lies to secure that his Ministry shall not disappoint the hopes which have been raised by their accession to office.

These hopes are, with reason, high. But it would be wrong, as well as foolish, to indulge them over-much. Nothing can be more dangerous to a Ministry than that it should be expected

to do great things suddenly. A fatal reaction is almost sure to ensue. And it would be idle to believe that this Ministry is prepared to follow all Mr. Bright's counsels, even though Mr. Bright himself is a member of it. The ballot will certainly be an open question; and some years will elapse before we can hope to see a Ministry abolishing the law of entail, or depriving of legislative sanction the pernicious custom of primogeniture. Yet it cannot be that Mr. Gladstone will think his occupation gone, even when he shall have surmounted the countless troubles of the settlement of the Irish Church. Education has to be dealt with as it has never been dealt with yet; the increasing peril of pauperism has to be faced; the condition of large masses of the population must be ameliorated; our Land-Laws, indeed the whole question of the distinction between heritage and moveables in all its branches, will soon rise into commanding importance.

The men composing the present Ministry cannot but feel that they are, in a sense, at the beginning of a new time. By the very fact of their advent to power all these questions, and many others such, have been hurried on. Their existence as a Ministry has been the effect of a great but gradual advance in public opinion; it will be the cause of an advance yet greater and more rapid. Toryism, if by that we mean mere quiescence, has received a severe blow. The peculiarity of the position of the new Government lies in this, that it is the result of no vague popular emotion, resting on no distinct convictions—looking forward with no definite aims. Such, in a measure, was the Government of 1832; but such is not the case now. On the contrary, long before the late election, the electors had well considered and resolved upon the principles which should guide their choice. These principles briefly were, justice to all classes at all hazards; the redress, so far as it may be possible, of our great social disorders. And, accordingly, they know what they expect. They expect of the men whom they have raised to power that this justice shall be done without fear, and that no effort shall be wanting to improve the condition of the country in which we live.

The people are firmly persuaded that this Ministry will address itself to social questions in a spirit altogether new; and hence their confidence and content. Far, very far distant is the time when "the whole land shall be a garden, and in every house there shall be plenty;" but the people will be satisfied so long as they know that their rulers feel for their sorrows, and, with zeal and vigour, will try to cure them. They have that knowledge now. The most marked characteristic of the Ministry is the presence in it of many men who

have been always moved by popular sympathies. Foremost among these is Mr. Gladstone himself, who, not once or twice in his career, has set himself to devise measures for the good of the body of the people, which the people had not the knowledge or the intelligence to think of for themselves.

Apart from this, we may fairly hope that in the present Ministry there will be found something of real statesmanship. A careful study of these speeches of Mr. Bright cannot fail to impress strongly the truth of the old saying, "with how little wisdom the world is governed." It is truly sad to see how utterly our rulers have failed in consistency and forethought in the great crises through which England has passed during the last thirty years. The ordinary business of administration was well enough carried on; but the country was allowed to drift into terrible calamities, because it was not governed according to any principle, or in the light of any wise forethought. For example, even men like Sir William Molesworth and Sir George Cornewall Lewis, during all the wretchedness of the Crimean War, never seem to have formed for themselves any clear idea of the purposes for which that war was waged, or of the lengths to which it should be carried. Again, take the case of Ireland—that unhappy country whose history is so fertile in all political teaching. More than sixty-five years ago we united, by most flagitious means, the Irish Parliament with our own, and since then we have passed but two Irish measures which bear any trace of statesmanship, Catholic Emancipation and the Encumbered Estates Act; and we passed the one under terror of a rebellion, the other under the pressure of a famine. It would be a curious and interesting study to go yet farther back, and test the claims of the various men who have ruled England to take rank as statesmen. Sir Robert Walpole, perhaps, might stand this scrutiny. He had before him clearly what he believed his country required, and he secured that for her.

"But for Sir Robert Walpole, we should have had the Pretender back again. But for his obstinate love of peace we should have had wars which the nation was not strong enough nor united enough to endure. But for his resolute counsels and good-humoured resistance we might have had German despots attempting a Hanoverian regimen over us; we should have had revolt, commotion, want, and tyrannous misrule, in place of a quarter of a century of peace, freedom, and material prosperity, such as the country never enjoyed, until that corruptor of Parliaments, that dissolute tipsy cynic, that courageous lover of peace and liberty, that great citizen, patriot, and statesman governed it. . . . He gave Englishmen no conquests, but he gave them peace,

ease, and freedom; the three per cents. nearly at par; and wheat at five and six and twenty shillings a quarter."¹

It seems a bold thing to say that since this "tipsy cynic" no statesman, in the true sense of the word, has governed England till we come to Sir Robert Peel. Yet such an assertion would not be far wide of the truth. Chatham was a splendid War Minister; Canning in his latter days was a brilliant Foreign Minister; but it may well be doubted whether, during those long years, any wise statesman rose to supreme power. Pitt, indeed, cherished great designs for the benefit of Ireland, but treason and Court opposition brought his designs to naught. .

It is not too much to say that something like statesmanship may be expected from the new Government. That in administrative ability they are far superior to their predecessors is abundantly obvious. But more will be demanded from them than even the high merit of vigorous administration. There are at least three men in the Cabinet of true genius for political affairs—Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Lowe. They differ on many points, and they must reconcile their differences, or agree to differ, as best they may; but in one thing they unite—in the possession of the qualities of statesmen. The knowledge of this fact itself assures us that they would not be in the same Cabinet were the divergencies of their opinions such as to suggest any serious difficulty. It is not within the scope of this paper to comment on the way in which the various offices have been filled up. But we may express, in a single word, what we believe to be a general feeling of satisfaction at the high office assigned to Mr. Lowe. It is a generous thing; and, what is of more consequence, it gives promise of Mr. Gladstone's purpose to allow true statesmanship an adequate field of action—a good sign for the stability of his administration.

We cannot but hope, also, that the temper of the House generally will support and encourage the popular sympathies of ministers. It will not, indeed, fail to do so, if members retain, in any measure, the views they avowed on the hustings. Next to admiration of Mr. Gladstone, sympathy with the working classes was the main profession of every Liberal candidate. Allowance must of course be made for the excitement of electioneering; yet surely these professions will not be altogether belied.

We do not at all refer to a certain condescending kindness which some well-meaning people assume towards their inferiors. The working classes have no wish to be patronized—to be indulged like children. Such treatment repels them. It offends their self-respect, much in the same way as the tracts and good

¹ *Thackeray's Four Georges.*

books so injudiciously circulated among them offend their intellect. Sympathy is very different from patronage; they are won by the former, but feel no gratitude for the latter. They are not much moved by loyalty or reverence for those above them. Seldom has a more mistaken social theory been imagined than Mr. Disraeli's great notion that the working classes of this country, in return for Maypoles and ostentatious alms, would yield themselves up, with grateful obedience, to the condescending leadership of the aristocracy. The whole Young England tone of sentiment was, as regards the body of the people, an absurd anachronism. They desire, above all things, justice. Satisfy them that they are dealt with fairly—that their rights are respected and their claims considered not less than those of others; and they ask nothing more. The questions raised at the late elections—the protection of the property of trades-unions; the liability of masters for the faults of foremen; arrestment of wages; even strikes; were, as a rule, urged by the electors in the spirit we have indicated. Even where feeling was keenest, meetings of working men, though they resented ill-tempered insult, never refused a hearing to fair argument. Mr. Roebuck was rejected for no noisy demagogue, but for a man who has done his best to promote justice and fair-dealing between employers and employed.

It seems to us, then, that the majority of the new Parliament has given promise of a disposition to attempt the solution of these vexed questions with that fellow-feeling which wins regard, and with that determination to do justice which commands respect. We hail this as a happy augury. It carries with it a far more lasting assurance of good than the accession of a Liberal Government to power. Difficulties may multiply so as not to be overcome; individual men may disappoint expectations; gloomy forebodings, of which the first whispers are already beginning to make themselves heard, may be speedily fulfilled; but if the temper of the House be such as we believe it to be, none of these things will long obstruct the advance of the nation in happiness and well-being. Reputations may be won or lost, administrations may rise and fall; but a Legislature, animated by kindly sympathy, resolute to deal justly with all ranks and conditions of men, surely justifies a sanguine hope. Mr. Bright himself has put that hope in words:—"I think I see, as it were above the hill-tops of time, the glimmerings of the dawn of a better and nobler day for the country and the people that I love so well."

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